

2013

## Rudd Chair Annual Report, 2013

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Rudd Family Foundation  
Chair in Psychology

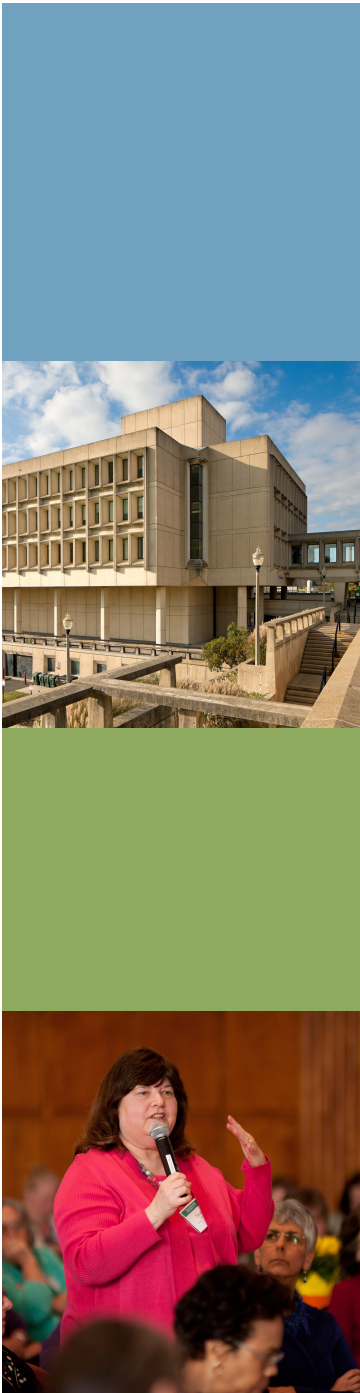
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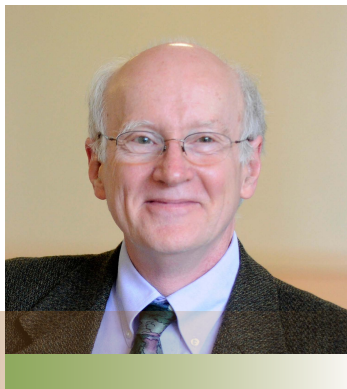
## Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology

The Rudd Family Foundation Chair is located within the University of Massachusetts Amherst Psychology Department and is affiliated with the interdisciplinary Center for Research on Families. The program conducts state-of-the-art research on the psychology of adoption that will impact policy at agency, state, federal, and international levels. It also trains postdoctoral scholars, graduate students, and undergraduate students in theories and methods needed for the study of adoption. Conferences, workshops, and publications disseminate research-based information needed by practitioners, policy makers, and the public. And through key community partnerships, the Rudd Adoption Research Program demonstrates how adoption research can transform policy and practice for the benefit of all whose lives are touched by adoption.

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## From the Chair

Dear Friends,

Two thousand thirteen was a milestone year—the fifth anniversary of the Rudd Adoption Research Program. We’ve come a long way since our beginnings in 2008, generating important research, creating new programs, and extending our reach.

A special fifth anniversary celebration was held during our annual New Worlds of Adoption Conference, highlighting the theme: Contact between Birth and Adoptive Families: What Works? It was exciting to gather 250 researchers, clinicians, case workers, and educators, many of whom also had personal connections to adoption, to address this important and timely topic. Panelists of youth, birth, and adoptive parents kept everyone grounded in the lived experience of those touched by adoption. Participants came away with deeper and broader understandings of issues around contact, with more nuanced understandings of both its benefits and its challenges. Importantly, Andrew and Virginia Rudd were present to help Dean Steve Goodwin and me cut and serve anniversary cake to mark the very special occasion.

Another much-anticipated highlight of the year was the Fourth International Conference on Adoption Research (ICAR4), held in Bilbao, Spain. Attending and presenting with me were Rachel Farr, Holly Grant-Marsney, and Karin Garber. This conference has special meaning, because I had the honor of hosting the first ICAR conference in Minneapolis-St. Paul in 1999. Urged on by one of my graduate students (who is now an associate professor), our small but energetic research team provided all the organizational infrastructure and hosted 100 visitors from all over the United States and several other countries. Our team has continued to have a strong presence at all four ICAR conferences (Minneapolis; Norwich, England; Leiden, the Netherlands; and Bilbao, Spain). ICAR is the only conference that focuses solely on adoption research and draws an incredibly interdisciplinary audience. Collectively, the

Rudd lab contributed nine presentations to ICAR4, a record number presented by us at a single conference. We are already setting our sights on ICAR5, which will be held in Auckland, New Zealand!

This year also brought deepening ties with the mentoring research community. In January our team was honored to present about our Adoption Mentoring Partnership at the National Mentoring Summit in Washington, DC. Jen Dolan presented about AMP at the Re-Envisioning Foster Care conference in April. In September, AMP was featured as one of two model community engagement programs at UMass Amherst, during a symposium called “Making Engagement Work.” And in November, we presented at the BNY Mellon Short Course on Mentoring Youth in the Foster Care System, at the Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring, University of Massachusetts Boston. All of these ties with the national mentoring network will strengthen our research and program development. We have also had many inquiries about our program and how it might be implemented elsewhere.

I invite you to review this report of our activities in 2013 and see for yourself the exciting ways in which our programs have developed. As always, we express our continuing thanks for the generosity of Andrew and Virginia Rudd and for our growing number of individual donors and organizational funding partners who make the work possible every day.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Harold D. Grotevant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Harold D. Grotevant, Ph.D.  
Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology

## Rudd Adoption Research Program



The Rudd Adoption Research Program is one vehicle through which the activities of the Rudd Chair are carried out. The program is located within the University of Massachusetts Amherst Psychology Department and is closely affiliated with the interdisciplinary Center for Research on Families.

The Rudd Adoption Research Program advances knowledge about the psychology of adoption through original research, mentors the next generation of adoption-competent researchers, engages with community partners to incubate and evaluate innovative programs that have potential for national impact, and provides research-based information to influence practice and policy at agency, state, federal, and international levels.

The program seeks to develop synergy among scientists, practitioners, and policymakers from varied disciplines who share interests in the many topics relevant to adoption. The ultimate goal of these activities is to contribute to evidence-informed practice in adoption and to provide research-based information that will influence policy at agency, state, federal, and international levels.

The Rudd Program continues to play leadership roles in two exciting university–community collaborations: the Adoption Mentoring Partnership and Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America. We have also participated in several local community collaborations (with parents, in the schools, etc.) The work of these community partnerships cuts across all program goals, as you will see in their descriptions that follow.

## Community Partnerships

### Adoption Mentoring Partnership



***“In addition to spending time with his Big Brother (who was adopted from the same home country), my son has also had the opportunity to meet some of his Big’s friends who are also of the same race. It has been great for him to be exposed to and interact with other successful young men.”***

*- Adoptive Parent*

The Adoption Mentoring Partnership was established in 2010 to address the lack of school and community support and understanding for adoptees and their families that were voiced by adoptive parents in the Amherst, Massachusetts, area. By providing adopted children with a mentor who has also experienced the challenges related to adoption, race, and ethnicity, the child is introduced to a new friend. His or her family is matched with an invaluable resource; a person who has experienced the challenges of negotiating a balance between the culture of one’s adoptive parents, one’s own birth heritage and culture, and one’s own identity as an adopted person. In this truly collaborative undertaking, the Adoption Mentoring Partnership (AMP) is a joint venture between

Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology

the Rudd Adoption Research Program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County, Adoption Journeys, and the Amherst Regional School District. The program’s goal is to provide adopted children with adopted mentors who can help them better negotiate complex issues such as adoption, race, and ethnicity, and to also provide support networks for both the mentors and the parents, in a comprehensive, unified program structure.

AMP utilizes the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County’s existing best-practices mentoring model. Mentor–mentee matches receive thorough screening, a rigorous intake process, match support contact, and clinical supervision. The matches are required to spend 3–5 hours a week, once a week in each other’s company. In addition to individual monthly supervision with a BBBS case manager, the adopted mentors also meet bi-weekly in a clinically supervised seminar to discuss the latest research in both adoption and mentoring; share perspectives on their matches and activities; and discuss, unpack, and process their own adoption stories.

***“I could not imagine my life today without AMP as a part of it. I always knew my adoption was special, but being a part of AMP gave it new meaning.”*** - Mentor

By the end of 2013, AMP had engaged a total of 24 mentor–mentee pairs. Currently, AMP involves 16 matched pairs: 11 returned from prior years and five new matches have been made this year. A real sign of program success is that matches have continued far beyond the required one year of participation. Many mentors have stated that the mentor group meetings continue to remain the only place they feel comfortable talking about their experiences with adoption, allowing AMP to support and enrich the lives of the mentors as well as the mentees.

***I love the program. It should be in every school if possible.” - Mentor***

A strong research component has been built into AMP since its beginning. Mentors are being interviewed and completing questionnaires about their experiences and attitudes several times a year; a comparison group of adopted college students who are not mentors is also completing those measures. Mentees’ parents are being interviewed about their expectations and experiences, and data are being collected about the mentees’ experiences. In light of the continued community interest and success of the Adoption Mentoring Partnership, efforts are being undertaken to fully document and research aspects of program development. With solid evaluation research undergirding the program, next steps will be to make the program available for replication at other sites across the United States.

AMP is now receiving national exposure. In January 2013 Renee Moss, Jocelyn Nelson, Jen Dolan, and Hal Grotevant presented a workshop on AMP at the National Mentoring Summit in Washington, D.C. Jen Dolan presented about AMP at the Re-Envisioning Foster Care conference in April. Hal Grotevant also made a keynote presentation about AMP in October 2013, as part of the BNY Mellon Short Course on Mentoring Youth in the Foster Care System, sponsored by the Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

A comprehensive overview of the program is now available online, as follows:

French, Q. Y. S., Grotevant, H. D., & Dolan, J. H. (2013). *The Adoption Mentoring Partnership*. Amherst, MA: Rudd Adoption Research Program, UMass Amherst. available at:

<http://www.psych.umass.edu/uploads/sites/56/Files/Adoption%20Mentoring%20Partnership%2001-23-2013.pdf>

AMP benefits from its connection to the world of academics and adoption research through the involvement of the Rudd Adoption Research Program. Further, it is strengthened by the time-tested mentoring model developed by Big Brothers Big Sisters; this nationally recognized program can only further community support and interest as well. As a direct result of these strengths of the collaborative partners, AMP is uniquely positioned to expand as an effective preventive intervention in the lives of adopted children and adopted emerging adults.

*Funding for AMP has come from the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, the Frank Beveridge Family Foundation, the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology at UMass, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County, and private donors.*

***“I feel prouder to say I am adopted because I feel any stigma that I have acquired over the years has gone away. I feel this program is what I needed to learn and grow as an adopted person.” - Mentor***



Mentors Melissa Gately, Samantha Calabrese, Sarah Hurst, Elena Faltas



## Community Partnerships

### Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America



Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America (REFCA) seeks to change the culture and practice of how we perceive and support children and youth in the public foster care system. The vision of REFCA is that all children and youth who experience foster care are connected to stable, loving families and caring communities of individuals in order to ensure their health and well-being so that they can lead productive lives.

The Rudd Adoption Research Program (Hal Grotevant and Jen Dolan) was one of the original conveners of this initiative, along with the Treehouse Foundation (Judy Cockerton and Kerry Homstead), and Friends of Children (Jane Lyons). The initiative has now expanded considerably to include other community stakeholders, including the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Children and Families. It is well on its way to becoming a national movement.

The Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin County region of western Massachusetts is serving as an incubator for

*“Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America is creating collaborative social change on behalf of our nation’s children and youth who have been removed from their homes and placed in foster care. Our goal is to ensure that every child is rooted in family and community. Jen Dolan and Hal Grotevant have been active partners in moving this process forward and making sure that our programs are grounded in research.”*

*- Judy Cockerton, Founder and CEO, Treehouse Foundation*

a nationwide model. REFCA envisions a collaborative, multi-sector and active “lab” that engages individuals and organizations in a vital process of dialogue, engagement, reflection, and action over time to support change and positive outcomes for youth in care.

Rudd Program leaders Grotevant and Dolan played key roles in 2013 REFCA convenings. At the February 2013, Winter Working Group meeting, approximately 50 people gathered at Treehouse to exchange progress updates. Participants were invited to join the working groups and to offer input. Buoyed by the success of the Winter Working Group meeting, a subsequent Fall Working Group Gathering was convened in November.

The Rudd Program was once again a lead partner in the fourth Re-Envisioning Foster Care conference, which attracted over 100 leaders to Holyoke Community College on May 3, 2013. The group heard from leaders and innovators across the United States, including Congresswoman Karen Bass from the Congressional Caucus

on Foster Youth; Rodney Walker, a former youth in care and master's student at Yale Divinity School and Yale School of Management; Barry Chaffkin of Fostering Change for Children; and Marianne Hughes, founder of the Interaction Institute for Social Change.

Three key issues facing those concerned with children in care are organizing the work of the initiative. Here are just a few examples of the work in progress:

### Aging Out/Transition Working Group

The goal of this group is to develop an array of resources to support young people in need of family and community. This goal is being accomplished by the

- HEROES Youth Leadership Project
- Transitional Youth Housing initiative

### Education Working Group

The goal is to develop family, mental health and educational resources to support the learning needs of children and youth ages birth–24 whose lives have been impacted by foster care. This goal is being accomplished by the

- Early Childhood Wellness Project
- More Than Words job/life skills model
- Higher Education initiative

### Permanency Working Group

The goal of this group is to develop resources that ensure all children and youth placed in foster care are connected to stable, loving families and caring communities. This goal is being supported through the following programs:

- Connections for Kids
- Education for Fostering Resources
- Massachusetts Survey of Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Parents
- Visitation Program

At the request of the Treehouse Community leaders, the Rudd program designed and conducted a research project aimed at understanding this innovative, complex community and how it functions. Jen Dolan interviewed Treehouse staff, elders, adoptive parents, and children in order to understand their shared and distinctive viewpoints, what they viewed as working well in the intergenerational community, and what they noted as challenges for the future. This research will help guide decision making in the community and

THE TREEHOUSE FOUNDATION &  
THE RUDD ADOPTION RESEARCH PROGRAM AT UMASS-AMHERST PRESENT:

*Fourth Annual*  
**RE-ENVISIONING FOSTER CARE IN AMERICA CONFERENCE**

*Ensuring Every Child is Rooted in Family & Community*

**MAY 3, 2013 | 9 AM - 4PM | HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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Registration Begins at 8:30 AM

**CONFERENCE PROGRAM:**

**OPENING EVENT:**  
**RODNEY WALKER**  
*From Foster Care To Yale: Why Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America Matters To Me*  
Rodney Walker is a Master's student, Yale School of Management and Divinity School

**REFCA INNOVATION SESSION:**  
*Ten Compelling Approaches to Re-Envisioning Foster Care*

Sixto Cancel: Rising Tides  
Jen Dolan: UMass Adoption Mentoring Partnership  
Mitch Findley & Chris Langeller: HEROES Youth Leadership Project  
Lauren Frey & Mary LeBeau: Tools for Talking With Youth About Permanency  
Liv Anna Homstead: Fostering Change for Children  
Corky Klimczak: System Change for Successful Children  
Kelley Lane: Sibling Connections  
Richard Rohnert: MA Chapter: Foster Care Alumni of America  
Gail Johnson Vaughan: Mission Focused Solutions  
Karen Zilberstein: A Home Within

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER:**  
**BARRY CHAFFKIN,**  
CEO Fostering Change for Children  
Foster Care Innovation Highlight:  
The Children's Corps

**AFTERNOON SESSION:**  
*Growing The REFCA Movement: Roadmap, Strategies and Tools*

**INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP**  
Facilitated by Marianne Hughes, Interaction Institute for Social Change

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Thanks to the Dave Thomas Foundation, our 2013 REFCA Sponsor:

**REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

Log onto: <http://refca2013.eventbrite.com>

Conference & Lunch: \$45 per person

REFCA Conference Hashtag: #refca13

For more information about the Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America Movement, go to [www.refca.net](http://www.refca.net)

will provide important information for others across the country who are seeking to replicate the program in their localities. Consultation also took place during 2013 with several professionals known nationally for their expertise in program evaluation, including Drs. Gary Mallon, Ruth McRoy, and Peter Pecora. Their feedback will guide next steps in program evaluation for Treehouse and the broader REFCA initiative.

For further information about the REFCA initiative, visit <http://refca.net>.

*Funding for Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America has come from the project conveners: Treehouse Foundation, Friends of Children, Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology at UMass Amherst, and from private donors.*

## Community Partnerships

### Community Engagement

In addition to community engagement through formal channels such as the Adoption Mentoring Partnership (AMP) and Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America (REFCA) initiatives, the Rudd Program has also initiated several informal adoption-related activities in the local community. For example, Jen Dolan has been coordinating a bi-weekly round table “bring your own lunch” discussion for UMass adoptive parents. The informal discussions on a wide range of topics are consistently well attended. Parents have children adopted internationally and through the child welfare system, mostly teens, but ranging in age from 6 to 26 years.

During National Adoption Month in November, Jen contacted the librarians at the Amherst Regional High School and Amherst Regional Middle School to see if they would be willing to display books about adoption in their libraries. The librarians at both schools liked the idea and agreed to host a display of adoption-related books. Peter Riedel, the middle school librarian, sent a photo of his display and mentioned that the books he had on adoption were outdated. In response, Melissa Gately, UMass psychology intern working with Jen, did some research and created a list of current books on adoption that would be appropriate for middle school and high school age students. During a meeting with Peter Riedel, Melissa shared the list with him and highlighted the top three books she recommended. Peter was familiar with many of the authors and seemed excited to have the list of books. He shared the list with the high school librarian the following day. The group talked about the value of the visibility of the books, regardless of whether any were checked out, and how the display helped to place the topic of adoption into the mainstream discourse and possibly enhance the normalization of adoption as a way of building families.

Jen has also been working with Tim O’Brien, the Education and Training Worker in Adolescent Services at the Department of Children and Families (DCF) who is in charge of all of the DCF youth who are attending four-year higher education institutions. In the spring, with the help of Martha Patrick in the UMass Ombuds office, Tim met with the staff in student services, all of whom are key contacts for students, especially those who have experienced foster care.

Tim talked about the unique needs of students who have experienced foster care, and the staff members volunteered to have students needing assistance contact them directly. Inspired by that meeting, a brochure was created that is now distributed to UMass students who have experienced foster care.

Based on the work Jen has been doing with the Foster Youth in Higher Education working group of the REFCA initiative, she was asked to give a tour of the UMass campus to several foster youth associated with the Treehouse community in Easthampton, Massachusetts. Through her connection to Tim O’Brien from DCF, Jen was able to invite a current UMass student who was in foster care to help guide the group. Seeing the campus and visiting some key sights were important, but the conversation that took place between the high school students and the older students was invaluable. The older students were able to answer a variety of college-related questions that took into account the foster care experience. The younger students had specifically asked if the person giving the tour could be a student who had experienced foster care, knowing that without that experience it would be hard for the tour guide to understand or relate to the high school students’ unique pathway to college. The high school students now know they have a whole cadre of allies at UMass if they decide to apply in the future!



Melissa Gately and the Adoption Book Display, Amherst (Mass.) Regional Middle School.

## Reaching Our Goals

### Advancing Knowledge about the Psychology of Adoption



#### Minnesota Texas Adoption Research Project



Dr. Grotevant continued to serve as the Principal Investigator on the Minnesota/Texas Adoption Research Project (MTARP), a longitudinal research study that focuses on the consequences of variations in openness in adoption arrangements for all members of the

adoptive kinship network—birthmothers, adoptive parents, and adopted children—and for the relationships within these family systems. The sample includes children adopted domestically as infants through private adoption agencies across the United States. The project began in the mid-1980s in collaboration with Dr. Ruth G. McRoy, currently the Donahue and DiFelice Endowed Professor in the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work. Dr. Grotevant and colleagues have completed three waves of this longitudinal study: when the adopted children were school age, adolescents, and emerging adults. Collection of the fourth wave is currently in progress.

One continuing thread of MTARP investigation has concerned adoptees' curiosity about their birth relatives and their search for information. What are the contexts that promote or hinder information seeking, and what role does curiosity play? In one study published in 2013, the Adoption Curiosity Pathway model was used to test the effect of curiosity on adoption information seeking in a sample of 143 emerging adult adoptees from MTARP Wave 3 (Wrobel, Grotevant, Samek, & Von Korff, *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 2013). Young adult adoptees were interviewed about their intentions and actions

taken to gather new information about their birth mothers and birth fathers. As expected, their level of curiosity was positively associated with information-seeking behavior. However, their curiosity was heavily influenced by barriers and facilitators to attaining that information, and an important contribution of this study was to identify some of those factors. Barriers could either reflect an internal state of reflection (e.g., not feeling ready to look for information, the belief that the information could be upsetting or harmful to the relationship) or external factors (e.g., closed records, high costs of beginning a search). Likewise, facilitators could be internal (e.g., sense of readiness, belief that the information will be useful) or external (e.g., assistance from someone at the adoption agency, encouragement from family and/or friends). Thus, information seeking was not only influenced by motivation (such as curiosity), but also by perceptions of the context in which information seeking occurs. This study provides further evidence in support of the Adoption Curiosity Pathway model, and also has important implications for adoption professionals and adoptive persons, as they consider options for obtaining birth family information.

In *Child Development Perspectives* (2013), we also published an important overview of MTARP findings to date. Our 30-year body of work has revealed the complexities of managing contact over time. Each participant in an adoptive kinship network brings his or her own developmental history, expectations of adoption, values, and relationship skills to the family system; these combine in unique ways across members. Mutually satisfying relationships hinge on participants' flexibility, communication skills, ability to maintain boundaries, and commitment to the relationships.

These skills can be learned, and they can be supported by others through informal, psychoeducational, and therapeutic means. Because contact arrangements evolve over time, temporary setbacks or disappointments should not discourage families from pursuing new opportunities, nor should well-functioning relationships be taken for granted. Like any relationship, arrangements involving contact require effort and attention (Grotevant, McRoy, Wrobel, & Ayers-Lopez, 2013).

Data are now being collected for the fourth wave of MTARP. The target children are now in their mid-20s to mid-30s, entering committed relationships and building their own families. These data are laying the foundation for a major grant application in progress for the National Institutes of Health, "Pathways to Relational Competence in Adopted Young Adults," which will use the longitudinal data from MTARP and four waves of data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health to examine how adopted young adults develop committed relationships and build families. Co-investigators with Dr. Grotevant include Drs. Manfred van Dulmen (Kent State University), Rachel Farr (UMass Amherst), and Aline Sayer (UMass Amherst). Submission of this grant application was facilitated by Dr. Grotevant's appointment as Faculty Research Scholar in the Center for Research on Families during 2012–2013.

*Primary support for the Minnesota Texas Adoption Research Project has come from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the National Science Foundation, the William T. Grant Foundation, and the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology, UMass Amherst.*

### Contemporary Adoptive Families Study

Dr. Rachel Farr, research assistant professor of psychology (and former postdoc with the Rudd Program), has actively contributed to new knowledge about the psychology of adoption through her Contemporary Adoptive Families Study (CAFS), a large study of adoptive families from across the United States, headed by lesbian, gay, and heterosexual parenting couples, all of whom had completed domestic infant adoptions. The study has examined the ways in which parental sexual orientation impacts child outcomes, parenting, and family dynamics in adoptive families with young children in Wave 1 of data collection. Wave 2 data collection is currently ongoing, now that children are in middle childhood (on average, eight years of age). In addition to continuing to examine the impact of family structure over time, in this second wave of the study, we are also investigating adoption-related dynamics, such as children's understanding of adoption, how families talk

about adoption, contact with birth families, and transracial adoption dynamics as related to child, parent, and family outcomes.

One emerging direction for the data collected in Wave 2 of CAFS regards children's feelings of difference, experiences with microaggressions, and demonstrating resiliency as a result of having same-sex parents. Limited research exists about the possible victimization and psychosocial development of children with same-sex parents, particularly those adopted by lesbian and gay parents. Thus, we aim to expand research on the experiences of adopted children with same-sex parents, specifically instances of microaggressions, awareness of difference, and resiliency. Although data collection is ongoing, our team of researchers has been utilizing thematic analysis to code video-recorded interviews from 44 children (Mage = 8 years; 21 girls, 23 boys) representing 27 two-dad families and 17 two-mom families. Preliminary findings suggest that adopted children of same-sex parents exhibit awareness of family diversity, demonstrate feelings of difference from their peers as a result of having same-sex parents, report experiencing some microaggressions on the basis of having same-sex parents, and show resilience despite such adversity. Microaggressions were frequently initiated by peers and occurred at a low intensity. Our findings are of particular importance as they suggest that adopted children of same-sex parents are capable of navigating through experiences of difference with resiliency and developing positive conceptualizations of their family.

Data collection for Wave 2 of CAFS is continuing during 2014. During visits to participating families' homes, children and parents are interviewed, both complete a series of online questionnaires, and families participate in two videotaped interaction tasks. Children's teachers also provide data for Wave 2. Several other directions of analyzing data from Wave 2 include graduate student research projects about how lesbian and gay parents socialize their children around issues of family diversity and their own family structure and about how adoptive parents in transracial adoptive families engage in practices of racial and cultural socialization with their children.

*The Contemporary Adoptive Families Study has received funding from the American Psychological Foundation's Placek Grant (awarded to Rachel Farr), the Williams Institute at UCLA and the Lesbian Health Fund (awarded to Charlotte J. Patterson), the American Psychological Association Dissertation Award (awarded to Rachel Farr), and the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology, UMass Amherst.*

## Reaching Our Goals

### Providing Evidence-Based Knowledge to Inform Adoption Policy and Practice

The Rudd Adoption Research Program sponsored the fifth annual Rudd Adoption conference, “New Worlds of Adoption: Contact between Adoptive and Birth Families” on April 11 and 12, 2013, in the Student Union Ballroom of UMass Amherst. The 250 participants enjoyed a rich menu of sessions from almost 50 presenters spread over two full days. Conference co-sponsors included the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work, Donaldson Adoption Institute, and Massachusetts Department of Children and Families.

The opening plenary session, “Contact between Adoptive and Birth Families: Diverse Experiences, Multiple Perspectives” brought together Drs. Harold Grotevant, Amanda Baden and Elsbeth Neil, whose symposium laid the foundation for the two-day conference by highlighting key findings and grappling with unresolved issues about contact in domestic infant, international, and child welfare adoptions.

Following the plenary session a panel of youth who have experienced foster care and adoption shared their first-hand experiences about contact with their birth families. This panel was facilitated by Chris Langelier, family support coordinator for Berkshire Children and Families, and staff member at the Treehouse Community.

During lunch, participants not only had the chance to visit or network with friends and colleagues, they also had the opportunity to review 17 posters describing current research and innovative programs. We were very proud to present our first Outstanding Poster Award to Dr. Amy Whitesel from George Washington University, for her research titled, “Birth Parents and Openness with Adoptive Families: An Examination of Actual Contact and Satisfaction with Contact.”

In addition, participants were treated to a piece of “Five-Year Anniversary Cake.” Andrew Rudd had the honor of cutting the delicious cake with his wife Virginia Rudd and Hal Grotevant.



Amy Whitesel receives “Outstanding Poster Presentation” award.

**“FABULOUS start to the conference— great overview at a good level to bring all the different groups in the room together in understanding and focus. Set the scene well and informed us and got us thinking”**

Our Thursday afternoon concurrent sessions were as follows:

#### CONCURRENT SESSION 1 (4 options)

- Where the Rubber Hits the Road: Clinical Practice Basics, Challenges Old and New, and a Tiny History Lesson that can inform the Future (Presenter: Janie Cravens)
- Does Biological Family Involvement Impact or Destabilize Adoptive Placements from Foster Care? (Presenters: Dawn Post & Brian Zimmerman)
- Openness in Adoptions from Foster Care: Implications for Children and Families (Presenters: Ruth McRoy & Susan Ayers-Lopez)
- The Importance of Maintaining Sibling Connections (Presenter: Judy Cockerton)



Conference presenters

### CONCURRENT SESSION 2 (4 options)

- Legal and Clinical Aspects of Communication Agreements between Adoptive and Birth Parents (Presenter: Marla Allisan)
- Post-Adoption Contact from the Birthmother's Perspective: What Can We Learn from the Involvement of Important Figures in the Birthmothers' Lives? (Presenter: Susan Henney) and Growing Up in Open Adoption: Adoptive Families Look Back (Presenter: Deborah Siegel)
- Nationally Representative Data on Openness in Adoption: 2007 National Survey of Adoptive Parents (Presenters: Sharon Vandivere and Rachel Farr)
- Post-Adoption Reunification: A Living Example (Presenters: Rebecca Hawkes and Erica Asselin) and Addiction, Reunion, and Open Adoption (Presenter: E. Kay Trimberger)

The second morning began with a powerful panel facilitated by Dr. Ruth McRoy titled, "Evolving Relationships and Contact in Adoption." This panel consisted of birth mothers, a birth father, his wife and his son's adoptive mother. Their personal stories contributed to making the conference discussions very real.

The morning panel was followed by Adam Pertman of the Donaldson Adoption Institute, who reviewed their current project, "Untangling the Web: The Internet's Transformative Impact on Adoption." Pertman's talk was followed by a discussion of "Regulatory and Legal Issues in Contact for Children in State Care," presented by Leo Farley and Virginia Peel from the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families.

Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology

"This was probably the most informative and moving panel that I have ever heard. This group gave voice to the issues that oftentimes remain theoretical"

Friday afternoon concurrent sessions were as follows:

### CONCURRENT SESSION 1 (4 options)

- "My Birth Mother Friendened Me!" Adoptive Family Relationships in the Social Networking Era (Presenter: Susan Ogden)
- The Minnesota Texas Adoption Research Project: Navigating Contact from Childhood into Young Adulthood (Presenters: Hal Grotevant, Ruth McRoy, Susan Ayers Lopez, Gretchen Wrobel, Ann Schwartz )
- Openness in Domestic Infant Adoption: A Longitudinal Examination of Adoptive Parents, Birth Parents and Adoptees from Research and Practice (Presenters: Jenae Neiderhiser & Janice Goldwater)
- Professional Development and Resources for Students and New Professionals (Presenter: Rachel Farr )

"These kinds of panels help remind us why we do what we do! They all did a great job"





Virginia and Andrew Rudd cutting the "Celebrating Five Years" cake with Hal Grotevant.

**"The conference and its presenters are rich with information. The conversation about the idea of contact and openness will continue."**

#### CONCURRENT SESSION 2 (4 options)

- Making Open Adoptions Work for You - Preparing Birth and Adoptive Families (Presenters: Susan Smith & Deborah Siegel)
- Meeting Chinese Birth Parents: Myths, Realities, and Other Imagined Stories (Presenter: Julia Vich-Bertran) and Contact with Birth Families in Intercountry Adoption: It's More Commonplace Than You Think (Presenters: Ellen Pinderhughes, Jessica Matthews, & Adam Pertman)
- Contact After Adoption 16 Years On: The Experience of Adopted Young People, Adoptive Parents, and Birth Relatives (Presenters: Elsbeth Neil, Mary Beek & Emma Ward)
- Adopted People's Longitudinal Experience of Birth Sibling Relationships Post-Reunion: Messages for Adoption Practice Today (Presenter: Heather Ottaway) and Why Quebec's Foster-to-Adopt Parents Do Not Seem to Consider Contact After Adoption as a Positive (Presenter: Genevieve Page)

**"This panel was so moving. As a birth mother and someone who works trying to keep families together, these brave individuals have changed the way I do my job."**

Plans are now well underway for the Sixth Rudd Conference, "New Worlds of Adoption: Helping Families Overcome Early Adversities" to be held April 11, 2014 at UMass Amherst. Dr. Philip Fisher, professor of psychology at the University of Oregon, will present the keynote address: "A New Model for Innovation and Best Practices to Maximize Prosperity among Adopted Children, Maltreated Children, and Their Families."

Information about the upcoming and past conferences may always be found at: <http://psych.umass.edu/ruddchair/annualconference/>.

Presentations from the 2011–2013 conferences are available on the Rudd Adoption Research Program YouTube Channel, where they can be watched at any time, by anyone, anywhere, at no cost. Visit us at: <http://youtube.com/user/RuddAdoption/videos/>.

Power point presentations from the past conferences can be found at: <http://scholarworks.umass.edu/rudd/>.

**"Unbelievably powerful"**



## Reaching Our Goals

### Building Capacity for Excellence in Adoption Research



**Theresa A. Cain** (MSW, LICSW) is a doctoral candidate at the Smith College School for Social Work in Northampton, Massachusetts. Her dissertation research is focused on examining the coming out process for lesbians who are also adoptees. Theresa maintains a private practice

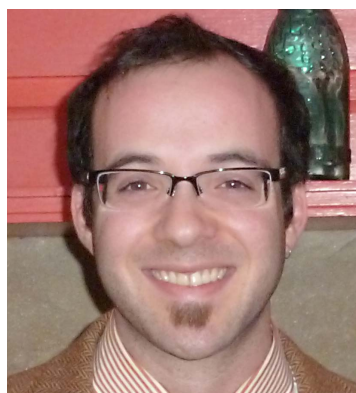
in psychotherapy and is an adjunct faculty member at the Springfield College School of Social Work. Theresa is also a consultation group leader for A Home Within, a national organization focused on meeting the emotional needs of foster youth.



**Quade French** (BS, Psychology, University of California San Diego; MA, Clinical Psychology, California State University Northridge) is a fifth-year doctoral student in clinical psychology at UMass Amherst. He is currently working in a pre-doctoral clinical internship at the University of California at

Santa Cruz which runs through August 2014. In addition, he is completing his dissertation, which looks at the lived experiences of adopted college students who participated as mentors in the Adoption Mentoring Partnership. This qualitative research is designed to strengthen current conceptualizations and theory of adoption by examining the experiences and perspectives of adopted persons themselves. In addition to completing his dissertation, Quade remains an active consultant for the Adoption Mentoring Partnership (AMP), which he helped develop over the previous four years. After his graduation in 2014, he will complete a post-doctoral clinical fellowship to gain license eligibility to practice psychology in the state of California, and will

seek both academic and clinical positions to continue the integration of adoption research and practice that is a foundation of his approach to the profession.



**Tobias Gale** (BA, Psychology, UMass Amherst) started working in the Rudd Adoption Lab in the summer of 2012. He worked closely with Karin Garber on her master's thesis, identifying the various ways in which adopted adolescents are the targets of microaggressions by

others. In addition, he assisted Dr. Grotevant in contacting participants for the fourth wave of MTARP, and Dr. Farr in tasks related to her longitudinal study examining lesbian- and gay-parented families. In the spring of 2013, Tobias conducted an independent research project with Dr. Grotevant examining how religious/spiritual commitment of adopted adolescents in confidential adoptions is associated with their adoptive identity. He presented the results as a poster at the Massachusetts Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference in April, and is currently finalizing a manuscript based on the study. Tobias was awarded the Outstanding Undergraduate Research Assistant Award in the Department of Psychology. He is applying to clinical psychology PhD and PsyD programs that have a focus on the integration of spirituality and clinical psychology.



**Karin Garber** (BA, Psychology, Scripps College; EdM and MA, Psychological Counseling, Teachers College, Columbia University) is a third-year clinical psychology student working with Dr. Grotevant. Her current research

interests are related to microaggressions experienced by adolescent adoptees. Microaggressions are “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative...slights and insults towards [members of a marginalized group]” (Sue et al., 2007). Her master’s thesis, defended in 2013, created a taxonomy of microaggressions experienced by adolescent adoptees and examined how these negative communications may be associated with their perceptions of their own adoptions. Additionally, she is exploring how ethnic identity is influenced when internationally adopted people make contact with their birth countries. Karin also is the current program coordinator for the Adoption Mentoring Partnership wherein she educates and supervises three cohorts of college-aged adoptive mentors in their community “matches” with younger adoptees between the ages of 8 and 12 years. She has also been working with others in the lab on collecting data with the fourth wave of the Minnesota Texas Adoption Research Project (MTARP). This year, Karin presented her microaggression work at the fourth International Conference on Adoption Research in Bilbao, Spain, and the fifth annual New Worlds of Adoption Conference: Contact between Adoptive and Birth Parents: What Works?



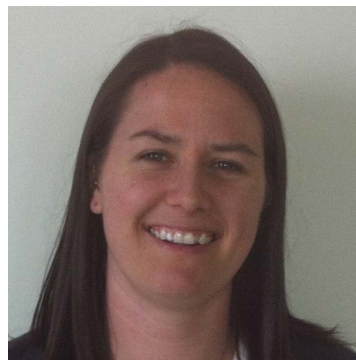
**Holly Grant-Marsney** (BA, Neuroscience and Behavior, Mount Holyoke College; MS, Clinical Psychology, UMass Amherst) is in her final year as a doctoral student in clinical psychology at UMass. She is currently engaged in her clinical internship at the University

of New Hampshire’s Counseling Center. Her research interests include close relationships and attachment in the adoptive family, adoptive identity, and narratives, particularly in adolescence and emerging adulthood. She is finishing her dissertation titled, “Emotion in Adoptive Narratives: Links to Close Relationships in Emerging Adulthood.” She plans to graduate in 2014, and pursue an academic position in clinical psychology that will allow her to integrate her interests in research, education, and clinical practice.



**Danila Musante** (AB, Psychology, Harvard University; MS, Clinical Psychology, UMass Amherst) is a doctoral candidate in the Child, Adolescent, and Family concentration in clinical psychology at UMass. She is currently on her internship at Cambridge

Health Alliance where she provides outpatient therapy in a community health setting to youth and adults. She studies the family as a context of individual development, particularly during adolescence and emerging adulthood, in adoptive families. In 2012 Danila was awarded a Graduate Student Fellowship from the UMass Center for Research on Families (CRF) to work on her dissertation, which examines the concurrent and long-term effects of adolescent individuation in adoptive families on adoptees’ adjustment.



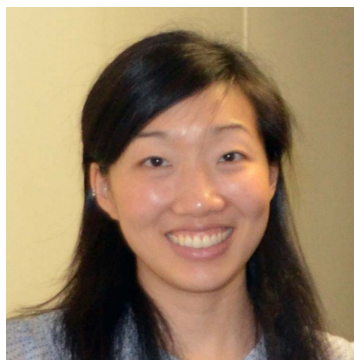
**Marykate Oakley** (AB, Psychology, Princeton University; MA, Clinical Psychology, Teachers College, Columbia University) is a second-year doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at UMass. She is currently completing her master’s thesis, titled “Diverse Family

Socialization: The Relationship Between Gay and Lesbian Parenting Strategies and Child Behavioral Adjustment.” She is working with Dr. Rachel Farr on the second wave of the Contemporary Adoptive Families Study, from which she is deriving her dissertation data. Her broader research interests include adolescent development, mentoring, and family systems, particularly within the LGBT population.



**Ashley Sherrill** (BS, Psychology, Bennett College) is a first-year clinical mental health master's student at Springfield College. Ashley came to the Rudd Program through the 2012/2013 Post-Baccalaureate Research Education Program at the

University of Massachusetts Amherst. PREP, a federally funded program from the National Institutes of Health, is a one-year internship with the goal of strengthening research skills and academic competitiveness of participants in pursuit of a doctoral degree. Ashley initially began working in the Rudd Adoption Lab as a part of PREP's required Summer Program for Undergraduate Research (SPUR), during which she assisted with ongoing research projects and completed preliminary original research titled "Religiosity and Civic Engagement: Links to Well-being in Young Adult Adoptees" based on Dr. Grotevant's longitudinal Minnesota/Texas Adoption Research Project. Ashley also assisted Karin Garber with coding for her master's research on microaggressions encountered by adopted adolescents. Ashley aspires to pursue a doctoral degree in clinical psychology with a concentration in forensic psychology. After completion of her PhD, she hopes to gain field experience working in the courts, with police departments and in correctional facilities. Ultimately she aspires to work with federal or international law enforcement agencies, such as the FBI, as a crime analyst or a violent crime resource specialist, providing case management advice and interview strategies.



**Yesel Yoon** (BA, Psychology, University of Maryland; MS, Clinical Psychology, UMass Amherst) is a fourth-year doctoral student in clinical psychology at UMass Amherst. Yesel's research focuses on different age groups including adolescence and

emerging adulthood. Yesel's master's thesis examined the role of family practices during adolescence, in the form of routines and rituals, and the extent to which these practices are protective during a particularly important transition period. She has extended her interests in family routines and rituals in various family contexts such as working-class, dual income-earner families. In addition to examining family practices, Yesel recently presented a paper at the sixth Biennial Conference on Emerging Adulthood looking at how to most accurately capture "psychological well-being" in emerging adulthood. Yesel teaches an advanced undergraduate seminar for psychology majors, devoted to advancing students' knowledge about topics related to diversity and multiculturalism in psychological research and practice. This year she will be serving as the emerging scholar representative for the Mental Health Special Interest Group. Looking forward, Yesel hopes to examine identity development and occupational development in college and non-college enrolled emerging adults.

## Reaching Our Goals

### Promoting Adoption Research Initiatives of Emerging Scholars

The work of the Rudd Program is greatly enhanced by the efforts of three extraordinary emerging scholars, each of whom contributes in multiple, significant ways to the work of the program. Meet Drs. Jennifer McDermott, Rachel Farr, and Jen Dolan.

**Dr. McDermott's** work examines how children's early experiences influence cognition, socio-emotional processes and developmental trajectories. One avenue of research focuses on the impact of early psychosocial deprivation. In collaboration with the Bucharest Early Intervention Project (BEIP) and colleagues at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, we are finding that stressful early caregiving contexts can negatively influence a range of cognitive and affective skills including response monitoring, emotion recognition and reward processing. However, placement into a high quality caregiving context, such as the foster care intervention in the BEIP, leads to improvements in some of these skills. Overall, the results from these studies have strong implications for the design of future intervention programs aimed at improving outcomes among children experiencing early adversity.

A second avenue of research involves studying the impact of early adversity on adopted and foster care children in Massachusetts. A major step in starting this work began in spring 2013 with the launch of the Massachusetts Survey of Kinship, Foster, and Adoptive Parents (MSKFAP). This survey explores experiences of families in Massachusetts with the aim of informing local providers as to what services are most valued and what services are most needed among kinship, foster, and adoptive families. Another goal of this survey is to lay the preliminary groundwork for the establishment of a regional database that will allow UMass Amherst scholars and affiliates to more efficiently undertake adoption and foster care research that uses a range of designs from neuroscience to family dynamic perspectives.



**Jennifer M. McDermott, PhD**  
Assistant Professor of Developmental Psychology,  
UMass Amherst



**Rachel Farr, PhD**  
Research Assistant Professor of Psychology,  
UMass Amherst

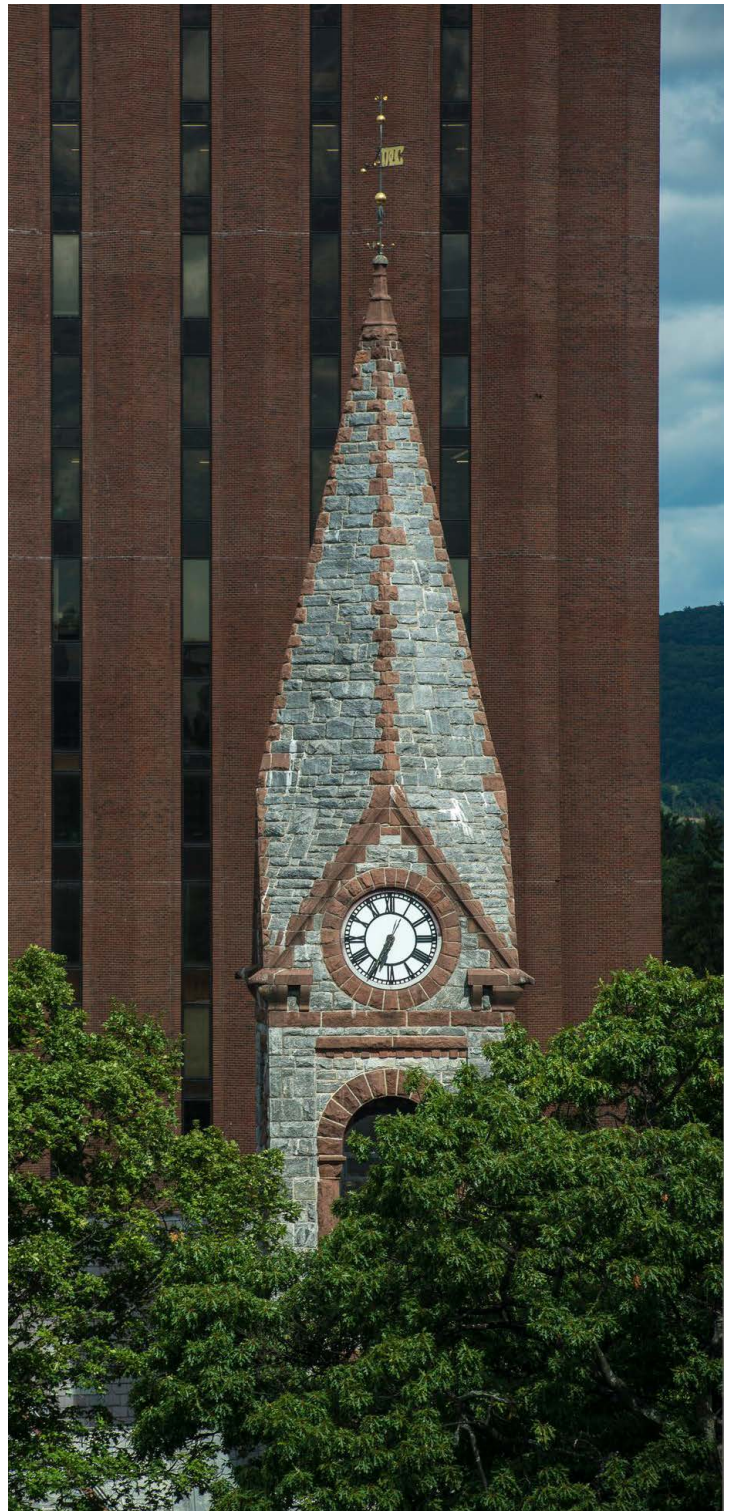
**Dr. Farr**, PhD, joined the Rudd Program in February 2011 as a postdoctoral research scholar and was promoted to research assistant professor in 2012. With her colleagues in the program, Rachel is working with the MTARP data set on several research projects related to openness arrangements among birth and adoptive families, particularly as adoptees enter adulthood. A central question in this work regards how adoptees conceptualize “family” in adulthood and how primary tasks of adulthood (e.g., entering long-term romantic relationships, marriage, establishing a career, having children) are influenced by adoptees’ ongoing relationships with adoptive and birth family members.

Prior to her postdoc, Rachel’s graduate work at the University of Virginia included a large study of over 100 adoptive families from across the United States, headed by lesbian, gay, and heterosexual parenting couples, all of whom had completed domestic infant adoptions. The study examined the ways in which parental sexual orientation impacts child outcomes, parenting, and family dynamics in adoptive families with young children. With funding from the American Psychological Foundation’s Placek Award, a second wave of data collection has been underway since the spring of 2013 now that children are school age. Rachel traveled across the country during 2013 to visit participating families, and she is working with a team of graduate and undergraduate students at UMass Amherst to collect, manage, and analyze the data. With Professors David Scherer and Hal Grotevant, she is helping advise the master’s thesis research of Marykate Oakley, who is seeking to explore how lesbian and gay parents socialize their children about their diverse family structure and how this socialization is relevant to children’s well-being and self-perceptions. Rachel is also advising the undergraduate thesis research of Maggie Cunningham, funded with an undergraduate scholarship from the Center for Research on Families (CRF) at UMass Amherst in 2013. Under Rachel’s leadership, Maggie is examining how children’s self-worth and peer relationships are shaped by parental mental health and well-being among these diverse adoptive families.

Several of Rachel's articles were accepted for publication or appeared in print in 2013. For example, her dissertation research (conducted with her graduate advisor, Dr. Charlotte J. Patterson) on coparenting among lesbian, gay, and heterosexual parents and associations with adopted children's outcomes was published in the July/August 2013 issue of *Child Development*. This article received substantial media attention over the summer, including interviews on National Public Radio's Fresh Air and Morning Edition programs, and news articles in sources such as the *Huffington Post*. In addition, research that Rachel has conducted with the MTARP sample with her colleagues at UMass was published this year in the *Journal of Adolescent Research*, specifically examining the openness arrangements of adoptees in emerging adulthood. Research that Rachel has been collaborating on with Dr. Abbie E. Goldberg of Clark University about openness arrangements among lesbian, gay, and heterosexual adoptive couples was accepted for publication in *Adoption Quarterly* in 2013.

During 2013, Rachel presented her research at a number of conferences. For instance, she presented about adoptive parent-child relationships in emerging adulthood from the MTARP sample at the biennial meeting of the Society of Research on Child Development in Seattle in April 2013. In July Rachel traveled with colleagues from the Rudd Program to the International Conference of Adoption Research (ICAR4) in Bilbao, Spain, where she presented a talk about her longitudinal research project about lesbian, gay, and heterosexual adoptive parents and their children, as well as another talk about emerging adult adoptees' representations of family among the MTARP sample.

In terms of Rachel's other professional activities during 2013, Rachel continued to participate in the Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America Initiative sponsored in part by the Rudd Program. With Dr. McDermott (see above), she has helped to develop and administer a survey about post-adoption services among families who have adopted, fostered, or provided kinship care for children, particularly in Massachusetts. In addition, Rachel sat on several adoption-related dissertation and master's committees for students at UMass and other collaborating universities in 2013. She gave several guest talks on adoption research in undergraduate classrooms at UMass during 2013, and she taught an online undergraduate seminar course at UMass Amherst on diverse families in the United States during the summer and fall of 2013. In the Rudd lab, Rachel has supervised approximately ten undergraduate research assistants throughout 2013 who assist her and others with a variety of research tasks and independent projects.





**Jen H. Dolan, EdD**

Rudd Adoption Research Program, Program Manager,  
UMass Amherst

**Dr. Dolan** interviewed the adoptive parents of the mentees as part of the ongoing evaluation of the Adoption Mentoring Partnership (AMP). The interviews revealed high levels of satisfaction with the program, while also pointing out issues that the program can address. For example, parents mentioned the challenge of getting the mentor and mentee together, especially given the start and stop rhythm of college students' academic year and summer schedules. This stimulated productive discussions about ways to promote more regular contact using Skype and other technologies. Parents also varied in terms of how much they hoped the mentors and mentees would explicitly discuss adoption. Their comments have stimulated discussions both within our AMP group and with colleagues in the broader field of mentoring. Parents felt that the mentor group meetings, in which mentors received both close supervision and support, were an important feature of the program. Uniformly, the parents expressed gratitude to the mentors for being wonderful role models for their children.

Jen was also involved in collecting ongoing evaluation data from AMP mentors, using Internet chat technology. The online chat format is a relatively new method of interviewing that few research projects have attempted; we are pleased and excited to be at the forefront of this new method of data collection. Questions centered around mentors' experiences in the program, sense of identity as an adopted person, and supports they had or might need. Although the data have not been fully analyzed, it is clear that the AMP plays an important role in the lives of the mentors. Just about all of the mentors stated they wished they could have had a mentor when they were younger. Use of the Internet chat technology will enable us to stay in touch with mentors long after they graduate from UMass.

In addition, Jen took leadership on a research project focusing on the Treehouse Community, an intergenerational community in Easthampton, Massachusetts, committed to supporting families who are caring for children adopted from the public foster care system. Interviews she conducted with 21 elders, parents, youth, and staff are being analyzed to identify strengths and challenges of the program. These data will guide program leaders as they identify the distinctive needs of different community members, issues to be considered in broader program replication, and strategies for attracting external funding. Several articles based on this research are in progress.

Jen has also served as a key member of the Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America (REFCA) Design Team, which grew out of consultations with the Interactive Institute for Social Change in Boston. The charge of the Design Team is to create a road map and implementation plan for innovative activities in western Massachusetts and beyond. One key activity is the REFCA annual conference about how to best support youth who are in foster care. She is also working closely with Jane Lyons, executive director of Friends of Children (Hadley, Mass.), in an effort to support foster youth who are in higher education. Jen and Jane are spearheading a committee that is working with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families to best meet the needs of current and former foster youth who are enrolled in post-secondary institutions. Jen created a brochure for UMass students who have experienced foster care that lists contact people who can help address their needs in areas such as housing, financial aid, and academic advising.





# Communication and Dissemination

## Publications and Presentations

### PUBLICATIONS

**Dolan, J.** (2013). The view from here: Love is not enough. *The Adoption Constellation*, 11.

**Farr, R. H., Grant-Marsney, H. A., Musante, D. S., Grotevant, H. D., & Wrobel, G. M.** (2013). Adoptees' contact with birth relatives in emerging adulthood. *Journal of Adolescent Research*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1177/0743558413487588.

**Farr, R. H., & Goldberg, A. E.** (in press). Contact between birth and adoptive families during the first year post-placement: Perspectives of lesbian, gay, and heterosexual parents. *Adoption Quarterly*.

**Farr, R. H., & Patterson, C. J.** (2013). Coparenting among lesbian, gay, and heterosexual couples: Associations with adopted children's outcomes. *Child Development*, 84, 1226-1240. doi: 10.1111/cdev.12046.

**Farr, R. H., & Patterson, C. J.** (2013). Lesbian and gay adoptive parents and their children. In A. E. Goldberg & K. R. Allen (Eds.), *LGBT-parent families: Possibilities for new research and implications for practice* (pp. 39-55). New York: Springer Publications.

French, C., Henney, S., Ayers-Lopez, S., McRoy, R. G., & **Grotevant, H.D.** (in press). Birth mothers' perspectives on their relationship with the birth father 12 – 20 years after adoption. *Journal of Family Issues*. published in advance online Jan 28, 2013 doi: 10.1177/0192513X12472892.

**French, Q. Y. S.** (2013). Adoption as a contingency of self-worth: An integrative approach to self-esteem in adopted individuals. *Adoption Quarterly*, 16, 128-152, doi: 10.1080/10926755.2013.787574.

**French, Q. Y. S., Grotevant, H. D., & Dolan, J. H.** (2013). *The Adoption Mentoring Partnership*. Amherst, Mass.: Rudd Adoption Research Program, UMass Amherst. Available at: <http://www.psych.umass.edu/uploads/sites/56/Files/Adoption%20Mentoring%20Partnership%2001-23-2013.pdf>.



**Grotevant, H.D. & McDermott, J.M.** (in press). Adoption: Biological and social processes linked to adaptation. *Annual Reviews of Psychology*, 65. doi: 10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115020.

**Grotevant, H.D., McRoy, R.G., Wrobel, G.M., & Ayers-Lopez, S.** (2013). Contact between adoptive and birth families: Perspectives from the Minnesota Texas Adoption Research Project. *Child Development Perspectives*, 7, 193-198.

**McDermott, J.M.** Troller-Renfree, S., Vanderwert, R., Nelson, C., Zeanah, C., & Fox, N.A. (2013). Psychosocial deprivation, executive functions and the emergence of socio-emotional behavior problems. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 7, ArtID 167.

Nelson, C.A., Westerlund, A., **McDermott, J.M.**, Zeanah, C.H. & Fox, N.A. (2013). Emotion recognition following early psychosocial deprivation. *Developmental Psychopathology*, 25, 517-525.

Oudekerk, B. A., **Farr, R. H., & Reppucci, N. D.** (2013). Is it love or sexual abuse? Young adults' perceptions of statutory rape. *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 22, 858-877. doi: 10.1080/10538712.2013.830668.

Patterson, C. J., & **Farr, R. H.** (in press). Children of lesbian and gay parents: Reflections on the research-policy interface. In H. R. Schaffer & K. Durkin (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of developmental psychology in action*. London: Blackwell.

Wrobel, G. M., **Grotevant, H. D.**, Samek, D., & Von Korff, L. (2013). Adoptees' curiosity and information seeking about birth parents in emerging adulthood: Context, motivation, and behavior. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 37, 441-450. doi: 10.1177/0165025413486420.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

**Dolan, J.**, (May, 2013). *The Adoption Mentoring Partnership*. Paper presented at the fourth annual Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America conference, Holyoke, Mass.

**Farr, R. H.** (January, 2013). *Motivations to adopt among lesbian, gay, and heterosexual parents: Associations with coparenting and mental health*. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology. New Orleans, La. Also presented at the New Worlds Adoption Conference of the Rudd Adoption Research Program (April 2013). University of Massachusetts Amherst. Amherst, Mass.

**Farr, R. H.**(July, 2013). *The Contemporary Adoptive Families Project*. Paper presented as part of the “Lesbian or Gay Adoptive Parents and their Children” Symposium at the International Conference on Adoption Research (ICAR4). Bilbao, Spain.

**Farr, R. H.**(November, 2013). Discussant for Symposium, “Navigating Decisions about Marriage and the Family in a Heteronormative Context,” chaired by April Moyer, Clark University. Presented at the National Council for Family Relations (NCFR) Annual Conference. San Antonio, Tex.

**Farr, R. H., Flood, M. E., & Grotevant, H.D.** (August, 2013). *Adopted siblings’ transformations in birth family contact from adolescence to emerging adulthood*. Poster presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (Division 43: Family Psychology). Honolulu, Hawaii.

**Farr, R. H., Grant-Marsney, H. A., & Grotevant, H. D.** (April, 2013). *Adoptees in emerging adulthood: How do adoption communication and attachment to adoptive parents matter to birth family contact?* Poster presented at the Biennial Meetings of the Society for Research in Child Development. Seattle, Wash.

**Farr, R.H., & Grotevant, H.D.** (November, 2013). *The role of siblings in adoptees’ outcomes from adolescence to adulthood*. Poster accepted for presentation at the meeting of the National Council on Family Relations, San Antonio, Tex.

**Farr, R. H., Shaikh, S., Chess, C., & Grotevant, H.D.** (July, 2013). *Family representations among adult adoptees in romantic relationships*. Paper presented at the 4th International Conference on Adoption Research, Bilbao, Spain.

**Ferreira, J., Barbosa-Ducharne, M., Palacios, J., & Grotevant, H.D.** (July, 2013). *Identity construction in adolescent adoptees: What really matters?* Poster presented at the 4th International Conference on Adoption Research, Bilbao, Spain.

**Flood, M.E., & Farr, R.** (April, 2013). *How siblings and birth family contact affect mental health outcomes in adult adoptees*. Poster presented at the Massachusetts Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference, Amherst, Mass.

**Gale, T., & Grotevant, H.D.** (April, 2013). “*Adoption confirms that God is in my life’: Religious / spiritual commitment and adoptive identity in adolescents and young adults*”. Poster presented at the Massachusetts Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference, Amherst, Mass.

**Garber, K.J., & Grotevant, H.D.** (July, 2013). *An exploratory analysis of microaggressions experienced by adolescent adopted individuals*. Poster presented at the Fourth International Conference on Adoption Research, Bilbao, Spain. Also presented at the Fifth New Worlds of Adoption Conference: Contact between Adoptive and Birth Families: What Works? Amherst, Mass.

**Grant-Marsney, H., Grotevant, H.D., & Roth, C.** (July, 2013). *The strengths in adopted adolescents: Links with emerging adulthood*. Paper presented at the Fourth International Conference on Adoption Research, Bilbao, Spain.

**Grotevant, H.D.** (April, 2013). *Constructing relationships: Contact in domestic infant adoptions*. In Grotevant, H.D., Neil, E., & Baden, A. Plenary session presentation: Contact between adoptive and birth families: Diverse experiences, multiple perspectives. Fifth New Worlds of Adoption Conference: Contact between Adoptive and Birth Families: What Works? Amherst, Mass.

**Grotevant, H.D.** (May, 2013). *What adoption reveals about identity, and what identity reveals about adoption.* Keynote address presented at the meeting of the Society for Research on Identity Formation, St. Paul, Minn.

**Grotevant, H.D.** (July, 2013). *The Rudd Adoption Research Program.* Paper presented at the Fourth International Conference on Adoption Research, Bilbao, Spain.

**Grotevant, H.D.** (July, 2013). Discussant Comments. In R. Rosnati (symposium chair), *Ethnic identity, cultural socialization, and well-being of transracial adoptees.* Symposium presented at the Fourth International Conference on Adoption Research, Bilbao, Spain.

**Grotevant, H.D.** (October, 2013). *The Adoption Mentoring Partnership: Lessons learned for mentoring foster youth.* Keynote presentation at BNY Mellon Short Course on Mentoring Youth in the Foster Care System. Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring, University of Massachusetts Boston.

**Grotevant, H.D.,** McRoy, R.G., Ayers-Lopez, S., Wrobel, G., & Schwartz, A. (April, 2013). *The Minnesota Texas Adoption Research Project: Navigating Contact from childhood into young adulthood.* Fifth New Worlds of Adoption Conference: Contact between Adoptive and Birth Families: What Works? Amherst, Mass.

**Grotevant, H.D.,** McRoy, R.G., & Garber, K.J. (July, 2013). Technology: How is it changing the meaning of physical and psychological presence of birth parents to adopted young adults? In R. Lee & H.D. Grotevant (symposium co-chairs), *The physical and psychological presence of birth families.* Symposium presented at the Fourth International Conference on Adoption Research, Bilbao, Spain.

**Grotevant, H.D.** & Moss, R. (September, 2013). *The Adoption Mentoring Partnership.* Presentation at the "Making Engagement Work" Symposium, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Office of Engaged Learning.

**Grotevant, H.D.,** Moss, R., Dolan, J., & Nelson, J. (January, 2013). *The Adoption Mentoring Partnership.* Workshop presented at the National Mentoring Summit, Washington, DC.

**Grotevant, H.D.** & Neil, E. (July, 2013). *Open adoption: How can it help adopted children?* Invited address presented to the Conference of Adoption Professionals of Spain [Encuentro de profesionales de la adopción], Bilbao, Spain.

**Oakley, M. K., & Farr, R. H.** (May, 2013). *Gender, religious affiliation, and degree of outness among gay and lesbian parents.* Poster presented at the Annual Convention of the Association for Psychological Science. Washington, DC.

**Oakley, M. K., & Farr, R. H.** (November, 2013). *How attachment in adoptive couples affects parenting and child outcomes.* Poster presented at the National Council for Family Relations (NCFR) Annual Conference. San Antonio, Tex.

**Sherill, A., & Grotevant, H.D.** (April, 2013). Religiosity and civic engagement: Links to adjustment in young adult adoptees. Poster presented at the Post-baccalaureate Research Education Program Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst.



ICAR conference Bilbao, Spain  
l-r Rachel Farr, Holly Grant-Marsney, Hal Grotevant and Karin Garber.

## GUEST LECTURES AND INVITED PRESENTATIONS

**Farr, R. H.** (April, 2013). "Professional Development and Resources for Students and New Professionals." Invited presentation and facilitated workshop at the Annual Rudd Adoption Research Program Conference held at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

**Farr, R. H.** (April, 2013). "Doing Research on Adoption using Secondary Data: Strengths and Challenges." Invited presentation and discussant role for Dr. Sharon Vandivere's talk, "Nationally Representative Data on Openness in Adoption: 2007 National Survey of Adoptive Parents," at the Annual Rudd Adoption Research Program Conference held at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

**Farr, R. H.** (October, 2013). "Adoption by Lesbian and Gay Parents." Invited presentation for Psychology of Adoption course, Dr. Harold D. Grotevant, Instructor, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

**Farr, R. H.** (November, 2013). "Coparenting among Lesbian, Gay, and Heterosexual Adoptive Parents and Outcomes for their Children." Invited presentation and discussion for the ADRAP (Advancing Diversity in Research and Practice) undergraduate seminar, Dr. Lisa Harvey, Instructor, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

**Grotevant, H.D** (October, 2013). *Technology tips for academics*. Workshop presented for Clinical Psychology Professional Development Seminar, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

**Grotevant, H.D** (November, 2013). *Post-Adoption contact between adoptive and birth families: What matters for adjustment outcomes in adolescence and emerging adulthood?* Colloquium presented for the Social Psychology Colloquium Series, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

**Grotevant, H.D** (December, 2013). *Family research centers at the University of Minnesota and the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill*. Presented at the Strategic Planning Retreat for the UMass Amherst Center for Research on Families.

*Note: Rudd Program faculty, staff, and students are highlighted in bold.*



Danielle Godon and Patricia Ramsey, Mount Holyoke College

# Communication and Dissemination

Advancing Knowledge about the Psychology of Adoption



The Rudd Chair has a strong presence on the Internet, using the latest technology to inform and network with others. Here are just a few examples of current tech projects:



## YouTube Channel: The Rudd Adoption Research Program

The Rudd Adoption Research Program YouTube Channel disseminates videos from our prior conferences. Videos are available on demand, 24/7, at no cost to viewers. This fulfills an important part of the Rudd Program mission, of connecting adoption research with practitioners, policy makers, and the public.

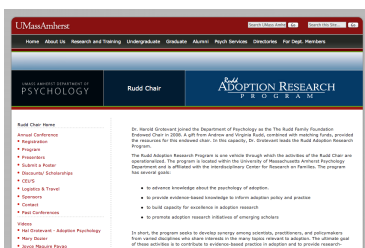
<http://www.youtube.com/user/RuddAdoption/videos>



## Facebook: Rudd Adoption Research Program

The Rudd Adoption Research Program Facebook page includes current news about the program as well as links to Internet news about adoption research, practice, and policy. Please visit, “like” us, and subscribe to our newsfeed.

<http://www.facebook.com/RuddAdoptionResearchProgram>



## Home Page: Rudd Chair

The Rudd Chair home page in the Department of Psychology contains up-to-date information about the activities of the chair, including news about current and past conferences as well as the program’s community partnerships.

<http://www.psych.umass.edu/ruddchair/>  
<http://www.psych.umass.edu/ruddchair/annualconference/>



## ScholarWorks

ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst is a digital repository for the research and scholarly output of members of the University of Massachusetts Amherst community, administered by the UMass Amherst Libraries. The Rudd Adoption Research Program has its own page, hosting information about its annual conference, doctoral dissertations, master’s theses, presentations, and publications.

<http://scholarworks.umass.edu/rudd/>

## Rudd Chair Teaching, Mentoring, and Service



***“I just wanted to thank you again for such a great semester. I am applying to master’s programs in special education for the fall and I am so thankful to have so much knowledge about children who face early adversity in development.”***

In fall 2013, Dr. Grotevant continued to offer the advanced undergraduate seminar that he created for UMass, The Psychology of Adoption (Psy 391AD). This term, students enrolled from UMass Amherst and Hampshire College. One guest speaker, back by popular demand, was Dr. Rachel Farr, who talked about the Contemporary Adoptive Families Study, her investigation of adoptive families headed by lesbian, gay, and heterosexual couples. Students were quite captivated to watch and discuss videos of parent-child interaction taken four years apart in this longitudinal study. We also consulted via Skype with Dr. Victor Groza, from the School of Social Work at Case Western Reserve University. Victor had recently been working in Romania and was able to provide current information on the orphanage and adoption situations there. Dr. Grotevant and Marla Allisan, JD (executive director of Full Circle Adoptions in Northampton) co-led an innovative session in which students applied their knowledge of adoption research and policy to the case of Baby Veronica, recently decided by the Supreme Court. In preparation, students read primary sources such as amicus briefs and the final Supreme Court ruling and made group presentations on different facets of the case. Further information about the course, including a copy of the syllabus, may be found at <http://psych.umass.edu/ruddchair/teaching/>.

Research mentoring of graduate and undergraduate students continued to comprise a significant part of Dr. Grotevant’s teaching activity. Three of Dr. Grotevant’s doctoral students in clinical psychology successfully applied for and began their clinical internships (Quade French at the University of California at Santa Cruz Counseling Center, Holly Grant-Marsney at the University of New Hampshire Counseling Center, Danila Musante at the Cambridge Health Alliance). Karin Garber successfully defended her master’s thesis. The adoption lab also includes two UMass clinical students whose primary advisor is Dr. David Scherer: Marykate Oakley (working on the Contemporary Adoptive Families Study) and Yesel Yoon (working on the Minnesota Texas Adoption Research Project). In addition to serving on several thesis and dissertation committees at UMass Amherst, Dr. Grotevant is also serving on a dissertation committee at Smith College. He also supervised senior psychology major Noelle Suntheimer in a community internship placement at Friends of Children, Hadley, Massachusetts.

In April 2013 two undergraduate seniors from the adoption lab presented their independent research projects at the Massachusetts Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference.

Margaux Flood: How siblings and birth family contact affect mental health outcomes in adult adoptees (also Commonwealth Honors College honors thesis).

Tobias Gale: “Adoption confirms that God is in my life”: Religious/spiritual commitment and adoptive identity in adolescents and young adults.

In addition, Ashley Sherrill, student in the Post-baccalaureate Research Education Program, presented her final research project: “Religiosity and civic engagement: Links to adjustment in young adult adoptees.”



## Service to the Profession and the University

During 2013, Dr. Grotevant provided service to a number of professional, community, governmental, and university organizations.

### Professional, Community, and Governmental Organizations

North American Council on Adoptable Children,  
Board of Directors  
St. John's University Adoption Initiative, Advisory Board  
Governor's Task Force on Adoption,  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Student Award Selection Committee, Society for  
Research on Identity Formation

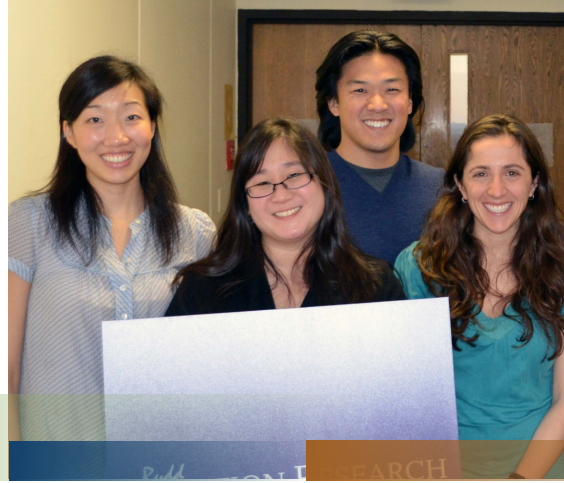
### Editorial Boards / Consulting Editor Positions:

Adoption and Fostering  
Adoption Quarterly  
Emerging Adulthood  
Family Process  
Identity: International Journal of Theory and Research  
Journal of Early Adolescence  
Journal of Family Psychology  
Journal of Research on Adolescence

### University Service:

Advisory Committee, Center for Research on Families,  
UMass Amherst  
Distinguished and Chaired Professors Committee,  
College of Natural Sciences  
Faculty and Staff Awards Committee,  
College of Natural Sciences  
Executive Committee, Department of Psychology  
Research Committee, Department of Psychology  
Search Committee for Associate / Full Professor in  
Developmental Science, Department of Psychology  
(Chair)  
Search Committee for Assistant Professor in  
Human Developmental Neuroscience, Department of  
Psychology  
Developmental Science Leadership Team,  
Department of Psychology  
Retreat Planning Committee  
Curriculum Committee  
Clinical Psychology Colloquium Series,  
Department of Psychology (Co-Chair)  
Clinical Psychology Program:  
Assisted with preparation of Self-Study for  
Accreditation by the American Psychological  
Association  
Assisted with preparation of Program's Application  
for Membership in the Academy of Psychological  
Clinical Science

## Rudd Program Personnel



### Faculty:

Harold D. Grotevant,  
Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology  
Jennifer M. McDermott,  
Assistant Professor, Developmental Psychology  
Rachel H. Farr,  
Research Assistant Professor of Psychology

### Staff:

Jen H. Dolan,  
Program Manager, Rudd Adoption Research Program  
Carla Williamson,  
Events Coordinator  
(with the Center for Research on Families)  
Brittney Smith, Intern  
Melissa Gately, intern

### Graduate Students:

Theresa Cain,  
Social Work, Smith College  
Quade French,  
Clinical Psychology  
Karin Garber,  
Clinical Psychology, Research Assistant;  
Adoption Mentoring Partnership Research Coordinator  
Holly Grant-Marsney,  
Clinical Psychology  
Danila Musante,  
Clinical Psychology  
Marykate Oakley,  
Clinical Psychology  
Yesel Yoon,  
Clinical Psychology

### Post-Baccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP):

Ashley Sherrill

### Undergraduate Students:

Kevin Chandler	Rebekah Kiely
Courtney Chess	Alex Krysko
Emily Crain (honors)	Jennifer Lin
Martha Cunningham (honors)	Kaitlyn McNamara
Calvin Downes	Amanda Moran
Jennifer Fagundes	Shoshana Moriarty
Margaux Flood (honors)	Melissa Pennica
Tobias Gale	Rebekah Simeone
Olivia Goldman	Rosana Urbaz

Note: The “honors” designation indicates that the student was completing an honors thesis or project relating to adoption under the direction of Dr. Grotevant and/or Dr. Farr.

### Adoption Mentoring Partnership Mentors:

Michael Abbate	Brandon Kinsey
Gabriela Bishop	Elizabeth Markee-Behrends
Samantha Calabrese	Olivia Nolan
Monica Carusi	Jasmine Offley
Tim Connor	Alexander Puchrik
Will DeVault-Weaver	Brian Shapiro
Alannah Driscoll-Sbar	Erin Shepard
Elena Faltas	Phoebe Taffel
Melissa Gately	
Ana Gremili	
Kristin Hanley	
Sarah Hurst	



## Rudd Program Partners and Collaborators



Visiting Scholar Richard Lee center with l - r Quade French, Karin Garber, Holly Grant-Marsney and Rachel Farr.

### University of Massachusetts Amherst

Department of Psychology  
Center for Research on Families  
College of Natural Sciences  
College of Social and Behavioral Sciences  
Office of Family Resources  
Office of Engaged Learning  
Ombuds Office  
Psychological Services Center  
Commonwealth Honors College

### Community Associates

Adoption Journeys  
Amherst Regional Public Schools  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County  
Boston College Graduate School of Social Work  
Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring, University of  
Massachusetts Boston

Clark University Department of Psychology  
Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute  
Friends of Children  
Massachusetts Department of Children and Families  
Mount Holyoke College  
Treehouse Community at Easthampton Meadow  
Treehouse Foundation

### Visiting Scholars, 2013

Christine Bachrach, University of Maryland  
Brian Barber, University of Tennessee, Knoxville  
Mary Beek, University of East Anglia, UK  
K.C. Haydon, Mount Holyoke College  
LivAnna Homstead, Fostering Change for Children,  
New York, NY  
Kay Johnson, Hampshire College  
Richard Lee, University of Minnesota  
Elsbeth Neil, University of East Anglia, UK  
Emma Ward, University of East Anglia, UK  
Gretchen Miller Wrobel



## Recognitions

Dr. Rachel Farr, research assistant professor of psychology housed in the Rudd Adoption Research Program, received two significant recognitions in 2013.

Dr. Farr received the 2013 Louise Kidder Early Career Award from the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. This award is given annually to recognize a social issues researcher who has made “substantial contributions to the field” within five years of graduating with a doctoral degree and who has demonstrated the “potential to continue such contributions.” According to the award letter, the recognition was conferred “in honor of your important work and your potential to continue such exemplary scholarly contributions in the future.” Further, it stated, “Your scholarly record is extremely impressive, your letters of support were quite strong, and your work addresses important social issues aligned with SPSSI’s mission.”

Dr. Farr also received the 2013 Outstanding Dissertation Award from the Society for Research in Child Development, the pre-eminent research organization in the field of developmental psychology. This biennial award is given for dissertations completed in the previous year that are “unusually noteworthy.”

Farr’s dissertation research, completed with her graduate advisor, Dr. Charlotte J. Patterson at the University of Virginia, was published in the journal *Child Development* in 2013. The dissertation focused on coparenting, or the ways in which two parents work together to care for their children, among a sample of lesbian, gay, and heterosexual couples with preschool-age children adopted at birth. The research revealed that adoptive lesbian and gay couples were more

likely than adoptive heterosexual couples to share parenting tasks evenly. Heterosexual couples, in contrast, were more likely to specialize; in other words, mothers did more childcare than did fathers.

The study next explored how couples’ coparenting dynamics were associated with children’s behavior problems. Actual divisions of labor were unrelated to children’s adjustment, but parental satisfaction with their arrangements was strongly associated with children’s adjustment. The best predictors of child behavior problems were observed competition between parents and dissatisfaction with division of childcare labor—neither of which differed by parental sexual orientation.

Overall, lesbian and gay couples were likely to share childcare tasks, whereas heterosexual couples were likely to specialize. These findings suggest the possibility that lesbian and gay couples are creating new ways to live together and rear children, outside of traditional gender roles. The findings contribute new information about how lesbian and gay adoptive couples divide childcare labor, as well as about how coparenting shapes child development in diverse family structures. The results are also important to adoption professionals who work with current and prospective adoptive parents.

## Advisory Board



### Amanda L. Baden, PhD

Amanda Baden is associate professor in the Department of Counseling and Educational Leadership at Montclair State University, New Jersey. Her research and clinical practice are focused on adoption triad members, transracial/international adoption issues, racial and cultural identity, and multicultural counseling competence. Dr. Baden co-created the Cultural-Racial Identity Model for transracial and international adoptees. She co-edited the *Handbook of Adoption: Implications for Researchers, Practitioners, and Families* (Sage, 2007) and serves on the editorial board for *Adoption Quarterly*. She also co-chairs the Biennial Adoption Initiative Conferences held at St. John's University, New York City. Dr. Baden was named an Angel in Adoption by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption and is a Senior Research Fellow of the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute.



### Dana E. Johnson, MD, PhD

Dana Johnson is a professor of pediatrics and member of the Divisions of Neonatology and Global Pediatrics at the University of Minnesota Medical School, where he co-founded the International Adoption Program in 1986. His research interests include the effects of early institutionalization on growth and development and the outcomes of internationally adopted children. Dr. Johnson is an invited speaker worldwide, a Senior Research Fellow in the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, serves on the editorial boards of *Adoption Quarterly* and *Adoptive Families Magazine* and has authored over 200 scholarly works. He received the Distinguished Service Award from Joint Council for International Children's Services, Friend of Children Award from the North American Council on Adoptable Children and the Harry Holt Award from Holt International. He serves on the boards of directors of Joint Council on International Children's Services, Half The Sky Foundation and SPOON Foundation.



### Femmie Juffer, PhD

Femmie Juffer is professor of adoption studies at the Centre for Child and Family Studies, Leiden University, the Netherlands. She was the first person to hold the Chair on Adoption Studies, which was established at Leiden University, Centre for Child and Family Studies, in 2000 by Wereldkinderen (Worldchildren), The Hague. Her research interests include international adoption and foster care, parental sensitivity and attachment in adoptive families, attachment-based interventions, adopted children's development, and child rearing in institutions. Dr. Juffer received the Casimir Award in 2005 for excellence in teaching in the Faculty of Social & Behavioral Sciences at Leiden University and the Piet Vroon Award in 2004 for research into practice. She is a member of the editorial board of *Adoption Quarterly*, *Adoptietijdschrift*, and *Mobiel, tijdschrift voor Pleegzorg*. She co-edited *Promoting Positive Parenting: An Attachment-Based Intervention* (Erlbaum, 2008) and co-directs the Adoption Meta-Analysis Project at Leiden University. She hosted the Third International Conference on Adoption Research in 2010.



### Ruth G. McRoy, PhD

Ruth G. McRoy is the Donahue and DiFelice Endowed Professor at the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work as well as research professor and the Ruby Lee Piester Centennial Professor Emerita at the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work. A practitioner, academician, researcher, trainer, and lecturer in the field for over 30 years, her work has focused on such topics as open adoptions, kinship care, adoptive family recruitment, minority recruitment, racial identity development, transracial adoptions, family preservation, adolescent pregnancy, African American families, family violence, disproportionality in child welfare, older child adoptions, and post-adoption services. Recent honors include the 2004 Flynn Prize for Social Work Research from the University of Southern California, the 2005 George Silcott Lifetime Achievement Award from the Black Administrators in Child Welfare, the 2006 Distinguished Achievement Award from the Society for Social Work and Research and the 2006-2007 University of Texas at Austin Graduate School's Outstanding Alumna Award. In 2010 she was selected as a fellow in the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare and also was named the recipient of the St. John's 2010 Outstanding Scholar in Adoption Award. Dr. McRoy also received the 2013 Adoption Excellence Award from the US Dept of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau.



### Cynthia Monahan, PsyD

Cynthia Monahan is the founding director of the Cutchins Children's Clinic in Northampton, Massachusetts. The mission of the clinic is to match the best trained and most experienced clinicians with the children and families most in need. Dr. Monahan received her PsyD from the University of Denver, and is the author of *Children and Trauma; a Parent's Guide to Helping Children Heal* (Jossey Bass, 1993). Dr. Monahan has lectured frequently on childhood trauma, models of intervention with parents of traumatized children, and child psychotherapy. She has taught at the Smith College School for Social Work and at the Antioch New England doctoral psychology program. Dr. Monahan has a long history of building multi-disciplinary teams to address the needs of abuse victims in western Massachusetts and is the child mental health consultant for the Northwest District Attorney's office.



### Elsbeth Neil, PhD

Elsbeth Neil is a senior lecturer in social work at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK. Dr. Neil has been undertaking research in the field of adoption for 17 years. She has conducted a longitudinal study, following young children placed for adoption and studying the impact of birth family contact on these children and their birth and adoptive parents. She recently began a follow up of this sample, the adopted young people now being in late adolescence/early adulthood. She has also recently completed two studies funded as part of the UK government's Adoption Research Initiative: the Helping Birth Families study has examined support services for birth relatives of children adopted from care, and the Supporting Direct Contact study has looked at how adoption agencies support face-to-face contact arrangements between adoptive children and their birth relatives. Both of these studies have recently been published by the British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF). She has also published a number of journal articles about her research and has edited two collections of adoption research (E. Neil and D. Howe, 2004, *Contact in Adoption and Permanent Foster Care* published by BAAF; and G. Wrobel and E. Neil, *International Advances in Adoption Research for Practice*, published by Wiley in 2009). In 2006 she organised and chaired the Second International Conference on Adoption Research, held at UEA.



### Melinda Novak, PhD

Melinda Novak is professor and chair of the Department of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and serves ex officio on the advisory board. She established the UMass Primate Laboratory, a small primate facility in which students receive training in handling and managing captive primates, performing behavioral and health assessments, and conducting research. Dr. Novak is head of the Behavioral Primatology Unit at the New England Primate Research Center at Harvard Medical School where she conducts her federally funded research on the causes of and treatment for abnormal behavior in primates. She regularly reviews primate facilities and provides advice and guidance on psychological well-being programs. Dr. Novak has over 100 publications related to behavioral development in rodents and primates. At the university, she is a past recipient of the College Outstanding Teacher Award, the Distinguished Faculty UMass Alumni Association Award, and a recent recipient of the Chancellor's Medal for Distinguished Faculty Lecturer, the highest honor bestowed on faculty for exemplary research and service contributions.



### Jesús Palacios, PhD

Jesús Palacios is professor of developmental psychology at the University of Seville, Spain. He has conducted research on both domestic and international adoption in Spain, especially focusing on issues of parent-child relationships and parenting stress. He has published numerous books and articles on foster care and adoption, including *Psychological Issues in Adoption: Research and Practice*, co-edited with David Brodzinsky (Praeger, 2005). He has also co-authored a preadoption training program for prospective adopters as well as a book for adoptive parents (*Adelante con la adopción [Ahead with Adoption]*). He consults regularly with governmental agencies about how to improve systems of foster care and adoption on behalf of children, and he has played a leadership role in connecting adoption researchers around the world. He hosted the successful Fourth International Conference on Adoption Research in Bilbao, Spain in 2013.



### Maureen Perry-Jenkins, PhD

Maureen Perry-Jenkins is professor of psychology and director of the Center for Research on Families at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her research focuses on the ways in which socio-cultural factors such as race, gender, and social class, shape the mental health and family relationships of employed parents and their children. Her current research involves a ten-year, longitudinal study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health that examines the transition to parenthood and transition back to paid employment for working-class, low wage couples and for African-American, Latino and European-American single mothers. The project examines how risk and resilience factors across these multiple life transitions affect new parents' well-being, relationship quality and the socio-emotional well-being of their children. She is the author of numerous articles and chapters published in *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *Journal of Family Psychology*, and *Family Relations*. She was a recipient of the University of Massachusetts Distinguished Outreach Research Award for her efforts to apply her research to policy as well as the Outstanding Teacher Award on the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Professor Perry-Jenkins was recently designated a Fellow of the National Council on Family Relations and completed a term on its board of directors.



### Sally Powers, EdD

Sally Powers is professor of psychology and neuroscience at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, director of the Center for Research on Families (until September 2013), and associate dean for research and faculty in the College of Natural Sciences. Dr. Powers's research investigates psychosocial risk factors (particularly adolescent and family-related social and behavioral stressors) and biological risk factors (endocrine dysregulation) that influence gender differences in the longitudinal course of depression and anxiety. Her research has been funded by NSF, NIMH, NICHD, and the William T. Grant Foundation, and is currently funded by the National Cancer Institute. At UMass, Dr. Powers has been awarded a Conti Faculty Fellowship for outstanding research, and the Chancellor's Medal for Distinguished Faculty Lecturer. She recently served as a member of the Committee on the Science of Family Research of the National Academies' Institute of Medicine.



### David Scherer, PhD

Dr. Scherer is a licensed psychologist and professor in the UMass Amherst Clinical Psychology Program. He earned his PhD in Clinical Psychology from the University of Virginia in 1989 and has been on the psychology faculty at UMass Amherst since 2005. Dr. Scherer's clinical and research work have focused on adolescents in the family context. In particular, he has worked on studies of how adolescents and parents make important medical decisions and innovative models of psychotherapy for adolescents. Dr. Scherer was trained as a structural family therapist and employs a family systems theoretical orientation in his clinical work with children, adolescents and their parents. In addition, he supervises clinical students wishing to gain expertise in working with children, adolescents, and families. He is also the proud parent of an adopted daughter who is now a teenager.



## Transformative Generosity

Andrew and Virginia Rudd established the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology with a generous gift in 2005. They are so enthusiastic about the progress that has been made to date that they want to inspire others to join them in raising the program to a new level of excellence. To that end, the Rudds have pledged another \$250,000 with the promise to match every contribution, dollar for dollar, to increase the endowment. Strong progress has been made toward this goal, but additional gifts are needed to complete the opportunity.

Gifts made to the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology support the priorities of the Rudd Adoption Research Program reflected in this report. Donations will build the endowment in order to support programs such as the annual conference, the Adoption Mentoring Partnership, Re-Envisioning Foster Care in America, adoption research training, graduate student and post-doctoral scholar stipends, and visiting scholars. For further information about this unique opportunity, please contact Jennifer Cooper, Director of Development, College of Natural Sciences. She may be contacted at (413) 545-2771 or at [jcooper@cns.umass.edu](mailto:jcooper@cns.umass.edu)

We greatly appreciate the support that the following generous individual donors and financial co-sponsors have made to the work of the Rudd Adoption Research Program. This support has been critical in helping us accomplish our goals.

Heather W. Ames	Nancy Keough
Justin K. Anderson	Salvatore Longo
Renee Moss Bachrach	Susan Lucier
Laurie Benoit	Renee MacGregor
Daniel and Lynn Blyth	Massachusetts Department
Boston College Graduate	of Children and Families
School of Social Work	Mark and Annette Matteson
Mary Brizzolara	Marybeth Nolan and
Kevin Chandler	Mehdi Javidan
Scott and Stephanie Chaplin	Linda Panetta
Donaldson Adoption	Jeanine Plumer
Institute	Charles Powers
Wesley J. Dunham	Patricia Ramsey and
Kathryn A. Eaker	Fred Mosely
Morgana Flaherty	Judith Rex
Sheila Frankel	Andrew and Virginia Rudd
Stewart Gabel and Joan	Efrain Segarra
Manheimer	Patricia Welsby
Janice A. Goldwater	Laura Wenk
Peter Gray-Mullen	Charra L. Wheeler
Harold and Susan Grotevant	Richard J. Wood
Janet Jackson	

## A New Transatlantic Partnership

The Andrew and Virginia Rudd Centre  
for Adoption Research and Practice  
University of Sussex, United Kingdom



Excited by the success of the Rudd Family Foundation Chair in Psychology at UMass Amherst, Andrew and Virginia Rudd have funded a new position at Andrew's undergraduate alma mater, the University of Sussex in the United Kingdom—the Andrew and Virginia Rudd Chair in Psychology.



The recently appointed chair, **Dr. Gordon Harold**, will serve as director of the new Andrew and Virginia Rudd Centre for Adoption Research and Practice at the University of Sussex. As stated on their website, <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adoption/>.

As founding director of the Centre, Professor Harold will lead a team of psychologists, social workers and education specialists at the University who will be looking at the many and profound ways through which early separation or trauma followed by adoption shapes the lives of all involved, and how adoptive families, and other families in transition, can best support these children.

Originally from Dublin, Professor Harold completed his undergraduate and graduate degrees at Iowa State University in the USA, achieving a BS in Psychology in 1991 and MS in Family Studies and Child Development in 1993. He received his PhD from Cardiff University (Wales) in 1998, and was on the faculty there until 2008. From 2008 to 2011, he was

the Alexander McMillan Chair, Professor of Psychology and Director of the Centre for Research on Children and Families at the University of Otago in New Zealand. From 2011 to 2013, until arriving at Sussex, he was professor of developmental psychopathology and quantitative behaviour genetics at the University of Leicester.

**We at UMass Amherst welcome Professor Harold to his new position and look forward to collaborative opportunities ahead!**



**US**  
University of Sussex



*Rudd*  
**ADOPTION RESEARCH**  
P R O G R A M

## Contact Information

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For information about supporting the Rudd Adoption Research Program, please contact Jennifer Cooper, Director of Development, College of Natural Sciences. She may be contacted at (413) 545-2771 or [jcooper@cns.umass.edu](mailto:jcooper@cns.umass.edu)