

Delve Deeper into *WO AI NI (I LOVE YOU) MOMMY*

A film by **Stephanie Wang-Breal**

This multi-media resource list, compiled by Susan Conlon and Martha Perry of Princeton Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the upcoming POV documentary *Wo Ai Ni (I Love You) Mommy*.

*What is it like to be torn from your Chinese foster family, put on a plane with strangers and wake up in a new country, family and culture? Stephanie Wang-Breal's *Wo Ai Ni (I Love You) Mommy* is the story of Fang Sui Yong, an 8-year-old orphan, and the Sadowskys, the Long Island Jewish family that travels to China to adopt her. Sui Yong is one of 70,000 Chinese children now being raised in the United States. Through her eyes, we witness her struggle with a new identity as she transforms from a timid child into someone that no one — neither her new family nor she — could have imagined.*

ADULT NONFICTION

Adoption

Battilana, Joan. *A Search to My Beginning: An Inspirational Adoption Story Told Through Poetry, Illustrations, and Reflections.* Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2003. Told through poetry, illustration, and narrative, this story of adoption documents the author's experience of finding her routes and reconciling her past with her present.

MacLeod, Jean and Sheena, Macrae. *Adoption Parenting: Creating a Toolbox, Building Connections.* New Jersey: EMK Press, 2006-7. With the collaboration of over 100 contributors, from experts in their respective fields, to wisdom from adoptive parents themselves and advice from adopted children, this handbook deals with issues all members of the adoption triad face. Contents include, among others: Sleep, Attachment, Language, Food, Transitions, Race, Siblings, and Support.

Pertman, Adam. *Adoption Nation: How the Adoption Revolution Is Transforming America.* New York: Basic Books, 2001.

This book, centered on a series of Pulitzer Prize-nominated articles

author Adam Pertman wrote for *The Boston Globe*, explores the history of adoption in the United States from the orphanages of the 19th century to the wider acceptance today of adoption by single, gay, and older parents and by families of different races than the child.

Robinson, Nancy. *Touched By Adoption.* Santa Barbara:

Green River Press, 1999. An anthology of letters, stories, and poems, providing a glimpse into the wide mosaic of the adoptive experience from the viewpoint of birth parents, adoptive parents, siblings, and adoptees themselves.

Adoption in China

Bowen, Richard. *Mei Mei - Little Sister: Portraits from a Chinese Orphanage.* San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2005. In China's state-run welfare institutions, thousands of children--primarily girls--are growing up without families of their own. This volume presents a poignant collection of b&w photographic portraits of children from 15 of these orphanages.

Evans, Karin. *The Lost Daughters of China: Abandoned Girls, Their Journey to America and the Search for a Missing Past.* New York: J.P. Tarcher/Putnam, 2000. Explores the emotional and political complexities of an international phenomenon that creates families across the boundaries of culture and geography.

Johnson, Kay Ann. *Wanting a Daughter, Needing a Son: Abandonment, Adoption and Orphanage Care in China.* St. Paul, MN: Yeong & Yeong Book Company, 2004.

Groundbreaking research on abandonment and adoption in China. A detailed look at the Chinese governmental policy and what actually happens as a result of the one child policy.

Rauhala, Ann. *The Lucky Ones: Our Stories of Adopting Children from China.* ECW Press, 2008. From the early stages of the adoption process to bringing the child back home, this collection of personal stories reveals why parents who have adopted children from China feel—

despite the challenges they've endured—truly lucky.

NONFICTION FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Adoption

Burton, Nicole J. *Swimming Up the Sun: A Memoir of Adoption.* MD: Appipa Publishing Company, 2008. Nicole J. Burton, a playwright from Britain, tells the complex story of her adoption and subsequent reunion with her biological family.

Gorbett, Danae. *Adopted Teens Only: A Survival Guide to Adolescence.* Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2004. Based on true stories, extensive research, and Danae Gorbett's background in psychology and education, *Adopted Teens Only* explores issues many adopted teens face, from bringing up sensitive topics with adoptive parents and what they might be going through, to whether and how to search for birth parents.

Roorda, Rhonda M. and Simon, Rita J. *In Their Own Voices: Transracial Adoptees Tell Their Stories.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2000. This multifaceted book, by Rita J. Simon and Rhonda M. Roorda, combines information about policy surrounding transracial adoption with the real-life stories of two dozen adoptees.

Adoption in China

Cummings, Mary. *Three Names of Me.* Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman, 2006. Grades 2-5. A girl adopted from China explains that her three names--one her birth mother whispered in her ear, one the babysitters at her orphanage called her, and one her American parents gave her--are each an important part of who she is. Includes scrapbooking ideas for other girls adopted from China.

Durow, Sarah. *When You Were Born in China: A Memory Book for Children Adopted from China.* St. Paul, MN: Yeong & Yeong Book Company, 1997. K-grade 5. A thoughtful description of the lives of children in China before they are adopted.



Delve Deeper into *WO AI NI (I LOVE YOU) MOMMY*

A film by **Stephanie Wang-Breal**

MacLeod, Jean. *At Home in This World: A China Adoption Story*. EMK Press, 2003. Grades 3-7. Effectively describes and empowers a young girl looking for acknowledgement, empathy and emotional validation. It also enables pre-teen readers to put their early lives into perspective, while emphasizing the supportive love that encircles them within their own families.

ADULT FICTION

Covington, Vicki. *Gathering Home*. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1999. Whitney Gaines has always known she was adopted. It's never been a problem - she loves her parents, Mary Ellen and Cal, a liberal minister, and enjoys her life in Birmingham, Alabama. But the year Whitney turns eighteen, Cal decides to run for Congress and the entire Gaines family is thrust into the spotlight. Whitney resolves to look for her birth parents, a decision her liberal-minded adoptive parents support. Although her birth mother doesn't answer her letters, Whitney finds her father, Sam Kirby, a gay cartoonist living in New York, wondering about the child he knows is out there and returning to his southern roots.

Hood, Ann. *The Red Thread*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010. The painful and courageous journey toward adoption made by several of her clients forces Maya Lange, founder of The Red Thread, an adoption agency that specializes in placing baby girls from China with American families, to confront the lost daughter of her past.

Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Bean Trees*. New York: HarperTorch, 1998. Taylor Greer grew up poor in rural Kentucky with the goals of avoiding pregnancy and getting away. But when she heads west with high hopes and a barely functional car, she meets the human condition head-on. By the time Taylor arrives in Tucson, Arizona, she has acquired a completely unexpected child, a three-year-old American Indian girl named Turtle, and must somehow come to terms with both motherhood and the necessity of putting down roots.

Larkin, Alison. *The English American*. New York: Simon & Schuster Publishing, 2008. When Pippa Dunn, adopted as an infant and raised terribly British, discovers that her birth parents are from the American South, she finds that "culture clash" has layers of meaning she'd never imagined. Meet The English American, a fabulously funny, deeply poignant debut novel that sprang from Larkin's autobiographical one-woman show of the same name.

Schooler, Shirley Jean. *The Red Sea Place*. Frederick, MD: PublishAmerica, 2003. The last thing Laura Dunbar needs is another problem. So when she receives a letter from the daughter she placed for adoption thirty years ago, she panics. Jennifer Lang made contact with her birth father, Gary Frederick, a year ago. Now Jennifer wants to know if lightning can strike twice in the same place. But Laura's twenty-year marriage to Curt Dunbar is on the rocks.

FICTION FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Kent, Rose. *Kimchi and Calamari*. New York: HarperCollins Children's Books, 2007. Grade 4-7. *Kimchi and Calamari* is the story of 14-year-old Joseph Calderaro, a boy adopted from Korean by an Italian-American family. On top of the typical dramas that many boys his age face- girls, school, sisters- Joseph must confront the growing gulf between his Korean ethnicity and his family's Italian heritage when his social studies teacher challenges him to discover his ancestry.

McMahon, Patricia and Conor Clarke McCarthy. *Just Add One Chinese Sister: An Adoption Story*. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 2005. Pre-S-grade 4. This story recounts the trip that Conor and his mother and father took to China to meet his new adopted sister, Claire, and spend time with her before returning home to the United States.

Rosove, Lori. *Rosie's Family: An Adoption Story*. Ontario: Asia Press, 2001. PreS-grade 2. Rosie's Family is a story about belonging in a family regardless of differences. Rosie is a beagle who was adopted by schnauzers. She

feels different from the rest of her family and sets forth many questions that children who were adopted may have.

Young, Ed. *My Mei Mei*. New York: Philomel Books, 2006. Pre-S-grade 2. Antonia gets her wish when her parents return to China to bring home a Mei Mei, or younger sister, for her.

FILMS, VIDEOS and BROADCASTS

***China's Lost Girls*. A film by Scott Bronstein. National Geographic Television & Film, 2004. TRT: 40 min.** Host Lisa Ling examines the consequences of China's two-decade-old, one-child policy, as it is commonly called. To curb the country's exploding population, China limits most families to one child, or in certain circumstances, two children. Due to cultural, social and economic factors, traditional preference leans toward boys, so girls are often hidden, aborted or abandoned. As a result, tens of thousands of girls end up in orphanages across China.

***Found in China*. A film by Carolyn Stanek. Tai-Kai Productions, 2007. TRT: 82 min.** Since the early '90s, Americans have adopted nearly 70,000 Chinese children. With thousands of them now at an age to appreciate returning to the homeland, heritage tours have brought adoptees and their families to China, presenting an unequalled opportunity for bonding and sharing identity issues. "Found in China" follows six Midwestern families as they observe contemporary trends and ancient Asian traditions in both urban and rural contexts.

***A Mother's Journey*. A film by Hugh Taylor. Annabel Films, 1995. TRT: 57 mins.** Under China's restrictive "one child per family" population control laws, girl babies are being abandoned by their parents who seek only a male heir. This film follows an American adoptive mother and another American couple as they travel to China to visit a Chinese orphanage, each to successfully adopt a Chinese female infant. Highlights the legal complexities, personal struggles, and joys of international adoption.

