

The top-left portion of the page features a complex, abstract graphic composed of several thin, black, overlapping lines. These lines form a series of irregular, interconnected shapes that resemble a stylized, fragmented map or a network of paths. The lines vary in orientation, creating a sense of movement and complexity.

**TRANSRACIAL ADOPTION: CULTURAL
PEDAGOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL
WORK**

Tianna Smith

OVERVIEW

Study

Literature Review

Methodology

Findings

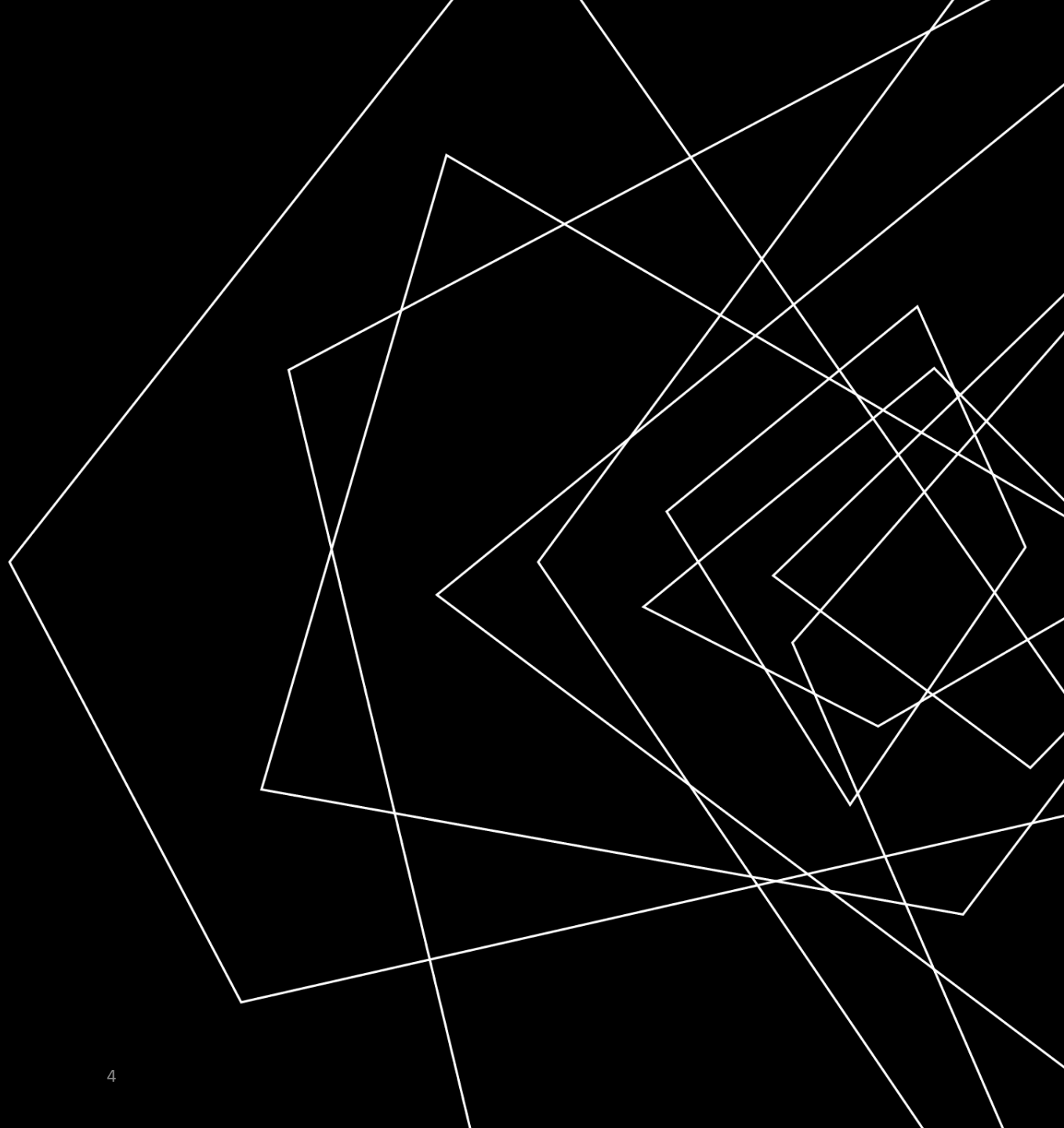
Conclusion

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of Dr. Linda Reeser and Professor Leticia Pittman.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my parents, who have supported me throughout these hard years of college.



STUDY

Through a mixed-methods survey of a convenience sample of social workers' attitudes, this paper investigates foster care and adoption social workers' attitudes toward the process of transracial adoption.

Survey responses were analyzed using groups made up entirely of foster care and adoption social workers.

The findings of this study support previous research on social workers' attitudes toward transracial adoption and difficulties they face in finding a family with different cultural backgrounds.

STUDY CONT.

This topic is being studied to increase awareness among social workers doing foster care and adoptions about the issues, possibilities, and challenges of the process of transracial adoption. One would expect social workers to engage with the prospective adoptive family to determine their willingness and capacity to adopt transracial children.

Transracial adoption is quite visible and controversial about which ways are correct for a child to be placed permanently.

Being a transracial adoptee myself, I had the curiosity to know what the process was like and if racial and cultural identity were being acknowledged and respected in some way during that process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Contrary to the large volume of research and information found regarding foster care, there is generally an absence of information and little knowledge development about transracial adoption.

In a 2019 literature review on adoption matching in a child welfare context, it is found that “of the literature that has been written, a significant portion is on international transcultural adoptions or studies where domestic adoptions are not separated from international ones. The lack of information on the growing numbers of transracial adoptions is a most concerning point for practitioners seeking more evidence-informed approaches in adoption in a child welfare arena” (Dubov et al., 2019).

7

LITERATURE CONT.

In the very recent case of baby O, it is at the center of a lawsuit because Baby O is of Native American heritage and thus a case that falls under the ICWA.

In this act there is a provision that Native American children must be placed with a family that has Native American heritage, whether its biological or not. A Caucasian family raised the child from birth as foster parents and then fought to adopt the child.

A conflict ensued between the Native American tribe that the child was a member of over the suitability of a biological parent or a family member of that tribe and the Caucasian family that assumed they were the best match for that child. The family went to court and the judge allowed them to adopt the child.

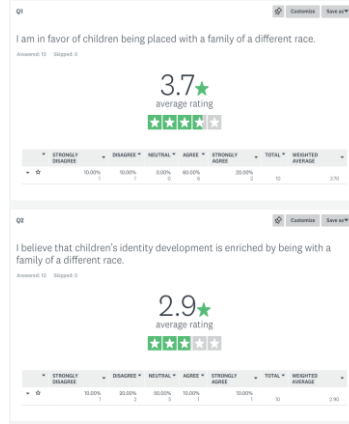
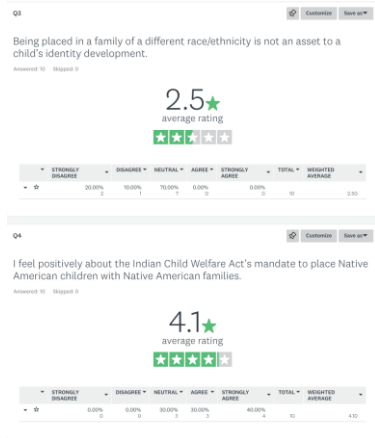
“National child welfare organizations say that ICWA has become a “gold standard” and represents the “best practices” of child welfare policy. Because of this, state child welfare policies have begun to look more and more like ICWA” (Nagle, 2022). However, there is a class action lawsuit that this family has joined, being presented to the court that has the intent of overturning the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) as a race-based act that discriminates against white foster parents. This supreme court decision has implications for state and agency policies that indicate preference for matching based on race or ethnicity.

METHODOLOGY

I created a survey study with an audience made up of social workers from foster care and adoption organizations.

I used a survey as a method of gathering data to find out about the attitudes and beliefs of social workers who work with and place transracial children who are seeking adoption or foster care.

I contacted 3 local non-profit human service organizations, which included Samaritas, Bethany Christian Services, and Family and Children Services. I got approval from the child welfare director to send out my survey to their foster care and adoption social workers to take the 5-minute survey.

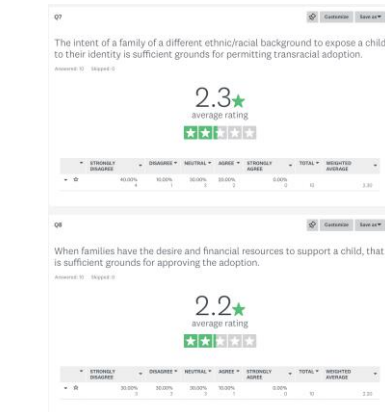


Q7
Are there any comments you would like to add about transracial adoption?

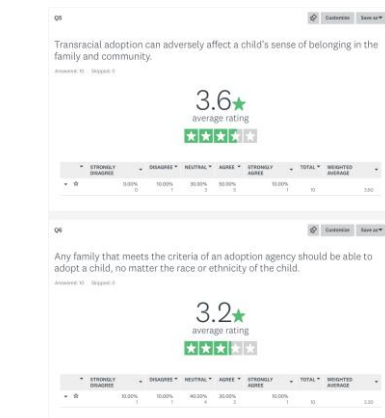
Introducing Sentiment Analysis

Search Responses

- Families who are wanting to adopt, and do not have extensive anti-racism trainings should not be permitted to adopt cross racial children. Practices need to be strictly enforced if adopting a child of color and be aware of the barriers POC individuals have to our society and be willing to be firm advocates against racism and discrimination.
- There are many factors that go into determining if an adoption will be in the child's best interest. When considering transracial adoption, by law race can only be considered if the child expresses concern or desire to be adopted or not adopted transracially.
- I believe that finances, debts, and exposing a child to a different ethnic/racial identity are not sufficient grounds for an adoption by themselves. Adoptive parents should be committed to maintaining and honoring that child of the child's ethnic/racial identity. Just as adoptive parents should ensure that Native American children maintain their heritage, all other children should be able to maintain their heritage as well.



FINDINGS



When looking at the results of the survey study we don't have a big enough sample to look at significance, however we will look at the percentages and what we did find in this study.

CONCLUSION

Social workers who are open to reviewing the results of this research study can use the findings to learn from the experiences and advice of other social workers about transracial adoption.

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APPENDIX A

The following statements were included in the survey:

- I am in favor of children being placed with a family of a different race.
- I believe that children's identity development is enriched by being with a family of a different race.
- Being placed in a family of a different race/ethnicity is not an asset to a child's identity development.
- I feel positively about the Indian Child Welfare Act's mandate to place Native American children with Native American families.
- Transracial adoption can adversely affect a child's sense of belonging in the family and community.
- Any family that meets the criteria of an adoption agency should be able to adopt a child, no matter the race or ethnicity of the child.
- The intent of a family of a different ethnic/racial background to expose a child to their identity is sufficient grounds for permitting transracial adoption.
- When families have the desire and financial resources to support a child, that is sufficient grounds for approving the adoption.
- Are there any comments you would like to add about transracial adoption?



THANK YOU

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