

**E2 GROUP:  
TRENDS IN THE  
FAMILY REVISION**

## Statistics

- The average cost of raising a child from birth until the age of 21 is around £271, 000.
- 4% increase of 1 child families since 1972.
- There were 695,233 live births in England and Wales in 2014, a decrease of 0.5% from 698,512 in 2013.
- The average age of mothers in 2014 increased to 30.2 years, compared with 30.0 years in 2013.



## Legal Issues

- Since children were barred from employment in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and education became compulsory in 1880, they have ceased to become an economic asset that can contribute to family income through working at an early age. Children have therefore become an economic liability and a drain on the resources of the parents.



# FALL IN BIRTH RATE

## Ideological

- Parenthood involves greater pressure on couples, with growing individualization and the impact of feminism many women want more from life beyond parenthood.
- As postmodernists, in an age in which consumer values dominate and people seek to develop their identities through their consumer spending and leisure choices, couples are becoming more reluctant to have children.



## Technological

- More effective and cheaper methods of birth control have been developed over the last century.
- The availability of safe and legal abortion since 1967 has also helped in terminating unwanted pregnancies. Family planning is therefore easier.

## Changes in social issues/attitudes

- Sue Sharpe demonstrated that women's aspirations have changed between the 1970s and the 1990s with more focus on careers rather than marriage and having children.
- Society's attitude to the use of contraception has changed from disapproval to acceptance, this is partly because of growing secularization and the declining influence of church and religion.
- In the last 30 years there has been a decrease in fertility rates for women aged under 30. Whilst most women do eventually choose to have children there is a growing population who are choosing not to, and they are making this decision later in life leaving themselves with less time to become pregnant.

# Decline in Infant Mortality Rate:

Since 1984 when the rate was 9.5 deaths per 1000 live births, there has now been a 62% fall to 3.6 deaths per 1000 live births.

This is the lowest ever recorded in England and Wales.

Mums under 20 years old risk an experience of a cot death in comparison to 30-40 yr old mothers.

There were 2,517 infant deaths in England & Wales in 2014. This compares to 2,686 in 2013 & 6,037 in 1984

Reasons for the fall in IMR

DEFINITION:  
"The number of babies that die in their first year per thousand of the population per year"

vacinations.  
↳ e.g. polio almost been eradicated

mothers have more knowledge of child health & hygiene

improvements to housing

improvements to sanitation

improvements to nutrition

now they're an economic liability

children are no longer an economic liability as they must be in compulsory education until 18

no longer working in factories with life endangering jobs.

laws banning child labour

children remain economically dependent for longer.

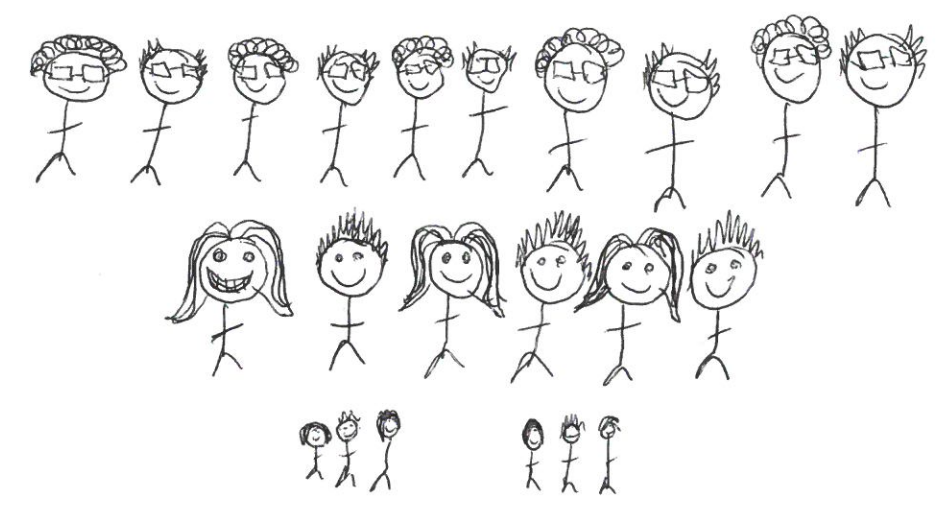
childhood seen more as a 'treasured' time.  
↳ shift from 'quantity' to 'quality'.

as a result, parents may be unable to afford to have large families.

decline in child mortality rates meant that parents no longer needed to have lots of children to ensure that a few survived.

- It is projected by 2041 there will be as many 79 year olds as 5 year olds.
- In 2015 there were 3.2 people for every pensioner; by 2033 this will have fallen to 2.3.

One in six people over the age of 65.



- More pensioner one person household
- growing isolation + loneliness
- growing dependance on children to visit.

More poverty & family hardship.  
- people having to support Grand parents, parents & children.

- A loss of skill & experience from the Labour force
- long time to replace
- less reliable & less committed

# Increased Life expectancy / ageing population.

Ageing population = the average age of the population is getting higher, with a greater proportion of the population over retirement age and a smaller proportion of young people.

DEPENDANCY RATIO = an increasing number of older people have to be supported by a decreasing proportion of the working population.

- more ill health & disability.
- loneliness leads to mental + physical problems.
- rising financial costs.

- Family stress
- emotional strain & overcrowding if relative moves in with child's family.
- conflict & increasing cost.

- more work for women.
- caring for elderly falls to women with housework etc.
- infirmity.

- Housing shortages.
- young find it difficult to find affordable homes as older people occupy them.

## POSITIVE

- parents can help care for young children.
- some do voluntary work
- have experience
- can enjoy a longer, fuller life.
- lower crime rate
- life insurance
- younger retired people contribute to the economy

## NEGATIVE

- strain on healthcare
- need people to care for older people
- occupy hospital beds
- pension crisis
- dignified quality of life
- economy shrinks
- haven't got someone to help them in an accident.

{ Kate Fraser }

The pressure of losing ones identity that comes with marriage.

The issue of choice, young people are finding immense power in the notion of having a choice + marriage is restricting.

The changing life course

Secularisation.

Change in values and beliefs - not so much of a religious pull toward marriage.

Changing attitudes towards love parent families - in past 'shot gun' weddings were held.

Changing social attitudes and reduced social stigma

Decline in number of marriages

Still to many gender roles in marriage. Women are less willing to take on the demands associated with the housewife / mother role, as feminists point out, this still seems to dominate women's roles in marriage.

Rising divorce rate may concern couples as they see marriage as a risk.

Individualism - increased individualism and an emphasis on personal fulfillment (Beck and Beck)

Other options are more normal - cohabiting couples.

In 1950s only 2% of cohabited before marriage

Influence of feminism - impacted on legal changes - e.g. allowing women to work / be paid equally -> Greater emphasis on careerism.\*

### The changing role of women

women's economic independence is growing.

- has given them more freedom to choose their relationships.

Women are now more successful than men in education which is being reflected as women seek to pursue their own careers.\*

Still to many gender roles in marriage.

Women are less willing to take on the demands associated with the housewife / mother role, as feminists point out, this still seems to dominate women's roles in marriage.

women in cohabiting relationships carry out less housework.

# INCREASE OF YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING WITH THEIR PARENTS

Described as 'clipped wing generation' young people unable to fly from the family nest + young people unable to establish a full independent adult identity

this group referred to as kippers - kids in parents pockets as its cheaper, easier and more comfortable to live at home

even by their 30's one in 10 men and one in 20 women are still living with their parents.

others are saying its through choice

When people finish education and are working, they live with their parents because they can't afford to rent or buy their own homes

Young women are ~~more likely to be married~~ less likely than young ~~men~~ to live with their parents...

In 2013, one in three men, and one in five women, aged 20 to 34 were still living with their parents (this is a 25% increase since 1996)

- Young women are more likely to be married or cohabiting relationships
- More likely to be lone parents living in their own households
- Women more likely to participate in higher education after taking them away from parents homes

## Statistics

- In 2012 there was a total of 118,140 divorces in England and Wales, and increase of 0.5% since 2011.
- The number of divorces each year rose from 27,000 in 1961 to a peak of 180,000 in 1993 and then fell back to around 130,000 by 2012.
- 71% divorces are shown to be from first marriages.
- In 1974 there was about 1 divorce for every 4 marriages but by 2012 this had more than doubled to just over two divorces for every four marriages.



## Ideological

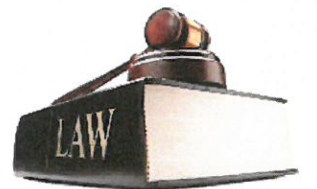
- Secularization refers to the declining influence of religious beliefs and institutions writers such as, Goode and Gibson argue that this has resulted in marriage becoming less of a sacred, spiritual union and more a personal and practical commitment which can be abandoned if it fails.
- The church now takes a less rigid view of divorce and many people today probably do not attach much religious significance to their marriages.



# INCREASE IN DIVORCE

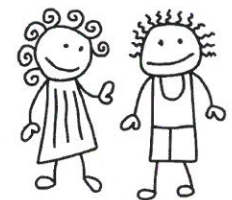
## Legal Acts/Issues

- Changes in the law over the last century have made divorce easier and cheaper to obtain, and have given men and women equal rights in divorce.
- The **divorce Law Reform Act (1969)** was a major change, before this law a person wanting a divorce had to prove before a court, that his or her spouse had committed a matrimonial offence.
- Matrimonial and family proceedings act (1984)** allowed couples to petition for divorce after only one year of marriage rather than three.
- The family law act (1996)** increased the amount of time a couple had to be married before a divorce could be granted from 12 to 18 months.
- In 2011 the government decided that as a quicker and cheaper alternative than resulting to courts, disputes between divorcing couples should be referred to mediation.



## Changes in social issues/attitudes

- From a postmodernist perspective Beck and Beck Gerstein see rising divorce rates as a product of growing individualisation and more choice, for example in family relationships individuals now choose and negotiate more things like organising finances and household chores.
- Postmodernists argue people have much greater individual freedom of choice and are less constrained by traditional controls of morality, social expectations, norms and family ties.
- Divorce has become more socially acceptable and there is less social disapproval and stigmatizing.
- As a result people are less afraid of the consequences and are more likely to seek a legal end to an unhappy marriage.



# Marrying later in life

Sue Sharpe demonstrated women's aspirations have changed between the 1970s & to the 1990s with more focus on careers rather than marriage.

far more people are cohabiting before marriage. This means they are having the benefits of marriage e.g. combining resources, splitting bills, sharing house work, and having children without the need for, and commitment of marriage.

In 1950's only 2% of marriage partners had cohabited prior to marriage whereas today, it is over 80%

people (especially women) are now more likely to go into higher education which puts back social life

less no. of years to have children because of careers / education and focus may be on this first instead of marriage.

## Changing attitudes / norms

- don't have to be married to have children

Giddens suggested modern marriage is about love not status.

## Secularisation

\* religious attitudes have declined - and

\* living together unmarried is no longer regarded as 'sinful'.

## Impact of feminism

- women don't need to rely on marriage and can wait until it is more appropriate.

built up enough financial stability.

average cost of raising a child in UK 0-21 yrs is around £230,000.

and people are often in debt - around £12,000 not including their mortgage.

The price of marriage seems too high, especially when people may be more focused on buying a home or bringing up children.

Average cost of a wedding in UK is now between £18,000 and £20,000



Beck (1992) suggests we are living in what he calls a 'risk society'. Individuals are less controlled by traditional structures and institutions like the family, and there is less loyalty and commitment demanded by the social norms of marriage and family life. More people may simply be choosing to avoid the risk involved in long-term legal commitments like marriage.

Younger people are more likely to cohabit, and have children outside marriage, and the trend is rising.

While the number of marriages has been falling, the number of couples cohabiting continues to increase:

- \* Cohabiting couples with children are a just growing family type
- \* There are **2.9 million** cohabiting heterosexual couples in Britain. About one in eight adults are now cohabiting - double the number in 1996.
- \* There are an **estimated 69,000 same sex** cohabiting couples
- \* About a fifth of all ~~most~~ cohabiting are 'serial cohabitants' who have had one or more previous cohabitations.

## Increase in the number of Cohabiting Couples

The idea of living together without being married is no longer widely regarded as 'living in sin' but as the norm.

In the 1950s only 2% of marriage partners had cohabited prior to marriage, today it is estimated to be over 80%.

In 1967 Contraception was made available on the NHS. This meant it made it possible for couples to cohabit without worrying about becoming pregnant.

↓  
Contraception like the pill changed dynamics in relationships and led to more couples cohabiting and less getting married.

### Reasons for the increase in cohabitation

- \* Increased cohabitation rates are a result of the decline in stigma attached to sex outside marriage. In 1989, only 44% of people agreed that 'premarital sex is not wrong at all', but 65% took this view by 2012
- \* The young are more likely to accept cohabitation
- \* Increased career opportunities for women may mean they have less need for the financial security of marriage and are freer to opt for cohabitation.
- \* Secularisation: young people with no religion are more likely to cohabit than those with a religion.

## Social

> 2013 Stonewall report - 55% LGB experience homophobic bullying at school + 1/5 employees experienced verbal bullying from colleagues or customers

## Teen

> more TV soaps and dramas with new gay and lesbian relationships  
 > IVG (in vitro gametogenesis) - babies can be conceived using the DNA of 1 or more parents

## Stats

> 2015 1.7% identified as LGB (more males than females)  
 > 15,000 same sex couples wed since the law change  
 > At least 14% surge almost 80% in UK over last 4 years  
 > 0.4% of over 65 identify as LGB  
 > 2.9% 25-34 identify

# Increase in same-sex Relations

+ families

## Ideology

> the law influenced the whole culture + difficult/impossible to produce books/films featuring homosexuals but there has been a change in legal and cultural treatment of homosexuality and those holding negative views keep quiet as they don't want to seem out of fashion or fear from consequences

## Legal acts

- > Civil Partnership Act 2004
  - similar arrangements to a legal marriage
  - equal treatment
  - legal status of 'civil partner'
  - 2014 same sex marriage is legal
  - 1968 men over 21 can have relations
    - ↳ age 16 in 2000

## Changing identities

- > Some change in traditional ideas about masculine and feminine gender identities
- > people becoming more tolerant and accepting
- > ignore traditional gender stereotypes