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# A Different Voice: Nonadopted White Siblings Talk About Their Experiences Growing up with Black Siblings

Andrea Genice Hardeman  
*Brigham Young University - Provo*

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A Different Voice: Nonadopted White Siblings Talk about Their Experiences

Growing up with Black Siblings

Andrea Hardeman

A thesis submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

Cardell Jacobson, Chair  
Mikaela Dufur  
Charlie Morgan  
Howard Bahr

Department of Sociology

Brigham Young University

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## ABSTRACT

A Different Voice: Nonadopted White Siblings Talk about Their Experiences

Growing up with Black Siblings

Andrea Hardeman

Department of Sociology

Master of Science

This study explores the notion of racial empathy and whether or not the nonadopted white siblings in transracially adoptive families develop the ability to empathize within the context of race. Specifically, I look at the following three questions: Do white siblings who have black adopted siblings develop *racial empathy* – the ability for one to personally identify with racially sensitive issues that affect persons of a separate racial category – toward blacks outside of their family by virtue of their interactions with the adoptee? What are the different dimensions of racial empathy? How is racial empathy displayed at each dimension? Participants are interviewed in-depth about their experiences being reared with black siblings. Ten out of 15 participants developed racial empathy in at least one dimension by virtue of having black adopted siblings. This is a limited sample (e.g. gender, class, religious affiliation) and the findings cannot be extrapolated; however, these findings suggest that further research needs to be conducted on racial empathy, as well as the nonadopted white siblings.

Keywords: adoption, transracial adoption, nonadopted white siblings, black siblings, inter-racial adoption, racial empathy, empathy, race, Oreos, trans-cultural adoption

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Brigham Young University

SIGNATURE PAGE

of a thesis submitted by

Andrea Hardeman

The thesis of Andrea Hardeman is acceptable in its final form including (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory and ready for submission.

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Cardell Jacobson, Chair

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Date

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Mikaela Dufur

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Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Charlie Morgan

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Howard Bahr

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Carol Ward, Graduate Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Susan S. Rugh, Associate Dean

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Adoption is an important avenue of family formation in the United States. Despite the controversy surrounding the practice and built-in challenges beyond those of inrace adoptions, transracial adoptions are increasingly common, and now account for one-eighth of all U.S. adoptions (Kreider 2003). Research on transracial adoption has largely focused on effects on the adopted child. The impacts of transracial adoption on siblings are less well understood. The present thesis is an exploratory examination of the effects of transracial adoption on white siblings.

The organization of this thesis is as follows, I begin with a brief introduction to adoption in the United States and of the rise in transracial adoptions in recent years. A review of themes in transracial adoption research is followed by a discussion of the limited research on effects upon siblings, and identification of the research questions. Next, I present a discussion of the method and processes of data collection and analysis. Finally, I summarize the findings and discuss the implications thereof, as well as possible future work.

### **Adoption and Transracial Adoption in the United States**

The concept of adoption became embedded into United States society by the late 1800s (Zamostny, O'Brien, Baden, and O'Leary Wiley 2003). Historically, baby farms took in unwanted and illegitimate children to use as laborers, but the increasing trend of "sentimental adoption" – adopting based on the emotional value of the child – contributed to a decline in the social acceptance of baby farms (Zelizer 1985:189). Sentimental adoption stimulated a perpetual increase in the number of legal adoptions in the early twentieth century. These adoptions were predominantly inracial; however, several factors shifted the status quo of same race placement in the direction of transracial adoption.

Zamostny and others (2003) point to the significant declines post World War I and World War II in the availability of healthy white babies and the concurrent rise in white couples and single adults seeking to adopt. Jacobson (2008) also suggests that the available number of such babies has been declining as women engage in careers, postpone having babies, and have fertility problems. Furthermore legal abortions, a decrease in stigmatization for single-parenting, and declining rates of relinquishment of children for adoption have also lessened the number of healthy babies available for same-race placement.

The transracial adoption of African American children into white families was in practice by the 1960s and has been a controversial topic since its conception, particularly when white adoptive parents adopt children who are ethnically identified as black (Feigelman 2000; Lee 2003; Zamostny et al. 2003). Debate over the ability of white families to properly raise and socialize children of different ethnic, cultural, or racial background continues to be a prominent issue. The National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) publicly petitioned for the preservation of the black identity of domestic transracial adoptees that can be taught and reinforced by black foster and adoptive families (Silverman 1993). This view was founded in the belief that white adoptive parents lack the ability to “[teach] their Black children how to resist and undercut potentially devastating and ubiquitous racial stereotypes and racist ideology” (Patton 2000:13).

The perceptions of, attitudes towards, and behavioral responses to race have had an active role in American society from its beginnings. This current trend in the general population is redefining race. The U.S. has removed and added racial categories over the past several decades in accordance with the political climate and interest groups. Kenney (1999:51) cites the multiracial population as “one of the fastest growing segments of the U.S. population.” Sources

of this rapidly growing segment of the U.S. population include interracial marriage, multiracial foster care arrangements, transracial adoption, and international adoption.

### **Research on Transracial Adoption**

Schermerhorn (1978:12) defines an ethnic group as “a collectivity within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, memories or shared historical past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements defined as the epitome of their peoplehood.” Ethnic groups are aware of the ways in which they differ from the members of the larger society. Their ethnic identity is fostered through this self-awareness. However, when ethnic identities become imposed by those outside the group an ethnic category is established (Cornell and Hartmann 2007). Thomas and others (1928:572) stated that “if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.” Cornell and others (2007) elaborated on this idea, describing ethnicity as malleable and as a construction site wherein ethnicity is created based on the conditions of the time period and other circumstantial factors. Accordingly, it is possible for individuals to perceive themselves as belonging to a particular ethnic group while being assigned a different ethnic category by those outside of their group.

Social interactions are a potent tool for shaping not only one’s view of the world but also how one perceives his or her own ethnic identity. It is through interactions and communications with others that humans become social beings (LaRossa and Reitzes 1994). The foundation of this socialization process is the family unit. Hollingsworth (1999:446) noted that through socialization within the family “[e]mpathy and role-taking allow[s] children to learn about themselves and about how to behave from observing the responses of those around them.” Children’s self-identity is developed as a result of this process. transracial adoptive parents have the additional task of race socialization (Galvin 2003; Tessler, Gamanche, and Liu 1999).

Historically, transracial adoption literature has focused on its impact on the adoptees and the parents. Research has looked at the self-esteem and racial identity development of transracial adoptees and the role of the white adoptive parents in facilitating healthy psychosocial development for their black children.

The effects of racial differences can be decreased and the solidarity within multiracial families is likely to be enhanced as “the meaning our society has attributed to the notion of race” is evaluated and redefined by the individuals belonging to the dominant race within the family (Kenney 1999:52). When transracial adoption occurs, the biological members of the family are presented with the challenge of meeting the racial and ethnic needs of the transracial adoptee. Their view of race must be re-conceptualized as they take a member of a minority group and incorporate him into the culture of the majority group. These family members develop an increased awareness of the existing race relations as a result of this evaluation process and their experiences with the adoptee. This new knowledge should enable and strengthen the family’s resolve to be proactive in minimizing and dealing with potentially detrimental practices affecting the adoptee in response to his or her race. Hence, one’s capacity to act in a positive manner is increased with the possession of a greater knowledge or understanding of the dynamics of race within the surrounding society.

Pre- and post-adoption services generally help educate and teach skills to (prospective) adoptive parents pertaining to issues surrounding adoption (e.g. attachment, hoarding, feelings of abandonment) and help foster a community from which adoptive parents can find support and learn from other parents’ experiences. Such services are a relatively new concept and are fairly expensive, thus many agencies do not offer extensive services if any at all. The novelty of these services represents a shift in social work paradigms regarding adoption practices (Finley 2000;

Galvin 2003), which is a major contributing factor to the scarcity of research on ways that transracial adoptive parents can successfully rear children culturally different from themselves. Subsequent to this recent shift in conceptualizing the practice of adoption there has not been much research focused on methods transracial adoptive parents can utilize to racially socialize their black children. Thus, transracial adoptive parents are engaging in race socialization with limited resources or professional guidance available to them.

### ***Race Socialization in Transracial Adoptive Families***

Racial awareness is typically examined by researchers in terms of its implications for ethnic minorities; thus, I will first provide an explanation of this concept relating to ethnic minorities followed by an application to nonadopted white siblings. Research has shown that as early as ages 3 or 4 children become aware of racial differences and preferences (Aboud and Skerry 1984; Pushkin and Veness 2007; Simon and Alstein 1974; Spencer 1984) During this age children spend a majority of their time among family members modeling their behaviors, thus families appear to occupy a highly influential position for socializing racial identity and preferences. Although several studies pertaining to the racial group preferences of black non-adopted children are methodologically flawed, Aboud and others (1984) cite black children as having white preferences over their own group initially but later develop own-group preference. Lambert and Klineberg (1967) found that “[t]he awareness of one’s group identification and evaluation is strengthened by contrasts and comparisons with other groups” (Lambert et al. 1967 as cited by Aboud et al. 1984:29).

The question then becomes who serves as a reference group for black transracial adoptees – blacks or whites? The answer depends on the context in which transracial adoptive parents socialize their black children to be competent – European-American, African-American, or both

(DeBerry, Scarr, and Weinberg 1996). transracial adoptive parents that value family cohesion over adaptability tend to emphasize the European reference group orientation (RGO), which constrains the adoptees' ability to form an autonomous identity that may differ from ideals expressed in a European RGO (DeBerry et al. 1996). Black transracial adoptees exist between two ethnic worlds – black and white – that are often positioned at opposite ends of the spectrum within society. DeBerry and others (1996:2388) noted that families who “did not view flexibility as a threat to family cohesion” promoted European and Africentric RGOs and were also more adaptable in comparison to families who focused solely on a European RGO.

Whether a black transracial adoptee develops a positive racial identity is in part contingent on the parents' beliefs “that either *affirm* or *discount* the transracial adoptees' culture and racial group membership” (Baden and Stewart 2000:330). Hence, adoptees raised with primarily a European RGO are less likely to cultivate a positive black racial identity if such an identity develops within them at all. To the extent that the environment in which the adoptee is reared is affirming or discounting also determines the level of involvement in birth culture (Baden et al. 2000). Adoptive parents' actions have a substantial impact on determining the types of preliminary avenues in which adoptees will embark as they discover the world around them, the framework with which they construct a perception of themselves, and of how they perceive the world, as well as their place in a racialized world.

As transracial adoptive parents become culturally competent, they will better understand the dynamics of race within society. They will also seek opportunities for adoptees to participate in their birth culture, and prepare adoptees to cope successfully with racism (Vonk 2001). Cultural competence increases transracial adoptive parents' likelihood of exposing adoptees to both European and Africentric RGOs, and they are more likely to have beliefs that affirm the

adoptees birth culture, as well as raise them in an affirming environment. These characteristics provide transracial parents with a foundation for developing and implementing methods that foster a positive identity for black adoptees.

### ***Interracial Contact and Empathy***

According to the contact hypothesis, exposure to members of other races cultivates affirmative racial attitudes (Sigelman and Welch 1993). Allport (1974) describes four key elements that must exist in order for the contact hypothesis to have an effect; they are as follows: “equal group status within the situation; common goals; intergroup cooperation; and the support of authorities, law, or custom.”

In a similar vein, Sigelman and others (1993) conclude that “personal contact between blacks and whites is associated with positive white attitudes” and that perhaps it is too soon to discard the contact hypothesis. There is utility in the application of the contact hypothesis despite debate over its ability to “withstand rigorous testing” (Sigelman et al. 1993:781). The contact hypothesis does not specify particular groups; rather, it focuses on intergroup attitudes in general. Sigelman and others (1993) point out the lack of generalizability among other flaws found in studies testing the contact hypothesis – e.g. nonrepresentative samples in longitudinal studies used to extrapolate findings, over-exaggerated antagonisms in experiments, as well as experimental studies that do not include a racial component but apply the findings to race relations.

Related to the contact hypothesis is the concept of racial empathy. Empathy refers to “an active cognitive process” (Davis 2004:404) through which one assumes the perspective of and has an emotional response to another (Duan and Hill 1996; Finlay and Stephan 2000). Racial empathy incorporates an additional element to empathy, one that allows an individual to express



empathy specifically in response to racial issues and members of other races. Persons possessing racial empathy are able to perceive themselves as members of a “stigmatized group” they know has been historically discriminated against (Dovidio, ten Vergert, Stewart, Gaertner, Johnson, Esses, Riek, and Pearson 2004). This type of perception is likely to heighten their awareness of racial injustices and produce negative emotions shared by the stigmatized group, such as anger (Dovidio et al. 2004, Finlay et al. 2000). Furthermore, whites who see themselves as having a “shared... fate” with blacks discard the perception of blacks being part of a separate group and perceive them as members of their group (Dovidio et al. 2004:1547).

### ***Effects on Siblings***

A few social scientists<sup>1</sup> have considered the effects of transracial adoption on the nonadopted siblings. Raible (2005, 2008) interviewed nonadopted siblings in transracial families. He found a small number of participants who acquired what I refer to as racial empathy to be the most interesting. He collected rich data from in-depth interviews. Five narrative identity composites were developed during this study – the Safe Sibling, the Responsible Sibling, the Moral Sibling, the Aware Sibling, and the Transracialized Sibling. Safe Siblings are generally characterized as being ignorant of adoption and race issues as well as the challenges encountered by their adopted siblings and other ethnic minorities. Responsible Siblings feel a sense of duty to protect their adopted siblings from insensitive remarks and to educate others about adoption and race. Moral Siblings’ liberal ideology towards race is one of their defining characteristics. Aware Siblings have educated themselves about adoption and race issues. Unlike the other four identity composites, Transracialized Siblings went beyond mere “dedication to... lofty ideals” (Raible 2008:213). These siblings allowed the transracial adoption to broaden their perspective in such a way that enabled them to “develop more complex... perspectives” (Raible 2008:215). This

category of siblings also tended to report “their current neighborhoods and friendship circles as multicultural, integrated, and diverse” (Raible 2008:215).

Raible (2005) innovatively takes the typical identity formation research approach conducted in transracial adoption settings and applies it to the nonadopted white siblings. While he concluded that the majority of the siblings in his study “did not seem overly concerned about anti-racist struggle or invested in understanding diversity issues,” he focused his analysis on the small number of respondents who in his words exhibited signs of being *Transracialized* (Raible 2005; Raible 2008:95). He refers to the *Transracialized self* as the nonadopted white siblings in his sample who expressed the use of “innovative and creative approaches... of being White or performing Whiteness” (Raible 2008:96).

### **Research Questions**

I surveyed the literature and identified 5 dimensions of racial empathy. These dimensions include forming intimate relationships with members of a different racial community (e.g. platonic and romantic relationships), engaging in the culture of a certain race other than one’s own, being aware of racial injustices, being able to view situations from a black person’s perspective, and feeling interconnected to or a sense of shared fate with members of a different race (see, for example, Dovidio et al. 2004, Raible 2005, 2008).

Figure 1 about here

Studies on adoption and transracial adoption often do not reflect the experiences of the nonadopted siblings. In this thesis I elaborate on the signs of racial empathy that surfaced in Raible’s (2008) identity study using qualitative data gathered in the West, thereby adding to existing discourse on transracial adoption.

I propose that concerned siblings have racial empathy. Not only are they aware of things that are racially sensitive, but they are also proactive in deterring acts of racism, discrimination, and prejudice. The emotions of the racially injured become their emotions. Simply being aware of what is or is not offensive to a particular race does not motivate one to change, rather one who feels racial empathy is more likely to take action. I suspect that white siblings who are immersed in the day-to-day racial obstacles of their black adopted brothers and sisters will be more empathetic to racial offensives and controversies, and therefore more likely to correct or stop such acts whether they are overt or covert than white siblings who have white adopted siblings. Thus, nonadopted white siblings with racial empathy are also likely to develop the ability to see a situation from a black person's point of view and to become immersed in aspects of black culture.

The literature shows that the family environment created by the transracial adoptive parents through the race socialization process will inadvertently affect their nonadopted children. The question then becomes if transracial adoptive parents are implementing race socialization in addition to the normative socialization that occurs within families, what forms of empathy and associated meanings are being modeled and developed by the nonadopted white siblings? If that environment welcomes the exploration of race by affirming the birth culture of the black children, the nonadopted white siblings will identify their transracially adopted siblings with their birth culture and authenticate them as a member of their birth race. Nonadopted siblings who view their black siblings as black will be able to develop a stronger sense of racial empathy. For the nonadopted white sibling, racial awareness also entails being aware of what would be racially offensive or uncomfortable to another person or group, as well as being aware of one's racial identity (Simon 1974). This can include humor, language, gestures, symbols, etc. Parents

and family members may increase their racial awareness by learning about the cultural differences of the adoptee's background.

I argue that racial awareness acts as a catalyst for racial empathy and that those with a heightened racial awareness are more likely to be familiar with and introduce the transracial adoptee to literature or music produced by those of their biological race and birth culture, as well as pick up on some of the associated cultural cues, which would then foster racial empathy. This exposure is an attempt to help the adoptee foster a connection with those of his or her race to enable better integration into their particular racial group. As the nonadopted siblings involve themselves in these cultural aspects they will begin to acculturate into both the perceived black culture and the aspects of black culture which they have been exposed to within their family.

### ***Central Research Question***

1. Do white siblings who have black adopted siblings develop racial empathy toward blacks outside of their family by virtue of their interactions with the adoptee?

### ***Procedural Sub-research questions***

1. What are the different dimensions of racial empathy?
2. How is racial empathy displayed at each dimension of racial empathy?

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

#### ***Characteristics of Qualitative Research***

I implemented a grounded theory approach in order to facilitate the collection of the richest data possible. This approach allowed me to use inductive reasoning to explore the nature of the problem that has been proposed above. The observations made during the data collection were able to dictate the actual patterns being set forth by the experiences of the participants. The exploratory nature of this research gives way to its emergent design. Patterns seen in the data

guided the research and allowed me to alter the protocol instruments to better fit the findings presented by the participants.

As a qualitative researcher, my goal is to be an observer who listens, records, and attempts to capture the essence of the data in order to present it in a scholarly manner to add to the discussion on transracial adoption. Complete objectivity is not possible; therefore, I acknowledged my personal biases by writing memos of the emotional labor I underwent throughout the interview process. Emotional labor is how individuals manage and convey their emotions (Hochschild 1983). It was difficult at times to conceal my opinions and disagreement with statements made by the nonadopted white about the black race. Writing memos allowed me to purge negative experiences from my mind, so I could focus on the data being collected rather than my reactions to statements I had heard.

### ***Qualitative Research Strategy***

I used a grounded theory approach to explore this relatively new topic of bridging the gap between adoption literature and transracial adoption literature that references racial empathy in order to create a clearer image of the experiences had by the nonadopted white siblings. This type of approach facilitates access to data that has been for the most part unexamined. I was able to adjust the interview guide according to the responses of the participants, which allowed me to delve further into insightful comments made during the interviews.

### ***Role of Researcher***

My status as a researcher is that of an outsider. I am an African American female, who grew up with parents of my own race. I have interacted with few persons who have been transracially or inracially adopted. My background creates potential barriers between myself and the participants that made the participants less likely to divulge intimate details that are negative

or racially sensitive. Thus, I engaged in impression management to reduce the effects of my background (Goffman 1959). In order to project a more racially neutral environment, I conducted several of the interviews with a white co-investigator in an effort to eliminate interviewer bias and to demonstrate black and white individuals working together. The intended result of the black and white interview team is to make the participants feel more comfortable and open throughout the interview.

During the interviews that did not involve a white co-investigator, I spent more time building a relationship of trust by spending more time on the background questions at the beginning of the interview to help respondents feel more at ease. I was aware of my looking glass self and how they might perceive me as a black interviewer discussing race and made extra efforts to tone down my ethnicity. My appearance was clean cut and professional to make me appear less black to them, so they would feel comfortable discussing race with me. This sentiment of me seeming less black was commented on in a few of the interviews.

Participants' perception of me as being less black became even more apparent during phone interviews (7 out of the 15 interviews). Participants gave multiple verbal cues that led me to believe they assumed they were conversing with a fellow member of the white race. They tended to be more relaxed and never made comments to the effect of "I feel bad [saying this] because you're sitting right here" as was often uttered by participants I interviewed in person both with and without a white co-investigator. Over the phone, participants were unable to detect that I was not white because I did not speak in what has been stereotyped as the black vernacular. One participant even told me in a face-to-face interview that I "talk white." Despite incorporating elements of whiteness into my patterns of speech, dress, and overall demeanor, participants still grew uncomfortable as they discussed certain aspects of race and their

experiences with their black siblings (For my reactions to the interviewing process, see *Lessons I Learned while Interviewing in a Mixed Race Environment*).

### ***Data Collection***

Due to the exploratory nature of this research, I limited the sample to a specific region and did not use the data to extrapolate findings to support a hypothesis. This research merely intends to show the existence of a new concept that may lend further insight to the ways in which we study race. The combination of demographic characteristics of Utah makes it an ideal setting to conduct this research. Overall, Utah's population is very homogeneous (mostly white) similar to most states in the West. Utah exceeds the national percentage for both adopted and transracial adopted children (see Table 1). When compared to regions in the U.S., Utah has the highest rate of adoptions that are transracial per white two-parent family (see Table 2). Utah also exceeds the percentage of adoptions that are transracial when compared to the top 5 states with the highest adoption rates (see Table 3).

Table 1 about here

Table 2 about here

Table 3 about here

Thus, I sampled from Utah County and Salt Lake County in Utah with the expectation of finding a more diverse sample in these counties than elsewhere in Utah. I recruited participants by announcing my study in sociology classrooms from the private university referenced above and passed around sign-up sheets for those who were either willing to participate in my study or who knew of someone who fit the study requirements (a white individual with at least 1 black adopted sibling).

In compliance with IRB regulations, participants were eighteen years of age or older and received consent forms with my contact information, as well as that of my thesis committee chair prior to the beginning of each interview in case they had additional comments or concerns later (see Appendix B). The interviewer(s) explained that participation was completely voluntary and could be discontinued at any point during the interview process and that their responses would remain confidential. Because the real names of the participants and individuals referenced throughout the interview were used during the interview, pseudonyms were subsequently applied to maintain the privacy of individuals referenced during the interview. Only my research team and I had access to the interview audio files and transcriptions containing their personal information. Identifying characteristics were excluded from the written portions of the study and presentations. Participants were also informed that they would receive no compensation – monetary or otherwise – for their participation.

I conducted a total of 15 in-depth interviews at which point the themes and patterns emerging became redundant. All of the interviews were in an open form allowing flexibility to ask additional questions that arise based on the comments presented by the respondents. This format allowed the interviewers to fully explore the feelings of the respondents. Open-ended and contingency questions were posed to evoke stories that detail the interaction and relationship between the respondent and the adopted sibling. Using these techniques allowed participants to give answers that illuminate characteristics of racial empathy. The duration of the interviews was approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

At the conclusion of each interview, a post-interview questionnaire was filled out by the interviewers (see Appendix E). It was important to complete this form promptly following the interview in order to record impressions and thoughts concerning the comments and body



language of the participants. Incorporating this element of field study to the interview setting provided an added element to the context of each interview (Lofland, Snow, Anderson, and Lofland 2006).

Participants completed demographic questionnaires after their interviews (see Appendix D). These questionnaires were analyzed using standard descriptive statistics and qualitative data were analyzed by using NVivo to code audio recordings and reviewing interviewer notes. I noted topical themes related to racial discourse and categorized those that were the most prevalent into a coding scheme. This coding scheme was used to summarize the qualitative data. Using a grounded theory approach allowed me to develop additional codes throughout the data collection process. Next, I analyzed the main codes using the 5 dimensions of racial empathy to determine which nonadopted white siblings had developed racial empathy and how they displayed it (see Appendix F).

## **Findings and Discussion**

The majority of the participants spent a portion of their youth as residents of Utah; the others grew up in similarly homogenous areas. Given that there is a stark contrast in racial composition between the state of Utah and most other states in the U.S., this will be an interesting demographic to study. Due to the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in Utah, participants were more likely to be exposed to racial stereotypes of minority groups without having regular contact with individuals of those groups to negate or confirm the stereotypes. Although increasing proportions of minorities have changed things somewhat in recent years, the following 2004 excerpt from the *Salt Lake Tribune* depicts the effects Utah's racial climate tends to have on blacks:

Ebony Washington thought he had finally found his home. A black teen raised in foster care around the country, Washington joined the LDS Church in 1996 in the Bronx, N.Y., and shortly after moved to Provo to find his place in a community of Saints.

But when he arrived in Utah, he was crestfallen. "I had been led to believe that this was— quote, unquote—'Zion.'" Instead of finding a warm embrace, Washington felt like his white counterparts viewed him with hostility and suspicion.

Despite being a faithful member of the church, "they didn't see me as that; they saw me as the next gang banger," Washington says.

His experience reflects the frustrations that many black members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints feel, particularly in Utah's predominantly white congregations. The predominant religion in Utah is affiliated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the LDS Church) and is often referred to as Mormonism (Winters 2004:Np).

In the account above if Ebony Washington had encountered a nonadopted white sibling possessing racial empathy; he would have felt that he was being viewed as an equal – not with hostility and suspicion. The existence of nonadopted white siblings who are able to demonstrate racial empathy despite having been raised in a predominately white area strengthens the case that racial empathy is a concept worth further exploration.

My sample is affiliated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church). The LDS Church has always had an open racial policy towards membership but until 1978 black males were not allowed be ordained to the lay priesthood, and thus to participate in

the full range of activities and leadership positions within the Church. Without priesthood ordination, black families could not participate in the culminating ordinance of LDS doctrine – temple marriage. Coupled with this exclusion are racial myths some of which are founded upon Biblical references to black inferiority on a spiritual level (see, for example, Bringhurst and Smith 2004; Mauss 2003; Embry 1993). Latent racial prejudices may exist in the older generations of participants’ families who practiced Mormonism during the priesthood exclusion and tensions may arise because of the decision to adopt transracially. Under these types of circumstances, participants should encounter more opportunities to exhibit racial empathy than their counterparts who reside in more heterogeneous regions of the country.

### ***Descriptive Statistics***

The majority of the nonadopted white siblings in my sample (9 out of 15) had at least completed some college but had not obtained a degree. All but one participant were active members of the LDS Church. Approximately half of the participants (8 out of 15) were over the age of 12 at the time of the first transracial adoption in their family. Most of the participants (10 out of 15) had at least two transracial adoptees in their family. The majority of the transracial adoptees (17)<sup>2</sup> were placed with their adoptive families as infants. The yearly family income while the participants were reared at home was reported by a majority of participants (13 out of 15) to be at least \$45,000.

Table 4 about here

### ***Conceptualization of Race***

Qualitative analysis allows for the context of the data to be taken into consideration. Therefore, I felt it imperative to understand the factors that contribute to how nonadopted white

siblings conceptualize race. I focused on three general topics to capture this – their perception of their black sibling(s), their family’s approach to race, and religion’s impact of ideas about race.

All of the participants commented that while they recognized that their adopted siblings’ skin color was black, race did not matter. They saw their siblings as real members of their families and looked past race. Stephan noted, “They’re not my black siblings. They are just my brothers and sisters. When I’m around other people and they bring it up, of course, I remember it. But when I’m just in family life or at home or anything like that there is no difference. I don’t even remember that there’s a difference there. ... We’re a family. We may not have the same skin color, but we’re all the same in general.” In fact, several participants recalled instances where they were initially caught off guard and perplexed when strangers or acquaintances drew attention to the racial differences within their families. Jonah recounted the following experience with a random stranger,

“Sometimes people will [say,] ‘Oh your brothers and sisters [are black]... For instance, I was walking through the mall with my little brother who is a lot lighter than my little sister and some guy asked us if... 'cause they thought we were together and that my little brother was our [son] 'cause he looks mulatto. We’re like no. She's my sister and he goes, ‘Your *sister*’ and he did this like [makes quotation marks with his hand] ‘your sister.’ And I [said] no she's my [actual] sister. ... I think we forget about [the difference]; it doesn’t occur to us.”

The stranger that approached Jonah and his siblings was using urban slang where “sister” is synonymous with “home girl” or “friend.” As Jonah repeated the dialogue, his facial expressions displayed slight confusion at the male’s initial comment because it took him a while to process what the stranger meant by “sister.”

All but one of the participants said they did not mind answering people's questions because their family was just like any other family with biological children. Participants felt this way in part because their black siblings were raised with the same culture as they were. Kelsey remarked,

Interviewer: "[When] you were talking about [Jessica's] diversity class, you said that she made the comment to you [about how] she's never felt any different than a white person and that when they were talking about different cultures between different ethnic groups she said that she had never experienced that. What were your thoughts personally on those comments? Do you agree with her or have you seen it differently in your life?"

Kelsey: "No, I think I agree with her."

Interviewer: "Okay. So you would say that there really isn't much difference [in] cultures between different ethnic groups?"

Kelsey: "I don't think that the culture between me and [Jessica] is that different."

Interviewer: "Oh okay. What about different groups in general?"

Kelsey: "I'm sure that there is, but me and [Jessica] were raised in the same culture."

All of the participants felt similarly to Kelsey and most of them (13 out of 15) reported being either best friends or really close to their black siblings. Jonah summed it up the best, "They [are] a part of our culture. They [are] a part of us and our class system and our everything..."

All of the participants either explicitly stated or implied that their parents, or more specifically their mothers, were the ones primarily responsible for instilling a sense of racial identity or black pride in their transracially adopted siblings. Participants thought of their role in a similar fashion to Sandi's description, "I've mostly just been supportive of it and have just been right there with my family. When my parents ask me to go and do anything specific, I would do

it. [For instance,] shopping... When I would find a little black doll I would be like, 'Look Mom, I found this really cute one!'"

Approximately half of the participants in my sample (8 out of 15) discussed how their parents incorporated all of the siblings when they exposed or taught the transracial adoptees about their birth culture and racial heritage. This exposure and learning tended to come in the form of attending the Genesis Group, an LDS congregation presided over by blacks leaders, cooking "black food," learning how to do hair weaves, and reading stories about black children. Anabelle explains that this type of exposure and teaching about race is so that her black siblings become aware and have a choice in the aspects of their birth and adoptive culture that they embrace. "We make them aware that just because they have white parents [it] doesn't mean that they can't learn about all the black things that are going on in the world."

Since most of the participants were active members of the LDS Church (14 out of 15), it was necessary to account for the effects of religion on how the participants framed and discussed race. Participants were asked to describe the impact their religion has had on their acceptance of having black siblings. Probing questions were asked to help them expound upon how religion has affected their view of race. How has [religion] helped you resolve conflicts between you and your adopted sibling? How has [religion] helped you overlook the physical differences between the two of you? LDS doctrine teaches individuals to look past differences and love one another as a prerequisite for salvation. The doctrine also heavily promotes the idea that everyone is a child of God, which has a tendency to cause some members of this faith to discard the social implications of race. However, the priesthood ban on blacks being able to hold certain ecclesiastical offices and its subsequent end in 1978 caused others to develop racial empathy toward blacks as they came to terms with this discriminatory practice.

Six of the participants felt that religion has positively influenced their view of race. The most prevalent theme in these discussions was about everyone being equal because they are a child of God. Jasmine referenced 2 Nephi 26:33 to illustrate this point, "...[The Lord] inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile" (The Book of Mormon). In addition to this view, it was also common among those who were LDS (12 out of 14) to mention that they talk about race "openly" within their families because they have black siblings. They also tended to express feeling comfortable discussing race with people outside of their family.

Those who were active members of the LDS Church (14 out of 15) were also asked to share their thoughts on blacks not being able to receive the priesthood in the LDS Church until 1978. The majority of the participants who responded to this question (13 out of 15), said learning about the previous priesthood ban did not affect their view of race. They were "glad that [blacks] are able to have the priesthood" as Anastasia stated in her interview. They were careful, however, not to criticize the practices of the LDS Church and discuss race specifically in conjunction with the priesthood ban. As Mathew put it, "I really haven't looked into it that much about the whole [priesthood] issue... I think I've just kind of accepted [that] it's the Lord's Church and he can run it how he wants." Others used similar language or also referenced the atmosphere of racial hostility during that time period as being a reason for the priesthood ban or simply reiterated Mathew's sentiments by stating that the ban need to be lifted in the "Lord's timing."

### ***Racial Empathy and the Nonadopted White Siblings***

Five topical themes repeatedly surfaced throughout each of the interviews as participants discussed their experiences being reared with black siblings. The predominant topical themes were racial awareness, perceptions of the transracial adoptees, perceptions of black people, racial groups the participants feel most comfortable socializing with, and opposition to the transracial adoption. Overall, the content of these topical themes is in accordance with literature on intergroup contact (see, for example, Aberson and Haag 2007; Allport 1954; Turner, Crisp, and Lambert 2007). These topical themes were coded and used to analyze the data and determine which dimensions of racial empathy were displayed by the participants. As I argued earlier, these dimensions include *forming intimate relationships with members of a different racial group, engaging in the culture of a certain race other than one's own, being aware of racial injustices, ability to view situations from the perspective of members of a different racial group, and feeling interconnected to or a sense of shared fate with members of a different race* (see, for example, Dovidio et al. 2004, Raible 2005, 2008).

Table 5 about here

#### ***Forming Intimate Relationships with Blacks***

Approximately half of the participants (8 out of 15) reported that they are able to comfortably welcome and at times seek out blacks to include in their inner circle of friends and intimate relationships, as a result of having black siblings. Amber stated, "I am very comfortable around black people, and I don't think I would be had I not been raised with black siblings." Two of the participants had been involved in at least 1 romantic interracial relationship with a black person. Others expressed a desire to date interracially but had not had the opportunity. For some participants this lack of opportunity was seen to be the result of the homogeneity of their



community. When asked if he would ever consider dating interracial, Jonah mentioned that he had recently had a conversation with his roommates about interracial dating and that “it wouldn’t bother [him] at all... [he] just hasn’t had many opportunities [here].” Echoing this lack of opportunity Stephan stated an additional reason, “I just have never been in close enough association with anyone to do so.” This desire to have meaningful contact with blacks was driven by their interactions with their black siblings.

Three of those eight participants who reported not consciously thinking of the race of their black siblings acknowledged that the fact that they had black siblings compelled them to include blacks in their inner social circle. Jasmine commented, “When I was at school and stuff I would find friends who were black. After high school I had three black boyfriends. I was comfortable with the [black] race.”

Figure 2 about here

### *Engaging in the Black Culture*

A common sentiment among all of the participants was that the burden of keeping the culture of their black siblings was the responsibility of their parents. All but two participants were content in engaging in that culture through osmosis. That is to say, they engaged in the culture to the extent that their parents incorporated it into the family’s white culture. Participants were aware of the different cultures across races but generally felt that the culture was not different between them and their black siblings, which in their minds often meant that their siblings were not really black. In reference to his transracially adopted sister Jonah stated, “She [is] white black girl...” He and many other participants recognized that their black siblings do not “act black,” yet he and Anabelle were the only two in the sample who understood the nuances of black culture.

Despite expressing that he has a “white interpretation” of black culture and will always be an outsider to the black community, Jonah was able to learn about at least one aspect of black culture – black hair. This may seem like a trivial cultural element but it plays a central role within the black community. Black hair care, particularly for black women, is a large part of black culture. He may not understand the correlations between different grades of black hair and certain hairstyles to status and beauty in the black community, but he grasps the importance of making sure his sisters have good weave to compensate for having a poorer grade of hair to the extent that he is planning on paying for them to get hair weaves after they graduate from high school until they can afford them on their own. His racial empathy seems to stem more from his two black sisters than his black brother, who he felt was still too young to understand and be impacted by his race.

Like Jonah, Anabelle also learned the importance of black hair to the black community and personally engaged in that aspect of black culture through her profession.

“I went to hair school [and] ...I learned as much as I could about black hair, so that when it came to doing my brother’s and my sisters’ hair we were prepared.... That’s a really big part of their culture – the way they do their hair. My sister had such different hair that it would be so easy to just let her have a little afro on her head, but black women tend to look down on white women with black kids when their hair is that short because then they think ‘Oh you don’t know what you’re doing.’”

Black hair care is a very subtle but prominent aspect of black culture that these two participants were able to hone in on. As I noted before, the majority of the participants did not feel the need to or have a desire to learn about or engage in black culture. The times where they did engage in the culture it was typically along shallow and stereotypical methods such as

cooking an occasional “black” meal or trying to talk like black gangsters in jest. Black hair care resonates with the core of black culture.

Figure 3 about here

### *Being Aware of Racial Injustices toward Blacks*

Nine out of 15 participants developed a greater awareness of racial injustices toward blacks because they have black siblings. This dimension of racial empathy was more often than not displayed by participants (six out of nine) with a degree of passiveness. In the midst of racial tensions, these participants were more likely either subtly to show their disapproval or not excuse racist remarks as distasteful humor rather than become an advocate for the victim of discrimination and seek social justice. Participants’ responses in these situations were usually in the form of body language (e.g. folded arms or furrowed brow) or walking away from the situation. They genuinely felt bad about the occurrence but did not feel it was their responsibility to rectify the situation. One participant stated, “I don’t want to be the prude.” Kelsey recounted an experience during her youth when a black boy in her neighborhood was denied employment at a local pizza parlor “because he was black.” She felt “bad” about the situation but when asked how she would react if a similar situation happened in her current neighborhood she stated, “I wouldn’t make a big deal out of it. ... You can’t change people.” Despite their disapproval of such occurrences, they are able to distance themselves from any form of social responsibility because people have the freedom to choose as long as no one is physically harmed. Two participants out of six who responded passively to racial injustices referred to the childhood mantra of “sticks and stones.”

Interviewer: And how do you feel when they make those racial jokes about [your friend]?

Sam: "...it's just subtle. It's not that bad. It doesn't make him feel bad."

However, four out of nine participants who witnessed racial injustices made comments to the effect that they had become more attuned and sensitive to racial disparities and insensitive remarks. Janelle stated that she is "more aware" of racial injustices that blacks face because she has black siblings. Stephan shared a parallel experience that involved a high school debate where he was one of two students in favor of affirmative action. He had heard a statistic about minorities and education a while back that he memorized and used to passionately argue his stance.

Interviewer: What do you think fueled that passion? Do you think it was more of your LDS upbringing or your siblings or...?

Stephan: My siblings definitely. To qualify [my statement], I never went looking for things, but I definitely paid more attention when I heard things [pertaining to race]. He pays attention to instances of racial disparities and makes an effort to educate others on the issues.

Figure 4 about here

#### *Ability to View Situations from a Black Person's Perspective*

Three of the participants (out of 15) in my sample demonstrated that they had developed racial empathy in this dimension as a result of having black siblings. They were able to set aside their white frame of reference and think of situations from a black person's point of view. The following excerpt from Stephan's interview illustrates this:

Interviewer: Based on having black adopted siblings, when you think of black people, what comes to mind?

Stephan: Just from my siblings what do I think of black people? I get frustrated more than anything else, I'll admit, because of all of the perceived differences and notions that people have of the different races. [I've] grown up with [blacks] and [know] that [blacks] are no different on an intelligence level or on an abilities level. The fact that there is still racism all over the place and discrimination, for the most part, [is] frustrating. It's frustration mixed with regret for society in general [because] there isn't equality.

He was able to racially empathize with the frustration that blacks sometimes feel being on the receiving end of racism.

Most participants (12 out of 15) had never given thought to how the stark whiteness of their communities would affect their black siblings who stick out like a fly in milk. They seemed to share the feelings stated by Megan, "I think he should be ok. ... I've never had to deal with any racial tension or anything like that." It was as though they were so caught up in the notion of being color blind that they could not fathom skin color having any effect on a person in contemporary society. White Americans are accustomed to what Waters (1998) refers to as symbolic ethnicity, where the possessor of this type of ethnicity has the ability to choose when to be ethnic or not. It enables one to "express [his or her] individuality in a way that does not make you stand out as in any way different from all kinds of other people" (p. 198). This is an element of white privilege that a few of the participants had in their minds ascribed to their black siblings. They thought that being black was something that made their siblings stand out but had no real bearing on their station in life; being the token black person was viewed as a good thing.

Fortunately, a few of the participants (4 out of 12) who had not given previous thought to what it would be like to be one out of a handful of members of your race with everyone else's skin being a direct contrast to yours gave this idea some thought during the interview. They

realized that perhaps they should step outside of themselves and view race from an ethnic minority's perspective. Mason reflectively stated, "So, it's more of me just being naive a bit I guess."

Figure 5 about here

*Feeling Interconnected to or a Sense of Shared Fate with Blacks*

Dawson (1994, 2001) suggested that blacks make up a social group by virtue of their shared heritage and sense of solidarity in regards to strongly believing that in essence what happens to one happens to us all. This dimension of *feeling interconnected to blacks* proposes that having black siblings will cause the nonadopted white siblings to adopt the concept Dawson put forth as they reconstruct and redefine what it means to be white to them. None of the participants in my sample developed racial empathy in the dimension of *feeling interconnected to or a sense of shared fate with blacks*.

However, two participants (out of 15) had begun to understand Dawson's concept and how it applies to their black siblings. They stood up to people who made comments about blacks in an effort to defend their siblings. When asked about their motivations for standing up to the offenders, their response indicates a subconscious understanding of the principle mentioned by Dawson. The offenders were in no way talking about the participants' black siblings; they were merely speaking crudely about blacks in general. These participants subconsciously were beginning to make the distinction that what happens to a random black person has a ripple effect upon other blacks, including their black siblings. For instance when Janelle's friends or other people with whom she associates make racial jokes, she is typically quick to tell them to stop because she has black sisters. She has a few black friends, but feels she stands up to people who are making racial comments more so because of her siblings than to defend blacks in general.

This dimension may be the most difficult to develop because for participants it forces them to recognize that not all ethnicities are created equal. Ethnic minorities do not receive the same privileges afforded to white ethnicity in America. The symbolic ethnicity of whites is shrouded in the cloak of white privilege and gives them a sense of being part of a collective but with the added ability to maintain their individual destiny without regard to fate of the collective.

### ***Summary***

In summary, for most of the nonadopted white siblings (14 out of 15), their family represented diversity in their neighborhoods and schools for the most part. A few of the nonadopted white siblings spoke of enjoying the attention they receive because they have black siblings. They felt that having siblings who were the token black kids on the block was “fun.” This inhibited their ability to recognize current and potential future racial issues and struggles faced by their black siblings. Many of the nonadopted white siblings (13 out of 15) tended to view their black siblings as Oreos – individuals who are black on the outside but are really white on the inside. This perception resulted from their black siblings assimilating into the white culture of their families. Despite this lack of authentication of their transracially adopted siblings as a *real* black person, 10 out of the 15 nonadopted white siblings in my sample developed racial empathy in at least 1 dimension of racial empathy.

Nine nonadopted white siblings who developed racial empathy did so in the *being aware of racial injustices toward blacks dimension (awareness dimension)*. As they discussed their experiences growing up with black siblings it was apparent that they had become aware of racial injustices toward blacks. They have witnessed discrimination against their black siblings firsthand and recognized that other blacks share similar experiences of being victims of discrimination and prejudice. Six of these 9 nonadopted white siblings responded passively to

racial injustices, but often giving subtle cues that they were offended by the act or behavior. Four of these nine nonadopted white siblings expressed that they paid more attention and were more sensitive to racially offensive behavior because they have black siblings.

Eight of the 10 nonadopted white siblings who developed racial empathy developed racial empathy in the *forming intimate relationships with blacks dimension*. Seven of these eight nonadopted white siblings also developed racial empathy in the *awareness dimension*. These eight nonadopted white siblings were comfortable associating with blacks and at times even sought out black friends as a result of having black siblings. Three out of these eight nonadopted white siblings commented that while the race of their transracially adopted siblings is not constantly at the forefront of their mind, they do seek out black friends because they have black siblings.

Three out of the 10 nonadopted white siblings who developed racial empathy did so in the *ability to view situations from a black person's perspective dimension*. They were able to perceive situations from a black person's point of view and at times feel what a black person might feel in a particular situation. One of these participants expressed feeling frustrated at the oppression of the black race and how the perception of blacks not being as capable as other nonblack individuals continues to persist in our society. The remaining nonadopted white siblings (12 out of 15) stated that they had not previously attempted to view any of their experiences from a black person's perspective. Four of these 12 nonadopted white siblings decided to re-evaluate the way they perceive different situations as a consequence of the interview. They became more committed to trying to step outside of their perception and take on a black person's point of view.



Two out of the 10 nonadopted white siblings developed racial empathy in the *engaging in black culture dimension*. They were able to enter a segment of the black community figuratively speaking by personally engaging in aspects of black culture. Unlike the others in the sample (13 out of 15) who experienced black culture in a peripheral sense via their parents' efforts, these two nonadopted white siblings had firsthand experience with the intricacies of black culture.

No one in my sample developed racial empathy in the *feeling interconnected to or sense of shared fate with blacks dimension*. However, two of the nonadopted white siblings showed signs of being able to at least see that black individuals are interconnected with each other and share a common fate.

Table 6 about here

I proposed that racial awareness facilitates the development of racial empathy. This claim held true for 9 (out of 10) of the nonadopted white siblings in my sample. Most of the nonadopted white siblings who developed racial empathy did so in the *being aware of racial injustices toward blacks dimension* along with developing racial empathy in at least one additional dimension. It cannot be ascertained from the data which dimension was developed first; however, the *awareness dimension* may be correlated with the development of racial empathy in other dimensions.

Figure 6 about here

### ***Conclusion and Limitations***

In evaluating these findings, it is important to note that this is a very limited sample in terms of gender, class, domestic adoptive siblings, and religious affiliation. These findings cannot be generalized. Also, the participants' views of what constitutes black culture are largely limited to the media's portrayal. This research does, however, set forth patterns that help us gain

a better understanding of how having black siblings affects the way nonadopted white siblings view and relate to blacks in general, as well as how they categorize their black siblings racially and culturally.

I had intended to limit the sample to Utah residents, but as a result of multiple factors (e.g. self-selection bias and sampling method) the final sample included some from outside the state of Utah. One aspect of my reasoning for selecting the Utah was the homogeneity and predominance of the white race. I thought this would provide an isolated instance in which to study racial empathy with relatively few variables and interracial interactions that would taint the effects the black adoptees had on their nonadopted white siblings. While not all of the participants were reared in Utah, they each spent a substantial amount if not all of their childhood in homogeneous communities. Thus, the same sense of isolation was still captured with the exception of a few participants who spent time abroad or in inner cities while serving LDS missions (three participants) or had recurring contact with blacks in their local communities (two participants).

The initial intent of this research did not include a focus on the LDS community, but as I recruited participants through personal contacts and announcements in liberal arts classrooms at Brigham Young University, most respondents turned out to be members of the LDS faith. Similar to many Christian religions, LDS doctrine among other altruistic practices emphasizes showing love and kindness to others. To account for the effects religion might have on the way participants framed their discussion on race, questions were included that allowed me to explore how religion has impacted their lives, as well as their relationship with their black siblings. Several respondents mentioned that their LDS upbringing has helped them see their black siblings as “children of God” and that when it comes to race “it’s not a big deal.” However, this

belief did not appear to prevent most of the participants from discussing the different dynamics of race. For some the LDS religion had a negative impact on their experiences with transracial adoption and caused cognitive dissonance between their personal beliefs and the actions of congregation members and the LDS doctrine. Here is an example of such an impact:

“I think [blacks not being able to have the priesthood] was wrong. ... If I lived in that time period I would probably would have had a huge issue with it to the point of choosing a different religion possibly. ... Like I said before there were two problems in the beginning when my parents adopted. One was [my mom’s] parents and the other was the church. So, I think that that our religion has played a negative role... But at the same time, I think that the fact that we have values and standards because of our religion has played a positive role. ... I don’t know if religion has helped at all because the Mormons not until [1978]... blacks couldn’t hold the priesthood. It was always a little bit weird about why they [felt that] way at one point. I don’t know if religion helped tie it all together.”

Throughout the course of interviewing, I did not feel that the religion component entirely impeded participants’ ability to objectively dialogue about race and how their black siblings have affected their interactions with other blacks outside their family unit.

Several participants described themselves as being color blind or stated they “don’t see color... [or] race.” Others, despite also purporting to follow the color blind approach, were able to develop racial empathy along at least one of the 5 dimensions. The concept of racial empathy requires further exploration to understand the many dynamics that influence the range of outcomes experience by nonadopted white siblings.

### *Lessons I Learned while Interviewing in a Mixed Race Environment*

Despite the many efforts I made to reduce the impact of being interviewed by a black person on racially sensitive matters, my race affected the comfort level and types of responses given by several of the participants. I desired to be impartial, which cannot be achieved in its entirety given the dynamics of this study. However, my goal was to eliminate or at least check my biases at the door before beginning an interview. This was an ongoing process.

There were two periods in which the interviews occurred. The first period of interviews was during the beginning stages of the research, when I completed eight in-person interviews. Half of the interviews were with a white co-investigator and the other half I conducted alone. The addition of a white co-investigator did not seem to change the reactions I received from participants. In both instances either through verbal or nonverbal cues, participants at times would indicate some degree of discomfort or guilt for not having thought of a particular issue with race prior to the interview. I had the hardest time concealing my biases during this first period. I wrote several memos to alleviate the black soul I was forced to repress. At times my allegiance to the black race outweighed my commitment to the research. There were a few instances where I needed to tactfully correct or offer a suggestion to the participants for the sake of their black siblings.

The second period consisted of seven phone interviews toward the end of the research process. I had become seasoned in the literature and practice of transracial adoption. I had also learned to check my race along with my biases at the door before beginning each phone interview. I had mastered shedding my blackness to the extent that when there were references of black siblings being called “black rapist” or the N-word (one participant said the actual word unabbreviated), I did not skip a beat in the conversation. My responses were polite but separate

from how I typically process my interactions as a black person. I did not write a single memo during this period as a cathartic measure.

### **Implications and Suggestions for Future Work**

The aspects of nonadopted white siblings and racial empathy that I have examined in this thesis were not fully explored due to its limited scope. This topic would be further benefited by assessing the effects of characteristics of the nonadopted white siblings, such as age differences, conflicts involving the adoptee(s), the number of black adoptees in the family, and parents' concept of race. Through this research and my engagement in related projects, I have come to the conclusion that several such factors may impact the development of racial empathy. Additional research on the degree to which these and other factors influence the nonadopted white siblings is needed, especially given that transracial adoption is an area that sociology has barely begun to investigate (Fisher 2003).

This thesis points to a need for racial training programs that assist the entire transracially adoptive family unit in learning how to acknowledge skin color and incorporate its associated culture without detracting greatly from the functionality of the white culture in which the adoptive parents raise their children. Without some type of integrative program that combines complimentary aspects of black and white culture, white families will continue to rear black children who either struggle to find or lack the ability to connect with their black selves. Along with that, the nonadopted white siblings will continue to view their black siblings as Oreos, and thus those who oppose transracial adoption will continue to have a case against its practice.

To some extent transracial adoption is a Trojan horse that erodes the prejudices of the older white generation and illuminates to whites in general the plight some blacks face. It is difficult to harbor racially motivated disdain toward a child especially once that child becomes a

part of your family. Creating a multiracial family through transracial adoption expands the views of the white adoptive family. The cultural and racial “genocide” (Simon et al. 1994:39) that are often byproducts of transracial adoption may be a noble and necessary sacrifice in an effort to abrade the negative stigma with which blacks have been enslaved by a white society.

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## Endnotes

1. Rita J. Simon and Rhonda M. Roorda recently published a third volume in their series on Transracial adoption titled *In Their Siblings' Voices* (2009). This installment in the series delves into the relatively uncharted territory of Transracial adoption affects on the nonadopted white sibling. Their findings included undertones of racial empathy with the conclusion that “[a]ll of the respondents believed that having a black or biracial brother or sister made them... more accepting of racial differences” (2009:215).
2. Two of the participants whose black siblings fall into this category are related, so their 3 black siblings were not double counted which would have raised the category of infant Transracial adoption from 17 to 20.

**Table 1: Total and Transracial Adoptions<sup>a</sup>**

	U.S.	Utah
Total Children <sup>a</sup>	4,269,671	42,687
Total Adopted Children <sup>a</sup>	103,827	1,247
Percent of Adopted Children <sup>a</sup>	2.4%	2.9%
Total Transracially Adopted Children <sup>bc</sup>	12,110	227
Percent of Transracially Adopted Children <sup>bc</sup>	11.7%	18.2%
<i>Census Data Summary<sup>d</sup></i>		
	U.S.	Utah
Total Children	83,714,107	831,039
Total Adopted Children	1,586,004	19,430
Percent of Adopted Children	2.5%	2.9%
<i>Subset Data Set Summary</i>		
	U.S.	Utah
Total Children	4,269,671	42,687
Total Adopted Children	103,827	1,247
Percent of Adopted Children	2.4%	2.9%

<sup>a</sup>Source: Used a subset of Kreider, Rose M. 2003. "Adopted Children and Stepchildren: 2000." *Census 2000 Special Reports*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau. Children under the age were examined.

<sup>b</sup>Note: Computed using statistical analysis in Stata/SE 11.0. Created a transracial adoption variable where the race of the parent or parents is white and the race of the child is non-white.

<sup>c</sup>Note: The subset was limited to household who had adopted children under the age of 18.

<sup>d</sup>Note: The Census does not parcel out transracial adoptions.

**Table 2: Rates of Adoptions that are Transracial by Region<sup>a</sup>**

Region	Per White Two-Parent Families
Northeast	40 per 10,000
Midwest	38 per 10,000
South	22 per 10,000
West	37 per 10,000
Utah	57 per 10,000

<sup>a</sup>Source: Used a subset of the 2000 Census data. Kreider, Rose M. 2003. "Adopted Children and Stepchildren: 2000." *Census 2000 Special Reports*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau.

**Table 3: Transracial Adoption Demographics<sup>a</sup>**

State <sup>c</sup>	Total Adoptions	Total Adoptions that are Transracial <sup>b</sup>	Percent of Adoptions that are Transracial <sup>b</sup>
Delaware	222	28	12.6%
California	11,230	1,254	11.2%
Louisiana	1,523	60	3.9%
New Jersey	2,917	509	17.5%
Texas	7,372	594	8.1%
Utah	1,247	227	18.2%

<sup>a</sup>Source: Used a subset of the 2000 Census data. Kreider, Rose M. 2003. "Adopted Children and Stepchildren: 2000." *Census 2000 Special Reports*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>b</sup>Note: Computed using statistical analysis in Stata/SE 11.0. Created a transracial adoption variable where the race of the parent or parents is white and the race of the child is non-white.

<sup>c</sup>Note: Looked at the top 5 states with the highest adoption rates and compared them to Utah.



**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics: Participant Demographics**

Participant Pseudonym	Current Age	Number of Black Siblings	Age of Black Sibling at Placement(Ct)	Highest Level of Education Completed	Family Yearly Income while Raised
Anabelle	24	3	8 Wks; 9 Days(2)	Trade School	\$45,001-\$60,000
Anastasia	27	1	7 Yrs	Bachelor's	\$30,001-\$45,000
Amber*	37	2	At Birth(2)	Bachelor's	\$15,001-\$30,000
Janelle	21	2	1 Day; 3 Wks	Bachelor's	Above \$100,001
Jasmine	20	2	At Birth(2)	Some College, No Degree	Above \$100,001
Jonah	20	3	1 Mo; 2 Wks(2)	Some College, No Degree	Above \$100,001
Kelsey	30	2	Few Wks(2)	Bachelor's	Above \$100,001
Lexi	21	3	8 Wks; 9 Days(2)	Some College, No Degree	\$45,001-\$60,000
Mason	18	3	10 Yrs; 8 Yrs(2)	High School	\$45,001-\$60,000
Mathew	23	1	6 Days	Some College, No Degree	\$60,001-\$100,000
Megan	19	1	1.5 Yrs	Some College, No Degree	Above \$100,001
Rita	19	1	5 Yrs	Some College, No Degree	\$60,001-\$100,000
Sam	21	1	1.5 Yrs	Some College, No Degree	Above \$100,001
Sandi	19	4	At Birth (3); 4 Mo	Some College, No Degree	\$60,001-\$100,000
Stephan	22	4	9 Yrs; 7 Yrs; 3 Mo; 3 Days	Some College, No Degree	\$45,001-\$60,000

\*Amber was not religious. The remainder of the participants were active members in the LDS Church.

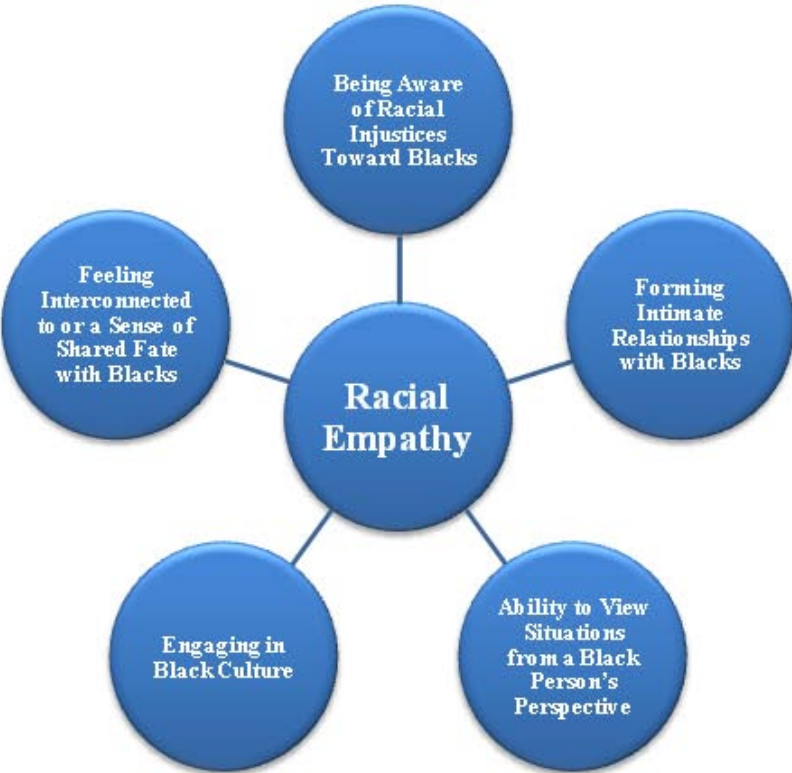
**Table 5: Topical Themes and Correlated Dimensions of Racial Empathy**

Topical Theme	Number of Times Coded	Correlated Dimensions of Racial Empathy
Opposition to the Transracial Adoption	16	---
Racial Awareness	78	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Ability to View Situations from a Black Person's Perspective</li><li>2. Engaging in Black Culture</li><li>3. Being Aware of Racial Injustices Toward Blacks</li></ol>
Racial Groups Nonadopted White Siblings Feel Comfortable Socializing With	23	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Forming Intimate Relationships with Blacks</li></ol>
Perception of Black People	46	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Forming Intimate Relationships with Blacks</li><li>2. Ability to View Situations from a Black Person's Perspective</li></ol>
Perception of Transracial Adoptee	24	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Forming Intimate Relationships with Blacks</li></ol>

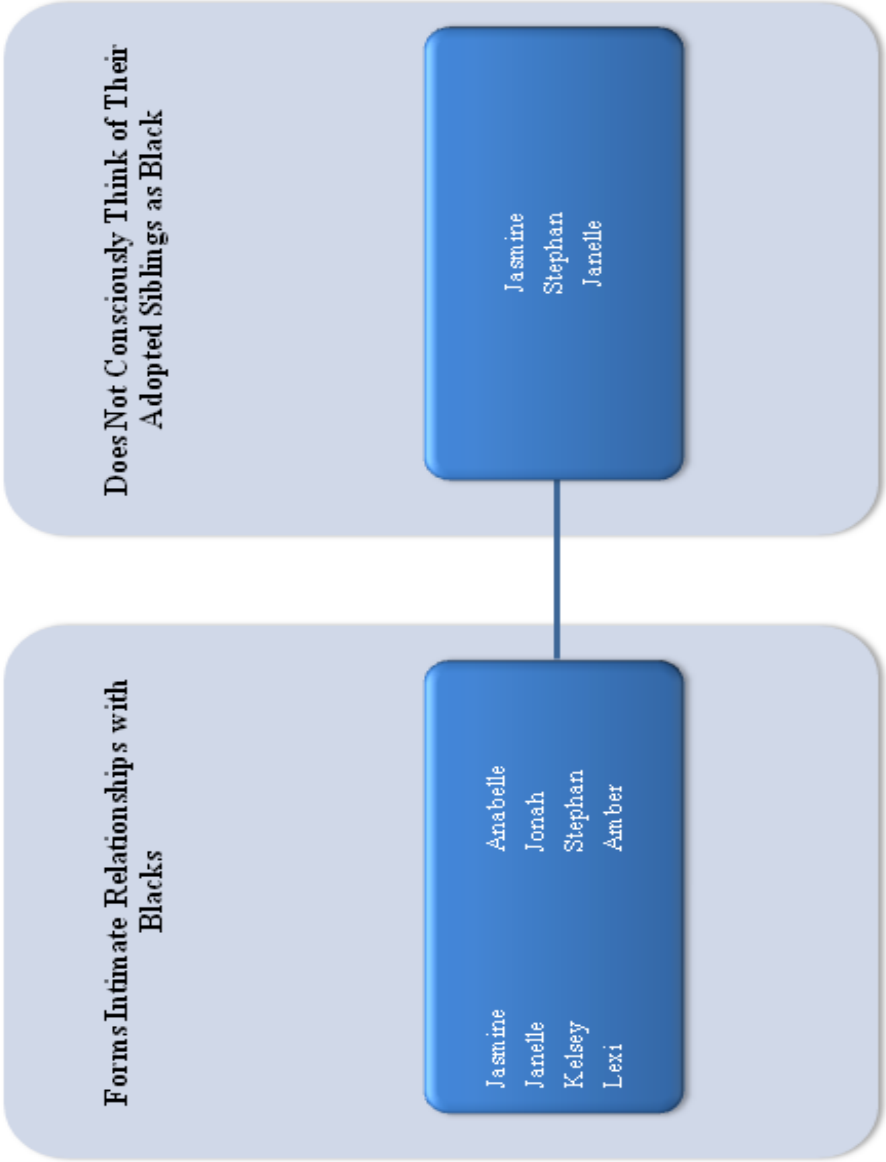
**Table 6: Dimensions of Racial Empathy and the Number of Participants who Developed Racial Empathy in each Dimension**

Dimension of Racial Empathy	Number of Participants who Developed it
Being Aware of Racial Injustices toward Blacks	9
Forming Intimate Relationships with Blacks	8
Ability to View Situations from a Black Person's Perspective	3
Engaging in Black Culture	2
Feeling Interconnected to or a Sense of Shared Fate with Blacks	0

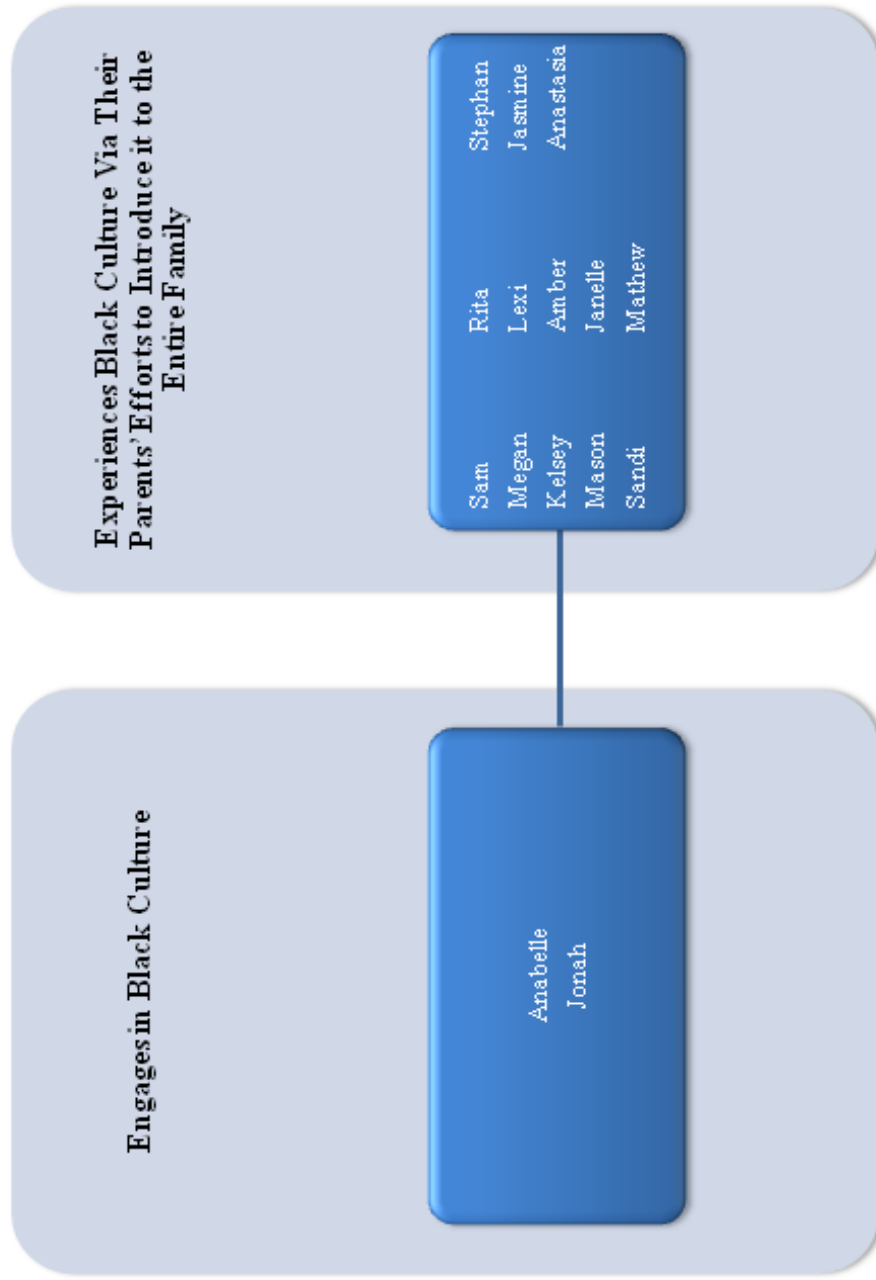
**Figure 1: Dimensions of Racial Empathy**



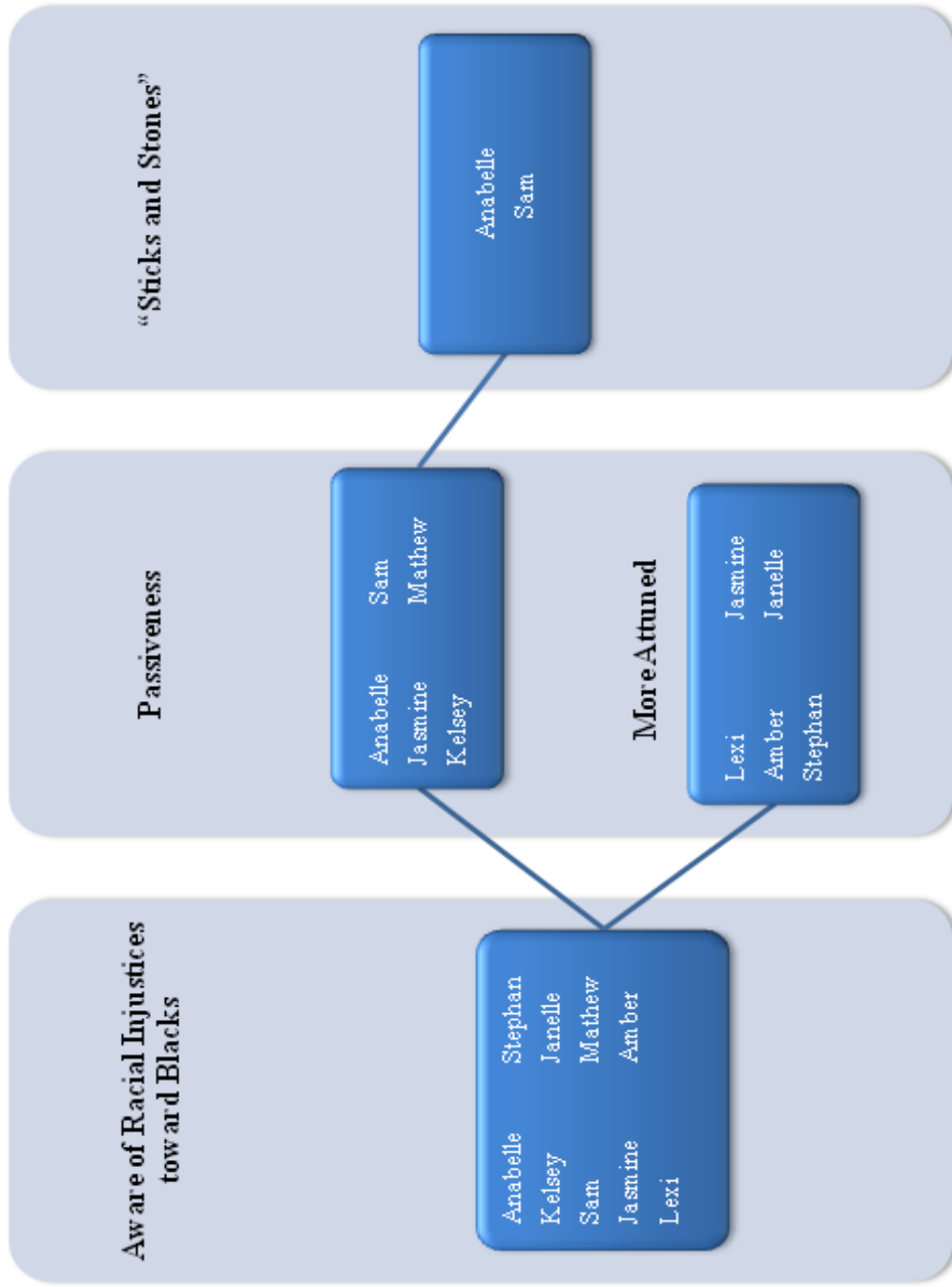
**Figure 2: Forming Intimate Relationships with Blacks Dimension**



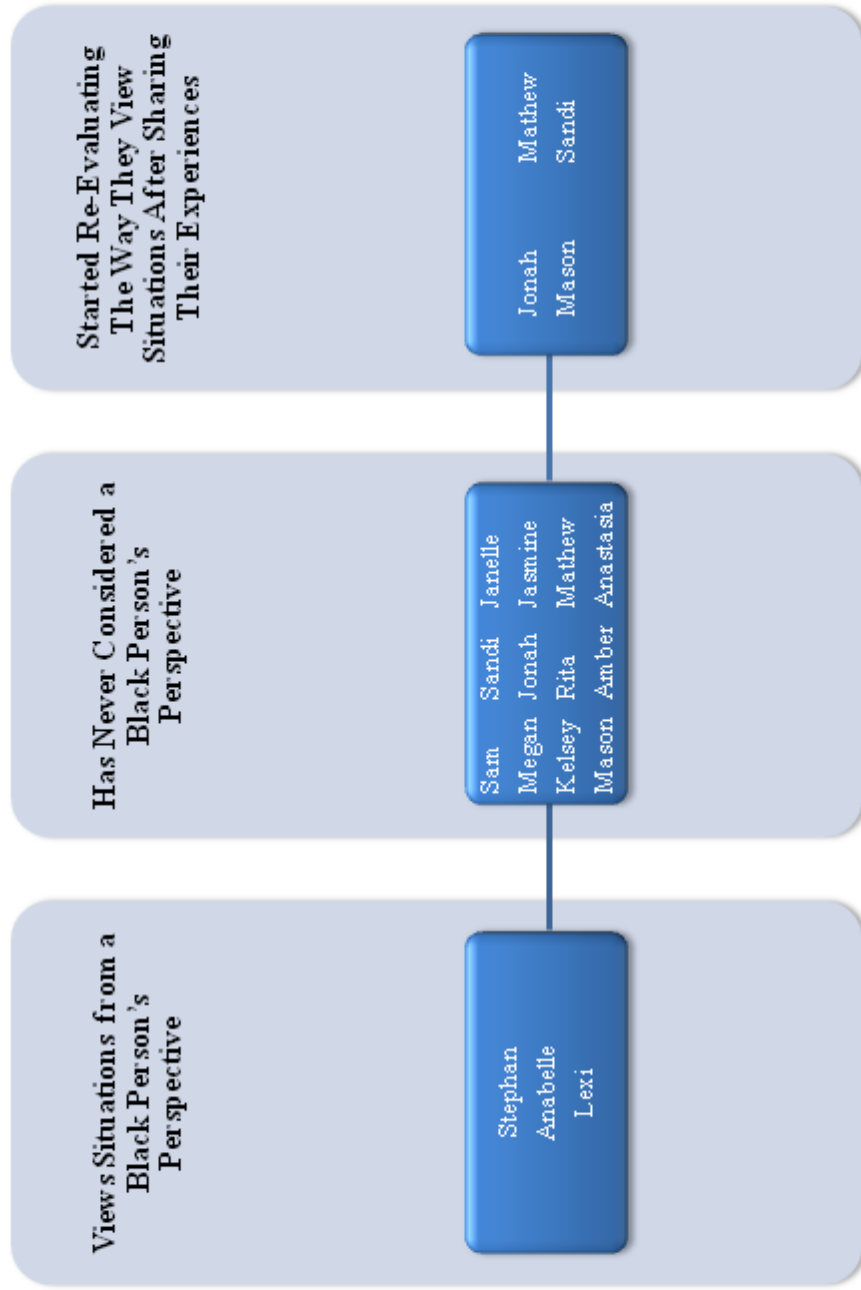
**Figure 3: Engaging in Black Culture Dimension**



**Figure 4: Being Aware of Racial Injustices toward Blacks Dimension**

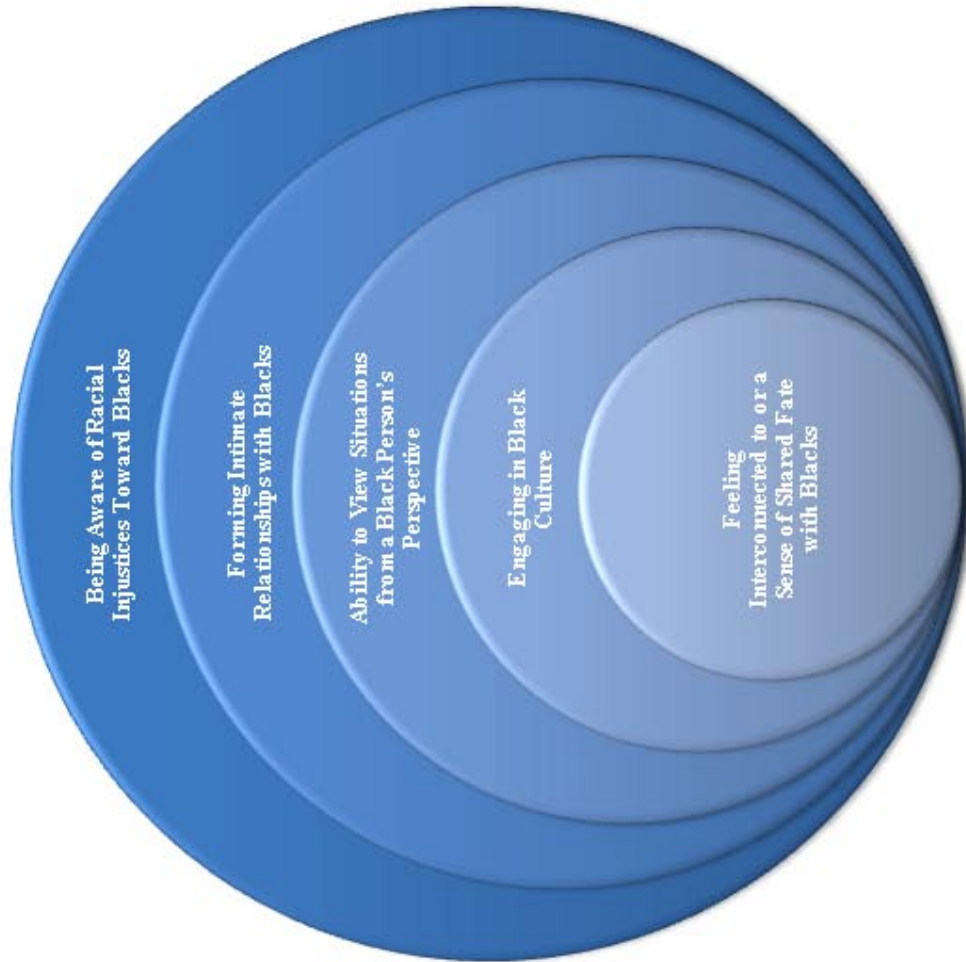


**Figure 5: Ability to View Situations from a Black Person's Perspective Dimension**





**Figure 6: Dimensions of Racial Empathy as Exhibited by the Participants**



## **Appendix A. Concepts and Definitions**

*Acculturation* – when two groups come into continuous contact with each other one or both groups adopts cultural traits of the other.

*Black* – includes persons of African and African American descent as well as black immigrant groups (e.g. Ethiopians, Haitians).

*Multiracial Population* – includes interracial couples, multiracial individuals, and families in which a cross-racial or Transracial adoption or foster care arrangement has occurred (Kenny 1999:51).

*Multiracialization* – the process by which the multiracial population increases or decreases.

*Nonadopted Sibling* – white siblings who are biologically related to the adoptive family.

*Psychosocial Development* – an individual's psychological development occurs in the context of and as they interact with their social environment.

*Racial Awareness* – being aware of one's own and of others' racial identity; being aware of what would be racially offensive or uncomfortable to a person from a different racial background (e.g. a nonadopted sibling stops tolerating racist jokes once a black child is adopted into the family because he/she realizes that such jokes are offensive to the black community; a Transracially adopted black child learns to identify him/herself as a member of the black community despite having a been raised in a white family and inoculated with white culture.

*Racial Empathy* – the expression of empathy specifically in response to racial issues and to members of another race (e.g. a nonadopted sibling is personally offended when their black sibling is the victim of racist remarks as if the remarks had been directed towards

him/her; one who has racial empathy is likely to be an activist for racial equality or proactive in rectifying perceived racial injustices).

*Race Socialization* – “specific verbal and non-verbal messages transmitted to younger generations for the development of values, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs regarding the meaning and significance of race and racial stratification, intergroup and intragroup interactions, and personal and group identity” (Lesane-Brown 2006:400).

## Appendix B. Consent to be a Research Subject

### Introduction

This research study is being conducted by Andrea Hardeman in the sociology department at Brigham Young University. The purpose of this study is to learn more about the ways in which having an adopted sibling of African descent affects white siblings.

### Procedures

You are invited to participate in the study by being interviewed and completing a brief questionnaire following the interview. The interview consists of approximately 12 questions and will take from 60 to 90 minutes in time. Questions will include details about your background, your childhood and adolescent experiences in school and in the community and some questions will be about your personal views. Interviews will be tape-recorded and then transcribed.

### Risks/Discomforts

Risks for participating in the study are minimal. However, you may feel emotional discomfort when answering some questions. You may choose to refrain from answering any question or questions with you are not comfortable, and you may choose to discontinue the interview at any time. Likewise, you may choose at any time to withdraw anything you have contributed to this research study.

Should you later feel uncomfortable about having participated in the study, we have made arrangements for you to talk to a trained social worker, who has done extensive work in adoptions. His name is \_\_\_\_\_, and his phone number is: xxx-xxx-xxxx.

### Benefits

There are no direct benefits to you, though we do believe you will find the interview interesting and perhaps insightful. By participating in the research you will help researchers understand how impacts the nonadopted white siblings in Transracially adoptive families.

### Confidentiality

All information provided will remain completely confidential. No personal identifying information will ever be released. Any quotes from the interview will be given a pseudonym—a name other than your own. All other identifying information such as age, sex, and background will also be changed. All data, including tapes/transcriptions from interviews, will be kept in a locked storage cabinet and only those directly involved with the research will have access to them. After the research is completed all tapes and transcripts will be destroyed.

### Compensation

Participants will receive no compensation of any kind for participation in this study.

### Participation

Participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw at **anytime** or **refuse** to participate entirely.

**Questions about the Research**

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Andrea Hardeman at xxx-xxx-xxxx, (xxxxx@gmail.com) or Cardell Jacobson at xxx-xxx-xxxx, (xxxxx@byu.edu).

**Questions about your Rights as Research Participants**

If you have questions you do not feel comfortable asking the researchers, you may also contact \_\_\_\_\_ at xxx-xxx-xxxx, (xxxxx@byu.edu).

I have read, understood, and received a copy of the above consent and desire of my own free will to participate in this study.

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C. Interview Guide

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Interview Site: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Your Instructions:

1. Tell the interviewee a *little* about yourself (where you go to school, etc... how you got involved in this research project)
2. Purpose of the interview: The purpose of this interview is to learn about how having an adopted sibling has impacted the way nonadopted white siblings interact with others.
3. Hand them the copy of the Informed Consent Form that requires their signature
  - **You will keep the signed copy** and hand them a copy to keep for their records.
  - *Remind them* that their comments during the interview will be kept confidential and that they can refuse to answer a question or discontinue the interview at any time during the interview process.
4. Ask them if it is okay to record the interview. Tell them you would like to record the interview, so you can go back over the tape to make sure you heard everything correctly. If they don't want you to record the interview, then you will have to write everything down by hand (feel free to write on the backs of the interview guide – make sure you number the questions & answers correctly though).
5. Make sure the recorder is **set to voice mode** and then **press the record button**.
  - *Start the interview*
6. After the interview, press the stop button. Have the interviewee fill out the *Demographic Questionnaire*. Thank the interviewee for his/her participation in this research project.

\*\*\*Remember: **YOU** need to get all of your thoughts/ideas about the interview out on paper while they are still fresh, so find a quiet place to go to after the interview and fill out the **Post-Interview Form**.\*\*\*

**CODE NUMBER** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Tell me about your family (how many brothers and sisters, etc.).
2. How would you describe your relationship with [name of adoptee] as the two of you were growing up?
  - a. *PROBE*: Was it close? Distant?
3. What was your initial reaction to your parents' decision to adopt Transracially?
4. What were the reactions of your extended family members to the adoption?
5. Did you ever have conversations with your siblings growing up about race or adoption?
6. How would you describe the place where you grew up?
  - a. What was the diversity like in the town that you grew up in (e.g. race, major businesses)?
    - i. *PROBE*: How did this affect...
      1. ...your family?
      2. ...you?
    - b. *PROBE*: What was it like growing up in a racially mixed family?
    - c. *PROBE*: Did [name of adopted sibling] ever have any conflicts with other in town because he/she is black? Tell me about them.
7. In your own words ,what was it like for your adopted sibling as he/she tried to "fit in"...
  - a. ... with other family members?
  - b. ...with the neighborhood kids?
  - c. at school?
    - i. Was he/she generally accepted there?
  - d. at church?

8. All of your siblings are white and not adopted, except for [name of adoptee(s)]. Do you remember any conversation that you had either with [name of adoptee(s)] or your parents about the difference?
9. Can you tell me about a time when you had to deal with people's curiosity about the racial differences in your family?
10. How did people at your school (teachers, students, the principal, etc.) treat your adopted sibling(s)?
11. What type of relationship do you have with [name of adoptee(s)]?
  - a. *PROBE*: In your opinion did he/she/they feel comfortable with you enough to talk about what was going on in his/her/their life and did you feel comfortable enough to respond?
12. What are some struggles that you noticed [name of adoptee] has had as a direct consequence of his/her race?
  - a. In what ways were you affected by these experiences?
  - b. Were there times where you felt the need to come to their aid? (In school for instance)
    - i. ...in conflicts that they had?
  - c. Were there times when you could have helped but did not?
    - i. What was going through your mind during this time?
  - d. What type of relationship does your adopted sibling have with his/her birth family?
13. How does having a black sibling affect the way you see your family?



- a. *PROBE*: Did you think of your family differently now that you had a black sibling and white siblings?
  - b. *PROBE*: Did it affect your perception of your family in any way?
14. How prepared do you think your family was to deal with adoption (*and race*) issues before they adopted?
15. Do you think when it comes to Transracial adoption it would be beneficial for the adoptive parents to develop and establish relationships with people from their child's ethnic community?
16. What types of things have you done to help your adopted sibling learn about his/her ethnic heritage?
- a. *PROBE*: How have you helped your adopted sibling identify with the black community?
    - i. Introducing him/her to black pop culture, such as prominent black authors, film stars, and singers would be an example?
    - ii. What about teaching them black history or visiting black historic sites, such as Martin Luther King, Jr.'s home in Atlanta, Georgia?
17. How have you educated others on the use of culturally appropriate and adoption-sensitive language?
18. How did you go about seeking diversity?
19. How does having an adopted sibling affect the way you interact with people who have a different background than you?
- a. *PROBE*: How has having a black sibling affected the way you interact with other black people?

20. How comfortable would you feel socializing in a group that includes members of the Muslim faith, Hispanics, or Polynesians, etc.?
- a. *PROBE*: Would you tell me about a time where you have been in a situation where you had the opportunity to associate with people of a different ethnic/racial background?
  - b. How about your siblings?
21. Can you describe your dating history?
- a. *PROBE*: Have you dated people of different races?
  - b. *PROBE*: Have you dated a black person or would you in the future?
22. Do you think having a sibling of a different race affected how you perceived yourself?
- a. *PROBE*: Did it change your sense of your identity?
23. Based on your experiences with [name(s) of adoptee(s)], when you think of black people what comes to mind?
24. As you reflect on the influence of your family, did the fact that you had a brother/sister of a different race/ethnicity shape you for the better or the worse?
25. How would you describe the impact that your religion has had on you being able to accept having a Transracially adopted sibling?
- a. *PROBE*: How has it helped you resolve conflicts between you and your adopted sibling?
  - b. *PROBE*: How has it helped you overlook the physical differences between the two of you?
26. What are your thoughts about blacks and the priesthood?
27. What do you think it means to be black?

28. Can you think of anything families should do intentionally if they are going to raise children of different races/cultures together?

**THANK THEM FOR TAKING THE TIME TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT!!**

**REMINDE THEM TO USE THE CONTACT INFO. ON THE CONSENT FORM FOR ANY QUESTIONS/CONCERNS THEY THINK OF ABOUT THE INTERVIEW THEY HAD.**

## Appendix D. Demographic Questionnaire

1. \*CODE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_
2. \*Date and Time of the interview \_\_\_\_\_
3. Address of the interview site \_\_\_\_\_
4. Age \_\_\_\_\_
5. Your age when your family first adopted a child \_\_\_\_\_
6. Children in your family.

	Gender	Race	Date of Birth	Age at adoption
#1	_____	_____	_____	_____
#2	_____	_____	_____	_____
#3	_____	_____	_____	_____
#4	_____	_____	_____	_____
#5	_____	_____	_____	_____
#6	_____	_____	_____	_____

List any other children below using this same format.

7. Religion \_\_\_\_\_
8. Educational Background (please circle the **highest** level completed)
  - a. Did Not Start/Finish High School
  - b. High School Graduate
  - c. Some College, No Degree
  - d. Bachelor's Degree
  - e. If Higher Than Bachelor's Degree, Please Indicate \_\_\_\_\_
9. Economic Status – family yearly income (only **circle** the most appropriate response)
 

a. \$0-\$15,000	d. \$45,001-\$60,000
b. \$15,001-\$30,000	e. \$60,001-\$100,000
c. \$30,001-\$45,000	f. Above \$100,001

**\*This question will be completed by the interviewer**

## Appendix E. Post-Interview Form

**Instructions: This section is to be completed by the interviewer shortly after the interview has been concluded. It is imperative that this section is completed promptly on the same day of the interview while the details of the interview are at the forefront of your mind.**

Please Describe the Following:

1. The setting of the interview (e.g. were there distractions in the background, was the interview conducted at an apartment/house):
2. The interviewee (e.g. was he/she talkative or reserved, did he/she seem to understand the questions, what type of emotions did they display & at what points of the interview?):
3. Difficulties you or the interviewee had during the interview:
4. Your feelings about the interview (e.g. how do you feel it went? Things you wish you had/had *not* done during the interview?):
5. Additional comments:

## Appendix F. Coding Scheme

### The Coding Process:

I coded the first 5 interviews in the beginning stages of the research while exploring the literature. I did the initial coding prior to developing the 5 dimensions of racial empathy. This process yielded very narrow analysis. I consulted with one of my mentors who suggested focusing on the topical themes before narrowing my coding to racial empathy. I stopped coding for racial empathy and began coding for the most prevalent topical themes. I recoded the first 5 interviews and continued to study the literature at which point I developed the 5 dimensions of racial empathy. Some of the aspects of the dimensions partially came from the content of the interviews.

The coding is binary, which suits the exploratory nature of this thesis. Participants who displayed at least 1 subcategory for a particular dimension of racial empathy were coded as having developed that dimension of racial empathy. The degree to which a dimension was developed was not captured by the binary coding. However, it is imperative that the context of the statements be taken into consideration when coding for the dimensions of racial empathy. Are participants simply engaging in a particular behavior because of the relationship they have with their black sibling(s) or does it have to do more with the racial differences between them and their black siblings? The point of racial empathy is that the participants develop it as a result of having black siblings and the racial dynamics involved within the sibling group. I leave it to future studies to examine the various degrees to which each dimension of racial empathy can be developed.

Topical Theme	Example: Interview Excerpt
Opposition to the Transracial Adoption	<p data-bbox="824 233 1344 338">“There’s been a few times where a black person [told us] ‘you should be able to [Transracially adopt].’”</p> <p data-bbox="1328 344 1435 375">- Sam</p> <p data-bbox="824 382 1390 487">“I think my mom’s family had a harder time with it. My grandpa’s family grew up in a home with old [racial] prejudices.”</p> <p data-bbox="1268 493 1435 525">- Anabelle</p>
Racial Awareness	<p data-bbox="824 531 1435 709">“People ask me questions like... ‘Do you think they will feel weird growing up [in the LDS Church]?’ ...[Jackson and Will] are only 5 and 2, so I’ve been [thinking] about it the last couple of years.”</p> <p data-bbox="1268 716 1435 747">- Jasmine</p> <p data-bbox="824 753 1435 932">“I’m just trying to teach her to open her eyes and look past [when she disagrees with people], so that’s when racism came in. I said, ‘You’ll be hated because of your skin color, which is messed up...’”</p> <p data-bbox="1295 938 1435 970">- Mason</p>
Racial Groups Nonadopted White Siblings Feel Comfortable Socializing With	<p data-bbox="824 972 1419 1035">“Culturally, I identify conservative LDS, but racially, I really don’t pay attention anymore.”</p> <p data-bbox="1268 1041 1435 1073">- Stephan</p> <p data-bbox="824 1079 1419 1142">“Honestly, [I feel most comfortable in] mixed groups.”</p> <p data-bbox="1268 1148 1435 1180">- Mathew</p>
Perception of Black People	<p data-bbox="824 1190 1435 1253">“I know that I love black people because of my brother.”</p> <p data-bbox="1295 1260 1435 1291">- Kelsey</p> <p data-bbox="824 1297 1435 1518">“There [are] a lot of stereotypes out there. ...my brother is black. ..[T]he typical stigma for black people – rapper kind of like a gangster. I’ve known different black people and [they] don’t act like the black stigma when you think of ‘black’ [you think] in gang.”</p> <p data-bbox="1328 1524 1435 1556">- Lexi</p>
Perception of Their Black Sibling(s)	<p data-bbox="824 1556 1338 1619">“She is like a white-black girl in a white society.”</p> <p data-bbox="1308 1625 1435 1656">- Jonah</p> <p data-bbox="824 1663 1419 1768">“I just see him as my little brother. I don’t see him any differently than any of my other siblings.”</p> <p data-bbox="1295 1774 1435 1806">- Megan</p>

<b>Dimension of Racial Empathy</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>
Being Aware of Racial Injustices toward Blacks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognizes racial inequalities between blacks and whites</li> <li>2. Recognizes racism, discrimination, and/or prejudice</li> <li>3. Actively promotes racial equality</li> </ol>
Forming Intimate Relationships with Blacks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has black friends</li> <li>2. Seeks out black friends/people</li> <li>3. Currently has or has previously had a romantic relationship with a black individual</li> </ol>
Ability to View Situations from a Black Person's Perspective	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consciously attempts to view situations as if he or she were black</li> <li>2. Has reactions that parallel a black person's emotional response to a situation (e.g. angry or frustrated because a black person was given a harsh sentence for a minor offense)</li> </ol>
Engaging in Black Culture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is learning or has learned about the different aspects black hair care (male or female)</li> <li>2. Is learning or has learned how to properly care for black hair (male or female)</li> <li>3. Seeks out black literature, history, forms of entertainment (e.g. movies with all black casts or dealing with issues blacks generally face; black musical artists or actors)</li> </ol>
Feeling Interconnected to or a Sense of Shared Fate with Blacks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Feels that situations or policies that specifically affect or apply to blacks also impacts him or her in the same way</li> <li>2. Views blacks as in-group members rather than as out-group members</li> </ol>