

# The Convergence Thesis <sup>1</sup>

- **Modernization theory.**
  - Idea that poorer countries would eventually make a transition from traditional to modern in the same way as the Western countries did.
  - Theorists believed that the Western model of development was inevitable but also beneficial.
  - Conjugal family system was associated with progress and economic development.
-

## The Convergence Thesis <sup>2</sup>

- Concept of the American conjugal family eroded in the 1960s.
  - Rapid rise in divorce rates.
  - Sharp decline in birth rates.
  - Increase in prevalence of cohabitation.
  - Rise in marital age.
  - Increase in proportion of births outside of marriage.
- 
- Supremacy of the conjugal family weakened in Western Europe as well.
  - Separation of marriage and childbearing.

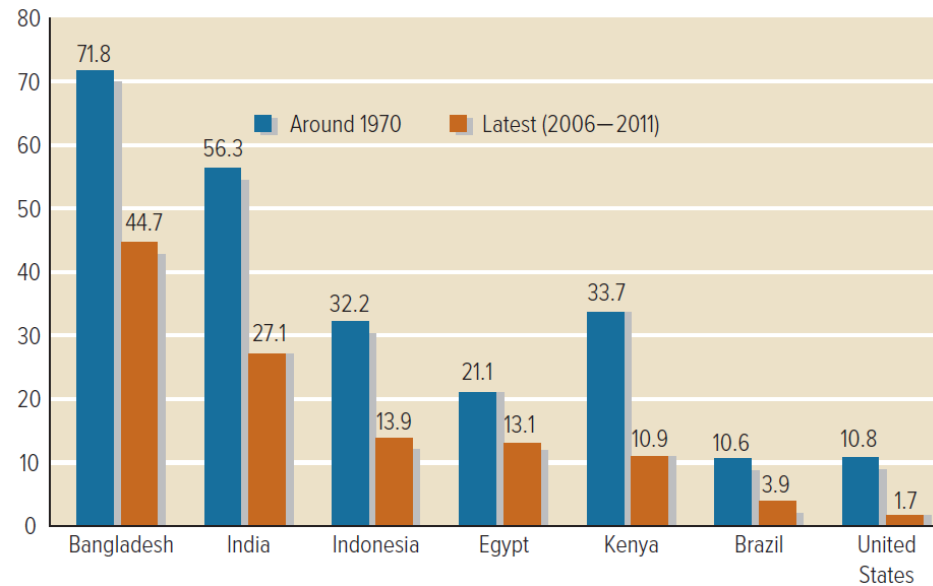
# The Decline of Parental Control

- Typical age at marriage of a woman is an indicator of parental control.
  - If age is low, it is most likely that parents are choosing husbands.
  - Reasons.
    - Rising age at marriage.
    - Hybrid marriage.
-

## Rising Age at Marriage

- Proves that:
    - Parental influence on spouse choice has declined.
    - Wives' authority in their households have increased.
  - Percentage of married adolescent girls has declined sharply in all of the countries though a wide variation still exists.
    - In Bangladesh, more than 40 percent of 15- to 19-year-olds are married today.
    - In Indonesia, Egypt, and Kenya, the percentage is a bit above 10 percent.
-

Figure 13.1: Percentage of 15- to 19-Year-Old Girls Who Were Married, 1970s to the Present



- Source: United Nations, 2013b.

# Types of Marriages

- **Arranged marriage.**
    - Parents choose their children's spouses with little or no participation by the children themselves.
  - **Love marriage.**
    - Young adults choose their own marriage partners on the basis of love and companionship.
  - **Hybrid marriage.**
    - Young adults and their parents work together to find marriage partners.
-

# The Spread of the Companionate Ideal <sup>1</sup>

- Companionate marriage.
  - Centers on the emotional satisfaction of the husband and wife rather than serving the needs of parents and other kin.
  - Emphasizes affection, friendship, and sexual gratification.
  - Has spread to nations that are not very industrialized.
  - Associated with:
    - Decline in arranged marriage.
    - Increase in marital age.
    - Other changes in family life.
-

## The Spread of the Companionate Ideal <sup>2</sup>

- Contributed by:
    - Mass media messages.
    - Christian missionaries who focused on the conjugal family.
    - Spread of mass education to low-income nations.
    - Economic development.
-



# How Social Norms Change

- **Developmental idealism:** Belief that Western-style families and economic development are beneficial for all countries.
  - Western way of life is superior and should be aspired to.
  - Abandoned by many intellectuals in the West.
  - Continues to exist in the non-Western world.
-

# The Spread of Postmodern Ideals

- Postmodern characteristics.
    - Cohabitation.
    - High rates of divorce.
    - Very low birth rates.
    - General orientation toward individual growth and development.
  - Latecomers to family change are skipping the companionate form of marriage.
    - Move from institutional marriage directly to individualistic marriage.
-

# The Decline of Fertility

- Total fertility rate (TFR).
  - Average number of births that a woman would have over her lifetime if current birthrates were to remain the same.
  - TFR of 2.1 is necessary to reproduce the population from generation to generation.
  - Decline in TFR in India, Mexico, Brazil, and China.
  - In China, the government-induced decline has clashed with the traditional preference for sons.
-

# Globalization of Production <sup>1</sup>

Movement to the global south of the production of goods and services that Westerners consume.

Unforeseen circumstances.

- Specialization in labor-intensive production of goods by factories in the global south.
  - Retention of control over design, marketing, and sales by the West.
  - Rise of global coordination on a supra-national level.
-

## Globalization of Production <sub>2</sub>

- Increasing employment of women is changing family patterns.
  - Employers in many low-income countries seem to think that:
    - Women will work for lower wages than men.
    - Women are easier to control than men.
  - Some of the jobs are done in factories and others are done at home.
-

# The Globalization of Production: Women's Employment <sup>1</sup>

- Benefits.
  - Wages help raise a family's standard of living.
  - Increased independence and bargaining power in the household.
  - Decrease in physical abuse.
  - Working at home helps combine earning money with childcare and household work.
-

## The Globalization of Production: Women's Employment <sup>2</sup>

- Costs.
  - Wages are low and employment is unstable.
  - Long hours of paid and unpaid work.
  - Lack of institutionalized care for children.
  - No increase in share of domestic work done by husbands.
  - Exploitation by employers.
-

# Transnational Families <sup>1</sup>

- Families that maintain continual contact between members in the sending and receiving countries.
  - Millions of families in the global south send members to work in wealthy nations in order to earn higher wages.
  - **Remittances:** Cash payments that immigrants send back to families in their countries of origin.
  - Gendered expectation.
  - Father's main task is to provide economically for his children.
  - Reality: Mothers are the main caregivers for children.
-



## Transnational Families <sub>2</sub>

- Reasons for sharp rise in migration of women.
  - Growth of low-wage jobs in wealthy countries.
  - Development of inexpensive means of computer-based communication across long distances.
  - Inexpensive air travel.
- 
- Can strain the ties between mothers and children.
  - Funds sent home can provide benefits to the children and their caregivers.
-

# Family Change in the Western Nations

- Expectation of social theorists.
    - Conjugal family of husband, wife, and children would continue to dominate family life in the Western countries.
  - Expectation of functionalist theorists.
    - Conjugal family fits best with an industrialized society.
  - Today, many different patterns of family and personal life co-exist.
    - Cohabiting couples with and without children, single parents, stepfamilies, and childless single adults.
-

# Globalization and Family Diversity in the West

- College-educated individuals have benefited the most from the globalization of production.
  - Access to managerial and professional jobs.
  - **Neo-traditional:** Style of family life centered on marriage but which may be preceded by cohabitation and in which wives work outside the home.
  - Egalitarian relationship between husband and wife.
- 
- Transformation of employment has constrained the family lives of less-educated adults and their families.
-

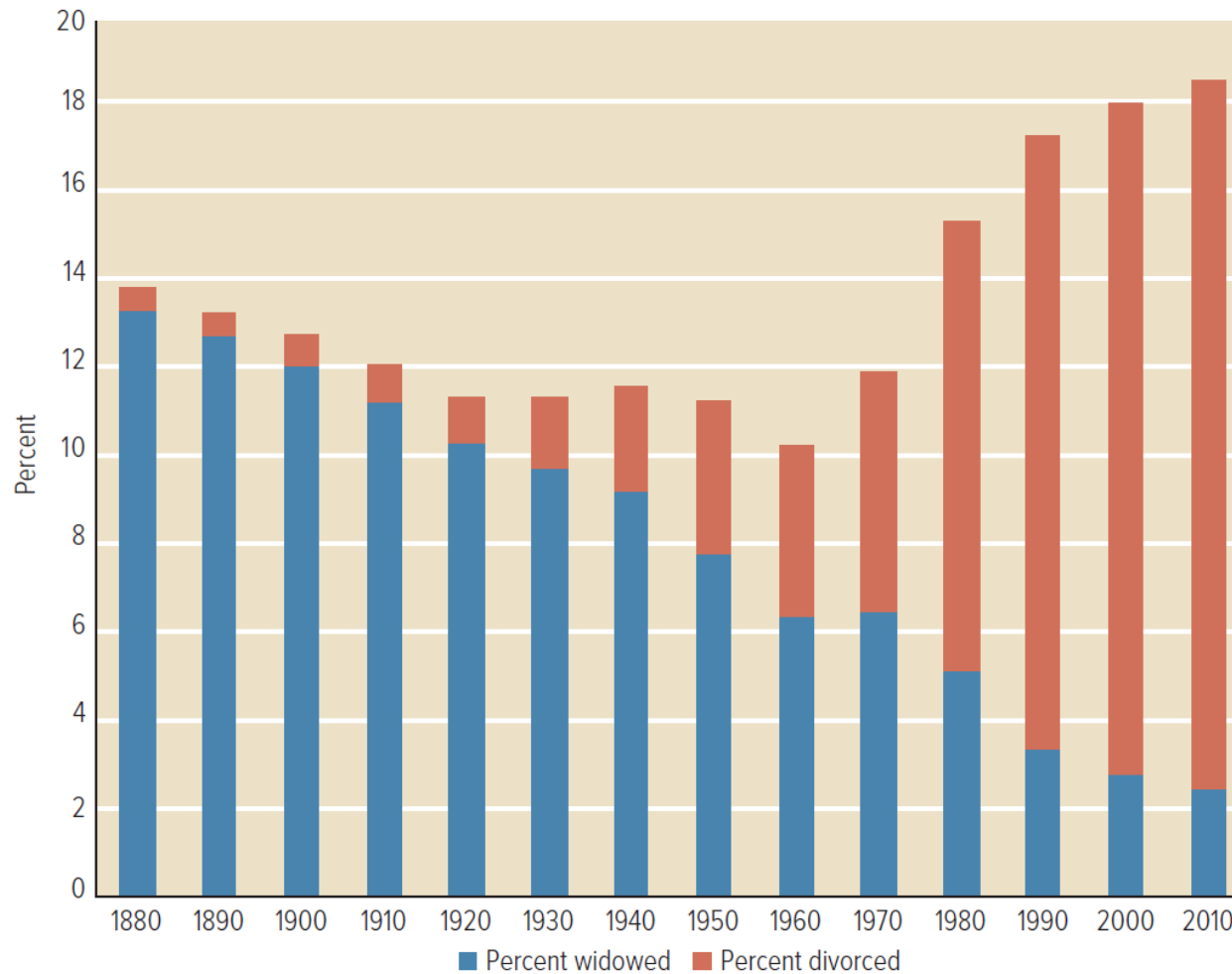
# The Return to Complexity <sub>1</sub>

- Uniformity of family patterns in the mid-twentieth century was the most distinctive and unusual period in historical perspective.
  - Family patterns in the centuries leading up to the 1900s include:
    - Informal marriage and nonmarital births.
    - High death rates, which made widowhood common .
  - Last half of the twentieth century.
    - Cohabitation, nonmarital births, and divorce retuned the West to a more diverse set of family patterns.
-

## The Return to Complexity <sub>2</sub>

- Implies a return to family diversity in contrast to the uniformity of family patterns in the mid-twentieth century.
  - Diversity of family patterns in the past had different consequences for family life than the diversity of family patterns today.
-

Figure 13.2: Percentage of 30- to 59-Year-Old Women Who Were Currently Widowed or Divorced: 1880 to 2010



• Source: Ruggles et al., 2010

# The Past and the Future

- Family patterns around the world did not converge to the Western conjugal family model.
  - Pace of family change around the world was uneven.
  - Greatest changes occurred in East Asia.
  - Latin America.
  - Signs of the postmodern family can be seen even before the transition to the modern conjugal family is achieved.
  - Predictions by social scientists about the future of the family are not error-free.
-