Adoption has been an integral part of our society in one form or another. Not only does it have deep-rooted social implications, but there are also political, economic, and moral aspects involved in this process. Cornell University Law School (1992) legally defines adoption as “the process in which parental rights to a child (whose biological parents’ parental rights have been severed) are bestowed on adopting parents, creating a parent-child relationship where one did not previously exist.” Although this process is most often examined in formalized, legal terms in contemporary society, the practice of adoption has not always been so structured.

There was a time when adoption was simply the act of taking in an orphaned child as a personal choice rather going through a complex, legal procedure. There were no regulations, restrictions, or follow-up evaluations documented to process in the interest of the child. However, over time, adoption drastically evolved from an informal process to a highly formalized, bureaucratic system. Formalized adoptions emphasized the shift from simply letting a child live with anyone willing to take them in to actually fostering the child and eventually making them part of that family through a legal adoptive process. These processes provide the distinction between foster care and adoption. While both processes involve a family providing care and support for a child, foster care and adoption should not be confused. Permanency and parental rights are the main factors that separate these two practices. Foster care is considered to be temporary while adoption is permanent. The purpose of foster system is to provide care to child for a short period of time until the biological parents are able to regain their parental rights.

Once a child is adopted, the rights of the biological parents are completely severed and transferred to the adoptive parents. The adoptee is legally viewed no differently than a biological child of the adoptive parents. In many states, foster care parents are limited in the decisions they can make regarding the foster child’s care. Typically, biological parental permission is necessary for the majority of decisions for a child, such as medical treatments, relocation to a different state, or even changing the child’s religion. Birth parents still retain
their parental rights over the child until the child has been placed for adoption or these rights are legally terminated by a court or state agency. However, in an adoptive situation, parental rights are given solely to the adoptive parents. The new rights mean that the parents are legally, financially, and socially responsible for the well-being of the child.

In addition to the legal and financial responsibilities that adoption entails, this process is also influenced by the role of socialization of the child. “Socialization is the process by which a person inherits and disseminates social norms, ideologies, and customs that supply him with the tools necessary to participate within society” (Clausen 1968). The process of socialization is influenced by a number of social institutions. Sociologists recognize five formalized patterns and basic institutions: 1) in determining kinship (family), 2) in providing for the legitimate use of power (government); 3) in regulating the distribution of goods and services (economy); 4) in transmitting knowledge from one generation to the next (education); and 5) in regulating our relation to the supernatural (religion). Often times, adoption drastically alters how people relate to these social institutions. These alterations have the potential to be either positive or negative experiences depending on number of factors affecting the assimilation of the child into the new family.

Coined by sociologist Max Weber, the term “life chances” refers to, “The opportunities an individual has to improve their quality of life or the extent to which an individual has access to important social resources, such as healthy, affordable food, shelter, education, employment, and healthcare” (Gerth and Mills 1946). Elements that can affect a person’s life chances are wealth, prestige, power, and education. For example, a child may be born to an impoverished, African American, single mother who decides to place the baby for adoption. He or she may be adopted by a middle-class, Caucasian family consisting of both a mother and father. The child will be socialized differently in the new, adoptive home than he or she would be in his or her biological birth family’s home. The child will have different life chances in both situations. His or her adoptive family must be able to help assimilate the child into a new lifestyle. Even if he or she is adopted as an infant, having no recollection of the birth family, the child’s experiences will be influential as he or she lives as an adopted child.

Often times, whether intentionally or unintentionally, the label of an adopted child will shape the way the child develops and learns to relate to society. One study notes, “Feelings of loss and rejection are often accompanied by a damaged sense of self-esteem. There is an understandable tendency to think that something must be wrong with me for my birth parents to have given me away” (Schwartz 2009).

It is evident that the adoption process is multi-faceted. As adoption has evolved from a simplistic, informal process to a highly institutionalized process, the core focuses and outcomes have also shifted. In order to better understand
this shift, it is necessary to have a basic knowledge of adoption history. Although
the concept of adoption dates back to ancient, biblical times, my objective is to
focus primarily on the domestic adoption practices in the United States from
the mid-1800s to the present. During this time, the adoptive process evolved
tremendously from an informal system to a formalized and even institutional-
ized system. Prior to industrialization and modernity there were no formal proce-
dures for recording births or name changes. There was no way to know if a child
legally belonged to a certain family. Informality facilitated the rise of informal
adoptive arrangements.

Often times, these informal adoptions were economically driven. Early
adoptions were not conducted in the best interests of the child. Rather, they
were often a means of obtaining additional labor at a low cost (Porter 2010).
Instead of hiring more farm laborers, orphaned children were taken in by an-
other family or relative to serve as indentured servants. In some cases, adopted
children were simply orphaned children treated as chattel slaves. The concept of
children’s rights or child welfare was almost nonexistent. Hillary Rodham (1973)
notes, “In eighteenth century English common law, the term ‘children’s rights’
would have been a non sequitur. Children were regarded as chattels of the family
and wards of the state, with no recognized political character or power and few
legal rights.” The ideology was applied to all children, not just orphans. All chil-
dren were expected to supply labor as an economic commodity. However, when
children had no immediate family or guardian to ensure their well-being, other
families began to exploit these orphaned children as a way to obtain cheap la-
children could commonly be found as apprentices or indentured servants in
nineteenth-century households.” History provides evidence of social norms that
allowed informal adoptions to become commonplace. Many textile mills took
on the factory model, such as Jean Bonnet’s silk mill, and sought young child
laborers. One source notes, “Bonnet ‘recruited young girls from the poor agricul-
tural families of the region ‘under promise to give them board, lodging, clothes,
and all that they required, together with small wages, and to teach them not
only the art of silk making, but to give them a general education (Maynes and
Waltner 2012).” Mill owners would agree to maintain the well-being of a child
while allowing them to earn money to establish a better life so their biological
parents informally sent them to live under the authority of the new family. There
were no regulations that determined whether this new family was qualified to
provide adequate care for the child. With a lack of records or institutionalization
of the statute, adoptions were a personal, familial concern rather than a concern
of the state. Governmental agencies that might oversee these transfers of pa-
rental rights were largely nonexistent, allowing these informal adoptions to con-
tinue. Additionally, some impoverished family abandoned their child because of
the financial burden they placed on the family. Many children were left without
a guardian to take care of them. By the 19th century, industrial and social changes had also affected the definition and role of parenting.

The importance of motherhood became increasingly valued in the nineteenth century, meaning families were eager to conform to social expectations of a strong, nuclear family that was considered to be the most valued institution of society. While the public realm tended to be seen as more masculine, the domestic realm was primarily reserved for women. Women’s role in society was to raise virtuous, well-behaved children that would grow up to be exemplary citizens. According to Maynes, et al (2012):

“New kinds of representations of women as virtuous heroines and self-sacrificing mother and of family life as a realm of personal fulfillment began to circulate in text and image. Women, especially in the role as mother, began to appear in novels and treatises as the guarantors of individual and collective progress through their moral influence on their children.”

As a result of the importance placed on this concept of Republican Motherhood, there was a rising number of individuals that sought to expand their family and “fill their empty cradles.” Susan Porter (2010) states, “As a result, poor or illegitimate children whose parents could not maintain them now had the opportunity to grow up in a complete family where they would be loved and provided for.” Poverty and destitution were considered to be social diseases and society began trying to purge itself of these plights. Children were removed from their family and placed into institutions aimed at improving the family structure. If there were no relatives or close connections willing to take on responsibility of raising the child and informally adopting them, the children were left without many options. Children without options led to the foundation of many organizations that sought to provide care for orphaned or abandoned children. Christine Adamec (2007) states, “Biological parents, and sometimes biological grandparents, were legally responsible for supporting children, but in the absence of these or other relatives willing to care for the children, they became a ward of the state, and orphanages were one way to provide for their care, housing, and education.” A variety of these institutions were established and began the shift from informal to formal adoptions. E Wayne Carp (1998) comments, “In this formulation, adoption was either a means of moving children from unhealthy environments into families that would train them to be productive citizens of the modern state or a means of providing innocent victims of misfortune with the advantages of middle-class family life and a secure future.” One of the most influential and successful early orphanages and early proponents of adoption was the New Bedford Orphan’s Home established in 1843. Sharon C. Silvia (2013), Director of Child and Family Services, explains, “To respond to the growing need for orphan care and
children's aid, a group of charitable New Bedford ladies formed the New Bedford Orphan's Home, giving orphaned children a new start with adoption families in the area.” However, these orphanages quickly placed children with any family that would take them, regardless of whether or not it was a good match; a mistake that could potentially lead to very difficult transitions and negative consequences for both child and parent, including the last resort of re-homing children. These adoptive placements paid very little attention to the needs and best interests of child choosing to focus solely on the interests of the state and elite classes that maintain it. Industrialization was in full swing and American society was becoming increasingly more complex. At times, adoptive parents were more interested in indenture rather than adoption of the child they sought. There was an evident need of more formalized regulations regarding both child welfare and the institution of adoption. This transition was one of the most defining moments in modern adoption law.

The evolution of adoption policy can be best defined in the sociological concept of organization and bureaucracy. German sociologist, Max Weber, examined a model of bureaucracy that he explained as the ideal way of organizing government agencies. In his book, Economy and Society, Weber (1922) provides a brief explanation of bureaucracy: “The combination of written documents and a continuous operation by officials constitutes the ‘office’ (bureau) which is the central focus of all types of modern organized action.” This model coincided with his theory of “ideal types.” He determined that in a perfect society, there were ideal types that would serve as a basic “measuring stick” for how society should ultimately function. Although these ideal types were not “real”, they should be understood and that the goal of society should be to strive to come as close as possible to meeting these ideal types. In this way, bureaucracies, in the perfect, ideal world, would allow society to function more efficiently and effectively. In an examination of the classical perspective of the Weberian model of bureaucracy, Fischer and Sirianna (1994) states, “Bureaucracy, obsessed with its power and its formalism, views the world as an object to be administered and extends its tentacles as far as it is able to reach.” Weber determined six basic characteristics of bureaucracy: 1) hierarchy of authority; 2) division of authority; 3) rules and regulations; 4) achievement-based advancement; 5) impersonality; and 6) efficient operation. With the presence of these six ideal characteristics, the bureaucracy would be able to function optimally resulting in a more proficient society. With the rise of industrialization, bureaucracy and organization became distinctive marks of modern social structures. Industrialization revolutionized social interactions. More mechanized labor created a need for a more complex social order. A highly organized system meant that society could be run like a business resulting in an increased profit and production. According to Weber (Gerth and Mills 1946), bureaucracies should be goal-oriented and highly structured. One of the most influential components of a bureaucracy focuses on the way legitimate
domination is obtained through one of the three basic forms of authority: traditional authority, charismatic authority, and rational-legal authority. Ritzer (2013) explains rational-legal authority as “the type of authority in which the legitimacy of leaders is derived from the fact that there is a series of codified rules and regulations, and leaders hold their positions as a result of those roles.” Weber believed that bureaucracy was at the heart of the rational-legal authority. One of the most prominent examples of bureaucracy is the government institutions. These bureaucracies manage people through this structured system in an attempt to provide rationalization and order to society. When bureaucracies function properly, society flourishes. However, if the bureaucracy is not operating optimally, there may be detrimental results. An ineffective bureaucratic system has the potential to imprison individuals and force them to become so caught up in the bureaucracy to they fall victim to social control. Similarly, Reeves (2013) confirms that adoption has always been an incomparably final method of “…reordering the deviant family through placing the mother in the hot seat of moral responsibility whilst refusing her access to the means (usually economic) to determine and control her environment. Demand and supply of adopters and adoptive children is central to the development and importance of adoption as an instrument of social control.” However, many steps may be taken to reorganize a defunct bureaucratic institution and loosen the chains of social control that have resulted from the implementation of this system. Weber believed that once a form of bureaucracy is established in social structures, it is almost impossible to destroy it. In order to devise potential methods of the reversal of ineffective bureaucracy, we must first examine the main characteristics of the system itself.

All bureaucracies are created as a means of improving efficiency through the application of a business model. They are meant to increase efficiency, decrease the time spent working toward the goal, and maximize the profit or return once the goal has been accomplished. While interactions prior to the establishment of a bureaucracy were much more personal and informal, the rise of bureaucratic systems has ushered in a wave of formality and institutionalized structure in almost every corner of society. Because bureaucracies are such an integral part of our lives on every level, it is important to study the basic components. The first tenet of the Weberian model of bureaucracy is a hierarchy of authority. A specific chain of command is put in place to emphasize the order of authority not only for the people involved in the bureaucracy, but also for people outside of the bureaucracy. Individuals are supervised by someone else in a higher position forming a pyramid-like institution. Individuals at the top of the pyramid hold higher authority that individuals that are lower down. Max Weber (Gerth and Mills 1946) stated, “The principles of office hierarchy and of levels of graded authority mean a firmly ordered system of super-and subordination in which there is a supervision of the lower offices by the higher ones.” With each step up the hierarchical ladder, the level of status and importance
tend to increase. A firm chain of command is meant to structure the distribution of power among the organization. The distribution of power is the most vital component of the hierarchy of authority. Pfeffer (1992) states, “A person or group cannot have power in isolation; it has to be in relationship to some other person or collectively, as when a person or group has to overcome the resistance of another person or group.” The distribution of power, allocation of resources, and hierarchy of authority all play key roles in the development and functionality of the bureaucracy.

The second characteristic of a bureaucracy is division of labor. This system meant that tasks were broken down into individual components and then assigned to different people. Rather than have a large group address an issue or work on a project, individualized tasks are assigned and each person is responsible for the completion of their assigned task. Each task is a vital component of the achievement of the goal. By dividing up the amount of work into manageable chunks for each person, maximum efficiency can be achieved. Each division is highly specialized meaning that the individual is trained in one specific area for his division of labor. As the bureaucracy continues to evolve, these divisions of labor also undergo more and more specialization to increase efficiency.

The third main characteristic of a bureaucratic system is the presence of strict rules and regulations. By implementing these standard operating procedures, individuals have a uniform code to follow. These rules and regulations apply to everyone equally. While these may seem restrictive, they provide order and structure to society. Additionally, they establish a sophisticated system of communication that ensures the bureaucracy is running smoothly. This system of communication functions primarily on the establishment of the formal rules and policies put in place. These written rules of conduct are constantly being revised and updated as the bureaucracy evolves. This element, coupled with a hierarchy of authority and a clear division of labor ensures that there is a standard model to follow to accomplish tasks and more efficiently through the bureaucratic system.

Achievement-based advancement is yet another component of an ideal bureaucratic system. This means that individuals must be qualified and demonstrate competency and proficiency in order to advance within the levels of bureaucracies. Weber (Gerth and Mills 1946) states, “This is shown, first, in the requirement of a firmly prescribed course of training, which demands the entire capacity for work for a long period of time, and in the generally prescribed and special examinations which are prerequisites of employment.” This element further provides order to the function of the system.

The fifth characteristic Max Weber theorized in his examination of the ideal bureaucratic model is impersonality. Both employees and customers involved in the model are treated on the basis of objective merit, aiming to remove all personal bias or favoritism among interactions. The rules and regulations of
the bureaucracy apply to all people regardless of external factors such as personal relationships. Weber (Gerth and Mills 1946) explains, “Its specific nature, which is welcomed by capitalism, develops the more perfectly the more the bureaucracy is ‘dehumanized,’ the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculation.” In order to achieve the highest levels of efficiency, bureaucratic systems must strive to remove all irrationality from interactions by actively seeking elements of impersonality.

The final and most important component of the ideal model of bureaucracy is the goal of efficient operation above all other values. The primary function of the bureaucracy should be to incorporate the other five components to achieve maximum efficiency. The formalized, rigid structure would allow the system to be managed properly and result in increased productivity and profitability.

Although Weber theorized that bureaucracies were an “ideal type”, he was critical of the dysfunctions of bureaucracy that could hinder progress. One of the most significant concerns Weber had was the level of depersonalization and social control a bureaucratic system exercised over those involved. Ritzer (2013) states, “He feared that as more and more sectors of society, not just the government bureaucracy, were rationalized, people would find it increasingly difficult to escape into non-rationalized sectors of life. They would find themselves locked into an iron cage of rationalization.” Strict adherence to the bureaucratic system leaves little room for flexibility. In some cases, the enforcement of rules and regulations become so complex and bureaucratic that over time, the system ends up being more inefficient. In this instance, the primary goal of efficiency is not achieved and the system becomes defunct. In his book, Democracy and the Public Service, Frederick C. Mosher (1968) states that governmental bureaucracy and the power of the civil service pose a distinct threat to democratic control; this concept purported that these systems are self-serving rather than serving the public interest. Therefore, while bureaucracies are meant to create a system of efficiency and effectiveness, if taken too far, they can easily become dysfunctional and ineffective. The evolution of adoption from an informal process to a bureaucratic one is reflected in the evolution of adoption law.

The evolution of adoption laws has a very rich history that should be examined. In order to understand the historical basis for modern adoption laws, we must first examine the foundation of social work. Contemporary adoption practices grew largely out of the American social welfare system. The origins of this system can be found in the English Poor Laws. These Poor Laws were established as an attempt to cope with problems that plagued society: poverty and destitution. Rather than making individuals face these issues alone, public charitable organizations stepped in to provide assistance and support to alleviate the hardships of others. This meant that rather than these issues being an
individual, personal problem, these plights metaphorically became the plight of society. Donzelot (1979) explains, “Since the end of the eighteenth century, a multitude of philanthropic and religious associations had made it their goal to come to the aid of the poorer classes, to moralize their behavior and facilitate their education by concentrating their efforts toward the restoration of family life…to ensure the supervision of children from the lower classes.” However, the rising number of exploitative adoptions under this informal system paved the way for the implementation of various screening qualifications and standards to ensure the placement of the orphaned child was suitable for both the child and the adoptive family. In 1851, Massachusetts enacted the first modern adoption law. The Massachusetts Adoption of Children Act required judicial approval, as well as consent of the child’s biological parents, and agreement of the adoptive family to care for and support the child. The statute became one of the most influential factors in the evolution of modern adoption. In the mid-1800s to early 1900s, there was a period known as the Orphan Train movement. Charles Loring Brace, founder of the New York Children’s Aid Society, wrote a book called The Best Method of Disposing of Our Pauper and Vagrant Children, determining that the best method of social work to deal with these children was the place them on “orphan trains” to travel across country in search of a new home. Most often the children transported on the orphan trains were children of poor Catholic and Jewish immigrants that society believed needed to be permanently removed and placed in Anglo-Protestant farming families. Although this system was established to be a “child-saver”, a lot of individuals saw this process as more of a “child-stealer.” Ellen Herman (2012) states, “As a result, sectarian groups developed their own social services and child-caring institutions, such as orphanages.” These orphanages began to look after the well-being, education, and socialization of the orphaned children. In 1868, the Massachusetts Board of State Charities launched a program that would oversee the foundation of “placing-out” which focused on placing children in families, most often through legitimate forms of foster care and even adoption, rather than simply housing them in social institutions. Placing-out was one of earliest forms of a more structured adoptive process. As society continued to develop and become more bureaucratic, these programs began much more specialized. Amy Andrews (1995) explains, “As the number of informal adoptions rose, the need became greater to have a formal process for adoption.” In 1891, Michigan became the first state to require that “the [the judge] shall be satisfied as to the good moral character, and the ability to support and educate such child, and of the suitableness of the home, or the person(s) adopting such child.” The first specialized adoption agencies were established between 1910 and 1930. While these agencies were adept at placing-out children in traditionally structured families, they still did not consider unmarried mothers and illegitimate children a viable family unit so children would be taken from their unwed mothers and ‘placed-out’ to a tradition family
that could provide a more stable life for the child. Taken as a measure to further structure the adoptive process, Minnesota passed the first law mandating social investigation and confidentiality of adoption records in 1917. Rather than simply allowing any family to adopt a child, this statute provided a system of qualifications to determine which individuals should be allowed to adopt. In 1921, the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) was founded. Herman (2012) explains, “The founders of the CWLA involved themselves in child-placing policy from the outset because they believed child welfare required definite standards in record keeping, personnel training, and financial management as well as placement practice.” The first set of minimum standards were established by the CWLA in 1938. These standards defined the distinction between temporary placements and permanent placements. Other adoption agencies began to establish a system of minimum standards to ensure the child’s welfare was the primary concern of all potential adoptions. Herman (2012) notes, “By midcentury, virtually all states in the country required individuals and organizational child-placers to be licensed and the vast majority had new or revised adoption statutes on the books echoing reformers’ constant refrain: investigate and supervise.” A new form of record-keeping was put in place to ensure comprehensiveness and consistency, in addition to confidentiality of the sealed adoptive records. Each agency constantly reviewed and revised their standards as the adoptive field became much more complex. As new situations began to arise, new legislation had to be developed. A transition from simple to very complex laws aided in the further development adoption policy. Prospective parents were required to meet certain criteria to be eligible for consideration. If a family met these qualifications, they advanced through the hierarchy of authority to be granted permission. Additionally, several laws were passed that thrust specialized professionals into the process. Social workers were no longer the only people involved in the process. Between 1962 and 1965, some child welfare advocates proposed new legislation to require doctors to notify law enforcement of suspected cases of child abuse. Law enforcement officials were tasked with following up on these allegations and facilitate the removal of the child if necessary. The involvement of more “professionals” clearly defines a division of labor system. Each component, whether they were doctors, child welfare advocates, psychologists, law enforcement officials, or social workers, all played a vital role in the adoptive bureaucracy. Whereas virtually anyone had the ability to foster or adopt a child through the simple, early adoption process, the establishment of strict rules and regulations has made the adoptive process extremely complex and burdensome. Currently, there are several practices that bog down the flow of the adoption process and even prohibit certain individuals from qualifying as adoptive parents. Once a family has decided that they want to adopt, they must go through an extremely arduous process to actually obtain an adoptive child.

The first step of the process is to apply for a home study. A social worker
will need to examine the potential parents’ lives and backgrounds to ensure they are fit to become parents. The step includes a completion of state and federal criminal background checks, financial and medical information, interviews with the case worker, and an inspection of the home. If the potential parents meet all of the minimum standards to qualify as “adoption-eligible” they will undergo a matching process. During this time, the family will be matched with children that satisfy the characteristics they are looking for in a child. The process aims to ensure that the parents and child will be a good pairing. Until they are matched, the parents remain in a waiting period. The average wait time for an adoptive placement is about three years. Additionally, based on certain provisions and types of adoption placements, the prospective parents will be responsible for a variety of unique costs. According to the research conducted by American Adoptions Agency (2015), both domestic and international adoption fees typically range around $25,000 to $50,000. These expenses may be put in place to provide living expenses for the expectant mother while she is carrying the child, pay for adoption agency fees, obtain legal counsel for the finalization of the adoption, and file legal paperwork that is necessary to obtaining legal custody of the child. Although these rules and regulations were put in place as a means of legitimizing the system and ensuring the welfare of the child, this evolution of adoption policy from an informal system to a highly bureaucratic system has created a great deal of inefficiency and dysfunction.

After a careful examination of the history of adoption, it is evident that it has evolved into a highly bureaucratic system. For example, in the transition from informal adoption policy to formalized adoption policy, a hierarchy of authority has been put in place. In early adoptions, a family could decide to take in a child and adopt them without having to go through a chain of command to prove their qualifications as a decent, adoptive family. There was no system of authority in which one person had more power to grant the adoption. However, contemporary adoption policies differ tremendously. Potential adoptive parents must submit applications on a local level. If the application is determined to be sufficient at the local level, it will then be sent to several higher levels until it reaches the individual at the highest level of the hierarchy of authority. Informal adoption processes were much more streamlined than modern adoption proceedings. The hierarchy of authority component of the bureaucratic system of adoption can easily be seen in the fact that social workers on lower levels must now report to higher officials such as government agencies and judicial courts to ensure that the adoptive process is conducted in accordance with the minimum standards put in place.

While these rules aim to ensure that the process runs smoothly and strategically, they have also hindered the primary goal of adoption: to place child in permanent homes. The current adoption policy appears to be detrimental to the purpose of the process. The need for good, qualified adoptive parents
is still present in our society, however, because the system is so complex and burdensome, many prospective parents never decide to pursue adoption. A system that was established to protect the welfare of children is actually keeping them from the opportunity to be adopted. The amount of paperwork, coupled with extended wait times and extremely high costs, deter families from even considering the option of adoption. According to a 2013 research, conducted by the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), there are more than 418,670 children in the US living without permanent families. Of these children in foster care, there are 113,790 that are eligible for adoption. Of those eligible children, almost 32% of them will wait in the foster care system for over three years before being adopted. Additionally, there are over 153 million orphans around the world. These figures will only continue to rise unless there are necessary steps made to reform the adoption system to loosen some of the restrictions and actively attract new prospective parents to pursue adoption. In some instances, people have even turned to illegal methods of obtaining a child because the legitimate adoption system is too burdensome.

However, the need for parents is not just a domestic issue; we currently face a global orphan crisis. It is evident that there is an urgent need for adoption reform. The current defunct bureaucracy must be abolished if we hope to make any progress. We can no longer allow adoption to fall victim to the dysfunctional bureaucratic system. Not only must we examine this crisis holistically, we must also research and theorize potential ways to reverse bureaucracy. Weber himself believed that once a bureaucracy is in place, it will be extremely difficult to reverse. A further examination of the negative consequences of the bureaucratization of adoption should be conducted. However, we must choose to take every opportunity available to reform this system if we hope to ever efficiently and effectively address the issue of children living with permanent families.
Works Cited


