



THEM BEFORE US

Children's Rights Before Adult Desires

DONOR CONCEPTION

Donor conception violates children's right to life, right to their mother and father, and right to be born free- not bought and sold.

IVF IS NOT CHILD FRIENDLY

Most donor children (DC) are conceived in glass (IVF). Only 7% of lab-created embryos will be born alive. IVF treats babies like disposable commodities. "Undesirable" embryos are discarded routinely; many babies won't survive the thaw or transfer, the few that do implant may be "selectively reduced" (aborted), or have their siblings "selected" for disposal. And many will spend their lives in a freezer.

#BIGFERTILITY

#BigFertility is for-profit; no one is "donating," everyone is buying or selling. At great cost, "donor" children are created in labs by adults willfully choosing a motherless or fatherless (sometimes both) life for a child. DC children suffer socially and emotionally in greater numbers than their adopted counterparts.

#BigFertility is unregulated with few requirements to record-keep or report on the outcomes of the children they are making. Ninety-nine percent of DC adults believe that #BigFertility has a responsibility to act in the best interest of the people it helps create.

COMMODIFICATION

#BigFertility is big business and their human-products are troubled that their lives came with a price tag. DC people, rightly, feel trafficked and monetized. Seventy percent of DC people agreed that "the method of my conception sometimes causes me to feel distressed, angry, or sad."

"Do you know what it's like [to be] traded for money, lied to in the face of your mother and social father for their benefit, and then having to bottle up these feelings of mourning for the birthfather who never loved you, and wants nothing to do with you, an entire family who doesn't know you exist, and dozens of half-siblings you'll never know?"

EUGENICS

#BigFertility is a marketplace and buyers pay more for gamete sellers with "desirable traits" such as attractiveness, athleticism, academic achievement, and white skin.

"I knew from an early age that I was purchased and selected from essentially a catalog. knew that my blonde hair and blue eyes was somehow valued above other colorations—because my mother never fell in love with my father, he was never a full human being to her, only a handful of breeding details. I always knew that I was purchased and created precisely to make her happy."

- Alana Newman

IDENTITY STRUGGLES

DC kids overwhelmingly believe knowing their biological parentage is paramount to good mental health. Many describe feeling fraudulent, untethered, and alone; even when raised in a two-parent family, they long for their biological parent:

- 64% of DC adults believe that their sperm donor is half of who they are.
- 70% believe they have been harmed by anonymous donation.
- 89% believe it is important to know the identity of their donor.

'Mum told me when I was a child. All about how desperate she was for a baby, and how much I was wanted, and I was special. It doesn't feel like that. I'm middle-aged now, and I went through a phase of kidding myself it doesn't matter. But it does. It always has if I'm honest.'

'I don't know how to express with words how distressing it is to have half of your identity ripped away in a moment like that.... There isn't a handbook on how to rebuild your sense of self when you discover that your nonidentifiable father sold you.' - Ellie

"I cannot describe what it feels like to see your father's face for the first time, I became whole. The lopsided, half-empty feeling I had every day of my life, suddenly filled. I was a whole and complete person for the first time in my life." - Anonymous DC person

The want of their commissioning parent(s) pales when compared to the need these children have to understand who is responsible for their attributes.

Many DC adults are fixated with finding their missing half-siblings, some worry about the possibility of being related to a romantic interest, and others spend years obsessively searching for their biological parents. With the help of DNA testing services, many are learning the truth of their biological family members. According to We are Donor Conceived 70% of "donor" children found at least one donor sibling via DNA testing. 79% have found one to ten siblings, while five percent have discovered fifty or more donor siblings.

"I was also shocked to find out what a huge number of donor conceived half-siblings I probably have living near me. At least twenty, maybe over fifty. It is painful to know that I likely won't ever even know most of their names, let alone get to meet them. They are unlikely to have been told they were donor-conceived. I love them and miss them without even knowing them." - Ellie

How should advocates of children's rights proceed in matters of sperm and egg donation? Matt Doran, the founder of Donor Children (a social networking site that connects and supports the donor-conceived community), has this recommendation:

"I think the whole practice should be banned. It's legalized human trafficking and it's a huge multibilliondollar industry and you are disenfranchising children from their biological roots so that you can have a baby. It's more like purchasing an object and you're denying a child their human rights to their natural heritage."

Donor conception shifts the emotional burden of an adult longing to become a parent to a child who will long for their missing parent(s) for a lifetime.

Excerpts from chapter 7 of "Them Before Us: Why We Need a Global Children's Movement"



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