

I am part of the first generation of people conceived by gamete donation in France. In 2006, no one in Europe had ever publicly spoken out about the need to know one's origins (co-author of "Born of unknown spermatozoa..." published by Presses de la Renaissance, 2008). I was also lucky enough to be the first person to have found the gamete donor who conceived me thanks to a DNA test (Co-author of "Le fils" (the son), published by Iconoclaste, 2018).

The procedure for doing this is simplistic. All you have to do is order a DNA test on the internet. It cost me about 100 euros and I received it in two days. We are asked to spit saliva into a tube and 3 weeks later the results are displayed on the website interface. The company 23andme proposes that my DNA be compared with that of all the other users of the site. Using this method, I discovered the profile of Laura, a Londoner with whom I share 6% of DNA. I contacted her immediately. We called that evening and she immediately told me she understood my need to know the identity of my donor. She repeated several times, "It's basic, it's basic". She didn't know that one of her family members was a donor and she was amused! The next morning, 12 hours after I had spoken to her on the phone, she sent me a message that read: "I know who your biological father is, call me". I had a first and last name. From there the investigation could begin. I found his address by deduction and thanks to certain websites that also allow you to find those who are on the red list. Laura had told me that this family lived in the Yonne, so I started to look for my donor in the area. Then I had to develop a technique to approach him, but that's another story. I had finally found my donor, but I still had no photo of him except for one that Laura had sent me of him when he was 10 years old. I couldn't wait. Very often I was asked what I called my donor, I call him Gérard: he is my genitor and I am one of his offspring, quite simply.

I always knew that I had a father, a mother AND a donor and that my two sisters and I were conceived with three different donors. We still had a form of secrecy because our parents forbade us to talk about it outside the family, to protect us they said.

Since I was very young I have been thinking about this issue. I have had a hard time being placed in situations of need in many ways. Indeed, not knowing my family history has put me in a situation of medical necessity. I would later discover that my donor is a carrier of a serious genetic abnormality. It is also a public health issue, because not knowing which genetic family I come from can increase the risk of inbreeding. How many times have I thought to myself, "I hope this girl is not my sister or a close cousin..."?

I have also felt placed in a situation of existential necessity: answering the question of origins is a major philosophical question and very cumbersome for those who want to ask it. Aren't we all already dealing with the question of the origins of life? Do we need to add questions to questions? I was very distressed by the abyssal void in which we have been left.

France intervenes with women who ask to be able to give birth secretly, because they are in a situation of need (financial, social, family etc.). They are in need at a given moment. Once the secret birth has taken place, their state of need ceases. For children, the anonymity of their origins is *Ad Vitam Æternam* – that is forever. This is unjust.

Why did we create the association Origins (www.associationorigines.com)? Its objective is to contribute to the public debate in a constructive way with a clearly progressive position. We set ourselves the goal of improving things on both the human and technical levels. Our method consists of systematically proposing a realistic legislative solution. Indeed, we have noticed that on bioethics issues, it is a bit like psychoanalysis, when we talk about bioethics or psychoanalysis, when we talk about ourselves without knowing it. This contributes to the tension between the subjects. In 15 years of fighting, we have heard a lot of radical statements.

We had placed a lot of hope in the revision of France's bioethics law that was voted on recently. Even if it contains important advances, we must recognise that this revision is far from sufficient. I would even go so far as to say that it may not prevent France from being condemned by the European Court of Human Rights in Audrey's appeal.

We have been asking for several years that all future donors agree to be identifiable. This will now be the case.

It was very important for us that former donors could be questioned in the event of a request from a person resulting from their donation seeking identity – are you open to contact. We have been heard on this point and it is a great victory.

However, these former donors will not know in advance to whom they are saying yes or no: they will not know the state of mind of the people resulting from their donation or even their number! We would have liked a system that would allow former donors to make a more informed decision and that would have allowed those who initially refuse to lift their anonymity to be able to change their minds after having taken the time to get to know each other anonymously.

We would also have liked a more open system, so that these former donors would not be faced with a binary choice: either to agree to reveal their identity or not to be able to transmit any information apart from the non-identifying information collected in the files several years ago and therefore very often obsolete. A donor who has fallen ill years after his donation will have to reveal his identity if he wishes to pass on this information to the people born of his donation. With the anonymous matchmaking platform we proposed, a donor could have chosen to remain anonymous, at least initially, and would have wished to make known at least his updated medical history. Above all, he could have taken the time to get to know the person resulting from his donation anonymously and then possibly change his mind and agree to meet him. This contact platform would have allowed everyone to take the time to get to know each other gradually, which may be desired by both the donor and the person resulting from his donation. Some former donors are afraid of having their anonymity lifted, and it is for them that the platform could have been most suitable. We were not heard on this point.

This is all the more regrettable as donors (former or future) will still not have the right to know how many people were born from their donation and parents who have resorted to donation will still not have any information on donors, not even their medical history, even though the proper medical care of their child depends on it. We would have liked to have seen the possibility of donor information being made available to the donor during his or her minority if he or she needed it before the age of 18. This would have been possible via the anonymous matchmaking platform we proposed.

We also very much regret that nothing has been foreseen for the "old regime" donors who have died: the persons resulting from their donation will still have no legal right of access to the knowledge of their origins. This raises the question of the conformity of French legislation with the European Convention on Human Rights.

Furthermore, nothing has been put in place to allow the identification of diblings (people from the same donor).

Finally, nothing has been done to recognise the leading role of DNA testing. This is a pity because it is currently through this illegal process that people find their donors, deceased or not.