

# Gender Role Attitudes Across the Life Course of Four Generations Temporal Change and Family Variation

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# Background

- Strong evidence for greater egalitarianism post 1960s due to or resulting in greater access to higher education and labor force participation of women, egalitarian marriages, legislation promoting gender neutrality, and culture change in legitimating equal rights and division of labor between the genders.
- So called “backlash” in the 1990s popularly regarded in as a historical reversal in gender egalitarianism.



# Research Questions

- How do gender role attitudes change over the life course—by the multiple temporal metrics of historical time, aging, and generational location?
- How is change in gender role attitudes shaped by education and gender?
- To what degree do family members resemble each other in gender role attitudes?

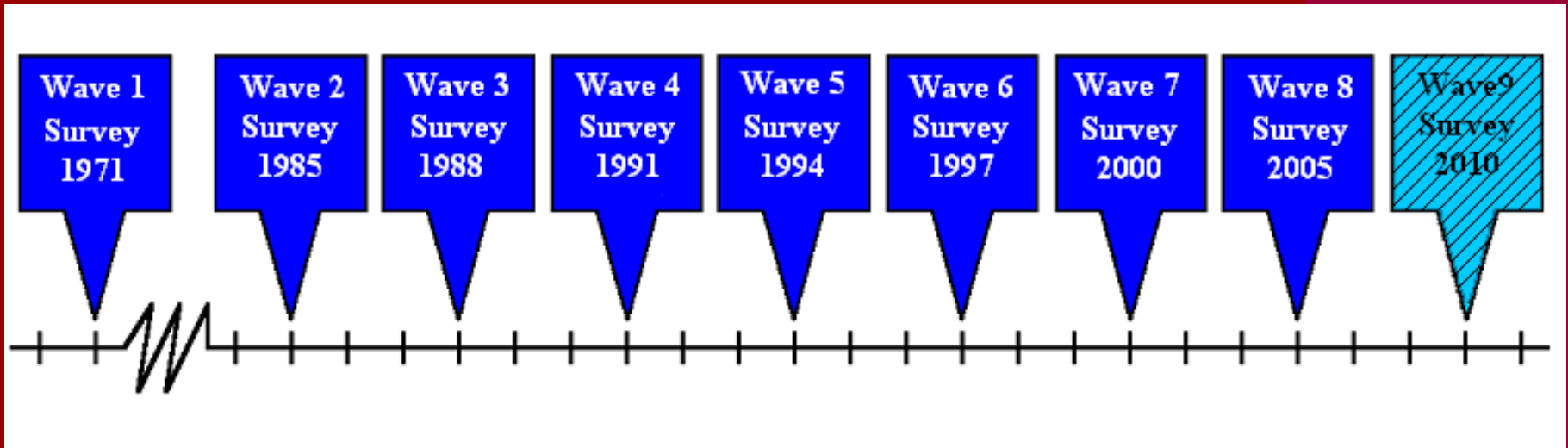
# Expectations

- Historical trend: over the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, gender role ideology has become more egalitarian but experienced a backlash. Recent evidence points to a “rebound” (Cotter, et. al., 2011).
- Aging: gender-role ideology is malleable and will become more conservative with advancing age.
- Generational/cohort: later generations will hold more egalitarian gender attitudes than earlier generations. Baby-boomers will be most affected by social change.
- Gender & education: women will hold more egalitarian gender attitudes than men and their change over time will be more volatile particularly among the higher educated.
- Families: members will resemble each other the closer their relationship, with spouses and siblings sharing attitudes more than extended family members.

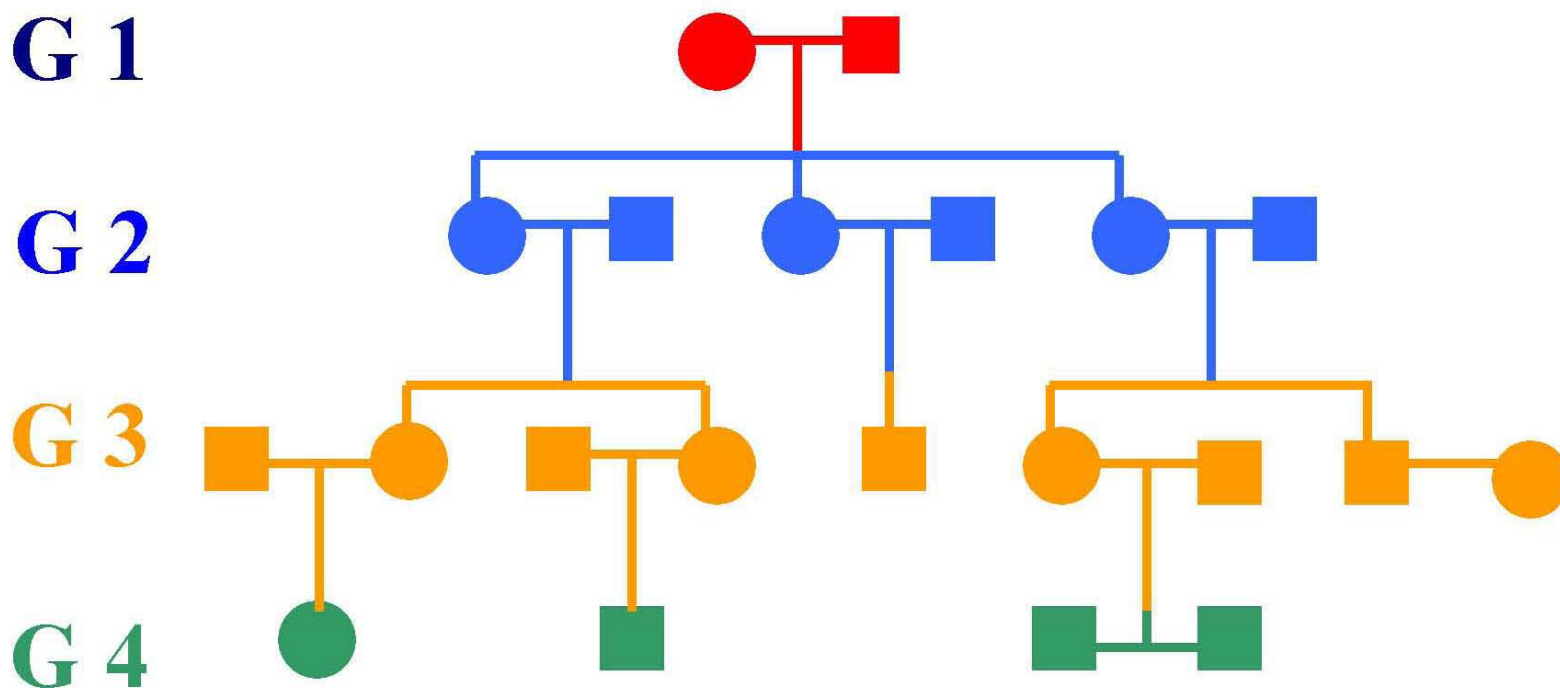
# The USC Longitudinal Study of Generations (LSOG)

- A multigenerational multi-time-point study, started in 1971 with repeated panels → 2005. Mail-back and web surveys.
- Consists of 3,500 individuals from 418 three-generation families. Grandparents initially recruited within Southern California region from large HMO.
- Full families are surveyed: grandparents, parents, and grandchildren (16+), including siblings, (former) spouses.
- Fourth generation added in 1991 when they turned 16.
- Sample continuously replenished with newly eligible G4s, new spouses.

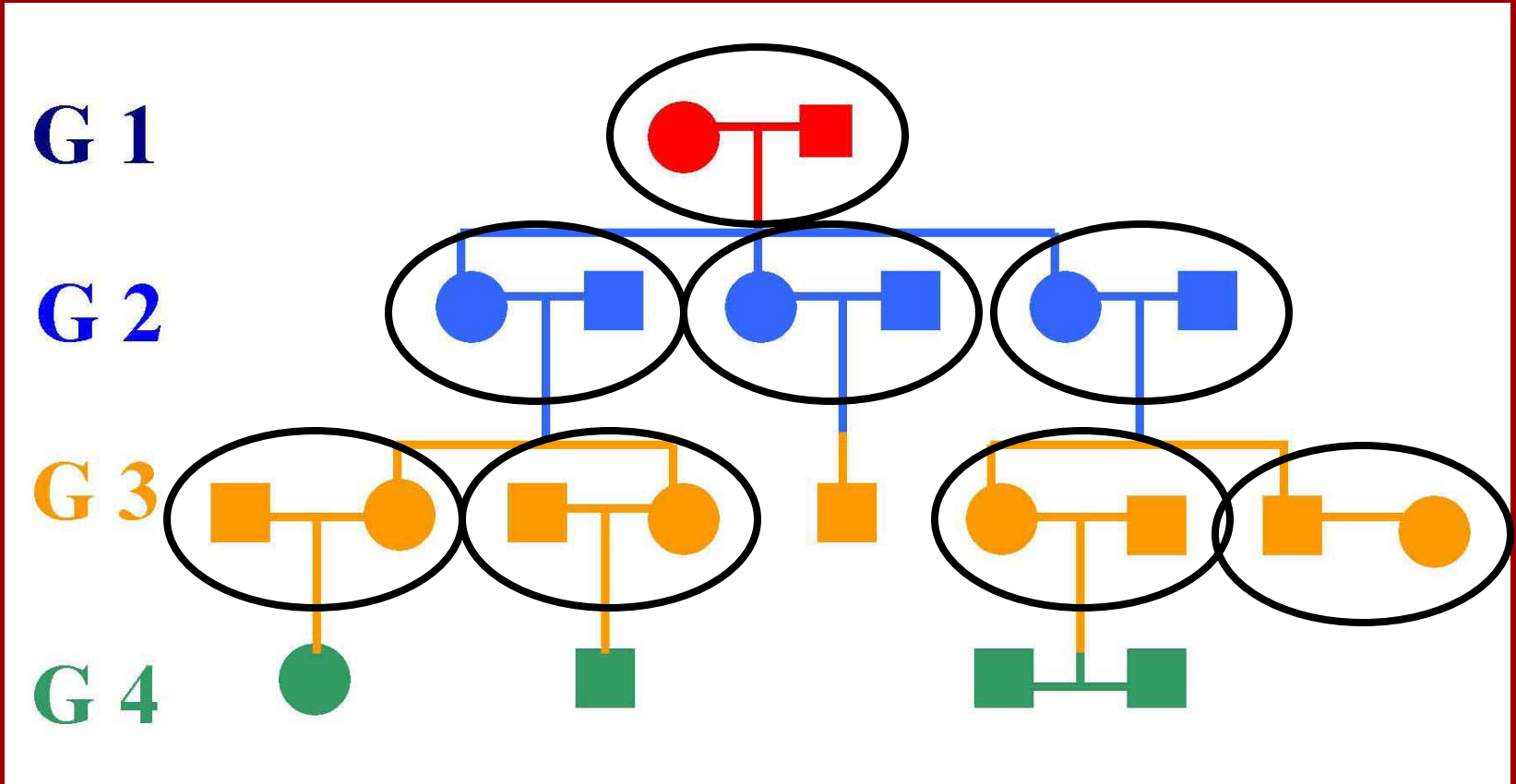
# Temporal Design of LSOG



# Family Design of LSOG: Full Families

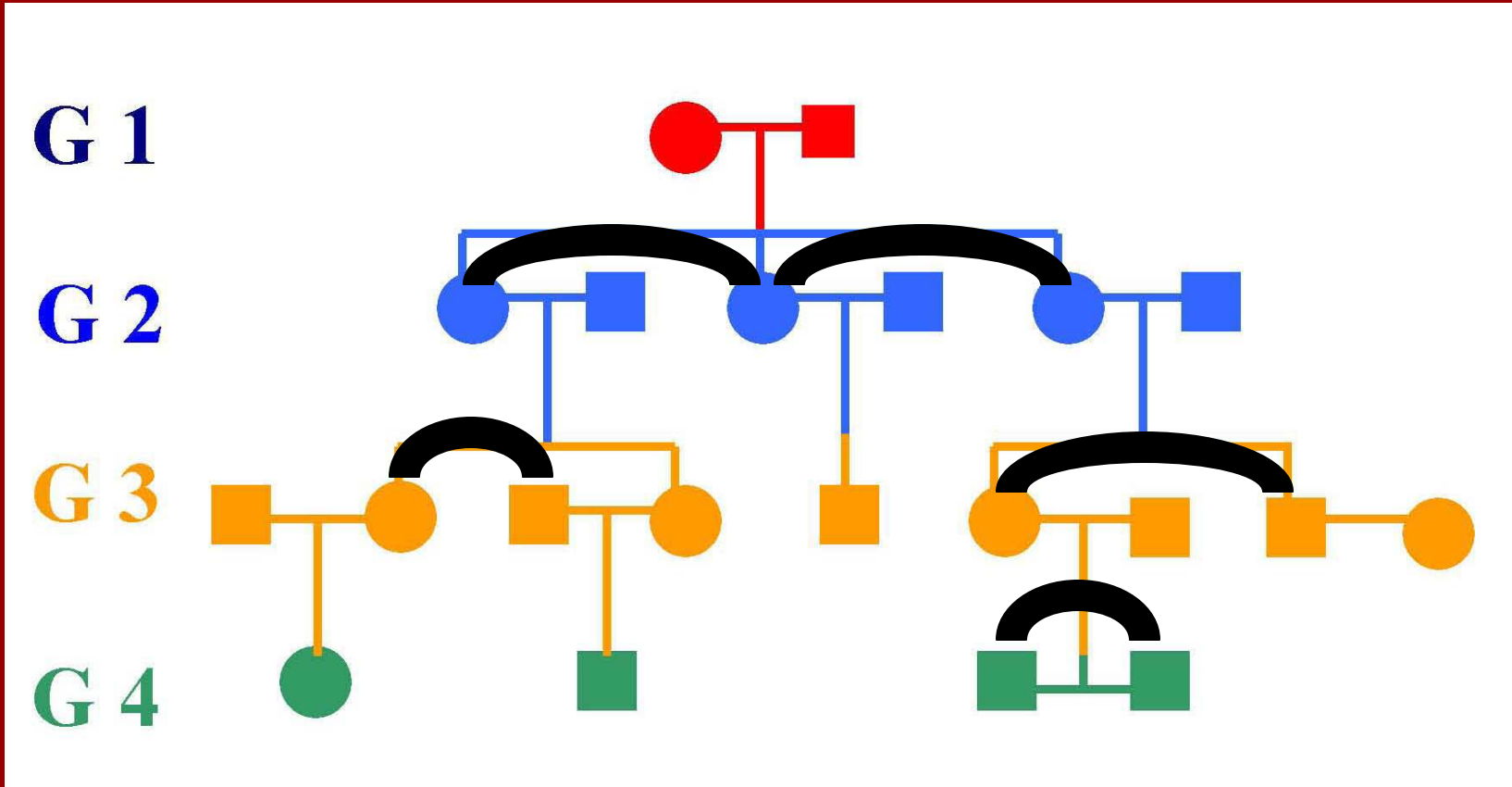


# Family Design of LSOG: Spouses

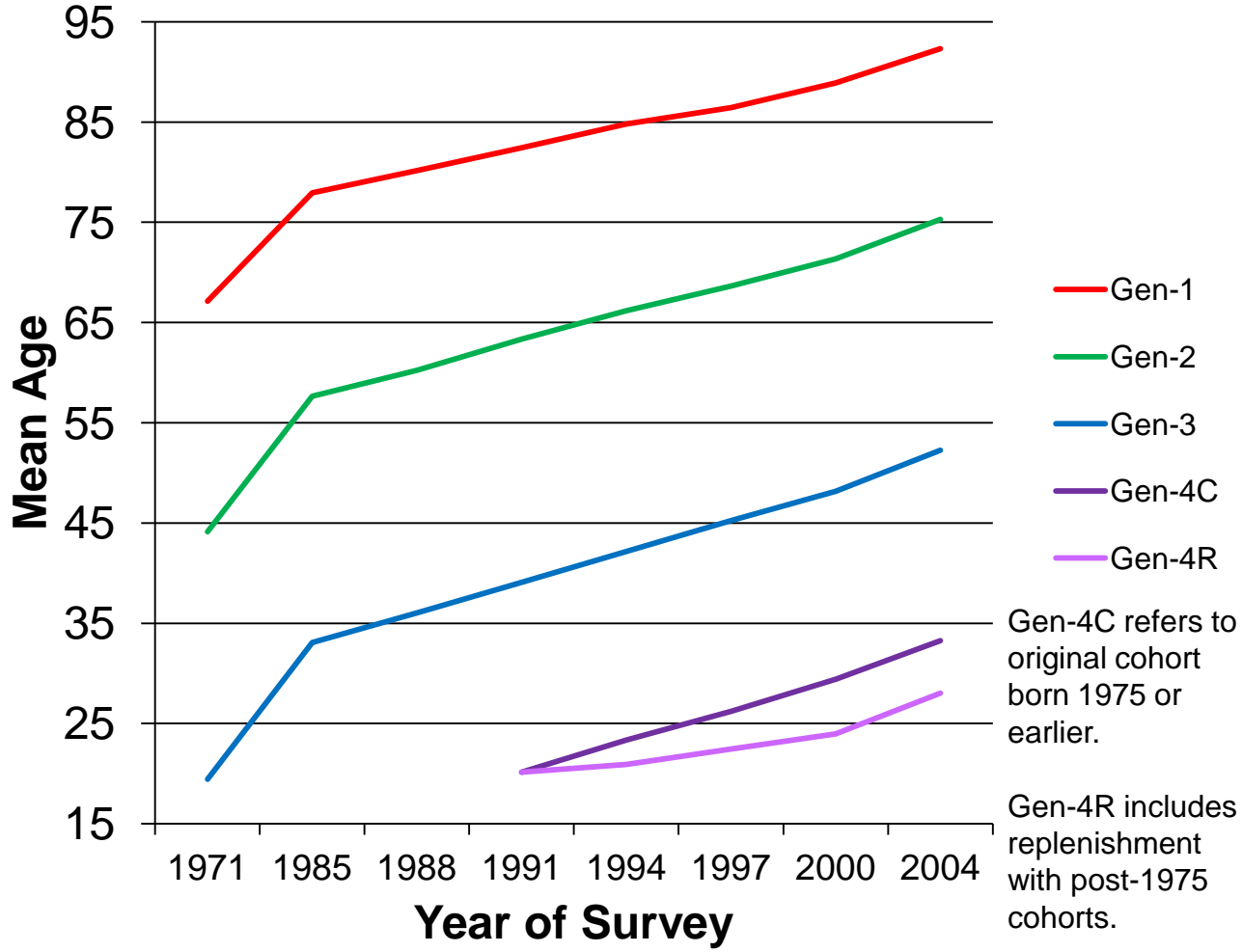




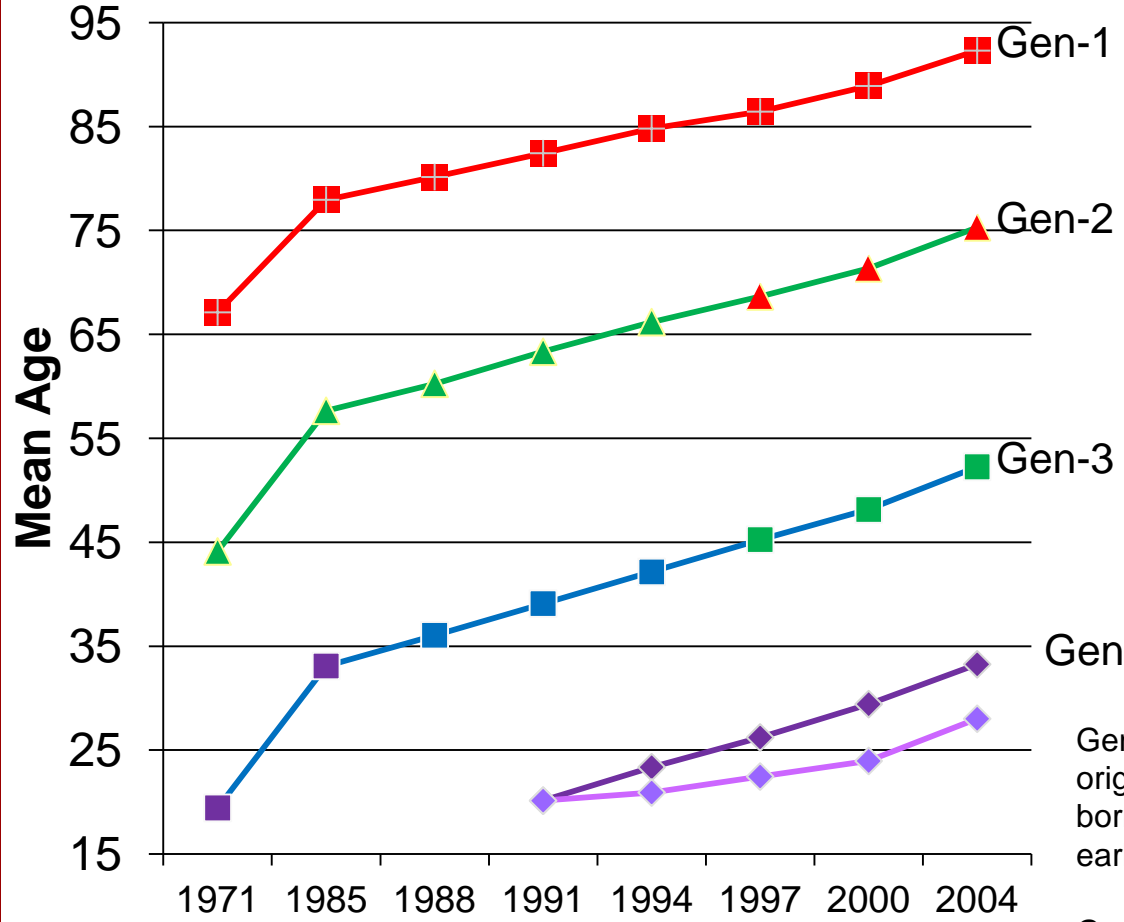
# Family Design of LSOG: Siblings



# Age Trends of the LSOG Over Survey Years by Generation



# Age Trends of the LSOG Over Survey Years by Generation



Gen-4

Gen-4C refers to original cohort born 1975 or earlier.

Gen-4R includes replenishment with post-1975 cohorts.

Gen-1 Gen-2 Gen-3 Gen-4C Gen-4R

Several generations tracked over the same chronological ages in different historical periods

# Measures of Gender Role Ideology

1. *Husbands ought to have the main say in family matters.*
2. *It goes against nature to put women in positions of authority over men.*
3. *Women who want to remove the word “obey” from the marriage service don’t understand what it means to be a good wife.*
4. *Women’s liberation ideas make a lot of sense to me.*

- *Rating: 1=strongly disagree to 4=strongly agree*
- *Items #1-3 reverse coded*
- *Reliability >.8 in each survey*

# Operational Sample

- For this analysis, data used are from 3,628 individuals aged 16-102 who were surveyed between 1971-2005
- A total of 13,699 observations were analyzed
- Average number of observations per individual is 3.8

Table 2. Mean Gender Role Ideology Over Waves of the LSOG by Generation ( $N_{obs}=12,686$ )

Generation (Average Birth Year)	Gender Role Score	Wave-1 1971	Wave-2 1985	Wave-3 1988	Wave-4 1991	Wave-5 1994	Wave-6 1997	Wave-7 2000	Wave-8 2005
Gen-1 (1905)	Mean (N)	5.56 (406)	6.04 (215)	7.12 (163)	7.16 (121)	6.72 (92)	7.24 (58)	7.28 (39)	7.16 (2)
Gen-2 (1928)	Mean (N)	6.08 (526)	7.68 (554)	8.04 (557)	8.44 (489)	8.04 (526)	8.12 (493)	8.16 (463)	8.36 (403)
Gen-3 (1952)	Mean (N)	6.28 (613)	9.16 (547)	8.92 (736)	9.32 (696)	8.76 (697)	8.80 (672)	8.88 (714)	9.04 (678)
Gen-4 <sup>a</sup> (1976)	Mean (N)				9.04 (197)	8.64 (333)	8.76 (455)	8.68 (659)	8.88 (582)

Note: Gender role egalitarianism is scored 0-12 with higher scores indicating stronger egalitarianism.

Samples reflect attrition and recapture of respondents.

<sup>a</sup>G4 sample is replenished with respondents who become age eligible at 16 years old. Average birth year shown is for all G4 cohorts.

# Multi-level Modeling

- Dependencies in data
  - observations nested within individuals
  - individuals nested within families
- Three level model is estimated using Mplus with FIML maximum likelihood estimation
  - Time varying observations at level-1
  - Individual characteristics at level-2
  - Common family membership at level-3.

# Family Resemblance in Gender Role Attitudes Using Intra-Class Correlation (ICC)

- ICC is a measure of within family homogeneity
- $ICC = \text{Between-family variance} / \text{Between} + \text{within-family variance}$
- ICC for different family aggregations (conditional on their presence in the data)



# Strength of Within-Family Resemblance

**Table 1: Intraclass Correlation for Gender Role Attitudes by Family Aggregation**



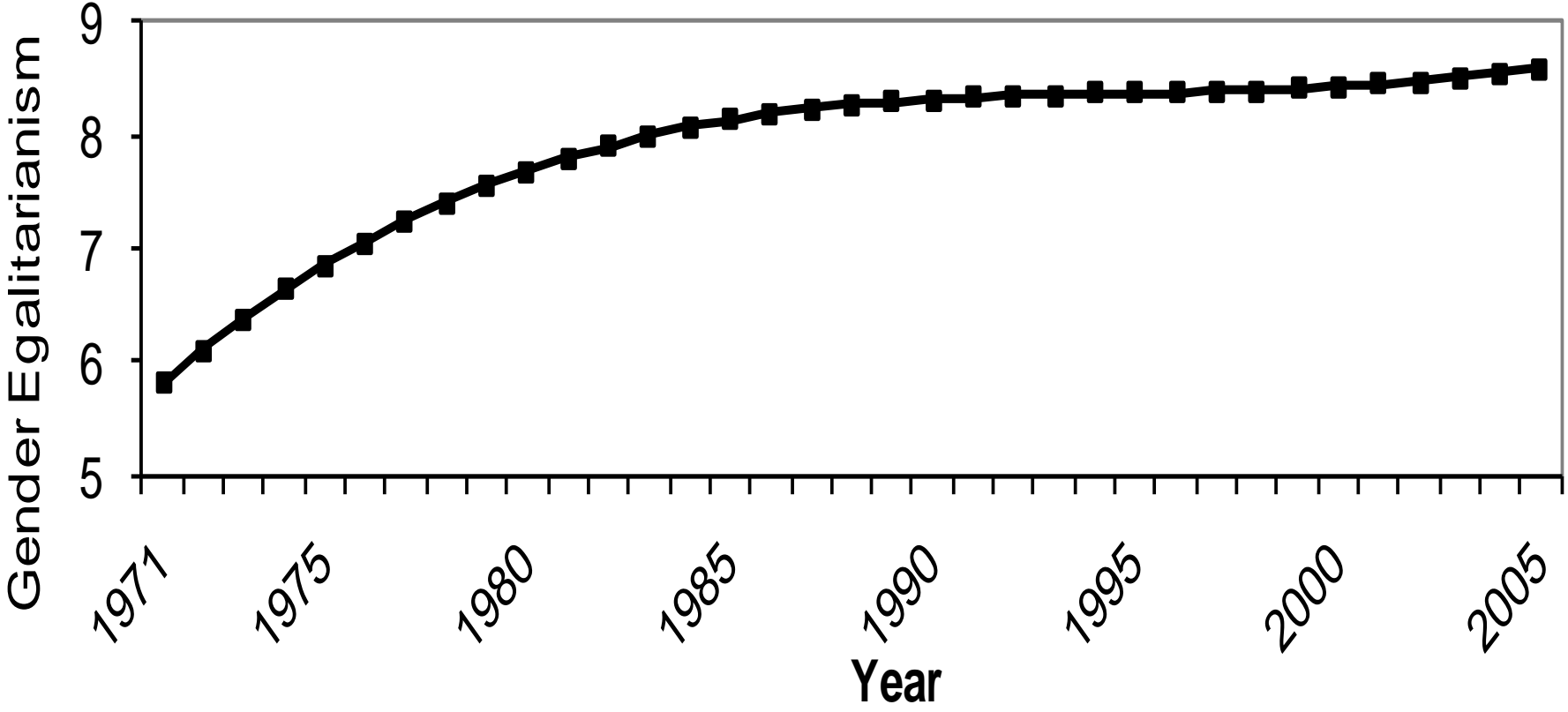
# Predictors of Gender Role Attitudes

- Time varying predictors
  - Age (15-102)
  - Years since 1971 ( $\rightarrow$ 2005 centered at 1991), years squared, years cubed
- Time invariant predictors
  - Gender: female (1) vs. male (0)
  - Education: college graduate (1) vs. less than college graduate (0)
    - Completed education or education imputed from aspirations, gender, age, and generation.
  - Generation/cohort (average birth year)
    - G1 (1905)
    - G2 (1928)
    - G3 (1952) ref
    - G4 (1976+)

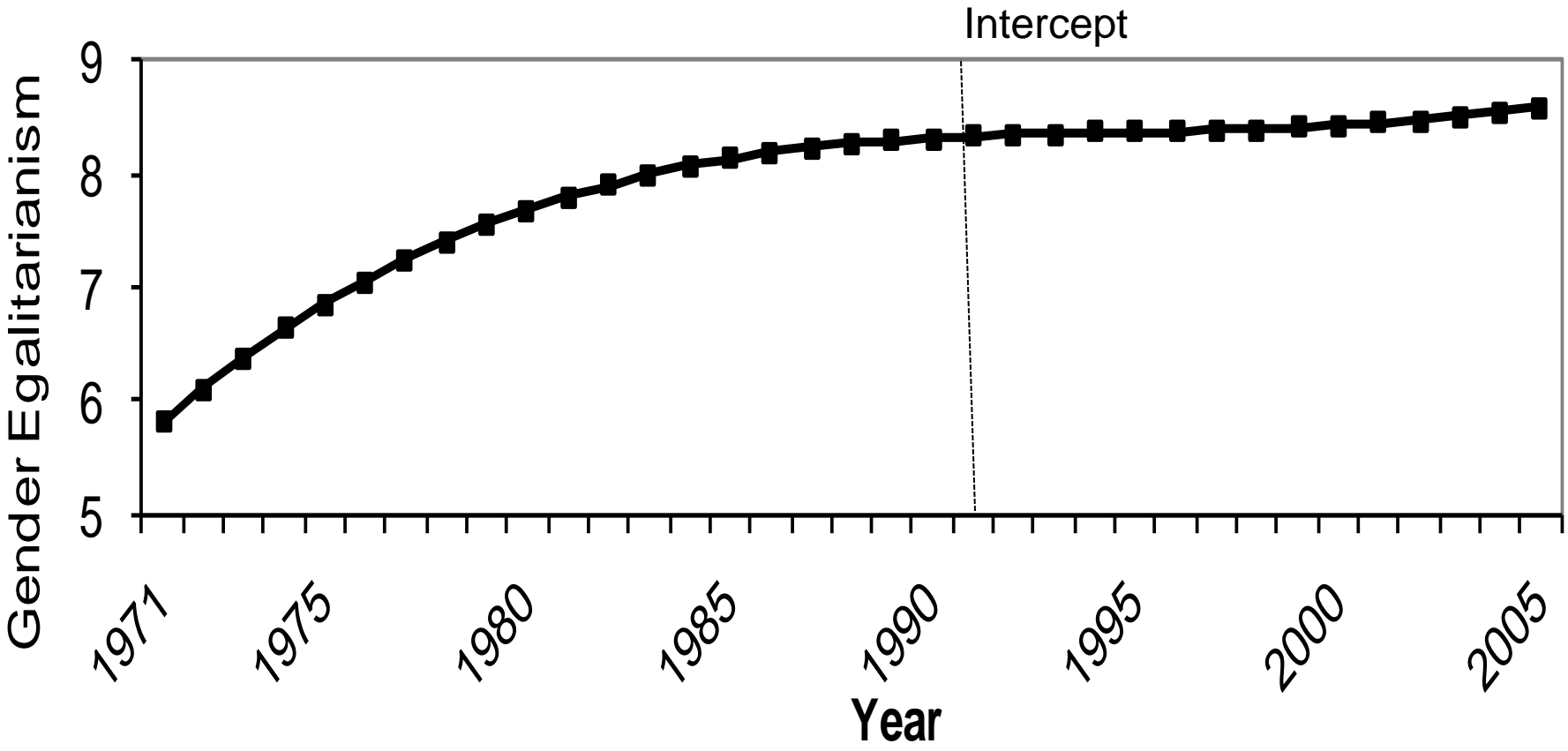
# Estimates from Unconditional Three Level Growth Model Predicting Gender Role Egalitarianism 1971 --> 2005

<u>Predictors</u>	<u>Estimates</u>
Intercept (1991) <sup>+</sup>	8.339 ***
Years <sup>+</sup>	.015 *
Years squared <sup>+</sup>	- .002 ***
Years cubed <sup>+</sup>	.0002 ***
Age <sup>#</sup>	- .019 ***
* p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001	
+Random effect; #fixed effect	

### Figure 1: Period Trend for Gender Role Egalitarianism with Age Trend Controlled



# Figure 1: Period Trend for Gender Role Egalitarianism with Age Trend Controlled



## Estimates from Conditional Three Level Growth Model Predicting Intercepts (1991) for Gender Role Egalitarianism

<u>Predictors<sup>+</sup></u>	<u>Estimates for Intercepts</u>
Constant	8.638***
Generation (G3 = ref)	
G1	- .131**
G2	- .394
G4	- .179
Female	1.162***
College grad	1.008***
* p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001	
<sup>+</sup> Age is controlled as a time-varying fixed effect	

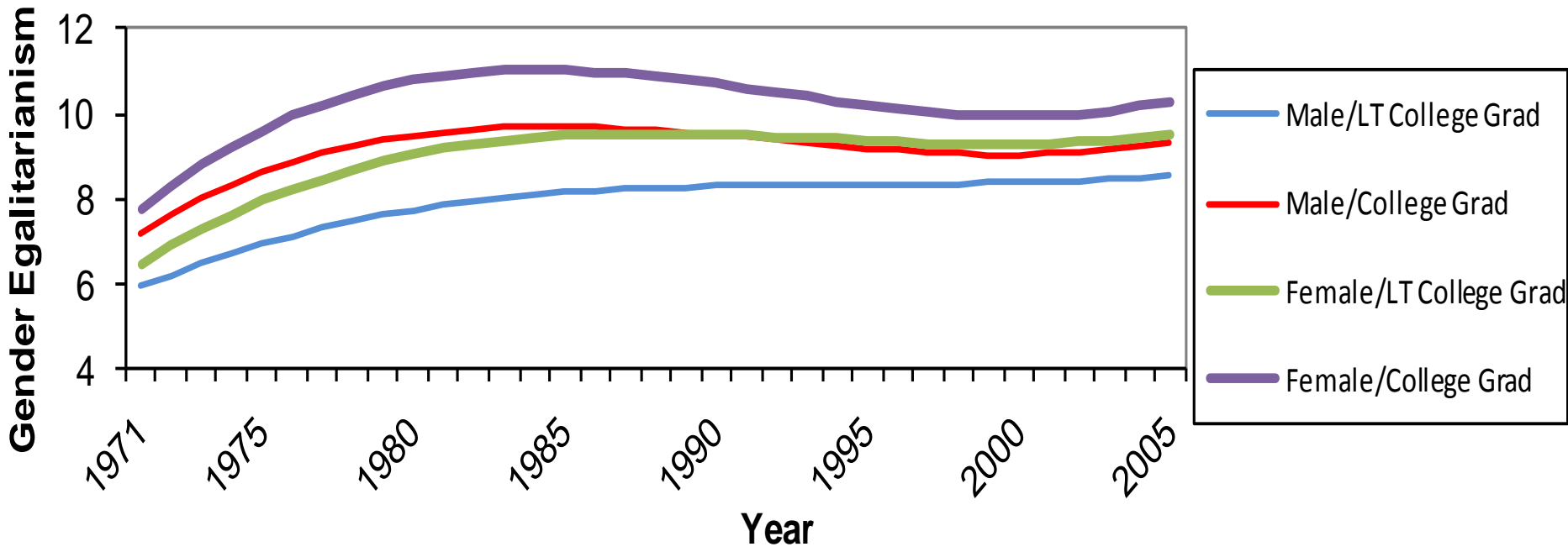
## Estimates from Three Level Growth Model Predicting Slopes (1971 --> 2005) for Gender Role Egalitarianism

<u>Predictors</u> <sup>+</sup>	<b>Estimates for Slopes</b>		
	<u>Linear</u>	<u>Squared</u>	<u>Cubic</u>
Constant	- .022	- .002***	.0003 ***
Generation (G3 = ref)			
G1	.116***	- .002	- .0006***
G2	.050***	- .001*	- .0003***
G4	- .108	.020	- .0009
Female	- .034**	- .0005	.0001**
College grad	- .054***	.0005	.0001*

\* p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001

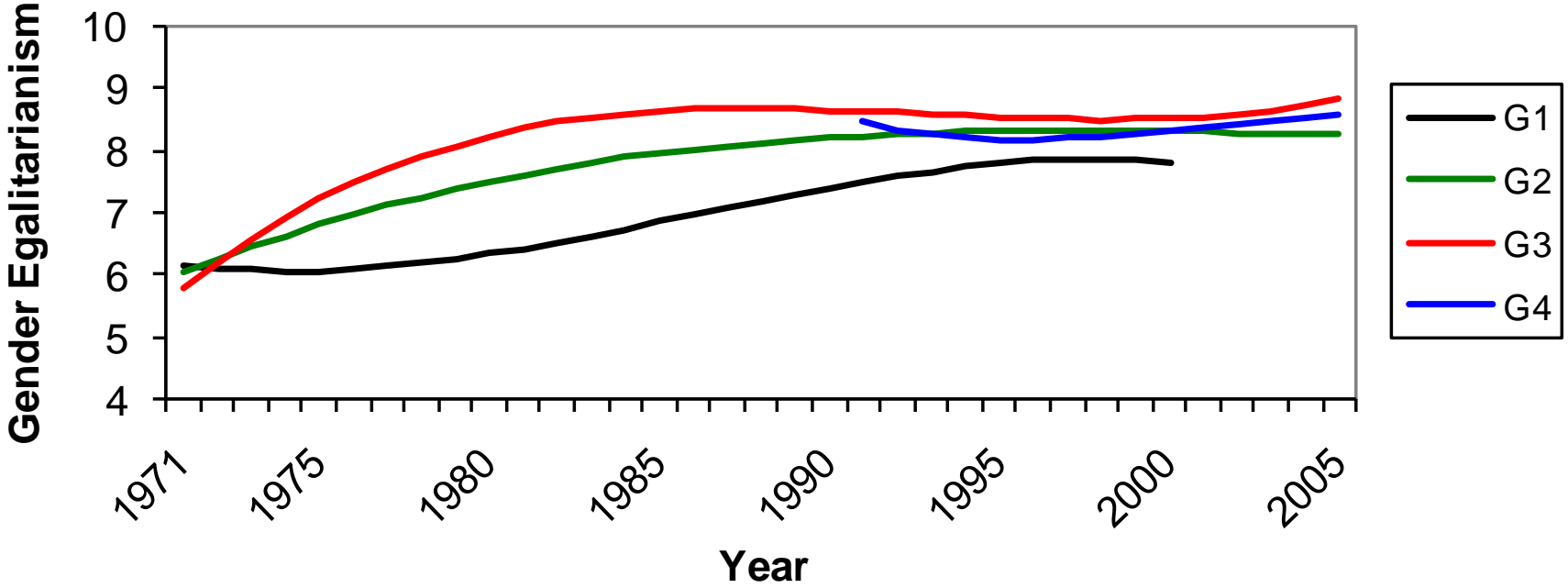
<sup>+</sup>Age is controlled as a time-varying fixed effect

### Figure 2: Period Trend for Gender Role Egalitarianism By Gender & Education with Age Trend Controlled





**Figure 3: Period Trend for Gender Role Egalitarianism By Generation/Cohort with Age Trend Controlled**



# Summary

- Gender-role attitudes became more egalitarian during 1970s and 1980s, but plateaued starting in the early 1990's, supporting claims of a stalled gender revolution.
- There is evidence of recent strengthening of gender role egalitarianism among G3 baby-boomers and their G4 children.
- Of the four generations studied, the G3s most volatile: strengthening their gender role egalitarianism but also experiencing the most moderation and largest rebound.
- With metric of historical time controlled, aging reduced egalitarianism.

# Summary

- College educated women were the most volatile in their historical change but there is some degree of convergence among gender/education groups by 2005.
- In spite of historical change in gender role values, there is relatively strong intra-familial resemblance in values due to assortative mating and parent-child socialization.

# Discussion

- Why a stall and no decline or backlash? The stall recently explained by new cultural frame of “egalitarian essentialism” that blends aspects of feminist equality and traditional motherhood roles (Cotter, Hermsen, & Reeve Vanneman, 2010, *AJS*).
- Supporting this view we found (in other analyses) that neither marriage nor fertility was associated with a post-1980s decline. Cognitive dissonance or disconnect between principles and lifestyles?
- Most likely, work and human capital advances among women are more important than family decisions.