

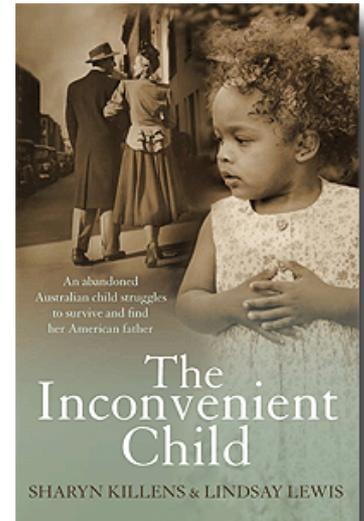
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BRUTAL BEGINNINGS, COURAGE AND A DREAM, AND A HAPPY ENDING

Childhood abuse, abandonment, beatings, maternal rejection, scandalous treatment under the guise of care in notorious juvenile institutions and life on the streets of Kings Cross are just part of the extraordinary tapestry that is the life of Australian singer and entertainer, Sharyn Crystal.

This is not your usual celebrity biography. *The Inconvenient Child* is a gritty account of **Sharyn Killens'** life, beginning as an abandoned Australian black child and her struggle to survive in an often hostile white society, her journey to success as singer **Sharyn Crystal**, then her quest to find her African-American father on the other side of the world.

The story begins in Sydney 1948, when the baby Sharyn is rescued from squalid foster care by visiting champion African-American boxer Freddie Dawson and taken to live in a 'party house' in the red light district of The Cross. The nightclubs of the Trocadero and the Booker T Washington Club featured in the life of her blue-eyed blond Australian mother, whose illicit liaison with the visiting handsome black American serviceman produced Sharyn. But illegitimate children, particularly of mixed race, were shunned in post World War II Australia. So her mother did all she could to distance herself from her inconvenient child.



At age five, Sharyn was abandoned in a convent-orphanage where she suffered abuse at the hands of a cruel nun. By fifteen, after clashes over her father's undisclosed identity, the troubled disillusioned teenager was arrested in Kings Cross as a runaway.

Deemed 'uncontrollable' by the Court, she was sentenced to six months in the notorious juvenile prison of Parramatta Girls Home. Not conforming to the harsh conditions, she was then transported to Hay Girls Institution, where she was stripped of her dignity and suffered brutal and inhumane punishment.

"This gripping biography is a mixture of shameful and dehumanizing treatment combined with a rich combination of gutsy and courageous choices," says co-Author Lindsay Lewis. "What drives Sharyn is her undying love for the mother who showed her little or no love and a visceral urge to find her identity."

Sharyn's desperate quest to find her roots catapulted her into a journey of vulnerability and degradation, exacerbated ten fold by the clashes over the secret her mother refused to reveal – the identity of her father. But as irony would have it, the challenges of her life produced qualities of determination, courage and perseverance.

Her salvation lay in music and her overwhelming dream to become a singer. It took her on a journey through the night clubs of Sydney and onto luxury Cruise ship stages throughout the Pacific.

Sharyn's final triumph over the cards life dealt her, transported her to New York, Los Angeles then North Carolina on a quest to find her African-American father and her heritage. How she gets there and what she discovered en route makes for riveting reading.

The Inconvenient Child charts Sharyn Killens' life from its shocking beginning, through her colourful and sometimes desperate times in Kings Cross, her success in the Australian music industry to the eventual discovery of a remarkable African-American family and her American slavery roots. Sharyn's story may alarm many who consider us a tolerant society. But most of all it stands as a testament to the courage and passion of one woman who so easily could have faded into oblivion.

To arrange an interview with Sharyn Killens and co-Author Lindsay Lewis, or for more information, please contact: Miracle Publishing on (02) 9460-8050 or 0429-998-885

eMail to: lindsay@miraclepublishing.com.au

Website: www.TheInconvenientChild.com

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