

PRESS RELEASE

ANNIE O

BOTANICAL STYLIST

WHERE THE F*CK IS MY MOTHER?

A book for grown-up adoptees by Annie O

"Where is my mother?" is what haunted Annie Oxborough from the age of seven, when she suddenly and shockingly learned she was adopted.

Decades later she is still affected by the trauma of not knowing who she really is. The Matakana stylist and event planner, who goes by the name Annie O, has released a book for grown-up adoptees called *Where the F*ck Is My Mother?* Written in picture-book style, it's illustrated by artist Sparrow Phillips, a half-brother Annie met in adulthood.

*Where the F*ck Is My Mother?* shares deeply personal thoughts that many adults adopted as babies will relate to, as well as women forced to give up their children in New Zealand's 'Baby Scoop' era from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Annie's 21-year-old birth mother was not allowed to see her after delivery, and Annie was left with other new-borns in hospital for 16 days after her birth in Auckland 51 years ago. Medical records reveal she cried so much she was medicated.

As an adult, Annie discovered the name the hospital nurses had given her was Lisa Mary Clarke. Her adoptive parents named her Angela Marshall, but her name changed again when she was five. Her religious adopted mother felt Angie was "too much like a prostitute's name", so she officially became Anne Marshall.

Annie became a mother at 17 and at 20 she was finally legally allowed to view her original birth certificate, but it provided few details. It took 18 months before Annie was finally able to track down the woman who'd given birth to her, and when she finally met her, seeing her was "like coming home" she told [Duncan Garner: Editor in Chief](#) recently. But like many adult adoptees, Annie's feelings of devastation have never left her.

Annie's adopted parents have since died. Her birth parents are still alive, but they are ageing. They've given permission to Annie for their names to be included on a new birth certificate, one that Annie feels will say who she really is. But current laws under the Adoption Act 1955 do not allow this to happen. Work is being done to update the Adoption Act, but no Government agency Annie has contacted so far has been willing to help her.

"I feel like a second-class citizen who's lived a lie my whole life," she says. "I am 51 and I have no legal right to my lineage or my heritage, which I find horrific," she told Garner.

After speaking to Garner, Annie has followed his advice and spoken to a local MP to sponsor a private members' bill to help her have what she so desperately wants - a birth certificate with her biological parents' names on it.

*Where is the F*ck is My Mother?* is one step towards Annie finding some healing from the anguish of her past. The book is available to buy in printed form from annieo.co.nz and can be downloaded from Amazon and Apple Books.

Annie O is available to interview.

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