



Contact: Laura L. Engel
laurae@cox.net-619-887-3429

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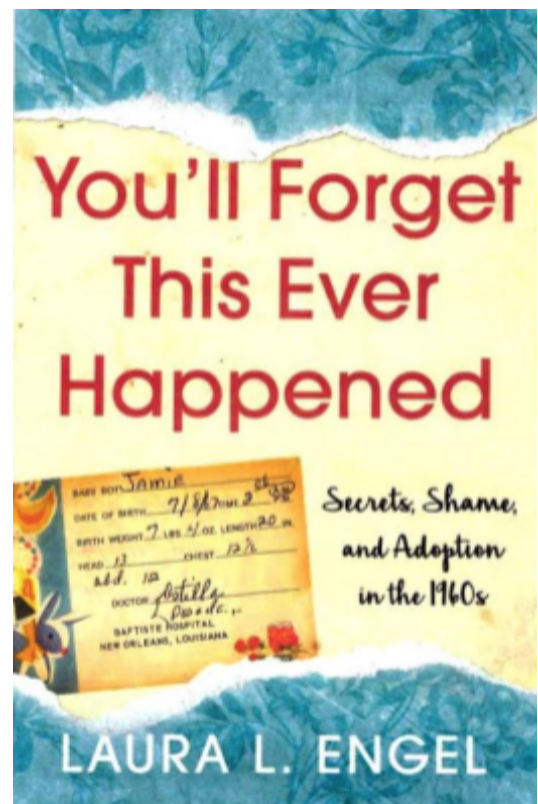
A mother opens up about her traumatic experience after years of hiding a secret she'd never forget

Powerful memoir 'You'll Forget This Ever Happened' sheds light
on the dark truth of adoption in the 1960s

SAN DIEGO, California – Laura L. Engel's memoir, *You'll Forget This Ever Happened* is not just the story of Laura but of thousands of girls and women in the 1960s.

By writing her truth, Laura gives a voice to that seventeen year old girl caught up in a tangle of a secret pregnancy and the relinquishment of her son. Her book is passionate and emotional, yet educates the reader about that time period and the guilt and trauma that women endured. This book delves into how a traumatic secret is never forgotten and colors the secret keeper's life. Laura's book shows how the bursting of this shameful secret colored her life and changed the direction of it in a powerful and positive way.

This book is not only an act of love for Laura's long missed secret son, and the three sons she raised, but for the thousands of adoptees who wonder why they were given up and for the women affected over those decades by the stigma of having a child out of wedlock.





“You’ll Forget This Ever Happened”

Laura Engel | May 10, 2022 | She Writes Press | Memoir

Paperback | 978-164742-349-01 | \$16.95 | eBook | B09CYH7R2V | \$8.99



LAURA ENGEL: Laura L. Engel, born and raised on the Mississippi Gulf Coast transplanted to San Diego over 50 years ago. She is married to the love of her life, Gene, and the mother of five beloved grown children and an adored golden retriever, Layla Louise. Laura is the proud Grammy of 10 cherished grandchildren.

In 2016 Laura retired from a 35-year career in the corporate world with plans to quietly catch up on hobbies and travels with her husband Gene. In October of that year her plans changed when a miracle happened in her life. She soon found herself busier than ever, writing about a secret she thought she would take to her grave.

Along with writing her memoir, Laura holds the office of President of San Diego Memoir Writers Association and is an active member of the International Women Writers Guild, San Diego Writers Ink, San Diego Writers and Editors Guild, and the International Association of Memoir Writers.

Today finds Laura having written her first book, a memoir she never dreamed she would write, *You’ll Forget This Ever Happened - Secrets, Shame, and Adoption in the 1960s* published by She Writes Press and available May 2022.

Follow Laura on social media:

Facebook: [@lauralengelauthor](https://www.facebook.com/lauralengelauthor) | Twitter: [@LauraEngel1](https://twitter.com/LauraEngel1) | Instagram: [@storytellerlaura](https://www.instagram.com/storytellerlaura)



In an interview, Laura can discuss:

- Her personal experience of adoption in the 1960s and her time in the home for unwed mothers when women had no voice, no choice.
- How this early traumatic event shaped her as a young woman.
- The joy of reuniting with family that you never imagined you would see again, and what the journey of finding her son was like.
- How to hold onto hope in the worst of times, and offer support and guidance for those experiencing a similar loss.
- The experience of writing such a personal story, and the feelings it brought up for her as she went through the process of authoring this book.



An Interview with Laura Engel

1. How did losing your son at such a young age shape how you lived the rest of your life?

The trajectory of my life changed dramatically after the traumatic experience of losing my first born son in 1967. It not only affected my self-confidence and belief in who I was, but pushed me into leaving my home and all I knew in order to survive a constant pain and reminder of what had happened. All of my plans changed after leaving New Orleans and I was determined to reinvent myself and create a different life which included moving as far away as I could, marrying, and having more children to keep and love.

2. Do you know of other women who experienced giving up their child during the 1960's? Did they also reunite with their lost children?

Yes, I know birth mothers from that time. Some did reunite. Some chose not to for various reasons. One thing that has been prevalent in all of their stories is the shame, guilt, and secrecy that they still feel fifty years later. Although some did not want to reunite, they all were glad to finally learn where their children were and if they were okay.

3. Did you ever imagine you would reunite with your son?

This is an interesting question for me. Yes and No. From the time I learned I would have to give up my son, I stood my ground and would not change my name,(a thing encouraged at that time - after all the Home said, why would you want to risk your name being attached to this shameful experience?) From the day I entered the Home I hoped my son would find his birth certificate and find me some day. I tried to find him for years but before the internet it was next to impossible as the Louisiana records were sealed.

4. Has writing this book helped you to process the events? How did it feel to look back at all these memories?

It was so painful. I had held that secret inside of me for 50 years. Now, I was writing about it - releasing that pain - telling the world. I dove through all the emotions and relived that



traumatic time in my life and soon emerged a stronger and healthier woman. I would wake in the middle of the night and see the girls at the Home in 1967. I would clearly see their faces and remember their names. I would remember the couple of times I held that baby boy in my arms and I would weep.

5. What advice would you give to your younger self as you reflect on your experiences?

In April 2016 I thought I would never know my secret son and one day I wrote a letter to my seventeen year old self from the older woman I was now. I told that young troubled girl although she thought her life was over that she would go on to have a good life filled with love. I assured her she would get through this time and she needed to forgive herself. I assured her she was loved by me - her much older self. That letter sits in a drawer in my desk today and is included in my memoir. Six months later, my son found me.