

Your 'real father'

Michael Sean Winters | Jun. 18, 2009 NCR Today

On the way to the library just now, Diane Rehm had as her guest Lennard Davis who has a new book out about discovering [who his biological father was](#) [1].

Mr. Davis is, of course, entitled to live his own life, ask his own questions, and the such. But he and Ms. Rehm continually used the term "real father" to designate one's "biological father." A woman called in and said that she was not raised by her biological parents but that her real parents were the ones who taught her, tolerated her, loved her. Mr. Davis waved off her point with the observation that we humans are inquisitive beings.

Indeed we are. But, Mr. Davis seems not to grasp the very profound point this woman was making and both he and Ms. Rehm continued to use the obnoxious phrases "real father" and "real parent" when they were referring to biological parents who had largely been absent from their progeny's psycho-social development. He seems not very inquisitive about what might make a human being human, apart from a certain manner of clustering DNA.

If I were a parent who had adopted a child, I would have been incensed by this program. I also would make sure that my child did not hear it, or if he or she did, that we would have a discussion about what "real" means in this regard. I cannot imagine the hurt of an adoptive parent whose child might, in a fit of anger, scream, "You're not my real dad!"

Among all the many blessings I have received, at the top of the list (alongside my faith) is that I was born to Felix and Claire Winters. I am delighted I have their genes. But, I am even more delighted that they loved me and taught me and nurtured me. They still do. My dad in our almost daily phone calls and frequent visits and my mom with her intercessions from heaven. I second the words of e.e. cummings: "I am first the son of my parents and whatever is happening to him."

It is an axiom of sacramental theology that Christians are made not born. So are parents.

Source URL (retrieved on 07/27/2017 - 02:04): <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/your-real-father>

Links:

[1] <http://wamu.org/programs/dr/09/06/18.php#25909>