

PRESS RELEASE

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CD Forum Presents **Which Way Seattle? Series: Transracial Adoption of Black Children** Co – sponsored by the Ethnic Cultural Center/Theatre October 11, 2007

Seattle, WA – The Central District Forum for Arts and Ideas (CD Forum) presents *Which Way Seattle? Series: Transracial Adoption of Black Children* on Thursday, October 11, 2007 at 7 PM at the Ethic Cultural Theatre (University of Washington).

Which Way Seattle? is an ongoing series of civic dialogues about local and political affairs that directly impact Seattle's African-American community. Explore the issue of transracial adoption of Black children in the first of two events in this series.

Since the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 (MEPA), there has been a rise in the adoption of Black children by non-black individuals. The high proportion of Black children in foster care coupled with the institutional barriers hindering Black families from adopting complicate the matters of transracial adoption and impact many.

Join moderator Zynovia Hetherington, Program Director - Child Welfare Training and Advancement Program at the University of Washington, panelist Chad Goller-Sojourner, writer and adoptee, Billy Hancock, Family Recruitment Specialist-Amara Adoption Service, Penny Nelson, Adoptive Parent and Lisa Marie Rollins, founder of Adopted and Fostered Adults of the African Diaspora (AFAAD) as we discuss the challenges and historical context of transracial adoption of Black children and how we as a community can preserve African-American families while acting in the best interest of children. (Full Bios Below)

Tickets are \$7 for general admission and \$5 for CD Forum members, students and seniors. Advance sales are available through Brown Paper Tickets at <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/16878> or by calling 1-800-838-3006.

BIOS

Moderator

Zynovia Hetherington is the Director for the Child Welfare Training and Advancement Program, at the UW-SSW. She provides leadership and direction to CWTAP - a partnership between the University of Washington and the state of Washington's Children's Administration - for the production of qualified MSW students that specialize in public child welfare. Zynovia has worked in the field of child welfare since 1987 in Detroit, MI and in the Washington State Public Child Welfare system since 1997. She is a mentor and trainer to

newly-hired Social Workers. Her special interest is permanence for African-American children and adolescents.

Panelists

Chad Goller-Sojourner was born December 5, 1970 in Cleveland Ohio and thirteen months later became the youngest addition to the multi-racial Goller family: parents, Alan and Gayla (white), sister, Zanna (Samoan) and brother, Bret (black/white), of Tacoma, Washington. Now a Seattle based poet and spoken word performance artist Chad has written and spoken extensively on the topic of transracial adoption. His inaugural Chapbook entitled *Born One Thousand Years Too Early: Fat, Dark-Skinned, Gay and Adopted by White Folks A Fragmentary Journey Towards Alignment* received accolades from Maya Angelou and has been described as poignant, chilling and prophetic. He is currently creating a one-sissy multi-media show (June 2008) entitled: *Sitting in Circles with Rich White Girls: Memoirs of a Bulimic Black Boy* which chronicles his life long affair with the scale and a ten plus year liaison with an eating disorder.

Billy Hancock is a Family Recruitment Specialist at Amara Adoption Service. He holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology and Child Development. Billy has over twenty years experience in the Child Welfare and Social service field, has training focusing on skills to enhance the ability to discuss relevant adoption issues with prospective and post -adoptive families and provides direct pre/post-placement services to adoptive and foster-to-adopt families. He is also a trained and once certified Quality Circles facilitator; member of the United Way Speaker's Bureau and in 2004 completed The Peoples Institute two day training on Undoing Racism. Hancock has been married for nineteen years and is raising three bi-racial children.

Penny Nelson is an Anglo parent in a multi-racial family of three children, two of whom are bi-racial and adopted, and seven grandchildren. She currently is the Development Director at Executive Service Corps and has more than twenty years experience working with non-profits. Penny has managed organizations that serve inner city children in Los Angeles, low income families and minority communities dealing with health issues. She has a bachelor's degree in Journalism from the University of Oregon and has worked in television news and public relations.

Lisa Marie Rollins is a multidisciplinary performance artist, writer and Ph.D. Candidate in African Diaspora Studies at University of California, Berkeley. She is the Founder/CEO of AFAAD (Adopted and Fostered Adults of the African Diaspora) and is currently performing her solo show, *Ungrateful Daughter* in theaters across the nation. *Ungrateful Daughter* is an comedic look at one black girl's life as a transracial adoptee. Lisa Marie can be contacted on her Blog *A Birth Project* at www.birthproject.wordpress.com or at lisamarierollins@gmail.com.

About CD Forum

The CD Forum is a 501 (c)(3) non profit organization whose mission is to present and produce African-American cultural programs that encourage thought and debate for the greater Seattle area. Our vision is to inspire new thoughts and challenge assumptions about African-American Culture.

For more information, visit www.cdforum.org or call 206-323-4032.

This season is sponsored by 4Culture, ArtsFund, Boeing, The Microsoft Corporation, The Mayor's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, The Horizons Foundation, and The Washington State Arts Commission.

Special thanks [Mayflower Park Hotel](#), the preferred hotel of the CD Forum.

Special thanks to our Outreach Partners: Amara Parenting and Adoption Services, UW School of Social Work and Treehouse For Kids.

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