

Marina Chapman. (2013). The Girl with No Name: The True Story of a Girl Who Lived with Monkeys. Vancouver: Greystone Books.

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Marina Chapman's book, "The Girl with No Name", is a collection of real events brought together to explore the idea of family in greater detail. In her book, Chapman recounts her own childhood by reflecting on her unusual and traumatic past. As Chapman contrasts her life among the capuchin monkeys from aspects of her human life, she begins her discussion of the subjective meaning of the family structure. She captures the essence of the human spirit and the value of family through the recollection of her childhood. Since the story is told from the perspective of Chapman, she provides the reader in the vivid details of her emotional experiences. In doing so, the author creates a world the reader can experience for themselves. The book is separated into two parts: (1) her life with the monkeys in the Columbian jungle; and (2) her return to human civilization.

Although her childhood is vague in her memory, Chapman recounts her unforgettable transition of human to monkey life. Early on in the chapters, the book introduces a lasting theme of loss and heartbreak. Chapman was torn away from her family at a young age (specifics are unclear in memory), explaining that she was kidnapped from her village and abandoned in the Columbian jungle. From there, the story unfolds, "No one came. The day passed, as did the next day, and the one after that, and still there was no sign of my parents. There was no sign of anyone" (p. 39). As Chapman's hope faded, she eventually stumbled across a new family; a

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troop of capuchin monkeys. Chapman shows incredible resilience throughout her struggles and considers living in an alternative way to was familiar to her. Moreover, after watching the monkeys live and interact with one another, she realizes that they are not much different from the human family she remembers. As her time in the jungle continued, Chapman began to feel a sense of security within her new family, “bit by bit, my sense of loneliness and abandonment began to fade...with the comforting, familiar sound of the monkeys up above me, I was gradually turning into one of them” (p. 52). Humans, among other species, yearn for acceptance and belonging. It is critical for a species, not only for survival but to fulfil that emotional need. Lost without her security, Chapman found a new home in the Columbian jungle, far away from what was familiar.

To study the important value of family, Chapman illustrates her life within an animalistic family structure as well as within her human experiences. Starting off in part one of the book, the author provides insight into her own transition into the life of a monkey. Among the monkeys, Chapman found refuge and a new-found sense of community, “No longer was I just a tolerated outsider; it felt as if I was becoming a real part of the troop, which made the ache lodged in my heart that tiny bit more bearable” (p. 53). Slowly losing her human qualities, Chapman essentially took on monkey-like characteristics: lost human speech, ate what monkeys ate, and eventually became feral. According to Chapman, this monkey troop was the only reference to family she remembered from her childhood. This family stood as a comparison to the experiences she faced within her later years:

I learned a valuable lesson that day. And an enduring one, too, because it resonates with me still. Family is not just about who you appear to belong to, or what it says on your birth certificate, or who you look like...Family is found anywhere you are loved and cared for (p. 89).

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In contrast, throughout part two of her book, Chapman's story progresses to a return to human life. After living in the jungle amongst the monkeys for around five years, Chapman finds herself among a group of 'hunters', as she references them, who sell her into slavery. She was sold into a brothel in the city of Cúcuta. As the next hardships unfold, she manages to keep her spirit intact. However, the comfort she felt in her jungle home was far away, pushing Chapman back into the depths of loneliness (p. 93). Eventually finding herself in the arms of a loving family, Chapman is once again part of family structure. Although different from her monkey family, she discovers comfort and love from a group once again.

The processes of socialization are at the heart of her book, seeing that the family is the primary system in which individuals learn how to behave. With a new family; the capuchin monkey troop, came new values, norms, and behaviours that were different from human societies. With her new identity, came at the cost of her previous life. Chapman was forced to socialize according to her new family structure, "There would be a big grooming party up in the canopy...it was normal and sociable, part of the bonding process that created such a close and happy family" (p. 102). Chapman discusses the years after living in the jungle and then being sold into slavery was a difficult transition. Now she was forced to forget everything she had previously lived for, consequently changing everything about her new identity.

The use of photographs and personal narratives offer the audience a first-hand view of Chapman's personal battles of hope and endurance as she reveals her story. Her alternative view of the family is an interesting one. Her different experiences of family allow her to magnify and add diversity to the traditional views of family. Her initial search for a life among her own species had become difficult: inevitably isolating herself (p. 133). Proving that family is much more than what we see on the outside. Chapman concludes by offering a definition of family that

Muelderings

is completely subjective, not one derived from biology. The book highlights the importance of family on many aspects of life. Without those connections, individuals will feel lost, regardless of species. She successfully integrates raw emotion within her story, allowing the reader to dive into her life and to bring in our own family experiences and understanding. Similarly, Chapman identifies the underlying forces that shape the family structure, using alternative examples to shape the discussion of family.

Chapman's intended audience would be, sociological disciplines studying different theoretical frameworks regarding the collective, and social psychologists; focusing on the individual level of the family. "The Girl with No Name" is an excellent tool and point of reference for students or professors at universities who are exploring family dynamics. This book provides an individual perspective of the lasting effects of losing family relationships on the social world, as well as on a psychological level.

Chapman delivers a personal narrative of her upbringing and expands on the concept of family; however, her perspective is difficult to relate to. Since her childhood circumstances are so unusual, the story does not resonate as much in everyday life. Additionally, this brings up the question of validity. Chapman is basing her story on her fragmented memory of events, relying heavily on ambiguous evidence-questioning the truthfulness of the story. Having said this, I still found "The Girl with No Name" to be a heartwarming story, with a beautiful lesson attached to it. I believe that other disciplines such as: social work, anthropology, women's studies, philosophy, biology, and other natural sciences could benefit from the book. In conclusion, I found Chapman's writing to be captivating and personable, allowing the reader to fully immerse themselves into her story and in her life.