

‘The other thing was...’: The reciprocal interview relationship and the impact of 'unconnected' traumatic memories.

In November 2009 a research project commissioned and funded by the Royal Women’s Hospital (RWH), Melbourne, set out to investigate delivery and adoption practices in relation to single women who were confined at the hospital in the period 1945-1975. The RWH was responding to calls from relinquishing mothers to explain its past adoption practices. As a result of the research, the hospital has acknowledged the ongoing trauma and suffering of women who lost a child to adoption, and issued a formal apology.¹ Oral history was fundamental to uncovering these past practices and investigating claims that these were unethical or even illegal, as most remain undocumented.² In the context of the larger project, in-depth interviews of sixty to ninety minutes were conducted with thirteen single mothers, two of whom kept their babies. Their stories covered the period from 1963 to 1977. While the intention to conduct interviews that covered the entire time span under investigation, attempts to locate women who were willing to speak of their experiences prior to 1963 were unsuccessful. The objective of this research was to develop an understanding of how the policies, practices, and staff attitudes of the RWH affected the experiences of single mothers who gave birth at the hospital during this time. For the purposes of this paper, I have chosen to examine one interview from this project and explore the challenges it posed in creating a reciprocal interview relationship, particularly in dealing with traumatic memories.

Although the use of oral history continues to be contested, recent Senate Inquiries such as those into the Stolen Generations, Forgotten Australians and former Child Migrants have helped to increase the acceptance of testimony as a legitimate source of evidence.³ While debates surrounding the validity of memory as an historical source raise important questions, particularly with regard to reliability and ‘factual’ evidence, this research places its emphasis on the *impact* of past adoption practice. Indeed, therein lies the value of oral history. As Alessandro Portelli explains in his interviews with workers in Terni: ‘oral sources may not add much to what we know, for instance, of the material costs of a strike to the workers involved, but they tell us a good deal about its psychological costs.’⁴ With regard to mothers who have lost a child to adoption, oral history affords the greatest opportunity to understand the effects and psychological costs of past practices, as well as the potential for informing present practices with the evidence from those most affected.

Motivated by a need to ‘provide empirical evidence about undocumented experience, and to empower social groups that had been hidden from history’,⁵ Alistair Thomson maintains that oral history is a powerful methodological approach that allows access to previously undocumented material. As such, oral history is not only a source of material evidence, but a method that is ‘informed by the more complex understandings of memory and identity’ and which explores ‘the relationship between individual and collective remembering, between memory and identity, or between interviewer and interviewee’.⁶ It is these interactions and relationships that form key tensions and challenges in building a respectful and empathic interview relationship with women who have lost a child to adoption, particularly when unconnected traumatic memories intrude and have an impact upon the interview relationship.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, up to forty-five per cent of Victorian unmarried mothers were separated from their babies by adoption. At this time, adoption was widely seen as a mutually advantageous solution to the joint social problems of infertility, illegitimacy and impoverishment. For the women interviewed, adoption claimed to offer moral and social redemption for both mother and child, but only through silence and concealment. As such, the unmarried pregnant woman often spent time in a maternity home or with a distant relative in order effectively to conceal her condition. It was seen to be an issue of preserving her family’s moral standing within the community: there was no doubt as to the embarrassment her condition would cause. The visibility of a woman’s pregnancy has been characterised as ‘moral bad luck,’⁷ in that only she would bear the burden of punishment, while the father escaped admonishment. Prior to paternity testing, the onus of proof was placed on the mother and she needed to be willing to support an accusation of paternity in court—with witnesses. In addition to these legal obstacles, past adoption practices prohibited the recording of the father’s name.⁸

The reasons why women felt obliged to turn to adoption are inevitably more complex. The availability of contraception, the legality of abortion, and the age requirements of marriage conspired to limit the choices available to the sexually active single woman. Combined with the role of the church, the continued stigma of illegitimacy and the invisibility of single mothers in the community into the mid-1970s, particularly as a result of inadequate financial support, choices were further restricted.⁹ With all other options exhausted and amid enormous social pressures, adoption often remained the only viable solution that ultimately offered salvation. Shurlee Swain and Renate Howe have argued that relinquishment was seen

not only as ‘a necessary pain’, but more importantly within this construct of censure and blame, it was ‘the only way in which she could regain her respectability’.¹⁰ It required the single mother to be complicit in her own punishment, as her absolute silence—about her pregnancy and relinquishment—was essential for her to move forward and ‘get on with her life’.¹¹ This arrangement rendered these mothers invisible and unable to acknowledge their grief and loss.

After years of silence, support groups for women who had lost children to adoption were established in the early 1980s. The recognition afforded by these groups offered affirmation of individual experience, as well as an arena within which a language became available to express the unspoken experience. The availability of language is an important factor in determining whether individual remembrances can be publicly shared, particularly if these do not conform to dominant views (in this case that single mothers willingly surrendered their babies to adoption). In the 1980s, the emergent discourse in the adoption reform movement provided a language to describe these experiences, portraying adoption as an ‘exploitative system in which the “rich and powerful” took advantage of the “poor and vulnerable”’.¹² However it must be noted that the stigma of illegitimacy and the perception that adoption provided the only solution was present across all social classes. Support groups provided a safe place within which the reform discourse spilled over and a counter-experience could be acknowledged. With a mantra of ‘you are not alone’, support groups also offered a space within which a re-visioning of personal identity could occur and members could contest the dominant narrative. Within this context, the women interviewed were able to integrate the trauma of relinquishment into a larger narrative of manipulation and abuse at the hands of those they trusted. But equally within this particular group narrative, there is no room for a positive experience of relinquishment.¹³

Although much research is currently being undertaken into past adoption practices in Australia, very little work has yet focused on analysing the narratives of the mothers. Writing in the early 1990s, Judith Modell found that the language with which her narrators recounted their stories drew on the rhetoric developed within the American adoption reform movement and further ‘popularised on television shows and in magazines and best-sellers’.¹⁴ This movement coincided with the emergence of self-help and support groups in which a collective memory of women’s experiences developed. In the Australian context, the Victorian branch of the Association of Relinquishing Mothers, or ARMS, formed in 1982, follows a similar

pattern. Despite expressing a belief that relinquishing mothers should refuse to be victimised, ARMS calls attention to the negative impact of relinquishment by emphasising the victimisation of the ‘natural mother’ at the hands of societal standards and (past) adoption practices. This is evidenced by the common feelings of ‘guilt, shame, worthlessness and loss of self-esteem ... ultimately affecting their emotional, psychological, physical and spiritual health’.¹⁵

The use of mechanisms for creating a bearable and usable past is an essential tool for survivors of trauma and those dealing traumatic memories, particularly because it is believed that ‘such experiences produce shame, anger, often guilt in the victim, and are regarded as secrets rather than as stories to tell’.¹⁶ Mechanisms for dealing with traumatic events can include outright denial of the experience, repression or suppression of the memory, or even attempts to depersonalise the event. A working knowledge of the potential difficulties that could have arisen out of working with survivors of trauma was particularly pertinent while conducting interviews with mothers who lost a baby to adoption. It is not only the mothers themselves who insist that their experience be understood as traumatic; the Australian Institute of Family Studies report *Impact of Past Adoption Practices*, published in early 2010, stresses ‘the usefulness of understanding past adoption practices as “trauma”, and seeing the impact through a “trauma lens”’.¹⁷

In agreeing to be involved in this project, narrators were acutely aware of the opportunity it provided to share their stories with a wider audience. Interviews were guided by and developed along terms dictated by the women themselves, whether this involved reinforcing a specific identity or conveying a political message. The motivation for women to place their stories on the public record became even more apparent after the commencement of a Senate Inquiry into past adoption practices.¹⁸ There is no doubt that the narratives shared in the course of this project have been composed in order to help women ‘make sense’ of their experiences. As Anna Sheftel and Stacey Zembrzyck have pointed out, this construction operates not only in providing meaning for these memories, but also in ‘finding a place for them in one’s identity, [and] within the larger community’s narrative’.¹⁹ This paper examines one interview which provides the most extreme and comprehensive example of this narrative identity, and as a result the challenges it presented for the interviewer. Margaret,²⁰ like the majority of the interviewees, was a member of ARMS. In 1970, she was an eighteen-year-old in a relationship when she discovered she was pregnant. This paper illustrates the ways in

which Margaret was able to make sense of her pregnancy and the consequent relinquishment by arranging it within a narrative identity that had three key components. Firstly, she defined her trauma as both life-defining and lifelong. Secondly, and most surprisingly to me, she drew on outdated social work theories to position herself as a 'typical' unmarried mother. Thirdly, she sought affirmation of this identity by challenging me to not just listen to her story, but to hear it, understand it, and even act on it in a way that had eluded her in the past. Within this context, I will examine how Margaret's self-perception, projection, and need for affirmation impacted on the relationship between interviewer and interviewee.

Within the first minute of the interview, indeed in response to the very first question, Margaret positioned herself as the victim of lifelong trauma. Her experience of relinquishment was just one of many traumatic episodes in her life:

The other thing was that I hadn't had an ordinary childhood or upbringing in that I had already experienced quite a bit of abuse in the family so I was very nervous about the whole thing, because I realised that I wasn't valued anyway, let alone being pregnant in those days was a very quick way to becoming even more devalued.²¹

This immediate disclosure surprised me; I had gone into the interview expecting that I would have to work to gain the trust of my participants. Given that the aim of the interview was to assess the impact of the adoption practices of the hospital on mothers, I chose not to directly pursue a line of questioning into the nature of her abuse. I was also acutely aware of my role as interviewer as opposed to therapist. However, throughout the interview, Margaret often returned to the issue of her unhappy and unsupportive family life.

It is only in hindsight that it became apparent that Margaret was trying to integrate her experience of relinquishment by locating it within a bigger picture of ongoing trauma. As Valerie Yow has argued, 'people choose memories important to them: they repeat them over the years as they seek to reinforce meanings in their lives'.²² Memory is fundamentally charged with defining a person's identity and sense of self. According to Geoffrey Cubitt, a subjectivist approach to memory emphasises the consequence of such an assertion.

Memory is ... the central vehicle of subjectivity, crucially engaged in fabricating the inner meanings that we give to our psychic experience. Memory in this view is important chiefly as the primary locus of our sense of self and is assumed to be geared to maintaining that sense of self in the face of life's disruptive vicissitudes.²³

Therefore, central to the function of memory is its ability to provide justification and reinforcement for the ways in which we want to see ourselves, as well as the ways in which we want others to see us. Affirmation of identity is fundamental to these projections. It must also be noted that this multifaceted sense of identity changes over time, as the individual re-works old memories to fall in line with the new.

Although anchored in the past, memories are continually re-worked to reinforce meaning that is relevant to the present situation and to protect the individual's sense of self. The selection process is also dependent on 'present concerns and wider contexts including those of victimisation' as explored by Denise Phillips, in her work with Hazara refugees.²⁴ Memories must be framed within the context of current issues. For Margaret, not only was she recounting her experience of relinquishment at a time when interest in former forced adoption practice is high—influencing her selection of memories—but her identity and sense of self also play a decisive role in this selection. Having established her difficult childhood as the starting point for her sustained traumatic existence, Margaret went on to also recount the failure of her subsequent marriages:

I was married and the first husband left after my son was one month old and the second husband, it wasn't—that marriage didn't last, he had a drinking problem, and so I had to get out of that one.²⁵

Again, it was not until later that I stumbled on the work of Laura Brown and discovered that one traumatic event can trigger the recall of others, and as a result they become interconnected. Brown has suggested that a feminist perspective on psychic trauma can be useful in understanding it as an ongoing process, rather than a singular event. She proposes that we might begin to ask 'how many layers of trauma are being peeled off by what appears initially to be only one traumatic event or process?'²⁶ And indeed this proved true for Margaret. While it was not apparent to me at the time of the interview, it has become increasingly obvious that the 'unconnected' traumatic memories that were intruding into the interview were not so 'unconnected' after all. For Margaret, these memories were equally important in defining her sense of self, with each instance in which she was devalued by her family, and then her two husbands, bearing consistently with her treatment as a single, pregnant woman.

The motivation for Margaret to define herself in a particular way is also consistent with the findings of Modell who identifies the challenges which women who have lost children to adoption face in dealing with the ‘inconsistencies in the cultural meaning of being a parent’.²⁷ Like her narrators, my interviewees were compelled to explain and to justify their status as a ‘childless mother’ to the outside audience. They needed to justify the ‘mistake’ of having a baby at the ‘wrong time’ and their ‘consent’ to adoption. At a time when motherhood was highly celebrated, the maternal status of these women was denied. During my interview with Margaret, I was particularly caught off-guard by her identification with the outdated theories of American social worker Leontine Young in the justification of her experience:

Margaret: So in other words, I had a real need to have a baby because I had no love.

There was no love at home.

INTERVIEWER: Is this the psychology of the time or the—?

Margaret: No, no, this is my understanding of children who have been very deprived...

In the early 1950s, Leontine Young developed an enduring pseudo-psychiatric analysis of the unmarried mother.²⁸ Unplanned pregnancies, she argued, were wilfully premeditated. She further insisted that ‘anyone who has observed a considerable number of unmarried mothers can testify to the fact that there is nothing haphazard or accidental in the causation that brought about this specific situation with these specific girls’.²⁹ Young believed that the act of falling pregnant was an indication of an unwed mother’s dysfunctional family relationships and unfulfilled desires. There is no doubt that these key components are well aligned with Margaret’s projected identity. Young’s theory was widely accepted amongst social workers into the 1960s, but it was also picked up to various degrees in the wider population. Challenges to these perceptions were evident by the 1970s: with the increasing visibility and acceptance of single mothers in the community, ‘illegitimacy [was] no longer something that happened invariably by accident or as a response to unconscious needs. It [could] be a conscious choice’.³⁰

I was astonished when Margaret connected so strongly with these views and I asked her to clarify what she meant. She proceeded to explain her understanding of why she had fallen pregnant, finally trailing off into silence. Although I paused to allow her to continue, I sheepishly returned to the focus of the interview when her gaze met mine once again. I was aware of Mark Klempner’s advice to expect the unexpected, especially in the case of trauma survivors, whom he argues ‘may have defense [sic] mechanisms in place that might make

their responses sound strange or “off”,³¹ however, I was still caught off-guard by her line of reasoning. Upon later reflection I was reminded of Mark Roseman’s research with Holocaust survivor Marianne Ellenbogen, particularly in the way a ‘re-working’ of memories can be used to make painful memories more bearable. Perhaps for Margaret, the belief that she represented a ‘typical’ single mother allowed her ‘to impose some control on a memory which could not otherwise be borne’.³²

However, the most confronting aspect of the interview was the way in which Margaret challenged me to really listen to her story, asserting that no one outside her circle of shared experience ever had. At the time of her pregnancy, Margaret recalls that no one wanted to know that she was single and pregnant. She pleaded with me to listen and validate her story.

People that found out about it later said, ‘Oh you should have told me. I would have helped you,’ but I did tell people and they all acted like I wasn’t speaking. I told a number of people and no one wanted to know about it. No one wanted to know. It was like I didn’t say anything and then they would move on to the next sentence, the next subject. Like I didn’t say a word; like no one could deal with it. It was like some sort of—it was like me saying ‘I just went down the street and murdered someone’.³³

At moments like this the interviewer’s response is critical. In this instance, I immediately reacted to Margaret’s intentionally shocking statement, almost interrupting her in my attempt to reassure her that I heard what she said; I restated her response and with this encouragement, she elaborated further. Harold Kaplan and Benjamin Sadock maintain the importance of empathy and ‘the capacity to put oneself into the psychological frame of reference of another and thereby understand his or her thinking, feeling, and behaviour’.³⁴ Margaret’s concern that her voice was not being heard persisted throughout the interview and she again raised the issue of the silence with which her disclosure was met. Fumbling through her response, she stated:

It was just quiet. There was this silence thing. People all just went ‘Oh’ and just changed the subject because what could they say? There was nothing. They could say, ‘Well, why don’t you keep the child Margaret and then you could go on this benefit or there’s homes where they look after people with their babies.’ No one—there wasn’t hardly anything—I found out later there was some home, but I was never told about it at the time. But people—when there is no solution they’re inclined to just you know move on to the next subject because what can they say to me?³⁵

Margaret also recalls that the child's father denied ever being told of the pregnancy, despite her insistence that she had—another instance when I became acutely aware of my obligation to listen:

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever tell the child's father that you were pregnant or was that a discussion that you had?

Margaret: Oh, I told people. Yes, I told him. He already had another woman pregnant and he was going to marry her. But, her parents would have kept her and the child. I've spoken to him since. Anyway, he said, 'Oh you didn't tell me,' and I said, 'Yes, I did, I told you.' Lots of people, too, they all make out that they would have helped if they had known, but I did tell them. They did know. There's all—massive denial, massive denial. So yeah, it was a terrible thing.³⁶

But how then do we listen? Cathy Caruth has pointed out that 'there is no single approach to listening to the many different traumatic experiences and histories we encounter. The irreducible specificity of traumatic stories requires in its turn the varied responses—responses of knowing and acting—of literature, film, psychiatry, neurobiology, sociology, and political and social activism.'³⁷ I felt that no amount of knowing would equip me for the challenge presented by Margaret during this interview. I reiterated responses, I paused to allow her to expand, I try to empathise and value her responses in a way that had eluded her at the time. My carefully planned open-ended questions and preparation seemed less than adequate. In the words of Anna Sheftel and Stacey Zembrzycki: 'what we plan on paper is never quite the same as what we experience in practice.'³⁸ Given that the aim of the interview was to assess the impact the adoption practices of the hospital had on mothers, Margaret's diversions from this central issue disturbed me and initially appeared irrelevant. It was not until much later when I revisited the interview: listening to the audio, reading through the transcript, and having conducted other interviews in the same vein that I realised the importance and implications of these diversions: there is no single trauma and the adoption practices of the hospital can only be assessed as part of these women's trauma.

To some extent, Margaret's ability to share her story in the present provides the opportunity to overcome her sense of having been ignored in the past—in this case particularly by having someone listen to her pleas for help. Self-perception, projection, and the need to be heard are integral to personal identity and the need to tell is a vital component to the story. As Portelli

points out, ‘oral sources tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did’.³⁹ The opportunity to share her story has provided Margaret with the opportunity to overcome the injustices of the past: the silence, the separation, and the guilt. Telling, then, fulfils a therapeutic role as well as satisfying a more compulsive need to justify past actions. Dori Laub refers to the ‘imperative to tell’, in which a narrator may be compelled to constantly re-tell their story, yet warns of the risks of it becoming an all-consuming life task where no amount of telling seems to ever be enough. He says: ‘There are never enough words or the right words, there is never enough time or the right time, and never enough listening to articulate the story that cannot be fully captured in *thought, memory and speech*.’⁴⁰ The dimensions of this need to tell are evident in the more than four hundred submission to the Senate Inquiry into past adoption practices⁴¹ and the current research undertaken by AIFS on the Service Response to Past Adoption Experiences, in which seventy-six per cent of respondents want to participate in follow up focus groups.⁴²

Without memory, individuals would have limited understanding of their role or place in their family, or even within the community. Memory is one of many resources or tools that an individual has available in order to make sense of, and feel a belonging to, the world in which they are living. As oral historians, we access these personal memories for particular purposes and must be mindful of protecting our participants and ourselves. The interview process presents a multitude of challenges; those posed by this interview were threefold. The first involved the intrusion of ‘unconnected’ traumatic memories, although upon reflection, it became apparent that these formed an integral part of Margaret’s narrative identity and were inextricably linked to the trauma of relinquishment on which my research was focused. Secondly, I was caught off-guard by Margaret’s unexpected response to, and understanding of her unplanned pregnancy. Finally I was confronted by an interview that left me feeling like I lacked the listening skills and capacity to respond in a way that was appropriate to her demands. Each of these issues have reminded me of the sage advice of Kathryn Anderson and Dana C. Jack who underline the collaborative nature of the oral history interview, and in particular the ‘fine line between accomplishing our research goals and letting the subject be in charge of the material in the interview’.⁴³

By responding to the challenge to listen together, we produced an interview which both yielded rich data for my research and satisfied, at least partially, Margaret’s need to be heard.

Despite feeling that I had reacted inappropriately to her identification with Young's theories, the further questioning provided me with a deeper understanding of Margaret, her perception of herself, and her understanding of her relinquishment experience. And while careful planning and preparation are always advised, as interviewers we must also be open to the unexpected: by sharpening our listening skills and pausing a little longer after each response.

¹ The Royal Women's Hospital, 'Media Release', available from:

http://www.thewomens.org.au/uploads/downloads/News_Events/apology.pdf, 23 January 2012.

² Shurlee Swain and Renate Howe, *Single Mothers and Their Children: Disposal, Punishment and Survival in Australia*, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 7. Swain and Howe successfully used oral history and substantiated earlier claims by C. Hay, 'The Pangs of the Past,' *Oral History*, vol. 9, no. 1, Spring 1981. See also Alistair Thomson, 'Making the Most of Memories: The Empirical and Subjective Value of Oral History,' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Sixth Series*, vol. 9, 1999, p. 291.

³ See *Bringing Them Home: National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, April 1997; *Forgotten Australians: A report on Australians who experienced institutional or out-of-home care as children*, Canberra, Senate Community Affairs References Committee, 30 August 2004; *Protecting vulnerable children: A national challenge*, Canberra, Senate Community Affairs References Committee, 17 March 2005; and *Lost Innocents, Righting the Record: Report on child migration*, Canberra, Senate Community Affairs References Committee Secretariat, 2001.

⁴ Alessandro Portelli, 'What Makes Oral History Different?,' in Robert Perks and A. Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, London and New York, Routledge, 2006, p. 36.

⁵ Alistair Thomson, "Making the Most of Memories: The Empirical and Subjective Value of Oral History," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Sixth Series* 9 (1999): 295.

⁶ Alistair Thomson, Michael Frisch, and Paula Hamilton, 'The Memory and History Debates: Some International Perspectives,' *Oral History*, vol. 22, no. 2, Autumn 1994, p. 34.

⁷ David Howe, Phillida Sawbridge, and Diana Hinings, *Half a Million Women: Mothers Who Lose Their Children by Adoption*, London: Penguin Books, 1992, pp. 25-28.

⁸ Christin Quirk, 'Separated at Birth: Adoption Practice in Relation to Single Women Confined at the Royal Women's Hospital 1945-1975,' MPhil Thesis, Australian Catholic University, 18 January 2012.

⁹ Christin Quirk, 'Separated at Birth: Adoption Practice in Relation to Single Women Confined at the Royal Women's Hospital 1945-1975,' MPhil Thesis, Australian Catholic University, 18 January 2012, pp. 11-20.

¹⁰ Swain and Howe, *Single Mothers and Their Children: Disposal, Punishment and Survival in Australia*, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 140.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

¹² Modell, "'How Do You Introduce Yourself as a Childless Mother?'" Birthparent Interpretations of Parenthood,' in George C. Rosenwald and Richard L. Ochberg (eds), *Storied Lives: The Cultural Politics of Self-Understanding*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1992, pp. 78-79.

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- ¹³ Of the more than four hundred submissions to the Senate Inquiry, only one provided a positive account of the relinquishment experience—and this was presented by a third party. See Senate Community Affairs References Committee, "Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices". www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/clac_ctte/comm_contrib_former_forced_adoption/index.htm, Submission 30.
- ¹⁴ Modell, 'How Do You Introduce Yourself as a Childless Mother?' Birthparent Interpretations of Parenthood,' in George C. Rosenwald and Richard L. Ochberg (eds), *Storied Lives: The Cultural Politics of Self-Understanding*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1992, p. 78.
- ¹⁵ ARMS website <http://www.armsvic.org.au/about-relinquishment>. (Accessed 30.09.11).
- ¹⁶ John Robinson quoted in Mark Klempner, 'Navigating Life Review Interviews with Survivors of Trauma,' in *The Oral History Reader*, Robert Perks and A. Thomson (eds), London and New York, Routledge, 2006, p. 198.
- ¹⁷ Daryl Higgins, *Impact of Past Adoption Practices*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, April 2010, p. 2.
- ¹⁸ The Senate Inquiry into the Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices was announced in November 2010.
- ¹⁹ Anna Sheftel and Stacey Zembrzycki, 'Only Human: A Reflection on the Ethical and Methodological Challenges of Working with 'Difficult' Stories,' *Oral History Review*, vol. 37, no. 2, 2010, p. 201.
- ²⁰ A pseudonym has been used to protect the identity of the participant.
- ²¹ Margaret, interviewed by author, August 2010, audio and transcript held by author.
- ²² Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences (Second Edition)*, Walnut Creek, CA, AltaMira Press, 2005, p. 39.
- ²³ Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory*, (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), 72.
- ²⁴ Denise Phillips, 'Wounded Memory of Hazara Refugees from Afghanistan: Remembering and Forgetting Persecution,' *History Australia*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2011, p. 193 (citing the work of Linda Shopes and Deborah Levenson's work in Guatemala).
- ²⁵ Margaret, interviewed by author, August 2010, audio and transcript held by author.
- ²⁶ Laura S. Brown, 'Not Outside the Range: One Feminist Perspective on Psychic Trauma,' in Cathy Caruth (ed.), *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995, p. 110.
- ²⁷ Modell, "'How Do You Introduce Yourself as a Childless Mother?'" Birthparent Interpretations of Parenthood,' in George C. Rosenwald and Richard L. Ochberg (eds), *Storied Lives: The Cultural Politics of Self-Understanding*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1992, p. 78.
- ²⁸ Leontine Young, *Out of Wedlock; a Study of the Problems of the Unmarried Mother and Her Child*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954.
- ²⁹ Leontine Young, 'Personality Patterns in Unwed Mothers,' in Robert W. Roberts (ed.), *The Unwed Mother*, New York, Harper & Row, 1966, 81.
- ³⁰ Mary Kathleen Benét, *The Politics of Adoption*, New York: The Free Press, 1976, p.176.
- ³¹ Mark Klempner, 'Navigating Life Review,' in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, London and New York, Routledge, 2006, p.203.
- ³² Mark Roseman, 'Surviving Memory: Truth and Inaccuracy in Holocaust Testimony,' in *The Oral History Reader*, Robert Perks and A. Thomson (eds), Routledge, 2006), 238.
- ³³ Margaret, interviewed by author, August 2010, audio and transcript held by author.

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- ³⁴ Harold Kaplan and Benjamin Sadock, *Synopsis of Psychiatry*, quoted in Mark Klempner, 'Navigating Life Review Interviews with Survivors of Trauma,' in Robert Perks and A. Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, London and New York, Routledge, 2006, p.203.
- ³⁵ Margaret, interviewed by author, August 2010, audio and transcript held by author.
- ³⁶ Margaret, interviewed by author, August 2010, audio and transcript held by author.
- ³⁷ Cathy Caruth, 'Introduction,' in Cathy Caruth (ed.), *Trauma : Explorations in Memory*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1995, p. ix.
- ³⁸ Sheftel and Zembrzycki, 'Only Human: A Reflection on the Ethical and Methodological Challenges of Working with 'Difficult' Stories,' p. 192.
- ³⁹ Portelli, 'What Makes Oral History Different?' in Perks and Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, p. 36.
- ⁴⁰ Dori Laub, 'Truth and Testimony: the Process and the Struggle,' in Cathy Caruth (ed), *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1995, p. 63.
- ⁴¹ Senate Community Affairs References Committee, 'Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices'.
www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/clac_ctte/comm_contrib_former_forced_adoption/index.htm
- ⁴² AIFS on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/#!/search?q=%23PastAdoption>. (Accessed 21 December 2011).
- ⁴³ Kathryn Anderson and Dana C. Jack, "Learning to Listen" in Perks and Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, p. 141.