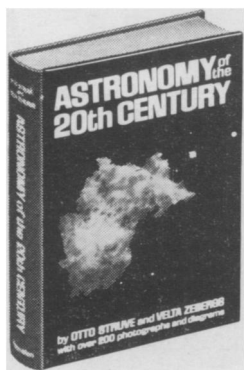


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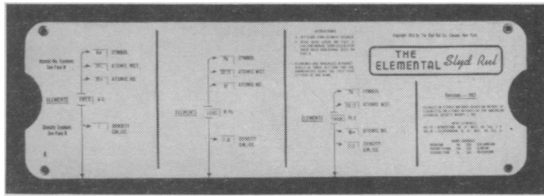
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## PSYCHIATRY

### Adoption May Trigger Psychiatric Problems

► ADOPTION may be responsible for breeding psychiatric problems for the children concerned.

A preliminary survey by a child psychiatry team at the Neuropsychiatric Institute, University of California, Los Angeles, has suggested that such may be the case in many instances.

The team consists of Dr. Henry Work, James Q. Simmons, Marshall Schecter and Paul Carlson.

The research project grew out of an observation by Dr. Schecter that 13 per cent of the children brought to him for psychiatric treatment were adoptees. A subsequent survey of child psychiatric clinics and private practice in Southern California revealed the number of adoptees being treated ranged from 8 to 15 per cent.

Since fewer than five-tenths of one per cent of the population are adopted, these figures seemed to be significant.

A further observation—a rather puzzling one, according to the investigators—was the fact that children who were adopted early (under six months of age) tended to have psychiatric problems more often than those adopted later.

The general feeling has been that the earlier a child is adopted, the better he will adjust to the adoption. The research findings up to this point do not support this generally accepted thesis.

Psychiatric symptoms most typical of adopted children are those concerned with overt aggression, for example, violent actions against animals, or against brother, sister, or mother and sexual disturbances such as homosexuality or promiscuity.

The question is, what is the source of the trouble? How much do the parents contribute to the problem? Or is it largely the result of a more basic disturbance that occurs outside the realm of the child's memory? What is a child's own feeling about being adopted, and what does adoption mean to the children themselves?

It is hoped that a carefully controlled research program to study relationships of parents and their adopted children, now underway, will answer these questions.

• Science News Letter, 82:358 December 1, 1962

## Do You Know?

Certain varieties of *bacteria* literally "eat up the road," using the asphalt as a food supply.

New Guinea's Greater Bird of Paradise, noted for its magnificent plumage, is a cousin to the common *crow*.

An FM radio system, which records *heartbeats* on a transmitter worn on a wide belt, now enables researchers to study the heart rate patterns of patients even while they sleep.

• Science News Letter, 82:358 December 1, 1962