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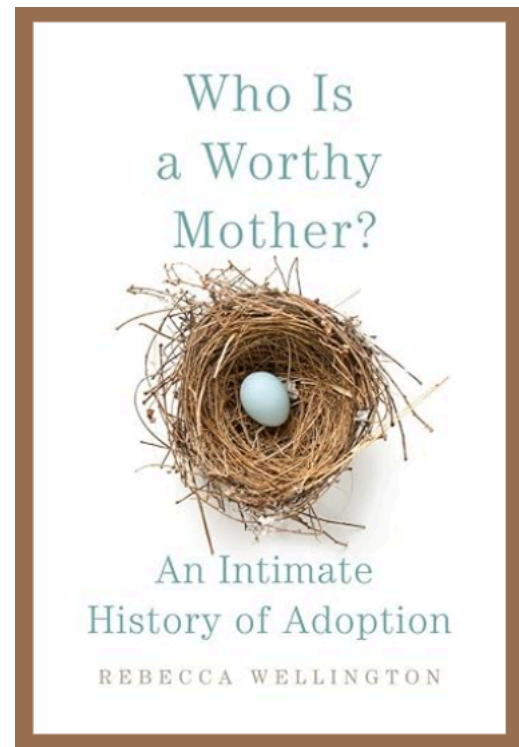
Who Is a Worthy Mother?
An Intimate History of Adoption
By Rebecca Wellington

**AN EXPLORATION OF U.S. ADOPTION PRACTICES THROUGH PERSONAL
MEMOIR AND HISTORICAL NARRATIVE**

Nearly every person in the United States is affected by adoption. Adoption practices are woven into the fabric of American society and reflect how our nation values human beings, particularly mothers. In the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, the renewed debate over women's reproductive rights places an even greater emphasis on adoption. As a mother, historian, and adoptee, Rebecca C. Wellington is uniquely qualified to uncover the policies and practices of adoption. In *Who Is a Worthy Mother* [University of Oklahoma Press, April 9th, 2024], Wellington's timely—and deeply researched—account amplifies previously marginalized voices and exposes the social and racial biases embedded in the United States' adoption industry.

The history of adoption is rarely told from an adoptee's perspective. Wellington remedies this gap by framing the chronicle of adoption in America using her own life story. She describes growing up in a family with which she had no biological connection, giving birth to her own biological children, and then enduring the death of her sister, who was also adopted. As she reckons with the pain and unanswered questions of her own experience, she explores broader issues surrounding adoption in the United States, including changing legal policies, sterilization and compulsory relinquishment programs, forced assimilation of babies of color and Indigenous babies adopted into white families, and other liabilities affecting women, mothers, and children.

According to Wellington, U.S. adoption practices in America are shrouded in secrecy, for they frequently cast shame on unmarried women, women struggling with fertility, and



“illegitimate” babies and children. As the United States once again finds itself embroiled in heated disputes over women’s bodily autonomy— disputes in which adoption plays a central role—Wellington’s book offers a unique and much-needed frame of reference.

ADVANCED PRAISE FOR *WHO IS A WORTHY MOTHER?*

“Rebecca Wellington carefully explores the history of ranking mothers by race, socioeconomic status, and made-up norms about who is fit to mother. *Who Is a Worthy Mother?* is a must-read for social workers and prospective adoptive parents.”

—**Nefertiti Austin, author of *Motherhood So White: A Memoir of Race, Gender, and Parenting in America***

"Wellington interweaves deep scholarship and wrenching memoir to produce a history of adoption that reveals brutal government practices, demeaning societal norms, and unintended outcomes for all of us. My naive eyes, mind, and heart were opened by *Who Is a Worthy Mother?*—essential reading for all whose work, stories, aspirations, friends, or family are connected to adoption.”

—**Dolly Chugh, author of *A More Just Future: Psychological Tools for Reckoning with Our Past and Driving Social Change***

“Wellington’s memoir-history challenges America’s belief that the only good mother is a white mother.”

—**Susan Harness, author of *Bitterroot: A Salish Memoir of Transracial Adoption***

ABOUT REBECCA WELLINGTON

Writer, historian, and educator **Rebecca Wellington** teaches at the University of Puget Sound in the School of Education. She has taught high school social studies, as well as undergraduate courses and graduate level courses in education history and curriculum and instruction. Her higher-education teaching adventures have taken her to universities across Western Washington, including University of Washington and Seattle University. She holds a doctorate in Education History from the University of Washington, where she taught in the undergraduate program of the College of Education. Rebecca's career in education started on the ocean, sailing around the world on a traditionally rigged tall ship. Through this two-year global circumnavigation Rebecca trained for a US Coast Guard captain's license and went on to work in non-profit outdoor education, teaching kids to sail on the Charles River in Boston and later on the Puget Sound of Washington State. Rebecca's scholarly articles have been published in *The History of Education Quarterly*, *The American Indian Quarterly* and *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*. Rebecca was driven to write a history of adoption in the United States from the perspective of an adoptee and to honor the memory of her older sister and truth of brave women everywhere. Rebecca's proudest accomplishment is mothering her two daughters, Maria and Victoria.

She and her husband and daughters live in Seattle, Washington on the traditional homelands of the Duwamish people.

INTERVIEW TOPICS

Wellington is available for expert commentary, interviews, articles, and more on topics such as:

- Who Is a Worthy Mother? - An intimate look into the adoption industry from the perspective of an adoptee
- The Intricate Link Between Motherhood, Fertility and Adoption Policy in America
- Defining Motherhood - How we perceive motherhood and why it often leads to shame
- Gender Roles in Parenting - How gender and socialization affects the ways we care for our children
- Motherhood and Bodily Autonomy - The role that adoption plays in a post-*Roe v. Wade* world
- How Adoption Practices in the U.S. Reveal Crucial Truths About Systematic Racism and Sexism

CONNECT

To learn more about Wellington, visit her website www.rebeccawellington.com or connect with her on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#), and [Facebook](#).

Who Is a Worthy Mother? will be released April 9th, 2024 and is available for purchase on [Amazon](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), and wherever books are sold.

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