

## **Alliance for the Study of Adoption and Culture Newsletter – 2015**

Greetings to all!

Before all the good news, condolences to EMILY HIPCHEN, our treasurer and editor of our journal *Adoption & Culture*, current executive committee member and former co-chair, on the sudden accidental death, on April 15, of her husband of 14 years, CHUCK BOWIE. Many of us remember Chuck, who came to several of our conferences and helped with instructional technology and good humor. He is much missed.

### **Our Next Conference**

Villanova University is interested in hosting our next conference and is actively pursuing funding in addition to seeking partners in the Philadelphia area. If it is at Villanova, it will be the weekend of October 15, 2016, on the theme of Adoption, Ethics, and Culture. SARAH-VAUGHAN BRAKMAN, Philosophy/Villanova, and MARIANNE NOVY, English/Pittsburgh, will be co-chairs of the conference planning committee.

### **Our MLA Session**

For the Modern Language Association convention, in Austin, Texas, January 7-10, 2016, JENNY WILLS, U. of Winnipeg, has arranged a panel on Comparative Approaches to Adoption for our guaranteed session. The date and time of our session will be announced by the MLA in July. The papers are as follows:

DEANNA STOVER, Texas A&M University  
“Gold Slippers and Cyborg Feet: Comparing Adopted Bodies in the Grimms’  
“Cinderella” and Marissa Meyer’s *Cinder*”

TRACEY-LYNN COUGH, University of Texas (Arlington)  
“No Longer Silent in ‘a white man’s world’: Documenting the Legacy of the Indian  
Adoption Project in *Lost Sparrow* and *Reclaiming Our Children*”

PAMELA KIRKPATRICK, University of Arkansas (Fayetteville)  
“Transracial Adoption in Jacqueline Woodson’s *Feathers* and Jerry Spinelli’s *Maniac  
Magee*”

JOSHUA WHITEHEAD, University of Calgary  
“Transracial adoption: From Sixties Scoop to Babylift”

### **Graduate Student Paper Awards**

The award for the best student paper at the 2014 ASAC conference went to JULIA BOWES, history, Rutgers, for “Fostering Ties: The politics of resettling displaced orphans in the United States after World War II.” SUSANNA SNYDER, anthropology,

Oregon State, was the runner-up for “ ‘Screw you guys! I’m not a bad person!’: Contesting Motherhood through Birthmothers’ Lived Experiences of Gender Subversion.” CLAUDIA NELSON chaired the panel of judges.

### **Adoption at Other Upcoming Conferences**

CYNTHIA CALLAHAN has arranged a panel titled “Kinship and Precarity” at the National Women's Studies Association's annual conference, in Milwaukee, November 12-15, 2015. Participants will discuss the vulnerabilities that accompany adoptive families as depicted in a variety of literary and visual texts. ASAC members LORI ASKELAND, MARINA FEDOSIK, EMILY HIPCHEN, and KIMBERLY MCKEE, along with Lucy Curzon, Associate Professor of Art History at the University of Alabama. Texts discussed will include Benjamin Wilkomirski’s *Fragments: Memories of a Childhood, 1939-1948*, a “false” Holocaust memoir and adoption memoir; *The Language of Blood* by Jane Jeong Trenka; Karen McElmurray’s *Surrendered Child*; popular films about kinship and adoption including *The Kids are All Right* and *Philomena*; and a range of images by contemporary artists, in particular those from Catherine Opie’s “Domestic” series (1995-1998).

### **Other Member News**

CYNTHIA CALLAHAN’s recent book *Kin of Another Kind*, and also CAROL SINGLEY’s *Adopting America* and MARK JERNG’s *Claiming Others*, are reviewed in “Literature and Adoption: Themes, Theses, Questions,” [Caren Irr, American Literary History Volume 26, Number 2, Summer 2014](#), pp. 385-395. See EBSCO at "<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mzh&AN=2014382069&site=ehost-live>"

WAYNE CARP published two contributions to our Bibliography issue, *Adoption and Culture* 4 (2014): “The History of the Law of Adoption in the United States (32-42) and “The History of Orphans and Orphanages in the United States, “ (43-51). His “The Sentimentalization of Adoption: A Critical Note On Viviana Zelizer’s *Pricing the Priceless Child*” will appear in *Adoption & Culture*, 5 (forthcoming).

KRISTEN CHENEY has published several articles, including “Giving Children a Better Life: Reconsidering Social Reproduction, Humanitarianism and Development in Intercountry Adoption,” *European Journal of Development Research* (2014) 26, 247-263; “ ‘Addicted to Orphans’: How the global orphan industrial complex jeopardizes local child protection systems” (with Karen Rotabi) in Harker, C., Horschelmann, K. and Skelton, T. (eds), *Conflict, Violence and Peace, Volume 11: Geographies of Children and Young People* (Singapore: Springer, 2015). Both of these are on the web at academia.edu. She also ran the International Forum on Intercountry Adoption & Global Surrogacy, at the International Institute for Global Studies in the Hague, 11-13 August 2014. Information about this forum and its executive report may be found at [www.iss.nl/adoption\\_surrogacy](http://www.iss.nl/adoption_surrogacy) and <http://repub.eur.nl/pub/77408>. Recent presentations of her research on Uganda are at <http://bit.ly/1iG9kB5> and <http://bit.ly/bloodbinds>; a

version of the latter is forthcoming from the journal *Childhoods*.

JEANA DEL ROSSO's "De-tangling Motherhood: Adoption Narratives in Disney's *Tangled*" is forthcoming in *The Journal of Popular Culture* 48:3 (2015): 522-535.

The University of Michigan Press has published JANET ELLERBY's new book *Embroidering the Scarlet A: Unwed Mothers and Illegitimate Children in American Fiction and Film*. This book traces the evolution of the "fallen woman" from the earliest novels to recent representations in fiction and film. Interweaving her own experience as a pregnant teen forced to surrender her daughter and pledge secrecy for decades, Ellerby interrogates "out-of-wedlock" motherhood, mapping the ways archetypal scarlet women and their children have been exiled as social pariahs, pardoned as blameless pawns, and transformed into empowered women.

SHANNON GIBNEY's YA novel, *See No Color*, will be released by Carolrhoda Books in November 2015. It is a coming of age story about a mixed Black transracial adoptee, who is trying to reconcile both her adoption and her racial identity.

MARGARET HOMANS' 2013 book, *The Imprint of Another Life: Adoption Narratives and Human Possibility*, is now out in paperback from the University of Michigan Press.

In June 2015, a special issue of *Social & Cultural Geography* 16 (5), which JESSACA LEINAWEAVER co-edited with SONJA VAN WICHELEN, will be published. It is called "The Geography of Transnational Adoption: Kin and Place in Globalization." It includes articles by SONJA and JESSACA as well as KATRIEN DE GRAEVE, Silvia Posocco, and BARBARA YNGVESSON.

DEANN BORSHAY LIEM's film *The Geographies of Kinship—The Korean Adoption Story* is in post-production and should appear in 2016. She is currently filming *Crossings*, about the event on May 24 in which 30 international women leaders, including Gloria Steinem, Mairead Maguire (Northern Ireland), Christine Ahn, and Leymah Gbowee (Liberia) cross the DMZ from North to South Korea, calling for an end to the Korean War and for peace and reconciliation on the Korean peninsula.

JOHN MCLEOD's book *Life Lines: Writing Transcultural Adoption* (Bloomsbury Academic) will appear in September.

MARIANNE NOVY gave a talk, "Do Some Adoption Practices Violate [Birth]Parents' Reproductive Rights?" at a conference on Reproductive Rights, sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program, March 20. She also arranged and coordinated a mini-elective on adoption and foster care for University of Pittsburgh medical students, together with pediatrician Sarah Springer.

ROSEMARY STARACE's poetry collection, *Requitements* (Revised Edition, Elephant Tree House, 2015), has been reissued in an expanded edition that includes several additional poems and the essay "A Poetics of Adoption: Love and Grief." The poems and

the essay engage issues of identity, kinship, and what is discovered through what is lost. Starace writes from an adoptee's perspective. For more information, or to order the book, please visit the publisher's website. <http://www.elephanttreehouse.com/?s=requirements>.

KAY TRIMBERGER writes a blog on *Psychology Today* called Adoption Diaries: Adult Relationships in Adoptive Families. Here is the link <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/adoption-diaries> Two blog posts (among others) are "Adoptive Parents and Adoption Reunions," and "Adoption in the Life of Steve Jobs." She writes, "I'm interested in posting guest blogs. Please contact me at [trimberg@sonoma.edu](mailto:trimberg@sonoma.edu) if you have a topic on which you would like to write." She also has a few blog posts on *The Huffington Post* including "Adoption and Genetics: Implications for Adoptive Parents." [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/e-kay-trimberger/adoption-and-genetics-imp\\_b\\_4682667.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/e-kay-trimberger/adoption-and-genetics-imp_b_4682667.html)

ERIC WALKER has published "Adoption, Narrative, and Nation, 1800-1850: The Case of William Austin," *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (Oct. 2014), pp. 960-91.

LIES WESSELING was inaugurated as holder of the special "Opzif" chair "Cultural Memory, Gender, and Diversity," on September 12 at Maastricht University (Netherlands), and an international symposium in her honor was held on the topic "The Personal Is Geopolitical: Story-telling and Familial Belonging in a Globalizing World." Speakers included CLAUDIA NELSON, on "When Adoption Became 'Adoption': The Justification of Child Migration in Victorian England," BARBARA YNGVESSON on "Origin Myths, Narratives of Return, and the Making and Unmaking of (Adoptive) Identities in Sweden," (response by JULIA VICH), JOHANN GONDOUIN, "Sensible Indian Women and Sensitive Gay Men: On the Politics of Surrogacy in Swedish Media," LENE MYONG, "Questioning the Biopolitics of Transnational Adoption: Remigration, Adoption Critique, and the Danish Adoption Debate," and others. LIES' inaugural speech was on "The Weaving of Family Narrative Practices and Cultural Remembrance in Transnational Adoption."

JENNY WILLS has three essays soon forthcoming, "Paradoxical Essentialism," *Canadian Review of American Studies*; "Fictional and Fragmented Truths in Korean Adoptee Writing, in the journal *Asian American Literature: Discourses and Pedagogies*, Summer 2015; and "The Gift of the Good Life: Anchor Babies and Asian Adoptees," in *The Good Life and the Greater Good in a Global Context*, ed. Laura Savu (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars,) 2015. Recent conference papers include, among others, "Paradoxical Essentialism in the Life Narratives of Black Abolitionists and Asian Adoptees," Critical Ethnic Studies Association, Toronto, April 29-May 3, 2015, "Allies and Kin: The Giving of Anti-Essentialism in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and *The Language of Blood*," at the Critical Race and Anti-Colonial Studies Conference Edmonston, October 17-19, 2014, and "Francophone Asian Adoption Graphic Memoirs: A Response to the 'Canon'," Canadian Comparative Literature Association, Ottawa, May 31-June 2, 2015. She has spoken on related topics at the conferences of the Association of Asian American Studies, MELUS, the American Comparative Literature Association,

the Korean Canadian Children's Association, and Stanford University. Also, she published two poems in *Ricepaper*, April 2015, "Elegy for a Grandfather Twice Met," and "1:30."

### **Help Wanted**

If you can help us return to a newsletter-formatted newsletter, or if you would like to edit our newsletter, please contact me!

Also, if you think you can get (a unit of) your university to become a co-sponsor of our 2016 conference, especially if it is in driving distance of Philadelphia, please contact me or Sarah-Vaughan Brakman ([sarah.vaughan.brakman@villanova.edu](mailto:sarah.vaughan.brakman@villanova.edu)).

### **Membership, Journal, and Email**

Past issues of *Adoption & Culture* are now available electronically through EBSCOHost.

#### Membership Renewal

If you have not renewed your membership in 2015 through PayPal, it's time to!

Our PayPal address is [adoptionandculture@gmail.com](mailto:adoptionandculture@gmail.com). Membership, which includes a copy of our newsletter and our biennially-produced journal, *Adoption & Culture*, is just \$20 if you're in the US. All current members will be listed on our listserv; if you wish not to receive messages from members of ASAC through the listserv, indicate you'd like to opt out by sending a private message to [emily@hipbo.org](mailto:emily@hipbo.org) as soon as you see a message from the listserv.

Best wishes to all,

Marianne Novy  
ASAC Newsletter Editor  
Department of English  
University of Pittsburgh  
[mnovy@pitt.edu](mailto:mnovy@pitt.edu)

