

Formations: Thinking Kinship through Adoption
Oakland Marriott City Center Hotel, Oakland CA
October 18-20, 2018

Seventh Biennial Conference
The Alliance for the Study of Adoption and Culture
In cooperation with Adoption Initiative

(Tentative program: subject to change)

THURSDAY October 18

4:30-6 Opening Reception, with book sales

Dinner on your own

7:30PM Keynote address: Julie Pelletier: “Thoughts from a Birth/First Mother on the Intersections of Culture, Class, and Profession” (main room)

Welcome: Cynthia Callahan

Introduction: Jenny Heijun Wills and Susan Harness

Dr. Julie Pelletier is Associate Professor of Indigenous Studies at the University of Winnipeg and recently published the co-edited collection, *Gambling on Authenticity: Gaming, the Noble Savage, and the Not-So-New Indian* (2017). A cultural anthropologist specializing in Indigenous cultures and Indigenizing the academy, Professor Pelletier is also a first mother who relinquished her child for adoption and maintains a meaningful relationship with her daughter. Her lecture touches on the trauma of government and missionary removal of Indigenous children from their families. Her reflections on being an Indigenous first parent are informed by her scholarship but also her social activism.

FRIDAY October 19

Concurrent session 1 8:30-10:00

1. A - Main room)

Asian Orphans and Adoptees in Film and Media

Emily Bartz, Texas A & M University, “Mirror Scrolls and Google Earth: Cinematic Techniques in Adoption Search Narratives”

Kira Donnell, UC Berkeley, “The Orphan Nation: Orphans and Nationalism in Golden Age Korean Film”

Susanna Birnbaum, Muhlenberg College, “Beyond Returning to Roots: A New Model for Transracial Transnational Adoption Media”

Chair: Marina Fedosik, Princeton University

1. B) Adoption Performances

Lies Wesseling, Maastricht University, "Global Adoption in Reverse: Gudrun Widlok's Art Project *Adopted*"

Deirdre Osborne, Goldsmiths, University of London, "*Ego-histoire* and Adoption Aesthetics"

Beth Cleary, Macalester College, "Spoon, Cup, Key: Several Scenes of Assessment"

1. C) Shifting Temporalities and "Botched" Lives: S/Kinships in Contemporary Multi-Ethnic U.S. Cultural Productions

Shannon Gibney, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Reading from *Botched*, a Novel/Memoir

Lori Askeland, Wittenberg University, "Tiffany Haddish and The Fosters: Fostering Complexity in Contemporary US Popular Culture"

Kyung-Sook Boo, Sogang University, "The Skinship of Kinship in *Kindred: A Graphic Novel Adaptation*"

Chair: Lori Askeland

1. D) Adoption Initiative Session: Latinx and International Adoption

Jagannath Pati: "Social Audit of Child Care Institutions in India"

Angela Sharp, The New School: "The Search for Fifty Adoptees from My Orphanage"

Irene Salvo Agoglia, Universidad Alberto Hurtado: "The Biopolitical Mediation of Searches of Origins in Chile"

Concurrent session 2 10:15-11:45

2. A - Main room)

LADs: Latinx Adoptee Expressions

Stephanie Flores-Koulish, Loyola University Maryland; Jacqueline Arias, artist and filmmaker; Benjamin Lundberg Torres Sanchez, artist and educator; MasPaz (Federico Frum), artist and activist; Mary Kate Miller, Loyola University Maryland

What is it about our Latinidad that's best expressed in creative forms? Our historias are sacred. As Latinx adoptees, we express statuses as insider/outside, questioning and claiming our legitimacy to exist and thrive in the spaces in which we travel. We simultaneously belong everywhere and nowhere. Español, the lack thereof, the acquisition of, further distances or connects us with our origins, while we crave connections. Flores-Koulish along with Miller will

establish the overall theoretical context of the panel. Arias, MasPaz, and Lundberg Sanchez Torres will discuss and/or share some of the art they have created which gives creative voice to their histories.

2. B) **Queering Kinship I**

Kenneth Surlles, University of Oregon, “Beyond Bonds of Blood: Queer Affinity Families and Radical Liberation in Minneapolis 1996-2010”

Rovel Sequiera, University of Pennsylvania, “A Tale of Three Families: The Indian Transgender Subject at the Edge of Recognition”

Megan Paslawski, CUNY – Queen’s College, “Think of the Children: Intergenerational Kinship in Trans Youth Memoirs”

Lucy Curzon, University of Alabama, “MaPa Del: Visualizing Queer Kinship in LGBTQI+ Families”

Chair: Kimberly Leighton, Georgetown University

2. C) **Radical Kinships: Auto-Critical Readings**

Jenny Heijun Wills, University of Winnipeg

Bert Ballard, Pepperdine University

Lisa Moore, St. Olaf College

Jennifer Kwon Dobbs, St. Olaf College

This panel examines auto-critical life writing as a significant method for producing knowledge in critical adoption studies. Why and how are life narratives used in the service of exploring subjects’ experiences of non-conventional family building through transracial/transnational adoption and donorship? What does it mean for literary and other textual modes of creative expression to be inducted into analyses by sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, and others and taken as so-called “authentic” (self-)representation or qualitative insight? Attached to an anthology in preparation, the panelists weave together criticism and creativity while simultaneously defying these categorizations.

2. D) **Adoption Initiative Session: Practice**

Tara Linh Leaman, Program Director, Westchester County (NY) Department of Social Services; and Trista Goldberg, Founder and CEO, Operation Reunite: “Operation Reunite: The Power of Complexity: Best Practices in Adoption, Kinship Care and Healthy Formation of Identity”

Gina Sharpe, Rutgers University School of Social Work: “Adoption Certificate Training Programs: New Jersey’s Efforts to Enhance Adoption Expertise”

Nancy Rolock, Helen Bader School of Social Welfare, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; John Webb, Division of Child Protection and Permanency, Office of Adoption Operations; Kerrie Ocasio, School of Social Work, Rutgers University: "Post Adoption Engagement: The New Jersey Prevention Experience with Tuning in to Teens (TINT)"

Plenary roundtable 12-1:15 lunch provided

ASAC and OSUP: New Opportunities for Publishing Adoption Scholarship

Kristen Elias Rowley, Editor-in-Chief, Ohio State University Press

Emily Hipchen, University of West Georgia, editor of *Adoption & Culture* and co-editor of OSUP book series, "Formations: Adoption, Kinship, and Culture"

John McLeod, University of Leeds, co-editor of OSUP book series, "Formations: Adoption, Kinship, and Culture"

This round-table will celebrate the newly established relationship between ASAC and The Ohio State University Press (OSUP) and outline the opportunities it has enabled for publishing the latest high-quality interdisciplinary work in adoption studies. We will consider the development of ASAC's journal *Adoption & Culture* and explore the prospects for placing essays, proposing ideas for special issues, etc. We will also discuss OSUP's new book series, "Formations: Adoption, Kinship and Culture," as a means of supporting and disseminating conference participants' current research.

Concurrent session 3 1:30-3:00

3. A - Main room)

Bodies and Kinship after Biology I

Eric Walker, Florida State University, "Robert Pinsky's *At the Foundling Hospital* and Kinship Theory"

Ellen Peel, SFSU, "Adoption, Tragedy, and the Failed Search for Origins in *Frankenstein*"

Sayres Rudy, independent scholar, "The Anxious Kinship of Adoptee Subjectivity"

Marina Fedosik, Princeton University, "The Power to 'Make Live': Biopolitics of Reproduction in *Blade Runner*"

Chair: John McLeod

3. B) European Perspectives on Transnational Adoption and Surrogacy: Attachments, Fragments, Absences, Vulnerability

Lene Myong, University of Stavanger, "Affective Government: The Politics of Attachment and Transnational Adoption in Denmark"

Johanna Gondouin, Stockholm University, “Exploring White Fragility and White Innocence in Media Representations of Transnational Adoption and Transnational Commercial Surrogacy”

Silvia Posocco, Birkbeck, University of London, “Genocide Kinning: Fragment, Scale and Form”

3. C) **Recent Histories of Kinship Formation**

Kay Trimmerger, Sonoma State University, “From Open Adoption to Extended Kin”

Janine Baer, independent scholar, “How Outcasts and Outlaws Re-envisioned Adoption in *Chain of Life*, a Feminist Adoption Newsletter, 1989–1997”

Sandy Sufian, University of Illinois at Chicago, “Disability and the Limits to Adoptive Kinship Formation, 1980-1997”

Chair: Don Romesberg, Sonoma State University

3. D) **Adoption Initiative Session: Post-Adoption Support**

JaeRan Kim, University of Washington-Tacoma, and Angela Tucker, Post-Adoption Program: “The Family Support Model: Facilitating Openness for All Post-Adoptive Families”

Patrick Sheedy, Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota: “Human Meaning: Real Families”

Yemisi Adebawale, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan: “Openness In Adoption: Transforming Practice In Nigeria Through Anthropological Research”

Concurrent session 4 3:15-4:45

4. A - Main room)

Performing Transnational Adoption Kinship

Hosu Kim, CUNY – College of Staten Island

Meejin Richart, community organizer

Schuyler Swenson, multimedia producer.

This panel was born out of a 2016 workshop in which Korean adoptees met with birth mothers and birth family members. Inspired by the profound affects of connectivity and care the workshop produced, this panel will explore and excavate sites of adoptive kinship. Hosu Kim’s paper “Redefining Adoptive Kinship” provides a theoretical understanding and explores embodied aspects of kinship in light of performance. Schuyler Swenson and Meejin Richart’s multi-media performance “New Narratives of Adoption” materializes connectivity and care across bodies, borders, and bloods. Transcending language, culture, and current perceptions of adoption, “New Narratives of Adoption” amplifies underrepresented birth mother stories and creates a new narrative of coexistence and dialogue between birth mothers and adoptees.

4. B) **Misrepresentations of Adoptees and Birth/First Mothers**

Gretchen Sisson, UCSF, “Dear Birth Mother’: Rhetoric of Idealized Parenthood in Prospective Adoptive Parent Profiles”

Martha Satz, Southern Methodist University, “Is This Us?: Portrayal of the Transracial Adoptive Family in *This Is Us*”

Krista Benson, Grand Valley State University, “Meet Waiting [Indigenous] Children’: The Northwest Adoption Exchange and Profiles of Adoptable Native Children in Foster Care”

Chair: Marianne Novy, University of Pittsburgh

4. C) **Queering Kinship II**

Liz Latty, writer and activist, “We Are Really Straight: LGBTQ Adoption, Homonormativity, and the Right to Parent”

Seul Lee, Texas A & M University, “Indispensable yet Expendable: Family Care and Outsourcing as Alternative Kinship”

Jaehyun Jeong, Yonsei University, “Queer Ethnic Subjectivity of Transnational Adoptees”

Chair: Lucy Curzon

4. D) **Adoption Initiative Session:**

Emerson Dickman, attorney: “The Role of Genetic Expectancy in the Psychopathology of Children Who Are Adopted”

MasPaz, artist and activist: “Artistic Expressions of the Adoption Experience”

Keynote address 5:00-6:15 Judith Butler: “Coercion and Freedom in Light of New Family Values” (main room)

Introduction: Bruno Perreau, MIT

Dr. Judith Butler is Maxine Elliot Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. She is a foundational figure in what has become contemporary queer and gender studies, defining the field in monographs such as *Gender Trouble* (1990), *Antigone’s Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death* (2000), and many other books and essays. Her research probes the relationships among gender, sexuality, and kinship constructions. In recognition of her transformative thinking, Professor Butler has received numerous grants and awards, including an Andrew Mellon Award for Distinguished Academic Achievement in the Humanities (2009-13) and a Guggenheim fellowship (1999).

Dinner on your own

8:00 PM **Creative Writing Reading**

Hosted by Susan Ito, Kit Myers, and Jenny Heijun Wills

SATURDAY October 20

Concurrent session 5 8:30-10:00

5. A - Main room) **Adoption Initiative Session: Birth/First Parent Concerns**

Screening and discussion of “Out of the Shadows”: This 31-minute film by Connie Collins features birth moms whose stories shatter conventional notions about adoption, an adoptive couple embracing openness in adoption, and a progressive adoption agency committed to raising the standard of care and respect for birth moms. The film examines the unique perspective of birth moms and the grief, sacrifice, stigma and deep loss they experience in choosing, out of love, to give families to their babies. An adoptive couple and a professional adoption advocate share their respect and gratitude for the bittersweet bravery of birth moms. Lori Scobee, birth parent counselor, Caring for Kids (Ohio), will present the film and moderate discussion.

Beth Hall, PACT, An Adoption Alliance, and Katie Stickles-Wynen, PACT: “Newborns, Money, Competition & Desperation: Promoting Ethics in Voluntary Infant Placement”

5. B) **American Adoptee Citizenship and Belonging Since 2000**

Kit Myers, UC Merced, “Liberal Gifts, Securitization, and the Creation of (Un)equal Families in the Child Citizenship Act of 2000”

Wendy Marie Laybourn, University of Maryland, “Reframing Belonging: Korean Adoptees on the Ground and Screen”

Kim Park Nelson, Minnesota State University at Moorhead, and Eleana Kim, UC Irvine, “Adoptee Deportee: Asian American Adoptees and Citizenship in the Time of Trump”

Chair: Kim McKee

5. C) **Adoption and Writing about the Self**

Marianne Novy, University of Pittsburgh, “Class, Shame, and Identity in Search Memoirs from Difficult Same-Race Adoptions: Jeremy Harding’s *Mother Country* and Lori Jakiela’s *Belief is Its Own Kind of Truth, Maybe*”

Lori Jakiela, University of Pittsburgh – Greensburg, “Breaking Silence, Stitching the Wound: The Healing Power of Adoption Narratives”

Derek Kirton, University of Kent, "Close(d) Encounters?: Culture and Identity in Autobiographical Transracial Adoption Narratives"

Jill Brown, Creighton University, "First, find yourself a good mother': Adoption Research and My Private Objective/Subjective Collision"

Chair: Hertha Sweet Wong, UC Berkeley

5. D) **Adoption and Kinship in Chile**

Teresa Arana Migliassi, professional photographer, and Irene Salvo Agoglia, Alberto Hurtado University, "Co-researching Kinship and Identities Policies through the Lens of Domestic Adoption in Chile"

Marcia Escobar and Javiera Navarro, Alberto Hurtado University, "Family Maps: Building a Concept of Family and Kinship between Single Mothers by Choice and Their Children in Chile"

Paulina Fernandez Moreno, University of Alicante, "Resistances to the Adoption of Older Children in Chile: Elucidating Stereotypes Emanating from Institutional and Professional Practices"

Chair: Silvia Posocco, Birkbeck, University of London

Keynote event 10:15-11:30 Adoption Museum Project (main room)

Laura Callen, Founder/Director, Adoption Museum Project

Suzi Martinez Carter, Project Director, Adoption Museum Project

Zoë Klein, Development Fellow, Adoption Museum Project

Adoption Museum Project uses cultural experiences to reimagine adoption. Through exhibitions, public programs and other projects, we invite the public to consider the whole story of adoption -- so we can create a radically different practice based on justice and dignity. We look at how adoption has the potential to both help and harm, and how individuals are part of history and systems. Our current work is focused on creating a new history of adoption told through a lens of social justice. Adoption Museum Project is a values-driven organization led by people who are impacted by adoption. Learn more: www.adoptionmuseumproject.org

Introduction: Kit Myers

Concurrent session 6 11:45-1:15

6. A - Main room)

"Unlocking the Heart of Adoption" Twenty Years Later

Filmmaker Sheila Ganz screens selections from her documentary film, which bridges the gap between birth and adoptive families in same race and transracial adoptions, while interweaving the filmmaker's story as a birthmother and providing historical background. The screening will be followed by discussion with some of the film's participants: Sheila, the filmmaker and first/birthmother; Jody Burr, adoptee; Dolores Piper, first/birthmother; Ginger Bowman, adoptive mother. Twenty years after they were interviewed for the film, they will discuss how their relinquishment, adoption, and reunion experiences have impacted their lives and how these experiences have evolved and changed over time. More information and trailer at www.unlockingtheheart.com

6. B) Adoptee Belonging and Transnational Adoption from Asia

Katelyn Hancock, UCLA, "White Love, Southern Citizenship, Adoptee Belonging: Asian American Adoptees and the U.S. South"

Soh Yeun Kim, University of Washington, "Migration, Cross-border Adoption, and Kinship in Chang-Rae Lee's *A Gesture Life*"

Kathleen Ja Sook Bergquist, University of Nevada – Las Vegas, "'It's just easier': Reflections on the Intersections of Kinship, Race, and Ethnicity in Asian Adoptive Families"

Glenn Morey, filmmaker, "Side by Side"

Chair: Kim Park Nelson

6. C) Adoption, Policy, and the State

Carolyn McLeod and Heather Stewart, Western University, "Openness and Parental Leave"

Mark Montgomery and Irene Powell, Grinnell College, "International Adoption: Why Can't Kinship Be Negotiated?"

Lisa Gulya, University of Minnesota, "U.S. National(ist) Defense of Transnational Adoption and Alternate Visions from Adoptees"

Chair: John McLeod

6. D) Adoption Initiative Session: Activism

Daniel Drennan ElAwar: "Resisting Extirpation: Revolutionary Adoption Activism"

Carmen Diego: "A Dialectical Framing of Korean Adoptee Activism in the Bay Area and Beyond"

Malinda Seymore, Texas A & M University School of Law: "Bringing Lawsuits Everywhere: Suing Adoption Agencies for Money Damages to Incentivize Best Practices"

ASAC annual business meeting (open to members of ASAC) 1:30-2:30

Lunch on your own

Concurrent session 7 2:30-4:00

7. A - Main room)

Adoption Art

Zoe Klein, dancer and activist, "Adoption and the Body: Learning about Adoption through the Art of Movement"

Paul Bonnell, North Idaho College, Bonners Ferry High School, independent artist, "Between Tower and Sea" (mixed media)

Kate Greenway, Holy Trinity School, Toronto, "Adoption and Kinship: Artistic Representation and Creation"

Chair: Lucy Curzon

7. B) Korean Adoptee Literature in Scandinavia

Sabina Ivenas, Linköping University, "At the Border of Identity: Transnational, Transracial and Sexualized Bodies in Scandinavian Adoption Literature"

Mette Kim-Larsen, Copenhagen University, "A Fertility Clinic and a Family: Angry Testimonials of the Nordic Welfare States"

Viola Bao, independent scholar, "Critical Remigration Narratives in Scandinavian Adoption Literature"

Aino Rinhaug, UCLA, "Adoptee Aesthetic as Cultural and Political Activism: Art as Bodies Politic"

7. C) Transracial Adoption and Alternative Kinships: Realities, Possibilities, and Longings

Shannon Gibney, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, "Transracial Adoption and Intergenerational Kinship Structures"

Kim McKee, Grand Valley State University, "Reproductive Futurity and the Adoptive Family"

Kit Myers, UC Merced, "Ghostly Kinship: The Present Absence of Birth Family"

Lisa Marie Brimmer, University of St. Thomas, "Other Mothers' Gardens: Healing the Dislocated Dreams of Transracial Adoption"

7. D) Adoption Initiative Session: Racial Identity

Zeina Ismail Allouche, Concordia University: "Forced Separation as Perceived by Transracial/Transnational Adoptees while Accounting for the Legacy of Indigenous Peoples"

Ijeoma Eugene Ononuju, Northern Arizona University and Susan Branco, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Washington DC: "Reconciling Race and Racial Socialization through the Lens of Who 'Gets It' and the Actualization of Transracial Adoptees"

Laura X. Williams, Goucher College: "The Missing Peace: How Adoptees Form Collaborative Identities Towards Social Change"

Concurrent session 8 4:15-5:45

8. A - Main room)

Adoption Initiative Session: "Imaginary Mothers":

Filmmaker Jacqueline Arias, founder and director of Jersey Art Exchange, screens her feature-length documentary about four mothers – including her own - from Costa Rica: Crescencia Maria Castro Chaves, Helen Xiomara Barrantes Mora, Xinia Sancho Viquez and Doris Benavides Morales. Telling their stories for the first time, they bravely reveal the heart-breaking impact that losing their children has had on their lives. As they fight to be reconnected with their children, they also struggle against the myths about young single mothers in Latin America. This film brings to light the circumstances surrounding international adoption in Latin America during the 80's and 90's and the many warning signs that were ignored about corruption in international adoption. This film is not just about women in Costa Rica, but also about women all over the world who have lost their children through adoption.

8. B) Korean Adoption Archives: Roundtable on Interdisciplinary Archival Work

tammy ko Robinson, Hanyang University

So Yung Kim, social worker and founder of Transracial Abductees

Andrea Kim, UCLA

Eleana Kim, UC Irvine

Shawyn Lee, University of Minnesota - Duluth

Korean adoption culture, activism, and history have been unsystematically archived offline and online, with individuals collecting everything from personal and official documents to popular culture paraphernalia to academic books. More recently, efforts to create and preserve official archive collections have led to contestations regarding issues of historical recognition, critical historiographies, redress and accountability. This roundtable considers the multifaceted epistemological, material, and affective archival needs of diverse Korean adoptee communities. We will discuss the diverse forms and politics of adoption archives; decolonization of adoption and kinship formations including among queer transracial adoptees of color; ethical adoption practices and adoption justice; and the relation of the archive to U.S. state and international laws regarding adoption.

8. C) **Bodies and Kinship after Biology II**

Bruno Perreau, MIT, "The Future of Adoption in a Technological Age"

Frances Latchford, York University, "Eugenealogies: Adoption, Genealogy, and Eugenic Family Paradigms"

Heather Jacobson, University of Texas at Arlington, "Negotiating the Kinship of Excess Embryos: Reactions of Fertility Professionals"

Chair: Emily Hipchen, University of West Georgia

8. D) **Transnational Black Adoptions**

Rosemarie Peña, Rutgers University - Camden, "St. Josef Kinderheim (Children's Home): Afro-German Adoptees Return"

Silke Hackenesch, University of Cologne, "The Adoption of Germany's Mixed-Race Children to Postwar America"

Karen Balcom, McMaster University, "Cowboys, Baseball and Bicycles: An American Family for an African American-Japanese Adopted Child"

Kori Graves, University of Albany, "African-American Unmarried Fathers and the Expansion of WWII and Korean G.I. Adoptions"

Chair: Cynthia Callahan

6PM **Banquet** at Peony Seafood Restaurant, 388 9th St #288, Oakland
Tickets must be purchased in advance through registration

Closing Keynote 7:30 (main room)

Amandine Gay and Deann Borshay Liem: "Reclaim the Narrative: Filmmaking as Archival, Creative and Emancipatory Work"

Introductions: Rosemarie Peña and Kim Park Nelson

Documentary filmmakers Amandine Gay and Deann Borshay Liem discuss their films, their approaches to filmmaking, and their activism.

Deann Borshay Liem's films - *First Person Plural* (2000), *In the Matter of Cha Jung Hee* (2010), and *Geographies of Kinship -The Korean Adoption Story* (in progress) - probe the history and personal cost of Korean adoption. She is a recipient of a Rockefeller Film/Video Fellowship and a former director of the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM). Currently, she is the head of Mu Films, a non-profit documentary production company that focuses on representing untold stories from underrepresented communities in the interest of social justice and deeper cultural understanding.

Amandine Gay is the filmmaker behind *Ouvrir la Voix* (*Speak Up/Make Your Way* in English, 2016), a documentary that gives voice to twenty-four French women with African origins in order to reflect on European Black women's experiences of identity. She is also the co-author of "Diasporic Conversations: Anglophone and Francophone Adoptees of the African Diaspora Encounter Each Other" (*Adoption Today*, 2016). As an artist and a social activist, Gay uses her personal adoption story and scholarly background to increase public interest in the politics of adoption. She is currently working on her second documentary film, about transnational and transracial adoptions in francophone countries.