

Macquarie University

Willa McDonald

Letter to my daughter: ethical dilemmas in the writing of a memoir

Abstract

Writers of nonfiction are regularly called to make ethical decisions as part of the day-to-day requirements of their calling, as they balance the demands of publishers, editors, readers and the craft of storytelling itself, with responsibilities and sometimes loyalties to those written about. Writing memoir, in particular, raises a host of ethical questions regarding the ownership of the material and the ways in which it can be used. Our lives (and life stories) are made more interesting by our relationships, their ups and downs and the way we handle them. But what happens when we are telling the stories of those for whom it is difficult to give clear or informed consent? What happens when the line between the public and the private is blurred? When we are writing about family members? Our children? Do we have a greater ethical responsibility when telling their stories? Couser, Carey, Mills and others have deliberated on the responsibilities of the memoirist in celebrating the private self in the public realm. This paper reflects on these issues as part of the author's own ethical dilemmas in writing about the adoption of her young daughter and her struggle to work out where her responsibilities lie in the creation of the text.

Keywords: ethics; memoir; creative nonfiction

Writers have a right to write, but how far
into the privacy of others does that right extend?
(Richard Freadman 2004)

Not long ago, I was asked to write a memoir about the adoption of my daughter from China. The invitation both concerned and excited me. Although I had written about the adoption before, that had been for publications limited to readership in the adoption community. This would be different - this would be a popular book published by the mainstream press, with all the implications that would entail of wider reach to a more general audience. While making the decision to adopt Mei[1] - and in the long wait till the adoption was finalised - I had benefited from reading the memoirs of other adoptive parents, such as Emily Prager's *Wuhu Diary* (2001) and Karin Evans' *The Lost Daughters of China* (2000). These narratives were valuable not only in revealing the practical intricacies of the processes involved (albeit American) - and the particular challenges faced by the parents and children in coming to terms with the adoptions and all that lay behind them - but also the adjustment for both parents

and children to family life. Now I was in a position to add our story to that list of narratives.

Professional experience as a writer/journalist told me this memoir could make a compelling story. Most of the adoption tales had emerged from North America - there was yet to be an Australian adoption memoir that focussed on adoptions from China.[2] This book would have the potential to contribute to Australian social and cultural debate about adoption, while also throwing light on the shortlived practice of single parent adoption (a practice that is in its death throes after amendments by China to its adoption policy). It would also add more broadly to reflections already extant on both international adoption and adoption parenting. From a more personal viewpoint, such a memoir would give me the opportunity to convey my version of the adoption events to my daughter, and others, in a fuller, and deeper way, than I could verbally. Certainly, the journey to becoming a mother by transracial adoption had provoked a rethinking of my values and identity. In the way that memoir has of reaching people, I hoped this book could add to an understanding of alternative ways of parenting. At the least it promised to be useful and absorbing – and perhaps also fun to write.

Yet there is no denying the axiological difficulties of representing close relatives in the writing of memoir. Despite all the potential benefits of the project, at heart I was, and continue to be, deeply ambivalent about writing the memoir. As Eakin notes: ‘Because our own lives never stand free of the lives of others, we are faced with our responsibility to those others whenever we write about ourselves’ (2004: 159). The problem here is the impossibility of disentangling Mei’s story from my own. While I wanted to write a narrative that focussed on my journey to and through the adoption, in the end the most interesting and useful material revolved around Mei - how she came to be adopted; the adoption process itself; how she coped; how she adjusted to life in Australia - all aspects of her life she may grow up not wanting to share. Because memoir clearly raises ethical issues regarding the ownership of the subject material and the ways in which it can be used, I began to attend to the issues facing writers surrounding the rights of adopted children to their own stories. At the heart of the conundrum is the fact that while adoption is most often a positive outcome for children who would otherwise be at risk,[3] it is a practice based on loss. Adopted children, particularly internationally adopted children, have already lost so much – their birth parents, possibly their extended birth families, birth cultures and languages. Using them in any way, or taking their story away from them – taking their privacy away from them – has the potential to add greatly to a sense of grief and betrayal they may already suffer. While Eakin went on to note his view that there was no escape for the memoirist from responsibility to the people written about (Eakin 2004: 159), nevertheless the project invited consideration of whether those responsibilities could be ethically managed.

Because I was seeking time out from teaching to write the memoir, one of the first steps that needed to be taken was to seek clearance of the project from my university ethics committee. As has been pointed out by Carey (2008), the notion of informed and independent consent usually relied on by university committees is not always adequate to resolve the inherent ethical problems. Couser, commenting on consent in the context of parental narratives concerning children with disabilities (including adopted children), comments that:

Parental memoirs tend ... to be either unauthorized or self-authorized, insofar as parents assume rather than request the right to write about their children’s lives ... They are thus inherently, literally, paternalistic, particularly when they are

undertaken before the subject has reached the age of consent.
(2004: 57)

What he neglects to address is the impossibility of gaining meaningful authorization from a young child - let alone one's own young child - whether or not the child has disabilities. While there are examples of adoption memoirs where children have approved of stories involving them, they are rare and tend to involve subjects who are at least teenagers, if not adults, at the time of publication. An example is adoption advocate Julia Rollings' book *Love Our Way: A Mother's Story* (2008). Rollings' narrative involved the discovery that two of her adopted children had been stolen from Sunama, their birth mother, while she slept, and were then sold by their birth father. The book traces Rollings' journey from Australia to India to re-unite the children with Sunama. It is a moving tale with a strong agenda, and begins with the following Author's Note:

This book was written with the permission of my children and, most importantly, Sunama. It is told in the hope that our story might serve to illustrate the human toll of child trafficking - a trade whose victims are too often voiceless - while advocating for ethical adoption when that is genuinely in a child's best interests. (Rollings 2008: n.p.)

It is worth noting that Rollings' children may or may not have been able to give independent consent (particularly if, like many adopted children, they are affected by fear of abandonment issues), but they were teenagers when the book came out and so were able to express an informed judgement to their mother. Mei, at nine, is still pre-adolescent. In my view, she is not yet able to realistically evaluate the pros and cons of a decision to publish. She does not have the cognitive ability to fast-forward to the possible consequences of her early circumstances becoming public knowledge. Not only can she not give adequately informed consent but, being wholly dependent on me for her survival, nurturance and protection, she is unable to give independent consent. Asking her permission is of limited usefulness, and if relied on as the sole arbiter of whether or not the memoir would go ahead, it would be, I propose, an abrogation of my role as her parental guardian.

Apart from Couser's work, there is surprisingly little in the academic literature about the ethics of writing nonfiction about one's own children, let alone adopted children. This may partly be because, unlike Rollings, most writers of parental narratives are 'generally wholly amateur in their credentials and experience and thus not necessarily conscious of ethical constraints' (Couser 2004: 54). But, as Carey points out, there is little discussion of the rights of memoir subjects in the literature at all. Most of the ethical debate that does exist centres around the authors' rights generally to artistic expression versus the readers' rights to veracity (Carey 2008). One commentator, Claudia Mills, an associate professor of philosophy and writer of children's fiction, does at least allow for the theoretical possibility of ethical parental memoirs, suggesting that a way 'to reduce costs to those whom we write about is to protect their identity in various ways; to share a person's story but withhold the person's name, changing revelatory (but irrelevant) details whenever possible' (Mills 2004: 115). She also reveals, however, that she has resolved never to publish a memoir about her family - 'either my childhood family or my family now. For me, it would be too much of a betrayal; it would cross the line I have drawn for myself' (Mills 2004: 116).

Despite Mills' advice, when it comes to writing about one's own children, withholding the subject's name and changing identifying details may not

provide the protection an author would hope for. Julie Myerson, nominated in 2003 for the Man Booker prize for fiction, chose anonymity to protect her children's privacy when she wrote 'Living with Teenagers', a column in the *Guardian* newspaper that later became a book (Myerson 2008). As an added protective measure, her children were given false names. 'Although the aim of the column was to offer an honest picture of family life,' Myerson later wrote, 'some incidents were partly fictionalised, some details carefully rearranged and some characters [made] composites, to conceal the identity of our children' (cited Leitch 2009). Despite those efforts, however, neither her nor the children's anonymity endured. Myerson's son was identified by friends and then ridiculed at school. The leaked identities reached the British papers and the question of whether Myerson had crossed an ethical line was the subject of much discussion in the media. 'How silly of us all, in hindsight, to believe that such a secret could be kept for ever,' one of Myerson's editors on the *Guardian* later wrote, perhaps rather ingenuously, given the nature of the long-running column (Gardiner 2009).

Not long afterwards, Myerson's writing again became the focus of intense media debate when she published another book focussing on her family life, *The Lost Child*, this time campaigning against the drug 'skunk', but in the process chronicling her teenage son's drug use and his eviction from the family home. Although the book movingly relates the encounters where her son approved the unpublished manuscript, he nevertheless went on to object loudly to the book in subsequent press interviews: 'What she has done has taken the very worst years of my life,' he said, 'and cleverly blended it into a work of art, and that to me is obscene' (in Weathers 2009). In this case, Couser's grim warning that 'What are intended by parents as beneficent acts may be perceived by their children, once grown, as violations of their autonomy, acts of appropriation or even betrayal' (Couser 2004: 57) was being lived out in the pages of the British tabloids.

Beyond his intense hurt, Myerson's son was raising an important point often overlooked in discussions of memoir: the ability of skilled writers to bring such emotional impact to their words that their versions of events become hyper-persuasive. As Nichols says:

Even the most honest memoir writer turns herself and family members into characters. Professional writers know how to make their constructions appear more 'real' than reality itself. Those who are skilled like Myerson are experts at creating emotional impact ... The more such writing moves readers, the more it seems true. And riveting stories often fool us into thinking that one author's take on the world translates into everybody else's. (Nichols 2009)

Yet the very usefulness of the memoir depends on the reader being caught up in the storytelling and believing the version of events - particularly the emotional truths of the events - being portrayed. What is sacrificed is the duty to the subject, which becomes secondary in practice to the writer's responsibilities to both the text and the reader. Not surprisingly then, the ensuing debate about Myerson's writing fell into two camps - those who thought she was bravely 'outing' a rarely discussed issue, and those who considered her an appalling parent. Kellaway, writing in *The Observer*, said that Myerson had tried to 'write honestly about a nightmarish situation and a subject that never seems to get the attention it deserves' (Kellaway 2009). Some called the book courageous, thoughtful and elegant.[4] Janice Turner, on the other hand, described it as 'incontinent exhibitionism' (Turner 2009). In Tim Lott's eyes it was a 'moral failure', Myerson having betrayed her son for her own ambition (Lott 2009).

Minette Marrin in *The Sunday Times* went further and accused Myerson of ‘betrayal not just of love and intimacy, but also of motherhood itself’ (Marrin 2009).

Myerson is hardly the first mother to write about her children. Parenting narratives abound, particularly in the blogosphere. While blogs differ from memoir in their immediacy and often lack of evaluation and gatekeeping by editors, they nevertheless demonstrate the difficulty of protecting children’s privacy in this age of internet communication technology. The situation of Anita Tedaldi is a case in point. Tedaldi, a blogger with five biological daughters, wrote ongoingly and openly in her blog for *The New York Times* about her international adoption of a little boy from South America. When the adoption subsequently broke down because of Tedaldi’s and her son’s failure to bond, it caused a storm of reaction. Lisa Belkin, who interviewed Tedaldi on radio, wrote in her own blog, also for the *New York Times* ‘Motherlode’ site:

Had [Tedaldi] known that the adoption would end so tragically - if she had known the adoption would end - she never would have used this child’s name, or written a column three years ago condemning a Dutch couple for terminating an adoption, or rapturously described her life as an adoptive mother in ways that she now says were ‘naïve and full of denial’. (Belkin 2009)

Despite Tedaldi’s attempts to clean up the blogosphere, some commentators tracked down the boy’s real name from earlier blogs and re-posted his identity. A reader subsequently contacted Belkin with the following comment:

In light of the post by Anita Tedaldi I have a suggestion for a future topic: parental blogging and how it might affect the kids. What’s going to happen in 5 or 10 years (depending on the age of the kids) when they learn how to use Google and find what their parents have been posting about them for the entire world to read? (Belkin 2009)

Belkin herself says her basic rule is ‘no column is worth a relationship’ and claims to clear all references to friends and family with them before publishing her own writing (Belkin: 2009). While admittedly there is a difference between digital blogs and hard copy memoirs (the latter generally allowing more time for reflection and involving the opportunity for more editorial involvement), the whole notion of being able to protect a subject’s identity seems rather naïve in this age of search engines and instant mass communications. The Myerson and Tedaldi cases throw into doubt the very idea that, once written about, the subject of a memoir has any remaining ability to cling to their privacy. Even with the use of a pseudonym - even if we both used pseudonyms - there is no guarantee that Mei’s identity would remain protected over time.

Besides choosing anonymity, there are other ways in which memoirists negotiate the tricky territory of adoption parenting narratives. Collaboration is one, but it provides no easy answers. *Kids Like Me in China* is a book written by Ying Ying Fry, an eight-year-old adoptee in ‘collaboration’ with her mother, adoption expert Amy Klatzin (Fry & Klatzin 2001). The book traces Ying Ying’s return trip to her orphanage in Changsha, through photographs and her simply written text. The acknowledgements note, ‘The text was constructed from Ying Ying’s journal and from audiotapes, videotapes and interviews with her. The opinions, observations and questions are all hers, and she exercised final approval over the wording.’ The resulting manuscript is both a charming read and educationally useful. It has an honoured place on my daughter’s

bookshelf at home. But in our case, such an approach is not realistic because *Kids Like Me* is ostensibly Fry's memoir - with the mother in the role of facilitator, perhaps even ghost-writer or editor. Fry's is a book by a child for children who can relate to her experiences and benefit from them, mostly children within the adoption community. To refocus my/our narrative in that way would take the project to a place not envisaged by the publisher.

The Broken Cord, written by Michael Dorris (1989) about adopting a son with Foetal Alcohol Syndrome, ends with a chapter by the adult son, Adam. Couser argues that Adam's testimony does not resolve Michael's ethical responsibilities:

Adam could not fully imagine, and thus could not censor, the way he was being presented to a reading public. In this case, the subject is put at a disadvantage not so much by his culture as by his disability. Despite Dorris's noble intentions, then, he produced a book in which disability assumes the role of cultural difference in defining and subjugating the Other in anthropological discourse. Although Dorris did elicit Adam's testimony, that testimony serves mainly to corroborate Dorris's characterization of Adam in the narrative that precedes and introduces it. Adam's text is contained and defined by his father's. On the whole, then, Dorris seems to have arrogated authority in ways reminiscent of 'colonial' ethnography. (Couser 1998: 431)

While it is difficult to imagine what greater lengths the father could have gone to, to be fair to his son's voice, to reframe it within the discourse, the issue Couser raises of disadvantage is a real one. In my daughter's case, the 'othering' disadvantage is not disability but immaturity - she has no version of events to counter or ameliorate mine. Patently, at her tender age, she doesn't have the skills to write for an adult audience. Given our relationship plus the disparity in our ages, a truer collaborative approach is hardly feasible.

Another way through the ethical minefield of parenting narratives generally is to restrict the tale to the timeframe of young childhood and to stop writing about the children when they reach school age or even adolescence. For example, Melanie Gideon, author of the memoir *The Slippery Year: A Meditation on Happily Ever After*, told herself that she had until her biological son was aged ten to continue to write about him; after that, it would be an invasion of his privacy (Gideon 2009). Given the relatively recent practice of adoptions from China, with the earliest adoptees in the USA only now attaining adulthood and most of the earliest from Australia only now approaching adolescence, it is not surprising that China adoption parenting narratives tend to focus around early childhood and the adoption itself. This can be a deliberate choice. Jeff Gammage, the author of the bestselling *China Ghosts: My Daughter's Journey to America, My Passage to Fatherhood* (2007) - one of the few China adoption narratives written from a father's point of view - decided to end his adoption parenting memoir at the time his daughter reached the age of six - the age around which most children begin school and assert a public personality separate from their parents. This is an attractive approach in that it doesn't privilege the rights of the child over those of the writer parent, but at the same time it acknowledges the child's rights to their own story as they develop a separate self.

So far in this rumination I have focussed on the risks of a published memoir possibly harming my daughter by unwanted exposure or betrayal. But is it possible that the proposed memoir might benefit Mei and help her to make

sense of her early years? Mei's only knowledge of her early life she has learned with the help of me as investigator, recaller and interpreter. Katherine Nelson has confirmed that family stories are fundamentally important to a child's psychological development. She has found that autobiographical memory is created in children through narrative, co-constructed with the parent in early childhood – that the primary caregiver plays a crucial role in helping the developing child develop its sense of self by giving it the narrative feedback to enable it to form memories that are otherwise cognitively beyond its reach (cited Eakin 1999: 108-11). Narrative, then, is essential to the formation of our sense of identity. It is fundamentally involved in the creation and maintenance of our sense of self that is at the core of personal identity (Eakin 1999: 123).

As Oliver Sacks (1986) and Young and Saver (1995) have shown, people who lose their ability to construct their personal narrative through neurological ill health, lose their selves. As Eakin says:

Narrative's role in self-representation extends well beyond the literary; it is not merely one form among many in which to express identity, but rather an integral part of a primary mode of identity experience, that of the extended self, the self in time. (Eakin 1999: 137)

This notion is recognised in practice when adoptive parents are encouraged by their social workers to create 'lifebooks' for their children - homemade 'scrapbooks' which help to explain the children's early lives and subsequent adoptions. These give the children as much information as is available to enable them to create their own narratives and consequently to help them develop a firmer sense of their own selves, dissipating any 'secrecy' before it becomes toxic. While a published memoir could be viewed as a more professional version of an adoption lifebook, there is a crucial difference of intention between a manuscript written solely for the child and one written for public consumption. Where one is written for the benefit of the child's developing sense of personal identity, the other may well have underpinning agendas to do with the parent's career or desire for public acclaim - agendas that would not be lost on a sensitive teenager.

Yet another concern in tackling a memoir is whether I can do justice to Mei as a subject. Clearly children and teenagers are particularly vulnerable in memoir, especially the recent craze for so-called 'misery memoirs' where, as Cohen points out, 'Writers have revealed addictions, incest, betrayal, madness, paedophilia, abuse, criminality, violence and more in the name of truth, catharsis, social responsibility and art' (Cohen 2009). While most adoptions are successful and most adoption narratives written by adoptive parents are positive there are still pitfalls in the fact that the children themselves have little say over their parents' writing and the way they are portrayed. Given the ability of writers to be 'hyperpersuasive', as Nichols noted, there is the threat of a memoir backfiring, so that a restrictive self-image were to be imposed on Mei, rather than a positive one - one that could dominate her thinking with my version of events, inhibiting her ability to imagine herself into her own unique future. There is no way around the fact that a published memoir would pin my daughter to the page; forcing an interpretation of people and events onto her that would be difficult for her, or anyone else, to argue with.[5] The problem works both ways. While no child deserves their privacy betrayed or to be pinned for life to negative stereotypes that may arise from a description of their early circumstances, at the same time there are adult adoptees who object to a relentlessly positive portrayal of international/transracial adoption by adoptive parents in memoirs, blogs and media interviews, claiming that it denies the reality of pain, loss and dislocation that many adult adoptees feel.[6]

I confess that I stopped writing about Mei to my adoption support e-group some time ago partly because I was becoming more and more conscious of Mei's developing personhood but also because I was troubled by the way some of the readers on that list interpreted what I wrote. Often the anecdotes I gave when I sought advice or support were interpreted more negatively than I meant them or they attracted more didactic advice than I wanted to receive. Of course, that may say much more about me than it does about the e-group participants. Nevertheless, it does raise an important issue about how information about Mei would be interpreted, particularly if I wrote about her for an uninformed mainstream audience. And it raises the issue of how Mei would receive such interpretations. If I failed to communicate effectively what I intended to say to a small group of informed parents, how could I possibly convey the essence of Mei to a general audience? I feel pole-axed by the dangers lurking on either side of the adoption memoir tightrope: the risks of making too much of the dark side of her beginnings or of swinging too far in the opposite direction and sentimentalising and discounting the difficulties of her early years. How could a book be written that honours the truth of our lives, respects Mei and the reality of her toddlerhood, while adequately expressing my love for her?

Sentimentalisation is a real trap for memoir writers. Memoir requires both honesty and a sense of authenticity. As Mills has noted, a successful memoir creates an 'emotional identification' and/or 'moral solidarity' between the text and the reader through the use of haunting images or emotive and telling anecdotes, which are used to build a relationship of trust between the writer and the reader (Mills 2004: 36). The hazard is that such identification and solidarity leads to sentimentality and is established at the expense of the people written about. As Michael Ignatieff has described it, 'Sentimental art sacrifices nuance, ambivalence, and complexity in favour of strong emotion' (1998: 293). Bowdlerising Mei's infancy and not establishing a context for our tale would not only lead to poorly executed craft, it also could amount to another form of ethical betrayal. How does one avoid sentimentalisation? And avoid lurching into hyper-persuasiveness? By sticking to the truth as far as possible, in as emotionally honest way as possible, while anchoring the adoption story within the social, political and cultural context of China at the turn of the millennium and its policies and practices in family planning. Adequate contextualisation, both personal (regarding our small family) and sociocultural and political, would reduce the chances of Mei being misinterpreted, misunderstood or judged unfairly. Which leads us back to the basic conundrum of how to write truthfully while respecting privacy.

At this point in my vacillations, the whole idea of memoir is looking rather hard. But as a professor of writing recently reminded me, this memoir is not just about Mei - fundamentally it is also about me and it has the potential to give my daughter a better sense of who I am, this person who was so randomly allocated to her as 'mother'. I find that argument appealing, but again I am led back to where these reflections started. I can't separate Mei's past - or her story - from mine. In the end, the only way I can proceed is if I can persuade myself that it would be possible to write this memoir in such a way that it would play a useful role in helping Mei to construct her own history, her own narrative, her own sense of self and identity, as well as contribute to improving the awareness of the ins and outs of international adoption in the wider community. That's a tall order. At the least, if I were to write this memoir, I would have to be convinced that by presenting the facts of my daughter's early life as I know them, from the time of the adoption till the end of her infancy and the beginning of her schooling, I could enable Mei to live freely with those facts; to realise that perhaps her beginnings weren't ideal, but that her future need not be determined by them.

In our particular case, I am unpersuaded. According to Jane Brown, a US-based social worker and adoptive mother who runs empowerment workshops around the world for adopted children, there are some basic rules for discussing personal adoption information outside the realm of the family. In her view, the particular circumstances of a child's life prior to the adoption are their business and theirs alone. This includes issues such as:

whether and why their birth parents didn't keep and raise them, where they were found, whether or not their birth parents left a note and if they did, what the note contained. Also, any details about what condition they were found in if they were ill or improperly dressed, any problems they had once they were in the orphanage. (Brown 2006)

In other words, anything that goes to the telling of the child's own story from the time before the adoption is, in Brown's view, off limits. Regarding the common information that most Chinese-born adoptees share, such as that they were cared for in institutions before being adopted, Brown says:

It's all right to share it because it takes the mystery out of what happened and corrects misperceptions. It can also proactively give the information correctly before the other children start making up fantasies that can hurt and embarrass our children. (Brown 2006)

But this advice is limited to everyday interactions in the lives of adopted families, e.g. information given to teachers, school friends and other acquaintances. Brown, who has three internationally adopted children, goes much further when discussing adoption narratives - she states persuasively that there is no 'safe' way to write about adopted children:

I don't think that they can really give us permission to reveal it to others until adulthood when they are financially and emotionally more independent of us - and can freely say whether it is all right for us to share none, part, some, or all of it. (Brown 2009)

In effect, her view is that the responsibilities of parenthood outweigh the duties writers have to 'speak' truthfully to their readers. Despite the usefulness of memoir, she finds no justification for parental adoption narratives that outweighs the children's rights as custodians of their own stories.

I do not want to use Mei. I do not want to turn her into a commodity. I do not want her to feel used by me for my own professional advancement. I want it always to be clear to her that I did not adopt her to use her for personal gain. At the same time, I am aware of her need for protection. I do not want to betray her shyness or her privacy. Nor do I want to create anything that might undermine her or that might later limit her potential. I don't have the courage to sacrifice her trust in me or our relationship to the demands of such writing. Richard Freadman, when ruminating on the ethics of writing a biography of his deceased father, eventually persisted because he realised he could be loyal not only to his father's trust in him but also to his trust in his own best self, as both son and writer (Freadman 2004). While I find his argument influential - that I could rely on my own best self and use professional skills to get the job done - I stumble once again over the hurdle that Mei is not an adult. Nor is she deceased. She is a minor in my care, with unique needs and her future stretching out before her. In my view - and in my heart - my primary

responsibility is to her, not to literature ... Sigh ... Where did I put that unfinished novel?

Notes

1. Mei is a pseudonym. return to text
2. There have recently been two books published in the mainstream press about, or touching on, China-Australia adoptions: Guest & Neal 2010 and Rollings 2008. return to text
3. See, for example, Cohen et al 2008; Maclean 2003; Pomerleau et al 2005; van Ijzendoorn & Juffer 2006. return to text
4. See, for example, Lawson 2009. return to text
5. For expressions of similar concerns, see Couser 1997. return to text
6. See, for example, the regular discussions on <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/International-Adopt-Talk/> return to text

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Willa McDonald is Senior Lecturer and Discipline Leader of Media at Macquarie University where she teaches creative nonfiction writing. A former journalist, she has worked in print, television and radio. Her books include Warrior for Peace: Dorothy Auchterlonie Green (2009, Australian Scholarly Publishing) and The Writer's Reader: Understanding Journalism and Non-fiction (2007, Cambridge University Press).

TEXT
Vol 14 No 2 October 2010
<http://www.textjournal.com.au>
Editors: Nigel Krauth & Jen Webb
Text@griffith.edu.au