Long-Term Trends of Differential Racial Fertility in the United States

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Period and cohort fertility dynamics in the developed world
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Conclusions

- Rapid black fertility decline in recent 3-4 decades
- In 2000s white and black fertility almost equal
- Rapid decline of large black families (birth order three and more)
- Relatively low black childbearing recuperation (recovery of delayed births)
- Extremely low black marriage rates (33 percent of black women 30-44 in 2007)
- Economic standing lower than whites – but rapid improvement
- Educational attainment lower than whites – but rapid improvement
- Institution of marriage important, esp. for middle-class black women
- Numerous barriers to marriage and childbearing
  - a. Shortage of male partners – low economic and educational quality of men
  - b. Men dominate relationship market due to numerical imbalance
  - c. Problems with attitudes to childbearing
  - d. Marriage tensions may lead to high divorce rates
  - e. Many cultural and psychological barriers
Total cohort fertility rate
Birth cohorts 1878 – 1965

Total period fertility rate
1940 - 2009

Source: Heuser 1976 (pages 144, 171, 222), Hamilton & Cosgrove 2010

Source: NCHS 2011
Total period fertility rates, 1975-2009
Total cohort fertility rates, birth cohorts 1946-1965

Source: Hamilton & Cosgrove 2010, NCHS 2011
## Total cohort fertility rates

### Birth cohorts 1878, 1910, 1934

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TCFR of cohort born in</th>
<th>1910 as % of 1878</th>
<th>1934 as % of 1910</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1878</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All women</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nonwhite</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black as % of White</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source*: Heuser 1976 (pages 144, 171, 222),

### Birth cohorts 1946, 1955, 1965

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TCFR of cohort born in</th>
<th>1965 as % of 1946</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>1955</td>
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<tr>
<td>All women</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black as % of White</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source*: Hamilton & Cosgrove 2010,
## Total cohort fertility rates

### Birth cohorts 1946, 1955, 1965, by birth orders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TCFR of cohort born in 1946</th>
<th>TCFR of cohort born in 1955</th>
<th>TCFR of cohort born in 1965</th>
<th>1965 as % of 1946</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All BOs, All races</strong></td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>White</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>All BOs</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>92</td>
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<tr>
<td>BO 1</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BO 2</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BO 3+</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>84</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Black</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>All BOs</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>81</td>
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<tr>
<td>BO 1</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>94</td>
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<tr>
<td>BO 2</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>88</td>
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<tr>
<td>BO 3+</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Black as % of White</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All BOs</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BO 1</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BO 2</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>BO 3+</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>143</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Hamilton & Cosgrove 2010*
(benchmark cohort 1946)

BO1, White

BO1, Black

BO3+, White

BO3+, Black

Source: Hamilton & Cosgrove 2010
Cumulated cohort fertility rates, US, White & Black
Birth cohort 1965 compared to 1946, by birth order

Source: Hamilton & Cosgrove 2010
Recuperation indices, United States
Birth cohorts 1946 - 1965, by birth orders

Source: Hamilton & Cosgrove 2010
Racial Differences in Share of Adults Currently Married, 1970 and 2007

%  

**Women**  
- 1970: White 86, Black 62
- 2007: White 67, Black 33

**Men**  
- 1970: White 88, Black 74
- 2007: White 63, Black 44

Notes: Includes only native-born 30- to 44-year-olds.
Source: Decennial Censuses and 2007 American Community Survey (ACS) Integrated Public Use Micro Samples (IPUMS)
Households by Total Money Income and Race of Householder
Black as percent of White Income, 1967 to 2010

Source: DeNavas-Walt et al. 2011, Table A-2
Poverty Status of People by Race
Black/White Poverty Ratio, 1959 to 2010

Source: DeNavas-Walt et al. 2011, Table A-2
Educational attainment by race
High school graduate or more, 1960-2009

Source: US Statistical Abstract 2011, Table 225
Educational attainment by race
College graduate or more, 1960-2009

Source: US Statistical Abstract 2011, Table 225
Qualitative analysis (applies mainly to US)
Socio-economic, cultural, psychological circumstances, usually interconnected

Institution of marriage

- Traditionally (prior to mid 20th century) men married to gain homemaker, women to gain economic support
- Rapid changes because increasingly women work outside the household
- Marriage survives because its symbolic significance persists
- Social prestige – a marker of status and achievement, remains an aspiration
- Especially important for black middle-class women, but encounter barriers

Source: Banks 2011
Shortage of black male marriage partners

• The success gap
  
  Men lag behind educationally

  Many men earn less

• Interracial marriage gap – More than twice as many black men than women marry interracially

• Incarceration and post-incarceration limitations

Source: Banks 2011
The relationship market is skewed

- Shortage of black men → more power to available men
- Men with multiple partners – not polygamy, because no obligations - distrust and discord
- Men reluctant to marry in their 20s and 30s contributes to fewer marriages and fewer births
- Women accept man sharing – bad relationship better than none
- Black women more than any other group have STDs – not result of promiscuity but male multi partner relationships

Source: Banks 2011
Black women’s attitudes to childbearing

- **Unwed childbearing** - black women do not marry because of lower educational and income status of potential partners

- Do not fear life of single mother, but fear the *stigma* of having child without husband

- Struggle against image of *unmarried* welfare mother

- Black women **delay childbearing** until after they find a husband

- Dilemma – two risks: *Husband will never arrive; infertility will*

*Source*: Banks 2011
Marriage tensions often result in divorce

Black women likely to marry “down” – husband less educated AND earns less

• Male breadwinner model no longer applies

• Difficult to relinquish traditional gender roles

• Husbands find it difficult to accept subordinate economic role, feel humiliated and inferior

Source: Banks 2011
Marriage tensions often result in divorce

**Mixed marriages – cultural divide**

- Man and woman “inhabited different culture”
- Black middle class is female
- Black poor are disproportionately male
- Women have a “Sister-Save-a-Brotha” attitude – experienced by men as unwelcome control
- Many black marriages high-conflict – neither adults nor children are well served

*Source: Banks 2011*
Significance of race

- Black women acculturated to date and marry black men
- Black women marry down because they do not want to marry out
- Black women believe that non-Black men not open to marry them
- Black women believe that only black men will appreciate them
- Black women have deeper level of attraction to black men
- Important for black women to preserve black culture – black offspring
- Marriage with black man rebuts accusation of black inferiority
- Black women fear acceptance by his and her family and community
- Black women fear that white man will not understand black habits and culture
- Fear of problems for biracial children
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Source: Banks 2011
Sources


## Significance of Hispanic fertility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TPFR 2008</th>
<th>Percent women Hispanic</th>
<th>Percent of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/White</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Black</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: US Census Bureau 2011*

*A data limitation:*
Cohort fertility data are not available for Hispanic women.
Conclusions

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• Relatively low black childbearing recuperation (recovery of delayed births)
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