

# [PDF] Far From The Tree: Parents, Children And The Search For Identity

**Andrew Solomon - pdf download free book**

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**Books Details:**

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Author: Andrew Solomon

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**Description:**

Anyone who's ever said (or heard or thought) the adage "chip off the old block" might burrow into Andrew Solomon's tome about the ways in which children are different from their parents--and what such differences do to our conventional ideas about family. Ruminative, personal, and reportorial all at once, Solomon--who won a National Book Award for his treatise on depression, *The Noonday Demon*--begins by describing his own experience as the gay son of heterosexual parents, then goes

on to investigate the worlds of deaf children of hearing parents, dwarves born into “normal” families, and so on. His observations and conclusions are complex and not easily summarized, with one exception: The chapter on children of law-abiding parents who become criminals. Solomon rightly points out that this is a very different situation indeed: “to be or produce a schizophrenic...is generally deemed a misfortune,” he writes. “To...produce a criminal is often deemed a failure.” Still, parents must cope with or not, accept or not, the deeds or behaviors or syndromes of their offspring. How they do or do not do that makes for fascinating and disturbing reading. --Sara Nelson

**From** \*Starred Review\* Solomon, who won the National Book Award for *The Noonday Demon* (2001), tackles daunting questions involving nature versus nurture, illness versus identity, and how they all affect parenting in his exhaustive but not exhausting exploration of what happens when children bear little resemblance to their parents. He begins by challenging the very concept of human reproduction. We do not reproduce, he asserts, spawning clones. We produce originals. And if we’re really lucky, our offspring will be enough like us or our immediate forebears that we can easily love, nurture, understand, and respect them. But it’s a crapshoot. More often than not, little junior will be born with a long-dormant recessive gene, or she may emerge from the womb with her very own, brand-new identifier—say, deafness, physical deformity, or homosexuality. Years of interviews with families and their unique children culminate in this compassionate compendium. Solomon focuses on the creative and often desperate ways in which families manage to tear down prejudices and preconceived fears and reassemble their lives around the life of a child who alters their view of the world. Most succeed. Some don’t. But the truth Solomon writes about here is as poignant as it is implacable, and he leaves us with a reinvented notion of identity and individual value. --Donna Chavez

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