

Preface

"Donor" conception is a misnomer. It incorrectly suggests that the person "donating" has done something positive, selfless and beneficial to others. What he or she is actually doing is abandoning his or her child.

In this document I will refer to what is commonly called "donor-conception" by the more accurate term "stranger conception", i.e. the creation of the biological child of two people who have never met.

What is commonly called a "donor" is more accurately described by the term "stranger-father" or "stranger-mother", jointly "stranger-parents".

Personal submission : Inquiry into donor conception in Australia

I am a 27-year-old stranger-conceived man from the United Kingdom, and to the best of my knowledge I am the luckiest such person in this country.

Four months ago I met my stranger-father (hereafter referred to as my father, for that is indeed what he is) at a social event organised for stranger-conceived people and stranger-parents. At the time I did not know he was my father. This fact was only confirmed several weeks later by a DNA test.

I do not know of any other stranger-conceived person in this country who has identified their stranger-father whilst he was still alive.

Six years ago I learned that I was stranger-conceived. Since that point I had been suffering daily with the knowledge that I had been deliberately deprived of a relationship with my true father. I had been deliberately separated from my grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. The sense of loss, anguish and bafflement about my own identity were overwhelming. I had become terrified every time I looked in the mirror and saw someone staring back at me who I didn't recognise.

Having found my father I now finally have a chance to deal with these issues, to form a relationship with my father and come to terms with what has been done to me.

It is absolutely unthinkable that the law should support depriving people of knowledge of their father or mother; it is unjust that existing records of paternity and maternity are withheld from stranger-conceived people; and it is beneath human dignity that any human being should start their life as the result of a financial transaction between his or her parents.

There are three steps that every legislative body must take to correct this historic injustice:

1. "Donor" anonymity must be revoked. All people born as the result of regulated "treatments" must be granted the right to discover who their natural parents are.

2. The revocation of anonymity must be applied retrospectively. It must be understood that creating human beings to be deliberately deprived of access to their biological parents was unacceptable in the first place. The interests of these human beings are paramount since they played no role in the decision, and they must be granted access to identifying information about their biological parents should they wish to receive it.

3. Payment for "donation" of gametes must be forbidden. Payment demeans the dignity of the people created from those gametes.