

# Monoracial Interview #2 (Nathan)

Female, Korean American Adoptee - *Nathan*

I interviewed H, a monoracial Korean adoptee. I met H on one of the “Motherland Tours,” a program administered by Holt International Children’s Services that allows Korean adoptees to return to Korea. She grew up around Columbia, Maryland and still lives in Maryland today.

In talking with H about race, identity, adoption, and culture, it was interesting to find out how closely she links culture to race. While she acknowledged that race and culture are two different constructs, she still couldn’t help but feel that the two were intimately intertwined. Much like myself, H has some experiences of being ostracized by the Korean American community for not being “Korean enough.” She divulged that often times when she is in a space with other Korean Americans, who are not adopted, she finds herself being more guarded than when she is hanging out with people who are not from the Korean American community. With Korean Americans, she told me, I almost always feel like I have to prove myself to them. H mentioned that she has never been questioned because she doesn’t “look Korean”, but because she can’t speak the language or doesn’t understand the culture. Like myself and all other Korean adoptees I know, H has never been questioned because of her race, with regards to the Korean American community, but because of her culture, or lack thereof. When I asked H about her views on the multiracial adoptee community she said she had not really thought about it. She never met a multiracial adoptee, nor had she thought about adoptees in the context of being multiracial.

My interview with H was very insightful. I found that like all the other adoptees I know, H has never been questioned amongst her own racial community because of her race, but because of her culture. It was interesting to discuss multiracial adoptees with her. Much like H, I myself had never really thought about multiracial adoptees before taking this class. I always knew about people who are multiracial – some of my best friends are multiracial – but I never even thought to associate multiraciality with adoption. Perhaps this is because my experience with adoption and other adoptees, at least up until this point, has always been with monoracial adoptees. It was fascinating to realize how within a community that is rather concealed in and of itself, there exists a sub community even more hidden.