



For Immediate Release

## KIDS' RIGHTS: THE BUSINESS OF ADOPTION

# KIDS' R!GHTS

THE BUSINESS OF ADOPTION

Sir Elton John • David Furnish • Dove Pelzer • Paul R. Erdlich  
Jason De Parle • Francesca Polini • Janet M. Currie • James Cheu



EVERY CHILD DESERVES A GOOD PARENT.



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Featuring Sir Elton John and his partner David Furnish

Coming to DVD May 20 with On Demand Platforms in June

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LOS ANGELES, CA (May 5, 2014) In 2009, filmmakers Michael Dudko and Olga Rudnieva were on hand to witness the failed adoption attempt of Sir Elton John and his partner David Furnish; the couple sought to adopt an HIV-positive boy named Lev from an orphanage in the Ukraine. Under Ukrainian law, [unmarried people are not allowed to adopt children](#). They were turned down by government officials but the experience inspired Rudnieva and Dudko to make a documentary film that explored the complicated process of adoption. KIDS' RIGHTS: THE BUSINESS OF ADOPTION will become available on DVD as of May 20, 2014 followed by online streaming platforms.

Rudnieva and Dudko, both Ukrainian nationals, began their investigation by researching the parameters for adoption in New York City where they lived. Says Dudko, "Based on the amount of paperwork, thirty hours of parenting courses and a vigorous home study assessment, we began to wonder if we were competent enough to even become parents. And then we asked: if most people are required to just have sex in order to have a child, is that in the child's best interest?"

This set them on a course to research the process-- domestic and international, through private agencies and the child welfare and foster care systems--which included going undercover into an adoption agency to discover the cost to adopt a white baby was significantly more than to adopt a child of color. Their investigations paint a picture in which the private adoption process is fueled by profits and the state-supported child welfare systems (in the US and abroad) are beleaguered and not necessarily governed by what might be best for the child. With only one in 523 kids worldwide successfully adopted, they were surprised to learn that in the UK it is illegal for interracial adoption (either an interracial couple or to adopt

a child of differing ethnicity) and how child trafficking prevention laws have inadvertently stymied international adoptions.

For the film they traveled to Eastern Europe, China, Nepal, the UK and US and interviewed **Elton John** and **David Furnish**, who have since had two sons via surrogacy; **David Pelzer**, who was partially raised in a foster home and is best known for his best-selling 1995 memoir about child abuse, *A Child Called 'It'*; the UK's **Francesca Polini**, who adopted a Mexican baby but struggled with the UK's adoption laws thus founding [Adopt a Better Way](#); a lawyer, **Mary Beth-Feindt**, who specializes Law Guardian and child advocacy; and **Paul R. Ehrlich**, the Bing Professor of Population Studies at Stanford University, who is best known for the book *The Population Bomb*.

OFFICIAL TRAILER: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHrrkDw2o>

SYNOPSIS: Adopting a child means undergoing rigorous assessment marked by bureaucracy, paperwork and, often, an outlay of cash. Filmmakers Michael Dudko and Olga Rudnieva ask themselves if they are fit for parenthood after they personally witness Sir Elton John and David Furnish's failure to adopt. Their investigation of the regulations, cultural prejudices, and child trafficking policies behind the process takes them from the slums of Ukraine, through China, and the US. They speak with prospective parents, social workers, lawyers, psychologists, and adoption agencies to find a flawed system that allows millions of orphans to languish in foster care and learn that children lack the most basic human rights.

The 94 minute documentary will become available in North America on May20 on DVD (at traditional DVD retail outlets) and On Demand platforms (Amazon Instant, Hulu and Cinema Libre On Demand) to follow one month later (June 20, 2014). It is currently [available for educational use](#).

TECHNICAL DETAILS: USA | Documentary | Unrated | 94 mins | Directed by Michael Dudko and Olga Rudnieva  
DVD DETAILS: CLS 1192 | 881394119222 | SRP: \$ 19.95

#### DIGITAL ASSETS:

Website: [www.kidsrightsdocumentary.com](http://www.kidsrightsdocumentary.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/kidsrightsdocumentary>

Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eV4vbVa9qU>

Poster: <http://cinemalibrestudio.com/clscatalog/2014/kids-rights-key-art-final-72-dpi.jpg>

**ABOUT CINEMA LIBRE:** Cinema Libre Studio is a leader in distributing social-issue documentaries and features by passionate filmmakers. Headquartered in Los Angeles, the Cinema Libre team has released over one hundred films including the Sundance Audience Award-Winning FUEL, THE END OF POVERTY?, Rachid Bouchareb's LONDON RIVER and Oliver Stone's SOUTH OF THE BORDER. The studio is in pre-production on John Perkins' best-selling memoirs, CONFESSIONS OF AN ECONOMIC HIT MAN, into a major motion picture. For more information and updates, please visit: [www.cinemalibrestudio.com](http://www.cinemalibrestudio.com) | [Updates](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#).

**For screener or interviews, please contact press (at) cinemalibrestudio (dot) com, ph: 323-785-1585**