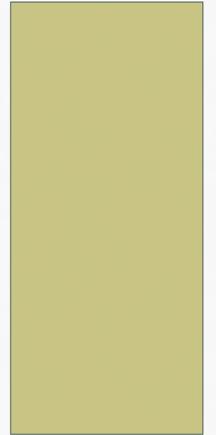


STATE-TO-STATE CHILD ADOPTION VARIATIONS: A POLITICAL CULTURE PERSPECTIVE

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THE DOMESTIC ADOPTION SYSTEM

- ❑ Complex yet crucial in starting millions of families over the years.
- ❑ About 7 Million Americans are considered adopted persons, about 100 million Americans have adoption in their immediate families.
- ❑ However, 130,000 US children are in foster care systems waiting to be adopted.

US ADOPTION SYSTEM CATEGORIES

❑ Public Foster Care System

- System in which a minor has been placed into a ward, group home, or private home of a state-certified caregiver referred to as a "foster parent".
- The placement of the child is usually arranged through the government or a social-service agency.

❑ Intercountry Adoption

- People from other countries can be adopted by US citizens

❑ Domestic Adoption System

- People who reside in the US can be adopted through private or public government agencies, or independently (depending on State law)

KINSHIP BY DESIGN

BY ELLEN HERMAN

- ❑ Outlines a basic timeline that displays American's shifting ideas about what constitutes as a legitimate family.
- ❑ Provides a basic narrative of the changes adoption has gone as both a policy and a concept
- ❑ Exposes how truly outdated adoption was and how far it has come more recently

Regulation and Interpretation (1900-1945)

Standardization and Naturalization (1930-1960)

Difference and Damage (1945-1975)

*Orphanages, baby farms, newspaper ads

* Working homes

*US Children's Bureau, the Child Welfare League of America, and other child welfare advocates began working towards making child placing governable by making adoption subject to state regulation

*Began working more towards "authenticity"

*Families began seeking out not only children who looked like they did, but also "rational fit"

*IQ testing, outcome studies, mental and developmental tests, and looking at family social history to see if a child was considered eligible for adoptions.

*Many children were deemed "unadoptable" just because of their background or culture.

*Older methods of defining and creating families gave way under pressure from new ideas and social movements.

*Children previously deemed un-adoptable because of disability, disease, race, and other factors were now eligible to be adopted.

*The reform of adoption services was considered a sign of enlightenment, progress, and civil rights within the child welfare world.

RELEVANCE TO THESIS

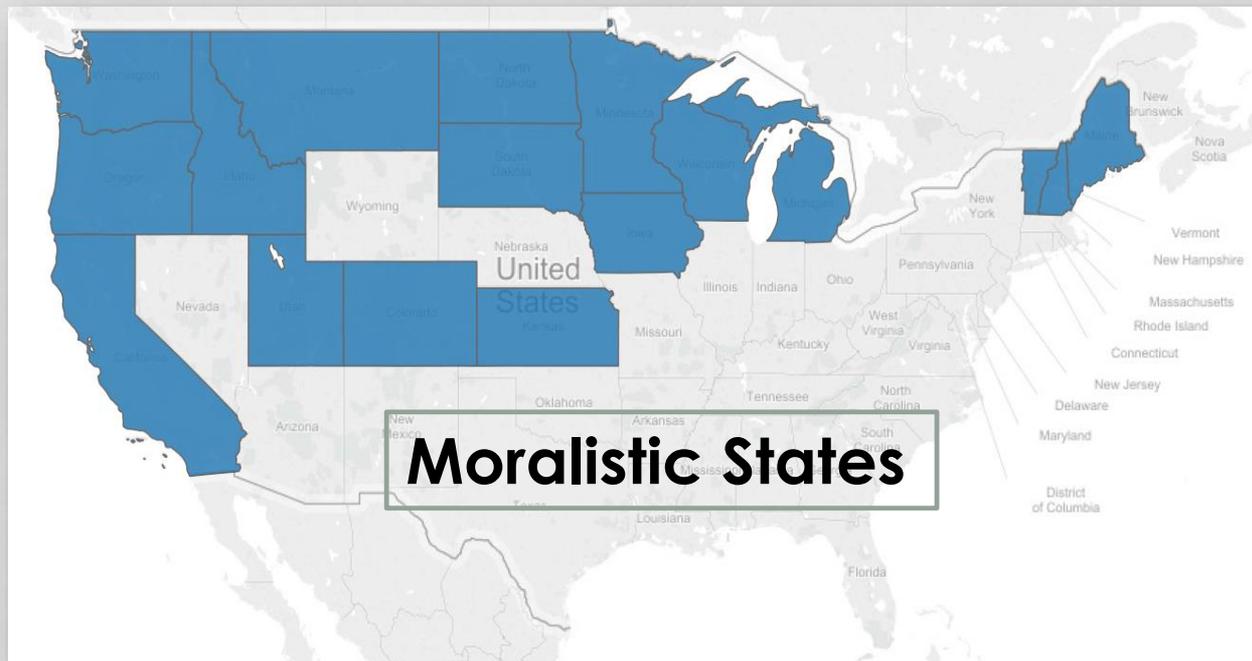
- ❑ Without the huge shift in who can adopt, who is being adopted, and what constitutes as a legitimate family, there would be little adoption variance with the states to examine.

RESEARCH QUESTION

- I analyze certain state level variable outcomes and state laws that pertain to adoption.
- I set out to answer the question do states with different political cultures have differing adoption laws and adoption outcomes from one another?
- If so, why?

MORALISTIC POLITICAL CULTURE

- Society is held to be more important than the individual.
- Government tends to be seen as a positive force.
- Serving the community is the core of the political relationships, even at the expense of individual loyalties and political friendships.



TRADITIONALISTIC POLITICAL CULTURE

- Social and family ties are prominent.
- Government is seen as an actor with a positive role in the community.
- Largely limited to securing the maintenance of the existing social order.
- Political leaders play a largely conservative and custodial role rather than being innovative.



ANALYSIS

- ❑ The Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)
- ❑ System that collects case-level information from state and tribal agencies on all children in foster care and those who have been adopted with a government agency.
- ❑ I gathered information on
 - The race of the child who was adopted
 - Whether or not the adoptive family received some type of government subsidy
 - The previous relationship the child had to the adoptive family
 - The adoptive family structure

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Provides a detailed record of every state specific laws as to:

Who may adopt

- Under 18
- State Resident
- Unmarried persons
- Married
- Homo/bisexual

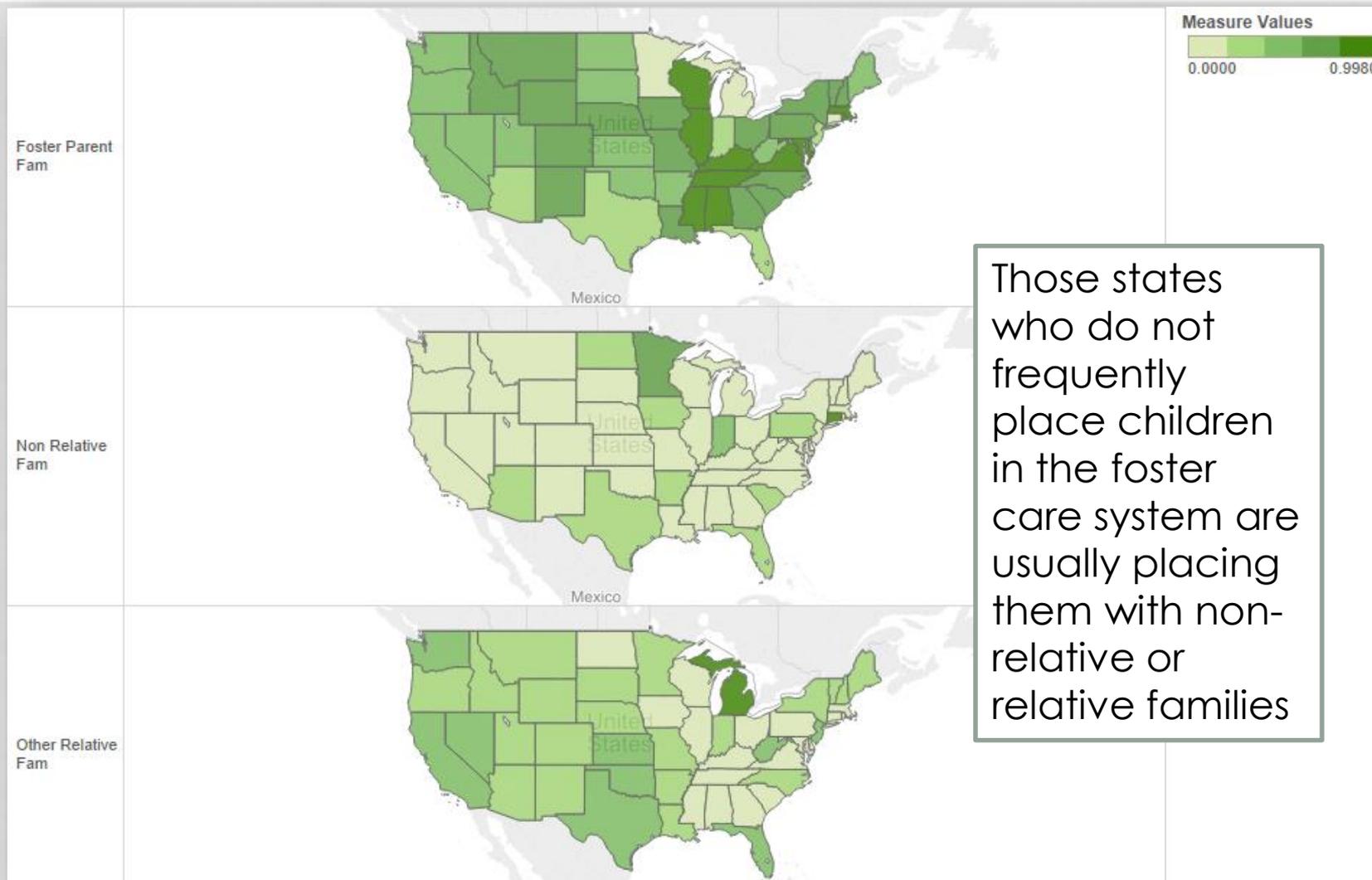
Who can place a child up for adoption

- Parents
- Guardians
- Agency
- Court

ANALYSIS

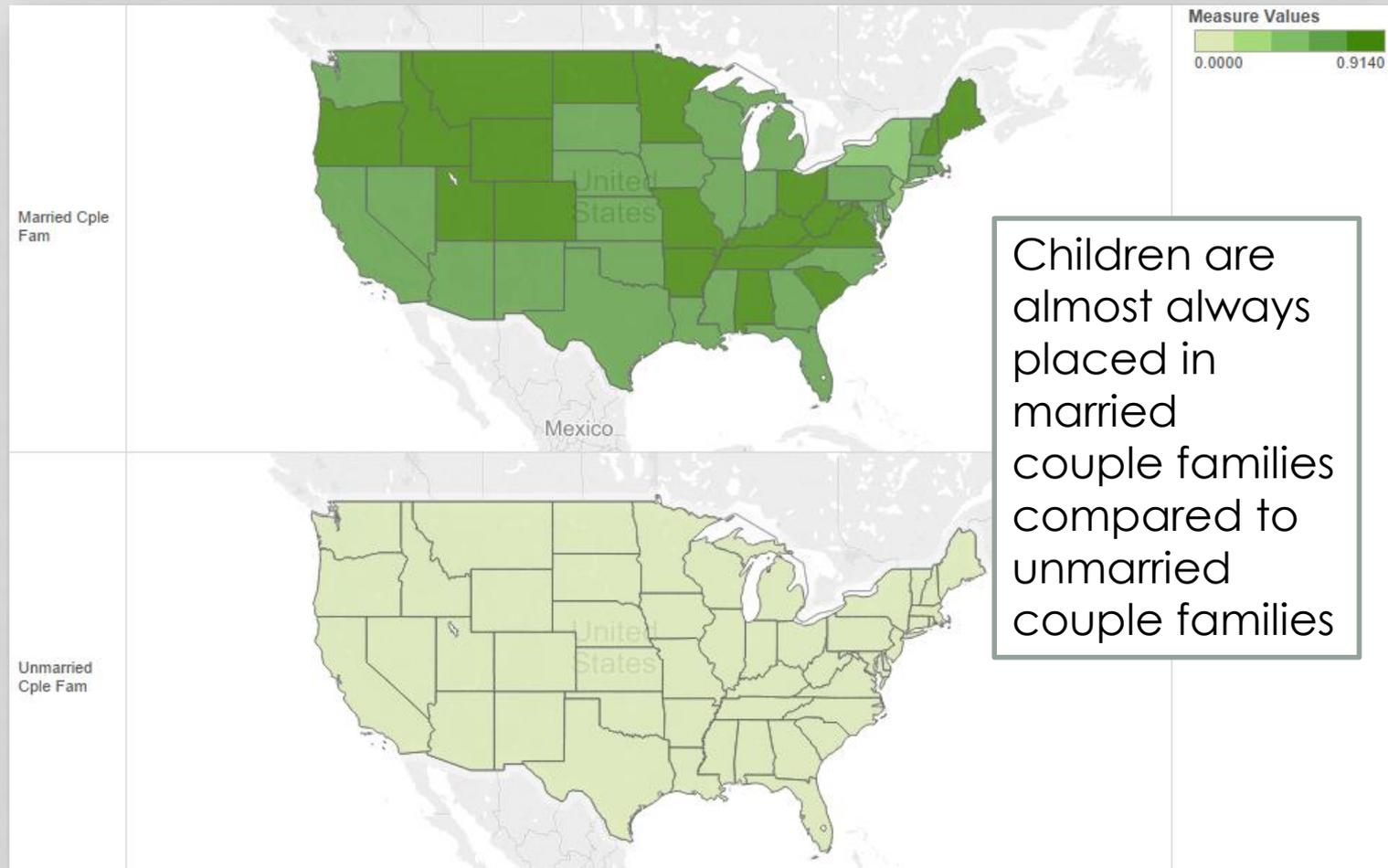
- ❑ Incorporated relevant work on adoption outcomes (AFCARS) and adoption laws (Department of Health and Human Services) with State's political culture variation (Elazar).
- ❑ Sought to find if political culture affected or influenced state's differing adoption outcomes and laws.

PERCENT OF PLACEMENTS WITH FOSTER PARENT PARENTS, NON RELATIVES, AND OTHER FAMILY

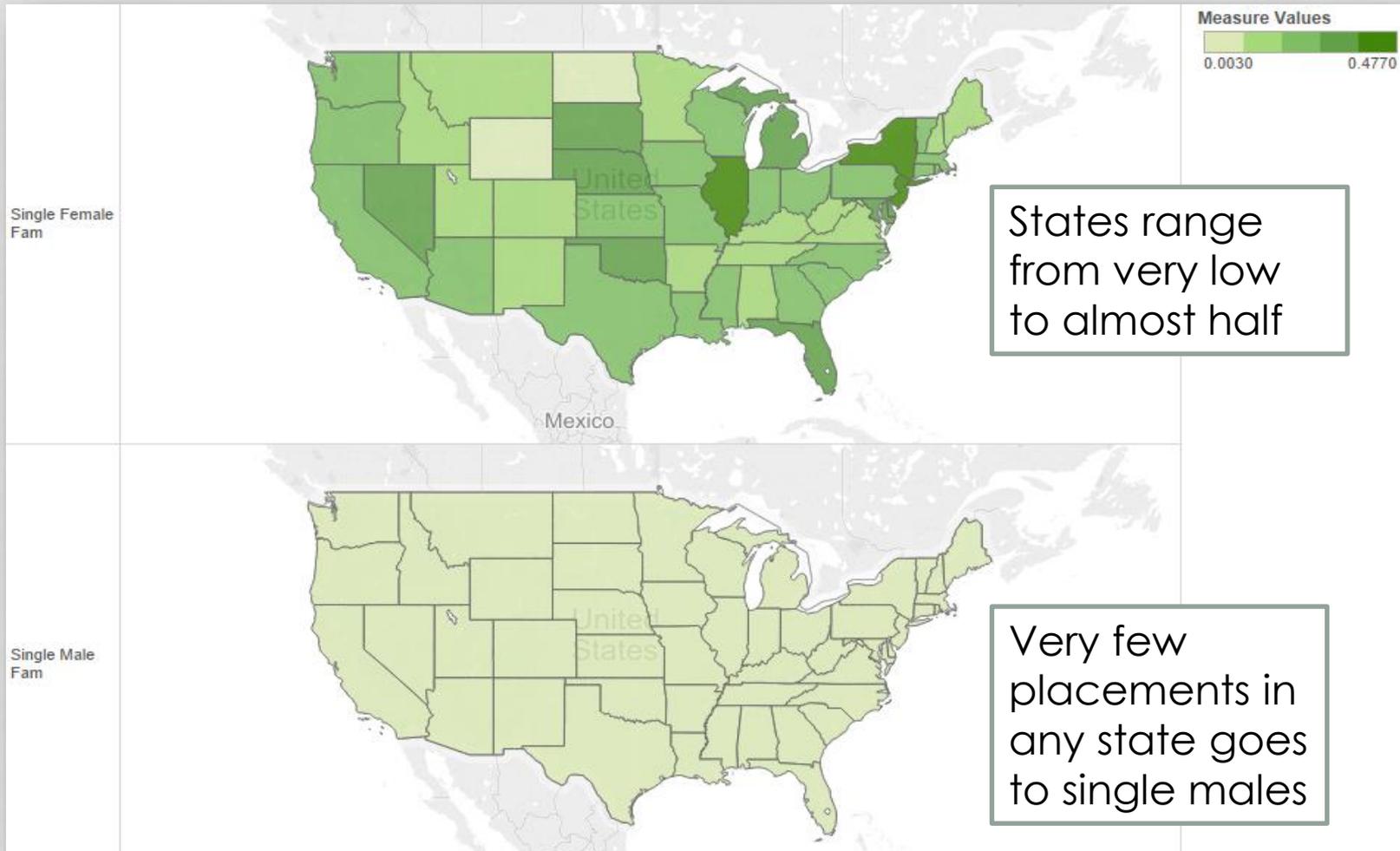


Those states who do not frequently place children in the foster care system are usually placing them with non-relative or relative families

PERCENT OF PLACEMENTS WITH MARRIED COUPLES VS UNMARRIED COUPLES



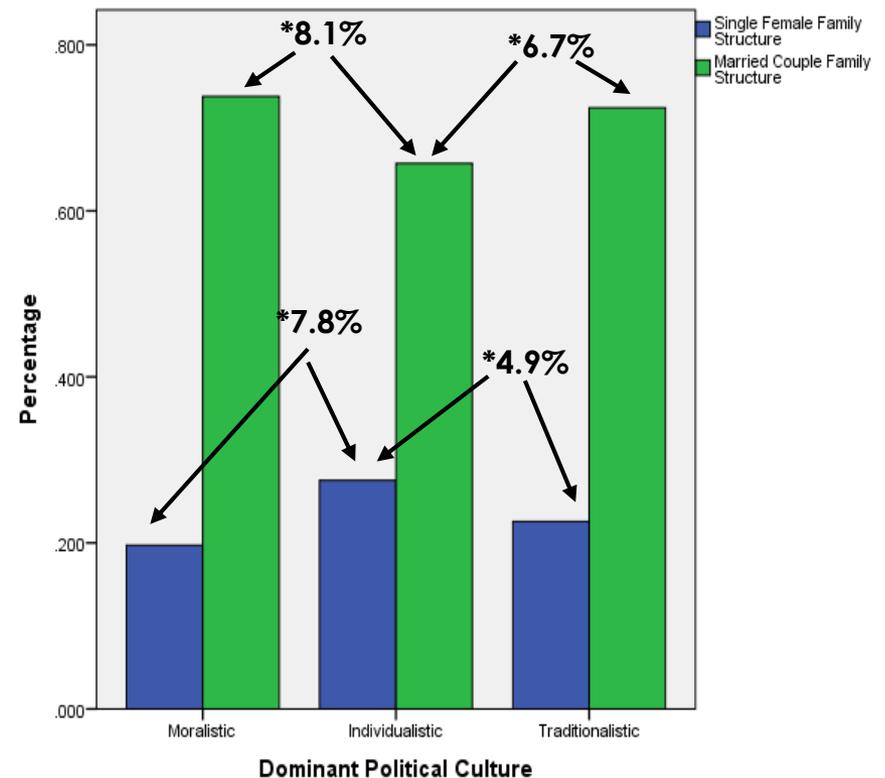
SINGLE FEMALE VS SINGLE MALE FAMILY PLACEMENTS



1. THOSE STATES WHO REPORT MORE MORALISTIC WILL HAVE HIGHER PERCENTAGES OF MARRIED COUPLE ADOPTIVE FAMILIES.
2. THOSE STATES WHO REPORT AS MORE INDIVIDUALISTIC WILL HAVE HIGHER PERCENTAGES OF SINGLE FEMALES ADOPTING CHILDREN.

Report

Dominant Political Culture, 1984		Married Couple Family Structure	Single Female Family Structure
Moralistic	Mean	.73788	.19718
	N	17	17
	Std. Deviation	.094137	.073338
Individualistic	Mean	.65718	.27535
	N	17	17
	Std. Deviation	.108788	.105547
Traditionalistic	Mean	.72425	.22588
	N	16	16
	Std. Deviation	.064573	.057970
Total	Mean	.70608	.23294
	N	50	50
	Std. Deviation	.096555	.086641

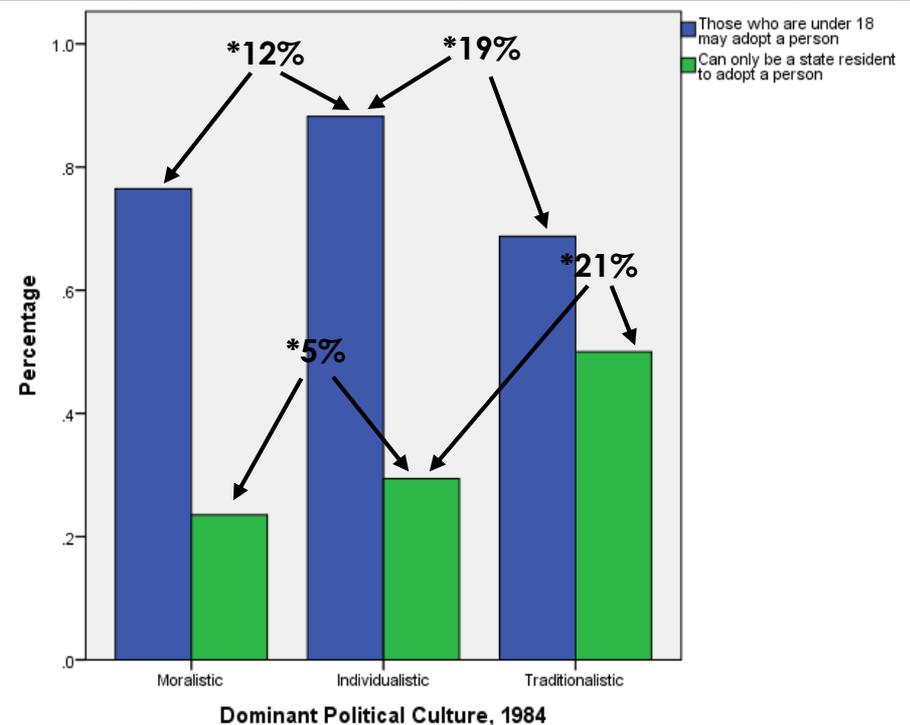


*Significant at the .05 level

3. THOSE STATES THAT REPORT INDIVIDUALISTIC WILL BE MORE LIKELY TO ALLOW PEOPLE WHO ARE UNDER 18 TO ADOPT.
4. THOSE STATES WHO REPORT TRADITIONALISTIC WILL BE MORE LIKELY TO REQUIRE A PERSON TO BE A STATE RESIDENT TO ADOPT.

Report

Dominant Political Culture, 1984		Those who are under 18 may adopt a person	Can only be a state resident to adopt a person
Moralistic	Mean	.76	.24
	N	17	17
	Std. Deviation	.437	.437
Individualistic	Mean	.88	.29
	N	17	17
	Std. Deviation	.332	.470
Traditionalistic	Mean	.69	.50
	N	16	16
	Std. Deviation	.479	.516
Total	Mean	.78	.34
	N	50	50
	Std. Deviation	.418	.479



*Significant at the .05 level

CONCLUSION

- ❑ While individualistic states differ from both moralistic and traditionalistic cultures together, moralistic and traditionalistic cultures are very similar.
- ❑ Political culture may not play as large of a role in states determining their adoption policies, though it is still significant to discuss.
- ❑ Analysis of adoption policy might be more relevant when studying states by their ideology, demographics, and unique characteristics, rather than Elazar's broad spectrum of political culture.