

THE LANTERN

THE STUDENT VOICE OF THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 20, 2007 **3**

Student's custody case reaches Supreme Court

By **Mary Dannemiller**
Lantern staff writer

When Paul Fisher returned to his hometown and had casual sex with an old girlfriend, having a baby was the last thing on his mind.

Fisher's life then changed forever when he discovered his partner, Emma Hasenjager, was pregnant.

"We hooked up a few random times and ended up making a baby," said the Undergraduate Student Government Senator.

Now the junior in English and business is in the midst of a custody battle under review by the Ohio Supreme Court over his four-year-old daughter, Demetra.

Fisher said he is seeking a new trial after his joint custody plan was altered so that Demetra's mother had full custody of the child.

"The judge decided it was in my daughter's best interest to terminate my custody and grant it to the mother," he said. Fisher said he went to court because he felt Hasenjager to be an unfit mother. Hasenjager declined to comment on the issue.

According to a brief filed by Fisher's lawyer, Doug Dougherty, controversy arose over whether a court is authorized to modify residential

parent and legal custodian status after initial custody is granted. He argued that current laws are in violation of the 14th amendment of the U.S. Constitution by eliminating a citizen's right to due process.

The Ohio Supreme Court will ultimately not decide who is awarded custody of the child, but if Fisher will be allowed to return to district court and attempt to get custody there, Fisher said.

"I think that now that it's going to the Supreme Court it's definitely an important case; a precedent will be set," said USG Senator Roz Skinner.

Fisher also said he would like to use his position as a USG senator to help educate students about how the family court system works and the importance of safe sex.

"I want to make it clear to all the guys out there messing around that they should consider their unborn children before hitting the sack with a stranger," he said. "For a single guy, the choice to have sex can be the last legally protected decision he'll make regarding his own child."

Dougherty, Fisher's lawyer, was unable to be reached for comment.

Mary Dannemiller can be reached at dannemiller.24@osu.edu.

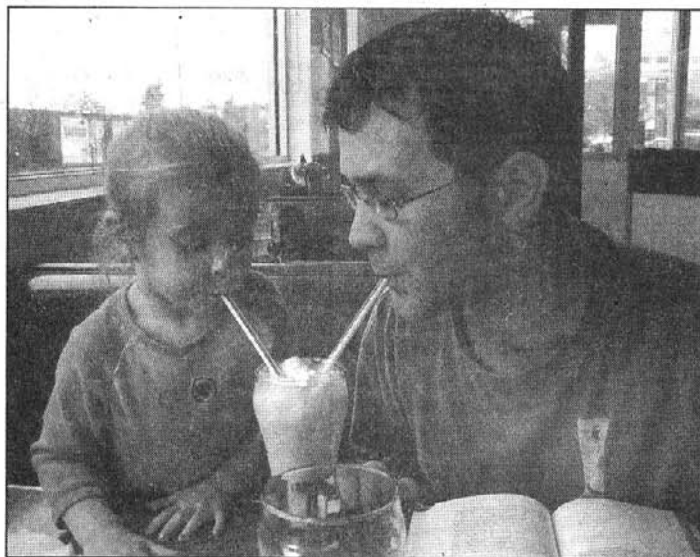


PHOTO COURTESY OF PAUL FISHER
Paul Fisher and his 4-year-old daughter, Demetra.