ADOPITION: 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 Bartos Theatre
Chair: TBA
Screening: Moms Living Clean, with discussion. Sheila Ganz, writer, filmmaker, San Francisco
12:15-1 Lunch
1-2:45 Plenary: Adoption in Documentary Film II Bartos Theatre
Chair: TBA
Screening: For the Life of Me, with discussion. Jean Strauss, filmmaker and author, Lubbock, Texas
3:00-4:00 Screening and installation: Translating Hiraeth, with discussion. 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 Welcome: Deborah K. Fitzgerald, Kenan Sahin Dean, MIT School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences; Professor of the History of Technology, Program in Science, Technology, and Society
Keynote Address Bartos Theatre
Chair: Marianne Novy, University of Pittsburgh

Friday 4/30/2010

8am-12pm Registration and Book Exhibits 46-3000 Atrium
9:00am Welcome
9:10-10:25 Keynote Address 46-3002
Chair: Margaret Homans, Yale University
10:40-12:00 Plenary: Birthmothers Speak 46-3002
Chair: Emily Hipchen, University of West Georgia
Karen McElmurray, Georgia College and State University

NB: all room locations are tentative 1 last revised: 2/25/10
Meredith Hall, University of New Hampshire
Kate Livingston, University of Cincinnati

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-2:30 **Plenary: Secrecy and Policy**
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**
Chair: Elizabeth Wood, MIT
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**
Chair: Jill Deans, University of Connecticut

“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**
Chair: Mary Shanley, Vassar College

“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

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4:30-6  **Keynote Address**  
Chair: Sally Haslanger, MIT  
“Adoption and Mental Health: Realism, Risk and Responsibility.”  
Anita L. Allen, Henry R. Silverman Professor of Law and Professor of Philosophy,  

6:00-7:30  Dinner

7:30-9:30  **An Evening of Creative Writing and Performance**  
Chair: Michele Oshima, MIT Office for the Arts  
“Parallel Tracks.”  
Martha Gelarden, Moore College of Art, Philadelphia; birthmother  
Adam Lazar, artist, Chicago; adoptee  
“Time Traveler” and Other Flash Fictions  
Ned Balbo, writer, Loyola University, Maryland; adoptee  
Selections from *Requitements* (Elephant Tree House, 2010)  
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

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**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  
“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

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“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: Penny Partridge, Amherst, MA

“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

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

**B. Birthmothers: Agency and Activism**
Chair: Jean Keller, CSB/SJU

“Tactile Love: Korean birthmothers’ Online Community”
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: Charlotte Witt, University of New Hampshire
               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: Ellen Herman, University of Oregon
               “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: Susan Ito, PACT
               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
               From “On Korean Birth Search Landscapes and Politics,” and “Poems from Paper Pavilion and others”
               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

4:30-5:30  ASAC business meeting  32-144
6-7:30  Banquet  R&D Commons
7:30-9:30  **Keynote Address**  32-123
Chair: Mark Jerng, University of California, Davis
Screening of *In the Matter of Cha Jung Hee* (in production), and discussion with filmmaker.
DeAnn Borshay Liem, Filmmaker of *First Person Plural* (2000), and

**Sunday 5/2**

9-10:30  Concurrent Sessions

**A. Transnational and Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Operation Babylift**  32-141
Chair: Christina Klein, Boston College
“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**  32-155
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
“‘Safe 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**  32-144
Chair: Barbara Estrin, Stonehill College
“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

10:45-12:15 Concurrent Sessions

A. Adoptive Parents, Race, Difference
Chair: Emma Teng, MIT

“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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