

# Retreat from Marriage and Dispersion of Fertility outside Marriage in the Second Demographic Transition

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## Interpretations of Second Demographic Theory?

Key idea: personal/subjective ***individualism*** &  
structural/institutional ***individualization***

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*(vanguard of prosperous elites:  
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Retreat from marriage,  
more nonmarital fertility for  
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Retreat from marriage,  
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## “Pattern of Disadvantage”

*(erosion of social bonds:  
individualization concentrates  
among least advantaged)*



Retreat from marriage,  
more nonmarital fertility for  
lowest educational level?

## Second Demographic Transition features:

### **Retreat from Marriage**



*(extended single life)*

*(unmarried cohabitation)*

*(living apart together)*

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### **INDICATOR:**

Average of percents  
unmarried for women  
at ages 15 through 49

Years: 1970 – 1985 – 2000 - 2015

Data for USA:

Births from vital registration (NBER website)

Female population from CPS / Census

Data for Sweden:

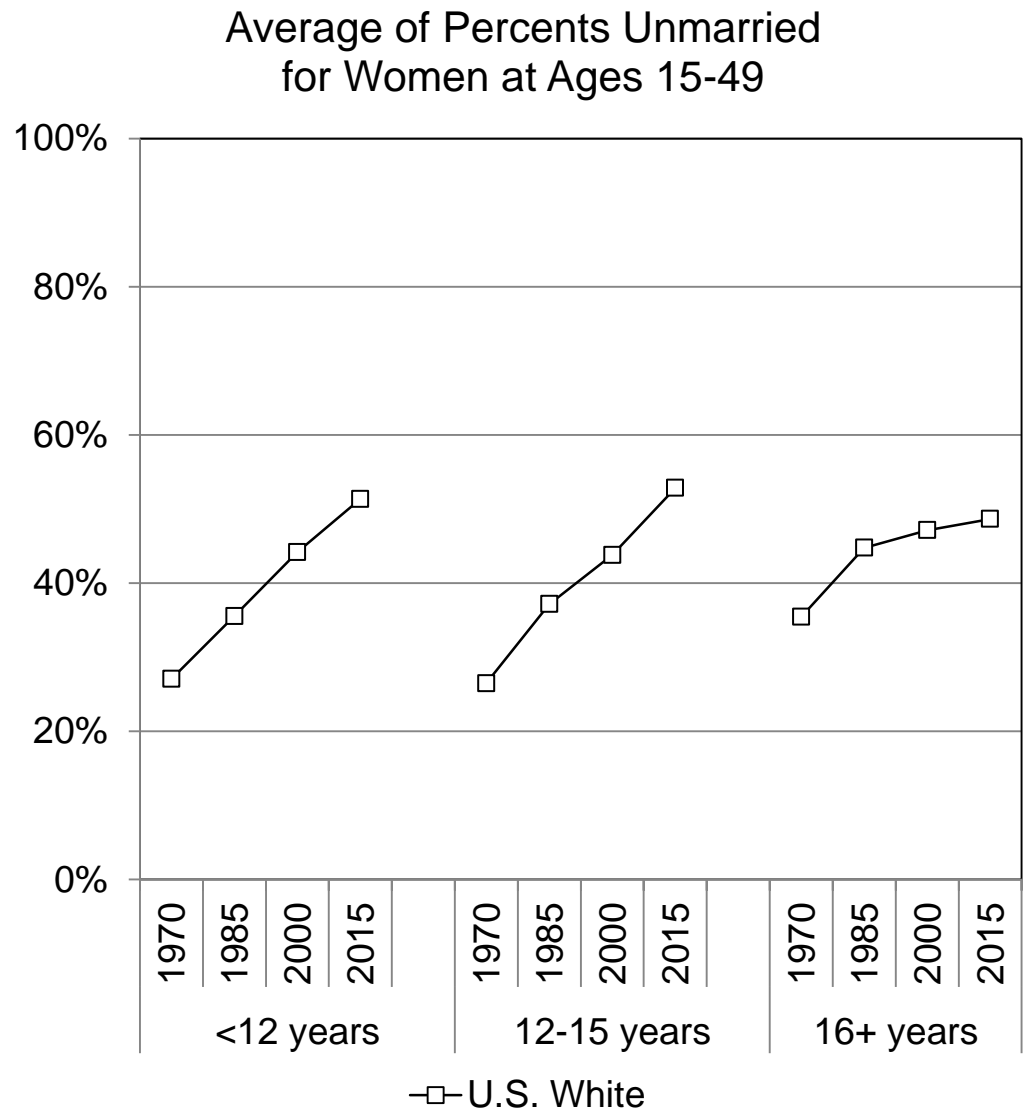
1970 births from vital registration

1970 female population from census

1985+ data from population register

Largest retreat from marriage for least-educated women,  
smallest retreat from marriage for most-educated women  
*(pattern-of-disadvantage?)*

U.S. White women: pattern  
of **disadvantage**? (*retreat  
from marriage inverse to  
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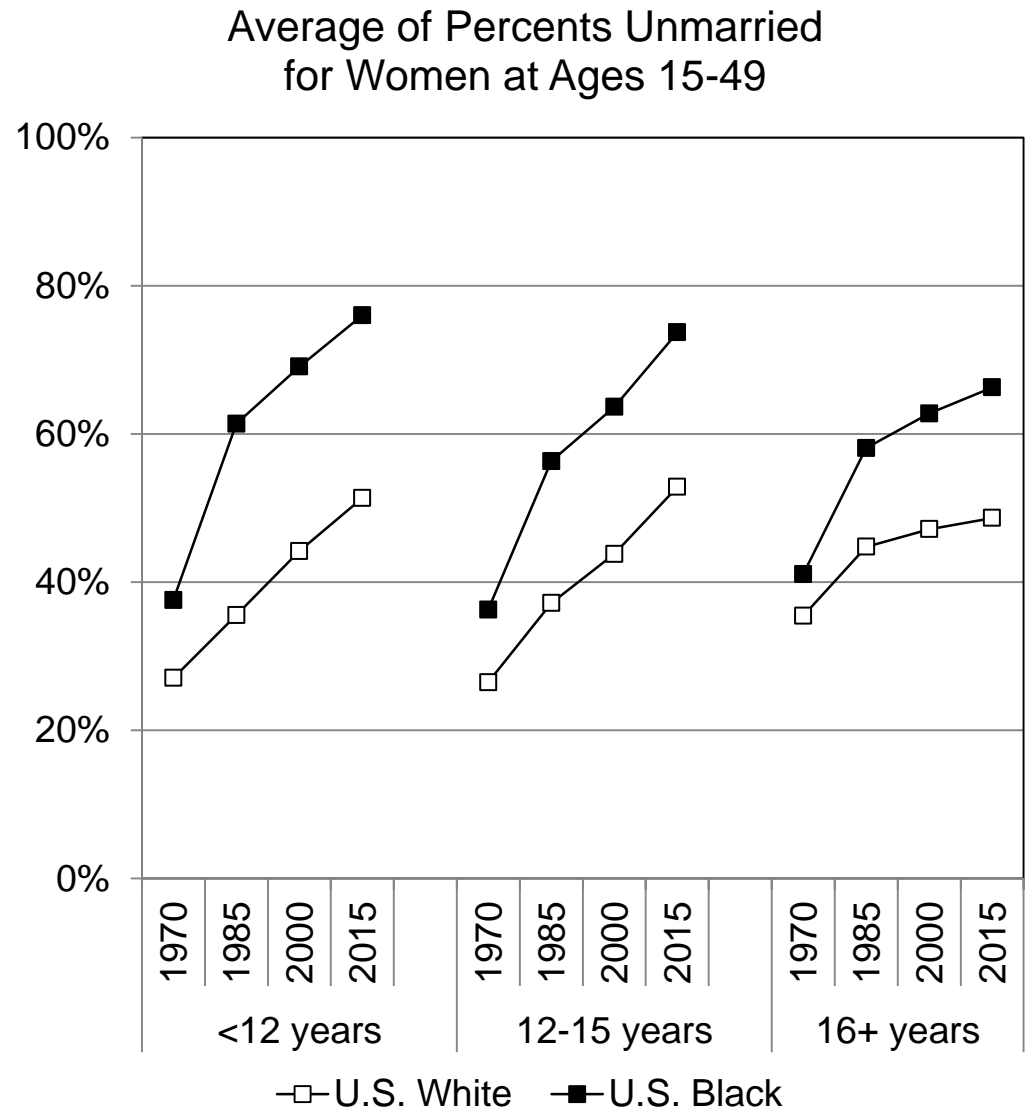




# Largest retreat from marriage for least-educated women, smallest retreat from marriage for most-educated women *(pattern-of-disadvantage?)*

U.S. White women: pattern of **disadvantage**? *(retreat from marriage inverse to level of education)*

U.S. Black women: more retreat from marriage, pattern of **disadvantage** same as White women



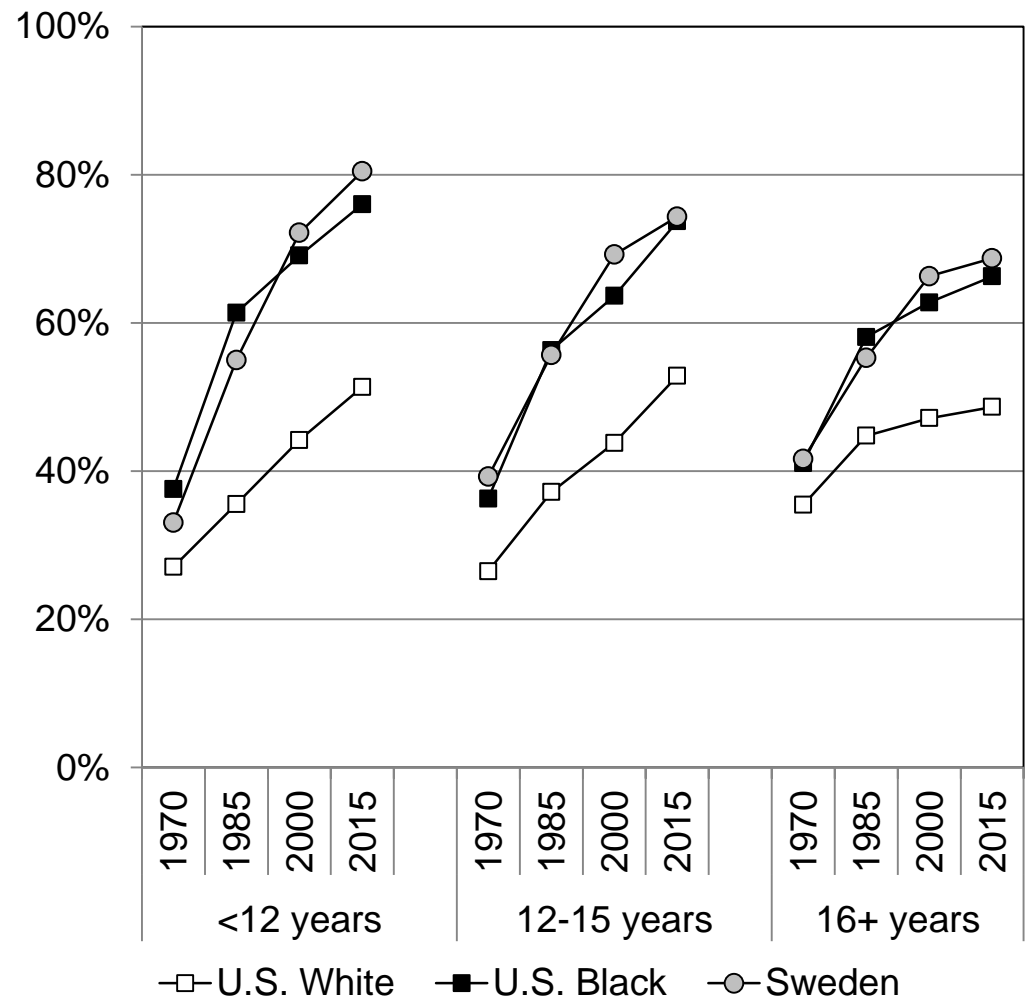
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Sweden: almost identical to trend for U.S. Black women: all groups conform to pattern of **disadvantage**

Average of Percents Unmarried for Women at Ages 15-49



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### **Nonmarital Fertility**



*(lower marital fertility?)*

*(higher nonmarital fertility?)*

*(later ages at birth?)*

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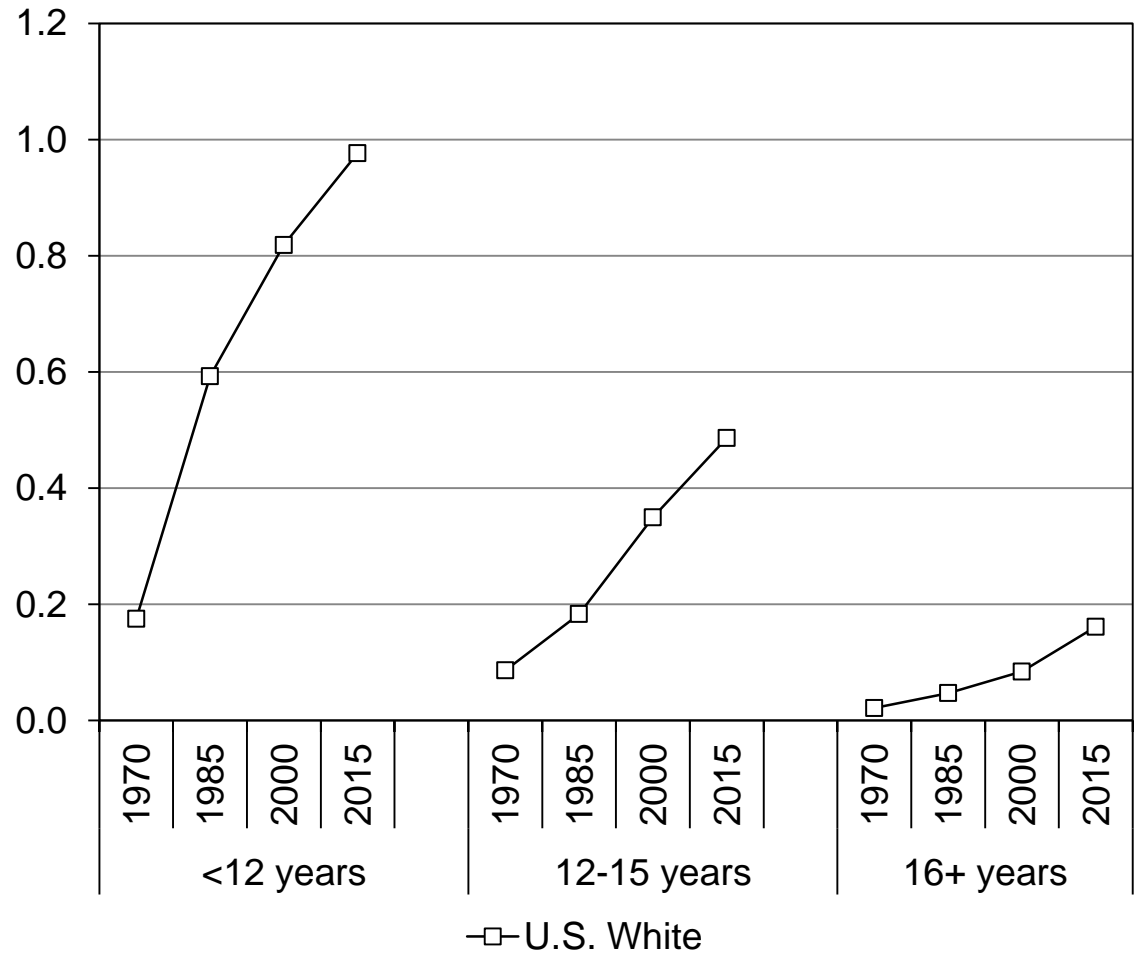
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#### **INDICATOR:**

Average of ratios of marital  
to nonmarital fertility rates,  
weighted by percent of  
births by age, for women  
at ages 15 through 49

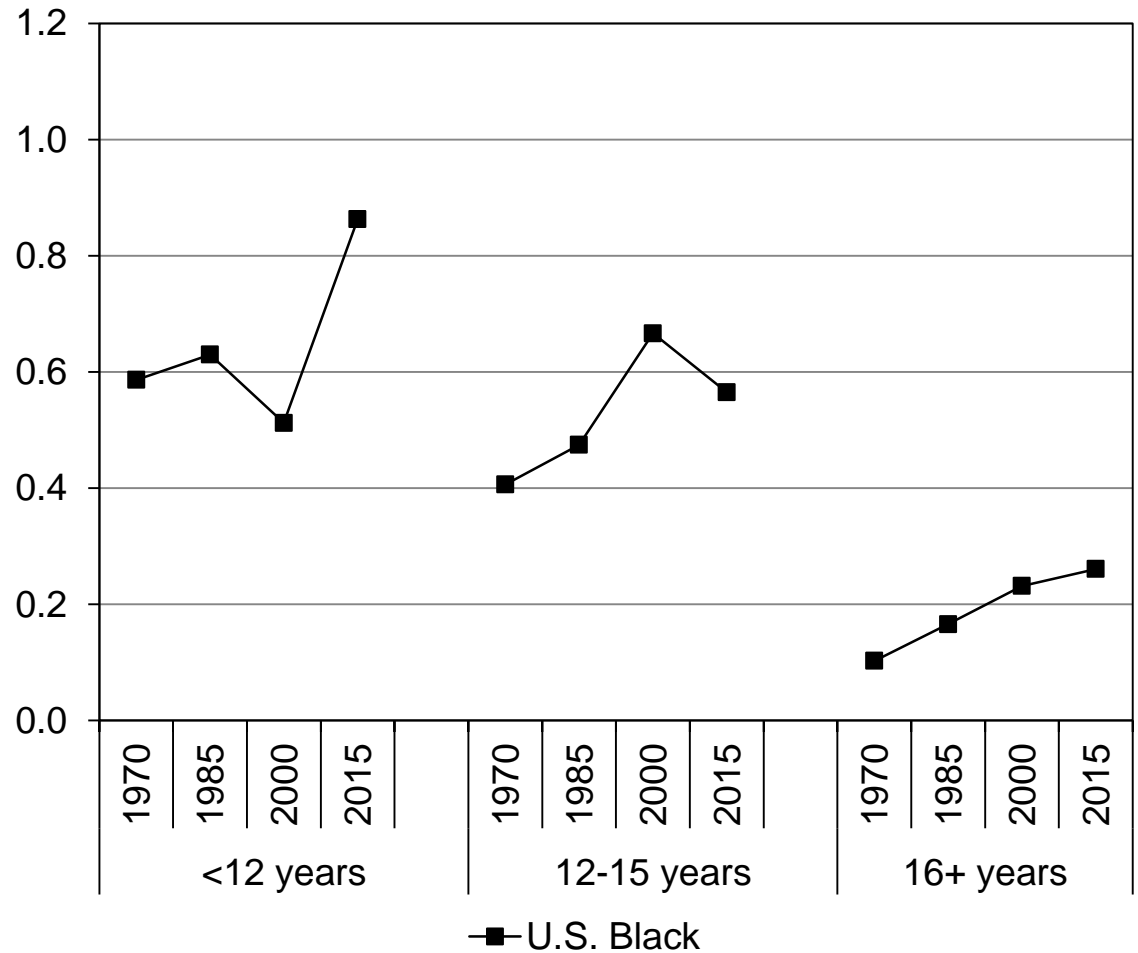
U.S. White women: pattern of **disadvantage**? (*greater increase in dispersion with less education*)

Ratio of Nonmarital / Marital Fertility weighted by Percent of Births by Age for Women 15-49



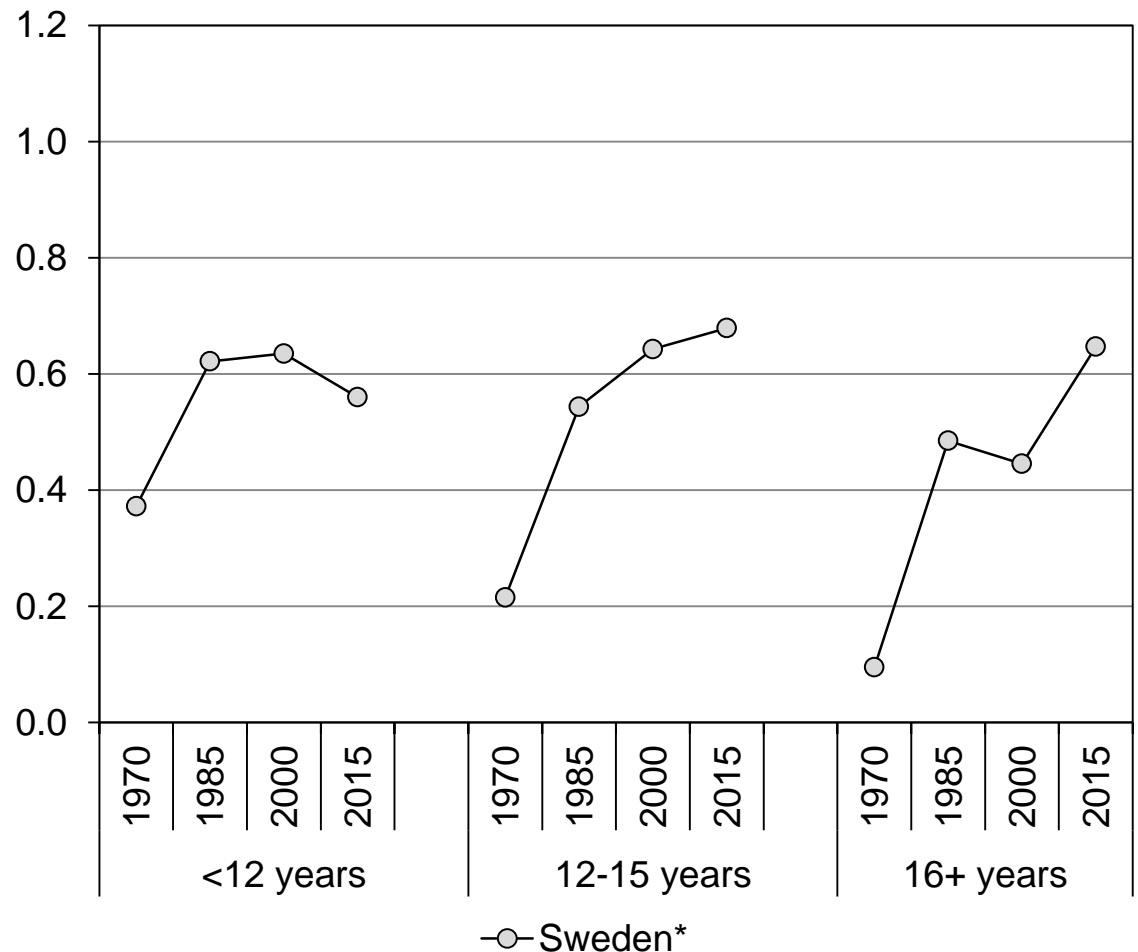
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Greatest increase in dispersion for most-educated women,  
 smallest increase in dispersion for least-educated women  
*(pattern-of-advantage?)*

Ratio of Nonmarital / Marital Fertility weighted  
 by Percent of Births by Age for Women 15-49



Swedish women: pattern  
 of **advantage?** (*greater  
 increase in dispersion with  
 higher education*)

# RESULTS?

USA

Sweden

Retreat  
from  
marriage



Fertility  
outside  
marriage

