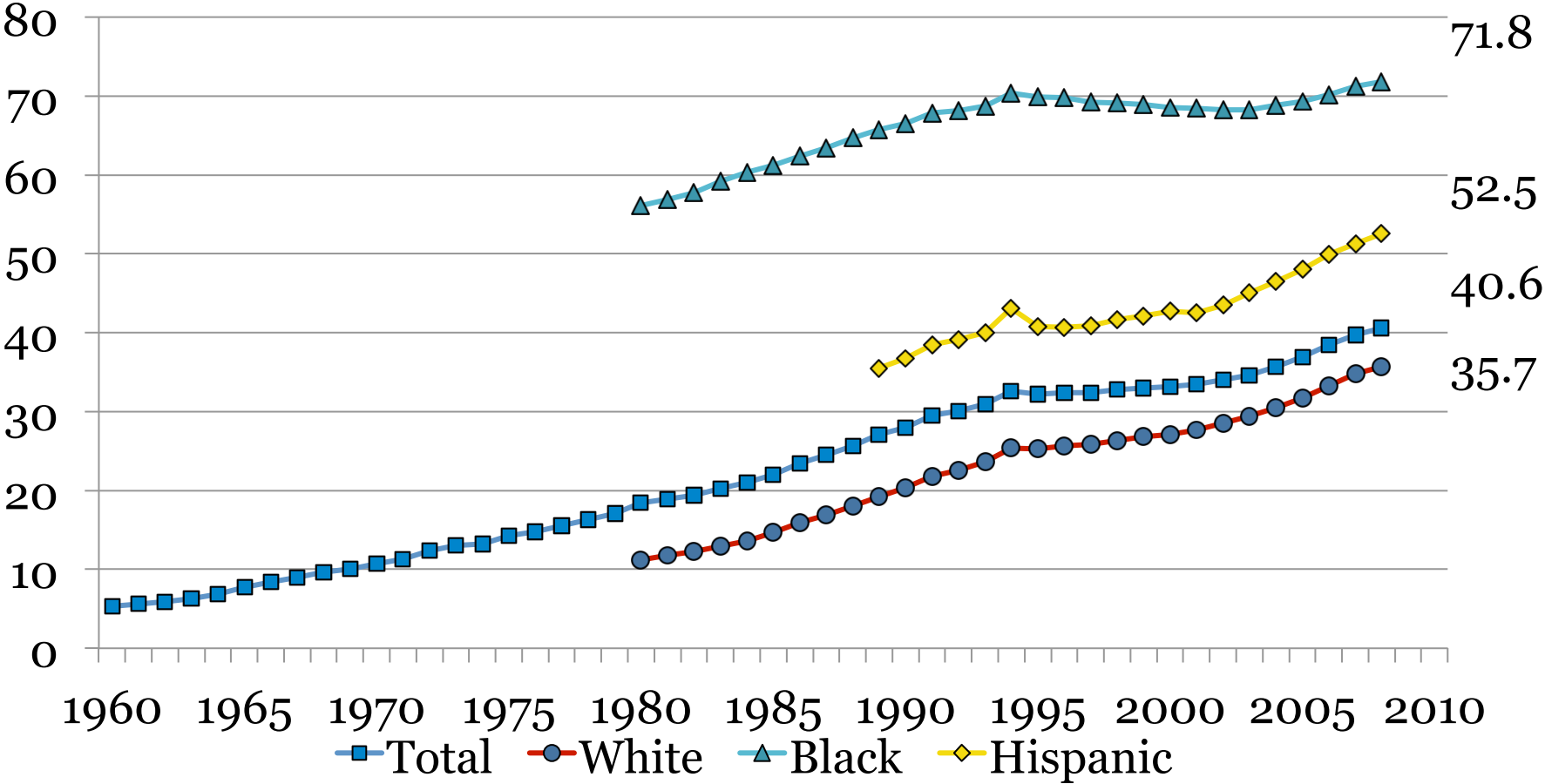


The Argument

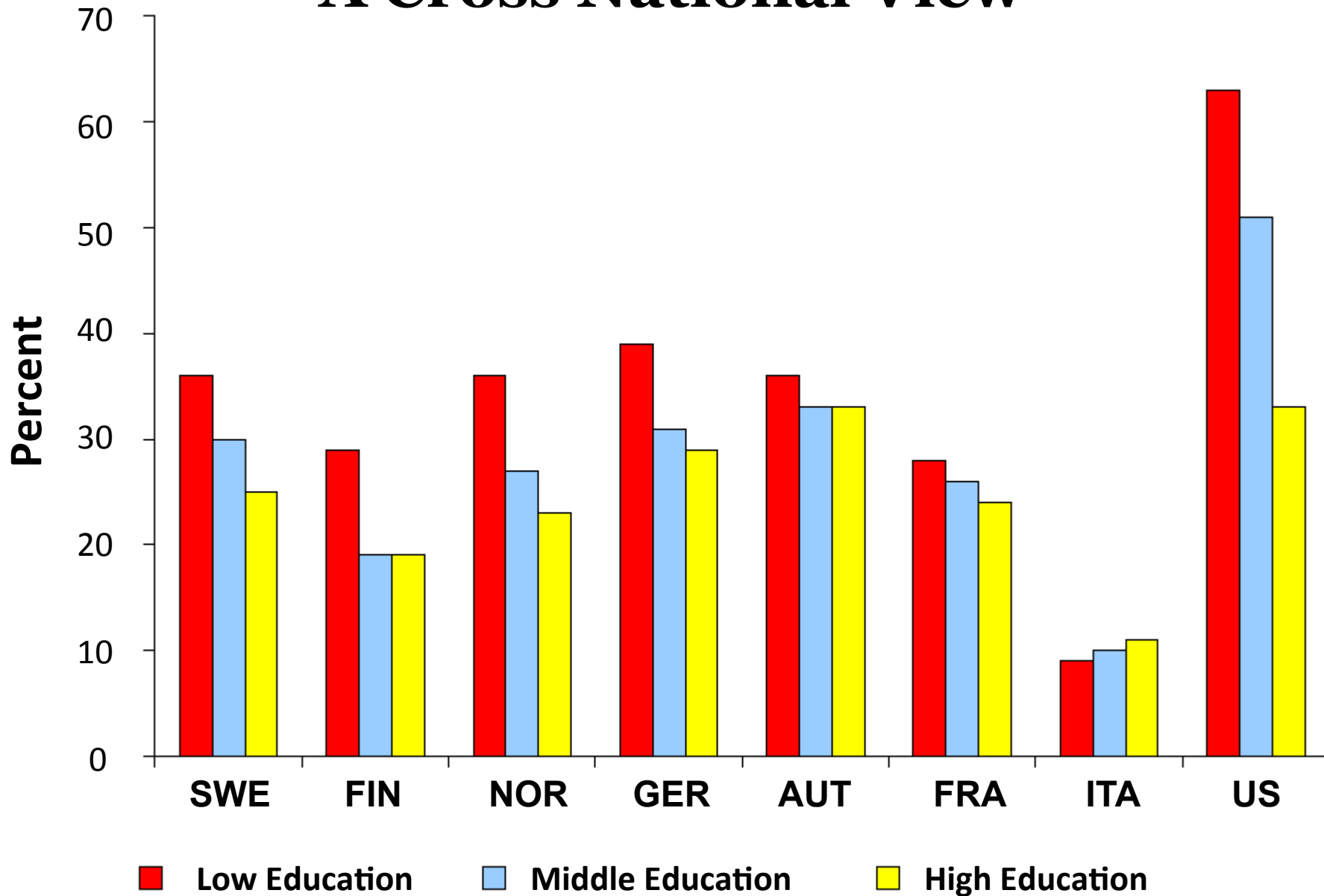
Non-marital childbearing is part of a negative feedback dynamic in which poor labor market conditions for men in Gen1 lead to lower parental investment in Gen2 and ultimately to lower human capital and mobility in Gen2.

Percent of Births to Unmarried Mothers



Source: National Center for Health Statistics

Single Motherhood by Age 15: A Cross National View



Causes

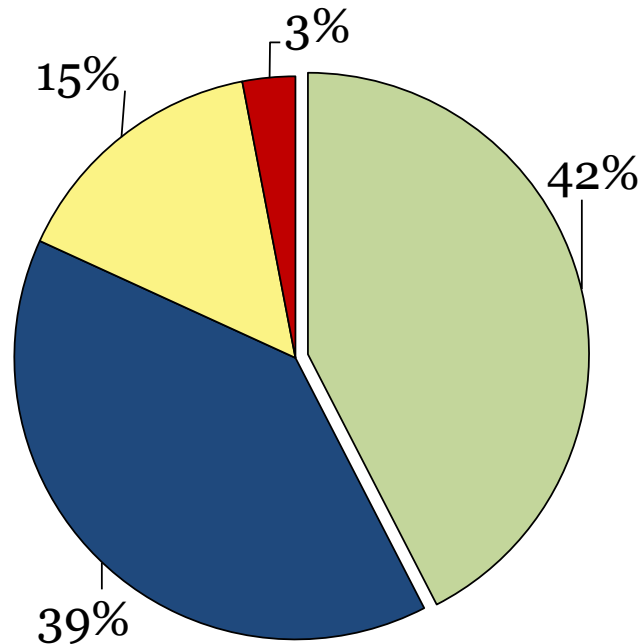
- Decline in stigma about about sex outside marriage and single motherhood
- New birth control technology
- Decline in labor market conditions for low and middle skilled workers, “marriageable” men
- Increase in income inequality – “marriage bar,” despair

Consequences

- Economic insecurity for mothers and children
- Relationship instability and family complexity
- Lower parental investment
- Worse child outcomes
 - Health
 - Behavior problems, especially boys
 - Educational attainment
 - Causal evidence is pretty good

Relationship Transitions (Age 5)

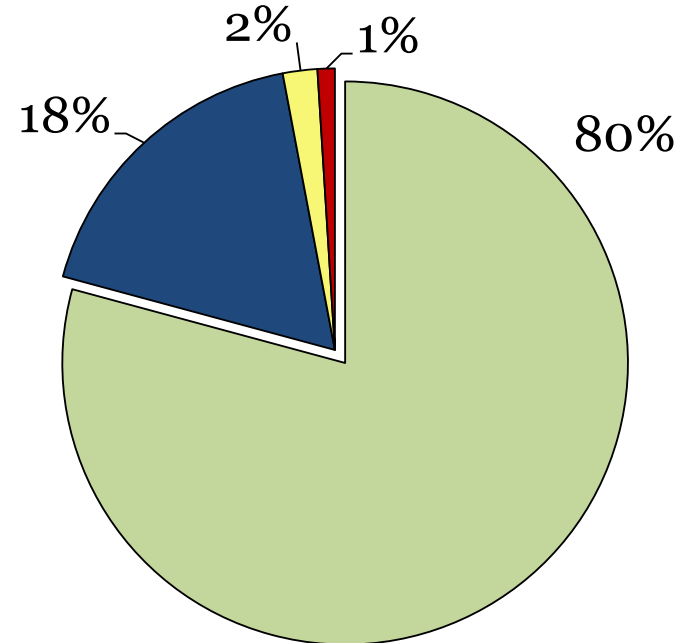
Unmarried Mothers



0 1-2 3-4 5+

Number of Transitions

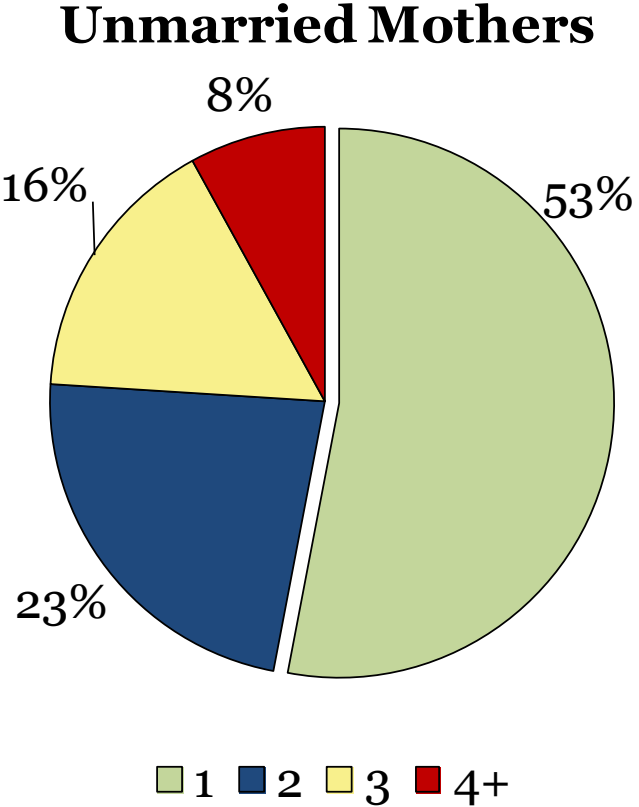
Married Mothers



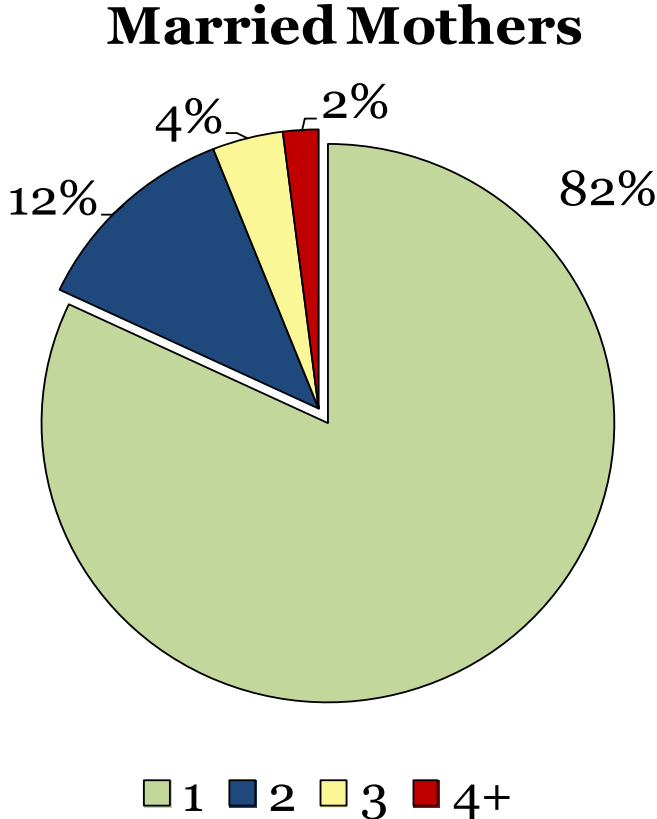
0 1-2 3-4 5+

Number of Transitions

Family Complexity (Age Five)



Number of Fathers



Number of Fathers

What Can Be Done?

Prevention

- *Changes in norms about sex and single motherhood*
- *Changes in birth control technology*
- Declines in labor market opportunities
- Reduce income inequality
- Delay childbearing

Compensatory

- Increase economic security for single mothers
- Provide stable housing
- Provide high quality childcare & pre-school