



# ORIGINS-USA

Educating about the realities of adoption separation, and providing support and empowerment to parents

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2 FALL 2011

## AUGUST 2011 ORIGINS-USA ANNUAL ELECTION AND MEMBER MEETING

BY BERNADETTE WRIGHT

At our August 2011 annual election of the Board of Directors, the four current board members were all elected to serve another term: Bernadette Wright, Carla Moquin, Debra Baker, and Carlynn Hershberger.

Following the election, the annual member meeting was held August 24 by conference call to review accomplishments from the past year and discuss future plans. Secretary Debra Baker took notes during the meeting.

Past President Jeanine Biocic described activities from the first several months of the Origins-USA calendar year. During this time, Origins-USA caught up with several “inward” activities: preparing three years of taxes, filing the annual report required to stay incorporated, and lowering operating expenses. At the same time, Origins-USA also conducted “outward” activities, including sending announcements to members about opportunities to make their voices heard, getting a letter published in USA Today, and writing a letter in response to the Center for American Progress’s report on “the adoption option.”

Current President Bernadette Wright reported on activities from the past few months. A major focus

during this time was redesigning the website; the new pages are now available at [www.origins-usa.org](http://www.origins-usa.org). Another accomplishment was that member Tammy McKanan submitted a grant application for Origins-USA to the foundation RESIST. In addition, Origins-USA continued to produce the newsletter, created a Facebook page that now has nearly 30 followers, and continued to respond to inquiries.

With additional support from members, donors, and volunteers in the coming year Origins-USA would like to: continue enhancing the website design, optimize the site to be found in internet searches, update the brochure, continue responding to items in the media, and continue all ongoing Origins-USA activities. To find out about ways you can get involved, visit:

[http://www.origins-usa.org/Join\\_Support\\_Us](http://www.origins-usa.org/Join_Support_Us).

### DON'T LET THIS BE YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER...

*Join Origins to continue to receive the newsletter. Just go to “Join” on the at [www.origins-usa.org](http://www.origins-usa.org) and fill out the form. Dues are \$25 per year.*



# ADOPTION LOSS: A MOTHER REMEMBERS

BY DEBRA BAKER

I delivered my baby on February 28, 1968, knowing he was not mine to keep. I named him Shawn Christian, knowing that name was not his to keep. Adoption is seen as a gift, but it is about loss. As a young mother giving up my infant son, I didn't just lose my baby; I lost myself.

I loved being pregnant, feeling my growing belly, figuring out which bump was my baby's head, which was his little bottom. He kicked so much my ribs were sore, but I didn't want it to end. I remember the place I lived while pregnant, the other girls, even what I ate, and my two dresses. My feelings are not as easy to remember, probably because the fear and shame I experienced was so profound.

As the milk leaked from my breasts, my mother bound them, but her efforts could not hide the fact that I was a mother without her child. I struggled to figure out a way to do the impossible: to keep my baby. When I signed the relinquishment papers five weeks after I gave birth, the nightmares and depression overwhelmed me. I pretended it didn't matter, and since my folks didn't talk about it, it didn't happen. I would live my life trying to forget. Of course, I could not forget. Every February 28th I wondered where he was and what he was doing, how he looked, and if he was happy. I recall a profound sadness, with no one to talk to. Who would understand?

Five years after Sean was born, imagining him going to kindergarten, I was not the mother zipping his jacket and kissing him goodbye; someone else had that pleasure. I started college, but it felt strange to be in class with other young people, younger than myself. I had a secret no one could know. I felt like I was living a lie, an imposter. I could not say I had a child when asked and that always made my stomach tighten. But I lived my life, just as the adoption caseworker said I would, but never forgetting my son, as she promised.

I wrote my son a letter on his sixteenth birthday; I was thirty-five. "Today is your sixteenth birthday. It's hard to believe." I felt a deep longing as I imagined him going about his day at school. "Are you getting your driver's license? Please be careful," I wrote. "I think about you everyday, wondering where you are, what you look like, your interests." I knew I would never see him, and it felt

like I was writing to a phantom. "Do you want to meet me?...I will never try to find you. It has to be enough to know that you are loved." I kept this letter. There was no place to send it and I couldn't throw it away.

Shawn turned twenty-one when I was forty, as I began a slow journey towards awareness about losing him and what that meant. The next nine years would take me through an emotional upheaval I hadn't felt since signing the adoption papers. All of the anger, shame, and guilt surfaced and my emotions were difficult to control. I screamed, I ranted, I cried until my boyfriend insisted we go to a Searchfinders meeting and fill out papers to do a search.

During this emotional time I produced a film about my experience as an "unwed mother" and the life-long ramifications of adoption. I started telling my story and began to heal as friends and strangers responded with compassion and support. I spoke to my family about what happened, but unfortunately my dad died before we had the chance to discuss it. Though I felt completely alone during my pregnancy and through the following years, adoption happened to the whole family, not just me.

I found my son while I was editing the film, when he was thirty years old. The excitement of meeting him, and then my grandchildren carried me through the days. I told everyone I knew and anyone who would listen. I joked that I was "out of the closet" and it felt great. I began to think of myself as a mother. I had a son and no legal document will change that. But I am aware that I am not the woman who raised him, and that will never change. But to be in each other's lives is a long-awaited gift.

*Debra Baker produced the films "Broken Ties" and "Lost and Found," which have aired on PBS and screened at numerous film festivals ([www.debrabakerfilms.com](http://www.debrabakerfilms.com)). She is a frequent presenter at adoption conferences and was awarded the Excellence in Broadcast Media Award by the American Adoption Congress in 2002. She is a board member of Origins-USA.*

**READ MOTHERS' STORIES AT:**  
<http://www.origins-usa.org/MothersStories>

## BOOK REVIEW: FOUND, JENNIFER LAUCK

REVIEWED BY JANE EDWARDS, FIRST MOTHER FORUM

WWW.FIRSTMOTHERFORUM.COM, 6/16/2011

Jennifer Lauck's "Found" reveals the painful truth of adoption.

"This is your mother.' My mother's voice is weak and broken, a frail warbling. 'I want you to know not a day has gone by that I haven't thought about you.'" Thus begins 44-year-old Jennifer Caste Lauck's reunion with her mother Catherine as recounted in her new memoir, "Found."

As she hears Catherine's voice, Lauck tells us, "I feel a rise of love so pure and utterly familiar. It is the same feeling I have for my children, which began sprouting the moment I knew I was pregnant with them. ... I know I have been waiting—for my true mother, for Catherine—in order to finally release this universal love in the other direction. Love has always been in my heart waiting for the right person to trip the code."

"Found" is beautifully written, a great addition to the adoption library. Lauck uses events in her life to make the case that mothers and their children belong together. A seemingly obvious position, but one that threatens the institution of adoption as practiced in the U. S. today. Here's an excerpt:

"Had I known anything about myself, I would have known that my mother married my father when she was nineteen. If I had been given some sense of her path, I would have seen that I was doing exactly what she had done and perhaps would have chosen differently for myself. ... My first compass of being in this world had been an abandoned child whose mother did not hold her and later, did not search for her. Unloved. Yes, I had a strong sense that I was unloved and unlovable."

"Who is closer to us than a mother but her lover? How hungry is the child who has not bonded with her mother? By nineteen, I was starving for human contact and love. I didn't care if the human contact was cruel or painful or confused. That is why I endured Jeff...."

"Found" begins with Lauck's birth in 1963 in Reno, Nevada, the daughter of 17-year-old Catherine and

18-year-old Bill. Because Catherine was unmarried at that time, Lauck was placed for adoption with Janet and Bud Lauck. They had a biological son, Bryan, two years older than Lauck. Janet (Lauck always refers to her by her first name) had failing health and believed adopting a child would restore

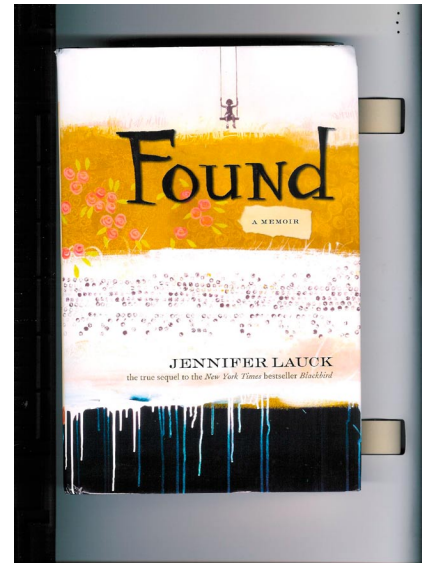
her health since God would not allow her to have a baby if she was going to die. "I was like a handbag or a scarf. Any baby would have done. It wasn't personal."

Janet died when Lauck was seven. Bud remarried and died two years later. Lauck lived with her stepmother, Deb, for two years — who was "like every evil stepmother in every fairytale." In her first book "Blackbird," Lauck recounts in detail abuse she suffered at the hands of her stepmother.

Lauck moved into Bud's parents' home and then lived with Bud's sister and brother-in-law, who adopted her. Bryan killed himself when she was 20. In the next two decades, Lauck attended college, married and divorced twice, had two children with her second husband, and moved to Portland, Oregon. She studied Buddhism and took as a guide Tara, the Buddha of compassionate action. "Tara was a powerhouse of compassion with a purpose." (After her reunion, she learns that her mother named her Tara after the plantation in "Gone with the Wind.")

After the success of "Blackbird," which made the New York Times best seller list, Lauck was invited to speak at an adoption conference. She began to learn about adoption and was particularly influenced by Nancy Verrier, the author of "The Primal Wound," whom she credits for pressing her to "take that final step in the journey and to finally find my mother."

Once Lauck found her mother, Catherine, she pursued a relationship. When her mother did not respond to a request for a second meeting, Lauck simply bought a ticket to Reno and told Catherine she was coming.



## FOUND

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Lauck embraces the similarities between herself and Catherine. They're both "bossy and confident and annoying." She takes the differences—Catherine admired Sarah Palin, for example, and Lauck did not-- in stride.

Like her model Tara, the Buddha of compassion, Lauck was understanding of her mother: "My heart breaks for my mother and what she has endured. I have no right to judge her and when I find I am judging her, I make myself think again—I push my heart to open wider still. I look for the love that is my original connection to Catherine and I keep my focus there."

She concludes her memoir with the question all adoptees ask: "What if I had been Tara Wright instead of Jennifer Lauck?" She answers that she "will remain Jennifer Caste Lauck for this life. That is who I am and who I always was. But I suppose I am also Tara. ... My Self, prior to meeting Catherine, was a patchwork quilt, a jagged mosaic of trial and error. I am now in a phase of refinement."

She includes an End Note criticizing the way of adoption is practiced in the U. S:

"My general feeling about adoption is that we are not thinking very well about this very important subject, nor are we applying common sense to the biological connection between mother and child. ...

"Adoption is big business. ...It is distressing to learn that the U. S. leads the world as the single largest adoption nation. It seems to me that Americans are so fast on the scene of international disasters, and we scoop up orphan children and have them adopted in American homes before body counts are added up....

"Helpful is keeping children within their own culture and empowering the people of those lands with resources, food, medicine, and water....

"Nor is it helpful, within our boundaries, to take a child from a mother due to her economic struggles, her age, or even her education. It is helpful to offer support, education, and solutions. We can fund wars and build bombs, but we cannot empower mothers to keep and care for their children?

"I do believe women, especially the educated women of the West, have the power to heal the world.... To create

generations of children nurtured by their mother's touch and care will make this world worth living in."

\*According to an 2001 article in Portland's Willamette Week, Deb and her son, Lauck's step-brother, deny abuse occurred. Other facts are disputed as well. Any factual discrepancies, however, do not take away the truth of what Lauck writes about adoption.

## A FEAST

A mother struggles with her son.

She could say Enough!

Let it go.

How wonderful it is, she is told,  
that she has her own family now.

It is wonderful, and heartbreaking, the mother wanting  
what the son cannot give her,  
though he has given her the gift of grandchildren.

She must be careful.

The mother walks on eggshells, the love tossed to her  
like crumbs,  
a modern day Gretel.

But she follows the trail. She never knows where it will  
lead her.

Happiness hearing his voice, sadness and dismay when  
he doesn't

return her calls.

If she had raised him

would he be this distant?

She waits for the crumbs  
to become a slice of bread

that she can feast on.

*by Debra Baker 2009*

## BOOK PREVIEW: SECOND-CHANCE MOTHER A MEMOIR BY DENISE ROESSLE

Denise Roessle is pleased to announce that “Second-Chance Mother,” a memoir of multi-generational adoption and reunion, will be released in both print and ebook formats by Red Willow Press this fall. Watch for details on her website: [secondchancemother.com](http://secondchancemother.com) and a review in the next Origins newsletter.

From the opening:

*He might as well have been dead. Except he wasn't.*

*I identified with mothers whose children had been stolen from their cribs or snatched out of strollers in shopping malls. Like them, I wondered whether my son was alive and whether I would ever see him again. But I wasn't one of those mothers. I hadn't lost my baby to a kidnapper. I had given him away.*

*My recollections were as frayed as a piece of cloth worn thin from handling — faded in some spots, like the summer of 1969, a year after high school graduation, when I had fallen in love with the wrong man — and all too vivid in others, like when I was left alone to face the wrath of my parents and swallow the customary antidote for unwed mothers in that era: adoption.*

*For nine months I'd carried my son, struggling against the urge to bond with the new life that swelled my belly and twisted just below my heart. I entered labor with the anxious resignation of a surgical patient scheduled to have a burdensome growth removed. I rode the pain without complaint until I was given the injection that shut off the feeling from my waist down. Only when his body was pulled from mine and I heard his gurgled cry did the loss take hold.*

*“Can I see the baby? Is it a boy or a girl?”*

*The answer came in the whoosh of the delivery room door, as a nurse rushed out with my newborn.*

*Two days later, I slipped out of my room and past the nurses' station, down the sprawling sterile halls to the nursery. I spotted him through the window, in the second row, last bassinet on the right: Baby Boy Janson. I memorized every detail of his tiny face poking out of the blue swaddling — the button nose, quivering eyelids, and furrowed brow — certain that this was all I would ever get and all that I deserved. With every cell in my body screaming “No!” I walked out of the hospital and out of my son's life.*

*I pushed back the grief until I was as anesthetized as the day I had given birth. I imagined myself becoming stronger when in truth I had merely become more comfortable with the numbness.*

*I might as well have been dead. Except I wasn't.*

Denise Roessle relinquished her son for adoption in 1970 and reunited with him in 1996. A year later she reunited with her mother's “secret” birth family. Contact her at [droessle@mac.com](mailto:droessle@mac.com).

## MOTHERS IN OPEN ADOPTION

Jeanine Biocic and Jane Edwards are presenting a workshop about natural mothers in open adoptions for a symposium sponsored by Coordinators2, Inc., September 22-24 (<http://www.openadoptionssupport.com/symposium>). They've prepared a short survey for mothers to tell about their experience and will present the results of the survey along with a discussion of legal considerations and recommendations for improvements.

They would appreciate your help in distributing the survey link, Mothers-in-Open Adoption, so that we can gain information about mothers' open adoption experiences. The survey will remain open until September 12, 2011.

<http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/628155/Mothers-in-Open-Adoptions>

## *they said*

*they said i had to go to a home for unwed mothers  
they never asked me what i wanted to do*

*they said my baby should have a mother and a father  
they never gave me a choice to help me see it through*

*they said the line on my belly would disappear  
they never mentioned the wound in my heart*

*they said go on with your life and pretend it didn't happen  
they never told me i would grieve all the years we're apart*

*they said i should be happy now that i'm free  
they never admit my flesh and blood has been amputated from me*

*they said i could get married and other children would call me mother  
they never said one person does not replace another*

*they said why worry she has a good life  
they never listen to how the pain of not knowing cuts like a knife*

*they said it's against the law to search and find her  
they never knew this was my heart's desire*

*they said she's still young and has other things on her mind  
they never say you're getting older you've been waiting a long time*

*they said when she has children she'll want to know me  
they never concede i missed sharing her life she never sat on me knee*

*they said if i loved my baby i'd sign the paper and leave that day  
she said, don't tell me you love me you gave me away*

*sheila ganz, 1994*

Sheila Ganz is a reunited birthmother and filmmaker of the documentary "Unlocking the Heart of Adoption" ([www.unlockingtheheart.com](http://www.unlockingtheheart.com)). She is currently working on a new documentary, "On Life's Terms: Mothers in Recovery" ([www.onlifesterms.org](http://www.onlifesterms.org)).

## ORIGINS WELCOMES YOUR SUBMISSIONS

Origins-USA invites members to contribute articles to the newsletter. Guidelines are below. Email your contribution as a Word attachment to Denise Roessle, [editor@origins-usa.org](mailto:editor@origins-usa.org). We reserve the right to edit for length, clarity, and grammar.

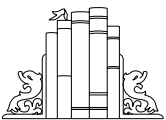
- *Articles and reviews should be no more than 500 words in length;*
- *The subjects of photographs must be identified and consent to publication of their photos;*
- *All material must be original unless consent of the author or producer has been obtained;*

Content must accomplish one or more of the following:

- *Promote Origins' views;*
- *Present an accurate account of mothers' experiences;*
- *Present a positive picture of mothers;*
- *Be uplifting to mothers;*
- *Provide factual information about the adoption industry;*
- *Provide insights into the experience of adopted persons without disrespecting mothers;*
- *Provide insights into the experience of fathers;*
- *Promote family preservation;*
- *Promote advocacy or activism;*
- *Identify areas for activism;*
- *Show mothers taking control and action.*

## CHECK OUT ORIGINS-USA'S BOOK, MOVIE & MUSIC LIST:

<http://www.origins-usa.org/Books>



# WHAT WAS IN MY ADOPTION FILE



BY TRACE A. DEMEYER  
*Author of One Small Sacrifice*  
([www.splitfeathers.blotspot.com](http://www.splitfeathers.blotspot.com))

When I found my natural mother Helen, she refused contact. This took me a full year to grieve. I was too shocked to think clearly. Then I tried to imagine how Helen felt at age 22, when

faced with a missing fiancé (my father) and the bulge in her body that was me. In 2010, I decided to get a copy of my adoption file.

Here is what my file contained:

State of Wisconsin Order for Hearing and Investigation, my adoptive parents petition to adopt (me) Laura Jean Thrall and the court ordered Catholic Welfare Agency and Wisconsin to investigate, required by law. June 5, 1958.

Letter from the State Supervisor of Adoptions, "According to our incomplete record, it appears this child was committed permanently to the Catholic Child Welfare Bureau, who placed this child (DeMeyer in March 1957). If that is true, no action is necessary on the State Dept. of Public Welfare. We are sure that if our assumption is incorrect, the agency will so notify us upon receipt of the investigator's report." June 9, 1958.

Letter to Judge in Superior, adoption hearing: June 24, 1958.

Report: Movements of Child while Under Care: Catholic Infant Home, Foster Home (name/address) and Foster-Adoptive Home (DeMeyer). First Baptism: 9-18-56 (requested by Helen) and a New Baptismal Certificate was issued on 2-21-1964. The signed "Certificate of Baptism, Cathedral of St. Paul," signed by Rev. Barr, March 10, 1959.

Hospital Discharge Report: The Physical Record of Mother. Admitted to the Catholic Infant Home on May 23, 1956. She delivered on 9-9-56, in hospital 5 days. Delivery: Normal, spontaneous. The Child Physical Report: full-term, discharged 9-26-1956. Social Worker: Miss Underhill.

Catholic Infant Home Report – Nurse: Sister Enid, Physical Exam at Birth and Discharge from Hospital to Infant Home.

Medical Exam (Infant to Two Years, Wisconsin Child Center) –Foster Care, General physical: Ok with Mild eczema on face. March 12, 1957. Medical Exam – July 15, 1957 – I'm named Tracy DeMeyer, General Development: Normal, lists various immunizations and vaccines.

State of Juvenile Court, Wisconsin, Parental Consent to Termination of Parental Rights, December 5, 1956. Underhill (social worker) is witness. "Father's consent is not necessary in the case of an illegitimate child." Signed Helen Thrall.

Leo Block, Director of Catholic Welfare Agency appears before Judge Robert Curran May 28, 1958, in the matter of Adoption of Laura Jean Thrall. Block consents to my adoption, reason: for the best interest of the child.

Request to Minnesota Dept. of Public Welfare April 9, 1958; Catholic Welfare Agency needs birth record to be used as proof of birth to protect the interest of this child at time of placement. April 16, 1958 sent to Social Worker Underhill.

Investigation, March 17, 1957 to May 28, 1958.  
**INFORMATION NECESSARY FOR CHANGING BIRTH CERTIFICATE in bold type.**  
Helen had moved to Chicago in 1952 and dated Earl Bland. April 1956, she goes home because she is four months pregnant. Five months pregnant, she and her mother go back to Chicago to place charges against the alleged father, but are unable to locate him. Helen desires to go to a maternity home in Milwaukee then chose St. Paul Catholic Infant Home because it is a work home. May 25, 1956: "Helen is using her own name at the Maternity Home.... This was her first physical exam and the doctors felt that she was further along and at least six months pregnant....Helen stated that she is very anxious to get into work home as soon as possible, concerned she'd have one less month to work toward her expenses. No savings, she wondered how soon she would have to pay her expenses at the Maternity Home. (It doesn't say how much money they charged.) She was told if (Catholic Charities) could be certain that she

## WHAT WAS IN MY ADOPTION FILE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

would repay when she returned to work, we would pay her bill at the maternity home, a great relief to Helen.

...She was uncertain about plans for her expected child and it was apparent she was very desirous of keeping the child if possible. Helen was told that we could assist her with temporary plans for her baby for six weeks, during which time she could return home and make her final decision... Helen was with the alleged father for several months and has been under the impression he intended to marry her. She seemed to feel that if she could talk to him, they could work things out.”

My first months, Helen's life, and my adoptive parents life and their desire to adopt me, was revealed on four typed pages.

I can live well knowing the truth.

*Journalist Trace A. DeMeyer lives in Greenfield, Massachusetts. Her email is [tracedemeyer@yahoo.com](mailto:tracedemeyer@yahoo.com).*

## FILM REVIEW:

### “RELATED BY BIRTH” (2011)

REVIEWED BY DEBRA BAKER

I was excited to view “Related by Birth,” adoptee Gregg Grossman's 75-minute documentary about the experience of birthmothers, a largely silent voice in the world of adoption.

At the beginning of the film, we see the plaque on the front of the New York Foundling Hospital with Gregg's voice over saying he wants to do a film about birthmothers. What he ends up with are interviews with four moms, his adoptive parents, and footage of him, some of which takes place in a therapist's office. A social worker, the director of birthmother services at one of the agencies he contacted, is also interviewed and gives her view on birth moms and adoption, while trying to place adoption in its social context.

Gregg is angry, as many adoptees are. Born in 1962, he was told that his mother died in childbirth. His adoptive parents were ill prepared, as many were, to one day find themselves parents to a 4-month-old baby. They wanted a baby desperately, and worried that there were so many couples wanting to adopt, they might not “get a baby.” His mother admits that she had said, “If we have to go black market, we'll go black market.”

The moms span several decades. One relinquished in the '60s when she was 17, and one fairly recently when she was 22 years old. Though the film captures the emotions of the mothers, the filmmaker's presence is disconcerting and at times quite disturbing.

His therapist attempts to explain the cultural phenomenon of adoption, but during a particularly upsetting passage, lasting several minutes, with Gregg ranting and images pulsing through a red screen, we can make out some of what he is saying. He hates the women he has met (the moms). “There is no accountability. They all have their reasons.” He even hates adoptive parents, basically saying if they were supposed to have kids, they would have been able to.

Though I hoped to see a film that would add to the short list of films about the reality of relinquishing moms, I was invited to witness his hostility and anger, with no empathy towards the moms he used to create the film. Though, at the end of the film, he says, “I hate the woman who gave me up,” he admits to thinking about a connection. “We are related by birth.”

## BOOK REVIEW:

### GOOD GIRLS DON'T, PATTI HAWN

REVIEWED BY DEBRA BAKER

Patti Hawn's memoir "Good Girls Don't" begins when the author is seven and recounts her early years with a talented, alcoholic father and an orderly, controlling mother, with searing honesty. That she loved her parents is clear, though her relationship with each was different. As she says, "If I learned the unexpected from my father, Mom taught me order." Ms. Hawn's early life, with her parent's arguments as a backdrop, comes to life through simple references such as "...a coffee cup filled with instant Nescafe and a pack of Camel cigarettes."

Her life wasn't much different than most young girls growing up in the 1950s in suburban America. A baby sister Goldie (who would become a well-loved and famous actor) came along when the author was seven, and her father stopped drinking when she was ten, ushering in a calm life for the family. By the time the author gets to high school in 1956 the reader senses her eagerness to grow-up. Patti, a scrawny redhead, wishes she looked more like her dark-haired, curvy mother.

Patti meets Robert, a few years older, on her first day of high school. She is immediately charmed, and when he calls to ask her to the back-to-school dance, the anticipation is palpable. They quickly become a couple, and Patti's parents are concerned about how wrapped up in Robert their daughter has become. Several fights ensue over the next year, but Patti is steadfast in her love. She proclaims she would rather die than stop seeing him.

But Robert breaks it off, and Patti spends the next year obsessing over him. When she runs in to him at a diner, she mistakes his joy at seeing her as him coming back to her, even though he is with another girl.

He calls afterwards and asks to see her and Patti, convinced they will be married, makes her plan, even packing a suitcase in case Robert wants to run away that night. Her dreams are dashed when he tells her the girl he was with is pregnant and they are getting married, but that he loves Patti. "How

could I not love you?"

When Patti discovers she is pregnant several weeks later, she is stunned, since she didn't really "go all the way" with Robert. Her mother arranges for an abortion through a friend, but when they get to the seedy neighborhood, her mother changes her mind, telling Patti that she will go to live with a relative, have the baby and give it up for adoption.

Ms. Hawn details the sad drama of unwed pregnancy and adoption so the reader feels a part of what is happening. Her description of the last time she saw her baby is heart wrenching. We are a witness to her torment at losing her son, the subsequent bad relationships, career changes, and her reunion with her son. I felt like I watched a young girl become a woman, albeit it took several decades.

Like so many reunions, this is not a happily ever after story. The tragic fact of her son David's schizophrenia and the circumstances of his life would have overwhelmed a younger Patti. But all of her experiences through forty years prepared her to accept her son with grace and unconditional love, which is obvious and appreciated by him. When he asks her why she finally looked for him her answer is simple. "It just seemed the right time."

#### *Origins-USA Board Members & Committee Chairs 2011-2012*

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# ORIGINS-USA

Educating about the realities of adoption separation, and providing support and empowerment to parents

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Origins-USA, a national tax-exempt non-profit organization is THE Voice of Mothers.

Origins-USA is working to protect the natural right of mothers to nurture their children.

Origins-USA envisions a society where mothers receive the support they need to nurture their children.

If mothers and children cannot remain together, children should be provided stable living arrangements that honor and maintain their connection to their natural families.

## JOIN TODAY

Your membership is vital for supporting Origins-USA's work to protect mothers' rights and be the voice of mothers who lost children to adoption.

*Dues are just \$25 a year. Give more if you can, less if you can't.*

Donations are tax deductible.

Give \$100 or more and receive an autographed copy of  
*The Stork Market:*

*America's multi-million dollar unregulated adoption industry,*  
donated by the author, Mirah Riben.

Give \$500 or more and become a Lifetime Member.

Go to [www.Origins-USA.org](http://www.Origins-USA.org) and click on "Join."

You may pay online by credit card or print the application form and mail it with your check to Origins-USA,  
7327 S.W. Barnes Rd., #400, Portland, OR 97225-6119.

### *Our Mission*

- Educate the public about natural family preservation.
- Provide search help and emotional support help for people separated by adoption.
- Engage in limited activity to promote legislative changes to support natural family preservation; acknowledge and provide redress for improper, illegal, and unethical adoption practices; and promote humane alternatives to adoption.

### *Our Vision*

- Every mother receives the support she needs to nurture her children.
- Mothers and children are separated only after all efforts to keep them together have been exhausted.
- Children separated from their mothers shall be provided stable living arrangements that honor and maintain their connection to their natural families.