

ADOPTION

THESIS

In the last twenty years, adoption has become a more normal part of life in American society. Through its evolution, there has been a lot of controversy over International adoption, same sex adoption, and the various methods used to adopt children and to find adoptive parents.

METHODS OF ADOPTION

- Public Agencies: They exist solely to place orphaned children in new homes, and run background checks on potential adoptive parents (Phelps, 2004, 122-132)
- Independent Placement: Also known as private adoption. The birth parents seek out and select the new parents themselves. These new parents normally get their child days after birth (*World of Health*, 2007)

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION

- Has sparked a lot of controversy, especially through the thought that children should be raised by someone of their own race. (Brodzinsky, 2002, 12)
- Other people believe that although parents are looking to help the children, by all appearances it is child trafficking, where the children are sold. (Voigt, 2012)
- The United States as a nation has become more accustomed to international adoption, and has passed laws to make it more manageable, such as the Child Citizenship Act in 2000, granting adopted children automatic citizenship. (*A Timeline of Adoption*, 2012)

SAME SEX ADOPTION

- Arguably the most controversial aspect of adoption
- Some people believe that the child would have a better chance at life in a “Normal” family. (*National Review*, 2013)
- However, others realize there is no alternative to get children for these couples.
- Same Sex Adoption numbers have risen greatly in the last 10 years, especially in the Southern states (*A Timeline of Adoption*, 2012)
- In 2011, Florida declares a law unconstitutional that previously made same sex adoption illegal. (*A Timeline of Adoption*, 2012)

IMPACT ON THE US AND ON THE WORLD

- Has provided millions of children with homes from across the world, especially in places like China. (Moe, 2011)
- Has provided the illusion that adoption is disrupting the international market, by taking children out of their countries where they could have helped and made a difference. (Voigt, 2012)

WHO IS INFLUENCED?

- There are a wide variety of people who are influenced, including Infertile couples, Same sex couples, Drug addicted parents who are required to give up their children, and most importantly the orphaned children who need new homes. (Moe, 2011)

FUNCTIONALIST PERSPECTIVE

The functionalist perspective sees adoption as a beneficial thing to society. It helps prevent overcrowding in some areas of the world by moving children to other areas, and it gives children a healthy place to grow up and become a contributing member of society.

CONFLICT PERSPECTIVE

Adoption is seen as a bad thing, and shows the powerful imposing control on the weak. The court, in one case, can impose control over parents by removing the kids from their care and placing them up for adoption. In that case, the birth parents have no choice in the matter

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONIST PERSPECTIVE

Children who have been adopted have the opportunity to socialize in different environments than would have been available to them. They can interact with their adopted family, and learn about and be more accepting of different cultures if they were part of an international adoption.

WHY IS IT SIGNIFICANT TODAY?

Provides millions of children with homes that otherwise would have been trying to make their way through the foster care system.

(Moe, 2011)

- Laws are changing, especially in the last few years, to make adoption more accessible in international adoption and same sex adoption. (*A Timeline of Adoption*, 2012)

WHY DID I SELECT THE TOPIC?

I selected this topic because I take part in National Adoption Day at the courthouse every year. Each time I go, I see children of all ages getting adopted, some as young as 6 weeks old and others as old as 16 years. I also hear some of the stories about adoptions, and how these kids have been removed from the custody of their parents because of drug and alcohol problems, as well as in some cases abuse.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Is anyone here adopted?
- Do you think International Adoption is helpful or harmful?
- What about Same Sex Adoption?