

Janet Hyunju Clarke

International adoption

Education, advocacy, and discovery resources

In recognition of November as National Adoption Month, this column is dedicated to Internet resources on international adoption. International adoption began when Korean War orphans were adopted by American and European couples in the 1950s. Some 50 years later, thousands of children from all over the world have been adopted internationally, with more than 150,000¹ from Korea alone. There is a growing body of scholarly writing on this topic, particularly as the number of adult adoptees engaging in the discourse of international adoption, both scholarly and popular, has reached a critical mass. In addition to print resources, the Internet provides valuable resources on research, education, advocacy, and community. Web sites were chosen for richness of content, clarity of purpose and authorship, and stability and currency.² Adoption placement agencies are not included.

Research

- **Adoptie Driehoek Onderzoeks Centrum (ADOC).** This research center, based at the Center for Child and Family Studies at Leiden University in the Netherlands, initiates research on various aspects of the international adoption triad and adoption-related foster care. ADOC makes its current research accessible through a “digital research center,” with an up-to-date searchable database of scholarly research by title, year, keyword, author, and journal. The Web site also posts current news and information about congresses, symposia, and new research. The geographic scope includes Korea, China, Greece, India, Colombia, and the African continent. ADOC offers fee-based research assistance. *Access:* <http://www.adoptionresearch.nl>.

- **Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute.** The institute is the pre-eminent research, policy, and education organization in its field. Established in 1996 as an independent and unbiased adoption research and policy organization, it has a Senior Research Fellows program, initiates original research, publishes white papers and book-length studies, conducts national adoption surveys, and advocates for ethical practices and laws on domestic and international adoption at national and international levels. *Access:* <http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/index.php>.



- **International Adoption Clinic, University of Minnesota.** The Web site states this is the “first clinic in the United States providing for the health needs of internationally adopted children through its clinic services, research, and education.”³ In addition to the pre- and post-adoption medical services that other (international) adoption clinics provide, this clinic conducts independent research in the field of international adoption. The current research project focuses on Eastern European growth issues of institutionalized children. *Access:* <http://www.med.umn.edu/peds/iac/>.

Education

- **Child Welfare Information Gateway.** Formerly known as the National Adoption

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Information Clearinghouse, this government (Department of Health and Human Services) site provides access to print and online publications, Web sites, and databases on all aspects of child welfare, including all aspects of domestic and international adoption. *Access:* <http://www.childwelfare.gov>.

- **Karen's Adoption Links.** A copious collection of Web sites on international adoption, this list of lists is hosted by Karen Holt and thankfully has a search mechanism, with Boolean, wildcard, qualifier, phrase, and advanced searching features (powered by the Freefind search engine). List topics include electronic lists by country, adoption stories, orphanage addresses, adoption consumer products, funding and benefits, and search registries. *Access:* <http://www.karensadoptionlinks.com/>.

- **Orphandoc.com.** Jane Aronson, OD, clinical assistant professor of pediatrics at Weill Medical College of Cornell University, specializes in international adoption medicine. Her site provides relevant medical research, definitions, and other information pertinent to international adoption. Her medical and travel resources and links are especially useful. *Access:* www.orphandoc.com.

- **Pact, an Adoption Alliance.** A nonprofit membership organization, Pact's mission is to provide support, education, counseling, and advocacy to adopted children of



color. It was begun in 1991 to address dual- or multiple-heritage adoptive families, sometimes referred to as trans-racial families. Its current focus is all triad members of trans-racial, transcultural or transnational adoption, and its staff and board reflect this diversity. Pact is based in Oakland, California, and has events and workshops, such as "Play group for same-race adoptive families of color" and "True Colors II: Interrogating our own racism: Pushing past Racism 101." Pact has affiliated support groups in California, New Jersey,

and North Carolina. *Access:* <http://www.pactadopt.org>.

- **Rainbow Kids.com.** This is a volunteer-based advocacy and information center for international adoption founded in 1996. Since 2006, Rainbowkids.com expanded its advocacy to include special needs adoption issues. One of the most valuable resources on this site is the RainbowKids.com online monthly magazine, with searchable archives back to 2001. Articles feature international issues, such as caring for African hair, learning about Mongolian spots, and handling family tree assignments at school. There is a searchable events calendar that covers all states. The site is sustained by contributions by adoption agencies and sponsorship ads, which are clearly marked as such. *Access:* <http://www.rainbowkids.com/>.

Advocacy

- **Ethica: An Independent Voice for Ethical Adoption.** Begun in 2003, Ethica is a nonprofit organization focusing on policy, advocacy, and education regarding ethical adoption practices worldwide. Updates for international adoption are arranged by country, including the United States (which has links to relevant laws by state). However, links throughout the site were not current at the time of this column, and some countries, like Korea, which is still one of the largest sending countries, were notably missing from the section on international adoption. *Access:* <http://www.ethicanet.org>.

- **International Adoptee Congress (IAC).** This is a newly formed (2006) national organization committed to "empowering, supporting, and giving voice" to international adoptees and facilitating dialogue among adoptive families, adoptee groups, adoption agencies, adoption professionals, public policy leaders, and the news media. IAC's goals are to groom adoptees as leaders in the adoption community; to evaluate current resources available to adoptees and to improve them; and to explore ways to give voice to pre-teen, teen, and adult adoptees and families. The Web site provides contact

information for researchers and adoption professionals, posts upcoming events, has a job exchange page (currently empty) and online discussion forums, and has a (now outdated) online newsletter. Though it is a membership organization, the Web site is not clear on how to join. *Access:* <http://www.internationaladopteecongress.org>.

- **Joint Council on International Children's Services (JCICS).** This "is the oldest and largest affiliation of licensed, non-profit international adoption organizations in the world." Its membership of more than 200 organizations works in 51 countries and includes adoption agencies, child welfare organizations, parent support groups, and medical specialists with an interest in inter-country adoption. JCICS works to promote the highest standards of ethics in international adoption, and works as an advocate for international adoption with U.S. and foreign governments. The Web site provides conference information, current legislative and country information, as well as information on the international adoption process, and a members-only area. The homepage has a Google search box for its site. *Access:* <http://www.jcics.org>.

- **SOS-Kinderdorf International.** This nonprofit organization was started in 1949 in Austria. SOS villages provide permanent care for abandoned, abused, and orphaned children, emphasizing sibling cohesion, family stability, and community in noninstitutionalized "village" environments, through 1,800 facilities in 132 countries, of which the United States has three (in Illinois and Florida). SOS villages provide an alternative to international adoption by keeping children in their native countries. *Access:* <http://www.sos-childrensvillages.org>.

Search registries

- **Adoptee Registry Connect (ARC).** This is a free "worldwide adoptee and birth parent search database" that currently has 33,000 U.S. and international profiles. The registrant has the option of attaching digital photos to their profile. The database has good searching

mechanisms: surname is searchable in three ways (partial, exact, and soundex); wildcards are allowed except in soundex searches; there is an option to choose multiple locations in the advanced search mode; browsing capability is by location or surname; and results may be sorted by surname or date (most recent posting first). On the results page, the user has the option to contact a registrant. ARC does not retain any correspondence on its server, but rather sends any e-mail directly to the registrant via an online form that does not display the registrant's e-mail address. If a search produces no hits, the resulting link takes user to ancestry.com, although ARC's privacy statement says it is not owned or operated by ancestry.com. *Access:* <http://www.adopteeconnect.com/>.

- **Adoption Reunions South Africa.** This is a fee-based adoption search service that is based in South Africa, but also includes Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Namibia, Botswana, and other African countries. The database is arranged by adoptee birth year, beginning in 1924, with updated or new information added to original inquiry/information. The registrant composes the message that gets posted online, less any contact information. There is no search mechanism except for birth year, which makes it difficult to search by name or geographic area. Advertisements are prominent at the top and bottom of each page, which could be distracting for first-time users. *Access:* http://members.tripod.com/adoption_reunions/index.htm.

- **Amerasian Family Finder.** This is a nonprofit search site for Amerasians, defined by this organization as any person fathered by a U.S. citizen and whose mother is an Asian national. The free registry, begun in 2006, is aimed at helping those born to American servicemen involved in wars or U.S. occupation in Asian countries. The database is organized by country, adoptees/Amerasians in Asia searching for fathers in the United States, and adoptees or birth fathers in the United States searching for birth mothers or children, respectively, in Asia; photos accompany some registrations. Forms are available online. The

database is not very user-friendly and there is no search mechanism for the site. *Access:* <http://amerasianfamilyfinder.org>.

- **Global Overseas Adoptee Link.** This nonprofit's goal is to reunite birth families and facilitate the experience of Korean culture for overseas Korean adoptees. It was founded in 1998 in recognition of the need for expanded post-adoption services, such as birth family reunions and Korean- and English-language study. The birth family reunion program regularly works with the Korean media (television, radio, and newspapers) to assist in and publicize searches. The Web site is available in Korean, English, and French. *Access:* <http://goal.or.kr/eng/>.

- **International Soundex Reunion Registry.** This is a very well-respected nonprofit mutual consent reunion registry, which was founded in 1975. The registry has 174,000 profiles, with a 5 to 3 ratio of adoptees to birth families. Registry match notification is done the old-fashioned way—by phone or snail-mail, not by e-mail. This organization is endorsed by CARE (Coalition for Adoption Registry Ethics, www.plumsite.com/care/index.html). There is no fee for registration. *Access:* <http://www.isrr.net>.

- **Kinsearch Registry.** Kinsearch Registry is a nonprofit DNA registry for those who have been adopted or are the result of assisted reproductive processes. The databank consists of a database of country of origin and a database of those conceived by donation. Its scope is international, though the current databases contain only profiles from Korea, China, Russia, Guatemala, and the United States. *Access:* <http://www.kinsearchregistry.org>.

Publishers

- **EMK Press.** The EMK Press Web site has helpful resources and supportive material, such as discussion questions, that go with the books. *Access:* <http://www.emkpress.com/>.

- **Tapestry Books.** Founded in 1990, Tapestry Books specializes in books about adoption. *Access:* <http://www.tapestrybooks.com/>.

Community

- **Also Known As . . . (AKA).** This social networking organization began in 1996 with a small group of Korean adoptees and friends in New York, but later expanded its scope to include “all families created by intercountry adoption and the unique experiences of transcultured people, seeking to share the human experiences of adoption.” AKA has a speakers' bureau, mentorship programs, volunteer program, and social programs. *Access:* <http://alsoknownas.org/>.



- **Eastern European Adoption Coalition.** Started in 1998, this nonprofit support and information network of adoptive families from Eastern European countries is the umbrella group for 21 adoptive parenting electronic lists from these countries, with a combined electronic list membership of more than 5,000. *Access:* <http://www.eadopt.org/>.

- **Families for Russian and Ukrainian Adoption (FRUA).** This is a nonprofit support network for families with children from Russia, Ukraine, and neighboring countries, such as Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. FRUA was started in 1993 in Washington, D.C., and is a national organization with regional chapters. It has various on-going orphanage support programs, and members have access to the quarterly newsletter and hotline on various adoption issues. Web site navigation is clunky and lacks a search mechanism. *Access:* <http://www.frua.org/home.shtml>.

- **Families with Children from China (FCC).** FCC is a network of parent support groups from around the world that has regional chapters and events and programs. The Web site is a general repository of information on China and adoption, such as China adoption laws and regulations, health and medical information, regional FCC newsletters, electronic lists, growth charts, orphanage assistance programs, and “The Mall” (China and

adoption-related products). The Web site also has announcements for participation in current research studies. The Web site has basic and advanced search mechanisms as well as a site index. *Access:* <http://www.fwcc.org/>.

- **Families with Children from Viet Nam.** This is the national adoption support, information, and networking site for adoptive families of Vietnamese children. This nonprofit organization has local chapters throughout the United States, and serves as the information clearinghouse for the chapters' events and news. Other resources include an active electronic list for members of Adoptive Parents of Vietnam (groups.yahoo.com/group/a-parents-vietnam/); a quarterly newsletter, "Chao Ban Newsletter"; culture camp information; families directory; as well as links to Adopt Vietnam (www.adoptvietnam.org/), a Web site dedicated to information and resources about Vietnam (culture, travel, adoption, and parenting, etc.), and Comeunity (www.comeunity.com), a resource site for adoptive parents, including a list of adoption electronic lists by country or topic, international adoption medical clinics in North America, and adoption photolisting sites. *Access:* <http://www.fcvn.org>.

- **Korean Focus.** A national nonprofit organization based in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, Koren Focus has several regional chapters around the country. The site provides useful cultural and curricular materials about Korea and adoption. There is an e-bulletin and newsletter, "The Drumming Crane," with archives available online. The sections "By and for KADs" (acronym for Korean adoptees) and "Resources & Links" provide current and relevant links. *Access:* <http://www.koreanfocus.org>.

- **Latin American Parents Association.** This is a parent support group, started in 1975, that provides guidance through pre- and post-adoption issues. The group's "Adoption Source Kit" is a 70-page document containing current information about adoption sources and conditions throughout Latin America. Based in New York, this regional chapter publishes a newsletter, "¿Que Tal?" and hosts an electronic

list for members, LAPAnet. *Access:* <http://www.lapa.com>.

Blog

- **Harlow's Monkey.** A well-written, well-organized, thoughtful blog by Jae Ran Kim, a Korean adoptee. The blog is a great resource for other adoptees who want to find blogs, information, advocacy groups, events, discussion, etc., related to the transracial adoption experience. *Access:* <http://harlowmonkey.typepad.com>.

Harlow's Monkey

Experiencing the social experiment of transracial and transnational adoption

Lists

- **Adoption Agency Research-International.** Founded in 2002, this list is for prospective adoptive parents in their research and selection of an international adoption agency. A membership application is required; employees or affiliates of adoption agencies are not welcome to join. *Access:* Adoption_Agency_Research@yahoogroups.com.

- **Adoption from Russia and Russian Culture.** Founded in 1999, this list has nearly 6,000 members and is very active; it covers Russia, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe. *Access:* Russian_Adoption@yahoogroups.com.

- **Adoptive Parents China.** Founded in 1999, this list currently has nearly 19,000 members and is very active. *Access:* a-parents-china@yahoogroups.com.

- **Guatemala Adoption.** Founded in 2001, this list has nearly 4,800 members, and is very active. *Access:* Guatemala_Adoption@yahoogroups.com.

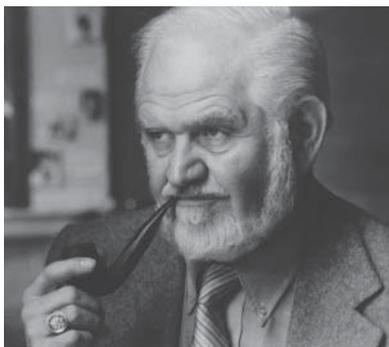
- **Intercountry Adoption Research.** Founded in 2003, this list's members consist of academics, researchers, adoption professionals and lay people, including those in the adoption triad, engaged in and/or interested in current research pertaining to intercountry adoption. Its main intent is to enable scholars and practitioners to communicate current research; share information on conferences

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University of Houston, and University of Texas-Austin. The grant will help fund the development and implementation of the Texas ETD Repository, a state-wide system for managing the entire life-cycle of electronic theses and dissertations from initial submission to final publication.

Acquisitions

The personal collection of Robert Prosky, veteran actor, has been acquired by George Mason University Libraries Special Collections and Archives. The Robert Prosky Collection consists of documents spanning Prosky's prolific career in theatre, film, and television that began more than 50 years ago. Materials include playbills, photos, scripts, articles, reviews, fan letters, personal correspondence, opening night gifts, media, and a scrapbook. The University Libraries hosted An Evening with Robert Prosky, where Prosky shared his experiences in appearing in more



Actor Robert Prosky

than 200 plays nationally and internationally and his 38 film and television roles, including Mrs. Doubtful, The Natural, Rudy, and Dead Man Walking.

Six archival collections from Teachers College related to the history of education and social reform, with a focus on New York, have been acquired by Columbia University's Rare Book & Manuscript Library. Among them are the records of four social agencies—Hudson Guild, Grosvenor Neighborhood House, the Children's Village, and the Wiltwyck School—and the papers of two individuals, Dan Carpenter, former executive director of the Hudson Guild, and Godfrey Dewey, noted spelling reformist. These collections document the history of the family, immigration, and social conditions in New York City from the mid-19th century to the present and relate well to Columbia University Libraries' holdings of primary source material in the area, such as the papers of Lillian Wald and the records of the Union Settlement Association of New York and the La Guardia Memorial House. *~*

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discipline, and enjoy conquering challenges, a tenure-track position may be just what

you're looking for. The key to making tenure a fun process is to apply the planning and organizational skills that we're famous for as librarians to our own careers. *~*

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and symposia relating to ICA issues; and to critique methods and tools of analysis, ICA practice, history, and policies. It is international in scope, covering the globe and all aspects of the adoption triad. Access: Intadoptresearch@yahoo.com.

Notes

1. Dong Soo Kim, A Country Divided: Contextualizing Adoption from a Korean Perspective, in *International Korean Adoption:*

A Fifty-Year History of Policy and Practice, ed. Kathleen Ja Sook Bergquist et al. (New York: Haworth Press, 2007), 8.

2. For example, Transracial Abductees (www.transracialabductees.org) is a group that vehemently opposes international adoption and has some interesting articles and links; however, the Web site is not very current and thus was not selected for inclusion here.

3. International Adoption Clinic at the University of Minnesota, www.med.umn.edu/peds/iac/. *~*