

# The Conversation

## December 2024

**Mission:**  
To bring a revival of the fundamental role of fatherhood to today's family unit.

**Vision:**  
To see loving, engaged fathers at the core of every family unit, and support for all those serving in the role of father-figures.

## Books we like

# Any Girl

A Memoir of Surviving Prostitution in Ireland

'Every man and woman should read this'  
SABINA HIGGINS

'Searing and generous ... a blazing beacon'  
DONAL RYAN

'Written with honesty, power and insight'  
RÓISÍN INGLE

Mia Döring



## Join The Conversation

Become a sponsor of Father-Con before 2025!  
[patrick@father-con.org](mailto:patrick@father-con.org)

## The Founder's Conversation Starter

"Carve your name on hearts, not tombstones." Shannon L. Alder

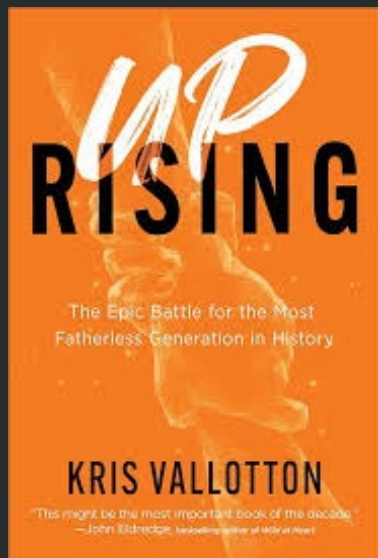
Another year sped by and we are now teetering on the brink of a lot of newness coming! This past year has been full of connections made, obstacles faced, blessings received, babies born, and mountains climbed. Mystery hovers like a bay area fog. One thing is certain, we enter the fog with deep friendships and partners in this good work. Personally, I welcomed my first grandson into this "magical mystery tour" of life and celebrated the 101st birthday of my mother. Seeing them together for Christmas was a pulsating reminder of our mortality and legacy. As my 10-month-old grandson peered into the soul of my centenarian mother, one could feel the past, present and future splitting atoms and releasing a static hope into the atmosphere. My mother who was not expected to live through her first night after a very premature birth in 1923 brought 8 children into the world and grandchildren and great grandchildren in the wake of my parent's love. She rode, like a fearless southern California surfer, the tsunami sized waves of the Great Depression, World War 2, the discombobulating sixties, Vietnam, political upheaval, personal disappointments, and the passing of the love of her life, my dad. She was witness to the greatest global transformations in all of human history, and she lived to see numbers emerge in data bytes that could choke a horse.

*Data: in 1950, less than 5% of all children were born out of wedlock in America. By 2017 that number rose by more than 1,700%. 39% of children in America have a mother in a cohabiting relationship. 24% of children in the US today live with a single parent, the vast majority single mothers. For perspective, most countries in the world are under 10% with only the UK a close second to "US."*

Consequences of these figures of millions of children not being raised by their biological parents is catastrophic in its scope and scale and yet humanity is if nothing else, resilient and the power to overcome even the bleakest upbringing is possible, but the odds are clearly against US. We are not designed to live without parental love, patience, nurturing, guidance, instruction, and in heritage of lineage. We thrive on being part of a tie that binds us from past through present to future. As my mother looks into the eyes of this one little boy, just one of her 8 great grandchildren, and says, "I love you baby!" I feel like I have entered the chronosynclastic infundibulum of Kurt Vonnegut's irrepressible imagination - and have suddenly appeared in multiple places at once. My childhood, my daughter's life and love, my grandson and all that he will see and do with his life glimmer like a kaleidoscope in my heart.

Let us find the way to living with humility and gratitude - and "Carve your name on hearts, not tombstones." Shannon L. Alder.

As a father, I don't want to look back on my life and see flashes of pleasure, moments of glee, but eyes looking back at mine with a faith, a love, a passion that would not be there if I had not been here. God bless you this end of the year and dawning of 2025!



Patrick Erlandson – Father & new grandfather  
 Founder: Father-Con and See it. End it. Film & Arts Festival

**We can only do this work, with the support of donors and sponsors.**  
 Make a world of difference – for our children and the communities they live in. Give generously to Father-Con

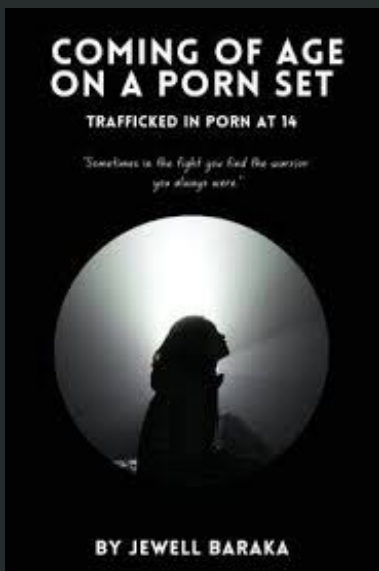
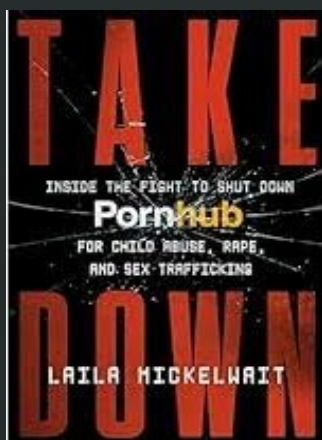


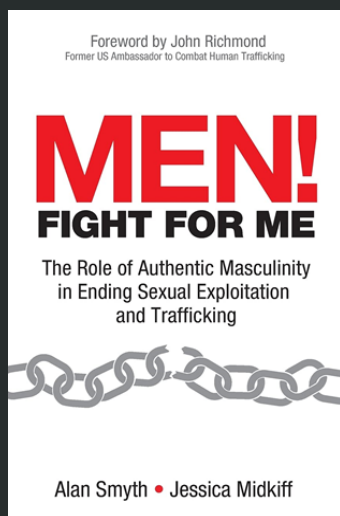
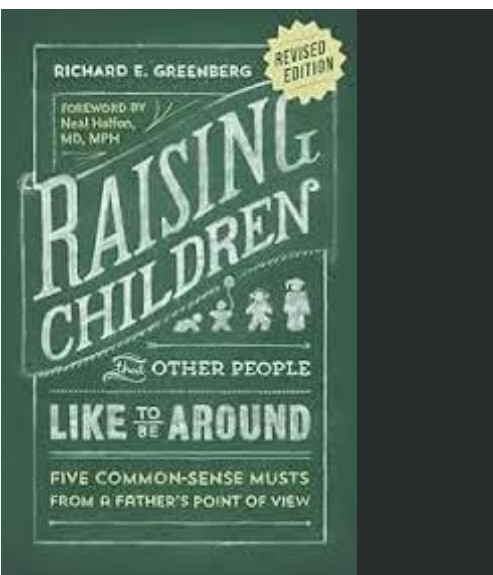
Also Father-Con on Zelle, PayPal and checks to Father-Con. Mail to Father-Con 1990 Avenida Feliciano, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

**“More than just a second parent or an extra set of hands, fathers are one of the best child development resources we have, and if we are going to give children the best start in life, we all need to fully recognize and utilize this role.”** *UNICEF Chief of Early Childhood Development Dr. Pia Britto.*

“We had leaders from nearly every sector of society there, including the chief of police, the sheriff, the head of probation, the fire chief, a court judge, the superintendent of schools, several members of our city council, the mayor, many prominent businesspeople and a few public-school teachers. We opened the meeting by going around the room and asking each person his or her perspective on what was at the root of our city’s most serious problems. When the night was over everyone had spoken, there was just one word on the whiteboard: fatherlessness,” Kris Vallotton in *UP RISING* The Epic Battle for the Most Fatherless Generation in History.

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Father-Con 2024



Taking on the con - creating a picture of success!

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