BOOK LIST: RELINQUISHMENT, ADOPTION, SEARCH, REUNION

General Books

Aigner, Hal. ADOPTION IN AMERICA COMING OF AGE

Babb, L. Anne ETHICS IN AMERICAN ADOPTION 1999 Bergin & Garvey. Today in the United States there is a lack of consensus about what constitutes ethical practice in adoption and how to serve the best interests of children who need to be adopted, birth parents, adoptive parents, and adult adoptees. This failure has resulted in a lack of ethical decision-making and inadequate--and sometimes fraudulent--treatment of those seeking adoption-related services. Based on the first research study to specifically study ethics in adoption practice, this book offers an in-depth history of values in adoption, codes and standards of practice affecting adoption and presents a suggested list of ethical standards specific to adoption work.

Baer, Janine. GROWING IN THE DARK: ADOPTION SECRETS AND IRS CONSEQUENCES. takes you through California´s early adoption laws, highlighting the sealing of records, and discusses the various consequences of this policy as they unfolded throughout the 20th century. Psychological theories, baby sellers, the views of child welfare advocates, and attempts to reverse the sealed records laws are all part of adoption´s story.

Bisantz Raymond, Barbara. THE BABY THIEF: The Untold Story of Georgia Tann, the Baby Seller Who Corrupted Adoption. For almost three decades, renowned baby-seller Georgia Tann ran a children’s home in Memphis, Tennessee — selling her charges to wealthy clients nationwide, Joan Crawford among them. Part social history, part detective story, part expose, The Baby Thief is a riveting investigative narrative that explores themes that continue to reverberate today.

Blau, Eric. STORIES OF ADOPTION: Loss And Reunion New Sage Press,1993. A photographer who is also a physician interviews adoptees, birthparents (including three birthfathers and adoptive parents, letting them tell their stories without interpretation.

Giddens, Lynn. FACES OF ADOPTION.

Jackson, Timothy P., ed. THE MORALITY OF ADOPTION: Social, Psychological, Theological and Legal Perspectives. The increasing number and legitimacy of various kinds of adoption are revolutionizing how families are formed. Is there any way to determine what kinds of adoption public morality and the law should allow? In this uniquely interdisciplinary book, Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant contributors wrestle with such concrete issues as the psychology of family ties, the advisability of cross-cultural adoption, the morality of single-parent adoption, and the new concept of embryo adoptions. Their conclusions pave the way for better-informed reflection and action by scholars and those considering adoption.

Kirschner, David. ADOPTION: UNCHARTED WATERS. Nothing ever before written about adoption can prepare the reader for the revelations in this book. With the precision of a forensic psychologist in a courtroom drama, David Kirschner sheds light on a dark subject - adoptees who kill: David Berkowitz (Son of Sam), Joel Rifkin (serial killer of 17 women), Steve Catlin (serial wife and mother killer), Jeremy Strohmeyer (the "casino" killer) and parricides Patrick DeGelleke, Matthew Heikkila and Patrick Niiranen. All were adopted, all obsessed with fantasies of their birth mothers, all raised with secrets and lies, all blocked and frustrated in their searches by a closed adoption system - before they killed. Exploring issues of abandonment, rejection, bonding, and birth-parent fantasies, Kirschner, known for his concept of the Adopted Child Syndrome (ACS), presents

compelling evidence for the healing power of honesty and openness. In this fascinating, personal narrative, he explains why these tragedies need not have occurred.

Kirk, David H. ADOPTIVE KINSHIP: A Modern Institution In Need Of Reform 1985 Ben-Simon Publishing A systematic analysis of the continuing controversy concerning the civil rights of adopted persons. Provides in-depth exploration of issues in adoption law and social policy, such as step-parent adoption, incest rules and child welfare activities. While identifying real troubles in adoption, it proposes humane, innovative answers. Difficulties peculiar to adoptive family life stem from well-meant but mistaken laws and administrative practices.

McTaggart, Lynne. THE BABY BROKERS.

Noble, Elizabeth. PRIMAL CONNECTIONS.

Pavao, Joyce Maguire THE FAMILY OF ADOPTION 1999 Beacon Press Pavao describes the grief processes, dilemmas, and potentials for healing of birth mothers and adoptive parents. A strong advocate for adopted children, she discusses the difference between secrecy and privacy--a crucial distinction in adoption. Pavao clearly identifies and demonstrates predictable, understandable developmental stages and challenges for every adoptee and elucidates patterns that adoptive parents may witness as their children grow.

Pertman, Adam ADOPTION NATION: HOW THE ADOPTION REVOLUTION IS TRANSFORMING AMERICA 2000 Basic Books Pertman brings a reporter's skill and adopting parent's concerns to this comprehensive look at the process of adoption. After years of incremental change, adoption is undergoing a revolution: states are revising laws and agencies are simplifying rules. Pertman also examines the trend toward opening adoption for singles, multiracial families, gays, and the middle aged. Although adoption is still fundamentally private, it is no longer shrouded in the secrecy of the past as more states allow for open adoptions and balance the rights and desires of birth parents, adopting parents, and adopted children. Pertman examines the history of adoption from the foundling homes of the nineteenth century to current trends that are "advancing the ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity that is a hallmark of Twenty First Century America."

Riben, M. SHEDDING LIGHT ON…THE DARK SIDE OF ADOPTION. 1988. AdvocatePublications.com. Expose of the adoption industry written in recognition of the all too real problems inherent in the current sealed-record adoption system, and offers solutions to make adoption more humane. Exposes the under-belly of what once was an idyllic social solution and has become a corrupt, greed and profit driven, international business of selling babies. An in-depth, investigative report of the "shadowy figures" in adoption: birthparents. To this day, most adoption books mention birthparents at the time of birth and surrender only, rather than dealing with birth parenthood as a lifelong process. While not biographical in nature, The Dark Side of Adoption affords birthparents their first ever voice. While the content is controversial, the material is presented without sensationalism, The Dark Side of Adoption is scrutinized with the same thoroughness with which we have been forced to view abuses in the family, in the foster care system, and day care centers, recognizing that only when we can honestly assess what is wrong with an institution are we able to explore solutions.

Riben, Mirah. THE STORK MARKET: AMERICA’S MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR UNREGULATED ADOPTION INDUSTRY. Expose of the adoption industry. 2007. AdvocatePublications.com. An in-depth examination of the corruption in the adoption industry: the fine line between black and gray market adoption; scams, coercion and exploitation in a market based on supply and demand with prices based on quality (i.e. age, skin color) of the merchandise and set as high as ‘desperate’ consumers are willing to pay. The Stork Market exposes international trafficking where children are a commodity bought and sold to the highest bidders, including pedophiles. It challenges convention wisdom and myths that abound in regard adoption. Riben asks if

adoption can be fixed - the money aspect removed and government controls and regulations put in place - or abolished in favor of permanent guardianship, or informal adoption that does not involve the issuance of a falsified birth certificate present in current adoption to fortify myths of replicating creation.

Russell, Marlou, Ph.D. ADOPTION WISDOM: A Guide to the Issues and Feelings of Adoption 1996 Broken Branch Productions. Insight and understanding of adoptees, birth parents and adoptive parents. A book for anyone who wants to know more about the realities of adoption. Marlou Russell is an adoptee in reunion with many relatives from both sides of her birth family.

Sachdev, Paul. UNLOCKING THE ADOPTION FILES

Shawyer, Joss. DEATH BY ADOPTION

Solinger, Rickie BEGGERS AND CHOOSERS: HOW THE POLITICS OF CHOICE SHAPES ADOPTION, ABORTION, AND WELFARE IN THE UNITED STATES 2001 Hill & Wang Pub The post-Roe v. Wade decision to articulate the women's movement's goals in terms of "choice," not "rights," had fateful consequences for women. Pregnancy and childbearing have historically and dramatically separated women by race and class in this country. Solinger explores the shifting qualifications imposed on women as gestators, mothers, and decision makers.

Solinger, Rickie. WAKE UP LITTLE SUSIE: Single Pregnancy and Race Before Roe v. Wade. In a thorough and important, if often tiresomely repetitive, study, Solinger (Women's Studies/Univ. of Colorado, Boulder) dissects the politics of female fertility in America from 1945-65, when the strikingly different treatments of middle-class white and poor black pregnant teenagers clearly reflected the demands of a racist, family-centered economy.

Sorosky, Arthur, et al. THE ADOPTION TRIANGLE: Sealed or Open Records, How They Affect Adoptees, Birth Parents, and Adoptive Parents. Anchor Books,1984. Based on one thousand interviews of adoptees, adoptive parents, birthparents.

Triseliotis, John. IN SEARCH OF ORIGINS: The Experience Of Adopted People

Verrier, Nancy THE PRIMAL WOUND: Understanding the Adopted Child. This book postulates the controversial but much-adhered-to theory that adopted people are deeply and permanently impacted from rejection felt in utero and at birth. Author Nancy Verrier, MA, is an adoptive mother and therapist.

Wegar, Katarina ADOPTION, IDENTITY, AND KINSHIP: The Debate over Sealed Birth Records, Yale University Press, 1997 Professor Wegar, an adoptee born in Finland, a country with open records, argues that the American obsession with pathologizing adoption and glorifying biological ties has impeded progress towards equal rights for adopted people.

Wadia-Ells, Susan, editor. THE ADOPTION READER: Birth Mothers, Adoptive Mothers & Adopted Daughters Tell Their Stories. Seal Press,1995. Thirty women, including well-known writers and adoption activists, write eloquently about a wide range of adoption experiences, including international adoption.

Birthparents

Bloch Jones, Merry. BIRTHMOTHERS

Denton, Kathy and Cummings, Teresa. THE SEARCH OF A LIFETIME, 2000. My search for the daughter I gave up for adoption, adoption issues revealed, the fight for open records, volunteerism, and how I found my daughter. My sister and co-author, Teresa Cummings also wrote a fictional political fable called Spynet which is interwoven throughout the book. Spynet tells the story of a girl searching for her family in invisible towns. 1stbooks Library, www.1stbooks.com.

Dusky, Lorraine. BIRTHMARK. The first memoir by a birthmother.

Jones, Merry Bloch. BIRTHMOTHERS: Women Who Have Relinquished Babies for Adoption Tell Their Stories. Chicago Review Press, 1993. Seventy women share their experiences of giving birth and placing a child for adoption, raising subsequent children, searching and being found.

Mason, Mary Martin OUT OF THE SHADOWS: Birthfathers' Stories Published by Oj Howard Pub 1995 Stories from and about birthfathers compiled by an adoptee/adoptive mother.

Moorman, Margaret WAITING TO FORGET, W.W. Norton & Co. 1996 Birthmother Moorman describes how her second pregnancy at age forty led to a confrontation with her decision to give up a child for adoption some twenty-five years earlier, explaining how the past has affected her life and the experience of being a pregnant teenager.

Musser, Sandy. TO PRISON WITH LOVE

Schaefer, Carol. THE OTHER MOTHER: A Woman's Love for the Child She Gave Up for Adoption. Soho Press Inc.,1991. A Bay Area woman tells her experience of pregnancy in a Midwest home for "unwed mothers," her relinquishment of her son, her years of loss, her search and reunion. This popular book was made into an acclaimed television movie starring Francis Fischer.

Silber, Kathleen and Phylis Speedin. DEAR BIRTHMOTHER

Waldron, Jatt. GIVING AWAY SIMONE, A Memoir Times Books, 1995. The author reunited with her daughter when the girl was eleven years old. Waldrun powerfully describes the struggle of birthmother and child to build a relationship.

Barton, Eliza M. CONFESSIONS OF A LOST MOTHER Birthmother Barton tells, through her own and other traumatized birthmothers' "confessions", how the relinquishment of their children adversely affected their personal lives and their attitudes towards adoption.

Growing Up Adopted

Anderson, Robert, M.D. SECOND CHOICE: Growing Up Adopted. Badger- Hill,1993. A black market adoptee who is also a psychiatrist tells his story

Brodzinsky, David M., Marshall D. Schechter, Robin Marantz Henig BEING ADOPTED: The Lifelong Search for Self, 1993

Eldridge, Sherrie TWENTY THINGS ADOPTED KIDS WISH THEIR ADOPTIVE PARENTS KNEW – In an attempt to inform adoptive parents of the unique issues adoptees face, Eldgridge discusses adoptee anger,

mourning, and shame and adoption acknowledgment while using case studies to illustrate how parents can better relate to their adopted child.

Lifton, Betty Jean. LOST & FOUND: The Adoption Experience. Perennial Library,1988 (first ed.1979)Based on an adoptee's talks with other adoptees but includes conversations with birthparents and adoptive parents as well, making this a good all-around starter book.

Lifton, Betty Jean. JOURNEY OF THE ADOPTED SELF: A Quest for Wholeness; Basic Books, 1994 Lifton addresses the myths surrounding adoption. This book delves into the psychological effects of adoption and is highly recommended for adopted people comfortable with the idea of search and reunion.

Lifton, Betty Jean TWICE BORN: Memoirs of an Adopted Daughter, McGraw-Hill, reissued 1998 Calling Twice Born both an autobiography and psychological journey into the past, Lifton takes the reader with her as she describes the loneliness and isolation of an adopted child cut off from the knowledge of her heritage. She explores the ambivalence and guilt that she feels toward her adoptive parents when she awakens as an adult to her need to ask: Who am I?

Paton, Jean THE ADOPTED BREAK SILENCE, Orphan Voyage 1954 This is a seminal book on adoption written by the mother of the modern adoptee-rights movement.

How to Search

Askin, Jayne & Davis, Molly SEARCH: A Handbook for Adoptees and Birthparents, 3 rd Edition; Oryx Press; Drawing from personal experience as well as from extensive research, Jayne Askin presents creative ways to overcome obstacles and attack problems that occur during the search process. Extensive Internet search & resource section.

BLUE BOOK. The Parent Connection, Box 230643, Encinitas, CA 92023-0643 ($16.50). Lists search groups and professional searchers throughout the country and internationally.

Strauss, Jean A. S. BIRTHRIGHT: The Guide to Search and Reunion for Adoptees, Birthparents, 2 and Adoptive Parents. Penguin Press, 1994. Part one tells how to search; part two deals with the effects of reunion on all members of the adoption triad.

Reunion-What Might Happen

Gediman, Judith St Brown, Linda P. BIRTH BOND: Reunions Between Birthparents & Adoptees, What Happens After New Horizons Press,1989. The authors interviewed thirty birthmothers in lasting reunions, along with adoptees, other members (the birth family, adoptive parents, to discover the impact of reunion on all involved.

McColm, Michelle. ADOPTION REUNIONS: A Book for Adoptees, Birth Parents and Adoptive Families. Second Story Press,1993. An adoptee who has worked with other adoptees and birthparents explores the roots of reunion, the reunion, and how to support the reunion process.

Saffian, Sarah, ITHAKA: a Daughter's Memoir of Being Found, Saffian tells her story of being found by birthparents who had married and had subsequent children not relinquished to adoption. Saffian is initially very reluctant to reconnect with her birthparents and this story tells of her harrowing psychological journey towards accepting a reconnection.