

Ruling protects kids of same-sex parents

3 California cases weighed by court

By David Kravets
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Same-sex couples who raise children are lawful parents, and just like heterosexual couples, they must provide for their children if they break up, the California Supreme Court ruled yesterday.

The justices ruled that custody and child-support laws that hold absent fathers accountable also apply to estranged gay and lesbian couples who used reproductive science to conceive.

Being a legal parent “brings with it the benefits as well as the responsibilities,” Justice Joyce Kennard said.

The court’s ruling, involving three separate cases, is the latest to recognize rights of same-sex couples.

The court granted a Marin County woman the right to be

the second mother of twins after the birth mother moved out of state. It ruled that a lesbian woman cannot avoid paying child support for her former partner’s biological children.

It also decided that another woman could not go to court to terminate the parental rights of her former lover years after obtaining a court order stipulating that both were parents.

“The court is now protecting the children of same-sex parents in gay families in the same way children are protected with heterosexual couples in heterosexual families,” said Jill Hersh, who argued the unidentified Marin County woman’s case.

The court ruled three years ago that men who establish themselves as parental figures may become legal fathers even if they did not help conceive the child.

“These legal principles apply with equal force in this case,” Kennard wrote in the case ordering a lesbian woman to support her former lover’s twins.



TODAY, IN 1927

Italian-born anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were executed in Boston in the killings of two men during a robbery in 1920.

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