

International Social Service Research Outcomes

Researchers from around the world and the United States regularly use the ISS records, as well as other historical collections to study the adoption of children from Korea, Vietnam, Greece, Germany, and other countries. The records are also a significant resource on such topics as: immigration and related policy; refugees, displaced persons, and forced migration; repatriation and family reunification; concepts of citizenship; responses to humanitarian crises due to war, occupation, and mass migration; and international family law. The records have informed books, dissertations, journal articles, scholarly papers, conferences, personal memoirs, policy papers, documentary films, legal scholarship, and investigative journalism.

From 2007-2022, University of Minnesota Social Welfare History Archives received 480 research requests related to adoption (domestic, transnational, Native American) and around 200 results on migration, immigration and similar terms. Below are examples of research outcomes using the ISS-USA records.

- **Cassavantes-Bradford, Anita.** *Suffer the Little Children: Child Migration and the Geopolitics of Compassion in the United States.* University of North Carolina Press, 2022. Starting with the European children who fled the perils of World War II and ending with the Central American children who arrive every day at the U.S southern border—Anita Casavantes Bradford traces the evolution of American policy toward unaccompanied children.
- **Doolan, Yuri.** "The Camptown Origins of International Adoption and the Hypersexualization of Korean Children." *Journal of Asian American Studies*, vol. 24 no. 3, 2021, p. 351-382. Project MUSE, doi:10.1353/jaas.2021.0032. This essay reorients the history of international adoption from South Korea. It centers the camptown—recreational spaces around US bases infamous for military prostitution—and the mixed-race children who constituted the vast majority of those sent abroad in the program's initial years, to help explain how adoptee bodies have been coded in the American psyche ever since.
- **Condit-Shrestha, Kelly.** "Archives, Adoption Records, and Owning Historical Memory" in Levison, Deborah, et al. *Children and Youth as Subjects, Objects, Agents : Innovative Approaches to Research Across Space and Time.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2021. Chapter exploring issues related to access to adoption records and the author's personal adoption research and story.
- **Rosaria Franco (2020)** *No Happy Childhood Behind the Iron Curtain: Cold War and Imperial Perspectives in the Anglo-Soviet Dispute Over Unaccompanied Baltic Children (1947–1952),* Europe-Asia Studies. 2020. DOI: 10.1080/09668136.2020.1727857 This article reconstructs the postwar Anglo-Soviet dispute within the League of Red Cross Societies over unaccompanied children from the Baltic states, whose postwar Soviet citizenship Britain contested. It argues that the resolution of this dispute was prevented by the novel Cold War view, common to both the British and the Soviet governments, that children socialized by ideological enemies were future enemies.
- **McKee, Kimberly D.** *Disrupting Kinship: Transnational Politics of Korean Adoption in the United States.* 1 ed. University of Illinois Press, 2019. Project MUSE muse.jhu.edu/book/65173. Since the Korean War began, Western families have adopted more than 200,000 Korean children. Two-thirds of these adoptees found homes in the United States. The majority joined white families and in the process forged a new kind of transnational and transracial kinship. Kimberly D. McKee examines the growth of the neocolonial, multi-million-dollar global industry that shaped these families—a system she identifies as the transnational adoption industrial complex. She explores how an alliance of the South Korean welfare state, orphanages, adoption agencies, and American immigration laws powered transnational adoption between the two countries.

- **Graves, Kori A.** "Amerasian Children, Hybrid Superiority, and Pearl S. Buck's Transracial and Transnational Adoption Activism." *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 143 no. 2, 2019, pp. 177-209. doi:10.1353/pmh.2019.0016
- **Graves, Kori A.** "War Born Family: African American Adoption in the Wake of the Korean War" NYU Press. 2020
- **Kim, Eleana and Kim Park Nelson.** "Natural Born Aliens": *Transnational Adoptees and US Citizenship.* *Adoption & Culture*, vol. 7 no. 2, 2019, p. 257-279. Project MUSE, doi:10.1353/ado.2019.0021.
- **Fehrenbach, Heide.** "Chapter 2: Children as casework: the problem of migrating and refugee children in the era of world war". *Research Handbook on Child Migration*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2018. <<https://doi.org/10.4337/9781786433701.00010>>. Web. 30 Jun. 2022. The author reviews the history of ISS, among other agencies, to explore perception of "unaccompanied migrant and refugee children...as a social problem requiring professionalized attention"
- **Lee, Shawyn C.** "Mother America: Cold War Maternalism and the Origins of Korean Adoption." *Ethical Standards and Practice in International Relations*, edited by F. Sigmund Topor, IGI Global, 2018, pp. 157-186. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-2650-6.ch007> After the Korean War, it became acceptable and expected that American families would adopt Korean children into their homes, symbolizing American prosperity and security. As significant a role as social work played in this process, there currently exists no research that examines the activities of the profession and the origins of Korean adoption. This chapter discusses the maternalist nature of adoption efforts during the 1950s by one international social welfare agency after the Korean War: the American Branch of International Social Service (ISS-USA). Predicated on maternalist ideologies that shaped the social work profession during the Progressive Era, in what the author calls Cold War maternalism, the gendered notions of motherhood were expanded to genderless notions of parenthood. Anticommunist sentiments thrust adoptive parenthood into the political spotlight on an international level, thus serving the best interests of adoptive parents and the nation long before serving those of the children.
- **Park Nelson, Kim Ja.** *Invisible Asians: Korean American Adoptees, Asian American Experiences and Racial Exceptionalism.* (Rutgers University Press, 2016). *Invisible Asians* draws on the life stories of more than sixty adult Korean adoptees in three locations: Minnesota, home to the largest concentration of Korean adoptees in the United States; the Pacific Northwest, where many of the first Korean adoptees were raised; and Seoul, home to hundreds of adult adoptees who have returned to South Korea to live and work. Their experiences underpin a critical examination of research and policy making about transnational adoption from the 1950s to the present day.

- **Silvana Patriarca** "*Fear of Small Numbers: 'Brown Babies' in Postwar Italy*," in *Contemporanea. Rivista dell' '800 e '900*, December 2015.
- **Silke Hackenesch**, Assistant Professor, Department of American History, Culture, and Society, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, Munich Germany. Funded fellowship from Fritz Thyssen Foundation to spend 3 weeks using records on international adoption to research the issue of "proxy" adoptions of children in the 1940s and 1950s. 2014
- **Pate, SooJin**. *From Orphan to Adoptee: U.S. Empire and Genealogies of Korean Adoption*. University of Minnesota Press, 2014. <https://www.upress.umn.edu/book-division/books/from-orphan-to-adoptee> SooJin Pate explores the ways Korean children were employed by the U.S. nation-state to promote the myth of American exceptionalism, to expand U.S. empire during the Cold War, and to solidify notions of the American family.
- **Choy, Catherine Ceniza**. *Global Families: A History of Asian International Adoption in America*, NYU Press. 2013 <https://nyupress.org/9781479892174/global-families/> The author unearths the little-known historical origins of Asian international adoption in the United States. Beginning with the post-World War II presence of the U.S. military in Asia, she reveals how mixed-race children born of Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese women and U.S. servicemen comprised one of the earliest groups of adoptive children. Based on extensive archival research, *Global Families* acknowledges the complexity of the phenomenon, illuminating both its radical possibilities of a world united across national, cultural, and racial divides through family formation and its strong potential for reinforcing the very racial and cultural hierarchies it sought to challenge.
- **Park Nelson, Kim Ja**. "*Korean Looks, American Eyes: Korean American Adoptees, Race, Culture and Nation*." University of Minnesota, Department of American Studies, December, 2009. <https://hdl.handle.net/11299/58718> This project positions Korean adoptees as transnational citizens at intersections within race relations in the United States, as emblems of international geopolitical relationships between the United States and South Korea, and as empowered actors, organizing to take control of racial and cultural discourses about Korean adoption.
- **Oh, Arissa Hyun Jung**. *Into the Arms of America: The Korean Roots of International Adoption*, 2008. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Chicago, Department of History <https://search-proquest-com.ezp3.lib.umn.edu/docview/304429649?pq-origsite=primo>
- **Yara Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria**. *Black German "Occupation" Children: Objects of Study in the Continuity of German Race Anthropology*, in: *Children of World War II. The Hidden Enemy Legacy*, Oxford, 2005

- **Heide Fehrenbach**, *Race After Hitler. Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* Princeton University Press, 2005 Heide Fehrenbach examines race relations in postwar Germany after 1945 as reflected in the case of biracial children born to black American GIs and white German women. This led to intense policy debates over the desirability of integrating Mischlingskinder into German society or of having them adopted into African American or other families abroad. She draws in part from extensive records on international adoption in the SWHA's International Social Service, American Branch records. Fehrenbach is professor of history at Northern Illinois University. She is beginning work on a related book on the beginnings of international adoption between Europe and North America.
- **Balcom, Karen** "*The Traffic In Babies': Cross-Border Adoption, Baby-Selling, and the Development of Child Welfare Systems in the United States and Canada, 1920-1960*" Rutgers University. 1997. Between 1930 and the mid-1970s, several thousand Canadian-born children were adopted by families in the United States. At times, adopting across the border was a strategy used to deliberately avoid professional oversight and take advantage of varying levels of regulation across states and provinces. *The Traffic in Babies* traces the efforts of Canadian and American child welfare leaders—with intermittent support from immigration officials, politicians, police, and criminal prosecutors—to build bridges between disconnected jurisdictions and control the flow of babies across the Canada-U.S. border.