



® ...and lots of questions.

An innovative statewide program serving a diverse adoptee community

Issue 5, August 2010

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About AHA Articles

ADOPTees Have answers is committed to sharing the many and varied adoptee voices and views. As such, the opinions expressed in articles and stories are solely those of their authors, and don't necessarily reflect opinions or policies of the AHA Program or the Minnesota Adoption Resource Network staff or organization. We welcome submissions at any time.

ANNOUNCING: **New AHA International/Transracial Adult Adoptee Support Group in Twin Cities**



Adoptees Have Answers is very pleased to offer a new support group opportunity to international and transracial adult adoptees. The group will be co-facilitated by AHA Advisory Group member Julie Hart, and Amy Fjellman, both international adoptees.



The new support group will meet on the last Monday of every month, from 7:00-8:00 PM, starting August

Featured Article: Third International Conference on Adoption Research



by Jane E. Newell
Family Social Science
University of Minnesota

I recently returned from the 3rd International Conference on Adoption Research (ICAR3) July 11 - 15 in the Netherlands. Kate Ingalls-Maloney asked me to share my experience with the AHA community.

To begin, the First International Conference on Adoption Research was created and launched right here in Minnesota by Dr. Harold Grotevant through the Department of Family Social Science at the University of Minnesota. The second conference was held at the University of East Anglia in England in 2006. Now, four years later, nearly 200 researchers, practitioners, and adult adoptees attended the third conference held at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands.

30, 2010. It will be held at the Roseville Library, 2180 Hamline Ave. North, Roseville, MN 55113.

For more information, please contact Amy at amyfjellman@gmail.com (see top photo) or Julie at jhart703@gmail.com

See [Support Group Flier](#) (pdf) for details.

REGISTER NOW: AHA Webinar Series, Part 4 of 12 –
How to Start an Adoptee Support Group for Youth

Webinar
September 22, 2010
12 noon to 1:00 PM CDT

Please join the discussion when Penelope Needham, Minnesota educator and adoption support group facilitator, talks about starting adoptee support groups for youth. Penelope will present her model and share her experiences organizing and facilitating support groups, within the school system, for adopted students.

Registration

To register, please call Anne Johnson at 612-746-5122. The cost of attending the live webinar is \$15. A CD of the presentation will be available for \$15. You can attend the live presentation AND receive a CD for \$20. In the future you will be able to register online through our new website.

About the Presenter



Penelope Needham is a semi-retired educator and facilitator of adoption groups for Minnetonka middle and high school students since 1989. Needham is a trainer, curriculum writer, mentor to young adoptees and currently facilitates a support group for adult adoptees called Adoptees MN. She also serves on the Board of the Minnesota Coalition for Adoption Reform.

Needham received her B.A. from Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota and M.A. from St. Mary's University of Minnesota.

Lisa's New Blog: *A Voice from Foster Care*



For those interested in resources, news and thoughts on foster care from a formerly fostered individual, here's a new blog you should check out. The blog, called 'Sunshine Girl On A Rainy Day,' is hosted by Lisa Dickson, who also maintains her own website and has authored a memoir about her experiences growing up in the foster care system. Lisa was honored to be

chosen as one of the chapter designees for Foster Care Alumni of America. She co-leads the statewide chapter in her state, serving as Communications Chair.

Check out Lisa's blog: <http://sunshinegirlonarainyday.blogspot.com/>

Keynote speakers covered a wide range of topics related to adoption, from the most current medical research on the phenomenon of 'catch up' growth for children adopted internationally (Dr. Dana Johnson), to research on birth parents' rights and the Hague Adoption Convention (Dr. Amanda Baden), the dynamics and outcomes of post-adoption contact from the view of the U.K. (Dr. Elsbeth Neil) and the U.S. (Dr. Harold Grotevant). Some sessions representing adult adoptees were as follows: 'All Grown Up: A Study of Adult Adoptees from Eastern Europe,' 'The Meaning of Search and Searching for Meaning: Adoption Narratives of Women in Young Adulthood,' 'I am much more than just adopted - Finnish Adult Adoptees' Perceptions of their Origin,' as well as 'Ethnic Identities of Transracial Adoptees.'

Importantly, adult adoptees were front and center at this conference and had a greater presence than they did at the 2006 conference. At the final evening dinner and event, Lilliane Waanders, an adult adoptee, offered a very moving performance of her story of being born in Greece and then adopted into a family in Holland. Lilliane shared the pain and grief she experienced throughout her life as she sought to make sense of her experience and her search for identity. I met a number of other adult adoptees who were at the forefront of emerging adult adoptee-run programs, primarily focusing on methods for supporting one another at this point. The movement for adult adoptees to speak their lived experience is emerging and

Check out Lisa's website:

<http://www.sunshinegirlonarainyday.com/Site/Welcome.html>

Released for 2009: **International Adoption Statistics**



The U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security have just released new statistics on immigration for 2009, including numbers of children adopted by U.S. citizens (see links below). For the 5th consecutive year, international adoptions have declined, dropping to about half of what they were at their peak in 2004. Particularly from China and Guatemala, the number of adoptions

has declined significantly. Only adoptions from Ethiopia have increased over that period of time.

http://adoption.state.gov/news/total_chart.html

<http://www.dhs.gov/files/statistics/publications/LPR09.shtm>

(See Table 12 and Supplemental Table 4)

Dissertation Presentation by U of MN Adoptee



"Genealogies of Korean Adoption: American Empire, Militarization and Yellow Desire" is the title of Soojin Pate's PhD dissertation in American Studies at the University of Minnesota. Pate argues that humanitarian narratives about Korean adoption supplanted what were originally militaristic, empire-

building motives for the practice. Pate will be delivering a talk on her research at the University of Minnesota on October 19th, from 12:30 to 2:00 PM, at the McNamara Alumni Center, Room 235.

Pate's dissertation is a finalist for the American Studies Association's Ralph Henry Gabriel Prize for Best Dissertation in American Studies, Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies.

[Read the research paper in its entirety.](#)

Pact Adult Camp: **One Man's View**



Kevin Hofman is the author of *Growing Up Black in White*, a memoir of Kevin's personal experiences growing up as a mixed-race adoptee in a white family in Detroit. Hofman recently attended the Pact Adoption Camp in Pacific Grove, California. This year for the first time, Pact offered an adult adoptee camp as well as one for adoptive

families. Kevin shared his personal thoughts about this first year of Adult Adoptee Camp. Thank you for sharing your views, Kevin. AHA welcomes other reviews as well.

[Pact Camp: An Exhausting Valuable Experience \(pdf\)](#)

Learn more about Kevin's book <http://www.kevinhofmann.com/>

the adoption community is responding by providing a venue for speaking at ICAR3.

I was fortunate to participate in a poster session to discuss my research. My background was as a social worker and family educator for nearly 15 years before I returned to graduate school in 2006. My last employment was with Children's Home Society & Family Services in the Minnesota Waiting Child Program where I provided adoption education for families adopting older children from foster care. This is where my research questions began and led me to my current research question in my doctoral program at the University of Minnesota, Department of Family Social Science - 'How is *family* defined by children in foster care?' I went to the conference to engage my colleagues in this question and to determine where, how, and by whom this question is being asked and answered. Most importantly I am seeking to hear from those who have lived in (or are currently living in) foster care: Who are the people you consider to be family? This is the focus of my future dissertation work and I would love to hear from any readers about your perspectives. Thanks for the opportunity to share about this remarkable event.

Jane Newell, MA
 Doctoral candidate
 Family Social Science
 University of Minnesota

Quick Links

[AHA Website](#)

[AHA on Facebook](#)

Support Group Resumes: **First Nations Orphans Association**



First Nations Orphan Association will begin hosting their monthly support groups again in September. Adoptees, fostered individuals within the Native American community, and their families are invited to a potluck dinner and talking circle held on the first Thursday of every month at All Nations Indian Church in Minneapolis. Sandra White Hawk, FNOA founder and AHA Advisory Group member, will facilitate the talking circle.

The first group will be held on September 2, 2010, and continue monthly through June 2011. The potluck runs from 6 to 7 PM, and the talking circle convenes at 7 and runs to 9 PM. People are encouraged to attend, even if they do not have a dish to bring. There is always plenty of food to go around. See [support group flier](#).

All Nations Indian Church
1515 East 23rd Street
Minneapolis, MN 55404

For questions or more information, please contact:
Sandra White Hawk
651-442-4872
sandywhitehawk@gmail.com
<http://www.wearecominghome.com>

Call for Submissions: **New Book about Search & Reunion**



EMK Press will be publishing a new book about adoption from various adoption perspectives, including those of adoptees. The publishers hope to go 'beyond the facts' to explore the deeper emotions of searching. If you have searched and/or been found by a member of your birth family, and would be interested in contributing to the book, see EMK Press's [webpage about the book](#). The information is located at the bottom of the webpage.

August Arts Gallery: **Spoken Word at the Loft**



Adoptee Christy NaMee Eriksen, spoken word artist, poet and writer, will be in Minnesota in September for a performance and workshop with a target audience of transnational and transracial adoptees. Born in Korea and raised in Alaska, Christy writes about 'mothers, oceans, lovesick ravens, homesick salmon, monsters under the bed, warrior babies who sing, and the occasional rainbow.' See fliers for performance times and locations.
[Flier 1](#) (pdf) [Flier 2](#) (pdf)

If you're interested in submitting a piece for publication in the AHA eNewsletter, please email it to j.decker@aha.mn with the words 'Newsletter Submission' in the subject line.

AHA on YouTube

AHA on Twitter

MN ADOPT

Contact Info

AdopteeLine
612.746.5135
1.877.966.2727

General Inquiries
612.746.5133

info@aha.mn

<http://aha.mn>

To join our mailing list,
please e-mail
info@aha.mn

Adoptee Support Groups

NEW!!! AHA International & Transracial Adoptees Support Group

invites adopted adults 18 and older to a monthly support group meeting. The first meeting is scheduled for Aug. 30, 2010, from 7 to 8 PM. Subsequent meetings will occur on the last Monday of every month, also from 7 to 8.

Roseville Library
2180 Hamline Ave N
Roseville, MN 55113
(2nd floor board room)

For more info, contact Julie at jhart703@gmail.com or Amy at amyfjellman@gmail.com

Note: Please send images in .jpg/.jpeg format. Written pieces should be limited to 250 words and submitted as MS Word documents or written directly into the body of an email message. We are looking forward to receiving your creative output.



First Nations Orphan Association

invites adoptees and fostered individuals and their families to a monthly potluck and talking circle. Groups begin in September 2010 and run through June 2011.

Pot Luck Meal – 6 to 7 PM
Talking Circle – 7 to 9 PM

All Nations Indian Church
1515 East 23rd St.
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Please come even if you don't have a dish to share.

For more information contact:

Sandra White Hawk
651-442-44872
sandywhitehawk@gmail.com
www.wearecominghome.com

'Wicoicage Ake Un Ku PI'

Adoptees MN

invites adult adoptees (18 and over) to a monthly support group meeting.

Loring Park Office Building
430 Oak Grove Street,
Community Room 207
Minneapolis (south end of Loring Park)

For more information contact:

Penny Needham
612-616-3139
Carrie Blesener
651-457-2252
adopteesmn@gmail.com

Adoptee Support Group of Duluth

Adoptees Have Answers

Minnesota Adoption Resource Network
430 Oak Grove Street, Suite 404
Minneapolis, MN 55403
<http://aha.mn>

General Inquiries:

info@aha.mn
612.746.5133
1.877.966.2727



invites adult adoptees to a
monthly support group
meeting.

2310 East 4th Street
Duluth, MN

First Wednesday of each
month, 7:00 p.m.

For more information
contact:
Michele Benson
218-525-3678
mbens525@gmail.com

Quote

" No one yet
has put into words
the complexity of
being adopted. "

- BJ Lifton

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