

You Don't Know How Lucky You Are

www.howluckyuare.com

Rudy Owens, MA, MPH | rudysdownens@gmail.com
1208 SE Nehalem St. | Portland, OR 97202 | Tel: 503-232-3170 | Cell: 206-696-3740

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An Adoptee's Journey Through
The American Adoption Experience



RUDY OWENS

Nearly 50 years after he was relinquished for adoption, Rudy Owens learned how fortunate life can be. In 2014 in San Diego, Owens met his biological half-sister for the first time. That meeting inspired Owens to tell his adoption story set against the larger adoption narrative that has impacted millions of adoptees, their birth parents, and their collective biological and adoptive families. Owens' autobiography offers insights on the widespread American institution of adoption, a national social engineering experiment that remains mired in discriminatory laws and partisan politics, not equality and fairness.

An adoptee recounts his lifelong odyssey navigating the secretive world of American adoption to highlight the public health and personal impacts of the institution on millions of Americans.

Owens' lifelong journey as an adoptee unravels the controversies and complexities of adoption. That adventure started in the mid-1960s, with his birth in a Detroit hospital created to serve socially scorned single mothers and place their infants for adoption. Twenty-four years later, he finally met his birth family and learned of his biological family history. It would take another quarter century and a bitter legal battle for the State of Michigan to release his sealed birth certificate that it illegally held for decades.

Owens combines his successful family discovery story with public health and evolutionary biology research to highlight the importance of kin relations and the damaging myths and archetypal prejudices that still cloud popular views of illegitimate children and adoption in the United States. Instead of seeing his experience as a loss, Owens finds greater purpose in having dedicated decades of his life to answering life's most essential question, "Who am I?" His lifelong journey for his original birth records, full equality before the law, and his ancestral history ultimately gave him the makings of a meaningful life.

For more information about Rudy Owens' story, visit www.howluckyuare.com.