



In Their Voices: Black Americans on Transracial Adoption

Rhonda M. Roorda

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While many proponents of transracial adoption claim that American society is increasingly becoming “color-blind,” a growing body of research reveals that for transracial adoptees of all backgrounds, racial identity does matter. Rhonda M. Roorda elaborates significantly on that finding, specifically studying the effects of the adoption of black and biracial children by white parents. She incorporates diverse perspectives on transracial adoption by concerned black Americans of various ages, including those who lived through Jim Crow and the Civil Rights era. All her interviewees have been involved either personally or professionally in the lives of transracial adoptees, and they offer strategies for navigating systemic racial inequalities while affirming the importance of black communities in the lives of transracial adoptive families.

In Their Voices is for parents, child-welfare providers, social workers, psychologists, educators, therapists, and adoptees from all backgrounds who seek clarity about this phenomenon. The author examines how social attitudes and federal policies concerning transracial adoption have changed over the last several decades. She also includes suggestions on how to revise transracial adoption policy to better reflect the needs of transracial adoptive families.

Perhaps most important, In Their Voices is packed with advice for parents who are invested in nurturing a positive self-image in their adopted children of color and the crucial perspectives those parents should consider when raising their children. It offers adoptees of color encouragement in overcoming discrimination and explains why a “race-neutral” environment, maintained by so many white parents, is not ideal for adoptees or their families.

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