

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner

22% of Americans Have a Relative in a Mixed-Race Marriage

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PewResearchCenter
A Social Trends Report

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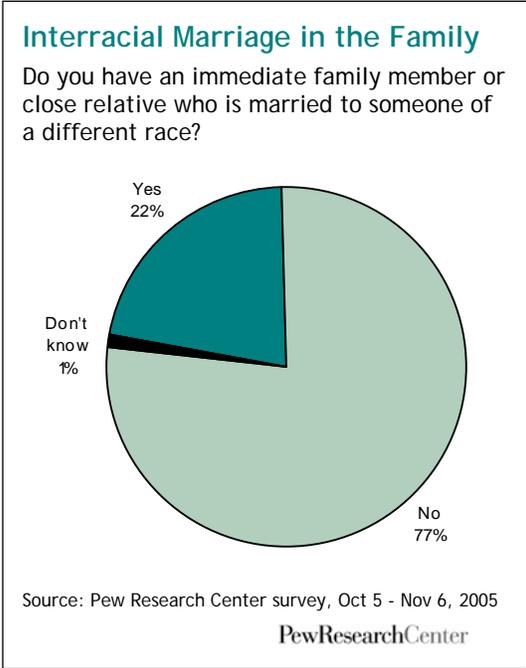
More than one-fifth of all American adults (22%) say that they have a close relative who is married to someone of a different race, according to a new Pew Research Center survey.

That degree of familiarity with -- and proximity to -- interracial marriage is the latest milestone in what has been a sweeping change in behaviors and attitudes concerning interracial relationships over the past several decades.

Until 1967, when a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Loving v. Virginia* struck down the last of the anti-miscegenation laws in this country, interracial marriage had been illegal in 16 states and was widely considered a social taboo.

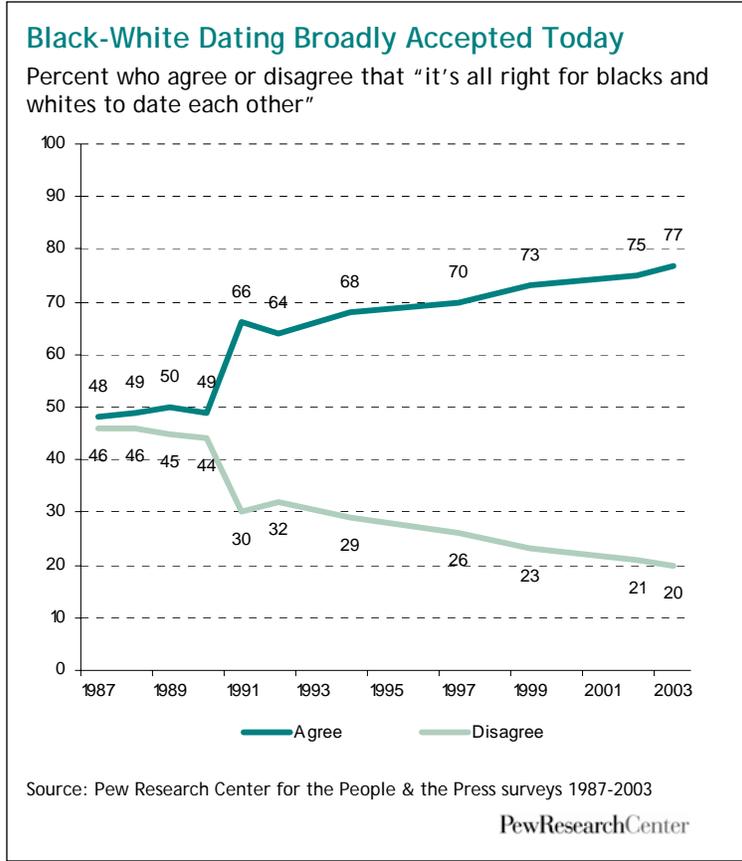
Since then interracial marriage in this country has evolved from nearly non-existent to merely atypical.

In 1970, fewer than one percent of all married couples were made up of spouses of a different race; by 2000 that figure had grown to just over 5%, according to an analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data by the Population Reference Bureau, a nonpartisan research organization¹.

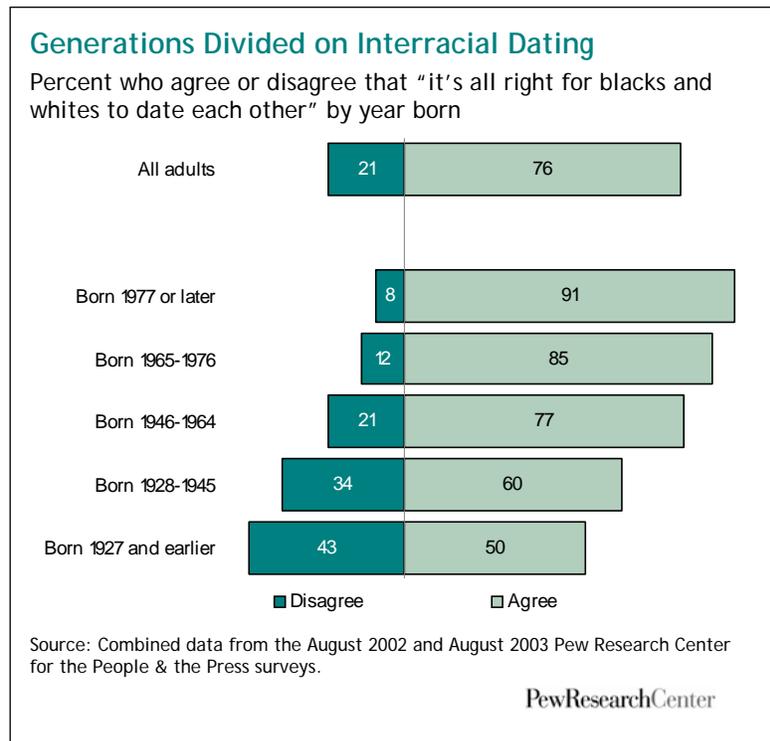


¹ Lee, Sharon M. and Barry Edmonston. New Marriages, New Families: U.S. Racial and Hispanic Intermarriage. 2005. *Population Bulletin*, 60(2) (Washington, DC: Population Reference Bureau).

At the same time, attitudes toward interracial relationships have also grown more tolerant. In 2003, more than three-quarters of all adults (77%) said it is “all right for blacks and whites to date each other,” up from 48% who felt this way in 1987, according to Pew Research Center surveys.



Acceptance of interracial dating is greatest among the young. In surveys conducted in 2002 and 2003, fully 91% of Gen Y respondents born after 1976 said that interracial dating is acceptable, compared with 50% of the oldest generation (those reaching adulthood during WWII) who expressed this view.

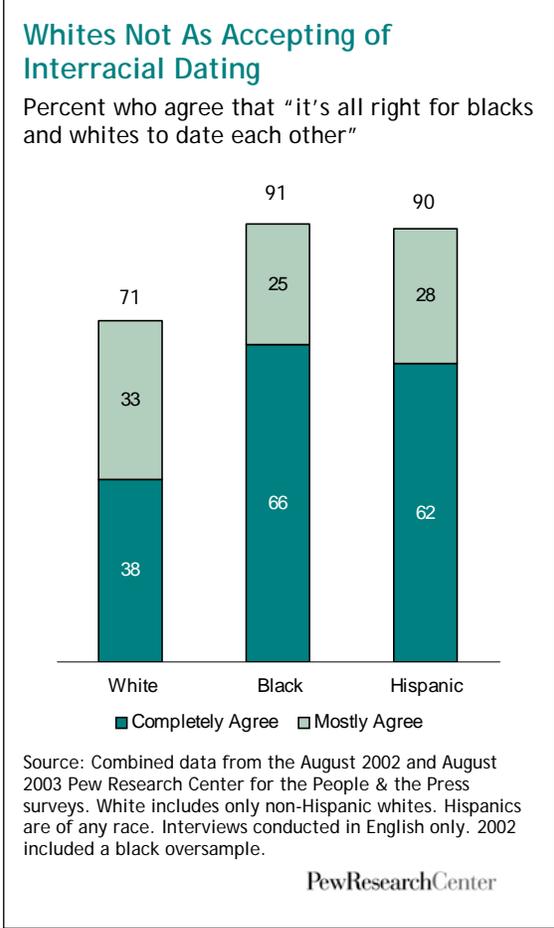


Also, blacks (91%) and Hispanics (90%) are more accepting of interracial dating than are non-Hispanic whites (71%).

In the new Pew survey, conducted from Oct. 5 through Nov. 6, 2005 among a randomly-selected, nationally-representative sample of 3,014 adults, there are also differences by race in family experiences with interracial marriage.

Blacks (37%) are twice as likely as whites (17%) to have an immediate family member in an interracial marriage, while Hispanics (27%) fall in the middle of those two groups. (There were not enough Asians in the national sample to permit any meaningful analysis of this population subgroup).

There is also a variance by age in reports of interracial marriage in the family. More than one third (34%) of all 18 to 29 year olds say they have a family member or close relative who is married to someone of a difference race, compared with 14% of those ages 65 and older who say this.



The survey finds no correlation with income or with education in the likelihood of having a family member in an interracial marriage, but there is a slight regional pattern in the reporting of mixed race marriages in the family. More westerners (28%) say they have a close relative in an interracial marriage than do those who live in the south (22%), the northeast (19%), or the midwest (19%).

This regional tilt toward the west is likely explained, at least in part, by the relatively higher percentage of Asian-Americans, American Indians and multi-race Americans who live in western states compared with the rest of the country. Members of all those groups are more likely to marry outside their race than are whites, blacks or Hispanics, according to the Population Bureau analysis of Census data.

According to Census data, the most common type of interracial couple in 2000 was a white husband married to an Asian wife; this pairing comprised 14 percent of all interracial couples. Black husbands and white wives accounted for 8 percent of all interracial couples. The Census data also show that in 2000 73% of all black-white married couples the husband is black, while in 75% of all Asian-white couples, the husband is white.

About the Pew Social Trends Reports

The Pew social trends reports explore the behaviors and attitudes of Americans in key realms of their lives – family, community, health, finance, work and leisure. Reports analyze changes over time in social behaviors and probe for differences and similarities between key sub-groups in the population.

The surveys are conducted by the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan “fact tank” that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

Survey reports are the result of the collaborative effort of the social trends staff, which consists of:

Paul Taylor, Executive Vice President

Cary Funk, Senior Project Director

Peyton Craighill, Project Director

PEW SOCIAL TRENDS
OCTOBER 5 - NOVEMBER 6, 2005
N=3,014

NO QUESTION 1

QUESTIONS 2 – 73 IN PREVIOUS RELEASE OR HELD FOR RELEASE

- Q.74 For each of the following, please tell me if you have an immediate family member or close relative in this situation. (First, Next...) do you have an immediate family member or close relative who...
[INSERT ITEM; ITEM d ALWAYS FIRST; RANDOMIZE ITEMS e THROUGH i]

NO ITEMS Q74A-C

ITEMS D – G IN PREVIOUS RELEASE

i. Is married to someone of a different race	Yes	No	Don't know/ Refused	N
All Adults	22	77	1=100	3,014
Men	20	79	1=100	1296
Women	23	76	1=100	1718
White*	17	83	*=100	2,272
Black	37	62	1=100	327
Hispanic*	27	72	1=100	271
Age				
18-29	34	65	1=100	447
30-49	22	78	*=100	1067
50-64	16	83	1=100	816
65 and older	14	85	1=100	633
Education				
College graduate	21	78	1=100	998
Some college	27	73	*=100	711
High school graduate	21	79	*=100	997
Less than high school	19	80	1=100	293
Family Income				
\$100,000 or more	20	80	*=100	478
\$50,000 to \$99,999	23	77	*=100	826
\$30,000 to \$49,999	26	73	1=100	528
Less than \$30,000	22	77	1=100	653
Region				
Northeast	19	80	1=100	580
Midwest	19	81	*=100	751
South	22	77	1=100	1,083
West	28	71	1=100	600

* White includes only non-Hispanic whites. Hispanics are of any race. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish.

QUESTIONS 75 - 84 IN PREVIOUS RELEASE OR HELD FOR RELEASE

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
JULY 14 - AUGUST 5, 2003

Now I am going to read you another series of statements on some different topics. For each statement, please tell me if you completely agree with it, mostly agree with it, mostly DISagree with it or completely disagree with it. The first one is...²

k. I think it's all right for blacks and whites to date each other

	----- AGREE -----			----- DISAGREE -----			Don't know/	
	NET	<i>Completely</i>	<i>Mostly</i>	NET	<i>Completely</i>	<i>Mostly</i>	Refused	N
August 2003	77	47	30	20	10	10	3=100	1,284
August 2002	75	43	32	21	10	11	4=100	2,502
Late September 1999	73	43	30	23	11	12	4=100	985
November 1997	70	37	33	26	13	13	4=100	1,165
July 1994	68	35	33	29	16	13	3=100	1,009
June 1992	64	33	31	32	18	14	4=100	3,517
November 1991	66	35	31	30	18	12	4=100	2,020
May 1990	49	19	30	44	26	18	7=100	2,998
February 1989	50	21	29	45	25	20	5=100	2,048
May 1988	49	21	28	46	28	18	5=100	3,021
May 1987	48	13	35	46	24	22	6=100	4,244

² This question is part of a long series of values items that have been asked since 1987. For the complete report see "The 2004 Political Landscape: Evenly Divided and Increasingly Polarized" <http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=196>.