

Families and Poverty/Inequality



Marcy Carlson, Professor of Sociology

June 12, 2018

Teaching Poverty 101 Workshop

Institute for Research on Poverty, UW-Madison

Key Family Topics Related to Poverty/Inequality

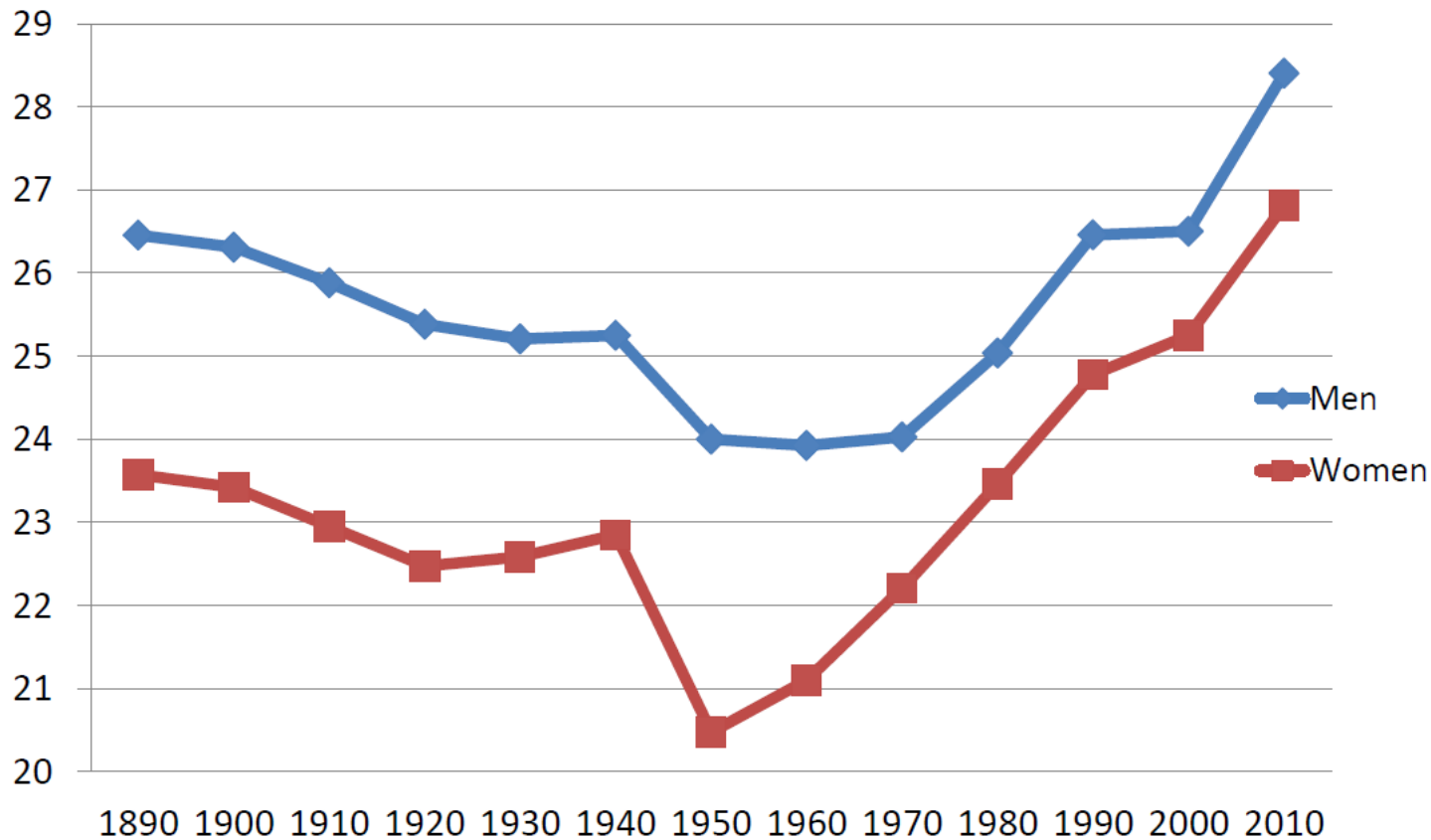
- 1) Major changes in U.S. family demography**
- 2) Differences in family patterns by socioeconomic status**
- 3) Families and the intergenerational transmission of (dis)advantage**

1) Major Changes in U.S. Family Demography

- **Marriage and cohabitation**
- **Divorce**
- **Nonmarital childbearing**
- **Single motherhood**
- **Growing instability and complexity**

Age at Marriage - U.S.

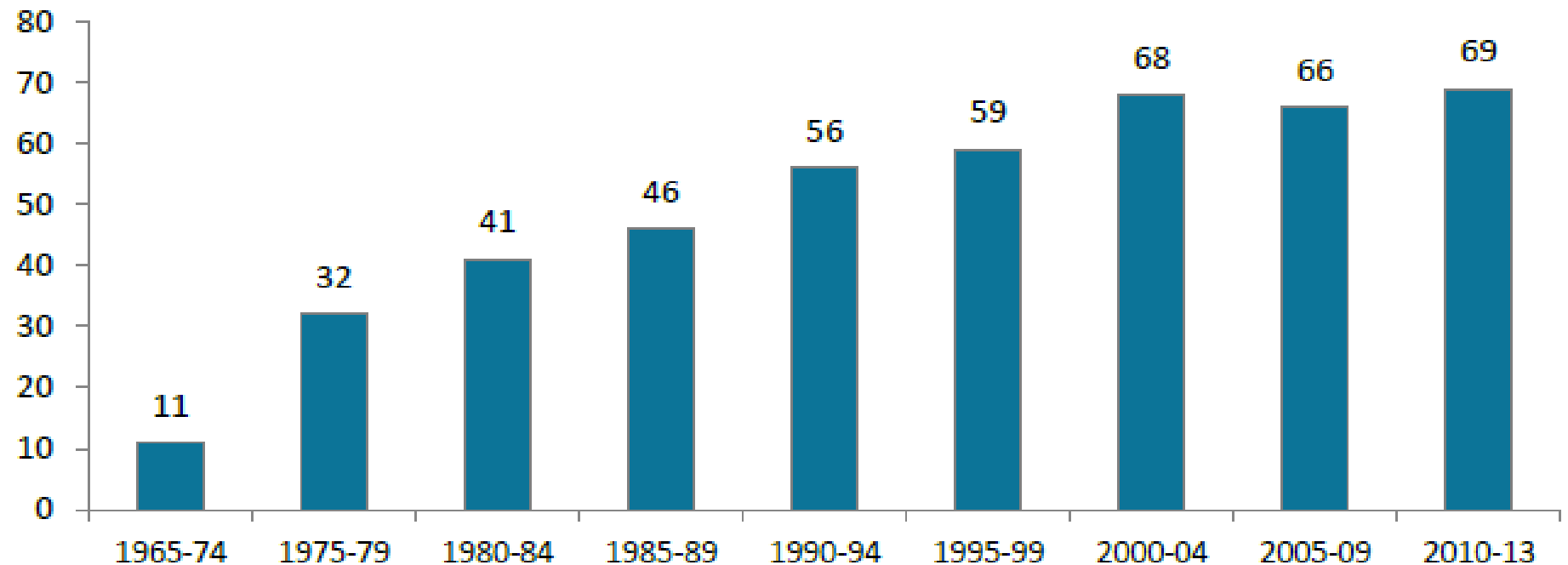
Figure 1. Median Age at First Marriage by Sex: 1890 to 2010



Source: U.S. Decennial Census (1890-2000); American Community Survey (2010). For more information on the ACS, see <http://www.census.gov/acs>

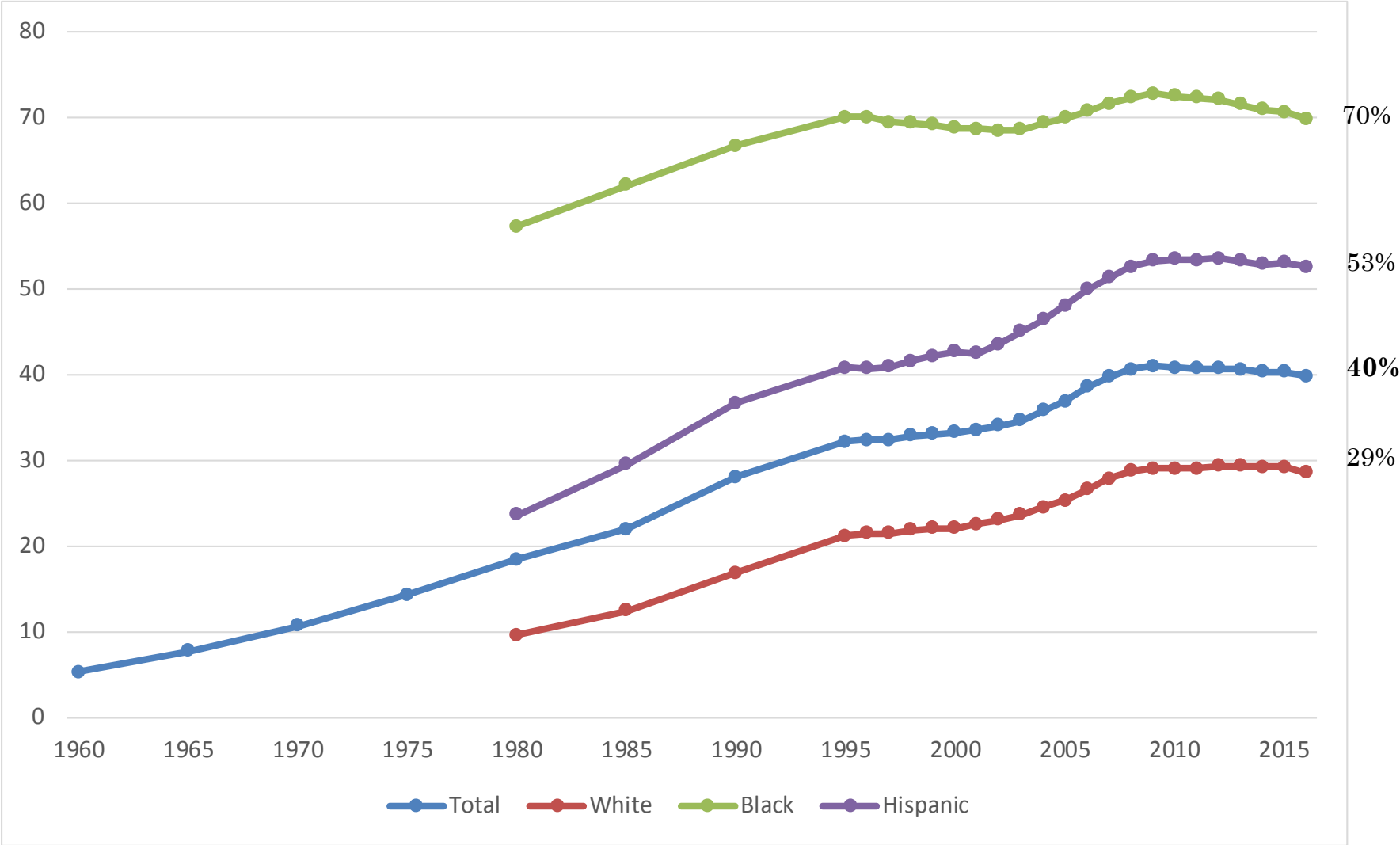
Cohabitation - U.S.

Percent of Women Ages 19-44 Who Have Ever Cohabited before 1st Marriage, by Marriage Cohort



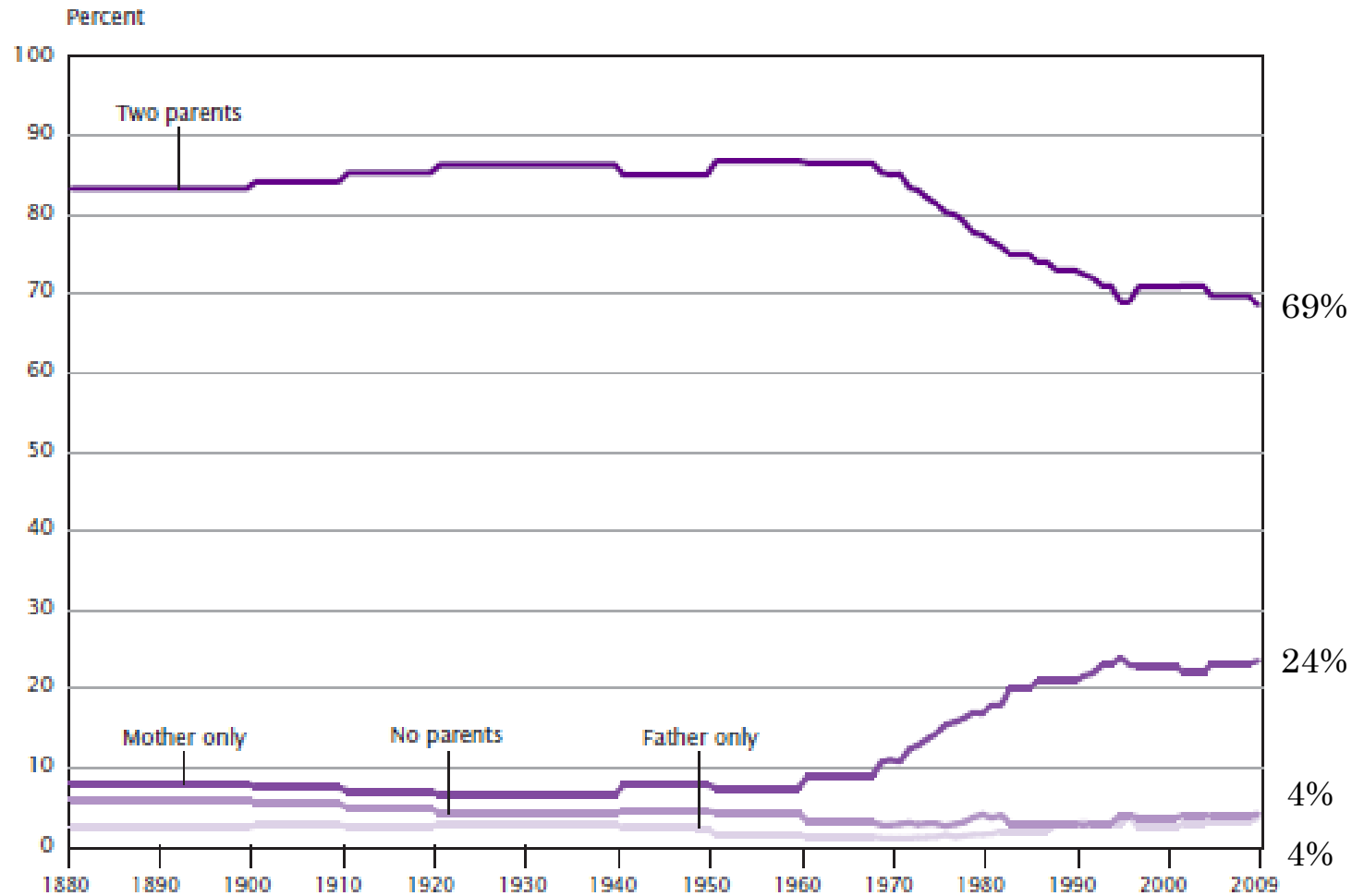
Sources: 1987 NSFH, Bumpass & Sweet, 1989; 1995 NSFG, Bumpass & Lu, 2000; 2002 NSFG, Kennedy & Bumpass, 2008; 2006/08 NSFG (FP-10-07); 2011/13 NSFG, NCFMR Analyses

Nonmarital Births (%) - U.S., 1960-2016



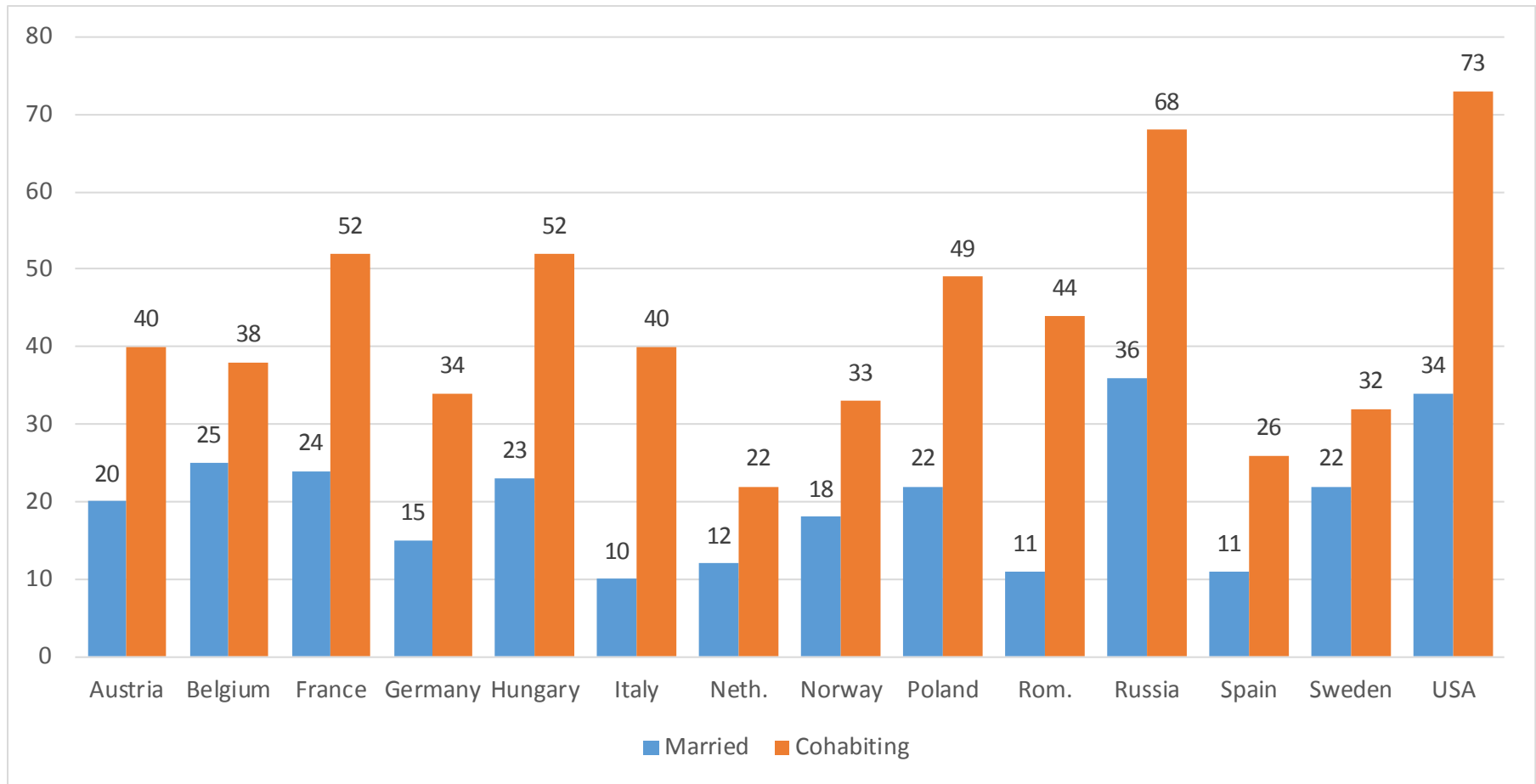
Source: National Center for Health Statistics

Figure 1.
Historical Living Arrangements of Children: Selected Years, 1880 to 2009



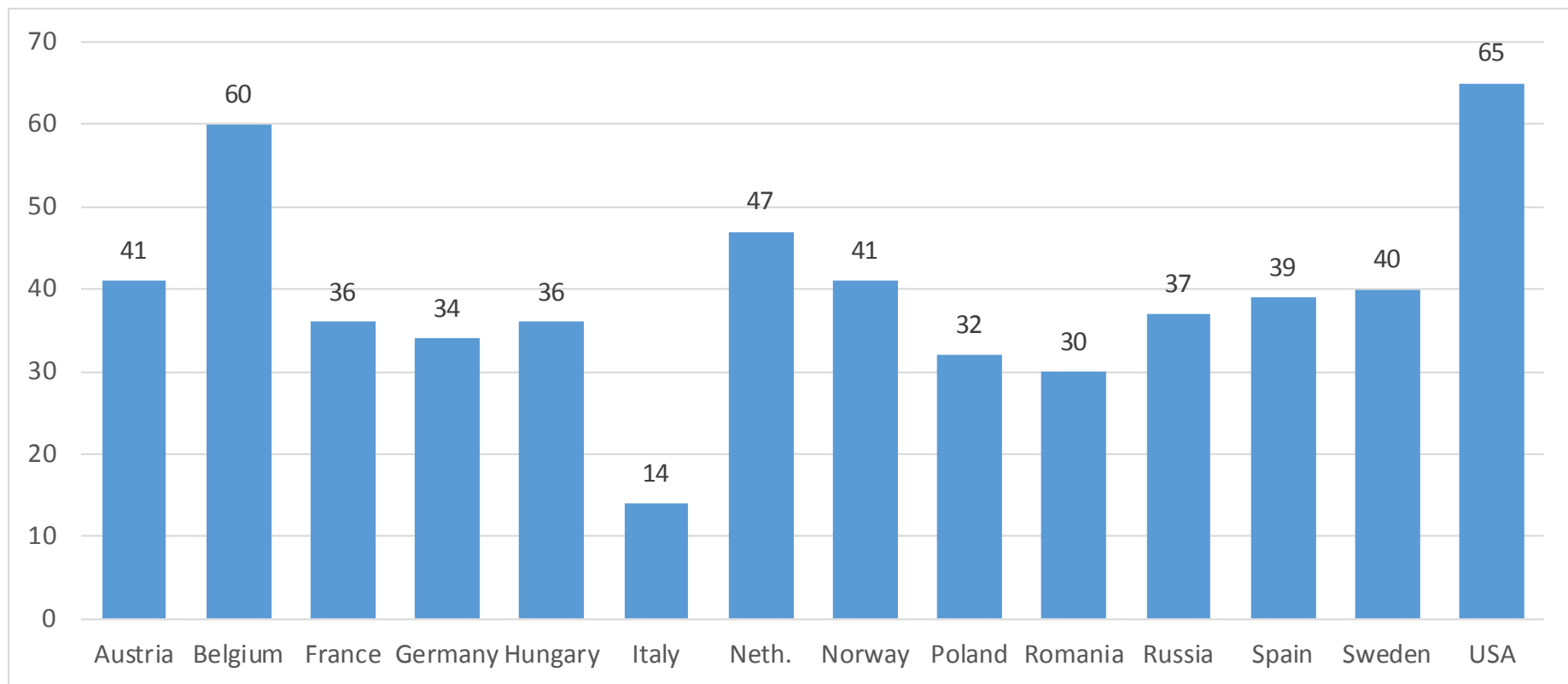
Source: 1880-1940: Integrated Public-Use Microdata Series: Version 2.0 1 percent microdata files made available by the Historical Census Projects. For 1880-1940, children in group quarters are included (1 percent or less of all children). For more information, see <<http://usa.ipums.org/usa/design.shtml>>; 1970-1990: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement 1970, 1975, 1980, and 1990. For more information about CPS, see <<http://www.census.gov/aprd/techdoc/cps/cps-main.html>>; 1996-2009: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 1986, 1996, 2001, 2004, and 2008 Panels, Wave 2 Topical Module. For information on sampling and nonsampling error, see <www.census.gov/sipp/source.html>.

Percent of Parents who Broke up by Child Age 15



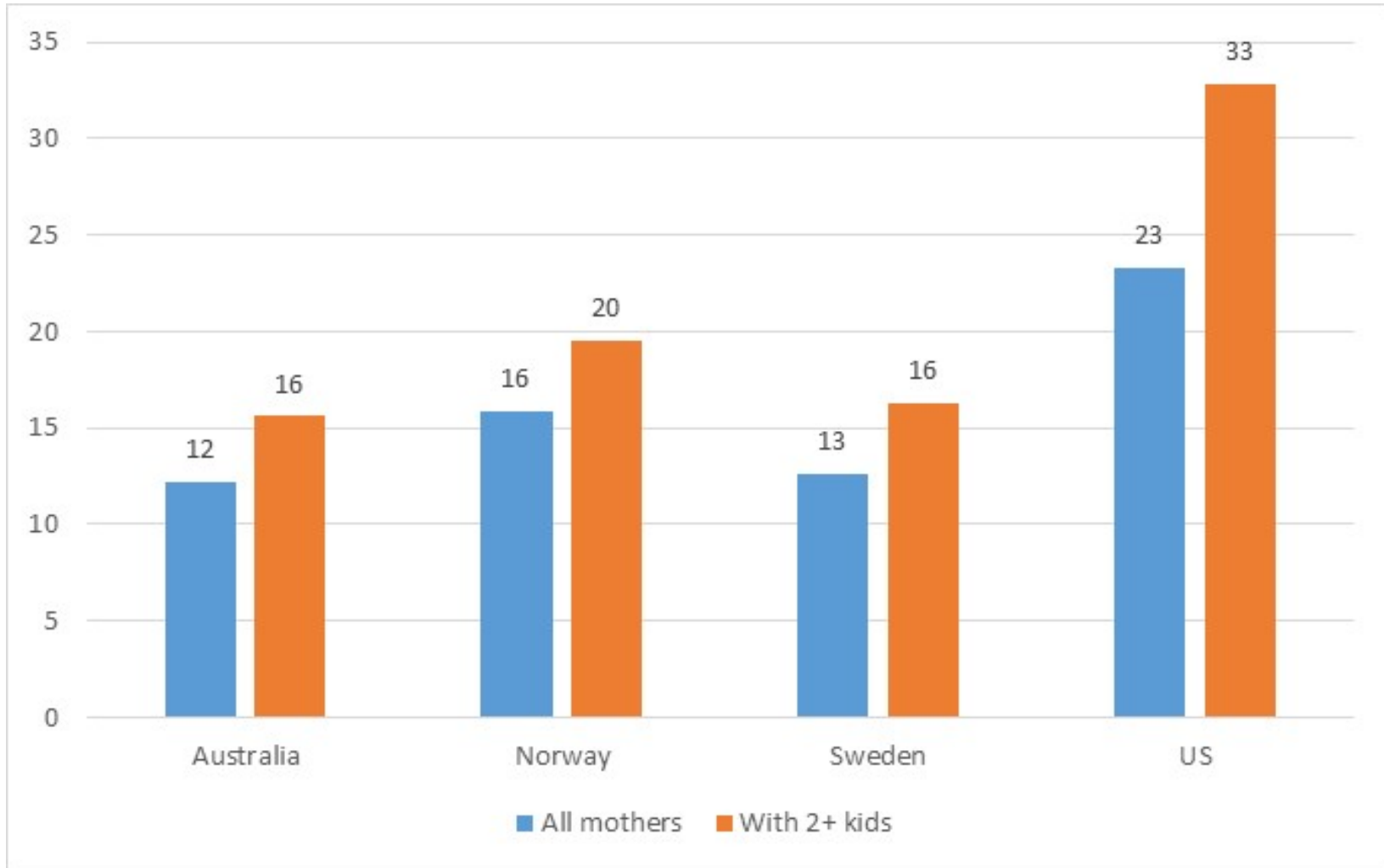
Source: Andersson, Thomson & Duntava. 2017. "Life-table representations of family dynamics in the 21st century." *Demographic Research* 37(Article 35): 1081-1230.

Percent of All Separated Parents Who Enter a New Union within 6 Years



Source: Andersson, Thomson & Duntava. 2017. "Life-table representations of family dynamics in the 21st century." *Demographic Research* 37(Article 35): 1081-1230.

Percent of Mothers Who Have Children with Two or More Fathers



Source: Thomson et al. 2014. "Childbearing Across Partnerships in Australia, the United States, Norway, and Sweden." *Demography*.

Taken Together, These Trends Suggest:

- **Disconnection between marriage and childbearing/childrearing**
- **Rise in single parenthood**
- **Growing family complexity (re-partnering, and children by multiple partners)**



“From consensus to complexity” (Furstenberg 2014)

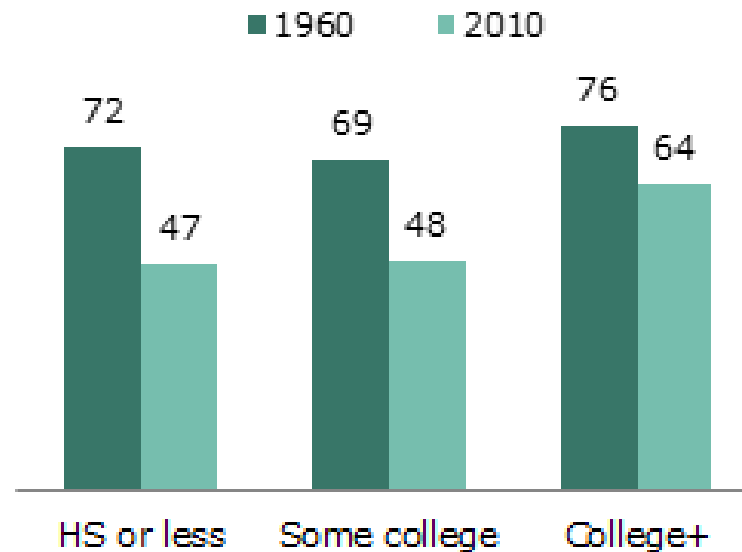
2) Differences in Family Patterns by SES

- **“Diverging destinies” in children’s family experiences over time in U.S.** (McLanahan 2004; McLanahan & Jacobsen 2014)
- **Strong evidence of (growing) demographic inequality in U.S.**
 - **Marriage** (Goldstein & Kenney 2001)
 - **Divorce** (Martin 2006)
 - **Nonmarital childbearing** (Ellwood & Jencks 2004; Sawhill 2014)
 - **Age/intention of first birth** (Hayford & Guzzo 2016; Musick et al. 2009)
 - **Multi-partnered fertility** (Guzzo & Dorius 2016; Meyer et al. 2005)

Marriage by Education

Share Currently Married by Education, 1960 and 2010

%

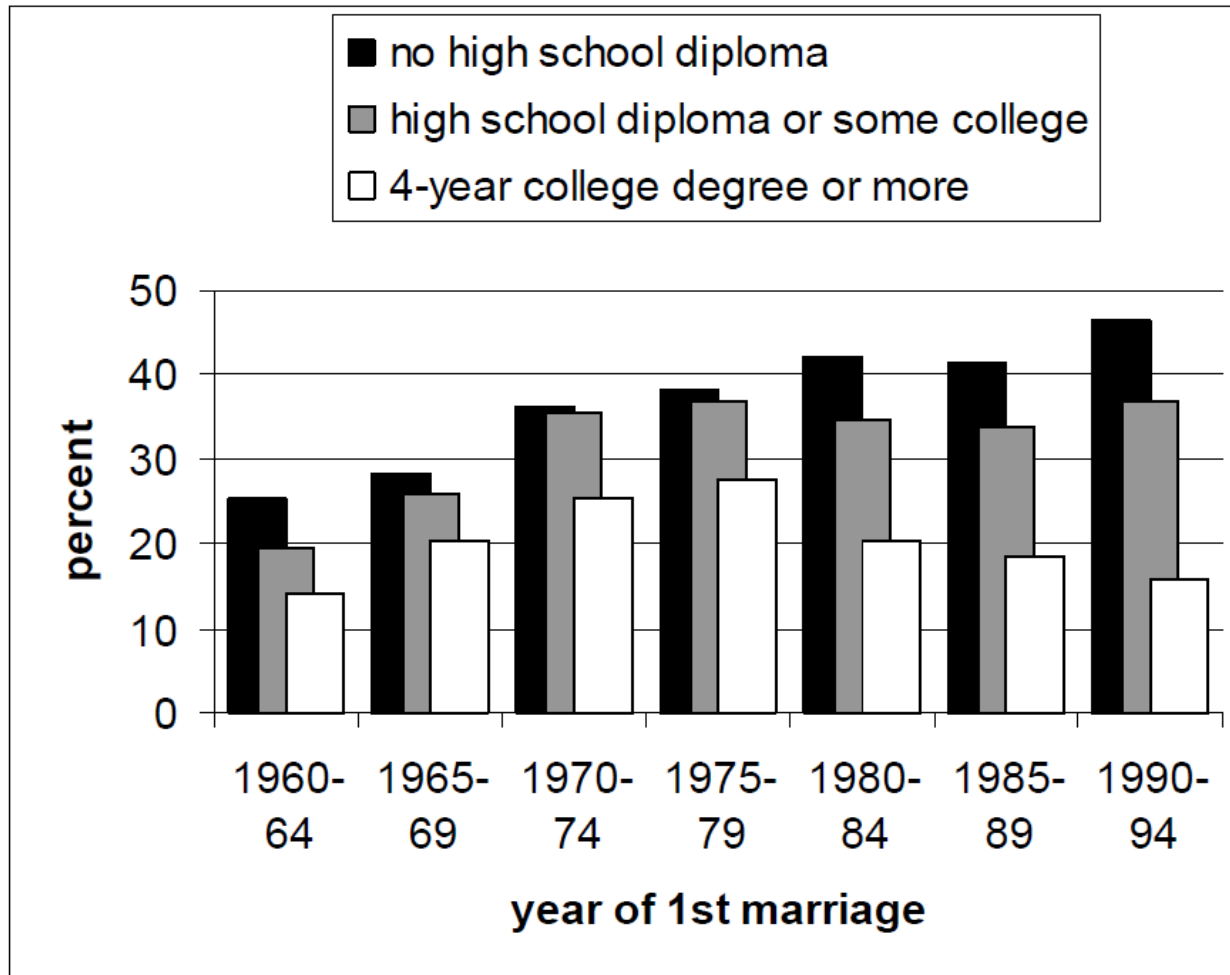


Note: Based on adults ages 18 and older.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Census 1960 and ACS 2010, IPUMS.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

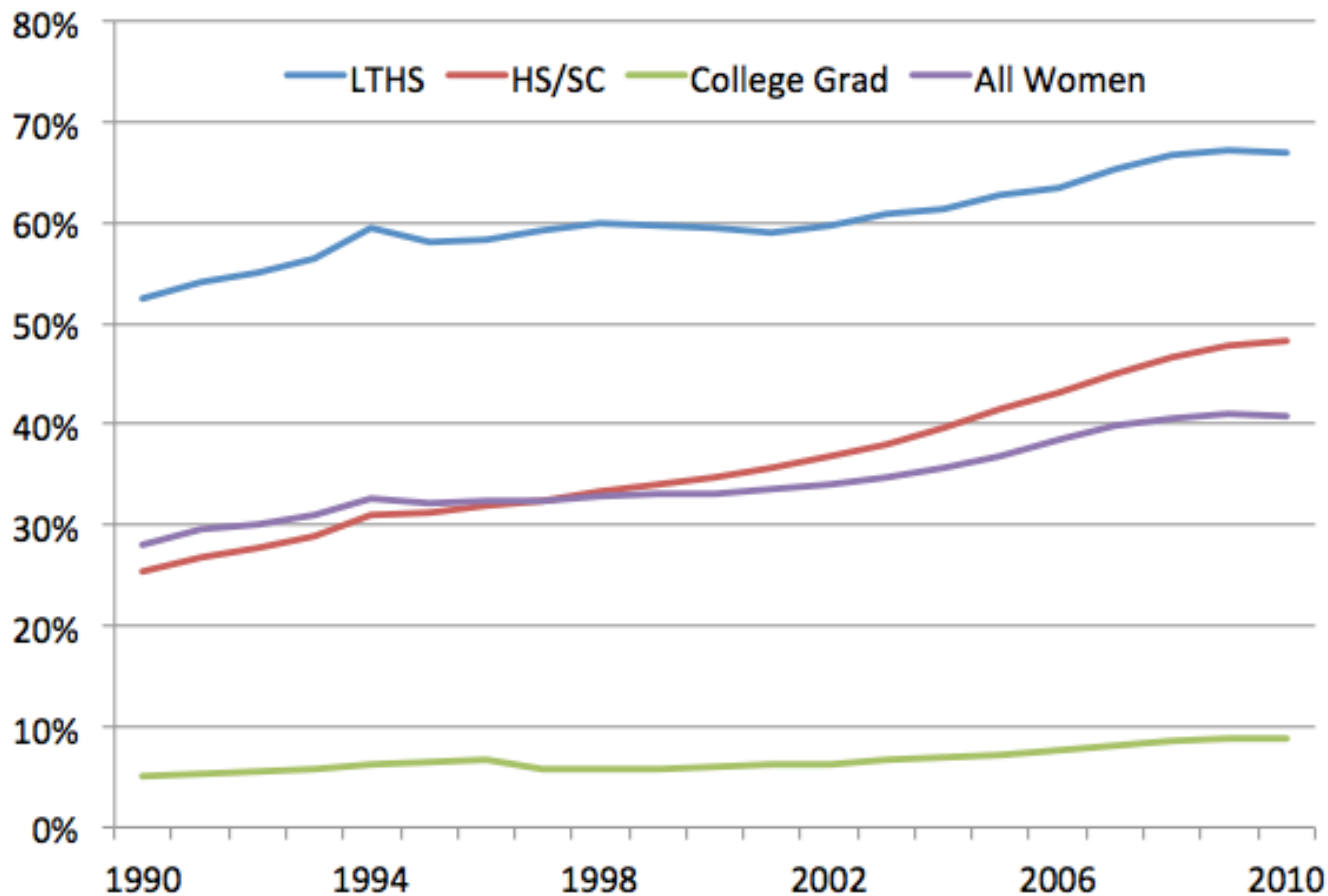
Percent Divorced within 10 Years of Entering First Marriage, by Education



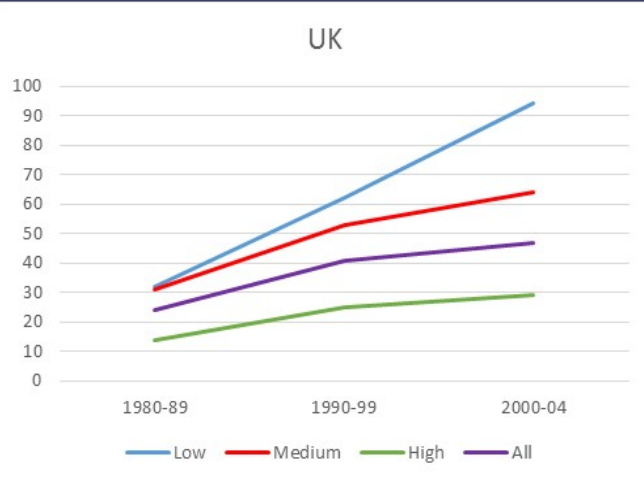
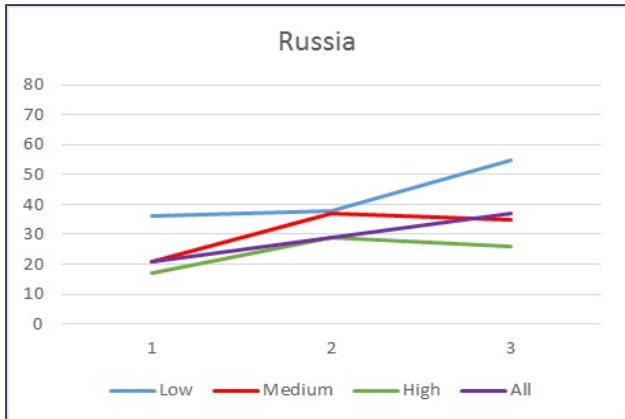
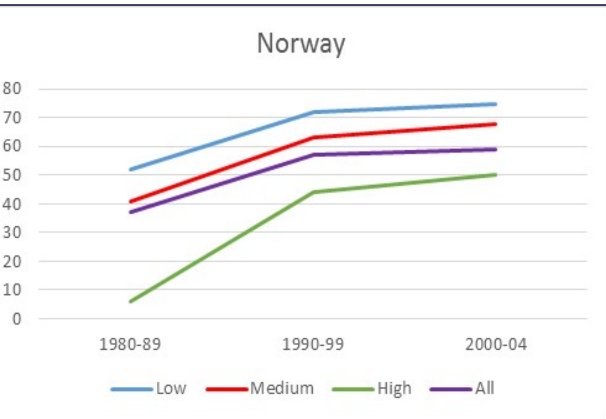
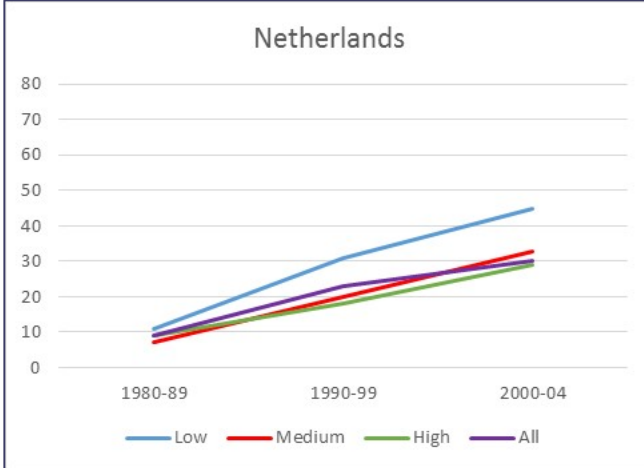
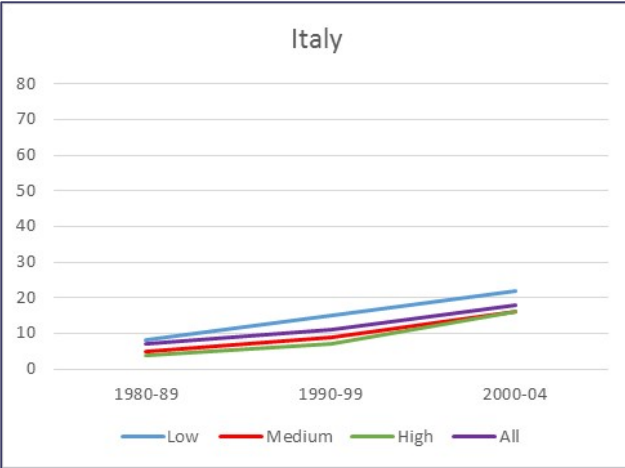
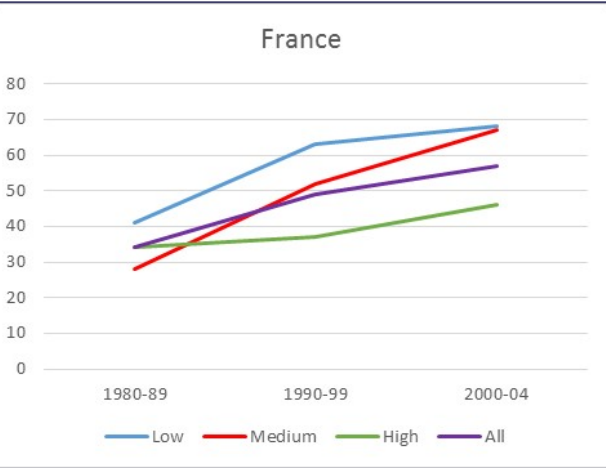
U.S.

Figure 1: Percent of All Births that are Non-marital by Education, 1990-2010

Source: National Vital Statistics Birth Data Files

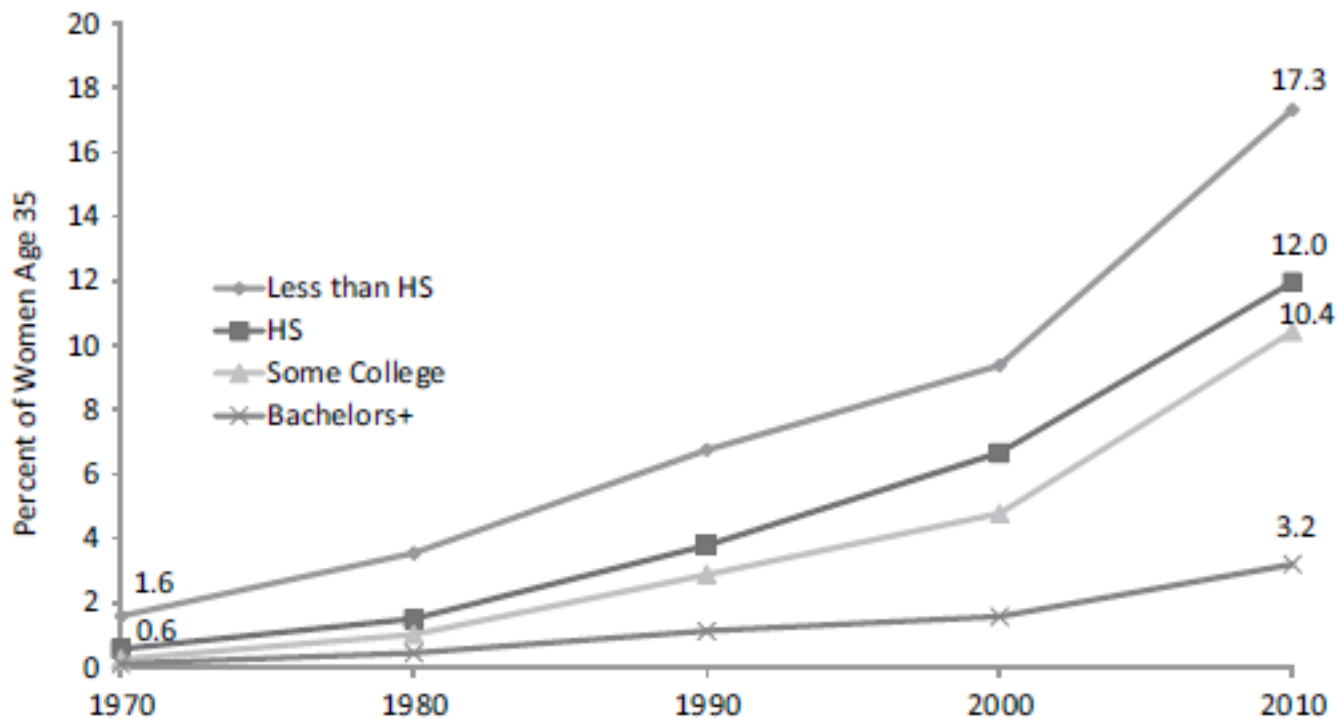


Smaller Educational Gradient in Nonmarital Births in European Countries (except the UK)



Source: Perelli-Harris et al. 2010. "The Educational Gradient of Childbearing within Cohabitation in Europe." *Population and Development Review* 36(4):775-801.

Percentage of Women Age 35 Who Are Never-Married Mothers by Education Level, 1970-2010

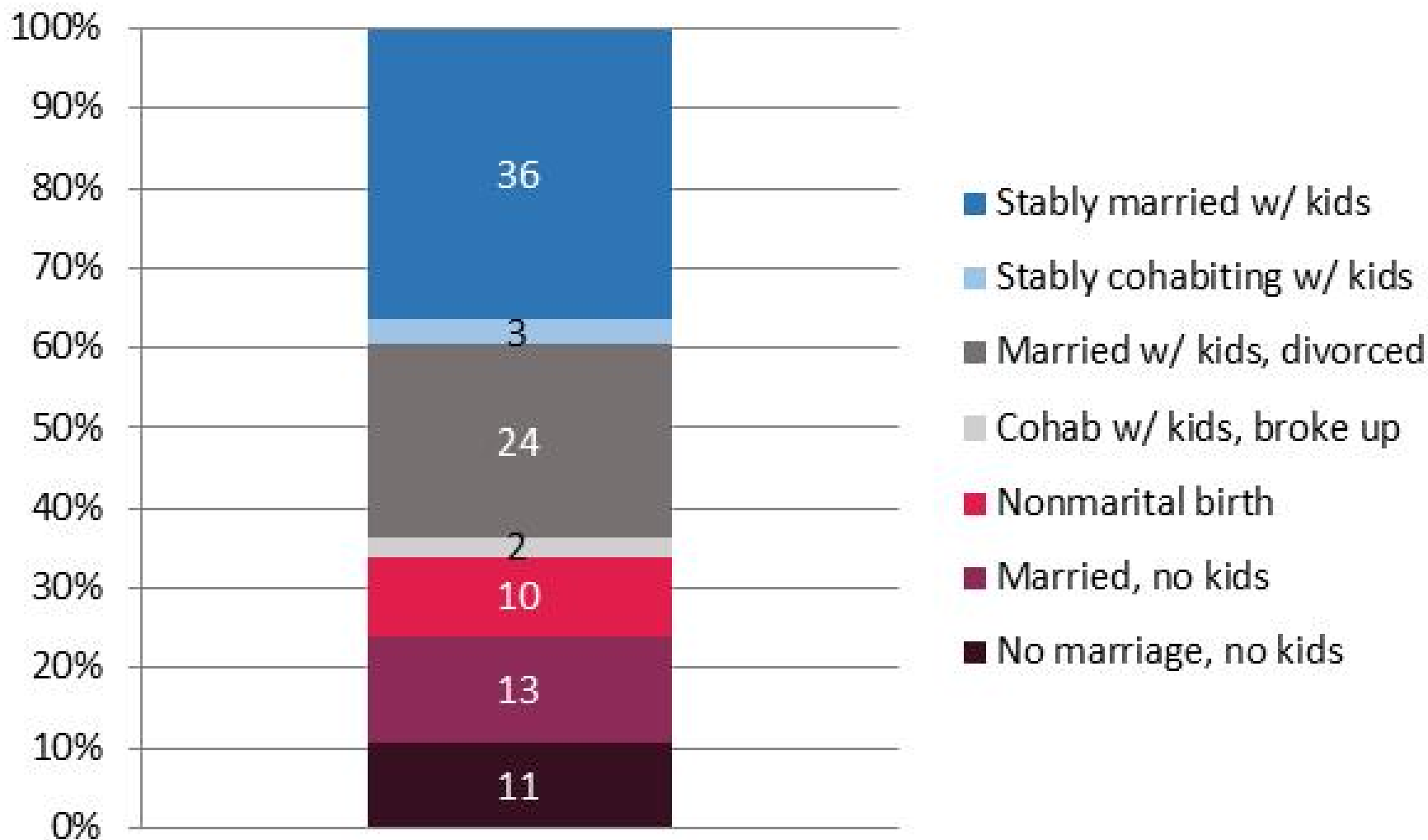


SOURCE: Authors' calculations from the decennial census (U.S. Census Bureau 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000) and the American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau 2010); includes only mothers with coresiding children.

Men's Family Life Course (7 Categories)

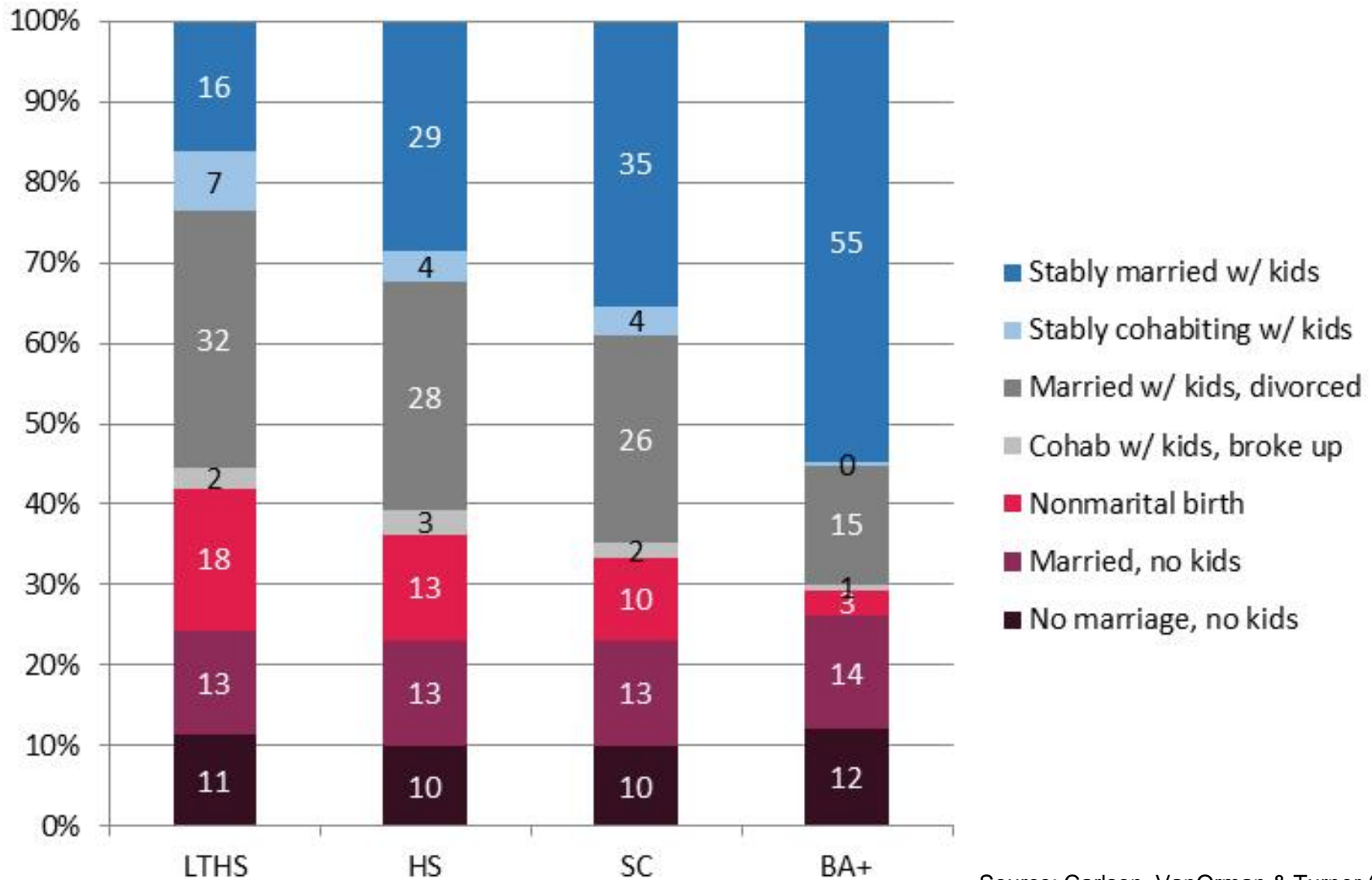
- *Stably married w/ kids* – married, then first child, no divorce prior to first child's 18th birthday
- *Stably cohabiting w/ kids*
- *Married, kids, divorced* – married, then first child, divorced before first child's 18th birthday
- *Cohab, dissolved*
- *Nonmarital first birth* – first child prior to first marriage
- *Married, no kids* – married, never reported any children
- *No kids or marriage* – never reported a marriage or child

U.S.: Family Experience of NLSY Men (Born 1967-64), through Ages 45-52



Source: Carlson, VanOrman & Turner (in progress)

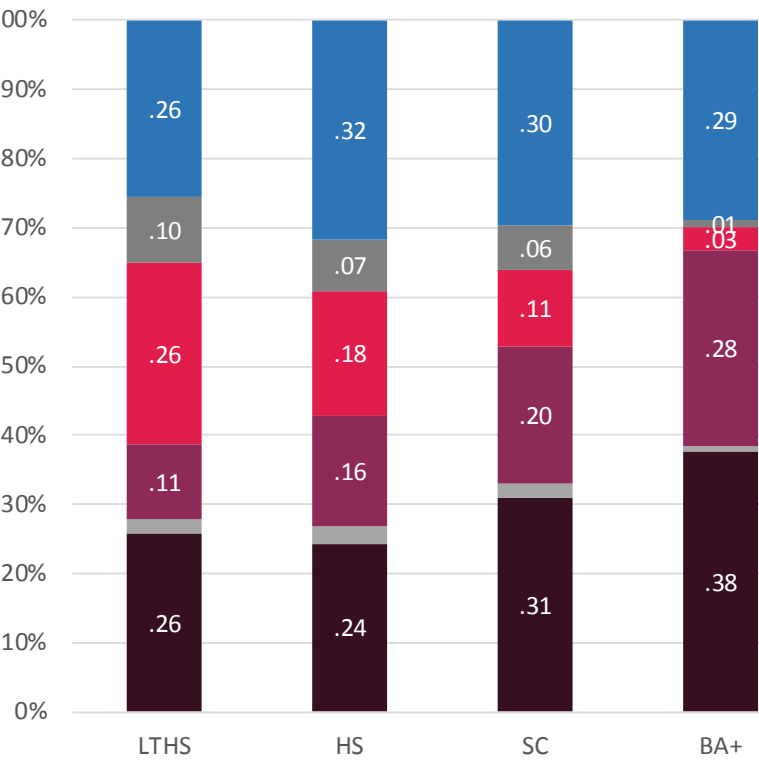
U.S.: Family Experience of NLSY Men (Born 1957-64), by Education through Ages 45-52



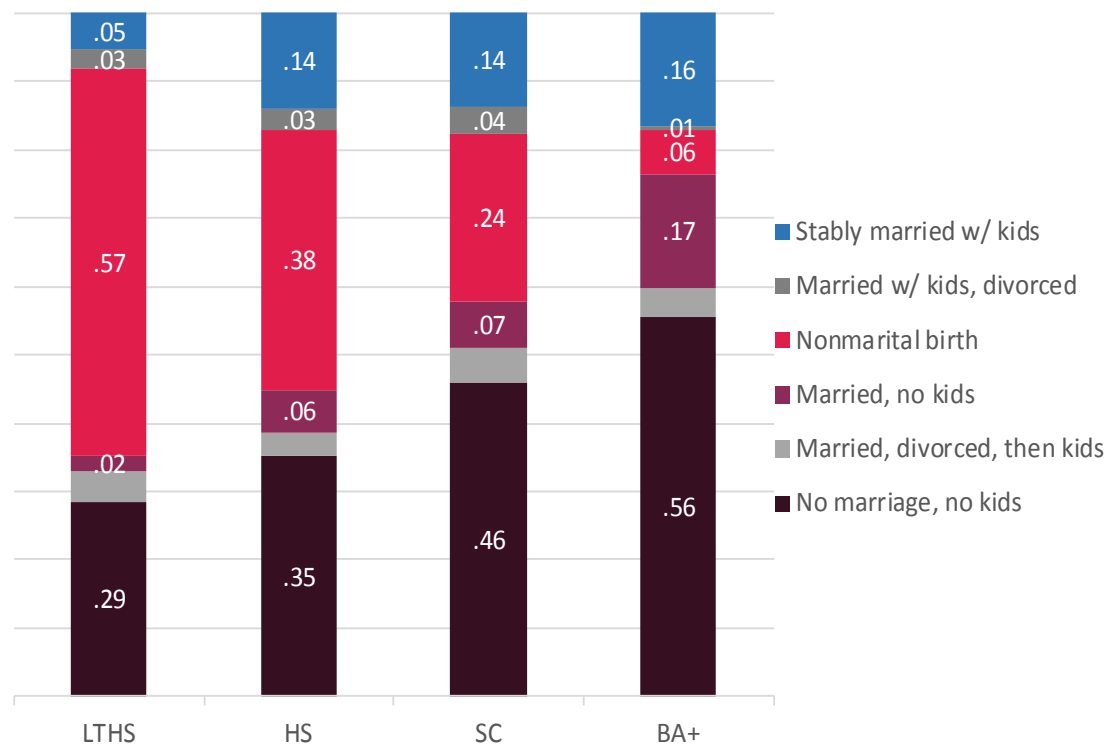
Source: Carlson, VanOrman & Turner (in progress)

Cohort Change: Men's Experiences to ~Age 30 (1979 and 1997 NLSY Cohorts)

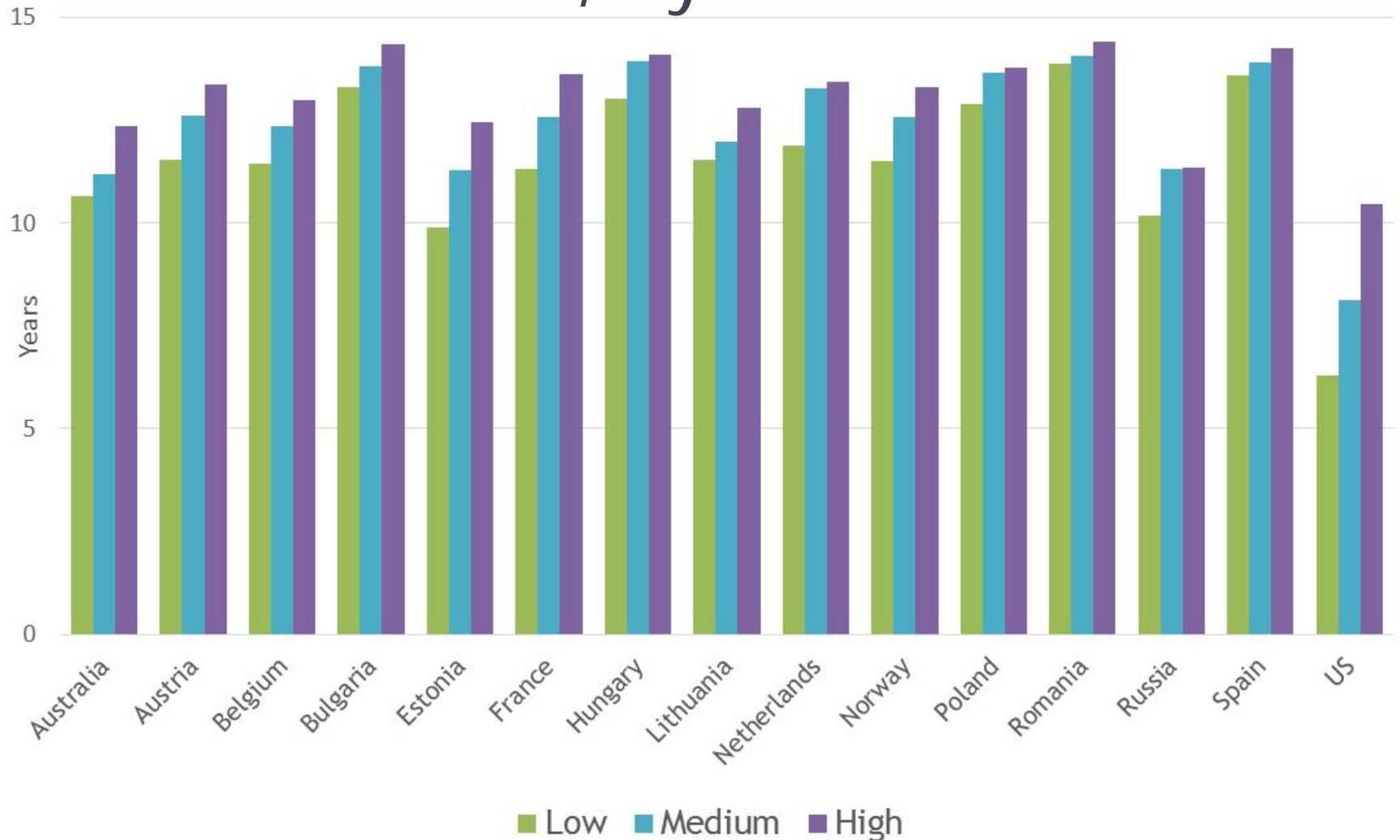
Born 1957-1964



Born 1980-1984

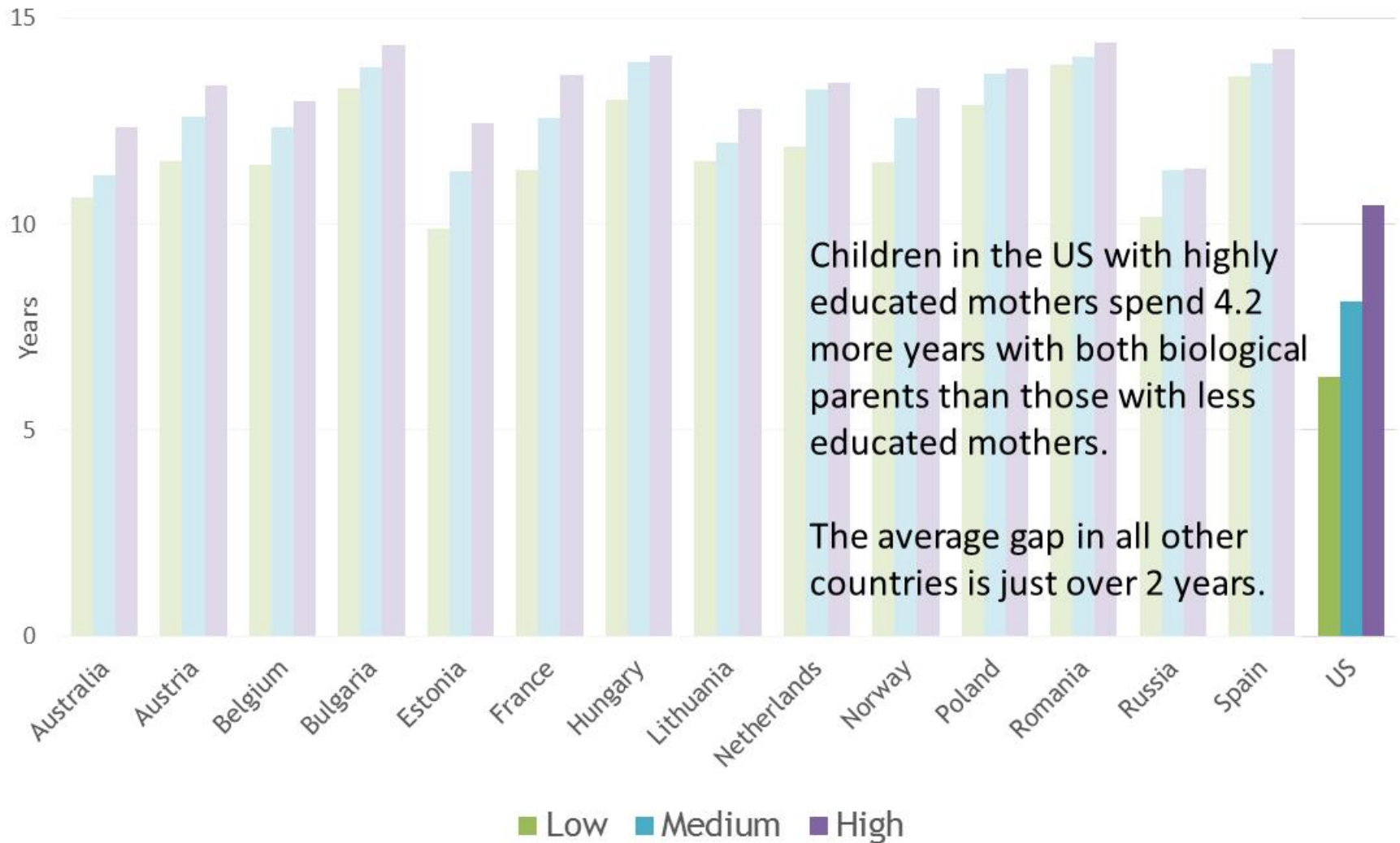


To Age 15: Years with Two-Biological Parent Families, by Education



Source: Generations & Gender Survey.

To Age 15: Years with Two-Biological Parent Families, by Education

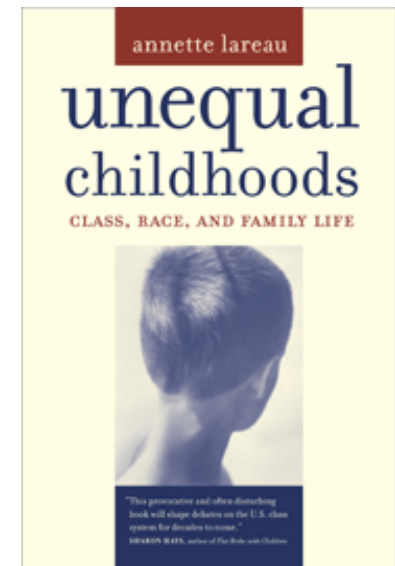


3) Families and the Intergenerational Transmission of (Dis)Advantage

- How do families transmit (dis)advantages to children?
- Key domains:
 - Economic resources
 - Parental socialization/involvement
 - Connections/networks
- Both structural and socio-cultural aspects
(i.e., who's in the house and what do they bring/do/invest?)

Annette Lareau's *Unequal Childhoods* (2003)

- Interested in how inequality affects life chances, starting during childhood and adolescence
- Ethnographic study of 12 White and Black families with children in 3rd/4th grades
- Finds big differences in parenting by social class (but not by race)



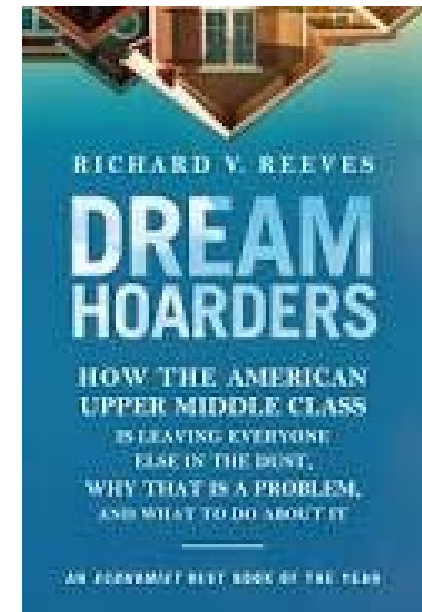
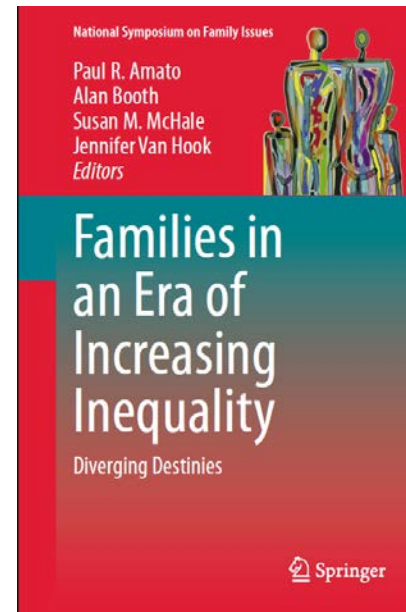
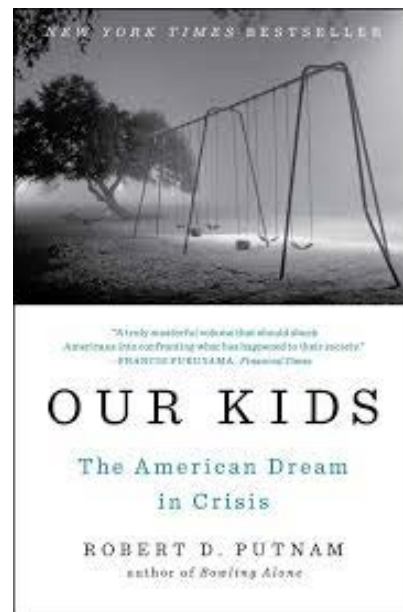
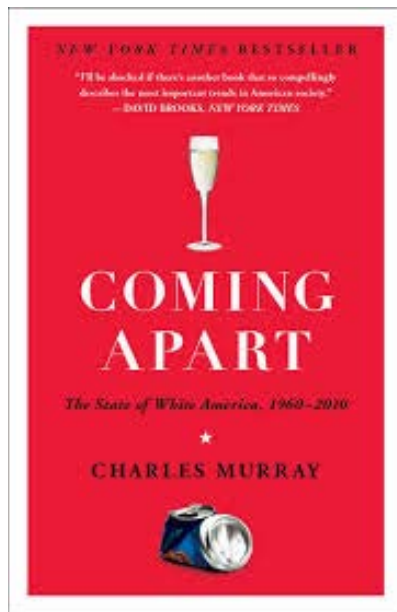
Working-Class Parenting = 'Natural Growth'

- Parents work hard to feed, clothe and protect their children
- But they also presume that children will spontaneously grow and thrive
- Children spend much of their non-school time in unstructured play
- Are given independence in school and other institutions
- Childhood is a time to be free of life's burdens – not to prepare for them!

Middle-Class Parenting = 'Concerted Cultivation'

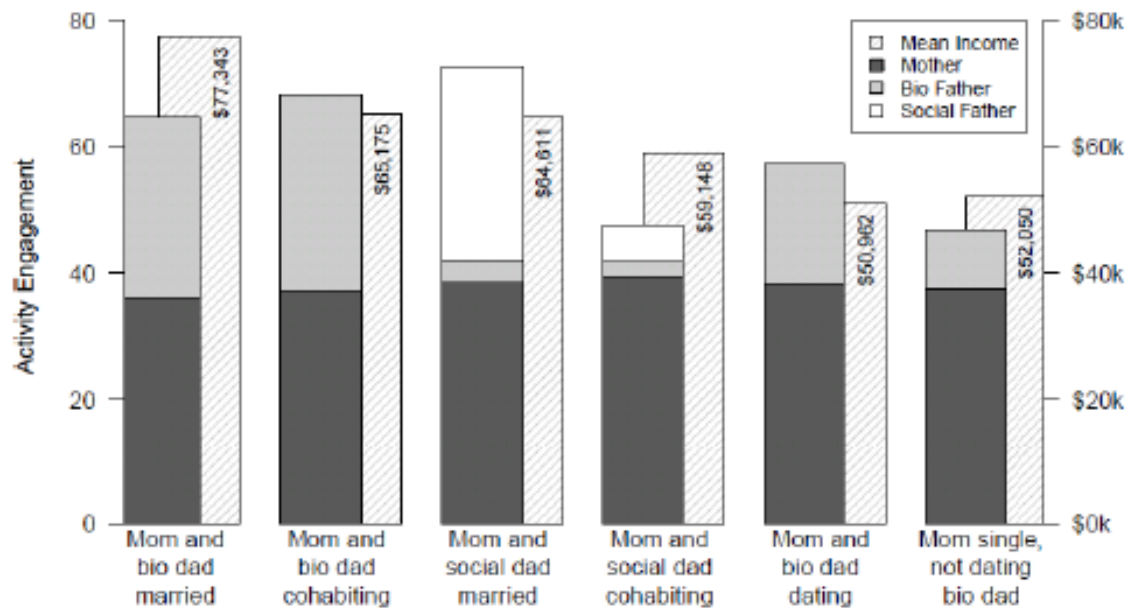
- Parents see their children as 'a project'
- They seek to actively develop their talents, opinions, and skills through organized activities
- Reasoning and language development are important
- Close supervision of their experiences in school
- Childhood seen as a "training ground" for self-actualization and pursuing interesting careers

Growing Attention to and Evidence about Differential Family Experiences/Investments by SES



Variation in Income and Parental Engagement across Family Types

Figure 2: Total (Sum of) Mother, Biological Father, and Social Father Activity Engagement and Median Household Income by Family Type (adjusted for baseline characteristics)



Note: Each stacked bar represents the total (sum of the) number of activities engaged in with children in the week before the interview by mothers (black portion), biological fathers (grey section), and social father (white section) for each family type. Activity engagement for *each parent* was assessed on a 0- to 56-point scale. The shaded bars represent median household income for each family type.

Thank You!

- Please feel free to be in touch:
carlson@ssc.wisc.edu
- Or find syllabus on website ('Sociology of Poverty, Inequality and Social Policy'):
https://www.ssc.wisc.edu/cde/people/show-person.php?person_id=486