

Chain of Life

A Progressive Adoption Newsletter

SINCE 1989

P.O. BOX 8081, BERKELEY, CA 94707

EDITOR: JANINE BAER, M.A.

JBAER @ PACBELL.NET

ISSUE 42 ▲ SPRING/SUMMER 1997

Chain of Life ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ o ~~XXXX~~ Chain of Life ~~XXXX~~ o ~~XXXXXX~~

THE CRIMES THAT HIDE BEHIND SECRET ADOPTION

NOW IT'S EL SALVADOR

BEING BLOCKED FROM knowing one's genealogy for any reason is unacceptable. Those who face sealed adoption records, those who face the secrecy of learning they were conceived by donor insemination, those whose birth parents veto access to their identities or deny being their birth parents, all encounter a preventable social injustice and a denial of information that is vital to their own self-knowledge and well-being. The need for open adoption records can be argued on the basis of a citizen's right to her own birth certificate. In this article, I want to confront a more sinister outcome of sealed records: that secrecy creates the perfect setting for crime.

Back in 1938, the Child Welfare League of America approved a list they called Minimum Safeguards in Adoption. This same list that suggested a need for birth records to be "revised" to avoid embarrassing an adoptee with the label of illegitimacy also stated that adoption should encourage neither illegiti-

macy nor "trafficking in babies." As baby-seller Georgia Tann and others knew in the 1930s, there was a market for babies at the time. Ironically, Tann did not need sealed records to change the identities of the children she placed. She was protected by a corrupt government in Tennessee that allowed her agency to operate without the need for sealed records. Tann simply falsified birth certificates to cover her tracks. Her crimes would never have been discovered if it were not for the adult adoptees who searched for their birth mothers and discovered the falsification of birth certificates.

And today? Adoption agencies in the United States have been forced to pay damages on occasions when they have been found to have coerced pregnant women to relinquish their children, as in the case of the woman in San Diego who was made to choose adoptive parents while she was in labor as a contingency for being taken to the hospital. Recently, kidnappings of children for adoption have come to light

in El Salvador. During El Salvador's civil war from 1980 to 1992, with its death squads that were partially funded and trained by the United States, terror was the norm. The revelations that children were stolen are easily believable in a country where murder and torture were routine. With Salvadorans freer to speak about their wartime losses today, so far over 400 have said their children were stolen from them during the war.

The story of Salvadoran children stolen for adoption was outlined in Stephanie Salter's article, "Tracking down El Salvador's 'disappeared' children" in the *San Francisco Examiner* published on Sunday, April 27, 1997. Reminiscent of the situation of government-sponsored terrorism in Argentina that came to an end not long after the war in El Salvador began, Salvadoran children whose parents were considered the enemy were taken as a form of punishment. Some children were

continued on next page...

...continued from front page

taken away in helicopters and given to relief workers as abandoned or orphaned. The children were adopted in the U.S., Europe, or elsewhere in Central America. Salter told of the work of the Reverend Jon de Cortina, a priest in El Salvador, who is helping parents locate their missing children. Some of the children, now teenagers or young adults, are thought to be in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles. The SHARE Foundation sponsored Cortina's visit here and can provide further information about a group Cortina co-founded, the Association in Search of Disappeared Children. SHARE can be reached at 415-882-1530 in San Francisco.

There is more than one way to seal records. De Cortina explained, "When we asked for the names of the children who were adopted by U.S. families, the embassy told us they couldn't give us the names. They said that all their records had been destroyed two years after the war." Besides, said de Cortina, some U.S. advisors in El Salvador adopted some of these children themselves.

So far, forty of the missing children have been found. The goal of the Association in Search of Disappeared Children is not to return the children to their Salvadoran families but to fulfill the rights of the children "to know who they are" and the rights of their birth families "to know how their own children are." Members of Physicians for Human Rights have performed DNA testing to make these matches — a tool that did not exist in Georgia Tann's time.

If adoption records were open routinely to adult adoptees, secret, closed adoptions would be unusual and suspect. Today, the pathetic arguments put forth in favor of keeping records sealed are founded on the pretense of a need to "protect" women who have been frightened into silence or denial. The atmosphere of secrecy in adoption allows varying levels of corruption to take place unmonitored. The movement to open records may not need more reasons to work for openness in adoption but stories like those being voiced in El Salvador provide haunting examples of the kinds of crimes that can occur more readily under cover of darkness. ▲

Laura Nyro

1947 - 1997

It has nothing to do with adoption but one of my favorite singers from the late '60s and early '70s died April 8 of ovarian cancer at the age of 49. Earlier this year a double CD of her greatest hits, "The Best of Laura Nyro - Stoned Soul Picnic," was released.

Laura Nyro began writing her emotional, avant garde hit songs at the age of seventeen. She retired from a successful career in her twenties to marry and have a child. Years would pass between the release of new songs, which by the 1980s began to include themes of feminism, ecology, and animal rights. Nyro

divorced and stayed mostly out of the public eye. Her obituary in the *New York Times* noted that she is survived by her teenage son and her female life partner.

The title song of Laura Nyro's last tape, "Walk the Dog and Light the Light" from 1993, is about a working mother phoning home to her child — reminding him to walk the dog — while she is in the city working.

While searching for articles about the songwriter, I discovered an excellent web site devoted to her at <http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~glens/nyro.html>.

2

*"Little girl of all the daughters
You were born a woman, not a slave"
— "The Confession," 1968, Laura Nyro*

Chain of Life

A note on the title:

The name Chain of Life refers to the biological connection that all people have with past generations of ancestors but that only adoptees in closed adoptions are asked to ignore.

Like everyone, adoptees are the product of our genes, our life experiences, and our own thoughts and actions. Adopted people have a right to know information as basic as our birth parents' identities. Reproductive freedom stops where it infringes on the rights of adult citizens who were relinquished and adopted as children to have vital information about themselves. ▲

Chain of Life

is a forum for exploring adoption and related topics, with a focus on the big picture: the social and political contexts of adoption. Views of authors are not necessarily held by the publisher and thoughtful debate is welcome. Please indicate whether any item you send to Chain of Life, by mail or e-mail, may be published.

Copyrights to articles are held by individual authors or original publishers. Permission to reprint articles first published here should be requested from Chain of Life, which will forward your request to the author. Please credit Chain of Life as the source of first publication.

While the goal of this newsletter is to enhance your relationships, Chain of Life cannot be responsible for actions readers take that were influenced by information published here. ▲

**Chain of Life, P.O. Box 808 I
Berkeley, CA 94707**

NEWS ▼

▲ JONI MITCHELL FINDS DAUGHTER AND GRANDSON

In March, singer/songwriter Joni Mitchell, 53, was reunited with her 32-year-old birth daughter, Kilauren Gibb, a former model, and Kilauren's four-year-old son. In a special interview with Bill Higgins published April 8 in the *Los Angeles Times*, Mitchell talked about the shame of being an unwed mother in 1965 and told how a former art school roommate sold the story of Joni's relinquishment to a tabloid, leading to widespread publicity.

Kilauren Gibb did not know she was adopted until about five years ago. She was pregnant when she learned she was adopted and was put on a waiting list for "non-identifying information" by Canada's Children's Aid. Gibb waited five years, until January 31, 1997, to receive non-identifying information about her birth parents. But with information about Mitchell's search for her daughter circulating in the mass media, Gibb noted enough similarities between the information she had received with that describing Joni Mitchell for her to realize this could be a match.

The adoptee phoned Mitchell but initially was not believed; many others had claimed to be Mitchell's daughter before. Higgins wrote, "...the information Gibb possessed seemed promising, so Mitchell asked her manager to phone and listen to her voice.... 'He came back and said it made his hair stand on end. He said it's like you're talking to the same person' Mitchell said. The article concluded, "For Mitchell, the end of the story 'counteracts the ugliness at the beginning.'"

Information about Joni Mitchell, including the reunion, can be found on the web at: <http://www.Joni Mitchell.com>.

▲ MICHAEL DORRIS DIES; ACCUSED OF MOLESTATION BY ADOPTED DAUGHTER

Michael Dorris, author of *The Broken Cord*, the book about his adopted son's struggle with fetal alcohol syndrome, took his own life in Concord, New Hampshire on April 11 at the age of 52. A novelist and a professor of Native American Studies on leave from Dartmouth College, Dorris had been suffering from depression for years, according to his estranged wife, novelist and poet Louise Erdrich. Dorris's separation from Erdrich is said to have been a major difficulty leading to his suicide.

At the time of his death, Dorris was being investigated for possible child abuse. His adopted daughter, Madeline Dorris, 21, is suing her father's estate for abuse that she claims took place when she was between 5 and 12 years old. Michael Dorris's will provided for his two biological daughters but neither of his adopted children, according to America On Line news, May 29, 1997.

Dorris was one of the first single men to adopt a child in the United States. His first adopted son died in his early twenties. Dorris adopted two more children and raised two birth children with Erdrich.

Erdrich's introduction to *The Broken Cord* was reprinted in *The Adoption Reader*, the 1995 anthology of women's voices in the adoption triad.

- Information from Associated Press/Boston Globe on line, April 15, 1997 and AOL news, May 29, 1997

▲ ISRAELI ADOPTEE STUDY: WHICH ADOPTEES TELL PARENTS THEY SEARCHED?

Tovah Lichtenstein, Ph.D., lecturer at Bar-Ilan University School of Social Work in Israel, wrote about Israeli adoptees who search in *Child Welfare*, Volume 75, #1. She noted that there are two "tellings" in adoption: in the first, the adoptive parents tell the child he or she is adopted. In the second, the adoptee tells the parents he or she has searched or, more accurately, has accessed the birth records. "In the first telling, adoptive parents tell children that they have another set of parents; in the second telling, the adoptees confirm this," wrote the author.

In Israel, records are open to adoptees at the age of 18. Lichtenstein's study sample consisted of 40 Israeli searchers, which reflected a 61.5% return rate of a questionnaire mailed to adoptees from Israel's central adoption agency. Of these 40 subjects, 29 were female and 11 were male.

For the adoptees whose adoptive parents were still alive at the time of the search, approximately two-thirds did not tell their parents of their decision to access their birth parent names. The researcher attempted to analyze the differences in child/parent relationships and other demographic or familial qualities between those who told their adoptive parents about their "search" and those who did not.

Adoptees who told their mothers they searched tended to be female, with a less traditional religious orientation than the non-tellers. They also came from families that were more "open to adoption." Adoptees who told their fathers that they had ac-

continued on page 5...

Book on Transracial Adoption Seeks Writers

VOICES FROM THE BORDERLANDS:

Transracial adoptees on 'race,' family and identity ©

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Voices from the Borderlands will be the first anthology written BY transracial adoptees about OUR experiences of adoption, 'race', identity and family. The anthology has the following aims:

- ▼ to create an invaluable resource for adoptees of color to help them to counter the isolation that often accompanies adoption into white families;
- ▼ to create a resource for adoptive parents, birth parents and adoption professionals so that they can better understand the needs and feelings of adoptees;
- ▼ to illustrate to policy-makers, legislators and academics some of the complex issues associated with transracial adoption;
- ▼ to explore the history, politics and community struggles associated with transracial adoptions and 'same race' policies from an adoptee perspective.
- ▼ to raise awareness in communities of color of the numerous children of color awaiting placement in permanent families.

Voices will contain poetry, memoirs and longer theoretical pieces. It is also hoped that photographic montages can be included.

Submissions of unpublished work BY adoptees of color — including

those of African American, Asian American, Latino and Native American descent — adopted by white parents are requested. The work should not be submitted to any other publication.

In addition, proposals for longer theoretical pieces are requested. Proposals should be 1-2 pages long and should summarise the content and argument of the proposed article. The following topics would be particularly welcome: theorizing identity and marginality; international adoptions; gay and lesbian adoptions; transracial adoption, gender and sexuality; debates over 'same race' policies; legal perspectives and adoption and mental health.

All submissions should include a brief summary of the author's life history and written accomplishments (if any). Maximum length 30 pages (no minimum). Contributors should indicate if they wish their work to be published under a pseudonym.

Please join with me to create this exciting, unique and invaluable project! Let's make our voices heard.

About the editor:

Julia Sudbury is of Nigerian/English descent and was adopted by a white family at 6 months old. She found her birth parents and five additional siblings in her twenties and since then she has committed herself to supporting other adoptees involved in the search process. Julia is a founding member of the Bay Area

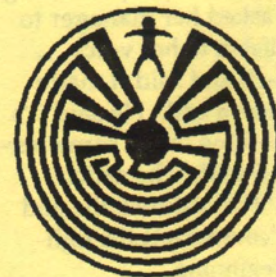
Transracial Adoptee Support Group and a member of the British Association of Transracially Adopted People (ATRAP).

Julia Sudbury is also a lecturer in Ethnic Studies at the University of California at Berkeley and the author of *Other Kinds of Dreams: Black Women's Organizations and the Politics of Transformation*, which will be published by Routledge in Spring 1998.

Please send all submissions to: Julia Sudbury, Department of Ethnic Studies, University of California, 548 Barrows Hall, Berkeley, 94704. For further information contact the editor on (510) 642 0236 or e-mail at jsudbury@uclink4.berkeley.edu.

Please note that due to space limitations there is no guarantee that submissions will be included in the anthology. All submissions will be acknowledged, however, written materials will not be returned unless accompanied by a SAE. Photographs will be returned, although the editor takes no responsibility for any accidental damage. Works over 1,500 words in length will be required on disc (WP5.1 or Word for Macintosh). Proposed date of publication: Spring 1999.

Julia Sudbury
March 1997



ISRAELI ADOPTION STUDY

...continued from page 3

cessed birth parent names had a "more positive father perception" than those who did not tell. They were members of families that scored higher on the growth dimension and were more "open to adoption."

"If the adoptee has experienced the first telling in a positive manner, then the second telling will be possible."

Dr. Lichtenstein concluded that "the two tellings...are closely related. If the adoptee has experienced the first telling in a positive manner, then the second telling will be possible."

Lichtenstein's use of the term "search" to describe accessing birth names seems somewhat misleading. Fewer than two-thirds of her subjects (60%) said they were interested in the possibility of actually meeting their birth mothers while only 33% wanted to meet their birth fathers. Accessing birth names and "search" are two different actions and it is unfortunate that the researcher used the latter term to denote the former activity, particularly in an open records country.

This study analyzed a very small sample and, because she promised them confidentiality, the researcher was unable to contact non-respondents to find out how their input might have changed the outcome. Still, Dr. Lichtenstein used an interesting framework in seeking to discover a relationship between the "two

tellings." ▲

The article was a small segment of Tovah Lichtenstein's doctoral dissertation at Bar-Ilan University School of Social Work in Ramat Gan, Israel.

▲ GOVERNMENT REFUSES TO APOLOGIZE TO AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES TAKEN FROM PARENTS AS CHILDREN

Between 10% and 50% of Aborigine children in Australia were taken from their parents as a result of government policy that began in 1910 and ended in the early 1970s. One hundred thousand Aboriginal children were taken from their families "because the white majority considered it as in their best interest" according to Alan Thornhill in an Associated Press article (*S.F. Chronicle* May 29, 1997). Under this policy, light-skinned Aborigine children were given to white families to adopt while dark-skinned children were put in orphanages. A report released in May described that policy as a form of genocide. One in six Aborigines separated from their parents as children reported to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission that they experienced beatings and excessive punishment while one in five reported sexual abuse in foster homes, orphanages, institutions, or workplaces.

Australia's Labor Party wanted to make a formal apology but was blocked by Prime Minister John Howard's conservative governing coalition. Howard was concerned that an apology would lead to legal claims against the government. Meanwhile, the Liberal Premier of Tasmania (an Australian state) said his government would push for a state parliamentary apology to the

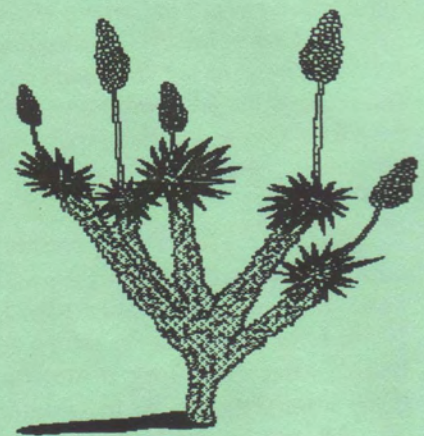
Aborigines.

Aborigines are the native peoples of Australia.

▲ BOOK ON FEMINISM AND MOTHERHOOD REVIEWED IN WOMEN'S REVIEW OF BOOKS

Motherhood Reconceived: Feminism and the Legacies of the Sixties by Lauri Umansky (New York University Press, 1996) was reviewed by Felicia Kornbluh in the June issue of *The Women's Review of Books*. The reviewer wrote, in part,

"Feminists, says Umansky, have



*never ignored motherhood. Whether they opposed or promoted mothering, feminists from the late 1960s onward were always centrally concerned with questions about motherhood. Even radical feminists who attacked mothering in print— as Shulamith Firestone indubitably did in *The Dialectic of Sex* (1970), arguing for extrauterine generation because pregnancy deformed and disabled the otherwise beautiful female body—also looked forward to a utopian future in which mothering might be different. Rather than reading radical feminist writing as anti-mother or -motherhood, Umansky argues, it often makes more sense to read it as a critique of*

continued on page 10...

Mi Ok Song Bruining Meets Her Birth Mother in Korea

Mi Ok Song Bruining was adopted by American parents from an orphanage in Korea in 1965, at the age of five. A poet, writer, artist, and social work consultant, Mi Ok doubted at times that she would ever meet her birth mother, to whom she had written a poem "To Omoni, In Korea" that was published in the 1990 anthology about women of color, Making Face, Making Soul. Mi Ok also wrote articles for two of Chain of Life's early newsletters.

As her following letter relates, the impossible happened in January of this year: Mi Ok met her birth mother and extended family in Korea. I (and others) received the following letter from Mi Ok in February 1997, explaining her sudden change of plans:

Greetings! I hope everyone and families are well and had a great year! As I am writing this (Feb. 1, 1997), I am preparing to return to Korea, after spending 3 months there from October '96 to January '97. Ah, but let me back up a bit. After I moved back to Cambridge in January '96, I worked part time as a social worker and had every intention of settling here and continuing my life. In late June, I received an invitation from a Korean adoptees' group to go to Korea to search for my birth mother. I accepted the invitation and prepared my apartment, my cat, Fiona Feline, and my '78 VW bus, Lulu, to be taken care of for one year. I arrived in Korea on October 20th and hoped that I would be able to obtain an English teaching contract at a university in Seoul for income. I also

hoped to learn Korean, travel around the country, do research on my book and search for my birth mother.

I went to Korea with \$500 — typical of my style of plunging off a cliff ill-

prepared for the worst. I was chasing a dream and nothing I had hoped to accomplish was achieved. My \$500 was gone by my 3rd week in Korea! Seoul is a huge, daunting, maddening, very expensive city. It makes New York City seem like a quaint suburb by comparison.

I met other Korean adoptees from Europe, Canada and the U.S., as well as other foreigners who were very supportive. I met many Korean and non-Korean people who will be lifelong friends. In late December, after 2 months of struggle, despair, 40 job interviews, frustration, unemployment, illness, exhaustion, horrible living conditions, poverty and heartbreak, I decided to return to the U.S. in late January as a failure. I was unable to search for my birth mother since I had no information. I never expected it to be easy and I knew Korea would be difficult. However, I had no idea how difficult it would be for me. I was discriminated against by Koreans for

being Korean, adopted, and not being able to speak Korean.

Then, in late December, I met

some Korean feminist women artists, writers and music performers. I agreed to teach

.....
*my ship has come in
 and it is a
 luxury liner.*

them conversational English for a friend who was on vacation. My luck changed and life turned around. These women embraced me, restored my spirit and faith in humanity, saved my life, helped, supported, encouraged, and accepted me with their kindness, generosity, humor, love and respect. I also met a Korean journalist for the largest newspaper in Korea and begged him to write an article about me searching for my birth mother. I told him that he was my last hope.

On December 19th, I scheduled my return flight to Boston for January 17th. On January 12th, the article about me appeared in the *Chosun Ilbo* newspaper in Korea. The next day, Monday, I was interviewed by SBS TV news, who were interested in my story of struggle and despair in Korea. That evening, a Korean man called me and told me that he might be my cousin. He told me that he thought his aunt might be my birth mother! I agreed to meet them the next morning and on Tuesday, January 14th, at 8 a.m., I

met my birth mother, aunt and cousin in Ilsan — the same town where I had lived for the first five years I spent in the orphanage! I spent the entire day with her and my extended family and communicated with them through a Korean friend who spoke Korean and English.

As a result of the newspaper article and TV interview, I received about 40 responses from Korean people who wanted to help me, in addition to obtaining a job interview with the largest art school in Seoul (Hong-ik University) for an English teaching contract. The president of Hong-ik saw me in the TV interview and insisted that I be offered a job. That day, I also met a wealthy Korean woman who offered me a free place to live and free airfare back to Korea.

On Thursday the 16th, I met my birth mother and extended family again and spent the last day in Korea with them. On Friday, January 17th, as planned, I returned to Boston. My birth mother and family were there at the airport saying good-bye to me. Everything I hoped for, worked for, wanted and dreamed of fell into place for me.

Most of these life-altering events occurred the last week I was in Korea but I returned to Boston to give up my apartment, store my stuff, deal with my finances, my car, and my cat, and visit my adoptive parents. More importantly, two Korean women friends (who are sisters) arrived in Boston from Korea on January 19th — my thirty-first anniversary of being adopted — to spend five days with me. They were with me in Rhode Island when I informed my adoptive parents of my birth mother finding me.

I can only describe my feelings and this experience in superlative adjectives of being surreal, cosmic, amazing, unbelievable and some-

thing I never dreamed would happen so quickly, so easily, if ever! Through translation with Korean friends, I learned about my birth mother's situation at the time I was brought to the orphanage and know that she suffered more than I ever did in being adopted. She was hoping to find me for 31 years! After three humbling months in Korea, I have come to respect and appreciate my adoptive parents more and regret all the difficulties and resentment I caused them while I was growing up.

Of course, I am saddened to be leaving my family and friends here in the U.S. for one year, but shall be returning for periodic trips. I also realize how difficult it will be for me in Korea when I return. Even though I am slowly learning the Korean language, I know my way around Seoul now, I have many friends in Korea, and, while still difficult, it will be better for me when I return. Korean society is very conservative and rigid in many ways. It is sexist, patriarchal, racist and homophobic and I will be forced to act differently than I do here as a Korean American woman. I feel my heart is broken in two pieces — one half is here in the U.S. and the other half is in Korea.

On February 20th [1997], I will say good-bye to my family and East Coast friends and the next day will be in L.A. for a Korean American conference. A few days later, I will return to Korea from L.A. As difficult as it was for me in Korea, I do

not regret experiencing what I experienced. I learned so much about myself, others, and Korean people and culture. I learned how to survive, how to negotiate around a hostile place, how to ask for and

accept help. I learned about humiliation, frustration, confusion, and patience. I learned how to meet other people, reach out to and try to help others, swallow my pride and

*I learned about my
birth mother's situation
at the time I was
brought to the orphan-
age and know now that
she suffered more than
I ever did in being
adopted*

dignity, yet still maintain my conviction and integrity. Most importantly, I learned about acceptance of things I cannot change and am now committed to helping other Korean adoptees who are arriving in Korea to search for their birth families.

One exciting discovery I made in Korea was e-mail!! I call it "e-femail" and my address in Korea is: "fiona@net.co.kr." If you have the opportunity to e-femail, please feel free to correspond.

I tell my friends that my ship has come in and it is a luxury liner. I always thought it would be a raft without oars! So, if it can happen to me, it can happen to you! All you have to do is BELIEVE.

— Mi Ok Song Bruining ▲



낮선 서울서 生母찾기 석달

美입양 35년만에 '엄마!'

35년전 미국으로 입양갔던 소녀가 마흔살이 다 돼 한국에 돌아왔다. 끼니를 걸러가며 친엄마를 찾아헤매기 석달. 또 한 차례 비통과 허탈함을 안고 서울을 떠나기 며칠 전, 그녀는

엄마를 만났다. 16일 오후 3시 서울 종로구 인사동의 한 커피숍. 벌써 잔주름이 긴 미옥 부르님씨(37·송미옥)와 환갑의 엄마朴貴男씨(박귀남·60·경기도 시흥)가 마주 앉았다.



3개월이 만료돼 17일 미 뉴이로 떠났다. 한달전부터 朝鮮日報에 게재되기 시작한 「생애의 양 특전」을 흡사나 싶어도 살피던 어머니朴씨(70)는 지난 12월 슬럼프 막혔다. 아무잡잡한 피부, 동그란 얼굴, 뭉클한 코, 작은 키, 37살, 새씨...朴씨는 30년전계 영유권으로 타고도 하소연할 곳없이 그려 어떤 내 팔이었단나 했단다.

미국가 생애의 양 특전을 한동안 서독을 바랄뿐 쉽게 말문을 열지 못했다. 미옥 부르님씨(37)는 낯선 건지 그만 멍했다고 말했다. 부부싸움 끝에 가출한 어머니, 어린 피양이를 이복의 살던 宋모씨에게 맡긴고도, 얼마 뒤 오.....

◇미옥 부르님씨(가운데)가 어머니 朴貴男씨(69)와 고모 廉英子씨(70)를 영접하고 있다.

〈李德福기자〉

「엄마 찾아...」시집낼 예정

本紙「입양특집」보고 찾아

오빠와, 그 옛날 미옥을 함께 했다. 이를전 만나 남에게 말조차 안했다는 밤새 부둥켜 안고 눈물을 고모 廉英子씨(영양자·70·부린 딸을 다시 보내는자 서울 동대문구 제기동)도 리다. 미옥씨는 비자기간

詩人돼 돌아온 미옥 부르님씨

다른가 사라진 宋씨, 그 후 어떤해 딸을 찾아나선 가족들이...
「안타깝고, 아파하고도 같은.」 함께 입양특전의 이구동성으로 거두고 평평 눈물을 흘렸다. 작년 10월 어그릴 아칠대 이상 전될 수 없다고 출생증명서 5백달러를 주고 보스턴에서 울로 돌아온 미옥씨의 35년전 생애의 양 특전이었다. 「못생긴」 한 귀여운 딸은 성장기 수단 「나쁜 구멍, 왜 여기에 있을 까 하는 벗지 못할 것들, 입양기관 고아원 파출소 동사무소를 찾아헤매는...」 소라했던 기억들이 겹쳐졌다.

하지만 아저씨 「도 단나」가 해외로 출생한 사실을 「안타깝고」 조금 리고, 宋씨가 나타내지 않았던 한 양양원도 양기 어렵기 때문이다. 미옥씨는 곧 돌아와서 유전 자점사도 해볼 생각이다. 미옥씨는 미국 무단에서 시인인 이복 딸인 유영인이다. 영자와 친척들로부터 선별을 한모리 받아든 그녀 「엄마찾아 3만리만 제복이로」 시집을 낸 영자 이라고 했다.

〈崔宇哲기자〉

UNLOCKING THE HEART OF ADOPTION

is nearly done! It is the first documentary to tell the adoption story from the perspectives of all three sides of the adoption triad, with stories of adoptees, birth parents and adoptive parents in closed, open and transracial adoptions. Filmmaker Sheila Ganz is aiming to make the September 1 deadline to apply to the Point of View series on public television, for airing in the summer of '98. It will take two months of work and \$25,000 for her to complete the film. To meet this goal, Sheila needs to have this money by the end of June.

Please give as generously as you can and make your tax deductible donation payable to Film Arts Foundation. Send it to Sheila Ganz, 1546 Great Highway #44, San Francisco, CA 94122.

There will be work-in-progress screenings on June 14 at KTVU Channel 2 in Oakland; June 16 in Chico, June 18 in San Francisco, June 19 in Sacramento, and June 25 in Santa Rosa. Call Sheila at 415-564-3691 for information.

ADOPTEES DESERVE THEIR ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATES!

Category (circle)	Order Quantity		Price Each		Shipping/ Handling		Total
(01-05)	[_____]	x	\$2.00	+	n/a	=	\$ _____
(06-09)	[_____]	x	\$1.25	+	\$1.00	=	\$ _____
(10-15)	[_____]	x	\$1.00	+	\$1.00	=	\$ _____

mail together with your check or money order to:

TxCARE Bumper Stickers
P.O. Box 832161
Richardson TX 75083-2161

Texas Coalition for Adoption Reform & Education
E-mail: txcare@visualimage.com

Proceeds from the sale of these bumper stickers will be used by TxCARE to further adoption reform and education.

...NEWS continued from page 5

neo-Victorian family arrangements, including the assumption that mothers must take exclusive responsibility for raising children."

The June issue with the entire review can be obtained as a back issue for \$3. Subscriptions can be ordered from The Women's Review of Books, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, Wellesley, MA 02181. Cost is \$23. for one year or \$41. for two years. It is published eleven times a year, with 28 pages per issue and is an excellent resource for keeping up with the latest academic feminist non-fiction books.

▲ WELFARE CUTS TO HARM GRANDPARENTS RAISING THEIR CHILDREN'S KIDS

Yumi Wilson of the *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 3, 1997) told of a new report by a University of California at Berkeley public health professor indicating that nearly half of California's 87,000 children not living with their parents are not in foster care but are living with relatives, usually a grandparent. One quarter of the grandparents in the study, co-authored by Meredith Minkler and published in "The Gerontologist," earned below the 1992 poverty line.

"The findings are important Minkler said, because they suggest that grandparents are just as effective as official foster care homes when it comes to helping children abandoned by parents on drugs, in jail, sick, or mentally ill." The Welfare Reform Act, which aims to get recipients to work after two years of receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children benefits, will require many of these grandparents to

THE LAST ISSUE OF CHAIN OF LIFE

Life goes on but Chain of Life will end publication with this issue. Not that our work is done, far from it. It is ending because I am taking a break after eight years of consistent publishing that began in the spring of 1989.

find jobs outside the home.

"We have to be especially concerned that the laws that are passed don't penalize the very people who are raising some of the nation's most vulnerable children,"



wrote Minkler.

RESOURCES ▼

BASTARD QUARTERLY

With *Chain of Life* ending publication with this issue, I recommend that you become members of Bastard Nation. For \$25 a year you will get the *Bastard Quarterly* newsletter, free web space, and on-line action alerts pertaining to opening adoption records. If you have not discovered the Bastard Nation website at <http://www.bastards.org>, which includes membership information, you can write for information to:

Bastard Nation
12865 NE 85th St., Suite 179
Kirkland, WA 98033,
by e-mail from sheag@oz.net,
or by fax from 415-680-2420.
The first issue includes several provocative articles that get to the heart of the adoptee experience.

Publishing a newsletter like this is work. I work 40 hours a week in an office, in front of a computer that looks very much like the one I now have at home, on which I do Chain. There are simply not enough hours in the day for me to produce a newsletter and work. Of course I would prefer to give up the paying job but, shall we say, that is not practical. I'm almost 47 years old so I'm a long way from retiring from the workforce.

I do not plan to give up on adoption reform work, however. I hope to write articles for other newsletters, which extra time should make possible. Our movement needs to continue considering the larger political and historical realities as we look at adoption in society today. No other newsletter does this consistently. And I will retain my P.O. Box and e-mail address if anyone wants to write.

However, Bastard Nation does a much better job than I have in putting forth the adoptee perspective and organizing to open records. And the American Adoption Congress has an excellent newsletter and has been fighting in the courts to support the Tennessee birth certificate access law, which has been successful though it is stalled in the courts. I will continue to be a member of AAC and Bastard Nation. And the Internet has proven to be an incredible source of information on all of our issues. I recommend that anyone who does not have Internet access should reconsider the option, save your money, and join the party.

I want to give special thanks to San Francisco Bay Times publisher Kim Corsaro for providing a free display ad in Bay Times for nearly the entire time Chain of Life existed. Thank you to all the readers of and writers for Chain of Life over the years for your enthusiasm and for keeping me company in the journey of developing a feminist, gay/lesbian-friendly adoption analysis and ethical policy perspective. The challenges Chain of Life has tackled will be here as long as people start out as children. ▲

Birth of a Bastard Nation Conference

Education, Fun,
Empowerment!

July 18-20 1997

Howard Johnson
International Hotel,
Schiller Park, IL
(Chicago area)

Room rate: \$79/night
Chicago area: 847-866-7131:
Tollfree: 1-800-323-1239

Registrations postmarked by July 1, 1997: \$60 for BN members, \$95 for non-members. After July 1, 1997 (do not mail but bring your registration fees with you): \$85 for BN members, \$115 for non-members

For a registration form, hotel information, and additional conference details, please visit the Bastard Nation Website at <http://www.bastards.org/features.htm>. We are pleased to announce as our Keynote speaker, veteran activist Randy Shaw, author of "The Activist's Handbook" and Supervising Attorney of the Tenderloin Housing Clinic in San Francisco.

Friday

9:30-10:30am: Welcome, Introductions, Announcements

10:30-Noon General Session

*APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF TACTICAL ACTIVISM: Fostering the growth and political clout of Bastard Nation — Activist/Attorney/Author Randy Shaw

12-3:30 SEALED RECORDS PROTEST Transportation will be provided to a location yet to be determined, where

we will be rallying in support of open records, and in opposition to the unjust records laws that IL and 47 other states still keep on their books. Pizza will be provided, as will signs. Bring 10 copies of your amended birth certificate with you, if you can. We will be making hats and halter tops out of them.

4-5:30 2nd Session

* HUMOR AND ADOPTION: Slide show, comedy and interactive parody poetry writing workshop — Adoptee/ Cartoonist Charles Filius and Adoptee Damsel Plum

* ART FOR ADOPTEES: A hands-on workshop in artistic expression for adoptees. — Adoptee/Art Therapist Helen Hill

* ARE YOU ADOPTED? ARE YOU SURE?: Discovering as an adult that you are adopted. — Adoptee Ron Morgan

5:30-7:00pm Dinner On Your Own

7:00-9:00pm 3rd session

* UNLOCKING THE HEART OF ADOPTION: An original documentary on adoption and the open records movement by Birthmother-Filmmaker Sheila Ganz

* SECRETS AND LIES: A screening of the award-winning British film

Saturday

9-10:30 am 4th session

* BRINGING BIRTHFATHERS OUT OF THE SHADOWS: Mystery man, sperm fathers, roving inseminators—birthfathers are stigmatized by many names—Adoptee and author of *Out of the Shadows: Birthfather's Stories* Mary Martin Mason

* KNOW THINE ENEMY: An examination of the political and ideological forces behind the anti-adoptee movement. — Adoptees/Activists Marley Greiner and Carolyn Evaine Shaw

There is a lot more through Sunday but I am out of room. Contact Bastard Nation for more information. (See page 10 for BN's web address and mailing address.)

TENNESSEE DECISION BEARS REPEATING

The following excerpts from the U.S. Court of Appeals decision about the Tennessee access to birth certificate law merits frequent repetition, especially in letters to legislators. It is part of a decision filed February 11, 1997 in the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals. (The full decision can be accessed from the AAC website.)

"A birth is simultaneously an intimate occasion and a public event — the government has long kept records of when, where, and by whom babies are born. Such records have myriad purposes, such as furthering the interest of children in knowing the circumstances of their birth. The Tennessee legislature has resolved a conflict between that interest and the competing interest of some parents in concealing the circumstances of a birth. We are powerless to disturb this resolution unless the Constitution elevates the right to avoid disclosure of adoption records above the right to know the identity of one's parents. The statute appears to be a serious attempt to weigh and balance two frequently conflicting interests: the interest of a child adopted at an early age to know who that child's birth parents were, an interest entitled to a good deal of respect and sympathy, and the interest of birth parents in the protection of the integrity of a sound adoption system."

UPCOMING EVENTS ▼ SUMMER 1997

▲ **June 14, 16, 18, 19, 25 (California) & July 19** (at Bastard Nation conference, Chicago), **“Unlocking the Heart of Adoption,”** a documentary film in progress; see page 9 for locations in California

▲ **June 28, “True Colors,”** a training for parents who are of a different race or ethnicity than their children, Oakland, CA. Call Pact, An Adoption Alliance at 415-221-6957 for details.

▲ **July 18-20, “Birth of a Bastard Nation,”** conference in the Chicago area (see page 11 for details).

JBaer@pacbell.net

Chain of Life, P.O. Box 8081, Berkeley, CA 94707



Order Back Issues of Chain of Life...

Send me all newsletters that were published in the following years...

1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996

1997 (\$6 - only 2 issues in 1997 - #41 & #42)

...at a cost of \$12 per year for a total of \$_____.

Please enclose a check payable to Chain of Life and mail it to:

Chain of Life, P.O. Box 8081, Berkeley, CA 94707

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

I am an adoptee, a birth parent, an adoptive parent, other _____