Family: Recent Demographic Changes
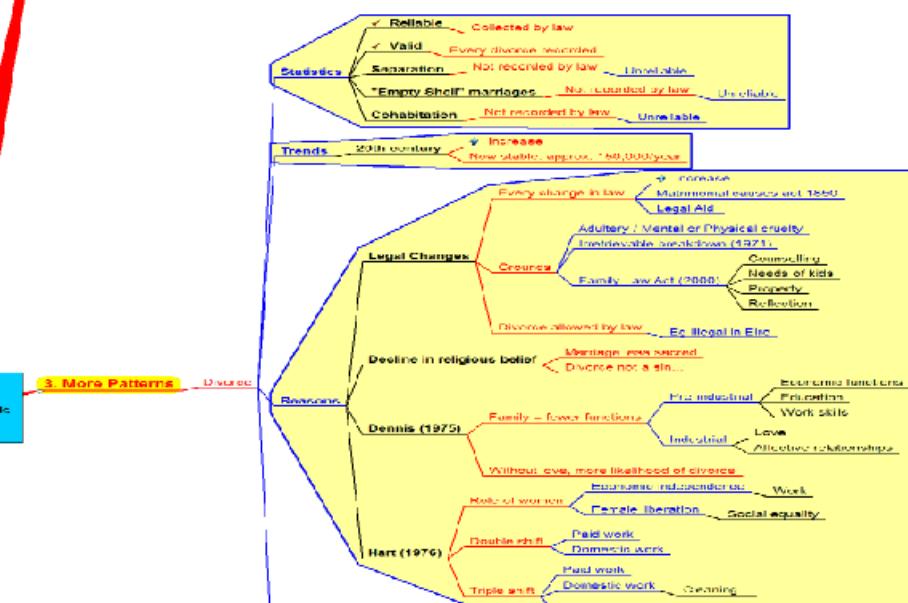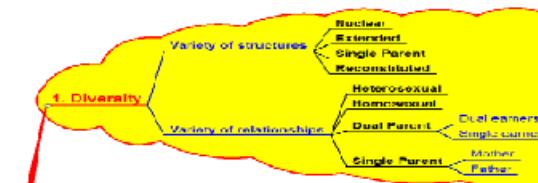
1. Diversity
- Variety of structures
  - Nuclear
  - Extended
  - Single Parent
  - Reconstituted
- Variety of relationships
  - Heterosexual
  - Homosexual
  - Dual Parent
    - Dual earners
    - Single earner
  - Single Parent
    - Mother
    - Father

2. Patterns

Marriage

Households
- Married couple + dependent children — 25% all households, 40% total population
- Single person — @ 30% all households
- Adults only
  - Single
  - Childless — 60% all households

Measurement
- Marriage Rate
  - Raw Numbers — Eg 250,000 marriages/year
  - No. marriages/ 1000 population
  - Cross-cultural comparisons — UK: One of highest rates in Europe
  - Easier out comparisons
    - 1st Marriages
      - Rise after WW2 — Baby Boom, Rise in 1970's, Decline 80's / 90's
      - More marriages now than 19th century
    - 2nd marriages — Increasing
- Statistics
  - Collected by law — Reliable
  - Every marriage recorded — Valid
  - Total marriages
  - 2nd+ marriages
  - Short marriages

Average Age Rising
- Men
  - 25 at 1st marriage — 1987
  - 30 at 1st marriage — 1997
  - 31 at 1st marriage — 2002
- Women
  - 24 at 1st marriage — 1987
  - 28 at 1st marriage — 1997
  - 30 at 1st marriage — 2002

Types
- Religious
  - Church
  - Registry Office
- Civil
  - "Approved premises"
  - Hotel
  - Football ground

3. More Patterns

Divorce

Statistics
- Reliable — Collected by law
- Valid — Every divorce recorded
- Separation — Not recorded by law — Unreliable
- "Empty Shell" marriages — Not recorded by law — Unreliable
- Cohabitation — Not recorded by law — Unreliable

Trends — 20th century
- Increase
- Now stable: approx. 160,000/year

Reasons
- Legal Changes
  - Every change in law
    - Increase
    - Matrimonial causes act 1850
    - Legal Aid
  - Grounds
    - Adultery / Mental or Physical cruelty
    - Irretrievable breakdown (1971)
    - Family Law Act (2000)
      - Counselling
      - Needs of kids
      - Property
      - Reflection
  - Divorce allowed by law — Eg illegal in Eire
- Decline in religious belief
  - Marriage was sacred
  - Divorce not a sin...
- Dennis (1975) — Family = fewer functions
  - Pre-industrial
    - Economic functions
    - Education
    - Work skills
  - Industrial
    - Love
    - Affective relationships
  - Without love, more likelihood of divorce
- Hart (1976)
  - Role of women
    - Economic independence — Work
    - Female liberation — Social equality
  - Double shift
    - Paid work
    - Domestic work
  - Triple shift
    - Paid work
    - Domestic work — Cleaning
    - Emotional labour — Child care...

Outcomes
- Gittens (1993)
  - Men benefit financially
  - Easier to attract younger women
  - Men: Greater ill health, More chance of remarrying
  - Single-parenthood
    - Mainly women
    - Poverty
    - Lower social status

4. Births

Fertility Rate
- Pahl (1990)
  - Baby Boom — Late 40's / early 50's
    - 2nd World War
    - Delayed marriage
    - Family in short time period
- 3 — 1964
- .8 — 1977
- 1.6 — 2000

Reasons
- Choice
  - Contraception — Planned family size
  - Childless couples
  - Careers
- Women working — Delaying family
  - Technological advances
  - Later marriage

- Social Trends (1998)
  - Falling for people in 20's
  - Rising for people in 30's

6. Ageing Population
- More elderly relative to young
- Average age of population rising
- Baby Boom bulge — Peak = 2030
- Welfare problems?
  - Elderly living longer
    - Use of hospitals
    - Use of services
  - Falling birth rate
  - Pension expenditure rises
  - Tax revenue falls
- Effects?
  - Pahl (1999)
    - "New Grandparenting" — Care of children
  - Burden of care on family — Caring for sick / elders

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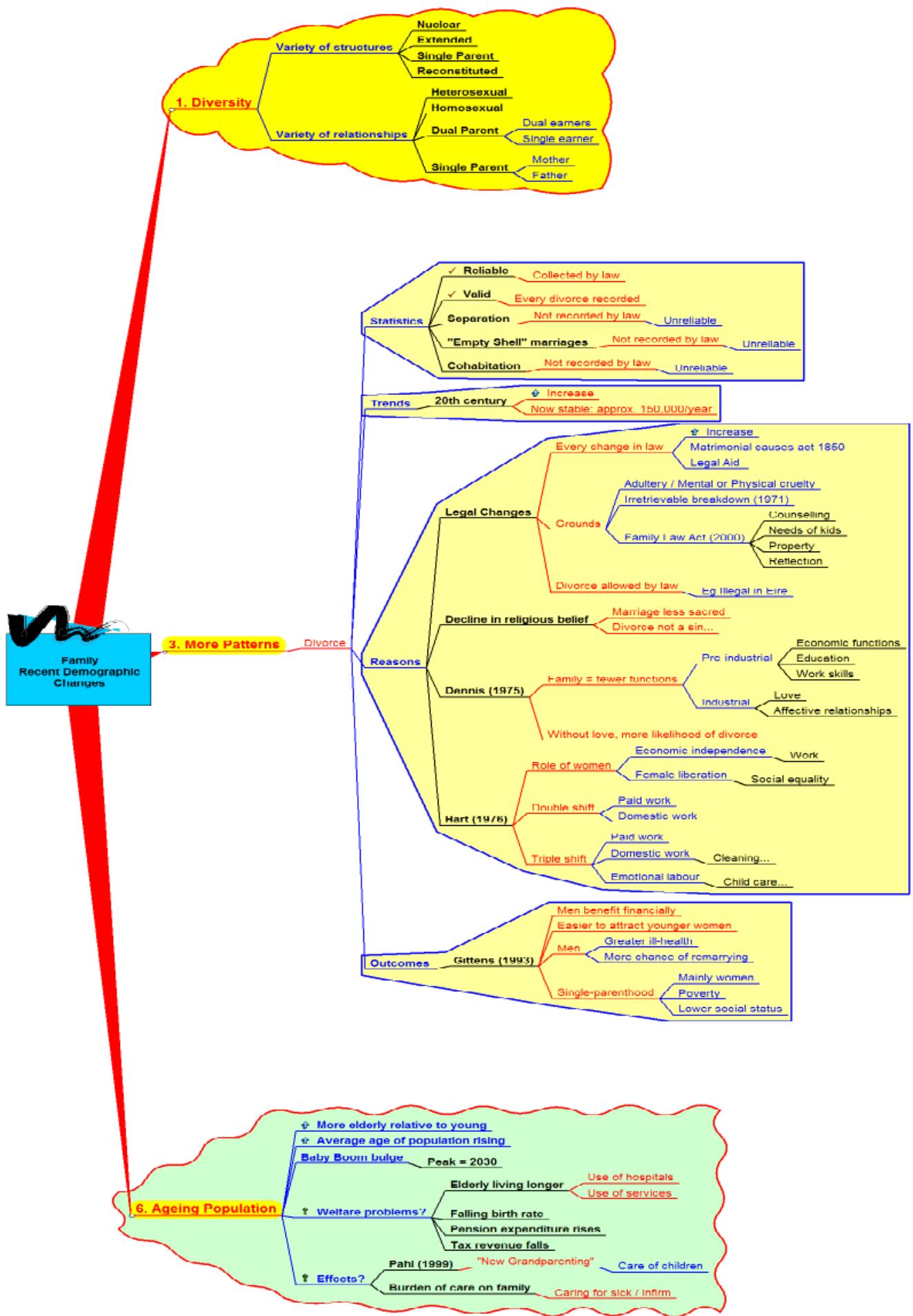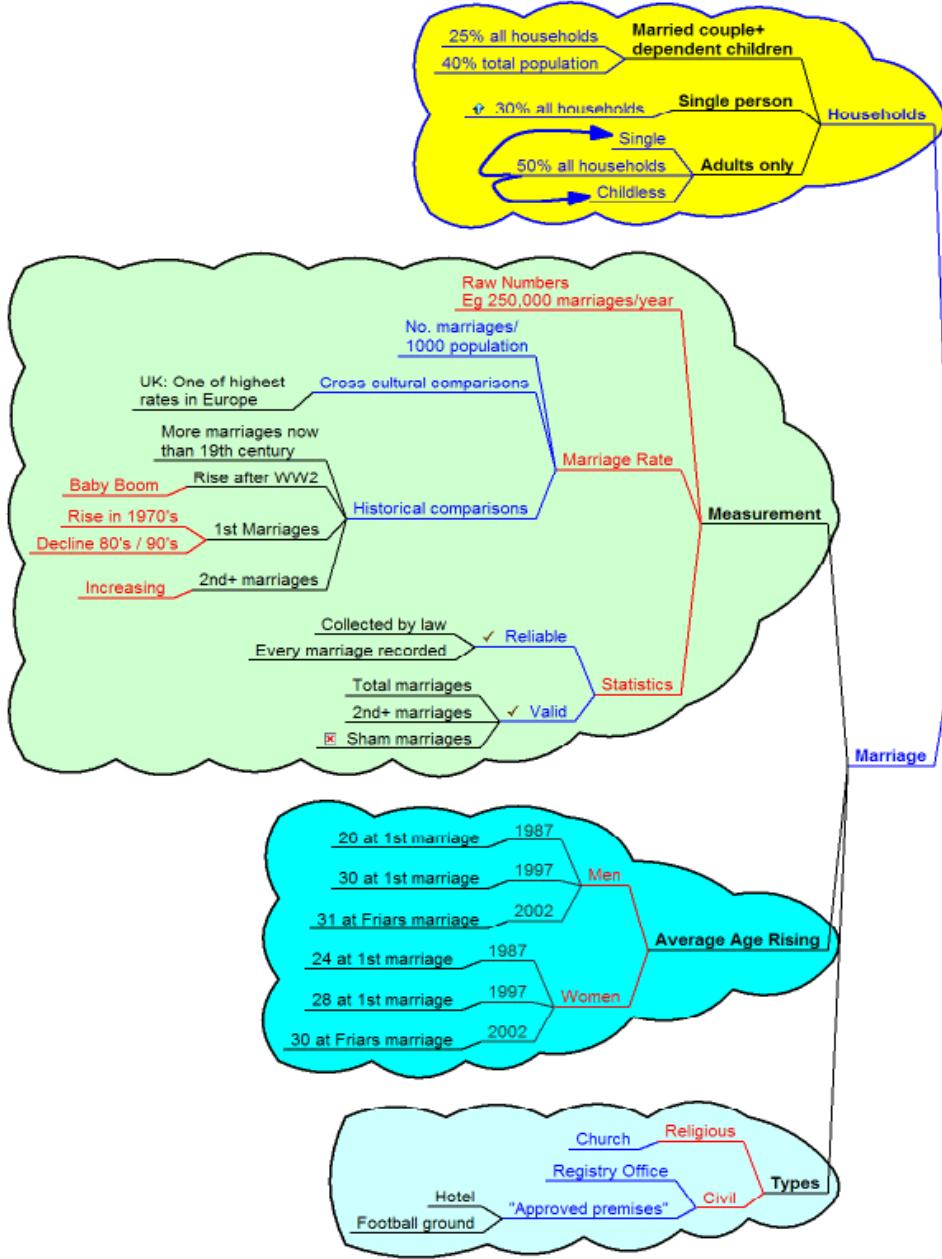   - "New Grandparenting" — Care of children
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- Historical comparisons
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  - 2nd+ marriages — Increasing

Statistics
- Reliable ✓
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- Valid ✓
  - Total marriages
  - 2nd+ marriages
  - Sham marriages ☒

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