



Adoption Ethics: Conflicting Rights and Interests

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How can ethical dilemmas be resolved when there are competing and conflicting rights and interests among triad members? If adoption practice is legal, is it ethical? Through examination of case scenarios, participants will focus on current controversial issues such as photo listings, access to birth certificates, birth fathers' rights, open adoption agreements, search and reunion, and recruitment of birth parents. An ethical framework will emerge that can help to guide decision-making and inform case practice.

Standards and Guideposts:

Adoption agency licensing authorities. State licensing authorities are identified, with contact information, at <http://www.childwelfare.gov/nfcad>

Council on Accreditation Standards www.coanetstandards.org

Child Welfare League of America www.cwla.org

Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption http://hcch.e-vision.nl/index_en.php?act=conventions.text&cid=69

Codes of Ethics for relevant professionals

Resources:

Babb, L. Anne; Ethics in American Adoption; Bergin and Garvey; Westport, CT; 1999

Dolgoff, Ralph, Frank M. Loewenberg and Donna Harrington, Ethical Decisions for Social Work Practice 7th Edition, Wadsworth Publishing, 2004

Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, Ethics and Adoption: Challenges for Today and the Future Anaheim, CA November 3-5, 1999 <http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/proed/confinfo.html>

Conference Proceedings from the 2007 Ethics conference, cosponsored by Adoption Institute and Ethica. <http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/proed/confinfo.html>

Fogg-Davis, Hawley. The Ethics of Transracial Adoption, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002

Fox, Rachel and Carrie Johnston, Ethical Issues in Adoption Practice, <http://msass.case.edu/downloads/vgroza/fall2004/ethicalissues.pdf>

Freundlich, Madelyn; Adoption and Ethics Volume 1: The Role of Race, Culture, and National Origin in Adoption; Child Welfare League of America; Washington, DC; 2000

- Adoption and Ethics, Volume 2: The Market Forces in Adoption, Child Welfare League of America; Washington, DC; 2000
- Adoption and Ethics, Volume 3: The Impact of Adoption on Members of the Triad; Child Welfare League of America; Washington, DC; 2002

- Adoption and Ethics, Volume 4: Adoption and Assisted Reproduction; Child Welfare League of America; Washington, DC; 2004
- The Intricate World of Adoption Ethics, Powerpoint Presentation, Presented at American Adoption Congress, San Francisco, California, November 11-14, 1998.
<http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/policy/presentations/ethical1.html>

Graff, EJ, "The Lie We Love" *Foreign Policy*, November/December 2008,
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=4508

Oreskovic, Johanna J.D. and Trish Maskew, J.D, "Red Thread or Slender Reed: Deconstructing Professor Bartholet's Mythology of International Adoption" *Buffalo Human Rights Law Review* Vol. 14, 2008

Raymond, Barbara Bisantz, *The Baby Thief*, Carroll and Graf Publishers, New York, 2007

Thome, Elizabeth, Thesis on International Adoption Ethics
<http://internationaladoptionethics.com/id6.html>

Trenka, Jane Jeong, Transnational Adoption and the "Financialization of Everything" *Conducive Magazine*, August/September 2009,
http://www.conducivemag.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=82:transnational-adoption-and-the-financialization-of-everything4569&catid=38:innovative-thinking&Itemid=61

Web Sites and Blogs

http://www.adoptionattorneys.org/information/ethics_code.htm Code of Ethics American Academy of Adoption Attorneys

<http://www.brandeis.edu/investigate/gender/adoption/index.html> Corruption in International Adoptions, The Schuster Institute for Investigative Journalism.

www.ethicanet.org Ethica is an independent non-profit organization devoted to ethical adoption practice. The Ethica web site includes a wealth of information about current adoption issues and cases.

http://www.exiledmothers.com/speaking_out/adoption_ethics.htm

The terms "unwed" mother, "birthmother," "biological" parents make a parent appear to be less than the mother or father they are. These terms dehumanize and limit the parent's role to that of an incubator. "Dear Birthmother" and "Dear Birthparent" letters soliciting for healthy babies are despicable. Using the honest terms "mother," "single mother" or "natural mother" help the public to understand that real family members are being separated to obtain babies for adoption

<http://www.growninmyheart.com/is-your-adoption-agency-ethical> Jun 5, 2009 | By [FauxCloud](#) | Is Your Adoption Agency Ethical? How are prospective adoptive parents supposed to know how ethical an adoption agency really is? An Inside Look from a Birthmother's Perspective.

<http://considerthekid.wordpress.com/2007/11/26/delving-into-the-world-of-adoption-ethics/> Blog post exploring the relationship between poverty and adoption

<http://pipes.yahoo.com/pipes/pipe.info?id=a3ac3b85be2ac58fedf174801f8ec748>

PEAR's Pipe ~ Views from the Triad ~ Adoption Ethics, Corruption and Reform Parents for Ethical Adoption Reform: Our Pipe, Mashup, or Blog of Blogs. This is a collection of blogs advocating ethics in adoption and provides a variety of views from triad members. <http://www.pear-now.org>

<http://www.prweb.com/pdfdownload/157137/pr.pdf>

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2004/09/prweb157137.htm>

How Biased Adoption Language Tears Families Apart Language that is biased or positive toward adoption benefits the adoption industry in getting more babies for "sale" and in building a "market" for babies. Honest language that is not biased toward adoption must be reinstated in order to protect American children and families.