

Arland Thornton, Georgina Binstock, and Dirgha Ghimire

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## **International Networks, Ideas, and Family Change**

Arland Thornton, Georgina Binstock, and Dirgha Ghimire

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## **Abstract**

This paper begins with the observation that family change has been a common occurrence in many places around the world. Social scientists have accumulated a wide array of structural and ideational explanations of this worldwide family change. In this paper we focus our attention on one particular set of ideational forces that we refer to as developmental idealism. We suggest that it has been disseminated widely around the world, where it has had enormous influence on family behavior, beliefs, and values.

Our contention that developmental thinking and conclusions have had extensive international dissemination is supported by new evidence from Nepal and Argentina. We find that in both countries, most ordinary people have considerable knowledge of the ideas of development, substantial knowledge about the major countries of the world, can rate countries on their levels of education and development, believe that there is an association between socioeconomic development and family structure, and believe that economic development and family structures and relationships are causally connected, with economic development causing family change and family change causing economic development. At this point in our research program, we cannot draw conclusions about the sources of these ideas in Argentina and Nepal or about their implications for family change. Further data collection and analysis will be required for answering these questions.

## Introduction

This paper is about family change, with an emphasis both on family behavior and family attitudes, values, and beliefs. The focus of the paper is international in that we consider family change around the world. We also take a long time perspective, considering the last two centuries, with an emphasis on the last several decades. The paper provides both a summarization of past research about family change and the structural and ideational theories explaining it. We especially focus our attention on one particular ideational factor in family change—that of developmental idealism—that we consider especially influential in explaining family change around the world. To buttress our ideas about the importance of developmental ideology on family change, we present initial findings from recent studies in Argentina and Nepal.

This paper is motivated by the observation that family change—both behavioral and ideational—has been substantial and consequential in both the West and in many other parts of the world. Almost every aspect of family life has been modified in the West during the past two centuries, especially in the past several decades (for example, see Alwin 1988; Bumpass and Lu 2000; Kobrin 1976; Lesthaeghe and Neels 2002; Lesthaeghe and Surkyn 2002; P. Morgan 1996; Phillips 1988; Ruggles 1994; Thornton 1989; Thornton and Freedman 1983; Thornton and Young-DeMarco 2001; van de Kaa 1987, 1994, 2001; Veroff et al. 1981; Wilson 2002). The role of marriage as a fundamental organizer of social life has declined substantially. This is evident in the dramatic weakening of the norms against sex, cohabitation, childbearing, and childrearing outside of marriage, along with the increased incidence of nonmarital sexual expression, coresidence, and the bearing and rearing of children. In addition, the norms against divorce have been weakened, divorce laws have been liberalized, and the incidence of divorce has increased. Independent living has also increased dramatically among both the young and the elderly. Independent thinking among young people is also increasingly valued, while strict obedience now receives less endorsement. The roles of women and men have also changed dramatically with the increased participation of women in school, the labor force, and politics. Similarly, attitudes toward gender roles have become much more egalitarian. Sexuality and childbearing have been transformed with the widespread availability and use of contraception, sterilization, and abortion. Fertility levels have declined dramatically, and the norms against voluntary childlessness among married couples have weakened substantially. In addition, whereas morality and the public regulation of personal and family behavior were previously controlled legally, there is now a focus on individual rights and the illegitimacy of public regulation of private lives and behavior (Schneider 1985). In fact, in many aspects of life there has emerged a norm of tolerance dictating against interference in the lives of others (Caplow, Bahr, and Chadwick 1983; Roof and McKinney 1987).

Changes in non-Western countries have been equally dramatic, although sometimes of a somewhat different nature because of long-standing cross-cultural differences (for example, see Abbasi-Shavazi 2000; Abbasi-Shavazi et al. 2002; Ahearn 2001; Amin and Al-Bassusi 2002; Audinarayana and Krishnamoorthy 2000; Banister 1987; Beillevaire 1996/1986; Bernard and Gruzinski 1996/1986; Bledsoe and Cohen 1993; Bongaarts and Watkins 1996; Burguière et al. 1996; Caldwell 1982, 1993; Caldwell et al. 1988; Cartier 1996/1986; Casterline 1994; Chackiel and Schkolnik 1996; Chesnais 1992; Cleland and Hobcraft 1985; Cohen 1993; Comaroff and

Comaroff 1991, 1997; Dahl and Rabo 1992; Freeze 2002; Friedl 2003; Ghimire et al. 2002; Goode 1970/1963; Guengant 1996; Guzmán 1996; Guzmán et al. 1996; Harwood-Lejeune 2001; Hetherington 2001; Hull and Hull 1997; Jones 1997; Jones et al. 1997; Kaufman 1983; Lardinois 1996/1986; Lee and Wang 1999; LiPuma 2000; McCaa 1994a, 1994b, 2003; McDonald 1985; Mehryar et al. 2000; Raymo 1998; Rele and Alam 1993; Thornton and Lin 1994; van de Walle 1993; Watkins 2000). These include shifts from extended to nuclear households, from familism to individualism, and from parental control to youthful independence. They also include changes from arranged marriages to love matches, from a young age at marriage to an older age at marriage, and from universal marriage to the potential for extensive celibacy. Also relevant is the dramatic movement from natural fertility to the control of childbearing and from large numbers of births to small families. Also important is the rise of feminism, with its emphasis on gender egalitarianism and the rights of women both in families and the public arena. Although data from non-Western settings concerning family attitudes and values are generally less available than data on family behavior, where we have such data, they generally suggest that ideational and behavioral changes have been in the same general direction.

### **Theories of Family Change**

Social scientists have offered a wide range of explanations for these family changes in both the western and non-Western parts of the world. For the most part, these explanations have predominantly emphasized changes in the economic, social, and political structure of society. Most important here have been the dramatic restructuring of societies through industrialization, urbanization, increases in education and knowledge, and increased consumption and social mobility. Other commonly offered explanations include changes in science and technology, with particular emphasis on more rapid transportation and communication networks, the expansion of the mass media, more effective contraceptives, and medical and public health innovations that have decreased morbidity and mortality.

Although such structural explanations predominate as explanations of family change, recent critiques have emphasized the failure of such structural models to explain historical trends in a range of family behaviors and have called for the inclusion of ideational factors as part of the explanation (see, for example, Caldwell 1999; Caldwell and Caldwell 1997; Chesnais 1992; Cleland and Wilson 1987; Knodel and van de Walle 1979; Lesthaeghe 1983; Lesthaeghe and Wilson 1986; Mason 1997; Woods 1987). For example, Lesthaeghe and his colleagues have argued persuasively that changes in religiosity and secularism are essential components for explanations of changing family behavior in Europe (Lesthaeghe 1983; Lesthaeghe and Wilson 1986). Similarly, Caldwell (1982), Freedman (1979, 1987), and van de Kaa (1996) have emphasized the importance of the spread of western ideas and beliefs for changes in family behavior and ideals in non-western populations.

Our purpose in this paper is not to choose between structural and ideational explanations of family change. In fact, we believe that both are important and the larger and more appropriate task is to demonstrate how the two fit together in mutually reinforcing ways. Although we endorse the need for this larger task, our agenda in this paper is much more humble—and that is to demonstrate how one particular idea, developmental idealism, has been a particularly powerful influence in changing both ideas and social structure.

## Developmental Idealism

The basic elements of developmental idealism have been presented by Thornton in a journal article and more comprehensively in a forthcoming book (Thornton 2001, forthcoming). Here we only highlight briefly the basic arguments concerning developmental idealism and its impact on family change around the world.

Developmental idealism grows out of the developmental paradigm—a model of natural, universal, necessary, and directional change—that has dominated much of Western thinking from the Enlightenment of the 1600s and 1700s onward. This paradigm suggests that all societies progressed through the same stages of development, but at different velocities, so that at any time point societies at different developmental stages could be observed. Scholars using this paradigm believed that the most advanced societies were in Northwest Europe and among the Northwest European diaspora, while other societies were viewed as occupying less advanced positions on the pathway of development. These scholars believed that they could use this cross-sectional variation to infer the nature of developmental trajectories across time. That is, they read history sideways from the cross-sectional data they observed by assuming that at some time in the past the most developed nations had been like their less developed contemporaries and that, assuming continued progress, at some point in the future the least developed nations would become like their more advanced neighbors.

These scholars observed that the family systems of Northwest Europe were very different than those in many other parts of the world. They found societies outside Northwest Europe that were generally family-organized, had considerable family solidarity, and were frequently extended. Marriage was frequently universal and often contracted at a young age. These societies also had considerable authority in the hands of parents and the elders, arranged marriages, and little opportunity for affection before marriage. They also had gender relationships that the scholars of the day interpreted as reflecting low status of women. By contrast, Northwest European societies were observed to be less family organized, to be more individualistic, to have less parental authority, and to have weaker intergenerational support systems. They also had more nuclear households, less universal marriage, older marriage, and more affection and couple autonomy in the mate selection process. They also perceived women's status as higher in Northwest European societies. With the developmental paradigm and reading history sideways methodology it was easy for generations of scholars to conclude that the process of development transformed family systems from the traditional patterns observed outside of Northwest Europe to the developed patterns within Northwest Europe. They believed that sometime before they wrote in the 1700s and 1800s, there had been a family transition that had changed European families from being like the traditional world outside of Northwest Europe to being like the modern families of Northwest Europe.

These scholars also observed that the social and economic systems of Northwest Europe were different from those in many other parts of the world. They noted that Northwest Europe was more industrial, urban, and educated than many other parts of the world; it also had higher levels of knowledge, consumption, geographic mobility, secularism, democracy, and religious pluralism. They also knew that there had been actual increases in many of these dimensions of Northwest European social and economic life. They made the inference that the unique

Northwest European family system was causally connected to the Northwest European social and economic system—as both a cause and effect.<sup>1</sup>

Developmental idealism emerged from the developmental paradigm, reading history sideways, and the conclusions of generations of social scientists about family change to form a strong model to guide and motivate subsequent social change. Within developmental idealism was a set of propositions that have had an enormous effect on family and demographic change during the past two centuries. This package of developmental idealism included a set of ideas specifying new goals to be achieved, a means for evaluating various forms of human organization, an explanatory framework identifying social relationships (including the family) as both cause and effect of socioeconomic achievement, and statements about the fundamental rights of individual human beings. We argue that these ideas and beliefs have been especially powerful in changing family and demographic structures and relationships around the world.

There are four main propositions contained within developmental idealism. The first is that modern society is good and attainable. By modern society we mean the dimensions of social and economic structures identified by generations of scholars as developed—including, for example, being industrialized, urbanized, highly educated, highly knowledgeable, and wealthy. The second proposition of developmental idealism is that the modern family is good and attainable. By modern family we mean the aspects of family identified by generations of earlier scholars as modern, including the existence of many nonfamily institutions, individualism, nuclear households, intergenerational independence and autonomy, marriages arranged by mature couples, courtship preceding marriage, and a high valuation of women. The third proposition is that a modern family is a cause and an effect of a modern society. That is, a modern social system produces a modern family system and a modern family system produces a modern society. Finally, the fourth proposition of developmental idealism is that individuals have the right to be free and equal and have their social relationships based on consent. Our argument is that these four propositions provide a system of beliefs that can guide a broad array of family and demographic behaviors and relationships, and trends in their acceptance can lead to changes in family and demographic behavior.

### **Dissemination of Developmental Idealism**

As discussed by Thornton (2001, forthcoming) there have been many mechanisms for the worldwide dissemination of the developmental paradigm, reading history sideways, the conclusions of social scientists, and the propositions of developmental idealism. To begin with, the treatises of the scholars of the 1700s and 1800s were widely distributed in Europe and

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<sup>1</sup> These ideas permeated the scholarly literature from the 1700s through the middle 1900s. However, in the second half of the 1900s a number of studies that used the Northwest European historical record to read history from the past to the present rather than from cross-sectional variation revealed that there was no such historical transformation in Northwest Europe. This new wave of scholarship revealed that the modern family system of Northwest Europe during the 1700s and 1800s had been in place for centuries rather than being the product of recent development. This discovery discredited the idea that societies progressed over time from the traditional family systems outside of Northwest Europe to the modern family system of Northwest Europe. It also cast doubt on the idea that modern family systems were the products of modern socioeconomic systems, while strengthening the belief that modern family systems were causal forces producing socioeconomic development.



elsewhere around the world. The dissemination of developmental thinking was also assisted by the introduction and expansion of mass education throughout the world. The mass media has also been a powerful mechanism for spreading developmental idealism and its associated models and conclusions. The flow of ideas, both internally within countries and externally across borders, is also facilitated by industrialization and the urbanization of the population.

The ideas of development and developmental idealism have also been spread actively through social movements and organizations devoted to at least some of the propositions of developmental idealism. Among these organizations have been the Christian churches that have spread widely throughout many regions of the world, including Africa and the Americas. European exploration, conquest, and colonization from the 1500s through the 1900s were additional sources for the spread of ideas about developmental idealism and the superiority of Western ways. An additional powerful element for the dissemination of developmental idealism was the movement for political democracy that has influenced the world for at least a quarter millennium. Although Marxism and socialism have been competitive political and economic systems to democratic capitalism, the developmental paradigm and developmental idealism played central roles in the theories and political agenda of Karl Marx (Nisbet 1980), a program that has been widely disseminated with considerable international influence. Developmental principles and conclusions also became embedded in American foreign policy that held up the United States as the pinnacle of development, a position to be achieved by others (Latham 2000). The United Nations and other international organizations, including both governmental and non-governmental organizations, have been important players in the creation and spread of a world culture that explicitly endorses the ideals of individual and social development, freedom, and equality (Meyer et al. 1997; United Nations 1948, 1962, 1979).

Additional social movements have adopted and actively disseminated specific dimensions of developmental idealism. Among the most noteworthy is the civil rights movement that had its roots in the Enlightenment and actively promulgated the principles of freedom and equality. Similarly, the women's movement has for centuries advocated for women's rights and the principles of freedom, equality, and consent for women and men in both public and private domains. And, finally, the international family planning movement has been especially powerful the past half century in mobilizing national and international groups and agencies to spread development idealism beliefs concerning family planning and small families.

We claim that through these many mechanisms the ideas of the developmental paradigm, reading history sideways, the conclusions of social scientists, and the propositions of developmental idealism have been widely disseminated in both European populations and in many other parts of the world (see, for example, Ahearn 2001; Amin 1989; Blaut 1993; Comaroff and Comaroff 1997; Dahl and Rabo 1992; Dussel 1995/1992; Escobar 1988; Kahn 2001; Kulick 1992; Latham 2000; Lee 1994; Lerner 1958; LiPuma 2000; Myrdal 1968; Nisbet 1980; Pigg 1992; Robertson 1992; Samoff 1999; Sanderson 1990; Wallerstein 1997/1979, 1991; Welch 1999). As they have been disseminated and accepted by government agencies, non-government organizations, community leaders, families, and individuals, they have become powerful forces for changing cultural understandings and family ideologies and behaviors for centuries.

Of course, the spread of developmental idealism has not been without substantial opposition in many parts of the world. There are many reasons for this resistance to developmental idealism, including the fact that many Western forms pronounced as modern in

developmental idealism are very foreign and strange to many people, especially those outside the West. Some of this resistance has been sufficiently strong that it could not be overcome without strong coercion and physical force (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991; Hetherington 2001). As a result, the ideas of developmental idealism have been ignored, resisted, modified, or hybridized as circumstances and conditions have permitted and required.

### **Evidence for Spread and Influence of Developmental Idealism**

Thornton (2001, forthcoming) has presented a wide array of evidence to support the thesis that developmental idealism has spread widely around the world and has had substantial influence on family change. Much of this evidence comes from the writings of government, political, and community leaders who have elaborated the arguments and approaches of the developmental paradigm and developmental idealism. For example, Thornton has documented extensive reliance on developmental thinking and arguments among European travelers, colonial administrators, Christian missionaries, civil rights leaders, leaders of the feminist movement, and family planning advocates. In addition, the role of developmental models has been demonstrated in the documents of the United Nations, numerous governments, including those of China and the United States, and international nongovernmental organizations. This kind of evidence suggests that developmental thinking has been widely disseminated and influential in the thinking and policies of important decisionmakers around the world.

Data from ordinary people around the world are also consistent with the idea that developmental thinking is both widespread and influential. For example, observers in such disparate locations as Africa, India, Nepal, and New Guinea report examples of ordinary people using the developmental idealism framework in evaluating various attributes and behavior. In addition, social science analyses of surveys reveal that attitudes and behavior consistent with developmental idealism are associated with access to and contact with the main avenues for the dissemination of developmental idealism. For example, urban living, education, and contact with the mass media have been shown to be strongly related to the timing of marriage, whether marriages are arranged by the young or their parents, the number of children born, living arrangements, and commitment to the ancestors. In addition, trends in urban living, education, and mass media contact can account for much of the trends in these family behaviors in various parts of the world. Furthermore, the explanatory power of such factors as education and mass media contact in explaining family ideas and behavior is much stronger than the explanatory power of such factors as urbanization and industrialization. It is likely that this differential explanatory power is the result of education and the mass media being explicitly designed to transmit ideas and information whereas cities and factories are designed with different purposes, thereby, making education and the mass media more effective mechanisms for the dissemination of the messages of developmental idealism.

### **Gaps in the Evidence**

Although there are many reasons to believe that developmental idealism is both widely disseminated and influential, there are important gaps in the evidence supporting this thesis. To begin with, much of the evidence about the widespread distribution of developmental thinking

around the world comes from the writings of the elite—including international bureaucrats, government leaders, and people active in social movements. There is to be sure, some information from ordinary farmers, shopkeepers, and factory workers, but such evidence is very limited because the research community has not focused an extensive and systematic research agenda on developmental idealism and its acceptance by ordinary people. Consequently, we have very little information concerning the distribution of developmental thinking in the general population.

The lack of a systematic research agenda concerning developmental idealism also means that much of the evidence for its influence in the lives of individuals is indirect, relying primarily on correlations between various family behaviors and attitudes and experience with urban living, factory employment, education, and mass media exposure. Although this evidence is consistent with the thesis of the influential nature of developmental idealism, it is also open to alternative explanations of the causal forces producing the observed correlations. For example, structural explanations rather than ideational explanations of these correlations are possible. Consequently, more direct evaluation of developmental idealism and its influence on family attitudes, beliefs, and behavior is needed.

Without direct measurement of individual awareness and acceptance of developmental idealism, it is also very difficult to evaluate the factors that influence it. That is, without more systematic data, we cannot know whether individuals learn developmental thinking more readily from their parents, in schools, from peers, from employment, or from the mass media. Consequently, our knowledge of the sources of developmental thinking in today's world is very limited.

We are part of a research group launching a program of research to provide systematic evaluation of developmental idealism and its acceptance and influence in multiple settings around the world. This research program has the following four goals: the creation of appropriate tools for measuring knowledge of and acceptance of developmental thinking; the utilization of these measures to evaluate the extent to which ordinary people believe and accept the propositions of developmental idealism and related aspects of developmental thinking; examination of the social forces influencing the degree of belief and acceptance of developmental thinking and conclusions; and the design of appropriate data collections for the examination of the consequences of developmental ideas and beliefs for family and demographic behavior, beliefs, and relationships.

Our initial efforts along these lines have been in Argentina and Nepal. We now turn to a discussion of these two countries, a description of the data we have collected in the two settings, and an evaluation of the extent of developmental thinking and beliefs.

## **Historical and Cultural Context**

We begin with Argentina, a sparsely populated country of about 37 million people, with almost 90 percent living in urban areas. The population is highly concentrated with one third living in Buenos Aires and its Metropolitan Area. Only a small minority of the population is illiterate, and almost 2 out of 5 of adult people have at least completed secondary education.

Argentina was a Spanish colony for more than two centuries, and declared its independence in 1816. By the 1880s, the Argentinean State had a strong presence, controlling

and regulating several aspects of social life, including education, marriage, and health. These changes were driven by the ruling elites' strong commitment to modernize the country, emulating Western societies. This also translated into the promotion of European immigration and campaigns to decimate the indigenous population. A significant European immigration at the turn of the twentieth century (mainly from Italy and Spain) had a great influence in shaping culture and society and greatly contributed to the growth and urbanization of the population.

Over much of its history Argentina has been politically and economically unstable. Since 1930 several military dictatorships ruled the country, alternating with short periods of democratic governments. The last dictatorship (1976-1983) was characterized by strong censorship and by systematic repression of any opposition. The restoration of democracy in 1983 substantially changed the social climate, and freedom of the press was restored.

Argentina's economy showed a constant growth for several decades based on the extensive exploitation of land until 1930 and on industrialization based on the substitution of imports by local production until 1970. In general, these decades have been periods of upper mobility and the consolidation of a wide middle class. In the late 1970s the economy started to show clear signs of deterioration that worsened in subsequent decades, with an unprecedented increase of unemployment.

The turn of the twenty-first century witnessed a major political, social, and economic crisis that resulted in the president's resignation and successive provisional presidents, currency devaluation, violent riots, and strong discontent with political institutions. Presently, the country is showing signs of undergoing a slow process of institutional and economic recovery. Still, more than half of the population is currently in poverty, and unemployment rates continue at very high levels.

Argentina has for the most part followed Western family patterns, with courtship and marriage based on love and mutual consent. Age at marriage was relatively late, with preferences for nuclear and small families. Fertility decline began at the turn of the twentieth century, substantially before the accessibility of modern contraceptive devices. The last decades have seen significant changes in matters of family formation, dynamics, and dissolution that mirror those observed in Western societies. There are fewer people getting married, and if they do, they are marrying at later ages, having fewer children, and more often disrupting their marriages. At the same time, more people are choosing to cohabite and are having their children while cohabiting. Women have also altered their roles within their families by playing a more significant role in the household economy.

Nepal, on the other hand, has never been colonized by any foreign power. Although Nepalese history evolved between two great civilizations, the Chinese and the Indian, Nepal has its unique independent history that dates back as far as the ninth century before the Christian Era (Rana 1998). The historical records show that Nepal was inhabited and politically controlled by a Tibeto-Burman group of Mongolian ancestry up until 1000 AD (Dastider 1995; Rana 1998). As the Muslim invasion became widespread in India around the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, a number of orthodox Hindus and Buddhists fled to Nepal to protect themselves and their religion (Harris et al. 1973; Adhikari 1998; Vaidya, Manandhar, and Joshi 1993). By the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century the Indo-Aryan group from India had taken over socio-political power of the then divided Nepal.

The King Prithivi Narayan Saha, who unified Nepal into a single country in 1768 adopted a closed state policy to protect the country from the penetration of the rapidly expanding British

Empire. This unification was followed by the emergence of an autocratic family ruling group, the Rana family regime, which continued the closed state policy and kept Nepal in virtually complete isolation from rest of the world for more than a century (1846 to 1950) (Adhikari 1998; Maskey 1996; Rana 1998). The Rana regime was overthrown in the 1950s and was followed by a brief period of multiparty political democracy, which was replaced by a partyless Panchayat democracy under direct leadership of the King in 1961. During the Panchayat period, the country slowly and cautiously established bilateral relations with other countries in Asia, Europe, and America and people were given limited public rights. In the 1990s the Nepalese people were able to restore the multiparty democracy and introduced a new constitution that promised a constitutional monarchy, sovereignty to the people, and social justice for all irrespective of ethnic background, religion, gender, and social class.

The difficult terrain, the historical isolation, extreme exploitation by the ruling elite, and the Hinduization of the non-Hindu population have had an enduring influence on many aspects of Nepali life. Nepal currently ranks as one of the poorest countries in the world. Over 85 percent of the population still lives in rural areas, and more than half of the population is still illiterate. In addition, several attributes of the family that are labeled by developmental idealism as traditional have historically characterized Nepal and are still common. These include extended households, early age at marriage, arranged marriage, parental control over children, and low status of women. One of the leading scholars from Nepal even claims that the fatalistic world view associated with Hinduism is one of the biggest obstacles in Nepal's effort to improve its economy and standard of living (Bista 1994).

### **Data Collection in Argentina and Nepal**

The Argentina project is a pilot mixed-methods study with high school teenagers. The teenagers were drawn from seven public high schools in two areas of the country—five schools in Santa Fe state and two schools in Buenos Aires City, with the sites selected to represent rural and urban parts of the country. Within each setting, high school directors were contacted and asked for authorization to invite the participation of students attending the last three years of high school. Students were chosen to represent generally those in these grades rather than any specific class.

The study in Argentina collected data through both focus groups and surveys. The focus groups were segregated by sex, with the number of participants in each group ranging from 6 to 10 individuals. Altogether, we conducted 8 focus groups with students from 2 high schools in rural Santa Fe, and 8 focus groups with students from two high schools in the City of Buenos Aires, with equal representation of male and female groups in each setting. With a few exceptions participants of the focus groups were classmates. The focus groups discussed a range of topics centered on the meanings of modernity and traditionality and the ways they were connected with social structure, families, and change.

Prior to the conduct of the focus groups, participants were asked to complete a self-administered questionnaire containing both demographic questions and questions about various aspects of developmental idealism. This self-administered questionnaire was also independently administered to additional students in the same high schools in Buenos Aires City, and in three additional high schools in rural Santa Fe thereby substantially increasing the number of

questionnaires obtained (456) over the number of people participating in the focus groups. Like the students participating in the focus groups, these students were not limited to classes of any particular subject matter.

The Nepal project is a pilot study that combines in-depth interviews, focus groups, and survey interviews, with primary emphasis on the surveys. A total of 12 in-depth interviews were conducted with individuals representing different ethnic groups, genders and ages. Similarly, 10 different focus group interviews, 5 groups consisting of women only, 4 groups consisting of men only, and 1 group consisting of both women and men, were conducted. The information from these interviews was then incorporated in the design of the survey questionnaire.

The survey was conducted with 537 people aged 17 and above living in the Western Chitwan Valley. These people were chosen using the following strategy. The study area was divided into five distinct strata, based on distance from the Valley's urban center. Second, a random sample of 2-4 neighborhoods was selected, with from 4- 25 households residing in each neighborhood. Once a neighborhood was selected, all the individuals age 17 and above residing in those neighborhoods were interviewed. This sampling procedure resulted in slightly more than 100 individuals from each of the stratum being selected. These people were interviewed in face-to-face interviews in the Nepali language. Two respondents who could not be interviewed in Nepali were excluded from our analysis. The field period lasted for six weeks and resulted in a 97 percent response rate.

## **Results from Argentina and Nepal**

We now turn to the initial findings from Argentina and Nepal that address the following questions. How much knowledge do the people of Nepal and Argentina have about the larger world? How informed are they about the concept of development? How well are the people of Argentina and Nepal able to apply the concept of development to the international community? What aspects of family life do they associate with development? And, do they believe that modern family life and socioeconomic development are causally connected?

### **Comparing Nepal and the United States**

We turn first to Nepal and a set of questions asking Nepali respondents to compare basic elements of social, economic, and family life in Nepal and the United States. More specifically, we asked the respondents to tell us if a particular attribute was more or less common in one setting than another. The univariate distributions for the four sets of questions are provided in Table 1. Also, note that there are objectively right and wrong answers to most of these questions—dictated empirically by the relative distribution of attributes in Nepal and the United States. We have noted what we believe to be the correct answers in bold in the table.

The data in Table 1 reveal that most of the Nepali respondents know an incredible amount about the United States and how it compares with Nepal. The vast majority can properly evaluate the differences between the socioeconomic circumstances in Nepal and the United States. More specifically, between 86 and 95 percent report that cities, education, high incomes, and paid employment are higher in the United States while child mortality and farm employment are higher in Nepal.

Many of these Nepali respondents can also report amazingly accurately about several dimensions of family life in Nepal and the United States. For example, 88 percent or more can report that polygamous families, activities organized around the family, marriages arranged by parents, and large families with many children are more common in Nepal than in the United States. Somewhat smaller percentages, but still between 74 and 84 percent, report that married sons living with their parents and child marriage are more common in Nepal while between 69 and 80 percent believe that personal freedom, women who never marry, and women having a high degree of respect are more common in the United States. Several, but not all, of the other family comparisons are in the predicted direction, but not as overwhelmingly split as those just mentioned.

Thus, this body of data suggests that most Nepalis have an incredible amount of information about the United States and can properly compare it with Nepal. They know that the two countries vary dramatically in terms of wealth, education, health, and wage employment. They also know that the two family systems differ dramatically. And, these data suggest that these Nepali respondents understand, at least implicitly, the correlation between family systems and socioeconomic factors—a correlation that we will address more explicitly below.

One additional result in Table 1 merits comment, comparisons of Nepal and the United States on their overall quality of life—a purely subjective comparison with no objective metric for evaluation. Despite the potential pressures of ethnocentrism, 87 percent of Nepali respondents rated a good quality of life as more common in the United States than Nepal.

### **Comparing Rich/Poor, Developed/Traditional, and Educated/Uneducated Places**

Table 2 contains information similar to Table 1 but this time asks Nepali respondents to make comparisons between poor and rich places, between traditional and developed countries, and between less educated places and more educated places. The univariate distributions for these three comparisons are contained in the six columns of the table. The correct answers, according to centuries of developmental thinking, are noted in bold.

These data confirm that the vast majority of Nepalis explicitly understand the correlation between family matters and various indicators of socioeconomic position, including wealth, development, and education. Between 64 and 93 percent of Nepalis report that people marrying at older ages, women getting treated with respect, married couples using contraception, and children living away from their older parents are more common in rich, developed, and educated places than in poor, traditional, and uneducated places. The 90 plus percent reporting a positive correlation between education and women’s status, spouse choice, and the use of contraception is quite remarkable.

Note, however, that the respondents are split on the correlation between divorce and wealth and education. Approximately half of them believe that the correlation is positive and half that it is negative.

Table 3 reports similar information from the teenagers in Argentina, but with slightly different questions and a different methodology. In Argentina we used a self-administered questionnaire that included an “about the same” box while that option was not offered to the Nepali respondents but was recorded if they volunteered it. In addition, the brevity of the Argentina questionnaire permitted us to only make one set of comparison—that between developed and less developed places.

One of the first things to observe in Table 3 is that many more Argentines than Nepalis chose the “about the same” answer in making their comparisons, probably an artifact of the different methodology. As we will discuss later, there is little evidence that the Nepalis are generally better informed about the ideas of development than are the teenagers from Argentina.

Between 73 and 61 percent of the respondents from Argentina reported a positive correlation between development and women’s status and the use of contraception. In addition, between 52 and 55 percent reported a positive correlation between development and age at marriage, and couples getting divorced or separated. And, nearly fifty percent reported a positive correlation between development and men and women doing the same work, valuing one’s family less, and women never marrying. This suggests a strong understanding of the relationship between development and several dimensions of family behavior—a correlation that is consistent with the developmental model and developmental idealism.

### **Rating Countries on Education and Development**

We turn to Table 4 where we summarize data for two different sets of questions for both Nepal and Argentina. The first set of items presented respondents with a scale of education from 0 to 10 with 0 being the least educated place in the world, 10 being the most educated place in the world, and 5 indicating moderate education. The respondents were then asked to rate several countries on this scale of education, with the countries asked about varying between Argentina and Nepal. The respondents were asked to rate the same set of countries on a similar scale of development.

The data in Table 4 indicate the mean education and development scores for each of the countries rated. Also, listed in Table 4 are the education and development scores of the United Nations, an organization expending considerable resources to assess the education and development of the world’s countries. The United Nations scores are listed here because they provide a criterion against which to compare the results of our surveys.

Perusal of Table 4 reveals that the average scores for Nepalis and Argentines are remarkably similar to each other and to the United Nations. As a summary measure of this correspondence, we calculated Pearsonian correlation coefficients between the United Nations scores and the mean scores for the respondents in the two countries, listing them at the bottom of the table. There we see that the four correlations in the two countries for the two scales with the United Nations indices range from .77 to .88. These correlations are estimated from only a small numbers of observations (less than 10 in each case), but are still remarkable in their magnitude.

A separate set of correlations was estimated for Nepali respondents with Somalia excluded because a significant number of Nepalis indicated their unfamiliarity with this African country, causing us to worry about the measurement unreliability introduced by including this country. Indeed, with Somalia excluded from the analysis, the correlations for Nepal reach nearly .9, indicating in the aggregate a remarkable amount of agreement with our colleagues at the United Nations.

Just as Pearsonian correlation coefficients can be computed between the aggregate scores of respondents and the United Nations, correlations can be computed between the scores of an individual and the scores of the United Nations. That is, for Nepal one can calculate 537 correlations between each individual’s scores on country education and the United Nations education index. Another 537 correlations can be calculated between individual Nepali scores



on development and the UN development index. Similarly, 456 education correlations and 456 development correlations can be calculated for the Argentina respondents. We summarize the distributions of these correlations in Table 5 by showing the quartile breaks for the various correlations.

Looking first at the individual correlations between Nepali respondents and the United Nations on education, we see that 25 percent of the respondents had correlations below .12, indicating a relatively low level of agreement of individuals with the UN. This low individual-level correlation is consistent with the fact that a significant number of Nepalis, 15 percent, gave Nepal a score of 10 on the education scale. Such a rating for Nepal virtually guarantees a low overall correlation with the UN. It is not clear whether these respondents misunderstood the question or were using a different criterion of education than the UN.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the fact that many Nepalis had only a low level of correlation with the UN, many displayed a relatively high correlation. That is, over half had an education correlation with the UN greater than .56, and 25 percent had correlations of .8 or greater.

Note that the individual correlations between the Nepali scores on development and the relevant UN scores were generally higher than those for education. There are substantially fewer very low correlations and more high correlations on development than on education. This suggests the possibility that the concept of development—and the distribution of countries on this scale—may be more salient in Nepal than is the concept of education.

Turning now to Argentina, we find that the magnitude of individual-level correlations are substantially higher than in Nepal, with this holding for both education and development. Most noteworthy here is that very few respondents in Argentina had extremely low correlations with the UN scales. That is, 75 percent had correlations on education at .42 or above and 75 percent had correlations at .55 or above on development. This suggests that most people in Argentina had perceptions of the distributions of education and development that are very similar to those of the scholars at the UN. Furthermore, the median correlation on education in Argentina was nearly .66 and on development it was .75.

Also note that, as in Nepal, the respondents in Argentina are able to replicate the UN development index more closely than the UN education index. As we speculated earlier, this may indicate a higher level of salience of development and its distribution than of education.

Our purpose in presenting the country ratings about education and development is not to suggest that we can put our colleagues at the UN out of business merely by locating a group of well-informed Nepalis or teenagers in Argentina and asking them to rate the countries of the world on a scale from 0 to 10 on education and development. Instead, we use these results to suggest that there is widespread understanding of development and education and their distribution in the countries of the world.

The ability of most respondents in Argentina and Nepal to perform so well on this evaluation task suggests at least three things. First, they were able to utilize our crude measurement devices rather reliably. Second, they have a fairly sophisticated understanding and conception of development and education, which, despite language differences, match those of the UN, since they are able to utilize the constructs in very much the same way as the UN. And, third, they have an understanding of some of the major countries of the world and are able to

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<sup>2</sup> 12 percent gave Nepal a score of 10 on development.

evaluate their levels of education and development. The simultaneous existence of all three of these characteristics is necessary to obtain such high correlations among so many of the respondents.

We are especially impressed with the knowledge and sophistication of the people in Nepal. This is a country that, as we noted earlier, was closed to the western world until approximately 50 years ago. Nepali knowledge of education, development, and significant numbers of world countries is impressive. Also, it is impressive that even higher levels of knowledge and sophistication are shown among the teenagers of Argentina, suggesting that these ideas and abilities are acquired at a relatively young age. Of course, as we also noted earlier, Argentina is a country with a European heritage, which has probably made developmental ideas widespread there for centuries.

Of course, in both countries, especially Nepal, there is a group of respondents who fail on at least one of these characteristics. Identification of these people and why they are unable to replicate UN ratings is a task for further investigation—to expand both our methodological capabilities and to understand the substantive implications.

### **Causal Connections between Socioeconomic and Family Change**

In earlier tables we documented in both Nepal and Argentina a general understanding of the correlations between a country's family structures and its socioeconomic position. Those tables, however, provide no indication of whether respondents have causal theories for those correlations and, if so, the nature of any such theories. In order to evaluate the nature of respondents' causal theories concerning the relationships between family and socioeconomic structures, we asked a series of questions in both Nepal and Argentina about the family consequences of socioeconomic change and the socioeconomic consequences of family change.

We begin our discussion here with three series of questions asked of Nepalis about the possible family consequences of Nepal becoming more developed, more educated, or richer. The questions about the family consequences of development proceeded as follows: "Now let us talk about whether the following things would be more common or less common if Nepal became more developed. People marrying at older ages? If Nepal were more developed, would people marrying at older ages be more common or less common?" Respondents could also volunteer that age at marriage would remain about the same with more development. Similar questions were asked about development in Nepal and the other dimensions of family life. In a similar fashion, respondents were asked about the family consequences of Nepal becoming more educated and richer. The percentages indicating that development, education, or wealth would increase or decrease particular family characteristics are provided in Table 6, with the right answers according to developmental thinking and conclusions marked in bold.

The first thing to observe in Table 6 is that the aggregate responses concerning the effects of development, education, and wealth are nearly identical. This suggests that at the aggregate level that Nepalis view the consequences of these three things as similar. This is likely due to the fact that development, education, and wealth are seen by them as highly correlated phenomenon, perhaps both conceptually and empirically. Because of the similarity of responses and the fact that we have more family items examined in the development series, we will focus the rest of our discussion on the perceived development consequences.

The data in Table 6 provide strong evidence that Nepalis believe that there are strong family consequences of changes in development, education, and wealth. With a few notable exceptions, Nepalis see virtually every dimension of Nepali family life being affected by development. Furthermore, in most cases the effects that most of them predict from development are in the same direction as predicted by developmental idealism. That is, most Nepalis predict that socioeconomic development would be associated with trends toward a later age at marriage, higher status of women, more use of contraception, more equality of gender roles, less polygamy, lower fertility, and valuing families less. Furthermore, in many of these instances the fractions expecting such changes are rather overwhelming, 70 percent and higher in many cases.

In some other cases, the results are mixed or unclear. For example, a substantial majority of four-fifths believed that development would increase the prevalence of young people choosing their own spouse, but only about one-half said that development would decrease parental control over whom their children married. Nepalis were also mixed in their expectations about the impact of development on children living away from their older parents and people working away from their families. In addition, the majority of Nepalis expected that development would decrease both divorce and the number of people who decided not to marry, both contrary to the usual theories of development. More investigation is required to understand the reasoning behind these expectations.

In Table 7, we shift the question from the impact of development, education, and wealth on family life to the influence of changes in family life on wealth, being better or worse off, and education. The data about the impact of family changes on life in Nepal were collected using the following question: “Some people talk about making Nepal richer. For each of the following things, please tell me whether you think it would help make Nepal richer or help make Nepal poorer. If more people married at an older age? Would that help make Nepal richer or help make Nepal poorer?” Similar questions were asked about the consequences of changes in other aspects of family life. In addition, a similar but smaller set of questions was asked about the consequences of family change on general quality of life and education.

We begin this discussion of Table 7 and the perceived consequences of changes in family life for socioeconomic matters by noting that there are several striking similarities with the data in Table 6 about the perceived influences of socioeconomic changes on changes in family life. First, as with the perceived consequences of socioeconomic change for family life, the perceived effects of changes in family life for socioeconomic position are very similar for each socioeconomic dimension. Again, Nepali respondents either do not distinguish conceptually between the various socioeconomic dimensions or see them as so highly correlated as to be empirically indistinguishable.

Second, just as most Nepali respondents perceived consequences of socioeconomic change for family life, they perceived effects of changes in family life on socioeconomic position. As before, the majority expecting consequences of changes in family life are frequently very substantial and usually in the direction predicted by most theories and ideologies of development. More specifically, substantial fractions of Nepalis report the expectations that Nepal would become richer if people married later, women were treated with more respect, more couples used contraception, more women and men did the same work, families had fewer children, and there was less polygamy.

Third, just as there were mixed or unclear reactions about whether or not socioeconomic change would affect parental control over marriage, there were mixed reactions about the influence of changes in parental control on socioeconomic change. That is, about equal numbers reported that married people choosing their own spouse would make Nepal richer as reported that more parents having control over who their children married would make Nepal richer—a contradiction that we have no explanation for. And, just as most Nepalis thought that improvements in socioeconomic position would decrease divorce, most believed that increased divorce would make Nepal poorer.

Although much of the story about the perceptions of the influence of family change on socioeconomic circumstances are similar to the story about the perceptions of the influence of socioeconomic change on family life, there are some notable exceptions. First is the fact that Nepalis overwhelmingly see development leading to people valuing their families less—as suggested in most developmental theories—but at the same time, they see any trend towards devaluing families as leading to poorer socioeconomic circumstances. Clearly, this is an area where many Nepalis must be conflicted about the interrelationships they see between socioeconomic change and family change. Interestingly, the majority seeing socioeconomic improvement negatively influencing family ties is larger than the majority believing that weaker family ties would cause Nepal to be poorer—a balance that might weight public opinion in favor of development even on this dimension of family life.

Second, although most Nepalis perceive a strong reciprocal causal relationship between socioeconomic and family change, in many, but not all, instances more Nepalis perceive an effect of family change on socioeconomic position than see an effect of socioeconomic change on family change. This tends to be true for the following aspects of family life: age at marriage, the use of contraception, women and men doing the same work, people working away from their families for pay, polygamy, and fertility. This suggests that the causal map held by many Nepalis posits a stronger influence from family change to socioeconomic structure than from socioeconomic change to family life. In any event, there is overwhelming evidence that most Nepalis see many, but not all, family changes in the modern direction as leading to improved socioeconomic circumstances, and, thus, important models for change in the direction of family life they perceive as modern.

We now switch our attention from Nepal to Argentina where we asked a similar, although smaller, series of questions about the causal interconnections between socioeconomic and family change in Argentina. Because of the shorter questionnaire in Argentina, we limited our focus of socioeconomic change on the concept of development and asked about fewer dimensions of family life.

In Argentina, our questions about the effects of development on family life were asked in a self-administered format and were worded as follows: “Now we would like you to think that Argentina became more developed than it is nowadays. Please for each of the following things mark whether it would be more common or less common if Argentina were to become a more developed country. People marrying late? If Argentina were more developed, would people marrying late be more common or less common?” Although not indicated in the question, the response categories included “about the same” as well as “more common” and “less common”. The questions about other aspects of family life were asked in a similar way. The distribution of responses is shown in Table 8.

The data in Table 8 suggest that the causal theories held by most teenagers in Argentina predict consequences of development on only two aspects of family life (that we asked about) in Argentina: women's status and the use of contraception. In both cases, nearly three-fourths of Argentina teenagers perceived that these two dimensions of family life would increase with development. Furthermore, more than two-fifths of the respondents believed that development in Argentina would lead to an older age at marriage. All of these results are consistent with the prevailing theories of the impact of development on family life.

At the same time, however, there were very conflicting images of the influence of development on the other aspects of family life, including divorce, individualism versus familism, and never marrying. In each of these cases a substantial fraction of the respondents reported that they expected no effects of development. And, among those who believed there was a causal effect of development, approximately equal numbers perceived the effect of development as being positive as perceived it as being negative.

Our evaluation of the effects of changes in family life in Argentina used the following self-administered questions: "Some people talk about making Argentina more developed. For each of the following things, please mark whether you think it would help make Argentina more developed, it would help make Argentina less developed or it would be about the same. If more people married later? Would that help make Argentina more developed or help make Argentina less developed?" "About the same" was included as a response category. Similar questions were asked of other dimensions of family life.

The data in Table 9 suggest that there are only two dimensions of family life in Argentina that the majority of teenagers believe would help the development of the country. These are higher status for women, with 83 percent suggesting that it would make Argentina more developed, and people spending more time away from their families, with just over half endorsing this as an impetus toward development. In addition, nearly half thought that having more children would lead to less development. Each of these expectations is consistent with prevailing theories of family change and development.

Interestingly, however, only a minority of respondents believed that delayed marriage, the use of contraception, and more people never-marrying would lead to greater development—expectations contrary to prevailing theories. In addition, the vast majority of teenagers in Argentina perceived that more divorce and more premarital sex would either have little effect on development or would actually lead the country towards less development.

Although there are substantial similarities in the views of Argentineans and Nepalis about the causal interconnections between socioeconomic change and family change, there are also important reported differences as we have outlined above. These could be due to many influences, including the following: the ages of the respondents; different knowledge and belief in the two settings; the fact that the respondents in the two countries were asked to evaluate the consequences of change in two very different places; and because of the different methodologies used. It is not possible here to evaluate the extent to which these various differences might have affected the responses in the two countries.

## Conclusions

As we noted in the beginning of the paper, family change has been a common occurrence in many places around the world. Social scientists have accumulated a wide array of structural and ideational explanations of this worldwide family change. In this paper we have focused our attention on one particular ideational force for changing family life—that of developmental idealism. We have suggested that it has been disseminated widely around the world, where it has had enormous influence on family behavior, beliefs, and values.

Our contention that developmental thinking and conclusions have been disseminated widely around the world is supported by new evidence from Nepal and Argentina. We found that in both countries, most ordinary people have considerable knowledge of the ideas of development, substantial knowledge about the major countries of the world, can rate countries on their levels of education and development, believe that there is an association between socioeconomic development and family structure, and believe that economic development and family structures and relationships are causally connected, with economic development causing family change and family change causing economic development. Of course, it is too early in our research program to draw conclusions about the sources of these ideas in Argentina and Nepal or about their implications for family change. Further data collection and analysis will be required for answering those questions.

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**Table 1**  
**Nepali Perceptions of Whether Certain Social and Economic Attributes Are More Common in Nepal or the United States<sup>3</sup>**

Attribute	More Common In <sup>4</sup>	
	Nepal	U.S.
People living in cities	13.5	<b>86.1</b>
Married sons living with their parents	<b>74.3</b>	25.1
Children dying before their first birthday	<b>89.3</b>	9.6
Child marriage	<b>83.9</b>	15.6
Family solidarity	<b>49.7</b>	48.8
Personal freedom	28.1	<b>70.9</b>
High incomes	9.6	<b>90.2</b>
Parental control over the earnings of adult children	<b>59.2</b>	39.4
Equality	36.5	<b>62.0</b>
Women who never marry	28.9	<b>69.1</b>
People working on farms	<b>94.9</b>	4.9
Good quality of life	11.9	86.9
Polygamous families	<b>88.0</b>	11.2
Activities organized around the family	<b>92.2</b>	6.8
Marriages arranged by parents	<b>92.2</b>	7.4
Large families with many children	<b>88.9</b>	10.5
Divorce	54.4	44.5
High education	6.0	<b>93.2</b>
Women having a high degree of respect	19.0	<b>79.7</b>
Working for pay	13.2	<b>86.0</b>

<sup>1</sup>The total number of respondents equals 537. One to three percent of respondents failed to respond to each question and are excluded from the table.

<sup>2</sup> Respondents had two response options: 1) “More common in Nepal”; 2) “More common in the United States”. Less than 2 percent of the respondents volunteered that each family attribute was about equally common in Nepal and the United States. They are included in the calculations of percentages, but not shown in the table itself. The response that we believe to be the correct one is in bold.

**Table 2**  
**Nepali Perceptions of Whether Certain Family Attributes Are More Common in Poor or Rich Places, in Traditional or Developed Places, and in Educated or Uneducated Places<sup>1</sup>**

	More Common In <sup>2</sup>					
	Poor	Rich	Traditional	Developed	Uneducated	Educated
People marrying at older ages	24.5	<b>74.0</b>	19.1	<b>80.7</b>	18.6	<b>80.8</b>
Women getting treated with respect	17.0	<b>80.2</b>	19.2	<b>79.9</b>	8.4	<b>90.6</b>
Young people choosing their own spouse	26.7	<b>66.8</b>			8.5	<b>90.4</b>
(Married couples) using contraception <sup>3</sup>	15.1	<b>82.3</b>	7.5	<b>92.0</b>	6.4	<b>92.9</b>
Couples getting divorced	43.0	<b>52.2</b>	33.4	64.4	55.3	<b>42.0</b>
Same father's children living away from their older parents			32.5	<b>64.8</b>		
Parents controlling who their children marry			<b>67.7</b>	31.1		

<sup>1</sup> Respondents could chose among the categories of “more in common” in one of the places or “about the same.” The percentage of people answering “about the same” is the difference between 100% and the sum of the two reported percentages.

<sup>2</sup> The response that I believe to most closely match that provided by developmental thinking is in bold.

<sup>3</sup> The words “married couples” were included in the traditional-developed comparisons but not in the uneducated-educated and poor-rich comparisons.

**Table 3**  
**Argentina Perceptions of Whether Certain Family Attributes Are More Common in Developed or Less Developed Places<sup>1</sup>**

	More Common In <sup>2</sup>		
	Less Developed	Developed	About Same
People marrying at older ages	22.4	<b>52.5</b>	25.1
Women getting treated with more equality	19.3	<b>60.8</b>	20.0
Married couples using contraception	11.5	<b>73.3</b>	15.2
Parents controlling who their children marry	<b>38.5</b>	36.6	24.9
Women and men doing same work	30.0	<b>48.5</b>	21.6
Couples getting divorced/separated	15.0	<b>54.6</b>	30.4
People deciding not to get married or living with a partner	21.4	<b>44.6</b>	34.0
People valuing family life more	<b>46.9</b>	24.9	28.2

<sup>1</sup> Respondents could chose among three response categories: more common in less developed places; more common in developed places; and about the same.

<sup>2</sup> The response that I believe to most closely match that provided by developmental thinking is in bold.

**Table 4**  
**Mean Country Scores on Education and Development as Reported by the United Nations, Nepali Respondents,**  
**and Argentinean Respondents**

Countries Rated	Education			Development		
	United Nations	Nepal Respondents <sup>3</sup>	Argentina Respondents <sup>3</sup>	United Nations	Nepal Respondents <sup>3</sup>	Argentina Respondents <sup>3</sup>
	<u>Education Index</u> (x10) <sup>1</sup>	Mean	Mean	<u>Human Development Index</u> (x10) <sup>2</sup>	Mean	Mean
England	9.9	7.29	8.1	9.3	7.52	8.4
United States	9.7	8.36	8.1	9.37	8.4	9.1
Japan	9.4	7.33	8.3	9.32	7.51	9.0
Brazil	9	6.49	6.3	7.77	6.4	6.3
China	7.9	6.91	7.1	7.21	7.34	7.8
India	5.7	6.03	4.5	5.9	5.9	4.5
Nepal	5	4.84		4.99	3.82	
Bolivia	8.5		5.1	6.72		4.8
Nigeria	5.9		4.5	4.63		4.5
Argentina	9.4		6.3	8.49		6.0
Somalia <sup>4</sup>	1.6	5.59		2.9	5.81	
Correlation between UN and Nepal/Argentina respondent's scores		0.798	0.820		0.766	0.858
Correlation between UN and Nepal respondents' scores without Somalia		0.877			0.897	

<sup>1</sup> 2003 Human Development Report, Education Index. The Education Index is composed of the literacy rate and school enrollment percentages of the country. ([www.undp.org/hrd2003](http://www.undp.org/hrd2003))

<sup>2</sup> 2003 Human Development Report, Human Development Index. The Human Development index is composed of GNP per Capita, life expectancy and the Education Index. ([www.undp.org/hdr2003](http://www.undp.org/hdr2003))

<sup>3</sup> The total number of respondents in Nepal is 537. The total number of respondents in Argentina is 456.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations scores were imputed.



**Table 5**  
**Bivariate Correlations Between *Individual* Respondent’s Ratings of Education and Development and Ratings of United Nations’ Education and Development<sup>1</sup>**

Percentiles	Nepal <sup>2</sup>		Argentina	
	Education	Development	Education	Development
25 <sup>th</sup>	0.116	0.298	0.422	0.553
50 <sup>th</sup>	0.569	0.638	0.655	0.754
75 <sup>th</sup>	0.796	0.825	0.773	0.852
N	453	503	430	432

<sup>1</sup> These correlations are computed at the individual respondent level. They represent the Pearson correlation coefficient between the country scores given by an individual for education (or development) with the United Nations scores for the same countries on education (or development). The possible range is from -1 to 1.

<sup>2</sup> Somalia was left out of the calculation of correlations.

**Table 6**

**Nepali Respondent’s Evaluation of the Proposition that More Development, Education, or Wealth Would Change Family Life<sup>1</sup>**

	If Nepal Were to Become... <sup>2</sup>					
	More Developed		More Educated		Richer	
	<u>More Common</u>	<u>Less Common</u>	<u>More Common</u>	<u>Less Common</u>	<u>More Common</u>	<u>Less Common</u>
People marrying at older ages	<b>73.4</b>	26.6	<b>80.8</b>	19.2	<b>75.5</b>	24.5
Women getting treated with respect	<b>89.2</b>	10.2	<b>88.5</b>	11.3	<b>90.6</b>	9.2
Young people choosing their own spouse	<b>80.0</b>	19.4	<b>83.5</b>	16.3	<b>82.6</b>	16.6
Married couples using contraception	<b>80.7</b>	19.3	<b>85.4</b>	14.6	<b>81.5</b>	17.9
Children living away from their older parents	<b>50.9</b>	48.5				
Women and men doing the same work	<b>78.7</b>	20.9				
Parents controlling who their children marry	47.4	<b>51.9</b>				
Couples getting divorced	<b>29.4</b>	70.3	<b>26.3</b>	73.4	<b>31.9</b>	67.4
People working away from family for pay	<b>54.5</b>	45.5				
Adult children controlling their own earnings	<b>72.1</b>	27.5				
Men marrying multiple wives	28.6	<b>70.3</b>				
Families having a lot of children	27.0	<b>72.4</b>				
People valuing their families less	<b>82.5</b>	17.1				
People deciding not to get married	<b>35.3</b>	63.6				
Families having fewer children	<b>60.2</b>	39.2				
More men having only one wife	<b>56.2</b>	43.6				

<sup>1</sup> The questions eliciting these responses about development were as follows, including the introduction. “Now let us talk about whether the following things would be more common or less common if Nepal became more developed. People marrying at older ages? If Nepal were more developed, would people marrying at older ages be more common or less common?” Respondents could also volunteer that age at marriage would remain about the same. Similar questions were asked about development in Nepal and the other dimensions of family life. In a similar fashion, respondents were asked about the family consequences of Nepal becoming more educated and richer. The percentage of people answering “about the same” is the difference between 100% and the sum of the two reported percentages.

<sup>2</sup> The response that I believe most closely matches that provided by developmental thinking is in bold.

**Table 7**

**Nepali Respondents' Evaluation of the Proposition That Changes in Family Life in Nepal Would Make Nepal Richer or Poorer, Better or Worse, or More or Less Educated<sup>1</sup>**

	Would Nepal Be Richer/Poorer, Better/Worse or More/Less Educated if... <sup>2</sup>					
	<u>Richer</u>	<u>Poorer</u>	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	<u>More Educated</u>	<u>Less Educated</u>
More people married at an older age	<b>89.8</b>	9.4	<b>89.1</b>	10.5	<b>89.1</b>	10.3
Women were treated with more respect	<b>88.7</b>	10.5	<b>89.3</b>	10.0	<b>90.0</b>	9.4
More (young) people chose their own spouse <sup>3</sup>	<b>71.6</b>	21.4	<b>72.7</b>	23.9	<b>73.8</b>	23.4
More married couples used contraception	<b>90.6</b>	8.9	<b>92.3</b>	7.7	<b>84.4</b>	14.6
More children lived away from their older parents	<b>56.6</b>	39.9				
Women and men did more of the same work	<b>90.5</b>	8.2				
More parents controlled who their children married	68.5	<b>23.9</b>				
More couples got divorced	20.7	75.6	22.7	76.4	24.6	70.6
More people worked away from family for pay	<b>80.6</b>	18.3				
Adult children had more control over their earnings	<b>51.2</b>	46.7				
More men had multiple wives	16.7	<b>82.7</b>				
Families had more children	18.3	<b>81.5</b>				
People valued their family less	36.7	62.4				
Families had fewer children	<b>93.6</b>	6.0				
More men had only one wife	<b>89.0</b>	8.9				
Fewer adult sons of the same father lived together	<b>85.1</b>	12.6				

<sup>1</sup> The questions eliciting these responses about development were as follows, including the introduction. “Many efforts are being made these days to make Nepal richer. For each of the following things, please tell me whether you think it would help make Nepal richer or help make Nepal poorer. People marrying at older ages? Would Nepal be richer or poorer if more people married at older ages?” Respondents could also volunteer that Nepal would remain the same. Similar questions were asked about whether Nepal would be better or worse off as a result of changes in other dimensions of family life. In a similar fashion, respondents were asked about the whether Nepal would be more or less educated as a result of changes of dimensions of family life. The percentage of people answering “about the same” is the difference between 100% and the sum of the two reported percentages.

<sup>2</sup> The response that I believe most closely matches that provided by developmental thinking is in bold.

<sup>3</sup> The word “young” was included in the better/worse and more/less educated questions but not in the richer/poorer questions.

**Table 8**

**Evaluation of Respondents in Argentina of the Effects of Development in Argentina on Family Life<sup>1</sup>**

	If Argentina Became More Developed... <sup>2</sup>		
	<u>More Common</u>	<u>Less Common</u>	<u>About Same</u>
People marrying late	<b>43.6</b>	19.7	36.7
Women getting treated with equality	<b>74.4</b>	11.9	13.7
Married couples using contraception	<b>75.8</b>	9.7	14.5
Couples getting divorced/separated	<b>31.2</b>	33.8	34.9
People putting their individual needs above their family needs	<b>34.9</b>	33.6	31.6
People deciding not to get married or live with a partner	<b>26.5</b>	30.2	43.3

<sup>1</sup> The questions eliciting these responses about development were as follows, including the introduction. “Now we would like you to think that Argentina became more developed than it is nowadays. We would like to know your opinion if each of the following situations would be more common or less common if Argentina were to become a more developed country. People marrying late? If Argentina were more developed, would people marrying late be more common or less common?” Respondents could also volunteer that age at marriage would remain about the same.

<sup>2</sup> The response that we believe most closely matches that provided by developmental thinking is in bold.

**Table 9**  
**Evaluation of Respondents in Argentina of the Effects of Changes in Family Life on Development in Argentina<sup>1</sup>**

	Would Make Argentina... <sup>2</sup>		
	<u>More Developed</u>	<u>Less Developed</u>	<u>No Influence</u>
More people married later	<b>32.7</b>	15.0	52.3
Women were treated more equally	<b>83.4</b>	3.1	13.5
Less married couples used contraception	37.5	<b>38.4</b>	24.1
Less unhappy couples got divorced	30.3	22.3	47.4
Families had more children	27.5	<b>45.0</b>	27.5
More people put their individual needs above family needs	36.1	39.6	24.3
People spent more time with their families	51.5	<b>6.9</b>	41.6
More people never got married	<b>8.6</b>	40.4	51.0
More young people had sex before marriage	12.7	29.8	57.6

<sup>1</sup> The questions eliciting these responses about effects of family on development were as follows, including the introduction. "Some people talk about making Argentina more developed. For each of the following situations, please mark whether you think it would help make Argentina more developed, it would help make Argentina less developed or it would not have an influence. People marrying late? If Argentina were more developed, would people marrying late be more common or less common?" Respondents could also say that it would Argentina would remain about the same.

<sup>2</sup> The response that we believe most closely matches that provided by developmental thinking is in bold.