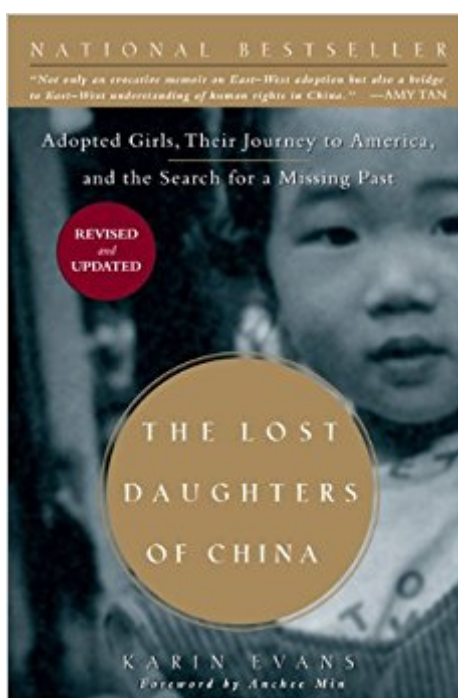


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# The Lost Daughters Of China: Adopted Girls, Their Journey To America, And The Search For a Missing Past



## Synopsis

In 1997 journalist Karin Evans walked into an orphanage in southern China and met her new daughter, a beautiful one-year-old baby girl. In this fateful moment Evans became part of a profound, increasingly common human drama that links abandoned Chinese girls with foreigners who have traveled many miles to complete their families. At once a compelling personal narrative and an evocative portrait of contemporary China, *The Lost Daughters of China* has also served as an invaluable guide for thousands of readers as they navigated the process of adopting from China. However, much has changed in terms of the Chinese government's policies on adoption since this book was originally published and in this revised and updated edition Evans addresses these developments. Also new to this edition is a riveting chapter in which she describes her return to China in 2000 to adopt her second daughter who was nearly three at the time. Many of the first girls to be adopted from China are now in the teens (China only opened its doors to adoption in the 1990s), and this edition includes accounts of their experiences growing up in the US and, in some cases, of returning to China in search of their roots. Illuminating the real-life stories behind the statistics, *The Lost Daughters of China* is an unforgettable account of the red thread that winds from China's orphanages to loving families around the globe.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*The Lost Daughters of China* is that rare book that can be many things to different people. Part memoir, part travelogue, part East-West cultural commentary, and part adoption how-to, Karin

Evans's book is greater than the sum of its parts. Evans weaves together her experience of adopting a Chinese infant with observations about Chinese women's history and that country's restrictive, if unevenly enforced, reproductive policies. She and her husband adopted Kelly Xiao Yu in 1997, and anyone curious about adopting from a Chinese orphanage--which houses girls and disabled boys--will learn about the mechanics and the emotional freight of the two-year process. Borrowing an image from Chinese folklore, Evans conveys herself, her husband, and their daughter as tethered by a red string that yoked them across an ocean and an equally awesome cultural divide. The elegant prose is spiced with bits of ironic cultural dissonance. A discount shopper, Evans "felt more than a little strange buying China-made [baby] clothes with which to bundle up a tiny baby, one of China's own, and bring her home." On a bus tour through southern China, she is one of a "bunch of Americans with Chinese infants singing 'Que Sera Sera' in the middle of a sea of traffic. Will she be happy? Will she be rich?" To suddenly hear Doris Day over the horns of a Kowloon traffic jam is heady stuff indeed. *The Lost Daughters of China* is at its best when describing Evans's tally of emotional loss and gain. At one point the bureaucratic adoption process is unaccountably delayed, but her father dies during that time and she's able to sit by his bedside. The most mysterious example of this emotional calculus is Kelly's birth mother. Evans invents many plausible scenarios that caused this unknown woman to abandon her three-month-old daughter at a market. These incomplete, necessarily provisional stories help give a face to the larger cultural processes that compel new parents to abandon 1.7 million girl babies annually. The stuff of headlines--human rights, infanticide, rural and urban poverty--is rendered personally relevant in Evans's compelling book. --Kathi Inman Berens --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

After a 22-month-long adoptive "pregnancy" filled with heaps of paperwork, a U.S.-China liaison rang Evans and her husband one October evening in 1997 to say, "You have a daughter." According to her Chinese documents, the little girl was "found forsaken." While it is illegal to abandon babies in China, Evans reports that the number of "lost girls" is frighteningly high: "Babies, female babies, it seemed, were found everywhere, every day." Currently more than 18,000 Chinese-born children, predominantly girls, have been adopted by Americans. Evans's first trip to mainland China included the brief whirl of bureaucratic negotiations, sightseeing and eating in restaurants, leading up to her introduction to Kelly Xiao Yu, her year-old adopted daughter. Yet in the author's effort to understand the forces that shaped her daughter's situation, her lack of familiarity with China results in a heavy dependence on such sources as the writings of Confucius

and Jasper Becker's 1997 book, *Hungry Ghosts: Mao's Secret Famine*--and few fresh insights. Evans shines, however, when depicting her new daughter's immediate affection for her and, following their return to the U.S., for the family dog and Harley Davidson motorcycles. In these lovingly wrought sections, devoted to exploring the mysterious process of adoption itself and Evans's quick fall into love with her newly "found" daughter, her narrative is both perceptive and moving. Agent, Barbara Moulton. (May) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book is a wonderful portrait of the Chinese adoption experience from the inside out for the "lost daughters". As an adoptive parent of a Chinese daughter it was particularly powerful for me. Prior to her adoption I had a very different view of the biological mothers and fathers who gave up these special children; after I experienced the process and was in China, I realized what a sacrifice this is for them, how devastating and shattering it is for them. Reading about this experience through their eyes as Ms Evans has written so impactfully, really changes your perspective. Getting a better understanding on generations of the devaluation of females and how its impact is still felt today is something that Westerners have so little experience with, even those who have participated in this process. As a mother of biological children and an adopted child I think every day of the parents of our daughter and what it meant for them to give her up, initially and every day of their lives and also how I will best convey this to her with each passing year of her life. There are no simple explanations and this is no simple task. This book illustrates this like no other I've read to date.

I was interested in this book initially as I have a 13 yo granddaughter who was adopted from China at about the same time the author and her husband adopted their own little girl. Her book is beautifully written and researched and gives a deeply moving history of women and female children in China over the past centuries as well as a thorough account of recent sociological and political conditions that led to so many Americans being able to bring children into lives that were painfully missing the presence of a child. I don't think it is possible to love my granddaughter more but this book has enriched my understanding of the events leading to her becoming adoptable. I was almost moved to tears when I read the amazing introduction, a letter from a Chinese 'Aunt' to all the daughters from China who have been adopted into grateful and loving American families. One can only imagine the thoughts and emotions these beautiful children will experience as they explore their own journey and then place that journey in a greater context with thousands of their Chinese sisters. I only wish that my granddaughter's birth parents could know what a beautiful, talented and

remarkable child she is and that she is happy and loved by a great number of people. Jody M.

I found this book very helpful to understand what the children go through when they are adopted. since we have one of the adopted girls in our family, her beginning here was very traumatizing, but is now s wonderful. She is a two-part of our family

Fascinating insight into the world of Chinese adoption in the US, as well as great information and anecdotes about the issues surrounding the one-child policy and gender preference in China.

As a father of an adopted daughter from China, this as a very good book, and very sad in some areas. Thankful that my daughter was one who God chose to save for us.

How can you sum up the importance of this book except to say that as one who has a beautiful adopted daughter from China, the author and I have walked the same path, asked ourselves the same questions and feel the same joys and pains that go with the successes of adopting. A story beautifully told that helps us all understand the life of our daughters before they came to us, why they were available for us and how to answer so many of the questions that we have and what our daughters will be asking. I tip my hat to a job well done amid many tears. Thank you for putting into words what so many of us cannot.

Very good read

This is still the preeminent resource. I have read so many memoirs, stories, studies and the like in this subject area. I want to be very informed as I have adopted from China. I read this one before I went to China and was awaiting our referral. Some of the material is a tad dated but the essence still holds true. There isn't a better resource to read in my opinion. *The Children Can't Wait* by Laura Cecere is also fabulous but more stilted but well worth your time if you can find a copy. *The Lost Daughters of China* is fabulous and worth your time.

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