

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

A STUDY OF PEOPLE WHO APPLY TO BECOME FOSTER PARENTS

Applicants for Foster Parenthood at
The Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg
During the Period January 1, 1959
to December 31, 1960

Being the report of a Research Project submitted
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Social Work

by

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May, 1961



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writers of this study wish to express their sincere appreciation for the interest, guidance, and advice received from the members of the faculty of the University of Manitoba School of Social Work, particularly Professor M. Roger and Professor E. Hill.

We also acknowledge the cooperation and assistance of Doctor G. I. Paul, Assistant Professor of Actuarial Mathematics and Statistics, and Mr. H. Rogers, Acting Executive Director, and Staff of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.

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ABSTRACT

This is a limited study of one hundred and forty one applications for foster parenthood to the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg. The area of study involved such aspects as the applicant's age; residence; race; national origin; religion; occupation; education; earnings; the age and sex of child preferred; number of own children in applicant's home; and whether or not the applicant owned his own home. In this study relevant data was obtained from pertinent case records and compiled on a schedule.

Major findings were that the applicant tended to fall within the age grouping from thirty to thirty nine years; was of white racial, British national origin, and protestant religion; and preferred the pre-school female child. The applicant's earnings tended to fall within the grouping three thousand to four thousand four hundred and ninety nine dollars; tended to be a home-owner; tended to have three or less children of their own living at home; tended to be of the non-professional occupations excluding the managerial and proprietary classification; and had an educational level of Grade Nine to Twelve inclusive.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Foster homes are now generally accepted as a way of meeting the needs of most children who must leave their own homes. Recognized child caring agencies frequently provide care for the child. These agencies are the overt expression of the community's concern that the inalienable right of each child to grow and develop to the maximum of his potential, is fulfilled. To enable a child caring agency to adequately discharge this responsibility, foster homes play a vital part.

The family is the most important primary group in the growth and development of the individual. To give continuity to the primary group's influence, child caring agencies make use of the foster home. It has not always been this way. The recognition and acceptance of the importance that this continuity not be disrupted or broken has been in existence for a relatively short time. Prior to the 1940's, the customary method of caring for children away from their natural homes was in institutions. With social work's growing knowledge of the forces acting on the emotional growth and development of a person, the importance of close personal relationships for the nurture of this growth and development also became apparent. Many institutions, despite their strengths in other areas, generally could not provide children with these necessary close personal relationships. With rapidly growing awareness, social work found that this could be provided in the homes of substitute parents. These substitute or foster parents were, in the beginning, selected on the basis of their material possessions,

such as income and kind of home. But, today, along with social work's growing knowledge and experience, an agency making foster home placements, is "committed to the needs of the child as the primary focus of practice, policy and procedure. Children need good physical care and opportunities for learning and achieving. They need support for growth to full adulthood in family and community. Basic to all these is mature, parental love -- that is, warmth, recognition and guidance toward eventual self-discipline."¹

A foster home is defined as "a private home in which dependent, delinquent or neglected child or children are placed for care."² A foster parent is "the person in a private home who takes the place of the natural parent."³ From these definitions it can be seen that before there can be foster homes, there must be persons who are prepared to take the place of the natural parents, who are neither kith nor kin to the child, but in essence are total strangers. At times, the child is one who is not of the same race, color, or religion as the foster parents.

While the importance of foster homes is both widely recognized and accepted, the numbers of available foster homes rarely keeps pace with the numbers of children who are in need of them. This study, part of a study of problems in child placement, undertaken by the second year students in the School of Social Work, The University of Manitoba, is concerned with the problem of insufficient numbers of foster homes. The Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg indicated an interest in this study and

¹Anne Campbell, "Principles of Social Work Applied to Adoption", pp. 1.

²Earl F. Young, Dictionary of Social Welfare. pp. 82-83.

³Ibid, pp. 82-83.

suggested several avenues of investigation. These were the characteristics and motives of persons who apply to be foster parents; why persons who make inquiries to be foster parents fail to follow through by completing formal applications; the loss of approved foster homes, either by voluntary withdrawal by the foster parents, or on the recommendation of the social worker. It quickly became evident that a study of any one of these avenues would require more time, finances, and staff than were available. Hence, of necessity the study had to be limited to certain socio-economic characteristics of the persons applying to be foster parents. These characteristics are generally descriptive of the family and its socio-economic status.

The shortage of foster homes is of concern, not only to child caring agencies, but to all social workers. Since meaningful personal relationships are the keystone of social work, and its efforts are focused in that direction, it follows that social workers have responsibility for selection of parents who can best meet the individual needs of each child. The foster home is part of such efforts, and a shortage of foster homes can contribute to social work failing in this responsibility.

This study includes all applications by foster parent applicants to the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, during the period January 1, 1959, to December 31, 1960. In reviewing the literature, no studies of a nature similar to this one could be located.

The hypothesis of this study is:

There exists a pattern of similar and measurable characteristics among applicants for foster parenthood.

There are certain limitations in this study: the characteristics to be studied are social and economic factors. These would be examined to determine if these factors are characteristic of foster parent applicants. The students doing the study do not suggest that they have included every possible socio-economic characteristic that could be used to describe foster parent applicants.

In support of the hypothesis, nine sub-hypotheses were formulated. These were:

1. Applicants for foster parenthood tend to come in numbers equal to the ratio of municipal population to the total population given service to by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.
2. Applicants for foster parenthood tend to have three or less unmarried children of their own living at home at the time of application.
3. Applicants for foster parenthood are those who tend to have a preference for female children whose age range is from six to twelve years.
4. Applicants for foster parenthood are those whose educational standards are between and including Grades Nine to Twelve.
5. Applicants for foster parenthood tend to fall within the age range thirty-five to forty-four years.
6. Applicants for foster parenthood tend to be of the white racial origin, British national origin, and Protestant religion.
7. Applicants for foster parenthood tend to come from occupations which are neither professional, nor proprietary and managerial.

8. Applicants for foster parenthood tend to be those whose incomes fall within the two-thousand to two-thousand-nine-hundred-and ninety-nine dollar range per year.
9. Applicants for foster parenthood are those who tend to own their own homes at time of application.

Although there were no comparable studies to this one, certain literature in the field of casework services to foster parents and foster children, and the associated field of adoptions, was valuable in preparing a background for this study. A research paper concerning adoptive parents was useful in drawing parallels concerning foster parents. Chapter II is devoted to a more detailed review of this literature.

Chapter III describes the methods used in the study. It sets forth the scope and limitations of the project and defines terms which might otherwise be misinterpreted. The raw data for this study was obtained from the foster home files at the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg. The schedule method was used in the collection of data, and the information was gathered from one hundred and forty-one applications. This represented the total numbers of applications completed during the period under review. Since these applications constituted the entire universe of study, the sampling method was not required. The schedule consisted of eleven questions including "not stated", or "not known", for any data that could not be obtained.

There were limitations, notably that the material used was obtained from the files, and therefore, only socio-economic factors of the applicants could be considered. No reference could be made to deeper psychological motivations for applying. Not all the schedule questions could be

answered from every file, due to omissions in the applications and recording. This had an effect on the final results.

In Chapter IV, the data was compiled and analyzed, in regard to the socio-economic characteristics of the foster parent applicants studied. Comparisons were presented where they were appropriate and useful. The data was presented in both graphic and tabular form. Comparisons were made on the basis of percentages within the universe, as well as with the population of the area served by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg.

In Chapter V, the findings arising out of the analysis were summarized and evaluated in relation to our hypothesis.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Although there is extensive literature on the broad subject of foster homes and adoptions, there has been little research done, particularly on projects that might have had some direct contribution to the study undertaken by this group.

A comparative study of adoptive families was completed by Warner Sanderman in June, 1953. This study stated that for adopting fathers, the age mode in all cases was in the group 35 to 39 years; for the adopting mothers the mode was in this age group in two cases and 30 to 34 years in two other cases; further that the educational level, high school or better, of adopting parents was considerably higher than that of the general population; also, that the adopting parents come from a specific social and occupational level. This study in addition examined some of the personal and interpersonal factors which are considered important in evaluating adoption homes.¹

The interpersonal factors were not applicable or helpful to this study, as this project did not go into psychological areas and motivations. The above findings, however, were pertinent to our assumptions in regard to age characteristics of those who were making application to become foster parents.

¹Warner Sanderman, "A Comparative Study of Adoptive Families in Metropolitan Winnipeg", Dep. Col. Thesis, Winnipeg, University of Manitoba, June 1953, pp. 10 - 24.

This study has limited itself to certain socio-economic characteristics of the persons applying to become foster parents. In this respect, Wilensky and Lebeaux draw interesting comparisons with adoption applicants, outlining that children for adoption are almost always placed in homes ranging upward from the middle class, and that foster homes are nowadays found mostly among lower-middle and upper-middle working class families.²

David Crystal in his article "What Keeps us from Giving Children What We Know They Need?", states that foster parenthood in being associated with a social agency, brings out negative associations in the minds of the public; that the opposite feeling of prestige, status, etc., is enjoyed by people who act in response to some disaster, and who are not under agency supervision. To be a foster parent is to invite immediate practical questions from friends and neighbours as to economic motive, primarily, and in a sense to take on the stigma attached to being a recipient of "Welfare". It appears, therefore, that the status associated with foster parenthood is not consonant with American cultural mores.³

This public attitude in part influenced the formulation of the hypothesis and sub-hypothesis of this study. It was felt, that in contrast to adoptions, the foster home applicants would be from a lower economic, educational and social group.

²Wilensky and Lebeaux. Industrial Society and Social Welfare. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1958, p. 170.

³David Crystal, "What Keeps us from Giving Children What We Know They Need?", Social Service Review. Vol. 27, 1953, pp. 136-143.

Much of the literature, however, tends to deal more with motivation, community attitudes, basic components of a healthy foster home, and other closely related material. For example, Dorothy Hutchinson states:

"The wish for a child so often reflects the desire to love or to be loved. Frequently, children are to the foster parents the emblem of love. Especially is this true of little girls, and this is one explanation of the inordinate demand for them by adoptive parents ... The foster parent who wishes to use a foster child as "treatment" for his own child or as a remedy for a bad marital relationship cannot offer a home atmosphere and an emotional environment conducive to the best interests of a foster child."⁴

Lorene Stubbins outlines some of the positive characteristics of a healthy foster home.

"Foster parents should be young couples as well as middle aged people, of varied interests, and in varied situations in order to meet the needs of a sound foster home program. They work in close relationship with the agency where they get financial and moral assistance and support. The foster parents should be emotionally mature, fond of children, flexible in handling children and able to co-operate with the agency. It is very detrimental to the child if the motive of a foster parent is purely selfish."⁵

⁴Dorothy C. Hutchinson. In Quest of Foster Parents, New York, Columbia Press, 1943, p. 14.

⁵Lorene Stubbins, "Foster Home Care", Canadian Welfare Council, Ottawa, 1951, p. 2.

Ruth Michaels states that "There can be as many motivations for taking a foster child as there are for having one biologically. Caseworkers should have knowledge of the neurotic as well as the healthy motivations for parenthood."⁶

Other literature, such as "Child Welfare", relates some of the expectations of foster homes.

"In recruiting and selecting foster homes we are looking for these essentials: sound well-integrated families capable of offering a child a stable experience in family and community living; with the capacity to love and accept a child not their own; able to share responsibility for the child with the agency and the own family; and able to accept the agencies ultimate responsibility for the child's welfare during placement."⁷

This study, however, is limited, and does not go into the area of motives. A separate study would be required. The above illustrations, however, do reveal some of the material which is available on the general subject matter.

In perusing the literature, two articles based on studies or projects seemed of some importance to this group's project, and correspondence was forwarded to the authors concerned, requesting their co-operation in forwarding the results of their studies. Letters were sent to Miss Lois Wildy, Executive Director of the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society, and also to Mr. Francis Naughton, casework supervisor of the Astor Home for Children, Rhineback, New York.

⁶Ruth Michaels, "Special Problems in Casework with Adoptive Parents", Adoption Principles and Services, Jan. 1952, p. 38.

⁷Child Welfare, "Some Principles Basic in Homefinding", Vol. 30, No. 10 (Dec. 1951), p. 14.

Miss Wildy, in an article in "Child Welfare" discussed a "Research project concerned with foster home treatment ... in an attempt to develop adequate facilities for children needing specialized foster care".⁸

She had made some pertinent comments in this article which were taken into consideration in this project. She noted for example that "of the seven foster families in this project the foster parents are all over forty, but in one of the four homes currently under study, the couple are in their thirties. They all have children of their own, although only one has young children. All save one are homeowners"⁹

A reply from Miss Wildy was received, but a copy of their findings was not included as their project was an ongoing activity of their agency and they did not have available for circulation any sort of summary report on this subject.

Mr. Francis Naughton in his article had made mention that one outgrowth of their project was "the development by Ralph Calvin, clinical psychologist, and John Bohman, social worker, of the Astor Home Staff, of a projective test in the form of a questionnaire, for uncovering the feelings and attitudes of foster parents toward children, behaviour, agency ..."¹⁰ No reply, however, was received to the correspondence here.

⁸Lois Wildy, "The Professional Foster Home", Child Welfare, Vol. XXXIV, No. 1 (1955), pp. 1-5.

⁹Ibid, p. 5.

¹⁰Francis Naughton, "Foster Home Placement as an Adjunct to Residential Treatment". Social Casework, Vol. 38, 1957. pp. 288-95.

In view of the lack of appropriate studies which could be applied to this project, it was necessary to commence from only limited material, and from some general observations that the group had made as a result of each individual's experience.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

After defining the topic and formulating the hypothesis with its nine sub-hypotheses, the study group set up a schedule that appeared to be workable. The schedule was tested with a selection of files of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg. As was expected, on examination and analysis of collected data, minor changes on the schedule were made adding new items while discarding those of little or no value. The schedule as used in its final form is to be found in Appendix "A".

During the testing of the schedule it was learned that in the year 1959 the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg had had only 245 enquiries concerning foster child care. Though the agency kept no complete record of the nature of the enquiries it was expected that a sufficient number of completed applications would be found within the definition to give a valid quantity suitable to the purposes of the study. However, as the total number of completed applications was only seventy, this not being sufficient, it was decided to include the year 1960. The final number of cases studied totalled 141.

From the face sheets, case records, health forms and application forms, separate schedules for each case studied were completed. A code system was set up by coding each schedule used for each case with a master sheet. As each schedule was completed it was checked. The recording book used by the Society was checked as well, to be sure that all files were obtained for the study's use.

After all the necessary data had been gathered from the 141 cases, it was coded in such a way as to afford accurate control of the compiling of the data. Each question on the schedule was numbered according to the nine sub-hypotheses presented in support of the study's main hypothesis. Then each unit of classification was assigned a three-digit number in consecutive order with the first digit corresponding to that of the numbered sub-hypothesis.

For example, question number two had six possible answers. They were coded 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206. Again, question number seven, with four possible answers, was coded 701, 702, 703, 704. The same pattern was followed for all the questions on the schedule with the exception of question number one. In short, each possible answer in the schedule was given a code number, but in such a way as to easily locate the same in relation to the respective sub-hypothesis.

It is important to be aware of the method of handling question number one, the residence of the applicant. The study made use of the Winnipeg Metropolitan Postal Area Directory, Queen's Printer (Ottawa) Cat. No. P.O. 4-360, 1960. This publication identifies the municipal area for each street listed. In organizing the data, the same coded method mentioned in the preceeding paragraph was then observed.

The study proceeded to collect and compile the data in the following way. One person read the coded answers, using the code number for each schedule. The other members of the study group recorded each answer on cards numbered correspondingly to the coded schedule. Each schedule was completely tabulated before going on to the next one. The results ob-

tained were then placed in table or graph form as will be seen in Chapter IV of this study, with an analysis of the related questions.

DEFINITIONS

- Applicants - Those people who apply to the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg by formal application for foster-parenthood. This includes those applicants rejected and those accepted.
- Child - A boy or girl actually or apparently under 18 years of age, as defined by the Child Welfare Act of the Province of Manitoba.
- Age - As at last birthday prior to application.
- Foster Home - A private home in which a dependent, delinquent or neglected child or children are placed for care.
- Foster parent - The person in a foster home who takes the place of a natural parent.
- Earnings - Total monies derived from wages, salaries and services by the breadwinner.
- Owned home - A dwelling in possession of the applicant, whether a clear title is held, or mortgaged, that is owner occupied.
- Race - Using the following terms, namely white, Negroid, North American Indian, Oriental, or Metis.
- Religion - That spiritual affiliation professed by the applicant, limited to Protestant, Catholic and other. Protestant includes Christian other than Catholic, and Catholic includes Roman Catholic, Ukrainian Catholic and Greek Catholic.

National origin - As stated on the application.

Non-professional
occupations -

Any of the occupations listed in the census, 1951, other than those occupations listed as professional. The non-professional occupations include proprietary and managerial, clerical, agricultural, fishing, hunting and trapping, logging, mining and quarrying, manufacturing and mechanical, electric light and power production, transportation, communication, commercial, financial, service and labours, (not agricultural, fishing, logging or mining).

University -

By this we mean having enrolled at a university, whether studies completed or not.

The Winnipeg Children's Aid Society - The incorporated Society (under the Child Welfare Act of Manitoba) serving the area covered in the Child Care Manual of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg. The agency gives service in the cities of Winnipeg, St. James and East Kildonan; and the municipalities of Fort Garry (includes St. Norbert and Fort Whyte), St. Vital, Brooklands (includes Weston), North Kildonan, Old Kildonan, Transcona, East St. Paul, West St. Paul and Tuxedo.

UNITS OF CLASSIFICATION AND PROPOSED METHOD OF ANALYSIS

Applicants were classified as coming from the major municipal corporations serviced by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg (see

definitions). A comparison was made of the percentage of applicants coming from each municipal corporation to the population percentage a specific municipality had in relation to the entire area covered by the agency.

The number of unmarried children living in the home of the applicant at the time of application was classified as none, 1, 2 - 6. The age of these children was classified in units of male, female, 0 - 11 months, 12 months to 5 years, 6 - 12 years, 13 - 18 years, and not stated. In the analysis the study observed the percentage of each unit of classification as compared to the total number of cases studied. A table was used in presenting and analyzing this data.

The units of classification re age and sex of child preferred were identical to those mentioned above with the exception of adding the classification of no preference to both sex and age of child preferred. In the analysis we put the information in table form, showing which age and sex group was most preferred. We also attempted to show what percentage of applicants had special preferences for a certain specific group of children.

The units of classification for the grade completed by applicant was for male and female, Grade I - VIII, Grade IX - XII, university, and not stated. The data was analyzed in table form.

The units of classification re age of applicant were for male and female, 20 - 24 years, 25 - 29 years, 30 - 34 years, etc., till 60 - 64 years, 65 plus. We also included the classification of not stated, and other. The analysis was again done in table form.

The racial origin of applicants was classified for male and female, white, Negroid, North American Indian, Oriental, Metis, and not stated. The applicant's national origin was classified for male and female, British (includes English, Irish, Scottish and Welsh), Ukrainian, German, Polish, French, Scandinavian, Netherlands, Russian, Italian, other European, Asiatic, not stated, and other.

Religious classification was for male and female, Protestant, Catholic, not stated, and other.

A table was used only for analyzing the national origin of the applicants. We attempted to determine the percentage of applicants that were of white racial origin, British national origin, and Protestant religion.

The occupation of the male applicant was classified as professional, managerial and proprietary, other non-professional, and not stated. Analysis was done in table form.

The earnings of applicants was classified in dollar units of 0 - \$999; \$1,000 - \$1,499; etc., to \$5,500 - \$5,999; \$6,000 plus. Other and not stated were again added. A graph was used to analyze this data.

The ownership of home was classified as, yes, no and not stated.

LIMITATIONS

In trying to focus the study and determine its scope it was found that the project, although it could reveal some pertinent trends, would have some definite limitations. One of the major limitations was the time being planned to devote to this study. The study was necessarily limited to 141 applications, these covering the period of 1959 and 1960. It was realized that a study of such a relatively small number of applicants would be limited in its validity.

In addition to this, the study was limited to the files of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg. There were no personal interviews with the applicants. In these files the study was also limited to possible bias of the applicant and social worker, and this was taken into consideration.

It was also remembered that there have been people coming to the agency to enquire about being foster parents and who were not given the opportunity to fill in a formal application form. There may have been some obvious reason for the intake worker to refuse the applicant. The applicant may not have qualified regardless of some good qualities he may have had. Age, for example, could have been the deciding factor. The result is that there was no written record on file regarding the characteristics of this applicant. An example of this was that of 806 enquiries made in 1959 and 1960, only 141 applicants filled in formal applications. Thus the limitations of the findings can be seen.

Regarding the findings generally, the study was concerned only with the specific areas covered by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg. There could be certain aspects and characteristics found much more strongly in the City of Winnipeg than in a rural area, for example. Another more highly industrialized city may have been markedly different in its characteristics of applicants. Whereas the study's findings could have some value to other agencies, these differences needed to be taken into consideration.

The limitations in connection with the files were also affected by the fact that the study had not planned to make it a practice to read fully the actual recording of interviews. For example, in some instances, such as the applicants education, we looked through the recording for this in-

formation because it was not generally on the face sheet, but this was not found to be necessary in every case. The study was limited to the application form itself and the form filled in by the Provincial Health Department in regard to sanitation and room available, etc. It was also remembered that these forms were not set up for research purposes and thus may not be as accurate and specific as one would like them to be for the purposes of this study.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

In preparing and utilizing a statistical analysis of a study of this nature, it must be borne in mind that far-reaching conclusions and impressions cannot be definitely arrived at due to the numerical limitations of the sample with which the study dealt.

In all, one hundred and forty-one applications for foster parent-hood made to the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg in the years 1959 to 1960 were studied. Of these one hundred and forty-one applications, one hundred and thirty-five were married couples and four were widows, one a divorcee, and one, an unmarried woman. Thus, in Tables IV, V and VI, where the individual applicants were studied, the total was two hundred and seventy-six. In Table III, the total number of children requested was one hundred and sixty-one out of a total of one hundred and forty-one applications, due to the fact that some applicants requested more than one child.

TABLE I - RESIDENCE

In respect to the official residence of foster parent applicants, Table I has been compiled to set forth the information gathered as to the number of applicants who came from each municipal corporation given service by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg. These figures have been compared both numerically and in percentages with the total populations of each municipal corporation. The municipal corporations were listed by population in descending order.

TABLE I
Applications for Foster Parenthood by
Municipal Residence

Municipal Corporation	Number of Applicants	Percent of Total Applicants	² Population	Percent of Total Population
Winnipeg	67	47.5	255,093	68.1
St. James	10	07.1	26,502	07.1
St. Vital	8	05.7	23,672	06.3
East Kildonan	14	09.9	18,718	05.0
West Kildonan	8	05.7	15,256	04.0
Fort Garry	6	04.3	13,592	03.6
Transcona	15	10.6	8,312	02.2
North Kildonan	6	04.3	4,451	01.2
West St. Paul	4	02.8	1,623	00.4
Brooklands	2	01.4	3,941	01.1
East St. Paul	1	00.7	1,504	00.4
Tuxedo	0	00.0	1,163	00.3
Old Kildonan	0	00.0	1,011	00.3
Total	141	100.0	374,838	100.0

The findings fail to support the sub-hypothesis which stated that applicants for foster parenthood tend to come in numbers equally proportionate to the population of their respective municipal corporations. Most of the applicants (47.5 percent) came from Winnipeg. This number is more than four times the amount of the applicants who came from the

² Dominion Bureau of Statistics: "1956 Census Bulletin, 4 - 11".

next largest group, Transcona (10.6 percent). However, the greatest disproportion between the number of applicants and population occurred in Winnipeg, as can be seen from Table I, in that Winnipeg constitutes 68.1 percent of the population. Also, Transcona showed a higher proportion of foster parent applicants (10.6 percent) as compared to population (2.2 percent).

TABLE II - CHILDREN

It was thought that the numbers of applicants own unmarried children living at home would have an influence on their making application. Information was obtained as to the numbers of these children and is shown in Table II.

TABLE II

Number of Unmarried Children of Foster Parenthood
Applicants Living at Home at Time of Application

CHILDREN	APPLICANTS	PERCENTAGE OF APPLICANTS
0	15	10.6
1	43	30.5
2	39	27.7
3	31	22.0
4	7	5.0
5	5	3.5
6	1	0.7
TOTAL	141	100.0

The figures indicate that 90.8 percent of the applicants had three or less unmarried children of their own living at home at the time of

application and thus the sub-hypothesis has been substantiated. The figures also show a decreasing progression in the number of applicants as the size of the family increases.

TABLE III - CHILD PREFERENCE

This study posed the question that applicants for foster parenthood would have a preference for female children who ranged in age from six to twelve years. This was not supported, because the table shows that the child most desired was female, from twelve months to five years. It was interesting to note that the next preference was a child, no preference as to sex, from zero to eleven months. This second largest group indicated a preference for infants rather than older children.

TABLE III

Applications for Foster Parenthood by Child Preference

Sex of Children Preferred	0-11 mths.	12 mths. 5 yrs.	6 yrs. 12 yrs.	13 - 18 yrs.	NP	TOTAL
Male	8	11	17	1	0	37
Female	9	34	22	6	2	73
NP	28	12	8	1	2	51
Total	45	57	47	8	4	161

TABLE IV - EDUCATION

It is interesting to note that the majority of applicants (45.7 percent) were in the educational level grade IX to XII, which agreed with the sub-hypothesis. However, as there was a large group of applicants

(22.4 percent) who had not stated their education, the findings of the study might have been altered.

TABLE IV
Number of Applicants by Education

Sex of Applicant	Education of Applicant				
	I - VIII	IX - XII	Univ.	NS	Total
Male	38	62	5	30	135
Female	42	64	3	32	141
Total	80	126	8	62	276
Percent	29.0	45.7	2.9	22.4	100.0

TABLE V - AGE

This section sets out to establish that the majority of applicants fall in the age group 35 years to 44 years.

TABLE V
Age of Applicant at Time of Application

Sex of Applicant	Age of Applicant										TOTAL
	20 24	25 29	30 34	35 39	40 44	45 49	50 54	55 59	60 64	65	
Male	1	28	25	29	24	12	6	6	2	2	135
Female	8	27	33	27	16	18	4	4	1	3	141
Total	9	55	58	56	40	30	10	10	3	5	276
Percent	33	19.9	21.0	20.3	14.5	10.9	3.6	3.6	1.1	1.8	100.0

As can be noted from the above findings, only 34.8 percent of the total applicants fall in this age range. Our sub-hypothesis, therefore, is not borne out. There seems to be greater interest, however, in the age range 30 to 39 years where 41.3 percent have expressed their preference. More revealing is the fact that the majority - 61.2 percent of applicants come from the age span 25 to 39 years.

RACIAL ORIGIN

In regard to the racial origin of applicants, 274 were white and two were Negro. There was no representation from other racial groups known to reside in the areas given service to by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg. This may have been due to varied factors of cultural, economic and residential nature.

TABLE VI - NATIONAL ORIGIN

The findings indicate that the predominant group are of British national origin. Of the two hundred and seventy-six applicants, the one hundred and seven of British national origin is nearly three times as large as the next largest group, thirty-seven, of German origin; and more than triple the number from the third largest group, the thirty of French national origin.

TABLE VI

Number of Male and Female Applicants by National Origin

National Origin	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
British Isles	51	56	107	38.76
Ukraine	9	11	20	7.28
Germany	18	19	37	13.40
Poland	8	8	16	5.79
France	17	17	34	12.32
Scandinavia	1	3	4	1.45
Netherlands	13	14	27	9.78
Russia	1	1	2	0.72
Italy	1	3	4	1.45
Other European	6	1	7	2.53
Asiatic	1	1	2	0.72
Not Stated	3	1	4	1.45
Other	6	6	12	4.35
Total	135	141	276	100.0

RELIGION

Finally, concerning the question of religion, each individual male and female applicant was considered. Therefore, the findings were based on a total of two hundred and seventy-six applicants. The Protestant religion accounted for sixty-eight point nine percent of the total, which

was slightly more than twice the number of Catholic applicants (31.1 per cent). It was speculated that this might be due to the higher proportion of Protestants in the population.

The above findings support our sub-hypothesis.

TABLE VII - OCCUPATION

The findings of Table VII bear out the sub-hypothesis which states that applicants for foster parenthood tend to come from occupations which are neither professional nor managerial and proprietary. Those classified as other non-professional, number one hundred and twenty, which is eighty-nine percent of the total applicants. Four applicants were professional, and eleven were from the managerial and proprietary group. Together, these comprise only eleven percent of the total.

TABLE VII

Occupation of Male Applicant

Occupational Classification	Number of Cases	Percent
Professional	4	2.9
Managerial and Proprietary	11	8.1
Other non-professional	120	89.0
Not Stated	0	0
Total	135	100.0

TABLE VIII - HOME-OWNER

The study next looked at the distribution between home-owner and non-home-owner applicants, since it was considered that owning one's own home would be a characteristic of most applicants. The information obtained is shown in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII

Distribution of Applications by Home-Owner and
Non-Home-Owner

Home Ownership	Number	Percentage of Applicants
Home Owner	86	61.0
Non-Home-Owner	28	19.9
Not Stated	27	19.1
Total	141	100.0

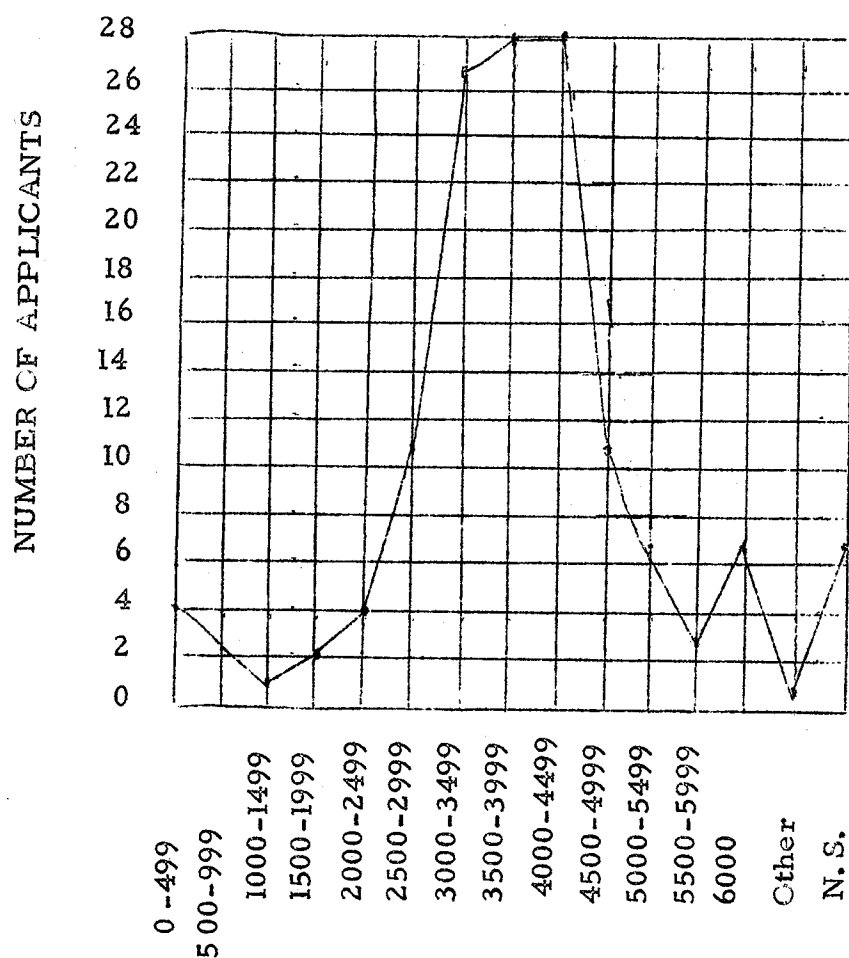
The figures indicate that sixty-one percent of the applicants were home-owners. The percentage of not-stated is not sufficiently large to have any measurable effect on the findings. Thus, the sub-hypothesis is substantiated.

Chapter IV has presented an analysis of the material obtained from the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg about the one hundred and forty-one applicants for foster parenthood which were completed in the years 1959-1960. Chapter V will be concerned with some of the broader implications of the material collected, especially in relation to the original hypothesis, will draw certain conclusions, and make certain recommendations.

FIGURE I - INCOME

In the analysis of the earnings of male applicants as indicated in the following graph, it was found that the largest number of applicants (83 out of 135 or 58.9 percent) had an income between \$3000 and \$4499. This disproves our sub-hypothesis which stated that the earnings were between \$2000 and \$2999. However, the difference between the amount mentioned in the sub-hypothesis and that found in the analysis was not felt to be substantial enough to draw any major conclusions.

FIGURE I
Number of Male Applicants by Income



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

In this study there were nine general areas in which observations and comparisons were made concerning characteristics of applicants for foster parenthood.

In this chapter, the data from Chapter IV will be evaluated with reference to the main hypothesis, and the sub-hypotheses.

In viewing the area of residence concerning applicants for foster parenthood it was noted that the findings do not substantiate the sub-hypothesis. In Winnipeg proper there was a noticeable disproportion of applicants (30% less) as compared to the total population. It was to be noted that within this area, certain sections are considered as blighted by the City Health authorities, and in view of this, applications may not have been accepted from this area. This may have been a contributing factor to the lack of applications.

The Town of Transcona and the Rural Municipality of West St. Paul indicated an interest in the foster home program. The percentage of applicants from Transcona was 10.6 whereas their population was 2.2% of the total population for the area; in West St. Paul the percentage of applicants was 2.8 whereas the population was 0.4%. It was also noted that East Kildonan had double the number of foster homes as compared with their population. This higher proportion may have been related to the fact that the former area is rail road, industrial and the latter, rural.

Some consideration needed to be given to the fact that there was some fluctuation in the population since the 1956 census statistics were compiled. This study was conducted of applicants who applied in the years of 1959 and 1960. Irrespective of this, the findings did not bear out the expectations that the applications would come proportionately from the various corporations.

As previously assumed, the great majority of the applicants had three or less children of their own living at home at the time of application. Our findings here appeared the most conclusive of the study.

In examining the preference of foster parent applicants for children, the data as illustrated in Table III did not support the sub-hypothesis. Our expectation to find a preference in the six to twelve year group revealed interest of only 29.1%. The trend appeared to favour pre-school children, with 63.4% of the applicants expressing their desire for this age group. Mention must be made that there were some applicants who had requested more than one child. It was not felt that this would alter our findings noticeably.

Insofar as sexual preference was concerned, the evidence was also inconclusive. There did not appear to be any significant desire for girls as only 45.3% of the applicants showed a preference for that group. Although there did appear (excluding no preference group) to be twice as many applicants for girls as for boys, it was noted that nearly one third of the applicants had expressed no preference as to sex. The study revealed that the age preference of foster children was of

greater concern to the foster parents than sexual preference. Only 2.5% showed no preference for age, whereas 31.7% showed no preference for sex of child. It was interesting to note that the older the child was that was requested by the applicant, the more specific the preference for male or female became.

Because of the large number of applicants who failed to reveal their educational standing the study was unable to determine conclusively the general educational trend. (In this respect 22.4% had not stated their educational achievement). There was, however, an indication that the majority of the applicants tended to have the educational standard between grades nine to twelve. The study consisted of a total of 141 families of whom four were widowed, one unmarried, one divorced, so that male applicants totalled only 135. It was not believed that this variance would appreciably alter the results of our findings.

An area of interest was the large regular age spread of the applicants. The age span of 35 to 44 years contained a total of 34.8% of the total universe which did not substantiate the sub-hypothesis. The previous ten-year span contained a higher number of applicants, and as this age group of 25 to 34 years was most likely to have had children of their own, this possibly could lend itself to further study. It was further expected that they would have recently established a home of their own and that in view of the above, financial remuneration might be a prime motive for their application. This was particularly significant in that the findings revealed the majority to have had three or less children of their own.

It was expected that the Children's Aid Society was encountering difficulty in obtaining sufficient foster homes for teen-age children. It was noted, for example, that 25.4% of the applicants who ranged in the age from 40 to 49 years, and who would chronologically be expected to care for adolescents, were requesting eight children, which is 5.0% of the children in the age group 13 to 18 years (note Table III). With the exception of preference for children of a lower age group than adolescence, it seemed that the wide age span of applicants lent itself well towards selection of suitable foster parents to meet the needs of the wards of the Society.

The data concerning the characteristics of racial origin, national origin and religion substantiated the sub-hypothesis. The findings on racial origin appeared most conclusive as 99.3% of the applicants were white. It was noted that there were no Indian or Metis applicants, although some may have considered their racial origin as French, Scottish, etc. This could account for some of the difficulties the Children's Aid Society was having in finding foster homes for Indian and Metis children. It was speculated that Indian and Metis population was located in the blighted areas. This could have prevented their making application for foster parenthood.

In regard to the religious affiliation, the findings revealed that over two thirds of the applicants were of the Protestant faith. This supported our sub-hypothesis. In view of the shortage of Catholic foster homes, it could be revealing if statistics had been available to indicate the proportion of the people of this religious affiliation that resided within the area served by the Society.

The national origin indicated that the majority of applicants tended to be of British origin. This confirmed the study's previous expectation.

The findings concerning the occupation of the applicants revealed that the largest number came from the non-professional, other than managerial or proprietary. It appeared they might have been wage earners from various occupations. This agreed with Chapter II, which stated that applicants tended to come from the higher working class and lower middle class. This was further substantiated by the annual income as revealed in Figure I. The occupational data supported the sub-hypothesis.

It was obvious that the question which concerned the income level of the applicants was greatly underestimated, as only 10.6% of the applicants ranged in this group. It was noted that there was an even distribution in the three income levels between \$3000 to \$4499 which comprised nearly 60% of the total group. One of the original intentions in the assumption that applicants' earning ranged from the \$2000 to \$2999 group, was to establish financial motivation as one of the factors leading to the application. As the data was analyzed, however, it was noted that a high proportion of applicants were in the age group of 25 to 34 years, inclusive; that they tended to have three or less children of their own; that they tended to own their own homes; and that their income varied between \$3000 to \$4499.

As already mentioned, the majority of applicants tended to be home owners, which agreed with our sub-hypothesis. The ratio of home owners to those who were renting was three to one, after excluding that group defined as not stated.

In the initial stage of the study an attempt was made to establish certain measurable socio-economic characteristics most likely to be found among applicants for foster parenthood. These characteristics were later elaborated through postulation of the sub-hypothesis. These were discussed above, and it was noted that the most "striking" characteristics of the foster parent applicant centred around the number of children in their own home; the applicants' racial and national origin, and religion; occupation; home ownership.

More specifically, the foster parent applicant was found to have three or fewer children of his own; was of white racial origin; Protestant religion; British national origin; and of the non-professional class to the exclusion of the proprietary and managerial classification; and owned his own home.

These characteristics of the foster parent applicant were expected to be of some help to the foster home finder of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg. This agency, in view of the usual lack of suitable applicants, could direct their publicity more towards the group illustrated earlier. As financial motivation does appear to be a factor, consideration should be given towards increasing ward maintenance, so that, in this manner, greater selection of suitable applicants within this group can be made. In view of the particular composition of the area covered by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, however, it was not expected that this study could be accurately applied elsewhere.

It was realized soon after this study was undertaken, that it would not be possible to include the deeper motivations which the

applicants may have had. This could be a subject for future research. It would appear to require a more intensive study, probably involving a series of interviews with individual applicants. It would also, confirm more conclusively the findings of this study.

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APPENDIX A SCHEDULE

Code Number _____ Date of Application _____
Address at time of application _____

1) Number of unmarried children in home at time of application:

Age	0-11 mos.	12 mos. -5yrs.	6-12 yrs.	13-18 yrs.	none	Not stated
No. of Ch.						

2) Age and sex of child preferred:

Sex	Age 0-11 mos.	12 mos. - 5 yrs.	6-12 yrs.	13-18 yrs.	No. Pref.	Not Stated
Male						
Female						
No Pref.						

3) Grade completed by applicant:

Sex	I-VIII	IX-XII	Univ.	Not Stated
Male				
Female				

4) Age of applicant at time of application:

	M	F	M	F		M	F
20-24	_____	_____	40-44	_____	60-64	_____	_____
25-29	_____	_____	45-49	_____	65+	_____	_____
30-34	_____	_____	50-54	_____	Not Stated	_____	_____
35-39	_____	_____	55-59	_____	Other	_____	_____

5) _____ M _____ F

ra-
cial
ori-
gin

White
Negroid
N. Amer. Indian
Oriental
Metis
Not stated

Na-
tional
Cri-
gin

British Isles
Ukrainian
German
Polish
French
Scandinavian
Netherlands
Russian
Italian
Other European
Asiatic
Not stated
Other

Re-
li-
gion

Protestant
Catholic
Not stated
Other

6) Occupation of male applicant at time of application:

M
Professional
Managerial & Proprietary
Other Non-professional
Not stated

7) Applicant's Earnings as stated on application:

\$ 0-999	_____	\$4000-4499	_____
1000-1499	_____	4500-4999	_____
1500-1999	_____	5000-5499	_____
2000-2499	_____	5500-5999	_____
2500-2999	_____	6000+	_____
3000-3499	_____	Other	_____
3500-3999	_____	Not stated	_____

8) Home owner: Yes _____ No _____
Not stated _____

Name of Researcher: _____

Date: _____