

to cope with life today. Using the Internet to reach a broad audience, Witkin surveyed 800 children aged nine to twelve about their stress and compared their responses to the results of surveys taken by their parents. She discovered that children are more stressed than ever and due to a greater variety of issues: sibling rivalries, parental divorce and blended families, school expectations, peer pressures, exposure to violence in the media and fears about world conditions. Most surprising is Witkin's discovery that parents surveyed had not taken a full measure of their children's stress. Witkin reports that parents badly underestimate how much children worry, how alone many of them feel, how much sleep they lose due to stress, and how often they are fearful of confiding in their parents. The adults Witkin surveyed underestimated school stress and overestimated peer pressure, underestimated how often children's fears were realistic, and underestimated a deep altruism that made many children sad about problems afflicting family, community, and world.

While making clear connections between emotional stress, physical illness, and other problems over-stressed children may experience, *KidStress* focuses most heavily on how parents can teach children to combat anxieties and fears with useful lists of tips categorized by issue. Witkin takes note of gender differences in coping and points out that parental modeling, birth order, income and other factors can affect how well children manage. One drawback of the volume is that it has been carelessly proofread; small diction and other errors detract from readability in numerous places. In addition, the book could use an update to account for publications and events since its 1999 appearance. For example, Witkin cites two long-term studies of how divorce affects children by psychologist Judith Wallerstein but was not able to include a third published in 2000, *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce*. As this third volume offers important insights about lessening stress for children when parents consider divorce, it would make an important addition to the information *KidStress* provides.

The Lost Daughters of China: Abandoned Girls, Their Journey to America, and the Search for a Missing Past

Evans, Karin.
New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, 2000.

Reviewed by Andrea Riesch Toepell

Karin Evans and her husband wanted to have a child. For most people, this desire is fulfilled easily through a pregnancy carried to term. For some, however, 10 to 25 percent of all couples (depending on age), it is not so simple. In *The*

Lost Daughters of China, Evans elucidates the process that leads to a couple's decision to adopt a child. Some couples choose to cross cultural and racial as well as genetic lines. Such choices are not easy to make and even more difficult to fulfill, however.

The book begins with a description of Evans' family and the circumstances that lead to their decision to adopt across ethnic lines. A realistic and, some might say, gripping account of the adoption process follows. (Anyone who can write a gripping account of two years of waiting deserves praise for that alone.) Along the way, Evan includes numerous digressions into various aspects of Chinese history, the history of women in China, the population crisis, and the government's attempts to deal with the problem. The historically unprecedented result of Chinese policies governing birth and population control is the "international female diaspora." Many thousands of Chinese infants, almost exclusively girls, have been adopted by families in the United States, Canada, and many other developed countries.

Many people have heard about "Chinese adoptions" or may know someone who has "actually done it." International adoption is no longer rare. Evans discusses the generic issues applicable to all adoptive families, as well as those specific to adoptions from China. The latter are many and Evan explores Chinese culture, the causes, the magnitude, and the results of the population crisis (China has more than 50 times the population of Canada with a roughly similar land area), and the powerful forces that govern people's lives in China.

A significant portion of the book is devoted to the plight of unknown Chinese mothers. Each mother has had to act in a way that is completely contrary to her "natural" instincts: she has had to sever the mother-child bond so that her daughter may have a chance at life. Evans has little sympathy, however, for the fathers of these lost daughters.

The book is intense, personal, and well written. It gives a balanced account of a complicated process spanning two cultures and centuries of history. It is essential for anyone contemplating adoption, especially from China, and recommended for any student of Chinese history and culture.

Child: An Anthology of Poetry and Prose

Dunlop, Rishma, ed.
Toronto: Boundary Bay Press, 2001

Reviewed by Roxanne Harde

In her introduction, editor Rishma Dunlop suggests that *Child: An Anthology of Poetry and Prose* "is about capturing our relationships to the qualities of the child within each of us," and she goes on to point out that "this book is about