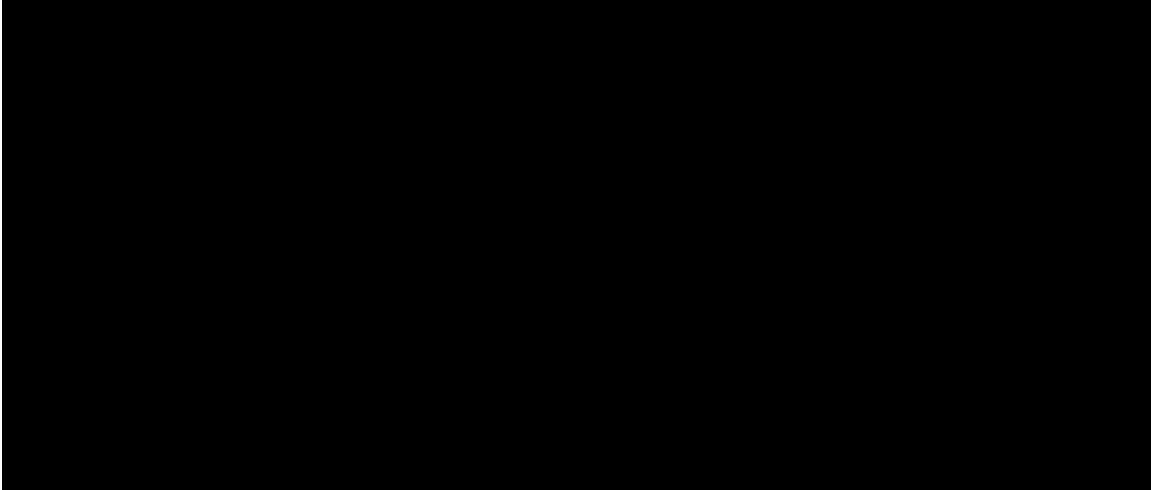


Forced Adoption Submission

**Lee Anne Parker adopted 1962 Royal
Women's Hospital Melbourne Victoria**

**This submission does not need to be made
confidential, even though I have declared my
adopted name. I have used nouns and
pronouns substituting family names.**



Forced Adoption:

Provided society from the shame of unwed mothers raising and loving their children.

Provided infertile married couples with a family.

Never considered: Opposition from extended family members, brothers and sisters of the infertile couple.

The damaging impact of emotional and sexual abuse given by these extended family members who opposed the concept of adoption.

It's like trying to put a square peg into a round hole ending in devastating tragedy!

My name is Lee Whelan, this is my married name although divorced, I chose to keep my married name. I was adopted in 1962 from the Royal Women's Hospital Victoria and named Lee Anne Parker.

My adopted family consisted of my mother, father and my brother (also adopted) he is three years older than me.

My very early childhood memories are happy ones, my father was a plumber and therefore, we never went without anything we desired. My mother never worked.

My adopted mother's younger sister married my father's older brother and they lived very close by. This sister of my adopted mother was a very toxic person. My adopted mother could never stand up to her and my mother told me in her last days "she would have never sustained the relationship with her sister if she had not bitten her tongue on many occasions." My mother also told me that once she had passed, "I never have to have anything to do with her again." I left my life in May 2016 to go to Melbourne and care for my mother until the time had come for her passing. My aunt and others from the family opposed this and told me that mum would be better cared for in a nursing home. My mother didn't want this to happen, she wanted to pass away in her family home. I had lots of long service leave and was able to take as much time off work as needed, then return to my occupation. I feel this opportunity surprised the family, especially my aunt as I am sure she was thinking, how on earth would someone like me have such security in an occupation and be valued as I was and still am. She then went on to complain to the rest of the family how I was caring for mum, she talked very badly about me. I had much support from the Calvary Palliative Community Care team but none from any family member except my two adult sons. My aunt opposed my adoption and always hated me right up to

my mother's last breath, and still to this day. She always made me feel that I never belonged, my being, my life was worthless because I was odd, despicably odd. She trained my adopted mother to resent me too. In October 1961 she gave birth to her second daughter with much disappointment to her husband as he wanted a son. I'm sure she suffered Post Natal Depression from what my mother has told me, however they went on and emotionally abused their daughter. I came along April/May 1962 and was received with much joy, love and hope by my mother and father. However it was not to be. My aunt was in a state that was covered up by societal values and her jealousy festered immensely right up to this very moment. The toxic opposition that she has always given me and my mother has made my adoption very traumatic.

Sometime during the late sixties my uncle, my mother's brother was widowed. They had six children who were sent to live with other family members they were split up except for the three daughters. These situations weren't successful and ended up tragically. My mother's brother and the three daughters went to live with his elderly parents and spinster sister in the family home. My uncle turned to alcohol and left his spinster sister to raise his three teenage daughters. This situation was disastrous and ended very sadly for the daughters bar one, the eldest daughter who had already spent a lot of her life with the spinster aunt due to her mother's ill health.

Late sixties and seventies we spent many Saturday nights visiting my nana, pop, aunt, uncle and his daughters. Our family would visit along with my other nasty aunt, uncle and their three daughters. There were always so many people and somehow we all fitted in and around the small weatherboard working class house. Saturdays my uncle always was drinking down at his local, he always came home very drunk. As a child I thought he was funny and I would like to get his attention and play with his packet of cigarettes, Craven A Cork Tip they had a pussy cat on the packet and I loved to open the packet to see the pussy cat. In doing this I would sit on his knee and that is when he started touching me. I was so young I didn't understand, I didn't even understand it was wrong! This continued on until it was found out, the duration of this time is something I cannot remember. When it was found out my mum and aunts just pushed it under the carpet. I feel that it was more of my aunts doing as they also started resenting my existence in the family more and more. They constantly made awful comments to me throughout my life and I feel that this was the time when things went from bad to worse. My mum was not an assertive person and she let her sisters get away with their treatment towards me. This made mum start to resent me also as she was torn between her loyalty to her sisters and societies values of the time. I had grown up always knowing that this abuse had happened to me however never was able to acknowledge the damage it had done to me. My

aunts had trained my mother not to speak out therefore I was trained to believe that it was alright for what my uncle had done to me. For I was the odd one that my own birth mother didn't want, therefore it didn't matter what anybody said or did to me. ***It was this neglect of emotional care that has had a very horrible and hurtful impact on my life!*** My adopted mother never explained to me about boys, men, relationships in general, I had been spoiled already by her brother and maybe she thought it was too late to talk to me about intimate relationships, that I would never be worthy of the courting, dating experience. This is only one outcome of Forced Adoption. It was only because of the wonderful but confronting counselling I had received from Vanish that I mentioned that I had been sexually abused when I was a young child, probably around seven or eight, the realization came to me when I was fifty-eight. It was the first time I had ever mentioned it to anyone, I was so fortunate to purge myself to lovely Liz at Vanish.

After mum passed I received bereavement counselling for thirteen months from the hospice where mum had died. During my bereavement counselling sessions my past started to come to the surface. Fifty years of contained, suppressed abuse was finding it's way out, I started remembering things that I had cast aside for so long. I was told that this was the start of 'Recovering Memory' as it was okay now to allow myself to be confronted with the trauma that I had held so deep within my soul.

At this time I had been seeing a psychologist helping me come through a relationship breakdown I had with a man who had been deceiving and betraying me for at least six years or more. I was manipulated and completely controlled by this man. He made me believe we were in a healthy, loving and caring relationship. He had another agenda as he was in another relationship which was the relationship he wanted to be in. To be manipulated and controlled for so very long was very traumatic and it caused me horrific pain very similar to how I felt about being betrayed by my mother. This feeling came from the man needing my honest and true love and then rejecting it by being with his other woman. Parallel hurt from my mum wanting a daughter then rejecting my love to be loyal to her sister. These rejections have made my self-worth feelings very low. I have been on antidepressants for many years now. My birth mother's rejection of me at birth, (now I know that it was out of her control), my adopted mother's rejection of me, a divorce and other unsuccessful relationships, platonic and intimate has left me very low. I struggle to trust, believe and give in any relationship, I always become confused. From my relationship with this man I had at least six years of my life stolen from me by deception. As with my birth mother I had my whole mother/daughter life stolen from me by a criminal act. I was **dumb** to the betrayal of my love and the deception of the whole relationship with this man as he completely controlled my thoughts making me believe everything about

our relationship was real. The parallels with my adopted mother were that she was controlled by her loyalty to her sister and family, to keep all secrets to themselves no matter how much it harmed me.

Furthermore with the separation from my birth mother I have no knowledge of any medical history. Knowledge I definitely deserve! I have a serious eye condition which can be genetic, Keratoconus. The condition causes the cornea to mishape, I have been fortunate to have a cornea transplant and am eligible now for another. This condition has impacted on my life enormously. With any knowledge of family medical history it would have been helpful. Also with my pregnancies, If I had prior knowledge of any difficulties my mother had giving birth to me, at that time any information would have been useful. My two sons have also had serious illnesses in their lives, illnesses that could have been in the family before. To have no access to past medical history is what forced adoption dealt me and it has been a heavy detriment to my life and my sons lives.

I find myself now that I would rather be by myself. I struggle to be with people as I always feel that I am not up to a standard that suits any company I am with. Every morning of everyday I struggle to get myself mentally ready for the day ahead and some mornings are very dark. I have my Faith and have found a sense of belonging with my church family, without my Faith and morning prayer I do not think I would

have coped as I have. For the first three months of my life I cried constantly, my adopted mother told me that the maternal health centre sister had said to her, "when you have her baptised she will stop crying" and I did. God was on my side! From the words of Bob Dylan, With God on Our Side!! Music is also a comfort to me and is my ally always!

Even when my mother was ninety years old and I had been caring for her in a palliative care situation, she still chose to emotionally abuse me. There was one time that I find too difficult to mention the whole experience. The pain I felt rise within me is something I shall never forget! It was the Christmas before she died and I was trying to keep a family tradition alive as I knew that the tradition was very important to her. However one afternoon when her sister came to visit mum shut me down very quickly in front of the aunt about the tradition. She said to me "family tradition is nothing, I don't even understand what you are talking about!" My aunt sat there smiling at me as my pain rose and I had to leave the room. I was in absolute shock and hurt to the very core. My mother had told me previously that she wished I was like my three cousins, the daughters of the nasty aunt. I remember the first time she said this to me and I completely felt the feeling of not being good enough for her and the hurt enhanced my feelings of rejection once again. My mother never wanted to share daughter/mother relationships with me, such as clothes shopping, sharing films, hobbies, my occupation and as I got older and came to visit mum she told

me she wished I'd go home again. For many years I volunteered at an aged care facility taking my friendly little dog to visit the residents, this brought them much joy. Sadly it brought my mother much shame. She told me that her sister and brother in-law would totally disapprove with my dog going into that type of institution. When my father was in an aged care home I had to take the dogs to visit dad when no other family were visiting as mum believed her sister, that it was shameful to do such a thing. Dad loved dogs so much, especially this dog the family had at the time, she was so special this dog she was dad's loving companion. I did take the dogs in secret to visit dad knowing in my heart that it was a lovely thing to do for dad, however also knowing that my mother chose to side with my aunt and uncle who didn't approve, even when it came to my dad's happiness in his final days. It was all because I was odd to them, indescribably odd!!

Sadly, I have never had a healthy relationship with any man or any family member apart from my two sons. Once that natural bond of love was severed from my birth mother and myself, the damage is unrepairable! No one has the right to do what the Royal Women's Hospital did to my birth mum or to me, no matter how I was conceived. The damage that is done is pain that can never be healed only managed. It should have never happened no matter what societal values were of that time, people, mothers and babies cannot be tortured in that way as the impact from the torture will stay

with them forever and constantly raise it's ugly head in other relationships that end up disastrously.

This is my story, I am lonely, I long for the intimate love and protection that seems to come to many. I am now trying to find my birth mother as I need to tell her how much I love her and have always loved her! At times when that awful strong feeling of rejection rises and tries to consume me, I cry out for my mum, I never understood where this came from but I do now and it's so important that I tell her. We should have never been separated at birth, my life has been traumatic, her life must have been catastrophically traumatic.

I want to believe that my life as an adopted child of the sixties would have been very different if the families of my adopted parents welcomed me and supported my mother and father. However that was not meant to be! We all suffered greatly and I am so sad for both of my mother's! The Royal Women's Hospital were to blame for this reckoning abuse to all our lives, the consequences of my forced adoption will be a pain I will always carry within my soul.

My story is honest as God is my witness to the words I write as my life story unfolds!