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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF Patricia Lee Hall for the Master of Science
in Psychology presented May 13, 1971.

Title: A Demographic Study of Transracial Adoptive Parents.

APPROVED BY MEMBERS OF THE THESIS COMMITTEE:

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Walter Klopfer, Chairman

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Robert Jones

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Roger Jennings

The objectives of this study were to replicate or modify findings of previous studies describing demographic characteristics of white parents adopting black children, and to test a set of hypothesis derived from these studies. These parents were compared to a randomly selected group of white parents adopting white children. Data were collected from records of one public and three private agencies in the state of Oregon. Subjects were parents receiving a child for adoptive placement in 1968. Among the results were the following: white parents who adopt black children had more education and higher status occupations. They did not differ in yearly income, age, number of previous marriages, duration of marriage, or likelihood of having previously adopted children. They were more likely to have natural children and larger families. They were more likely to have a non-Christian religious affiliation or no

religious affiliation, but, contrary to expectations, they were seen by the agency caseworkers as more involved in religious activity.

A DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY OF TRANSRACIAL ADOPTIVE PARENTS

by

PATRICIA LEE HALL

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE . .
in
PSYCHOLOGY

Portland State University
1971

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May 13, 1971

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. PURPOSE AND PREVALENCE OF ADOPTION

Adoption has been practiced since ancient times. One of the earliest known adoptions was that of Sargon, King of Babylonia, circa 2800 B.C. Egyptians, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans, Indians, and Chinese all practiced adoption. In early times, adoption served the needs of the parents. In many cases it was necessary to have a male heir to continue the family line and hold property. Sometimes having a large family enhanced one's chances of being elected to office. Most importantly, in some cultures, adoption was the key to heaven, whose gates opened only to those with sons (Kadushin, 1967).

Today adoption is considered primarily as a means for providing homes for children in need of them. Legislation and professional adoption standards seek to insure the protection of all involved--the natural parents, the adoptive parents, but first and foremost, the adoptive children. Developmental psychology has contributed a good deal of research to support the psychoanalytic notion that the earliest years of life are overwhelmingly significant in determining the later functioning of the adult. The importance of an early, close, continuing relationship with a caretaker-parent cannot be overemphasized. Although alternate methods of handling children throughout infancy and childhood have sometimes shown favorable outcomes, the method of choice still appears

to be the nuclear family, and the best possible solution for parentless children appears to be adoption.

Within our own country adoption first served the needs of parents, and only later evolved into an institution devoted to the needs of children. In Colonial America orphans were bound out as apprentices or bound servants, earning their way economically; sometimes at terrible costs to themselves. Early laws provided for little more than public recording of the legal ties, but around the turn of the century, legislation came to be increasingly designed to protect the children (Kadushin, 1967). Waiting periods have become a required part of the procedure in most states, and welfare departments have been directed to engage in investigational activities to determine the suitability of adoptive parents.

Agencies have come to participate in an increasing share of the responsibility for supervising selection and early adjustment. The advantages of agency placement have become more widely accepted by the public as shown by the rising proportion of adoptions arranged by agencies. In 1951, agency and independent adoptions were nearly equal in numbers, but in 1967, agencies arranged seventy-one percent of all adoptions (US H.E.W., 1969).

More children are being adopted each year. The Children's Bureau reports an increase from 91,000 in 1957 to 121,000 in 1962 to 142,000 in 1965, to 158,000 in 1967. Of the 158,000 children adopted in 1967, about 83,700 (53%) were adopted by relatives, and 74,300 (47%) by non-relatives (US H.E.W., 1959). Kadushin (1967) has pointed out that this rise in absolute numbers adopted is a function of rising

population, and that, in fact, the annual adoption rate per 10,000 children under twenty-one years of age remained quite constant at fourteen or fifteen, from 1951 through 1961.

II. CHANGING AGENCY POLICIES

The quality of homes selected for adoptive children, and the nature of the selection policies practiced by agencies, depend upon two factors. First is the conceptual set of the responsible persons. The shift in priority from needs of parents to needs of children to needs of both is an example of such a conceptual set. The second important factor is the economic fact of supply and demand. Brieland (1965) has briefly reviewed the historical developments in the field:

The earliest emphasis seemed to be on providing the ideal child. Late placement and psychological test results were used to make this possible. Then the emphasis was changed to selection of the nearly ideal applicants from a large supply. Now there are attempts to place children with all possible special problems and efforts to recruit adoptive parents, including those who are by no means ideal. (Quoted from page 62).

During early times, there were many children available, and children were an economic asset. Adoptive parents could afford to be selective, and adoptive agencies served these wishes. Children were held in institutional care, or less commonly, foster care, as long as was necessary to ascertain their suitability. Children with "problems", characteristics such as racial difference or physical or mental handicaps that diminished their capacity to meet parental needs, were declared "unadoptable" and consigned to entire childhoods as wards of the state.

As the second period of attitude change occurred, there were fewer healthy "uncomplicated" Caucasian infants than there were eager applicants. The task of the caseworkers then became sifting the best possible homes from the abundance. Standards for adoptive parents were very high, but also sometimes arbitrary, rigid, and restrictive. Many people who might have been fine parents were excluded from the adoptive experience because they did not conform to a narrow stereotype of ideal parenthood. Maas has composed a modal profile of successful adoptive couples, who, he said, "in each community were remarkably alike" (Maas, 1960). This couple were in their mid-thirties, with no medical problems except a clear infertility report. They had been married ten years, neither married before, both white, Protestant, belonging to and active in the same church. They were both high school graduates and had a modest but dependable income, and owned their own home. They were attached to family and thoroughly normal in behavior, if somewhat more controlled by principle than average. Adoption would provide them with a first child, resembling them as much as possible.

All this changed in the sixties, as adoption agencies noticed a change in the ratio of adoptive parent applicants to available children. Both groups have increased over the years, but the relative ratio has changed. This change was first documented by Lydia Hylton, of the Child Welfare League of America. Hylton sent questionnaires to 1244 agencies, nationwide, and received 672 replies. The findings of this study, and a similar follow-up study (Riday, 1969) revealed a relative decline in nonrelative agency adoptions and applications, compared to the rapidly rising number of children available. The ratio of applications

per 100 available children declined from 158 in 1958 to 129 in 1961, to 104 in 1967 (Hylton, 1965; Riday, 1969). The latest Child Welfare League study (Grow, 1970) suggests that the relative number of applicants to children is now beginning to increase again. This study has shown that for every 100 white children awaiting adoption there are 116 potential homes.

Two factors seem to be operating in this shift in trend. One is the increased incidence of illegitimate children being kept by their natural mothers, rather than being released for adoption. Second is the result of changing agency policies brought about by the pressure of the disadvantageous (to children) ratio.

Reduction in the relative number of applicants made necessary a reassessment of the selective process utilized by the agencies. The Hylton study compiled a list of changes undertaken by responding agencies:

Relaxation of, or more flexibility regarding, regulations pertaining to the age of the applicant.

A change in the amount of fee or method of payment.

Placement of children with couples who have other adopted children.

More flexibility regarding the number of years applicants have been married.

Flexibility in placing children with couples who have children of their own.

The use of homes in which the adoptive mother works, or accepting this after an "adjustment period".

More flexibility with regard to the "matching" of religion.

Entirely omitting or being more flexible with regard to proof of infertility. (Quoted from page 386)

The eligibility requirements of agencies were reviewed by the Child Welfare League of America in 1954, and updated by Brieland in 1969. These standards were reflected in the Child Welfare League

Standards for Adoption Service, published in 1959 and revised in 1969, which serves as the foundation for most agencies' policies, and as a guide for professional activities. Changes in the direction of greater flexibility are apparent when the two editions of these adoption standards are compared.

III. THE SPECIAL SITUATION OF BLACK CHILDREN

The relative scarcity of hopeful parents is much more crucial for non-white children, particularly those with any Negro racial component. In Riday's questionnaire survey, special attention was focused upon this aspect of the problem. These findings, based upon records from 1967, showed that for each available 100 white children there were slightly more than 100 applicants, while for each 100 available non-white children there were only 60 non-white applicants. The most recent Child Welfare League study (Grow, 1970) has shown that for each 100 non-white children awaiting adoption, there are only 39 prospective homes, compared to the 116 potential homes for every 100 white children. Non-white statistics include both black and other non-white groups, so the situation of black children is underestimated by these figures (see discussion below).

Previous studies have shown the attrition rate among black applicants to be very high (Fanshel, 1967). Recruitment campaigns have been largely designed around improving attitudes or disseminating information, which have not been the significant variables. The key considerations, outlined by Kadushin (1967) appear to be the insecure socioeconomic status of the Negro people, the lack of trust they have in the future,

the residue of unpleasant past experiences with agencies, and the unrealistic application of selection standards to blacks that are more appropriate for whites. Studies have shown Negro applicants to be older, more often divorced, with more working wives and less proven infertility (Fanshel, 1967; Woods, 1962). Secondly, even with these discouraging factors, non-whites, when financially able, already adopt at a higher rate than whites (Herzog, 1965). There simply are not enough potential non-white families to absorb the available non-white children.

This situation is especially crucial for Negro children. Survey data from 1968 shows that state and national statistics, which do not separate Negro from other non-white races, misrepresent the plight of the black child. Opportunity, a Portland, Oregon group, conducted a survey which they estimated to account for between 70 and 80 percent of placements of non-white children made in 1968. Of these placements surveyed, half were of black heritage and half from other non-white races. Since Negroes outnumber other non-white races by ten to one, it is the Negro child who is being omitted from the groups that comprise national statistics on non-white adoptions.

While the agency survey findings on unplaced Negro children are grim, it has been estimated (Isaac, 1965; Riday, 1967) that the Negro children officially available for adoption represent only a small proportion of those potentially available if homes could be found for them. Isaac has given an example to consider:

In Detroit, for example, it was reported in the Detroit News of February 23, 1964, that the 99 Negro children legally free for adoption were only a small proportion of those really needing adoptive homes. The court had over 1,500 children in temporary custody who could readily be

freed for adoption, but no agencies bothered to go through the necessary court procedures since there was no prospect of finding adoptive homes for them. A similar situation exists in large cities throughout the country. (Isaac, 1965, page 122).

Riday (1967) has reported that in 1967 there were only slightly more than one million non-white husband-wife families, age 25-44, with incomes of \$5000 or more, in the United States. With 176,000 non-white illegitimate births that year, each child had a ratio of only six possible non-white adoptive families potentially available, even if all these families had been eligible in other ways.

Recruitment plans, then, even when successful, simply encourage an increasing supply of children who tend to balance out the gains of the recorded pool of unplaced but legally free children.

It would seem therefore, that if homes are to be found for the 40,000 to 80,000 Negro children that the Children's Bureau estimates to be potentially available for adoption (Riday, 1969), agencies must look to white parents who will adopt Negro children.

IV. TRANSRACIAL ADOPTION OF BLACK CHILDREN BY WHITE PARENTS

Encouraged by the satisfactory adjustment of children of other minority races placed in white homes, agencies began placing black children in white homes beginning in 1958, with the Children's Service Centre of Montreal, Canada, leading the way. Their successes were an encouraging example, and in the early sixties placements of black children with white parents were made in several states by the Children's Home Society of California, the Boys and Girls Aid Society of Oregon, the

Chicago Child Care Society in Illinois, and others (Mitchell, 1969). As these early placements were accepted by communities, the agencies involved published the news of their experiences, encouraging others to make similar attempts. A survey of transracial adoption in 1968 and 1969, conducted by Opportunity (1970) showed that the majority of all known adoption agencies were placing black children with white parents. Opportunity estimated that by 1969, 1,500 children had been so placed, a figure comprizing a significant proportion of the adoptive placements of black children. In 1968, 733 children, or 23 percent of all adopted black children, were placed in white homes. In 1969 that figure jumped to 1,447 children--one third of all placements of black children. This represented an 81 percent increase in the number of black children placed with white families (Opportunity, 1969, 1970). While these changes represent important modification of trend and custom, it is only a beginning in terms of the actual proportion of children placed to children awaiting placement.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The newness of this area of transracial adoption has given rise to a good deal of interest in those parents who are willing to accept black children as family members. In earlier times such placements would not have been possible, due to agency restrictions that required the racial and physical matching of parent to child. Long held assumptions and policies are difficult to overcome. It has been the function of adoption research studies to dispel some of these cherished stereotypes, and thus to enable agencies to evolve more flexible policies which will better meet the needs of a wide variety of adults and children. One such study was that of Henry Maas (1959) whose careful examination of parents who adopt hard-to-place children produced a recommendation that agencies widen their concept of eligibility to take advantage of the greater tolerance within the adoptive parent population than that being utilized.

I. HISTORICAL TRENDS

Until just recently, black children were lumped with other hard-to-place children, and comparative studies simply examined characteristics of those parents accepting the children with any problems of any kind, whether racial, emotional, intellectual, social, or physical, comparing them to adopters of healthy white infants. The selection process for

both groups involved much more than the tolerance and interest of the applicants. To a large extent, agencies selected parents according to their own preconceived notions of what constituted eligibility for a particular child's potential parent. For example, as long as there was a surplus of applicants for healthy, Caucasian babies, a very homogeneous group of socially modal, conservative, well-established parents could be chosen by the agencies. An entirely different selection of requirements could be applied to the second group--those willing to "settle" for the child with problems. Age limits could be extended, income requirements relaxed, former marriages overlooked, infertility proof waived, and the adoption fee omitted.

The decisional autocracy of the agencies came to an end when the supply of children exceeded the supply of applicants in the early 1960's. Forced to either revise selection policies or deny children homes, the agencies made radical changes in the direction of greater flexibility. With so much greater acceptance of difference by agencies, the group composition came to be influenced far more by decisions of parents, and reflected much more accurately the kind of people who themselves wished to adopt various kinds of children, rather than solely the kinds of people the agencies thought should be matched to these children.

II. EARLY STUDIES

Early papers have attempted to describe adoptive parents as a group. An early paper by Leahy (1932) outlined a profile of adoptive parents generally, describing them as childless couples, older than natural parents having infants, who had experienced ten years of childless

marriage before adopting. They were very likely to be native Americans. This study utilized no comparison of subgroups.

Shapiro (1954) has compiled a list of parental characteristics, as they were determined by the selective influence of agency policies. Characteristics required by the agencies were physical and emotional health, marriage, financial stability, age below a maximum, minimum duration of marriage, religion, and infertility.

One of the earliest attempts to compare parents adopting infants with parents adopting older, handicapped, or minority race children was that done by Maas in 1959. In this cross-cultural study, case records were selected randomly from the chosen communities. The basis for choosing communities was not described. In this comparison, Maas found parents accepting older, complicated children more often from lower occupational status couples.

Shapiro (1957) has also studied children with "special needs", children with physical or emotional disabilities, children whose parents had such difficulties, and children of minority races. He has described the parents who adopt such children as having incomes under \$4,999 (70 percent), being divided in father's occupation, and being about forty percent college graduates.

In 1962, Kadushin described parents of "hard-to-place" children as lacking in eligibility. The most frequent deficiency with respect to agency standards was a tendency to be above forty years of age. Other problems included mixed-religion marriages, mixed-race marriages, history of divorce, other children in the home, or health problems. These findings were not statistically significant, but have nevertheless

been influential in picturing adoptive parents of children with eligibility problems as themselves having eligibility problems.

III. WHITE COUPLES WHO ADOPT BLACK CHILDREN

Pepper (1966) has reviewed a number of unpublished studies of parental characteristics of transracial adoptive parents. These studies that specifically focus upon adoption of black children, and several related studies, are summarized in Table I.

Studies that have separated the black children from other special groups have generally agreed that the socio-economic level of their adoptive parents is higher than other adoptive parents. It has been suggested that these families are more likely to have children. Reports do not agree on the relative age of this group. These parents are often described as humanitarian, but sometimes as being more involved in organized church activities and sometimes as being less involved in church.

TABLE I
STUDIES OF WHITE COUPLES ADOPTING BLACK CHILDREN

Study	Education	Income	Occupation	Age	Children	Religion
Speers 1962	higher	higher	higher	same		
Roskies 1963	above average	above average	above average		most	
Marmor 1964	well educated		professional		yes	active
Branham 1964	college trained		professors, teachers, managers, few laborers			
Sellers 1969	college trained				yes	lacking affiliation
Mitchell 1969	above				yes	strong, active
Falk 1970	above average socioeconomic level					religious, humanitarian
Priddy 1970			mostly professional			

Early studies that have combined heterogeneous groups or reported insignificant findings have been influential in creating a picture of parents who accept disadvantaged children as being themselves marginal people. Later reports, separating black children from other special children, have done much to change this stereotype of the "second rate parent for the second rate child". Unfortunately, few of these reports contain statistical tests of significance, and those that do have usually utilized mixed groups. Since the situation is so different for a black child, statistical studies devoted to this special group are urgently needed.

Agencies are vitally concerned with such reports, because they point the way to go to seek potential homes for children under their charge. Knowing the kinds of parents who have wanted black children in the past expedites the screening process for couples who apply, and also provides a base of general information useful in recruitment campaigns. Recruitment is a new thing, for agencies, but it is now becoming accepted as absolutely necessary if old myths about the difficulty of adoption and the impossibility of adopting transracially are to be exploded.

A second urgent need for such studies is related to the social desirability of assuming such a role in the face of early stereotypes. Potential parents may not wish to be identified with early descriptions of "marginal" parents who accept children with problems. The discovery that for many highly qualified couples transracial adoption is a first choice rather than a compromise can allow both agencies and prospective parents to abandon defensive postures.

This study was designed, therefore, first to clarify these issues

in dispute, and secondly to provide statistical evaluation of those contentions generally agreed upon, but reported in uncontrolled or informal studies.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

I. HYPOTHESES

The review of the literature brings a number of demographic characteristics of those white parents who adopt black children to our repeated attention. A number of previous studies have pointed up the differences between such parents and those who have adopted within their own racial group. The direction of these differences is not agreed upon from early to late studies, in the case of socioeconomic factors, or even within current writing, in the case of those factors related to family and religion. From these differences and controversies, the following hypotheses have been formed:

1. White parents who adopt black children will have more education than white parents who adopt white children.
2. White parents who adopt black children will have higher incomes than white parents adopting white children.
3. The white adoptive fathers of black children will hold higher status occupations than the white adoptive fathers of white children.
4. The white adoptive parents of black children will be younger than the white adoptive parents of white children.
5. White couples adopting black children will be more likely to have children, either adopted or natural, and they will have more children.

6. White couples adopting black children will be seen by the agencies' caseworkers as less involved in church activities than white adoptive parents of white children.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

To test these hypotheses, two samples of adoptive parents were selected. The first sample was composed of white couples who had adopted a child who was Negro, or who was part Negro. For the purposes of this study, mixed-race children were classified as black if they had any Negro component, without regard to other racial components. These parents comprised the transracial group. The comparison group consisted of Caucasian parents adopting Caucasian children. This group was designated as the control group. A couple was designated as an adoptive couple if an adoptive placement was made. The operational definitions of both groups included for use as subjects any single unmarried adoptive parents, since Oregon law and agency policy accepts such adoptive applicants if they are well qualified in other ways. However, no such adoptive placements were made within these groups in 1968.

III. SELECTION OF THE SAMPLES

In Oregon, adoption services are available from one public agency, the Child Welfare Commission, with branches in each county, and six private agencies: Albertina Kerr Homes, the Boys and Girls Air Society, Catholic Family Services, the Holt Adoption Agency, Jewish Family Services, and Waverly Children's Home. The Holt Agency specializes

in importing Asian children for placement in American families throughout the United States, and was not, therefore, involved in the kind of placements this study attempted to examine. Each of the other agencies was contacted, and in every case generous cooperation was extended.

During 1968, black children were placed with white parents by the Child Welfare Commission, Boys and Girls Aid Society, Catholic Family Services, and Waverly Children's Home. In order to obtain a large enough group for comparison, the entire group of white parent-black child placements was needed. The entire sample from the private agencies and nearly all from the public agencies were pooled to form a study group of 36 families. The control group was randomly selected by the participating agencies in proportions matching the composition of the transracial group.

IV. COLLECTION OF DATA

Confidentiality of adoptive files is protected by law in Oregon. It was necessary, therefore, to transfer the data of interest to tabulation sheets that contained no identifying information. This operation had to be performed by those persons employed by the agencies and having legal access to the files. Tabulation sheets were provided that allowed for recording the following information for each subject couple: education, income, occupation, age, religious preference, perceived religious involvement, previous marriages, duration of marriage, and other children within the family.

V. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Previous research has shown face-sheet data of this kind to be

highly reliable (Parten, 1950). In order to provide the maximum amount of descriptive information, data was converted into percent values in those instances in which it appeared to render the sample numbers more meaningful. In order to test for statistical differences between groups, data were categorized and tested by means of Chi square. Within the limits imposed by statistical analysis requirements, data were grouped to provide maximum differentiation and usefulness. Wherever possible, categories were established beforehand using long-established guidelines, such as the Bureau of Census categories, as a model, and these categories were then combined as demanded by the numerical nature of the statistical analysis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

I. EDUCATION

Both groups had achieved educational levels above the national median of 12.2 years (Statistical abstracts, 1970). Nationally, 44.3 percent of white adults fail to achieve four years of high school, and only 11.2 percent achieve four or more years of college. None of the transracial group failed to complete four years of high school, and only seven, or 9.7 percent of the control group had less than that much education. The transracial group contained forty-four parents with a college degree or more, and the control group contained twenty-two (61.2 percent and 30.6 percent respectively). In the transracial group the average years education for mothers was 14.9; for fathers it was 16.5. The control parents average 13.4 years education for mothers and 14.0 years for the fathers.

Educational categories of both groups are shown in Table II. While both groups are accomplished, there is a difference between groups, statistically significant at the 0.01 level, in the direction predicted by the hypothesis. The parents adopting black children had more education than those adopting white children.

TABLE II
EDUCATION OF ADOPTIVE PARENTS

Education	Transracial		Control		Total
	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	
Less than high school	0	0	4	3	7
Completed high school	8	5	12	6	31
Some college or job training	11	4	13	12	40
College degree	13	8	5	8	34
Graduate study	4	19	2	7	32
Total	36	36	36	36	144

($X^2 = 15.30$ d.f. = 4 $p < .01$ mothers and fathers pooled for analysis)

II. FATHERS' OCCUPATIONS

All the participating agencies accepted families from all employment levels as adoptive parents. Both samples contained fathers in blue collar jobs as well as post-graduate level professionals. However, the proportion of occupational representation was strikingly different. In the transracial group there were more than twice as many professional people as there were blue and white collar workers, with twenty-four professionals, six white collar workers, and four blue collar workers. In the control groups this relationship was reversed, with eleven blue collar workers, sixteen white collar workers, and only seven professionals. The occupations of both groups are listed in Table III. These differences are statistically significant at the 0.001 level.

TABLE III
OCCUPATIONS OF ADOPTIVE FATHERS

Occupation	Transracial	Control	Total
1. Blue collar group			
Unskilled labor	2	1	3
Skilled, manual	2	10	12
2. White collar group			
Clerical, sales, technicians	4	8	12
Administrative small business owners	2	8	10
3. Managerial and professional group			
Business managers	0	1	1
Higher executives	0	0	0
Professionals at bachelor's level	8	4	12
Professionals at post-graduate level	16	2	18
4. Unclassified group			
Students	1	1	2
Unknown	1	1	2
Total	36	36	72

($\chi^2 = 19.44$ d.f. = 2 $p < 0.001$)

The fathers' occupational choices appeared to reflect very divergent interests. Whereas fifty-three percent of the control group chose jobs of a commercial nature, ranging from salesmanship to bankexamining, only eight percent of the transracial fathers did so. The majority of these fathers, seventy percent, chose work in academic, scientific, religious, aesthetic, or social areas. The most frequently mentioned occupation among the control group was that of salesman (mentioned by four fathers); the most frequent occupations of the transracial group were teaching (seven) and ministry (six).

III. MOTHERS' OCCUPATIONS

The majority of both groups of mothers were identified as full-time housewives. Thirty-nine percent of the transracial adoptive mothers worked. The most frequent job was that of teaching or assisting teaching. Other mothers were nurses or secretaries or a variety of other things. The differences in occupations between groups were not statistically significant. They are shown in Table IV.

TABLE IV
ADOPTIVE MOTHERS' OCCUPATIONS

Occupation	Transracial	Control	Total
Housewives	26	22	48
Other jobs	10	14	24
Total	36	36	72

($\chi^2 = 1.0$ d.f. = 1 not significant)

IV. FAMILY INCOME

The transracial group reported an annual family income of \$9850.00. The reported annual income of the control families was \$11,213.77. The average reported annual income of all families was \$10,213.17. This can be compared to the Editor's and Publisher's Market Guide estimated income per Oregon household of \$10,422 in 1968. Table V shows the income categories of both groups. The differences are opposite in direction from that predicted, but there is no significant tendency for either group to have more members above or below the group mean. Table VI shows this comparison.

TABLE V

ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME OF ADOPTIVE PARENTS

Income	Transracial	Control	Total
Under \$6000	2	2	4
\$6000-\$9000	15	9	24
\$9001-\$12000	15	10	25
\$12001-\$15000	2	11	13
Over \$15000	2	3	5
No data	0	1	1
Total	36	36	72

TABLE VI

FAMILY INCOME COMPARED TO COMBINED SAMPLE MEAN

Income	Transracial	Control	Total
Below mean	20	17	37
Above mean	16	18	34
Total	36	36	72

$\chi^2 = .36$ d.f. = 1 (not significant)

V. AGE OF ADOPTIVE PARENTS

The age of mothers in the transracial group ranged from twenty-one to fifty, with a mean age of 31.3 years. The fathers in the transracial group ranged from twenty-two to fifty with a mean age of 33.4 years. In the control group, the mother's ages ranged from twenty-four to forty-four with a mean age of 29.5. The father's ages ranged from twenty-three to fifty with a mean age of 32.1. The age ranges of these groups are represented in Table VII. The differences between groups were not significant. The ages of group members, relative to the group mean, are compared in Table VIII.

VI. PREVIOUS MARRIAGE

Twenty-nine couples in the transracial group and thirty couples in the control group had not experienced a previous marriage for either partner. In seven of the transracial families and six of the control families, one or both marital partners had been married to another person

prior to this marriage. This represents no statistical difference between groups.

TABLE VII

AGE OF ADOPTIVE PARENTS

Age	Transracial:		Control:		Total Parents
	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	
21-15	4	1	8	4	17
26-30	18	16	17	13	64
31-35	6	9	8	9	32
36-40	3	4	0	6	13
41-45	4	2	3	1	12
46-50	1	4	0	1	6
Total	36	36	36	36	72

TABLE VIII

AGES OF ADOPTIVE PARENTS COMPARED TO COMBINED GROUP MEAN OF 31.5

Age	Transracial	Control	Total
Less than 31.5	44	46	90
More than 31.5	28	26	54
Total	72	72	144

($\chi^2 = .12$ d.f. = 1 not significant)

VII. DURATION OF PRESENT MARRIAGE

Couples in the transracial group had been married from one to twenty-three years; couples in the control group had been married from under one year to nineteen years. Table IX shows the division of couples into newly wed and long married. There was no statistical difference between groups.

TABLE IX

NUMBER OF YEARS ADOPTIVE COUPLE MARRIED

Years married	Transracial	Control	Total
Five or less	10	10	20
5 - 9.5	16	15	31
Ten or more	10	11	21
Total	36	36	72

VIII. CHILDREN IN THE HOME PRIOR TO PLACEMENT

The majority of families in both groups had children prior to this placement. Only 16.5 percent of the transracial group and 36 percent of the control group were childless at the time they received this child. The transracial group tended to have larger families, with an average of 2.25 children compared to the control groups' average of 0.92 children. Average family size nationally was 3.19 in 1969 (Bureau of Census, 1970). The respective family sizes are shown in Table X.

TABLE X

NUMBER OF CHILDREN PRIOR TO 1968 PLACEMENT

Number	Transracial	Control	Total
0	6	13	19
1	9	19	28
2	6	1	7
3	7	2	9
4	4	0	4
5	3	0	3
6	0	1	1
7	0	0	0
8	1	0	1

Adopted children were present in twenty-two percent of the trans-racial families, as compared to thirty percent of the control families. This comparison is shown in Table XI.

TABLE XI

PRESENCE OF ADOPTED CHILDREN PRIOR TO PLACEMENT

	Transracial	Control	Total
Present	8	11	19
Absent	28	25	53
Total	36	36	72

($\chi^2 = .64$ d.f. = 1 not significant)

The difference in families' likelihood to have natural children was highly significant. Natural children were present in 72 percent of the transracial group, but in only 36 percent of the control group. This comparison is shown in Table XII.

TABLE XII
PRESENCE OF NATURAL CHILDREN PRIOR TO PLACEMENT

	Transracial	Control	Total
Present	26	13	39
Absent	10	23	33
Total	36	36	72

($X^2 = 9.46$ d.f. = 1 $p < .01$)

IX. RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

The religious affiliations of the adoptive parents are listed in Table XIII. The control parents were all either Protestant (91.7 percent) or Catholic (8.3 percent). The transracial group contained 58.8 percent Protestants, 9.7 percent Catholics, 1.4 percent Jews, 19.4 percent from other religions, and 11.1 percent had no religion. The homogeneity of Christianity among the control group was striking, as was the lack of such a tendency among the transracial group, who contained 32 percent parents from non-Christian religions or no religion. This comparison is illustrated in Table XIV and is highly significant.

TABLE XIII
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF ADOPTIVE PARENTS

Religion	Transracial parents		Control parents		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Protestant	42	58.5	66	91.7	108
Catholic	7	9.7	6	8.3	13
Jewish	1	1.4	0	0	1
Other*	14	19.4	0	0	14
None	8	11.1	0	0	8
Total	72	100.0	72	100.0	144

* 2 Ba'h'ai; 12 Unitarian

TABLE XIV
CHRISTIAN AND NON CHRISTIAN AFFILIATION OF ADOPTIVE PARENTS

Affiliation	Transracial	Control	Total
Christian (Catholic, Protestant)	49	72	121
Jews, Unitarians, Ba'h'ai, Nonbelievers	23	0	23
Total	72	72	144

($\chi^2 = 69.48$ d.f. = 1 $p < .001$)

X. PERCEIVED RELIGIOUS INVOLVEMENT

Four of the five participating agencies rated the couples on a four point scale of religious involvement. The results of that rating are shown in Table XV. The groups were rated significantly differently.

with the transracial adoptive group seen more often as attending church regularly and perhaps being involved in extra participation, and the control groups seen more often as having no affiliation or only nominal church membership.

TABLE IX
CASEWORKER'S ESTIMATE OF COUPLES' RELIGIOUS INVOLVEMENT

Estimate	Transracial	Control	Total
Not affiliated with a church	4	9	13
Nominal membership	1	9	10
Membership, regular attendance	10	2	12
Membership, regular attendance, and extra participation	9	4	13
Total	24	24	48

($\chi^2 = 15.38$ d.f. = 3 $p < .01$)

XI. CHILDREN PLACED IN ADOPTIVE HOMES

Since two placements in the control group were double placements of siblings, the total number of children was 74. Only eight of these seventy-four had any reported physical, emotional, or social problems in their records. One child had been premature. One had flat feet. Another had had a hernia corrected by surgery which was no longer a problem. One child was himself uncomplicated, but had had an under-achieving natural mother. Another had only a small orthopedic problem.

In only three cases did the children appear to have serious problems at the time of placement. In one case, the child, age two, had had serious physical problems. He had had corrective surgery, but was left with some physical handicaps. The other two children were eight and nine years old siblings who were reported to have many social, academic, and behavioral problems.

All the other children placed were healthy, normal and usually young. Eighty-seven percent of the Caucasian children (thirty-three) were under one year of age, and of these twenty eight, or seventy-three percent were two months or younger. The Negro children were somewhat older. Eight of them (22.2 percent) were two months or younger; twenty-four of them (66.7 percent) were no more than two years old, and twelve (33.2 percent) were over two, which is considered old age for adoptive children. Children placed by age and agency are shown in Table XVI.

Exactly half (eighteen) of the Negro children were female, and half were male. In the control group of Caucasian children, there were seventeen males and twenty-one females; 45 percent and 55 percent respectively.

XII. CHILDREN AWAITING ADOPTION

Data on unadopted children were available from the private agencies, but not from the public agency. Information was obtained on thirty-two children, whose characteristics are summarized in Table XVII. Children with physical or developmental problems made up 40.6 percent of this group and the remaining 59.4 percent were normal children with no barriers

TABLE XVI
CHILDREN PLACED FOR ADOPTION IN 1968
BY AGE, AGENCY, AND RACIAL GROUP

Group	2 months or less	2-12 months	12-24 months	older than 24 months	Total
<u>Control Sample</u>					
Waverly Home	9	0	0	0	9
Boys & Girls Aid	11	0	1	0	12
Catholic Services	1	0	0	0	1
Welfare Comm.	7	5	0	4	16
Total	28	5	1	4	38
<u>Transracial group</u>					
Waverly Home	3	3	0	3	9
Boys & Girls Aid	4	5	3	0	12
Catholic Services	0	1	0	0	1
Welfare Comm.	1	7	2	4	14
Total	8	16	5	7	36

to placement other than age or race.

The largest single group of unplaced children are normal, healthy children of Negro or part-Negro racial stock. However, the absolute number of such children is small, only ten, as compared to seven normal Caucasian children who were also awaiting adoption. No direct information was available as to how long the children had awaited homes. A sharp difference is suggested, however, by the ages of the children comprising

TABLE XVII

CHILDREN AWAITING ADOPTION IN PRIVATE AGENCIES, DEC. 31, 1968

Children's Status	N	Percent
<u>Children with problems</u>		
Physical problems	7	21.8
Brain damage	1	3.1
Prematurity	2	6.2
Slow development	2	6.2
Mental retardation	1	3.1
Total	13	40.6
<u>Normal Children, by race</u>		
Normal Caucasian	7	21.8
Normal Negro	10	31.3
Normal, other race	2	6.2
Total	19	59.4
Grand Total	32	100.0

the respective groups. The Caucasian children averaged fifteen days of age and none was more than thirty days old. The Negro children averaged 21.25 months, and none was less than thirty days old.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

I. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Education. The unusually high level of educational achievement attained by the transracial group suggests several things. First, intellectual training and liberal social views have long been known to be correlated. A personal commitment to evaluate people on personal merits rather than by racial stereotype may well be the result of ample education. Secondly, college campuses are often areas where interaction between members of different races occurs with great frequency. Inter-mingling as equals and working together for a common cause is much more likely within the college experience than it is within ordinary community life. Thirdly, those Negro people collected on college campuses are very often drawn from the middle classes, and may, therefore, be expected to have many more characteristics, values, and interests in common with the white students who later came to make up our study group. With such training and personal experiences, we might expect well educated people to have more accepting and positive attitudes toward black children.

Income. The findings of this study differ from those of previous studies. The transracial group had neither more nor less income than the control group or than the Oregon population. A more important question might have involved the stability and security of income, as opposed to the actual size. This question was not asked in the present

study, and deserves further investigation in future research.

Occupation. A two-thirds majority of transracial fathers were professional men, a finding supporting the observations of previous studies (Marmer, 1964; Branham, 1964; Roskies, 1963). This may be part of a general set of intercorrelated interests: liberal racial views, disinterest in money for its own sake, humanitarian values, and academic interests. On the other hand, it is possible that, having attained prestige and status by way of professional position, these families feel secure enough to risk more social pressures and far less likely to encounter them.

Age. The finding of no difference in age contradicts both the early literature that found transracial adoptive parents older and more recent statements that they are younger. On the one hand there is a widely held notion that youth is more concerned with racial injustice, and on the other the finding that transracial adoptive parents already have larger families, which takes time.

Other Children. These findings support the contention that transracial adoptive parents are more likely to already have fulfilled the human desire to reproduce oneself. This theory, the "room-for-one-more" hypothesis, has been supported before (Pepper, 1966) in the sense that transracial adoptive parents do tend to have more natural children. The fact that, within these groups, there was not a tendency to have more adoptive children, but there was a significant tendency to have more natural children, does seem to suggest that adopting black children may be more likely for those who have already fulfilled their desire for a child of their own. Transracial adoption appears superficially

to be altruistic, but actually the motives seem to be dual.

A second idea may be important. Parenthood is an unknown area to most prospective parents, whatever route they may choose to accomplish it. Perhaps the confidence gained from success in coping with one's own children gives seasoned parents more courage to tackle a kind of parenthood complicated by both adoption and a racial difference.

Religion. This study points to a conclusively higher involvement in religious activity among the transracial group. It would seem very likely that we can safely infer a religious motive operating to shape the decisions of these couples to adopt transracially. However, the high portion of couples from churches of a non-traditional character, and the relatively high number of couples who claimed no religion suggest that the relevant variable is likely to be more philosophic than doctrinal. Other studies have suggested a humanitarian value system operates in these decisions, and the findings from this study could be interpreted to support that contention.

II. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Historical Limitations. This area is changing at a very rapid pace. Findings from 1968 are already becoming history rather than current events. In periods of rapid transition, it is essential to update studies of this kind frequently, and generalize from recent studies with caution.

Geographic Limitations. The present study presents a comprehensive view of transracial adoption of black children in 1968 in Oregon. Eight percent of black children placed in white homes that year were placed in this state (Opportunity, 1969). Cautious generalization to the

country as a whole appears to be justified, in view of the extent to which this study confirms findings from Canada, Chicago, California and other regions.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In order to keep abreast of rapidly changing events, and to widen the area of confident application, it is recommended that this kind of demographic study be carried out in other regions in the future.

This study has raised a number of pertinent questions. To what extent do certain socioeconomic assets represent an enhanced capacity to maintain stability in economic resources and assure continued social support? These questions need further study so that the important underlying factors can be identified. Clearer understanding of these factors is essential if more efficient recruitment and applicant screening is to take place.

Lastly, we are only now reaching a time when enough placements of black children in white homes have been made, and the children have had time enough living in their new homes, to make any evaluation of outcome. Past studies have shown demographic factors to be very important in selection, and much less important in adoptive outcome. These studies need replication with this particular subgroup. After all, the story has only begun with the placement of a child. He and his new family have a whole childhood ahead to share.

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