

Adoption Separation

Those of us who were separated from our children by adoption are very aware of society's attitudes to single parenthood in the 20th century. Many of us are ageing and our experiences are barely comprehensible to members of the current generation, who have grown up in a very different social context. Single parenthood is now generally tolerated and supported to the extent that, in some places, single people are permitted to adopt.

I believe that recording and publishing our stories is an important way to validate our experiences. It is also a valuable educational exercise to illustrate the attitudes to single parenthood which were prevalent in the last century, especially in the 1960s and 1970s when so many children were adopted. It is difficult for our children and grandchildren to understand the socially intolerant climate in which our pregnancies occurred and the only people who can explain that to them are those of us who experienced society's disapproval and often lost our children because of it. In line with the social values of the times, single parents were discriminated against and treated in different ways from parents who were married. In many cases they were denied what in the 21st century is perceived as social justice.

I plan to publish a collection of narratives written by parents who have been separated from their children by adoption. I am hoping to obtain contributions from Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and Ireland to illustrate the similarities in adoption experiences in the major English-speaking countries. As far as I am aware, this is the first time that such a collection has been produced.

It is my hope that the collection will educate our children, our friends and families, our communities, as well as professionals who may be working with those who have experienced adoption separation. I would like to produce a permanent record of how it felt to be pregnant at a time when single parents were blamed and shamed by an unforgiving society.

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I would appreciate it if this information could be distributed as widely as possible.



Evelyn Robinson, June, 2010