

digm Way: Good Psychotherapy is Sociological”). Bueskens insists on bringing in sociological perspectives to inform and challenge psychological and psychoanalytic vantage points while maintaining authentic appreciation of clinical work and psychoanalytic theory. It is the tireless unfolding of disciplines with the maternal as the constant focal point that makes this volume a valuable text for scholars, clinicians, theorists and researchers alike. My high expectations were indubitably met.

Love, Loss and Longing: Stories of Adoption

Carol Bowyer Shipley.

Winnipeg, Man: McNally Robinson Booksellers, 2013.

REVIEWED BY PAT BRETON

A birth mother's grief when giving up a child for adoption, identity loss for adoptees disconnected from birth parents in closed adoption registries, and the joy of new parent/ child relationships in adoptive families are just some of the heart-tugging stories that Carol Bowyer Shipley shares in *Love, Loss and Longing: Stories of Adoption*. Her study of domestic and international adoption in Canada is located within an adopted child's rights framework, attachment theories, and critiques of legal reforms in Canada's adoption laws. Here, her research traces the liberalization of Canadian adoption beginning in the 1970s where many adoption processes and adoptees' search for birth families benefited from laws allowing for active searches of birth parents. With the passing of Bill 183 in 2009, the author is critical of how the disclosure rights of those who do not want their identities released trump the human rights of Canadian adoptees and birth parents to know and be known to each other. One of Shipley's strongest convictions is the "belief that the right of adopted persons to know the identity of their birth parents surpasses in importance all other adoption issues" (267).

Shipley's passion for transparency in adoption processes is perhaps best reflected in the first section of the book where she writes about her own personal struggles for "completeness" as an adopted child in Manitoba. She recounts how she lived with "disenfranchised grief" and depression for many years until, as a fifty-two-year-old adult and adoptive mother with her own family, she finally reunited with her birth mother and Ukrainian birth family.

In the second half of the book, Shipley brings sensitivity, care and compassion to the complexities of adoption, as an adoption practitioner. Her research identifies the challenges of domestic and international adoptions encountered by adoptees, adoptive families, and birth parents in the private adoption circle. Ten narratives of birth mothers and adoptive families offer insights into how inequalities of race, class, gender, and sexuality shape adoption decisions and practices in Canada. For example, low-income teen mothers and mothers with addictions who gave up their children for adoption relate their stories of mistreatment and abuse by medical staff, support systems and family members during their pregnancies and deliveries. To help birth mothers heal from the stigma of the “bad, unfit mom who abandons her child through adoption,” Shipley’s adoption practice offers birthday celebrations to honour birth mothers. Another narrative tells the story of a low-income immigrant family who due to financial constraints, considers, but decides against, giving up their baby for adoption. The inclusion of contrasting adoption narratives of white, middle-class, heterosexual families with the financial means to adopt and raise a family provides an opportunity, which Shipley does not take, to reflect on how the “suitability” of adoptive parents is embedded within the westernized politics of race and class. Shipley however is critical of the long history of discrimination against LGBTQ parents in adoption, noting that private and public adoption practices over the last ten years have increasingly included LGBTQ families.

These adoption narratives of love, loss, and connection for adoptees and adoptive families barely scratch the surface of Canadian adoption. More attention to critiques of adoption within Canada’s colonial history of Eurocentric, white settler policies can shed important light on the state’s central involvement in the disruption and disintegration of families, particularly poor, racialized, First Nations and single mother families. The disproportionate numbers of children from these marginalized families, who predominate and languish in Canada’s child welfare and adoption systems, are testimony to this social injustice. Also absent are histories of the global politics of international adoption. Here, an analysis of global capitalism and transnational families can reveal how the inequalities of race, gender, class and nation are reproduced in international adoptions where “first world” private adoption agencies and adoptive families benefit from the commodification of family poverty and girlhood/childhood disadvantage when adopting “third world” children.

From the many perspectives of author Carol Bower Shipley as mother, adoptee, adoptive parent, academic researcher, and adoption practitioner, this book is a deeply personal and engaging read where happy endings, often elusive, are complicated by the grief, love, and losses associated with adoption.

This contribution to Canadian adoption literature highlights a history of adoption practices fraught with legal and personal struggles of identity and (be)longing.

Projection: Encounters with My Runaway Mother

Priscila Uppal
Toronto: Dundurn, 2013.

REVIEWED BY CAYO GAMBER

In her memoir, *Projection: Encounters with My Runaway Mother*, Priscila Uppal interrogates the autobiographical stories we are willing to tell others, and, ultimately, the personal stories we are willing to tell ourselves. From the outset, Uppal informs her readers that she “hated being the girl in school without a mother,” and that whenever possible, she wanted to ensure that no one should know that she “had a ‘runaway mother’: a mother who had abandoned her family without a trace.” At the age of 37, Uppal’s father drank contaminated water and became a quadriplegic. For almost six years, Uppal’s mother “cared” for her husband and two small children. Uppal recalls her mother’s violent rages – including when her mother threw her down the stairs along with her typewriter because Priscila had touched the typewriter without permission. She also remembers her mother shoving the tubing from her father’s urine bag down his throat. And then, when her brother Amjit was nine and Priscila was eight, her mother, Theresa, bought three tickets for Brazil. When the two children refused to go with her, Theresa left for Brazil on her own. Twenty years later, by accident, while running a web search for reviews of her work, Uppal runs across her mother’s website.

Given the evidence of her mother’s terrible rage against and subsequent abandonment of her family, I want to sympathize with Uppal; however, I find that I am conflicted in my response to this memoir because I do not fully understand her motivation in writing this narrative.

The memoir focuses on Uppal’s twelve-day visit with her mother. She informs us that “[e]ver since I was eighteen and had started writing seriously at university, I entertained the idea of embarking on a trip to find my runaway mother, and to write a book about the journey.” From the start, then, her journey, in large part, is about crafting a narrative of their encounter. In the last third of the text, she claims she is