GENERATION UNBOUND
Drifting into Sex and Parenthood without Marriage

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A Large Proportion of Births Occur Outside of Marriage

OVER 40% OF ALL CHILDREN ARE BORN OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE


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What is Driving the Change in Family Structure?

Improving Opportunities for Women

Declining Economic Prospects for Men

Changing Social Norms
Why it Matters

• Children fare better in stable two-parent families
• Family breakdown leads to more child poverty, inequality, less social mobility
• Child poverty rates are five times higher in single-parent families vs. two-parent families
• My estimate is that the child poverty rates have increased by about 5 p.p. or by about 25 percent since 1970 because of changes in family structure
Chicken and Egg

Does poverty $\rightarrow$ family breakdown

OR

Does family breakdown $\rightarrow$ poverty?

(It’s both!)
What to Do: Two Visions

The truth is, the greatest tool to lift children and families from poverty... isn’t a government spending program. It’s called marriage.

Children are not rugged individualists... All of us, whether we acknowledge it or not, are responsible for deciding whether our children are raised in a nation that doesn’t just espouse family values but values families and children.
Can Social Policy Keep Pace with Increased Need?

Leaving poverty (due to social programs)

Entering poverty (due to family breakdown)
Another Solution:
Reduce the Breakdown of the Family by
Changing Drifters into Planners
Drifting into Parenthood is Common

60% of births to single women under 30 are unplanned.

Less Advantaged Women Have Highest Rates of Drifting


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Why So Much Drifting?

• Young adults not using birth control or using inconsistently

• Not using most effective methods

• Long-acting reversible contraceptives (IUDs, implants) change the default from getting pregnant to not getting pregnant
How we got these numbers: Data is from Trussell (2011). The probability that a person doesn't get pregnant at all over a given period of time is equal to the success rate of her contraceptive method raised to the power of the number of years she is using that method. We then subtract this multi year "success rate" from 100% to get the failure rate (graphed above). This assumes that there is an equal chance of not getting pregnant in every year of condom use and that successful users and failed users (where success is not getting pregnant during a year using birth control) have the same rate. The assumption is reasonable given that figures we use are the figure for a “typical” user of some type of contraceptive.

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Changing the Default: Evidence

- Colorado Family Planning Initiative
- St. Louis: The CHOICE Project
- Iowa Initiative to Reduce Unintended Pregnancies
- UCSF Bixby Center Initiative
- Delaware (no results yet)
## Colorado Family Planning Initiative, 2009-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of LARCs</th>
<th>Increased six-fold from 4% to 30% of clients in Title X clinics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teen birth rate</td>
<td>Decreased by 48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young adult (20-24) birth rate</td>
<td>Decreased by 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abortion rate for each group</td>
<td>Decreased by roughly the same amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return on investment (state savings for every dollar spent)</td>
<td>$5.85</td>
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CHOICE Project, St. Louis, 2006-2010

CHOICE Project, St. Louis, 2006-2010

Rates per 1,000 sexually experienced women

- Teen pregnancy: 34 for St. Louis project, 158 for National
- Teen birth: 19 for St. Louis project, 94 for National
- Abortion: 10 for St. Louis project, 41 for National

Note: N = 9,256.

## UCSF Bixby Center Initiative
*(provider training only)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Treatment Clinics</th>
<th>Control Clinics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Received counselling</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chose a LARC</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy rate (within 12 months)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Note: Cluster randomized trial, 40 clinics in 15 states. Results for women seeking family planning services only. No significant difference if woman was offered a LARC after an abortion.

LARC Use: Low but Rising Rapidly

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Health Statistics Reports, No. 86, November 10, 2015, Table 2.
Why Not More Utilization?

- Women don’t know about LARCs or think they are unsafe
- Providers aren’t trained
- High upfront cost
- Political opposition
The Way Forward

• A change in social norms
  • Old norm: don’t have a child outside of marriage
  • New Norm: don’t have a child until you want to be a parent
• Empower young adults to achieve this new norm via education and access to contraception, especially the most effective forms
• Combine with effective social programs that create greater opportunity and motivation to avoid an unplanned birth