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DELIBERATELY DIVIDED

Inside the Controversial Study of Twins and Triplets Adopted Apart
By Nancy L. Segal

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About the Book

In the early 1960s, the head of a prominent New York Cit Child Development Center and a psychiatrist from Columbia University launched a study designed to track the development of twins and triplets given up for adoption and raised by different families. The controversial and disturbing catch? None of the adoptive parents had been told that they were raising a twin—the study's investigators insisted that the separation be kept secret. Here, Nancy Segal reveals the inside stories of the agency that separated the twins, and the collaborating psychiatrists who, along with their cadre of colleagues, observed the twins until they turned twelve. This study, far outside the mainstream of scientific twin research, was not widely known to scholars or the general public until it caught the attention of documentary filmmakers whose recent films, Three Identical Strangers and The Twinning Reaction, left viewers shocked, angered, saddened and wanting to know more.

Interviews with colleagues, friends and family members of the agency's psychiatric consultant and the study's principal investigator, as well as a former agency administrator, research assistants, journalists, ethicists, attorneys, and—most importantly—the twins and their families who were unwitting participants in this controversial study, are riveting. Through records, letters and other documents, Segal further discloses the investigators' attempts to engage other agencies in separating twins, their efforts to avoid media exposure, their worries over informed consent issues in the 1970s and the steps taken toward avoiding lawsuits while hoping to enjoy the fruits of publication. Segal's spellbinding stories of the twins' separation, loss and reunion offers readers the behind-the-scenes details that, until now, have been lost to the archives of history.

About the Author

Nancy L. Segal, PhD, is Professor of Psychology at California State University, Fullerton and Director of the Twin Studies Center. She has authored over 250 scientific articles and six books on twins and twin development—a recent survey placed her among the top 2% of well-cited scientists worldwide. Born in Boston and raised in New York City, she lives in southern California.

Praise for the Book

"The documentary Three Identical Strangers captivated viewers with the story of identical triplets who were separated at birth, studied by psychiatrists, and kept unaware of one another's existence. Deliberately Divided is the inside story of the history and science behind this disturbing event, told by a leading researcher and a gifted expositor."—Steven Pinker, Johnstone Professor of Psychology, Harvard University, and author of The Blank Slate and Rationality

"Before reading Deliberately Divided it never occurred to me that a book on the study of twins could be a gripping drama. Yet here, Nancy Segal, herself a professor of psychology (and a twin), writes so movingly about an unfortunate twin study that deliberately left many twins to grow up apart. Was this disruption of human lives worth the cost just to learn something about human nature? I was on the edge of my seat waiting to find out what happened when the long-separated twins found each other later in life. This is one of the most educational and entertaining books on psychology I've ever read."—Elizabeth F. Loftus, distinguished professor, University of California, Irvine and former president, Association for Psychological Science

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