

# CURRICULUM VITA

## Mirah Riben

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### Published Books

- Riben, M. (2007). *The Stork Market: America's Multi-Billion Dollar Unregulated Adoption Industry*, Dayton, NJ: Advocate Publications, 260 pages, 348 footnotes, ISBN:1-4276-0895-4
  - Reviewers have hailed *The Stork Market* as an "invaluable" "must read," "courageous" calling it an: "informative, well-documented and fascinating expose" with "copious and well-documented research and a clear, engaging writing style" that "investigate(s) this shameful trafficking in infants."
  - *The Stork Market* has been recommended for its "impeccable" research, "clear and cogent writing style," and because it "not only exposes the problems but offers common-sense solutions."
  - *The Stork Market* has been compared to Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* and called more accessible than Sollinger's *Wake Up Little Susie* and *Beggars and Choosers* and Pertman's *Adoption Nation*. **American Adoption Congress, Decree Winter 09.**
  - "...a must-read for every mother who is considering surrendering a child, every couple seeking to adopt, and every adoption professional and legislator in the United States...." **Adoption Today** magazine, Denise Roselle, October, 2008. pp 58-59.
  - Full reviews available at: <http://www.advocatepublications.com/index.php/the-stork-market/reviews.html>
- Riben, M. (1988). *shedding light on...The Dark Side of Adoption*, Dayton, NJ: Advocate Publications, 189 pages, 135 footnotes, ISBN:08187-010506
  - Outstanding Achievement Award to an Author, *People Searching News*, Florida, 1989.
  - Excerpts of *The Dark Side* appeared in:
    - Utne Reader, Nov. Dec., 1991, Vol. 4, pp 53-54
    - Social issues Review Series, 1991, Vol. 4
    - Macrocosm USA, 1992, p. 147
  - "...a must read ." The American Adoption Congress, Decree.
  - "...challenges the commonly held idea that adoption is a winning solution for everyone...this nook is to be recommended as one of the few available which balances the more usual happy-ending adoption stories with a birthparents's reality...it is recommended for those who prefer the truth, even if unpleasant, to unquestioned adoption mythology." **RESOLVE Newsletter**
  - "Although not an easy book for an adoptive to read, this is certainly an important book for anyone striving to undertand all sides of the adoption triangle. The good news (for adoptive parents) is that Riben is not slamming adoptive parents...her really big guns are leveled at The System. I recommend that adoptive parents read this book." Gigi Wirtz, **Families Adopting Children Everywhere (FACE)**
  - "A terrific book...it is dynamic! I will be asking my members to...purchase your book...I am constantly rereading sections." **Parent Finders, Ontario**
  - Full reviews of *The Dark Side* available at:  
<http://www.advocatepublications.com/index.php/dark-side/reviews.html>

**Published Articles & Op Eds. Published in journals, magazines, newspapers and newsletters**

- Riben, M. (2008). Interview with Adam Pertman, *Adoptive Families Magazine*, Nov. In press.
- Riben, M. (2008). M. Helping Adoptive Parents Understand the Role of Families of Origin: From the Viewpoint of a Mother who lost a child to adoption. *Parents for Ethical Adoption Reform*, PEAR-NOW.blogspot.com, Feb 13.
- Riben M. (2008). States' sealed records discriminate against adoptees, families. *USA Today*, Feb. 25.
- Riben, M. (2006). Rickie Solinger Speaks On Adoption (Interview with historian and author), *Communicator*, IA: Des Moines, Concerned United Birthparents, Spring, cover story
- Riben, M. (2006). "Dear Bastards: Demand Equality!" *Bastard Quarterly*, Bastard Nation, Vol. 8, No 1, Spring/Summer.
- Riben, M. (1995). Open Adoption: Optimum or Oxymoron, *Adoption Therapist*, Dallas, TX: Hope Cottage, Vol. 4, No. 2, Fall, 13-16.
- Riben, M. (1995). A Perspective on Family Preservation, *Decree*, American Adoption Congress, Summer, p.5.
- Riben, M. (1995). Between the Lines: Seeking True Culpability, *Communicator*, IA: Des Moines, Concerned United Birthparents, July/Aug, 16-17.
- Riben, M. (1994). Dealing With Death, *Adoption Therapist*, Dallas, TX: Hope Cottage, Vol. 6, No. 4, Fall, 5-8.
- Riben, M. (1992). A Last Resort: Adoption should be a solution that suits children, not childless couples. *Utne Reader*, Nov/Dec, Vol. 4, 53-54.
- Riben, M. (1991). Adoption not Abortion? *Chain of Life*, CA: Berkeley. Nov/Dec. Issue # 16, 6.
- Riben, M. (1992). A Last Resort: Adoption should be a solution that suits children, not childless couples. *Social Issues Review Series*, Vol. 4.
- Riben, M. (1990). *Adoption: A Women's Issue*, *Chain of Life*, CA: Berkeley Issue #5, January/February, p 4.
- Riben, M. (1991). A Last Resort: Adoption should be a solution that suits children, not childless couples. *Macrocosm USA*, 147.
- Riben, M. (1988) Class and Discrimination in the Denial of Adoptees Equal Rights in Adoption: The Case For Open Records, A Source Book for Political Action. J. Sweely (Ed.) University Press of America, Inc., Waltham, MA. In Press.
- Riben, M. (1987). Jews and Adoption, *The Jewish Press*, NY: Brooklyn, Jan. 23-29.
- Riben, M. (1987) Coping with the Heartbreak of Loosing a Child to Adoption, *Jersey Woman*, May/June.
- Riben, M. (1987) Adoption May Not be the Best Option, *Suburban Parent*, May.
- Riben, M. (1984). They Call Us Birth Mothers, *Family Journal*, July.
- Riben, M. (1984). The Cabbage Patch Phenomenon: More Than Just Kids' Stuff, *The Women's Newspaper of Princeton*, Feb. 12-13
- Riben, M. (1983). Adoption: A Circle of Love, *Mothering*, Winter.
- Riben, M. (1983). The Sealed Record Controversy, *The Women's Newspaper of Princeton*, May.
- Riben, M. (1983). The Changing Climate of Foster Care, *The Women's Newspaper of Princeton*, Aug.
- Riben, M. (1980). The Midwife as a Working Mother. *Mothering*, No. 17, Fall, p. 65.

### **Articles Self-Published Online**

- Riben, M. (2008). Great Expectations for Young Mothers, *OpEd News*, July 5.
- Riben, M. (2008). JUNO: Separating Fact from Fiction. *OpEd News*, Feb. 17.
- Riben, M. (2008). The Juno Mystique: Separating Fact from Fiction, *Associated Content*, Feb. 15.
- Riben, M. (2008). Michael Moore Blows it on This One! *OpEd News*, May, 27.
- Riben, M. (2007). Pro-Life/Anti-Family, *Associated Content*, Dec. 31.
- Riben, M. (2007). When Pro-Life is Anti-Family, *OpEd News*, Dec. 31.
- Riben, M. (2007). The Baby Chase Pits Women Against Women: Who "deserves" to Parent? *Associated Content*, Dec. 22.
- Riben, M. (2007). Adoption: Pitting Women Against Women, *Op Ed News*, Dec. 22.
- Riben, M. (2007). Rethinking Adoption: The Role of the Religious Right, *OpEd News*, Nov. 11.
- Riben, M. (2007). Is Promoting Adoption Healthy and Wise? *Associated Content*, Aug. 13.
- Riben, M. (2008). Family Secrets, *OpEd News*, July 27, 2008.
- Riben, M. (2007). Is Promoting Adoption Healthy and Wise? *Associated Content*, July 2.
- Riben, M. (2007). Revictimizing Victims, *OpEd News*, July 4.
- Riben, M. (2007). Creating Motherless Children: Wombs for Rent, *Associated Content*, May 21.
- Riben, M. (2007). A Mothers' Day Letter to Angelina Jolie, *OpEd News*, May 13.
- Riben, M. (2007). All In One Day's News, *OpEd News*, May 6.
- Riben, M. (2007). Guilty Until Proven Innocent; The Dark Side of Adoption, *OpEd News*, May 3.
- Riben, M. (2007). Childless Mother: Guilty Until Proven Innocent. *CounterCurrents*, May 3
- Riben, M. (2007). Adoption: The Child Commodities Market is Big Business, *Associated Content*, May 1.
- Riben, M. (2007). Adoption And The Role of The Religious Right, *CounterCurrents*, Nov. 4.
- Riben, M. (2007). Babies and Big Business: The Child Commodities Market, *OpEd News*, April 25; *CounterCurrents*, April 25.
- Riben, M. (2007). Mothers' Day Letter to Angelina Jolie...*OpEd News*, May 13.
- Riben, M. (2007). All In One Day's News, *OpEd News*, May 6.
- Riben, M. (2007). Guilty Until Proven Innocent; The Dark Side of Adoption, *OpEd News*, May 3.
- Childless Mother: Guilty Until proven Innocent. *CounterCurrents*, May 3.
- Riben, M. (2007). Adoption: The Child Commodities Market is Big Business, *Associated Content*, May 1.
- Riben, M. (2007). Adoption And The Role of The Religious Right, *CounterCurrents*, Nov. 4
- Riben, M. (2007). Babies and Big Business: The Child Commodities Market, *OpEd News*, April 25, 2007, *CounterCurrents*, April 25.

### **Published Book Reviews**

- Riben, M. (2008). Review of Birthmark by Lorriane Dusky, *Mothers in Action*, Origins-USA, Winter.
- Riben, M. (2001). Review of Adoption and Loss: The Hidden Grief by Evelyn Burns Robinson, *Bastard Quarterly*, Winter. Bastard Nation.

- Riben, M. (1995). Open Adoption: Differing Experiences, review of The Open Adoption Experience by L.R. Melina and S.K. Roszia, *Chain of Life*, Winter.
- Riben, M. (1991). Review of What Lisa Knew, by Joyce Johnson. *Communicator*, IA: Des Moines, Concerned United Birthparents, June/July.
- Riben, M. (1990). Review of Recreating Motherhood by Gena Corea. *Communicator*, IA: Des Moines, Concerned United Birthparents, Nov., p 3.
- Riben, M. (1990). Review of Birth Bond by Gediman and Brown. *Communicator*, IA: Des Moines, Concerned United Birthparents, March.
- Riben, M. (1989). Review of Lethal Secrets by Annette Baran, *Communicator*, IA: Des Moines, Concerned United Birthparents, Nov., p 12.

### **Broadcast Media Presentations**

- Riben, M. (2008) "Speaking of Adoption" with Donna Montalbano, WOON Radio, Oct. 28
- Riben, M. (2008) "Speaking of Adoption" with Donna Montalbano, WOON Radio, Jan. 8.
- Riben, M. (2007) The American Perspective: The Student Operated Press, Judyth Piazza, April 12.
- Riben, M. (2007) The Adoption Show: Voices Ending The Myth. Michelle Edmonds, June 17.
- Riben, M. (1989) Morton Downey Junior Show. Panel discussing open records with Joe Soll and Carol Gustavson
- Riben, M. (1989) Joan Rivers. Segment with Grace Anne Smiegel, grandmother of Lisa who was killed by Joel Steinberg
- Riben, M. (1988) Morton Downey Jr. Show. The Dark Side of Adoption
- Riben, M. (1988) Geraldo Rivera Show. "Private Adoption: White Knights or Flesh Peddlers?"
- Riben, M. (1987) Community View. Interview, July. Jackson Cablevision, NJ: Jacksonville.

### **Conference Presentations**

- Riben, M. (2009). Reexamining Goals: Open Records versus Equal Access, American Adoption Congress 30th Annual National Conference, Transforming Families, Connecting Lives, April 25.
- Riben, M. (2007). Alternative Routes to Permanency: Is Adoption Always the Best Choice? Adoption Ethics and Accountability Conference sponsored by The Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute and Ethica, Inc., October.
- Riben, M. (1997). Children Caught in the Middle: Divorce, Adoption & Other Separations, Plenary session, American Adoption Congress 18th Annual Conference, Baltimore MD, April 25-28.
- Riben, M. (1989). In the "Best Interest" of All: Equal Rights for Adopted-Separated Persons, American Adoption Congress, Region 3 Conference, Inequality Must End, October 1.
- Riben, M. (1989). Adoption Loss: Its Profound Effect on Women and Society's Exclusion of Them, Celebration of Our Work: Mosaics of Inclusion, Presented at the 7th Annual NJ Research Conference on Women, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ, May 23.
- Presented at countless other conferences including: Parents of Tomorrow, Adoption Forum, Council on Equal Rights in Adoption, Origins (NJ), and Concerned United Birthparents

### **Academic Presentations**

- Substitute Instructor at Staten Island College, New York, for Phyllis Chelser, Women's Studies, 1989.
- Guest Lecture: Adoption/Surrogacy. Women, Culture and Society, Rutgers University, Department of Women's Studies, 1995.

### **Recent Media Coverage**

- Bourbeau, Mary Ann (2008). South Brunswick author hopes book raises awareness on adoption issues, The Home News Tribune, Sept. 14
- Harbatkin, Erica (2007). Group keys on adoption, , , The Home News Tribune, Nov. 11
- Murino, Chris (2007). Birth info not easily obtained by adoptees: RegDay serves to inform residents about adoption information hurdles, Sentinel (North/South Brunswick, NJ). Nov. 15.

### **Volunteer History**

- August 2008 – present. Vice President of Communication, Origins-USA.org.
  - Serves as chief spokesperson and strategist to develop and implement internal and external communications, covering the broad range of the organization's issues and initiatives.
  - Oversees all media relations efforts, organization reputation management, and the creation and implementation of strategies to promote the organization's initiatives, visibility, growth, empowerment, uplift and education.
  - Liaison to other adoption and non-adoption organizations whose mission and goals overlap or are supportive of Origins-USA's.
  - This newly created position involves working directly with the president of this national nonprofit that advocates for mothers' rights and keeping natural families together.
  - Collaborates with officers, Board of Directors, and chairs of the Public Relations, Fundraising and Membership committees.
- August 2007- Aug 2008. Public Relations Chair and member of the Board of Directors, Origins-USA.
  - Responsible for directing the Public Relations Committee in seeking opportunities to create and disperse Press Releases and to send Action Alerts to members and supporters when issues require letter writing and other outreach activities.
  - Identify opportunities for publicity.
  - Attend regular board meetings and report committee activities.
- 1999-2000. President, University College Literary Society, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.
  - Responsible for publication of literary journal and "open mic" poetry readings.
- 2001. Editor in Chief, The Podium: A Publication of University College Literary Society, Vol. III.
  - Responsible for the selection and editing of poetry, short stories and essays for publication in the literary journal.

- 2000. Assistant Editor, The Podium: A Publication of University College Literary Society, Vol. II.
  - Assisted editor in the selection and editing of
- 1999 - 2000. Secretary, University College Governing Association, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.
  - Established and budgeted events for students
- 1988 - 1989. Director-at-Large, American Adoption Congress.
  - Served as member of the Board of Directors
  - Organized “Red Tape Ceremony” at the Hotel Roosevelt, New York, resulting in press coverage of the need to unseal adoption records
  - Organized “Speak Out” and rally as part of March on Washington DC for Open Records
- 1978 – 1995. Co-founder, Origins, a NJ-based national organization for women who lost children to adoption.
  - One of five mothers who conceived the idea, developed a mission and plan of action, named the organization, and began delivering services
  - Promoted our support groups in local newspapers and through self-help hotlines
  - Edited monthly national newsletter
  - Coordinated conferences, marches and demonstrations, including a candle light vigil in New York City after the tragic death of Lisa Steinberg
  - Facilitated monthly support group meetings for mothers dealing with depression, denial guilt, PTSD, feelings of low self-esteem – all recognized consequences of having lost a child to adoption.
  - Supported mothers who had never told anyone of their loss
  - Helped mothers prepare for and deal with the myriad emotions of search and reunion or being found
  - Comforted mothers who’s search ended with a grave or a child in a very bad situation
  - Received referrals of mothers from social workers
  - Helped two mothers keep their babies by offering them each temporary shelter in my home. One married her baby’s father and the mother of the other young lady relented and let her return home after seeing the baby
- 1977 – 1981. La Leche League Leader.
  - Facilitated monthly meetings to help mothers learn the womanly art of breastfeeding
  - Responded as needed to answer questions and provide support between meetings
  - Attended national conferences and read to keep up-to-date on latest medical and motional aspects of breastfeeding and mothering

## **Employment**

- 2007 – Present. Advocate Publications
  - President and CEO of sole proprietary publishing business.
- 1990 – 2003. Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
  - 2001-2003. Departmental Administrator, NJ EcoComplex.
  - 1997-2001 Administrative Assistant, NJ EcoComplex.
  - 1994-1997 Principal Secretary, Department of Plant Science.
  - 1992-1994 Secretary, Center for International Conflict Resolution /Peace Studies.

- 1990-1992 Secretary, Social Science Research Center.
- 1969 –1973. Volitant Publishing Corp., New York.
  - Associate editor of *Lady's Circle* magazine

### **Academic Studies, Honors and Awards**

- Sociology Major, University College Honors Program, Rutgers, the State University of NJ. 1994 – 2001
  - Academic Scholarship, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 1999-2000.
  - Dean's List, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 1998-99.
  - National Honor Society, Rutgers University Chapter, for Outstanding Academic Achievement.
- Middlesex County College, 1982-1983
  - Dean's List, Middlesex County College, 1982-1983.

### **Organizational Memberships**

- Lifetime member Origins-USA.org
- Lifetime member Bastard Nation, Bastards.org
- Member American Adoption Congress (AAC)
- Member Adoptive Parents for Ethical Adoption Reform (aPEAR)