

Who Adopts: The Relationship of Adoption and Social-Demographic Characteristics of Women*

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Adoption has increased in the United States, at least until 1971. As adoptions have increased, they have become less concentrated among women unable to bear children, although these women are still more likely to adopt than are fertile women. There is broad normative support for adoption and about 4 percent of American women have adopted a child by the time they are 45 years old. Women who adopt are found in all racial, religious and socioeconomic groups. Data are from national household surveys in 1955 and 1973, and from federal statistics for the years 1957-1974.