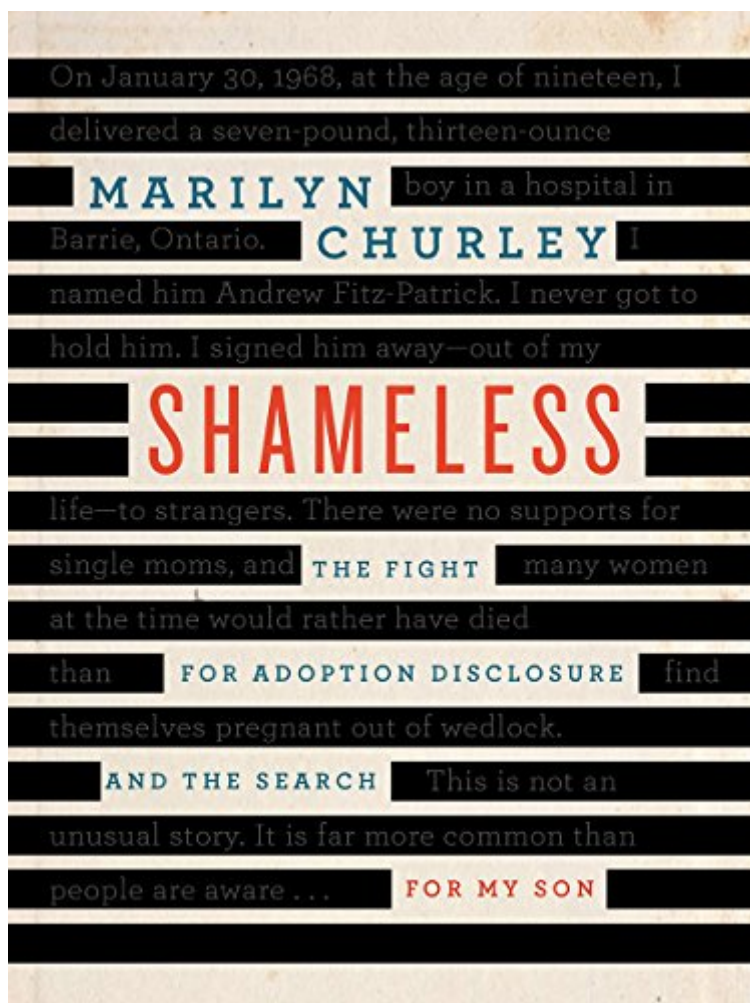


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# Shameless: The Fight For Adoption Disclosure And The Search For My Son



## Synopsis

In the late 1960s, at the age of eighteen and living far from home amidst the thriving counterculture of Ottawa, Marilyn Churley got pregnant. Like thousands of other women of the time she kept the event a secret. Faced with few options, she gave the baby up for adoption. Over twenty years later, as the Ontario NDP government's minister responsible for all birth, death, and adoption records, including those of her own child, Churley found herself in a surprising and powerful position – fully engaged in the long and difficult battle to reform adoption disclosure laws and find her son. Both a personal and political story, *Shameless* is a powerful memoir about a mother's struggle with loss, love, secrets, and lies – and an adoption system shrouded in shame.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Shameless" is a book that puts the myriad of naively well intentioned but ill-written birthmother memoirs to shame. Marilyn Churley provides a fascinating insight into Canadian politics and the journey of a mother who surrendered a child for adoption in the years when this was virtually an enforced choice for unwed mothers in North America. Her courage as a well-respected public figure

willing to wear the Scarlet Letter of an unwed mother to seek justice for all mothers and adoptees shines through. It is a story that starts at the low point in a woman's life, then rises to victory through sheer courage and determination to right a wrong. Her story as an unwed mother of the 60s is very familiar to those of us who also lived it, but unknown to the larger world, as silence was the price we were supposed to pay for respectability after surrender. The plight of the single pregnant girl in this era was harrowing and heartbreaking. Marilyn evokes these awful days with skill and sympathy. So many of us in the late 60s were taken in by the idea of "free love" that was not so free when the consequence was pregnancy with no wedding ring. Marilyn's subsequent story of her rise in Canadian politics and eventual reunion with her son is exciting and instructive to anyone anywhere working to reform adoption legislation. Even when viciously attacked by opponents of openness in adoption law, Marilyn maintained her dignity and determination to see the battle through, and was finally victorious. Her intelligent and articulate recounting of this tale is a joy to read, and very instructive about the way the political process works.

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