

Custody issues at center of father-daughter deaths on West Slope

By Stephen Magagnini and Peter Hecht, Sacramento Bee

Mourad “Moni” Samaan killed himself and his 2-year-old daughter, Madeleine Layla Samaan-Fay following a bitter custody battle that began even before the child was born, Samaan’s father said Monday.

In an exclusive interview with the *Bee*, Dr. Makram Samaan said his son and granddaughter – found inside his son’s sport-utility vehicle on Saturday evening in El Dorado County – died of carbon monoxide poisoning from the exhaust pipe. (Authorities haven’t confirmed the cause of death.)

The girl’s mother, California Deputy Attorney General Marcia Ann Fay, 46, has declined to comment after several requests by The Bee.

Makram Samaan – a psychologist who helps couples mediate disputes and divorces – held his hands to the heavens and cried: “I’ve helped thousands of people and saved a lot of families, but I failed my son – I did not see it. I did not see it! Why should it not be me?”

Samaan, who wrote his master’s thesis on suicide, said he knew his son Moni was in distress, but had no inkling how much.

He blamed the courts for driving his son over the edge.

“We need to take marriage and divorce out of the courts,” said a sobbing Samaan at his Fair Oaks home overlooking Lake Natoma.

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