

# Recommended Resources

A curated list offered as a starting point for adult adoptees & birth family.

## Books

### **An Adoptee Lexicon**

Karen Pickell, 2018


A glossary of adoption terminology from the viewpoint of an adult adoptee which intersperses personal commentary and snippets from her own experience with history and statistics pertaining to child development and the adoption industry.

### **The Adoption Mystique: A Hard Hitting Exposé of The Powerful Negative Social Stigma That Permeates Child Adoption In The United States**

Joanne Wolf Small, 2007

“The Adoption Mystique exposes, documents and confronts the effects of negative social stigma on adoption institutions, practices, adopted persons, adoptive and birthparents. It is a timely counterpoint to the misinformation and prejudices that created and maintain the myths of adoption.”

### **The Adoptee Survival Guide: Adoptees Share Their Wisdom and Tools 1st Edition**

Lynn Grubb, 2015 

“Thirty adoptee authors provide support, encouragement and understanding to other adoptees in facing the complexities of being adopted, embarking on search and reunion, fighting for equal access to identifying information, navigating complex family relationships with the latest technology, and surviving it with a sense of humor.”

### **Adoption Nation**

Adam Pertman, 2000

“With compassion for adopted individuals and adoptive and birth parents alike, Adam Pertman explores the history and human impact of adoption, explodes the corrosive myths surrounding it, and tells compelling stories about its participants as they grapple with issues relating to race, identity, equality, discrimination, personal history, and connections with all their families.”

### **The Adoption Reunion Survival Guide**

Julie Jarrell Bailey and Lynn N. Giddens, M.A., 2001 

A manual for preparing for search, reunion and beyond. Manual for searching is dated, but the discussion surrounding adoption reunion is timeless.

### **Birthbond: Reunions Between Birthparents and Adoptees, What Happens After**

Judith S. Gediman and Linda P. Brown, 1991 


Essential reading for anyone involved in an adoption reunion. Helps the reader understand the emotions involved in the post-reunion experience.

### **Birthfathers and Their Adoption Experiences**

Gary Clapton, 2002

“Discussing different notions of fatherhood, such as biological paternity, social fatherhood, sperm donorship and the ‘father figure’, this informative book – the first on birth fathers in adoption – brings new light to issues such as the decision to give up a child for adoption, the child’s desire to find his or her birth parents, and the facilitation of contact in later life.”

### **Birthright: the Guide to Search and Reunion**

Jean Strauss, 1994 

Acclaimed documentary filmmaker shares her own search story along with dozens of others. Also packed with important reference sources.

 Available for purchase through Adoption Network Cleveland

 Available in the Adoption Network Cleveland lending library

## **Black Anthology: Adult Adoptees Claim Their Space (The AN-YA Project)**

Susan Harris O'Connor MSW (Editor), Diane Rene Christian (Editor), Mei-Mei Akwai Ellerman PhD (Editor), 2016

"This anthology allows for the opportunity to see the rich diversity of a people; the uniqueness within the individual stories. Inside this book, you will read the depth of struggle, and the pure grace, dignity and accomplishments achieved, sometimes connected to the privileges afforded us while in the midst of insurmountable odds."

## **The Child Catchers: Rescue, Trafficking, and the New Gospel of Adoption**

Kathryn Joyce, 2013

Examines how "adoption has become entangled in the conservative Christian agenda as a reflection of pro-life initiatives, explaining how child and family well-being has become a lesser priority in a market increasingly driven by profit and religious ideology."

## **The Girls Who Went Away**

Ann Fessler, 2006

Birthmothers share their stories in their own words. A searing and important glimpse of a long overlooked social history, bringing to the page the lifelong emotions common to many birthmothers.

## **In Their Own Voices: Transracial Adoptees Tell Their Stories**

Rita J. Simon and Rhonda M. Roorda, 2000

A collection of interviews with black and biracial young adults who were adopted by white parents.

## **It's Not About You: Understanding Adoptee Search, Reunion and Open Adoption**

Brooke Randolph LMHC, 2016



It's Not About You is an adoptee-focused anthology project intended to comfort those who fear the desire for information and connection is any kind of judgement on themselves. Our purpose is also to confront those who try to make it about themselves, missing the opportunity to support and connect with the adoptee who needs this information.

## **Journeys After Adoption: Understanding Lifelong Issues**

Jayne Schooler and Betsie Norris, Founder of Adoption Network Cleveland, 2002  

Drawing on the experiences of dozens of triad members, the authors offer insight into the concerns, issues, joys and pain experienced by those whose lives are framed by adoption.

## **Lost and Found: The Adoption Experience**

Betty Jean Lifton, 1979  


An excellent book about the issues of growing up in a closed adoption.

## **Lost Daughters: Writing Adoption From a Place of Empowerment and Peace (Paperback)**

Amanda H.L. Transue-Woolston (Author), Julie Stromberg (Editor), Karen Pickell (Editor), Jennifer Anastasi (Editor), 2014

"Lost Daughters is written and edited entirely by adopted women, several of whom balance multiple roles in adoption and foster care along with being adopted. The Lost Daughters mission is to bring readers the perspectives and narratives of adopted women, and to highlight their strength, resiliency, and wisdom."

## **Outsiders Within: Writing on Transracial Adoption Paperback**

Jane Jeong Trenka (Editor), Julia Chinyere Oparah (Editor), Sun Yung Shin (Editor), 2006 

"Moving beyond personal narrative, these transracially adopted writers from around the world tackle difficult questions about how to survive the racist and ethnocentric worlds they inhabit, what connects the countries relinquishing their children to the countries importing them, why poor families of color have their children removed rather than supported—about who, ultimately, they are. In their inquiry, they unseat conventional understandings of adoption politics, ultimately reframing the controversy as a debate that encompasses human rights, peace, and reproductive justice."

## The Primal Wound

Nancy Newton Verrier, 1993 

A revolutionary book which examines the effect of early separation on the adoptee.

## Seven Core Issues in Adoption and Permanency

Sharon Kaplan Roszia & Allison Davis Maxon, 2019

A comprehensive guide to promoting understanding and healing in adoption, foster care, kinship families and third-party reproduction.

## Shattered Bonds: The Color of Child Welfare

Dorothy Roberts, 2003 

Illustrates the disproportionate representation of black children in the U.S. foster care system and its effects on black communities and the country.

## Memoirs

### Finding Fish

Antwone Fisher, 2001

The true story of man who, as a child, endured near-constant verbal and physical abuse in foster care, yet, becomes a sought after poet and screenwriter in Hollywood.

### Growing Up Black in White

Kevin D. Hofmann, 2010

A memoir of how a biracial adoptee grew to create his own identity after being adopted by a white minister and his family during the tumultuous 1960s in Detroit.

### The Language of Blood

Jane Jeong Trenka, 2003

“An adoptee’s search for identity takes her on a journey from Minnesota to Korea and back as she seeks to resolve the dualities that have long defined her life: Korean-born, American-raised, never fully belonging to either.”

## Like Family: Growing Up in Other People’s Houses, a Memoir

Paula McClain, 2003

This powerful and haunting memoir details the years Paula and her two sisters spent as foster children after being abandoned by both parents in California in the early 1970s.

## Lost and Found: A Memoir of Mothers

Kate St. Vincent Vogl, 2009

Touching, true story of an adoptee who is found by her birthmother when she least expected it.

## Surrendered Child: A Birthmother’s Journey

Karen Salyer McElmurray, 2004

“With unflinching honesty, McElmurray recounts both the painful surrendering and the surprise rediscovery of her son, juxtaposed with her portrayal of her own mother, who could not provide the love she needed. The dramatic result is a story of birthright lost and found and an exploration of the meaning of motherhood itself.”

## DNA

### The Family Guide to DNA and Genetic Genealogy

Blaine T. Bettinger, Revised 2019

A one-stop resource guide to better understand genetic genealogy. What DNA tests are available, with up-to-date pros and cons of the major testing companies and advice on choosing the right test to meet your needs. Understand ethnicity estimates & haplogroup designations, navigate suggested cousin matches and use third-party tools to analyze data.

### Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity and Love

Dani Shapiro, 2019

Memoir about identity, paternity and family secrets—a real-time exploration of the staggering discovery made through DNA about her father and that she was donor conceived, and her struggle to piece together the hidden story of her own life.

## Other Online Resources

### Adoption Network Cleveland Adult Adoptee and Birthparent Programs

**General Discussion Meetings** are support and discussion opportunities for all adult adoptees, birthparents, adoptive parents, siblings, and anyone interested in the lifelong journey of adoption.

<https://bit.ly/generalmtgs>

**Search Assistance Program** Adoption Network Cleveland successfully helps adult adoptees, birthparents, siblings and extended families find one another. We have over 31 years of experience providing individualized support and guidance during the search and beyond.

<https://bit.ly/ANCSearch>

### Birthparent Resources

#### Concerned United Birthparents (CUB)

The only national organization focused on birthparents; their experiences, healing and wisdom. CUB serves all those touched by adoption and all who are concerned about adoption issues, with a focus on birthparents.

<https://www.cubirthparents.org/index.php>

#### Ohio Birthparent Group

Provides links to blogs, book recommendations and other resources.

<http://ohiobirthparents.org/>

#### Out of the Shadows

Every adoption begins with one woman, her child and a decision. That woman is redefined in this film. Her misunderstood grief and bravery are brought Out of the Shadows. The women in this film embody a new story of the birthmom. One that outshines the past with its beauty, freedom and dignity.

<https://vimeo.com/238308068>

### Pact Informational Resources for Birth Parents

Provides links to blogs, book recommendations, and information on navigating open adoption.

<https://www.pactadopt.org/birth/resources.html>

### Adult Adoptee Resources

#### The Adoptee Film Channel

A selection of short films by Jean Strauss focusing on the adoptees which help many understand the issues adoptees face.

<https://vimeo.com/channels/adopteefilmchannel>

### DNA information and Resources for Misattributed Parentage, Assisted Reproduction

The International Society of Genetic Genealogy discussion of using DNA to search for birth family. Using DNA to break through adoption roadblocks.

[https://isogg.org/wiki/Utilizing\\_DNA\\_testing\\_to\\_break\\_through\\_adoption\\_roadblocks](https://isogg.org/wiki/Utilizing_DNA_testing_to_break_through_adoption_roadblocks)

### Donor Sibling Registry

Assists individuals conceived as a result of sperm, egg or embryo donation who are seeking to make mutually desired contact with others with whom they share genetic ties.

<https://www.donorsiblingregistry.com/>

### The Genetic Genealogist (Blaine Bettinger)

“The Genetic Genealogist examines the intersection of traditional genealogical techniques and modern genetic research. The blog also explores the latest news and developments in the related field of personal genomics.”

<https://thegeneticgenealogist.com/>

### Late Discovery

Adoption information and resources for adoptees who learned of their adoption later in life.

<https://www.latediscoveryadoptees.com/>

## Lost Daughters

An independent collaborative writing project edited and authored exclusively by adult women who were adopted as children.

<http://www.thelostdaughters.com/>

## NPE Fellowship

A non-profit organization whose mission is to raise awareness by providing community and education to those affected by an NPE discovery.

<https://npefellowship.org/>

## Watershed DNA

Watershed DNA provides genetic counseling consultation on ancestry testing, genetic genealogy and health.

<https://www.watersheddna.com/>

## International Adoption

### Adoptee Rights Campaign

A diverse group of intercountry adoptees and allies striving to educate, organize and advocate for adoptee rights. These include access to critical adoption, immigration, and other vital identity documentation.

<https://adopteerightscampaign.org/>

## Fraud and Corruption in International Adoption

A collection of the Schuster Institute's releases on intercountry adoption, as well as many of the source documents, independent research, government materials, and other resources.

<http://www.brandeis.edu/investigate/adoption/>

## Korean American Adoptee Network

KAAN is a volunteer organization whose mission is to improve the lives of Korean-born adoptees by connecting the community and providing opportunities for dialogue, education, and support.

<https://www.wearekaan.org/> 📖⭐

## Adoption Competent Therapists

Adoption Network may be able to make a referral for an adoption competent therapist in Ohio. Please contact Traci Onders - contact information below.

## 10 questions to Ask When Seeking an Adoption Competent Therapist

<http://secretsonsanddaughters.org/2014/02/21/adoption-therapist-leslie-pate-mackinnon-lcsw/>

## Adoptee - Therapist Directory

Directory of licensed U.S. mental health professionals who identify as adoptees and work with adoptees/families in a variety of settings.

<https://www.growbeyondwords.com/adoptee-therapist-directory/>

## Screening Questions When Seeking an Adoption Competent Therapist

<https://www.growbeyondwords.com/screening-questions-when-seeking-an-adoption-competent-therapist/>

## Other

## International Soundex Reunion Registry

The International Soundex Reunion Registry is a non-profit, tax exempt, charitable organization founded in 1975 by Emma May Vilardi. ISRR is a mutual consent reunion registry for persons desiring a reunion with next-of-kin.

<http://www.isrr.org/>

For more information:



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