

CCC-GKC Learning Community Transracial Panel

Moderator

Ashley Williamson is a biracial woman adopted by a White family. From a young age she deeply contemplated being child of color in a “color-blind” family and what it meant to check “other” on forms regarding race. She and her parents participated in a group called Multi-racial Family Circle, now Mixed Roots, whose mission was to provide a nurturing environment, a safe haven from prejudice, a place to grow in self-esteem and raise awareness. Ashley found her biological parents at the age of 18 and now has a beautiful relationship with her bio-dad, Dylan, who resides in Brussels as the Ambassador to his native country, Belize. In May Ashley received her Masters in Social Work, macro focus, and is the Community Engagement Coordinator at Women’s Employment Network. anoelle8@gmail.com

Panelists

Hakima Tafunzi Payne resides in Kansas City, MO and holds a Bachelor’s of Nursing and a Master’s in Nursing Education. Ms. Payne is currently enrolled at Walden University pursuing a doctorate in Nursing Education. Ms. Payne is the Executive Director of Uzazi Village, a nonprofit dedicated to decreasing perinatal health disparities in communities of color. Ms. Payne has a 34 year old son that she placed for adoption at birth whom she reunited with 3 years ago. She and her son maintain an active and loving relationship.

Hakima’s [first parent story](#). (Posts are sorted by date, most recent first) midwifepayne@gmail.com

Al Lampier is a food-loving, German-speaking, gender non-conforming (gnc) Korean adoptee currently residing in Kansas City, MO. Born in Chechon, South Korea, adopted at the age of 13 months by 2 lovely Wisconsinites, and raised outside Chicago. I’m an architect by trade and I enjoy peanut butter and chocolate [especially when combined], graphic design, big words, tactile textures and alliterations, clever t-shirts, as well as random bouts of dancing. I lift heavy weights and I love good design. I’m a bit of everything and enjoy never fitting neatly within any one box. alamp13@gmail.com

Ross Merritt has a Bachelor’s of History with an emphasis in US cultural history from Arizona State University, and Masters of Public Health from Missouri State University. He is a chronic disease epidemiologist by trade, and is currently a senior health analytics consultant with DXC Technology. Ross also helps facilitate the Families core group of the Kansas City chapter of Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ). Ross adopted his daughter Olivia Tarik, from Ethiopia in 2010, and Olivia is now in the 3rd grade in the Shawnee Mission School District. merritr@gmail.com

Amy Guyett is an adoptive mother of twin biracial girls. She and her husband adopted from foster care after being foster parents to for 4 years. Amy has 20 years experience as well in social services and currently is the Director of Resource Development at Foster Adopt Connect. Amyg@fosteradopt.org

Transracial Adoption Resources

Local Resources

- [Kansas City Mixed Roots \(Facebook Group\)](#) - *Kansas City Mixed Roots provides opportunities for education, support, and socialization for multiracial individuals, families, and people in interracial relationships.*
- [Showing Up for Racial Justice- Families \(Facebook Group\)](#)- *SURJ KC Families Core is a part of SURJ KC. We believe that in order to build a multiracial, People of Color-led movement for liberation, white people need to do intentional work within themselves and their spaces of influence Therefore, we desire to organize, support, and educate white caregivers to do anti-racism work in ourselves and our families in accountability relationships with People of Color. We desire to be race conscious caregivers who are raising race conscious children as a way to help dismantle white privilege and racism in our society.*
- [Fostering Hope Radio Show](#)- *In March 2017, FosterAdopt Connect launched Fostering Hope, a radio program that runs from 5-6 p.m. Sundays on 98.1 KMBZ-FM. Fostering Hope takes listeners inside the world of foster care and adoption to help individuals and communities understand the experiences of – and how they can help – society’s most vulnerable children. Fostering Hope shares voices from all aspects of foster care, including stories from foster youth and former foster youth, foster/adoptive parents, policy makers and those involved in the child welfare system.*
 - [A Parent’s Perspective On Transracial Adoption With Sue Badeau](#)
 - [Targeted Foster Family Recruitment With Denise Goodman, Phd](#)
 - [Transracial/Transcultural Adoption Policy & Practice With The Donaldson Adoption Institute](#)

Books

- [**Inside Transracial Adoption: Strength-based, Culture-sensitizing Parenting Strategies for Inter-country or Domestic Adoptive Families that Don't "Match"**](#) (Gail Steinberg and Beth Hall)

Is transracial adoption a positive choice for kids? How can children gain their new families without losing their birth heritage? How can parents best support their children after placement? *Inside Transracial Adoption* is an authoritative guide to navigating the challenges and issues that parents face in the USA when they adopt a child of a different race and/or from a different culture. Filled with real-life examples and strategies for success, this book explores in depth the realities of raising a child transracially, whether in a multicultural or a predominantly white community. Readers will learn how to help children adopted transracially or transnationally build a strong sense of identity, so that they will feel at home both in their new family and in their racial group or culture of origin. This second edition incorporates the latest research on positive racial identity and multicultural families, and reflects recent developments and trends in adoption.
- [**In Their Voices: Black Americans on Transracial Adoption**](#) (Rhonda M. Roorda)

While many proponents of transracial adoption claim that American society is increasingly becoming "color-blind," a growing body of research reveals that for transracial adoptees of all backgrounds, racial identity does matter. Rhonda M. Roorda elaborates on that finding, studying the effects of the adoption of black and biracial children by white parents. She incorporates diverse perspectives on transracial adoption by concerned black Americans of various ages, including those who lived through Jim Crow and the Civil Rights era. All her interviewees have been involved either personally or professionally in the lives of transracial adoptees, and they offer strategies for navigating systemic racial inequalities while affirming the importance of black communities in the lives of transracial adoptive families. "In Their Voices" is for parents, child-welfare providers, social workers, psychologists, educators, therapists, and adoptees from all backgrounds who seek clarity about this phenomenon.
- [**Somebody's Children: The Politics of Transracial and Transnational Adoption**](#) (Laura Briggs)

In *Somebody's Children*, Laura Briggs examines the social and cultural forces--poverty, racism, economic inequality, and political violence--that have shaped transracial and transnational adoption in the United States during the second half of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first. Focusing particularly on the experiences of those who have lost their children to adoption, Briggs analyzes the circumstances under which African American and Native mothers in the United States and indigenous and poor women in Latin America have felt pressed to give up their children for adoption or have lost them involuntarily.
- [**How Chinese are You? Adopted Chinese Youth and their Families Negotiate Identity and Culture**](#) (Andrea Louie)

Chinese adoption is often viewed as creating new possibilities for the formation of multicultural, cosmopolitan families. For white adoptive families, it is an opportunity to learn more about China and Chinese culture, as many adoptive families today try to honor what they view as their children's "birth culture." However, transnational, transracial adoption also presents challenges to families who are trying to impart in their children cultural and racial identities that they themselves do not possess, while at the same time incorporating their own racial, ethnic, and religious identities. Many of their ideas are based on assumptions about how authentic Chinese and Chinese Americans practice Chinese culture. Based on a comparative ethnographic study of white and Asian American adoptive parents over an eight year period, *How Chinese Are You?* explores how white adoptive parents, adoption professionals, Chinese American adoptive parents, and teens adopted from China as children negotiate meanings of Chinese identity in the context of race, culture, and family.
- [**The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures**](#) (Anne Fadiman)

Lia Lee was born in 1981 to a family of recent Hmong immigrants, and soon developed symptoms of epilepsy. By 1988 she was living at home but was brain dead after a tragic cycle of misunderstanding, over-medication, and culture clash: "What the doctors viewed as clinical efficiency the Hmong viewed as frosty arrogance." *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* is a tragedy of Shakespearean dimensions, written with the deepest of human feeling. Sherwin Nuland said of the account, "There are no villains in Fadiman's tale, just as there are no heroes. People are presented as she saw them, in their humility and their frailty--and their nobility."
- [**Two Worlds: Lost Children of the Indian Adoption Projects**](#) (Trace A DeMeyer and Patricia Cotter-Busbee)

TWO WORLDS: Lost Children of the Indian Adoption Projects is an important contribution to American Indian history. Trace DeMeyer-Hentz and Patricia Cotter-Busbee, the co-editors and adoptees, located other Native adult survivors of adoption and asked them to write a narrative. The adoptees share their unique experience of living in Two Worlds, surviving assimilation via adoption, opening sealed adoption records, and in most cases, a reunion with their tribal relatives. Indigenous identity and historical trauma takes on a whole new meaning in this adoption anthology. This anthology covers the history of Indian child removals in North America, the adoption projects, their impact on Indian Country and how it impacts the adoptee and their families.

Articles

[What Adoption Classes Didn't Teach Us About Raising Black Children](#) by Paula Fitzgibbons

[Why We Need To Talk About Race In Adoption](#) by Nicole S. Chung

[5 Things I Wish My White Parents Knew](#) by Rebekah Hutson

[Study Reveals Transracial Adoption is More Popular Than Ever](#) by American Adoptions News

[The Gardener's Tale, Dr. Camara Jones \(video\)](#)- Kamara Jones

In a 2002 videotaped interview for the CityMatCH Annual Urban MCH Leadership Conference, Dr. Jones shared a simple yet remarkably profound allegory she grew and nurtured to help people come to a place of understanding about the many layers and nuances of institutionalized, personally-mediated, and internalized racism.

National Resources

National Indian Law Library (<http://www.narf.org/nill/index.html>)

Lost Daughters- *Lost Daughters is an independent collaborative writing project founded in 2011. It is edited and authored exclusively by adult women who were adopted as children. Our name was chosen in the spirit of BJ Lifton's concept of one's Self becoming "lost" and "found" throughout the journey of being adopted.*

Pact Adoption Alliance

Pact is a non-profit organization whose mission is to serve adopted children of color. In every case, the child is always our primary client. In order to best serve children's needs, we provide not only adoptive placement but lifelong education, support, and community for adoptees and their families on issues of adoption and race. Our goal is for every child to feel wanted honored and loved, a cherished member of a strong family with proud connections to the rich cultural heritage that is his or her birthright. We advocate for honesty and authenticity in matters of race and adoption. We strongly believe that adopted children's and adults' connections to birth family and birth heritage should be respected and maintained. We also strive to identify and counteract "adoptism," an unfortunately common social prejudice that challenges the legitimacy of the choice to place a child for adoption or to build a family by adoption. Finally, as an organization committed to children of color, we feel it is essential to educate ourselves and others about the pervasive power of race and racism as they affect our children, our families, ourselves and our society.

- [Pact Adoption Alliance Adopted and Fostered Adults of Color Support Services \(Facebook Group\)](#)- This group is open to adults of color who were adopted or are foster care alum. The group is administered by Pact, An Adoption Alliance and closed to the public to encourage more intimate sharing and ensure privacy. Pact's private Facebook group is a space for sharing your experiences, insights, and camaraderie with others who share your experiences.
- [Pact Adoption Alliance Transracial / Transnational Parents Support Services \(Facebook Group\)](#)- This is a forum where adoptive parents can share their questions, concerns, and opinions about parenting, adoption, and race as well as information about events or resources that are relevant to adoptive families parenting children of color. Parents of all racial backgrounds are welcome. The majority of the participants on this group live in Northern California, with most residing in the Bay Area.
- [Pact Adoption Alliance Private Facebook Group for Adoptive Parents of Color \(only\)](#)- This Facebook group is for adoptive (and pre-adoptive) parents of color of any race. Join this multiracial community for discussion and support around parenting issues related to adoption and race. Pact's private Facebook group is a space for sharing your experiences, insights, and camaraderie with other parents just like you.
- [Private Facebook Group for Adoptive Parents of Color \(and their parenting partners\)](#)- This Facebook group is for adoptive (and pre-adoptive) parents of color and their parenting partners of any race. Adoptive parents in families where at least one parent is a person of color can join this multiracial community for discussion and support around parenting issues related to adoption and race. Adoptive parents of color are welcome to join this Facebook group and/or the group described above. In this group, parents of different races are negotiating relationships with both adults and children in the family who may or may not share their own racial identity.

Critical Mixed Race Studies

Critical Mixed Race studies is the transracial, transdisciplinary, and transnational critical analysis of the institutionalization of social, cultural, and political orders based on dominant conceptions of race. CMRS emphasizes the mutability of race and the porosity of racial boundaries to critique processes of racialization and social stratification based on race. CMRS addresses local and global systemic injustice rooted in systems of racialization.

- Critical Mixed Race Studies Conference 2018- Resisting, Reclaiming, and Reimagining, March 1-3, 2018 at the University of Maryland

Resources on How to Talk to Our Children and Youth About Race and Racism

Articles

[Strategies for Talking to Young Children About Race- http://www.raceconscious.org/strategies/](http://www.raceconscious.org/strategies/)

[Three Simple Ways to Address Skin Color Bias with Kids](#) By Alim Collins

[My daughter asked me what Black Lives Matter meant. Here's what I said...](#) By Allison Kenny

[Parenting for Liberation: Interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline](#) By Trina Greene Brown

[Preserving My Children's Innocence Is An Act Of Preserving White Supremacy](#) By Shannon Gaggero

[How to talk to kids about racism: An age-by-age guide](#) By Alex Mlynek

[The Bill of Rights for Mixed Race People](#) By Dr. Maria Root

[5 Things to Know if You Love a Mixed-race Kid](#) By Sara-Momii Roberts

[5 Essential Resources for Parents of Mixed Race and Multiracial Kids](#) Contributions from: Kimberly Cooper, Sharon Chang, Deidre Anthony, Chantilly Patino, & Rachel Charlene Lewis

[7 Fantastic Tips from Youth on How to Teach and Talk About Racism](#) By Alan Pelaez Lopez

Audio (includes edited transcript)

[Supporting kids of color amid racialized violence](#)

With child psychologist Dr. Allison Briscoe-Smith and educator Dr. Sandra "Chap" Chapman

* Adapted from SURJ KC Families