ADOPTION: SECRET HISTORIES, PUBLIC POLICIES

Alliance for the Study of Adoption and Culture
2010 Conference Program, MIT

Thursday 4/29/2010

10-6pm Registration and Book Exhibits List Atrium
10:30-12:15 Plenary: Adoption in Documentary Film I
Chair: TBA
Screening: Moms Living Clean, with discussion. Bartos Theatre
Sheila Ganz, writer, filmmaker, San Francisco
12:15-1 Lunch
1-2:45 Plenary: Adoption in Documentary Film II
Chair: TBA
Screening: For the Life of Me, with discussion. Bartos Theatre
Jean Strauss, filmmaker and author, Lubbock, Texas
3:00-4:00 Screening and installation: Translating Hiraeth, with discussion. Bartos Theatre
Judy Durey, installation artist, Murdoch University, Western Australia
4:15-5:30 Screening: A Man Without Culture Is Like a Zebra Without Stripes. Bartos Theatre
Ann Somers, Preparation Center for International Adoption, Belgium
5:30-6 Reception List Atrium
6-7:30 Dinner
7:30-9:30 Keynote Address: Title TBA Bartos Theatre
Chair: TBA

Friday 4/30/2010

8am-12pm Registration and Book Exhibits TBA
9:00am Welcome
9:10-10:25 Keynote Address: Title TBA 32-124
Chair: TBA
10:40-12:00 Plenary: Birthmothers Speak 32-124
Chair: TBA
Karen McElmurray, Georgia College and State University
Meredith Hall, University of New Hampshire
Kate Livingston, University of Cincinnati
12:00-1:00 Lunch

NB: all room locations are tentative 1 last revised: 1/14/10
1:00-2:30  **Plenary: Secrecy and Policy**  56-114
Chair: TBA
“Birthmothers: Objects of Others’ Desires.”
Elizabeth Samuels, University of Baltimore School of Law
"Sealed Records: Who is Being Protected--and Against Whom?"
Adam Pertman, Director, Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute
“The ART of Family Connection.”
Naomi Cahn, George Washington University Law School

2:45-4:15  Concurrent sessions

**A. Lesbian/gay Secrecy Issues and Adoption**  56-180
Chair: TBA
Bruno Perreau, Sciences Po, Paris
“Public Triumphs and Disavowed Secrets: Developing a Queer Ethics of Adoption.”
Jessica Petocz, University of Minnesota
“Closet Within My Closet: Growing Up Gay and Adopted.”
Michael Potter, University of Iowa

**B. Complications of Search, Reunion, and Aftermath**  56-167
Chair: TBA
“Adoptions Neither Open nor Closed: Ambiguous Secrecies in Adoption Narratives by Waldron and Hopgood.”
Margaret Homans, Yale University
“Seven Adopted American Women’s Memoirs of Reunion and its Aftermath.”
Marianne Novy, University of Pittsburgh
“The Age of Search and Reunion.”
Betty Jean Lifton, psychotherapist, Cambridge, Mass.

**C. Transnational Adoption as Immigration Policy**  56-160
Chair: TBA
“Adoption and (as) Immigration: Exceptions, Parallels, and Dilemmas.”
Sara Dorow, University of Alberta
“"They’re Cute When They’re Young”: Adoption and the ‘Racelessness’ of Babies.”
Karen Dubinsky, Queen’s University
“U.S. Immigration Policy and the Embrace of Transnational Adoption in the 1950s and 1960s.”
Karen Balcom, McMaster University

4:30-6  **Keynote Address:**  Title TBA  32-123
Chair: Sally Haslanger, MIT
Anita L. Allen, Henry R. Silverman Professor of Law and Professor of Philosophy, University of Pennsylvania Law School, author of *Privacy Law and Society* (2007).

6:00-7:30  Dinner
7:30-9:30  **An Evening of Creative Writing and Performance**
Chair: TBA
“Parallel Tracks.”
Martha Gelarden, Moore College of Art, Philadelphia; birthmother
Adam Lazar, artist, Chicago; adoptee

[Title TBA]
Ned Balbo, writer, Loyola University, Maryland; adoptee

[Title TBA]
Rosemary Starace, poet, Pittsfield, MA; adoptee

“Whose Records Are They Anyway?”
Craig Hickman, performance artist, activist, Annabessacook Farm, Maine; adoptee

“Ungrateful Daughter.”
Lisa Marie Rollins, activist, Adopted and Fostered Adults of the African Diaspora, UC Berkeley; adoptee

**Saturday 5/1**

9-6  Book Exhibits, Registration, Information
9-10:30  Concurrent Sessions

**A. Secrecy and Adoption: Historical Perspectives on the U.S., Europe, and Asia after World War II**
Chair and commentator: Barbara Yngvesson, Hampshire College

“How to Handle a Birthparent: From Local Practice to International Policy in Early Intercountry Adoption, 1948-1960.”
Heide Fehrenbach, Northern Illinois University

“A agencies of Adoption in Britain and Germany after the Second World War until the 1960s.”
Benedikt Stuchtey, German Historical Institute, London, UK

“Jean Paton, Illegitimacy and the Problem of Sealed Adoption Records: A Surprising History.”
E. Wayne Carp, Pacific Lutheran University

Carol Singley, Rutgers University-Camden, commentator

**B. Writing and Publishing about Adoption**
**Note new time for this panel**
Chair: TBA

“Editing Adoption & Culture.”
Emily Hipchen, University of West Georgia

“Writing Adoption in a Digital Age.”
Liberty Hultberg, **University of Pittsburgh**

“The Ethics of Writing Memoirs about Adoption.”
Martha Nichols, Harvard University Extension, freelance writer
C. Adoption, Secrecy, Visibility

Chair: TBA

“The Quiet Russian: Case Study of Russian Adopted Children in Spain.”
Lilia Khabibullina, University of Barcelona, Spain

“Racial Difference, (In)Visibility, and Popular Representations of Adoption.”
Heather Jacobson, University of Texas, Arlington

“Secrecy in Constructions of Adoptability.”
Sonja Van Wichelen, Pembroke Center, Brown University

“Secrecy, Adoption and Respect.”
Jason Grinnell, Buffalo State University

10:45-12:15 Concurrent Sessions

A. Adoption in Film

Chair: TBA

“The Horror of Adoption: The Mother, the Other and the Other Mother in The Ring/The Ring 2, Silent Hill, The Abandoned and The Orphan.”
Kim Park Nelson, Minnesota State University at Moorhead

“What Kinds of Secrets? The Will to Knowledge in Philipe Claudel’s Il y a longtemps que je t’aime.”
Anja Michaelson, Ruhr-University Research School, Germany

“Adoption and the Movies: One Adopted Person’s Perspective.”
Joyce Maguire Pavao, Center For Family Connections, Cambridge, MA

B. Birthmothers: Agency and Activism

Chair: TBA

Title TBA
Hosu Kim, College of Staten Island

“Recovering Jocasta: Bio-essentialism and Agency in Discourse about Birthmothers.”
Frances Latchford, York University

"A History of Birthmother Activism 1976-2010"
Maryanne Cohen, Concerned United Birthparents, New Jersey

C. Adoption and Culture in 18th-19th c. England and the US

Chair: TBA

Carol Singley, Rutgers University-Camden

“The Culture of Adoption in the Early Nineteenth Century Novel and Society: Family Portraits in the Life and Novels of Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen.”
Sue Howard, Duquesne University

“The ‘Delicate Investigation,’ State Censorship, and Adoption Narrative.”
Eric Walker, Florida State

12:15-1:15 Lunch
1:15-2:45  **Gays, Lesbians and Adoption**
Chair: TBA
Marla Brettschneider, Political Science, University of New Hampshire
John Raible, Education, University of Nebraska
Sarah Tobias, International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission

3-4:30  Concurrent Sessions

**A. Biological Preference Critiqued and Analyzed**
Chair: Sally Haslanger, MIT
“Unknown Origins: Blood, Secrecy, and African Taboos about Formal Adoption.”
Kristen Cheney, University of Dayton
“Reproducing Bastards: The Figure of the Adoptee in Arguments against Anonymous Gamete Donation.”
Kimberly Leighton, American University
“Preferring a Child of One’s Own.”
Tina Rulli, Yale University
“Is Biocentric Kinship Necessary?”
Charlotte Witt, University of New Hampshire

**B. Adoption Practices: Analysis and Impact**
Chair: TBA
“Choices and Options: The Role of the Agency in the Adoption Process.”
Liz Raleigh, University of Pennsylvania
“‘Neither Common Sense Nor Justice’: Religious Matching & Adoption in Canada.”
Jenny Gilbert, University of Toronto
“The Nation’s Gardeners: The Interpretation of Heredity Through Adoption Casework.”
Patti Phillips, York University
“Hidden Consequences of the Adoption and Safe Families Of 1997: A Policy Project Addressing The Impact on Incarcerated Mothers”
Susan Castagnetto, Intercollegiate Women's Studies of the Claremont Colleges

**C. Creative Writing on Adoption**
Chair: TBA
From *Walking Towards Everything New: A Russian Adoption Memoir.*
Cassie Kircher, Elon University; adoptive mother
From *If You Were Mine*
Carol LeFevre, University of Adelaide, Australia; adoptive mother
[Title tba]
Jennifer Kwon Dobbs, St. Olaf College; adoptee
From *Lost and Found: A Memoir of Mothers*
Kate Vogl, writer, Loft Literary Center, Plymouth, Minnesota; adoptee
From “The Birthday Party”
Patrick McMahon, writer and activist, San Diego; adoptee

NB: all room locations are tentative
4:30-5:30 ASAC business meeting 56-180
6-7:30 Banquet R&D Commons
7:30-9:30 **Keynote Address: (title??)**
  Chair: TBA
  DeAnn Borshay Liem, Filmmaker of *First Person Plural* (2000), and *In the Matter of Cha Jung Hee* (in production)

**Sunday 5/2**

9-10:30 Concurrent Sessions

**A. Transnational and Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Operation Babylift**
  Chair: Karen Balcom, McMaster University
  “The Politics of Orphans: The Vietnam War and Adoption Reform in Canada.”
  Tarah Brookfield, Wilfred Laurier University
  “Politics and the Pawns of War: Operation Babylift in Australia.”
  Joshua Forkert, University of Adelaide, Australia
  “We Shall Never Meet.”
  Aimee Phan, California College of the Arts

**B. Secrecy and Openness: Legal Issues**
  Chair: TBA
  “Preventing Harmful Secrecy: Blood-ties, Best Interests and Veto Victims.”
  Alice Diver, School of Law, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland
  Cindy Baldassi, UBC Faculty of Law
  Letting the Genes Out of the Bottle: Should New Paradigms in Medicine Lead Us to New Paradigms in Adoption?
  Martha Satz, Southern Methodist University
  “ ‘Save Haven’ Laws: Promoting the Culture of Secrets and Shame in an Age of Adoption Openness--Ohio Case Study.”
  Marley Greiner, activist, *Bastard Nation*, Ohio

**C. Adoption and Politics in Contemporary Irish, English, and Swedish Novels**
  Chair: TBA
  “Searching for the ‘I’: The adoption trope in Sebastian Barry's *The Secret Scripture* and Benjamin Black's *Christine Falls*.”
  James M. Smith, Boston College
  “Small Island, Secret Island: Andrea Levy, Adoption and Race in the UK.”
  John McLeod, University of Leeds, UK
  “Secrecy, Openness, and Response in Ninni Holmqvist’s *The Unit*.”
  Claudia C. Nelson, Texas A&M University

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Concurrent Sessions

**A. Adoptive Parents, Race, Difference**

Chair:

“Forever Half Ethiopian: Challenging Cultural and Biological Differences in the Heart of the Family.”
Katrien De Graeve, Ghent University

“Adoption’s Secret and Silence in Spain and/or the Past’s Ghosts.”
Diana Marre, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Andrea Louie, Michigan State University

**B. Secrecy, Openness and Other Ethical Issues for Adoptive Parents**

Chair: TBA

“Personal/Philosophical Reflections on One Open Public Adoption.”
Bonnie Mann, University of Oregon

“Adoptee Vulnerability and Post-Adoptive Parental Obligation.”
Mianna Lotz, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

Samantha Brennan, University of Western Ontario

**C. Transracial Adoption in Contemporary Literature**

**Note new time for this panel.**

Chair: TBA

“Secrecy in Transnational Adoption: Body as a Trope of Alienation and Reunion in Search Narratives.”
Marina Fedosik, John Jay College

“Alienation and De-Alienation in Korean Adoption Literature.”
Eli Park Sorensen, Cambridge University

“Narratives of Transracial Adoption as Counterhistory.”
Mark Jerng, University of California, Davis

“Strategic Essentialism and Self-Fashioning in Linda Hogan’s Solar Storms and Sherman Alexie’s Indian Killer.”
Cynthia Callahan, Ohio State University, Mansfield

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