

Parenthood and Paid Work: conflict, compromise and compatibility

CENTRE FOR
LONGITUDINAL
STUDIES

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Outline

1. Stories of Grandmothers
2. Demography and the Status of Women
3. Trends and Trade-offs in Britain
4. Gender roles and post-Transition
Fertility

1.

Stories of Grandmothers

Maria Agnes Lee, née Boswell 1841-1921



Florence Mare née Lee 1875-1971



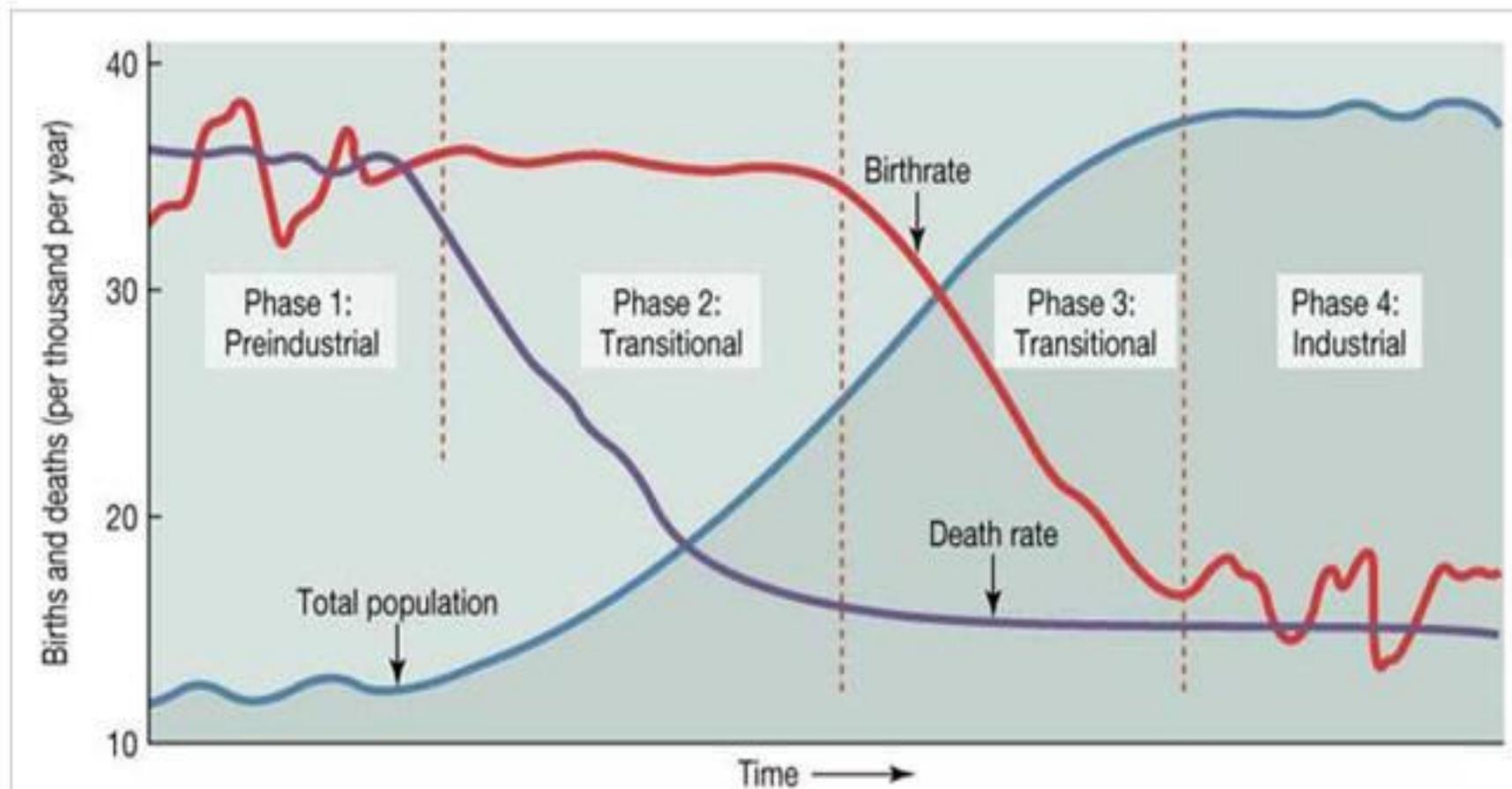
Dr Molly Spooner, nee Mare, 1914-1997



2.

Demography and the Status of
Women

The Demographic Transition : Fertility decline contains the population explosion



'Status of Women' enters Demography

Women's education, employment and empowerment seen as possible drivers of fertility decline, along with improved survival, and the diffusion of ideas about the conscious control of fertility

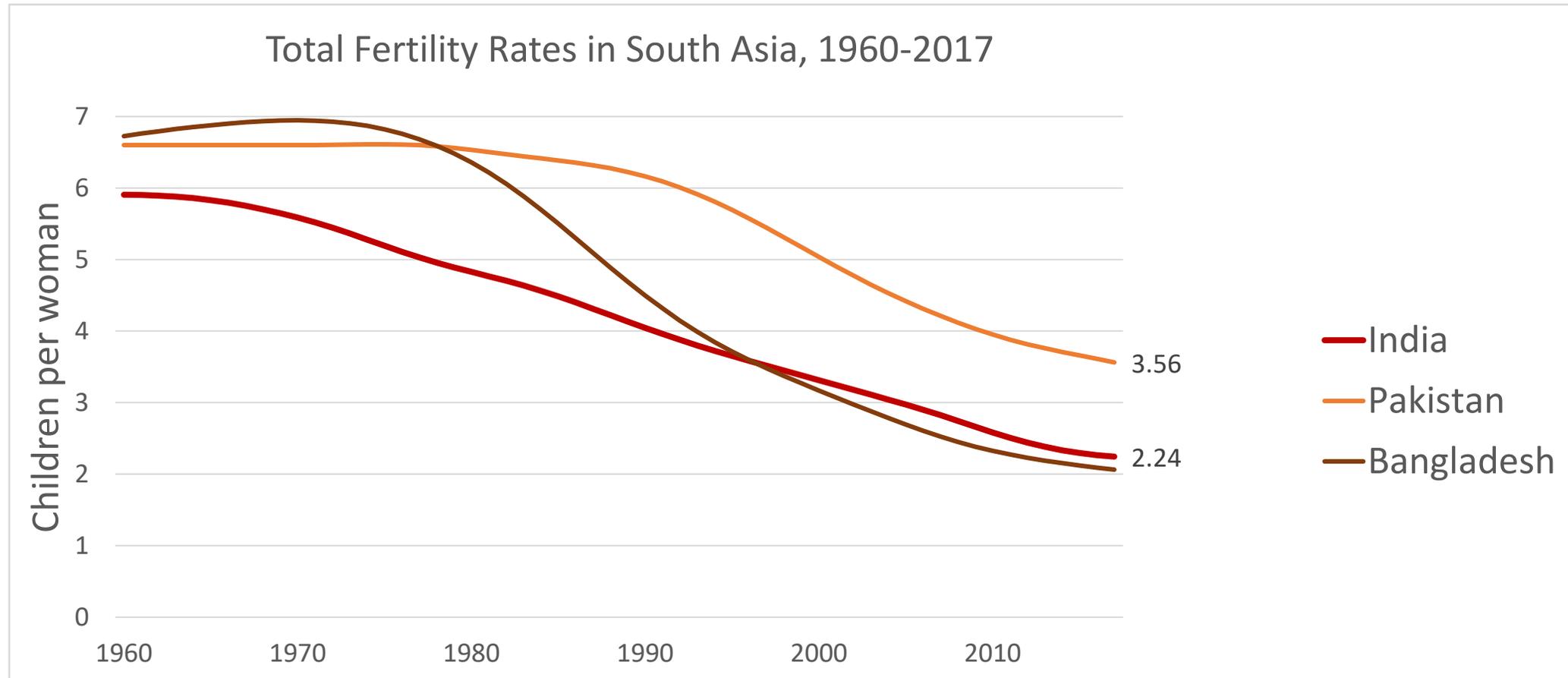
This was acknowledged in the Cairo Declaration on Population and Development 1994 , but under pressure from feminists, the Declaration emphasized that the enhancement of women's rights and health were ends in themselves rather than a means to population control.

It added:

“The full participation and partnership of both women and men is required in productive and reproductive life, including shared responsibilities for the care and nurturing and maintenance of the household.”

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Fertility transition in India and neighbours has not had to wait for full gender equality



3.

Trends and Trade-offs in Britain

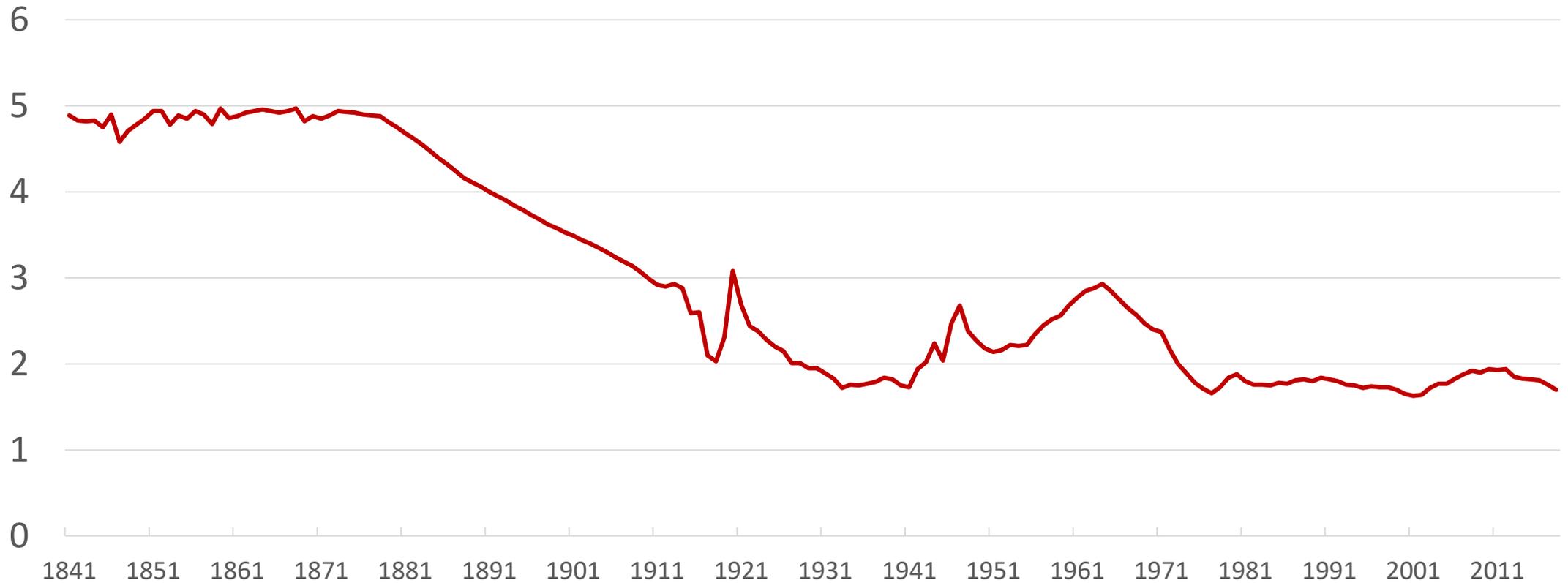
Have rising opportunities for women in education and employment cut childbearing?

Have they changed its opportunity cost?

Fertility trends in England+Wales 1841-2018

Children per woman

tfr

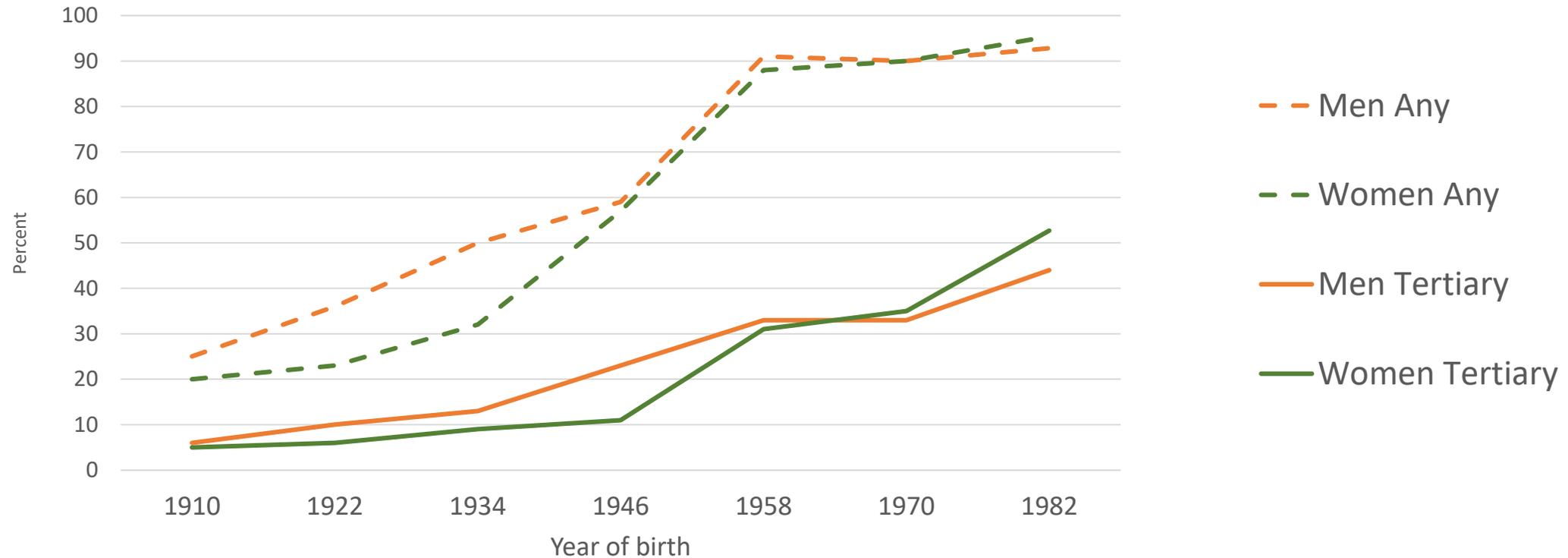


Female labour force participation, England & Wales 1871-2011



Educational qualifications: men and women by C20 cohort

Women start even lower than men, and then over-take



Changing Breadwinner Regime

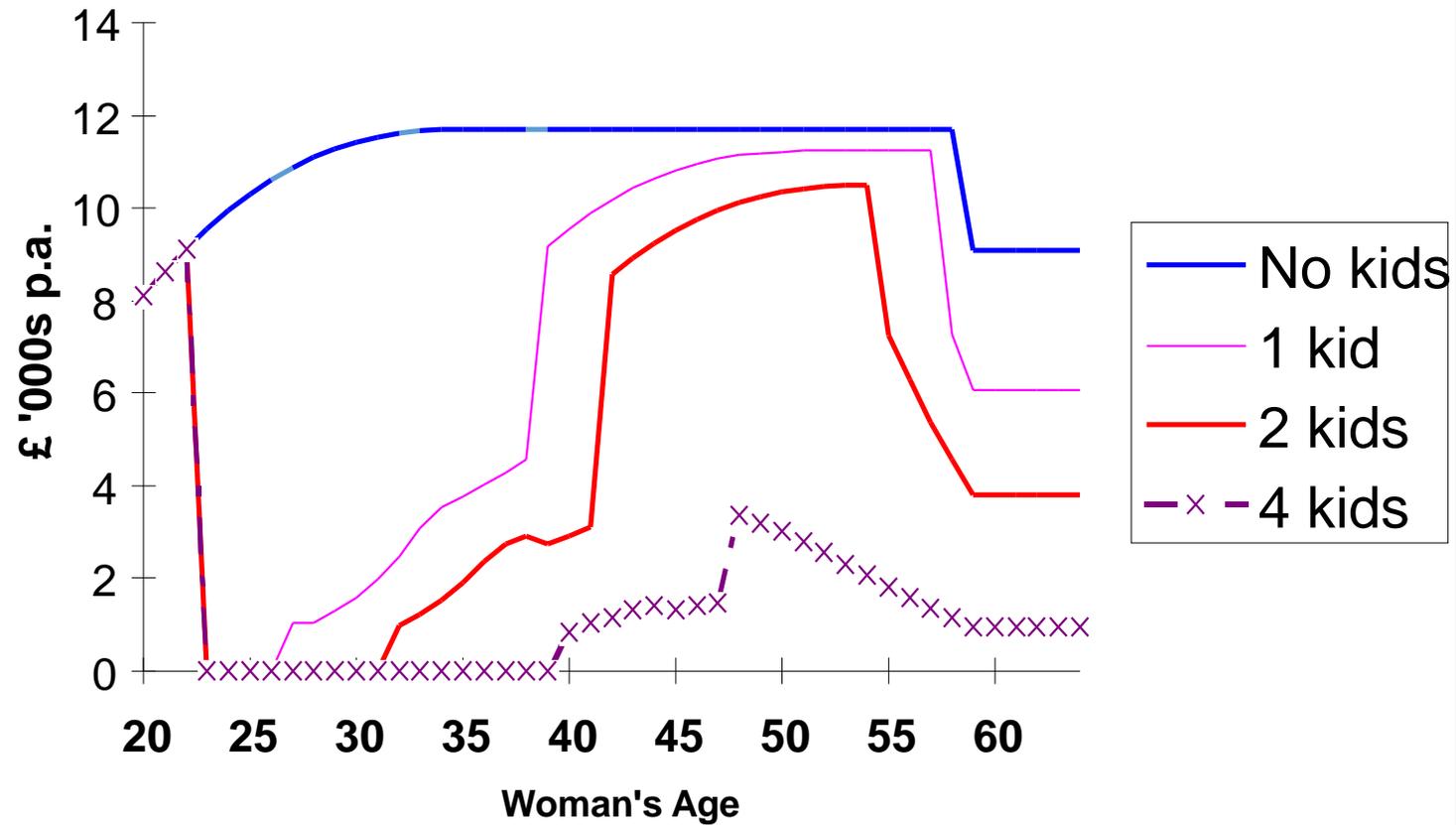
- Beveridge's ideal arrangement was for the male breadwinner to support wife's vital unpaid work in the home. She had 'other duties', namely the reproduction and maintenance of the population.
- Although this a middle class ideal rather than working class reality, the implication was that increased female labour force participation in production would jeopardise reproduction.
- Instead the baby boom happened at the same time as the emergence of the 1.5 earner couple
- It was followed by a weakening of the reliability of marriage as a meal-ticket for life (2nd Demographic transition) also with implications decisions about having children.

Illustrative lifetime profiles

- Easier to demonstrate an effect of childbearing on earnings than the other way round: earnings on childbearing.
- We simulated lifetime earnings for illustrative women, by number of children and levels of skill.
- Taking the difference represents the earnings opportunity cost of children relative to having none
- Initial estimates based on 1980 data was that Mrs Typical would reduce lifetime earnings by having 2 children rather than none
- Based on earnings and employment history data gathered in 1994.
- Projected in a time warp

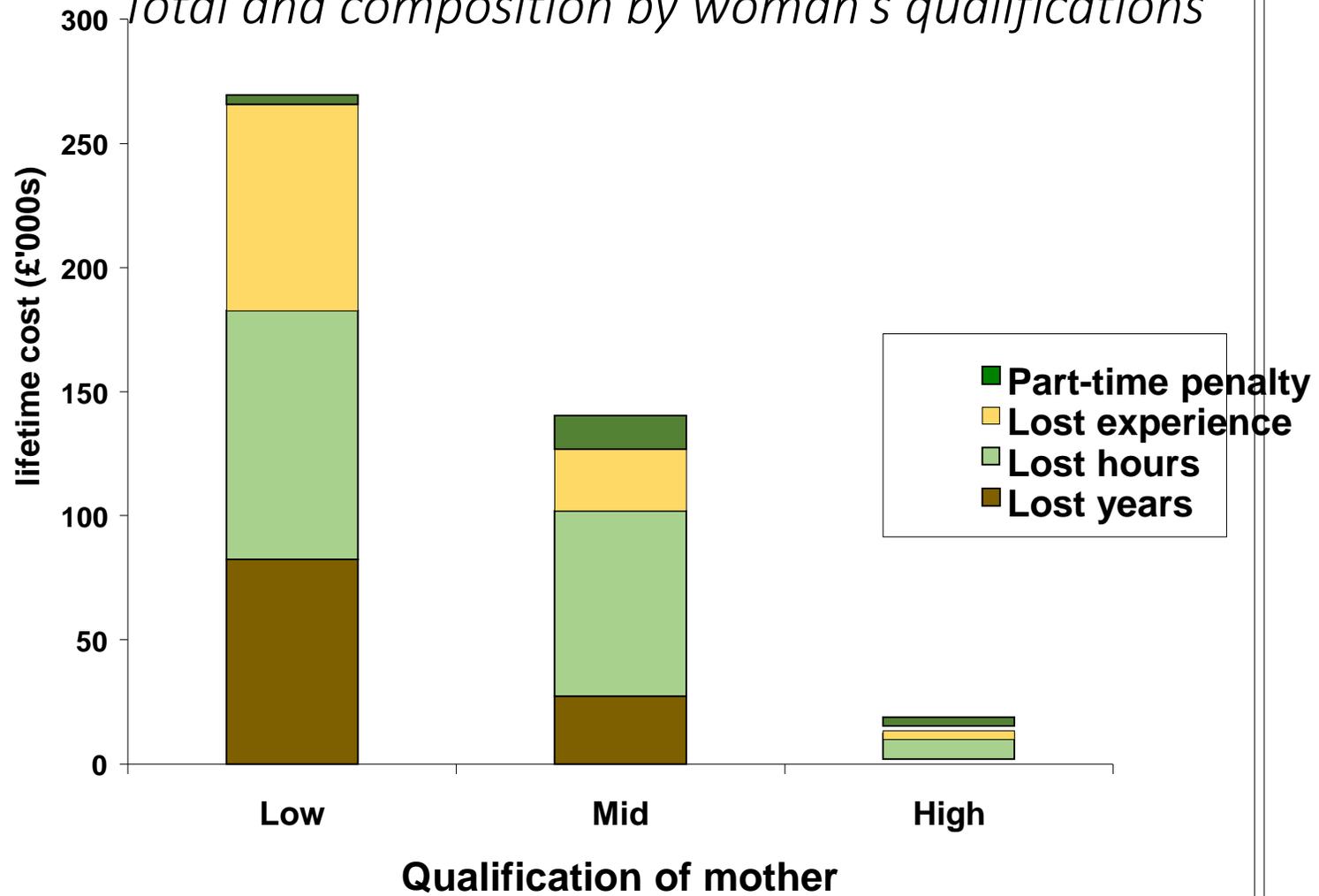
Woman's Earnings over the Lifetime

Case of low qualifications



The earnings cost of two children:

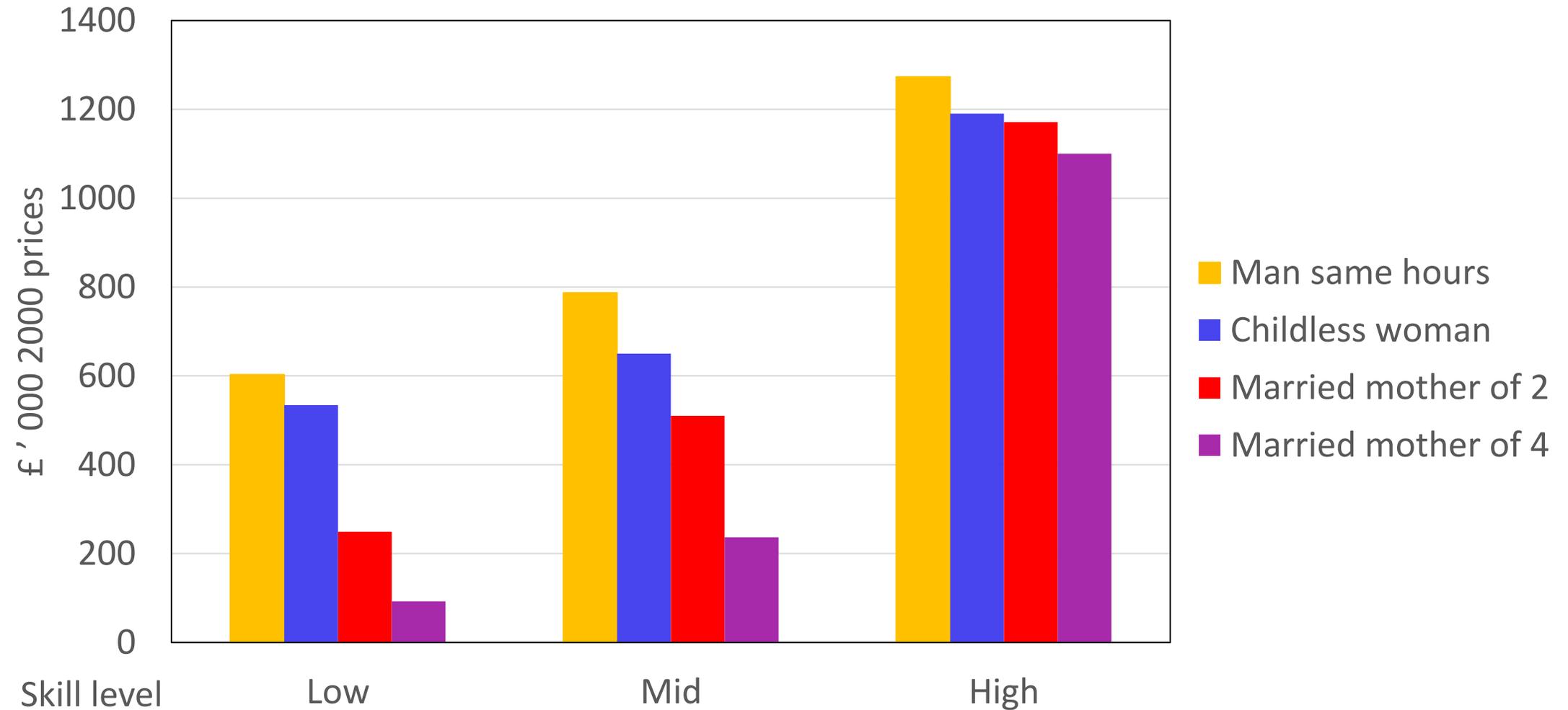
Total and composition by woman's qualifications



Have rising opportunities for women in education and employment raised the opportunity cost of childbearing?

- Earning opportunity cost of childbearing ironically remain largest for those with lowest earning power
- Because it is possible to make compromises to accommodate earning and caring
- For some the opportunity costs of child-rearing are replaced by direct expenditure on childcare, particularly those with highest earning potential
- Concerns remain about the availability, and quality of day care arrangements

Gender differences in lifetime earnings



Careers & childbearing: British Compromises before 2020*

Incompatibility

- Employment break
- Part-time hours
- Lower pay
 - lost experience
 - lower pay in part-time work
 - for a more convenient job
- Gender pay gap lowers incentive for sharing time inputs of parenting

Compatibility

- Non- maternal childcare
 - school *
 - state/private day care*
 - fathers
 - grand-parents
 - other informal
- Maternity/Parental leave
- Flexible employment

*Impact of COVID crisis discussed below

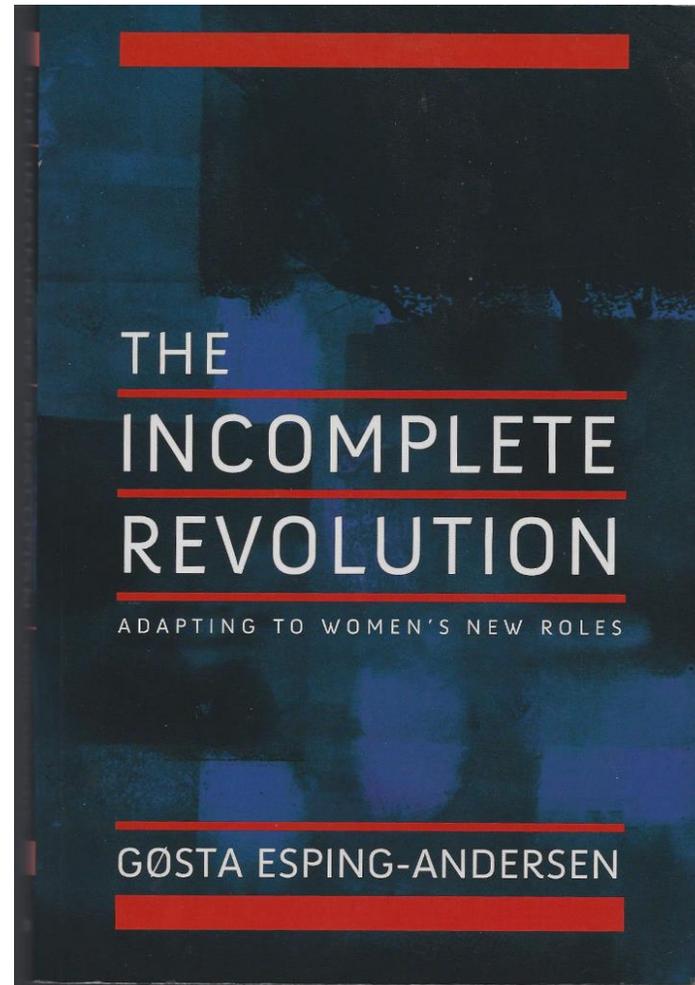
4.

Gender roles and post-Transition
Fertility.

The Gender Revolution

Gender Equity in Theories of Fertility Transition Peter McDonald 2000
Population and Development Review, Vol. 26, No. 3

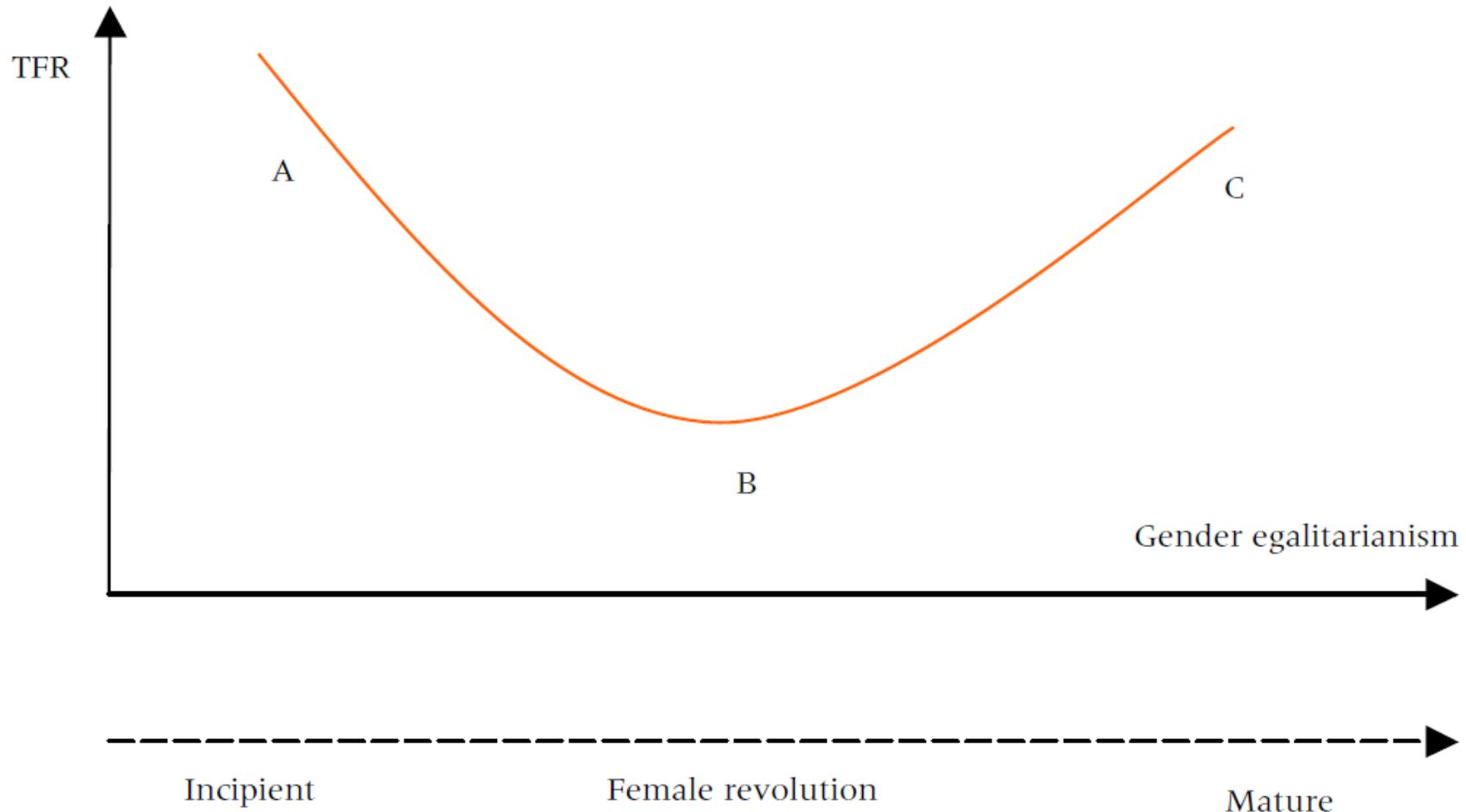
The Gender Revolution: A Framework for Understanding Changing Family and Demographic Behavior
Frances Goldscheider
Eva Bernhardt
Trude Lappegård, PDR
2015



'The opportunity costs of childbearing: **more than mothers' business'** Heather Joshi (1998)
Journal of Population Economics

Sobotka, T, Matysiak A.
and Brzozowska, Z (2020)
Policy responses to low fertility: How effective are they? UNPF

'The female revolution': Schematic Fertility Trend' Esping-Andersen and Billari, 2015



The EU Gender Equality Index



Making equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans and beyond

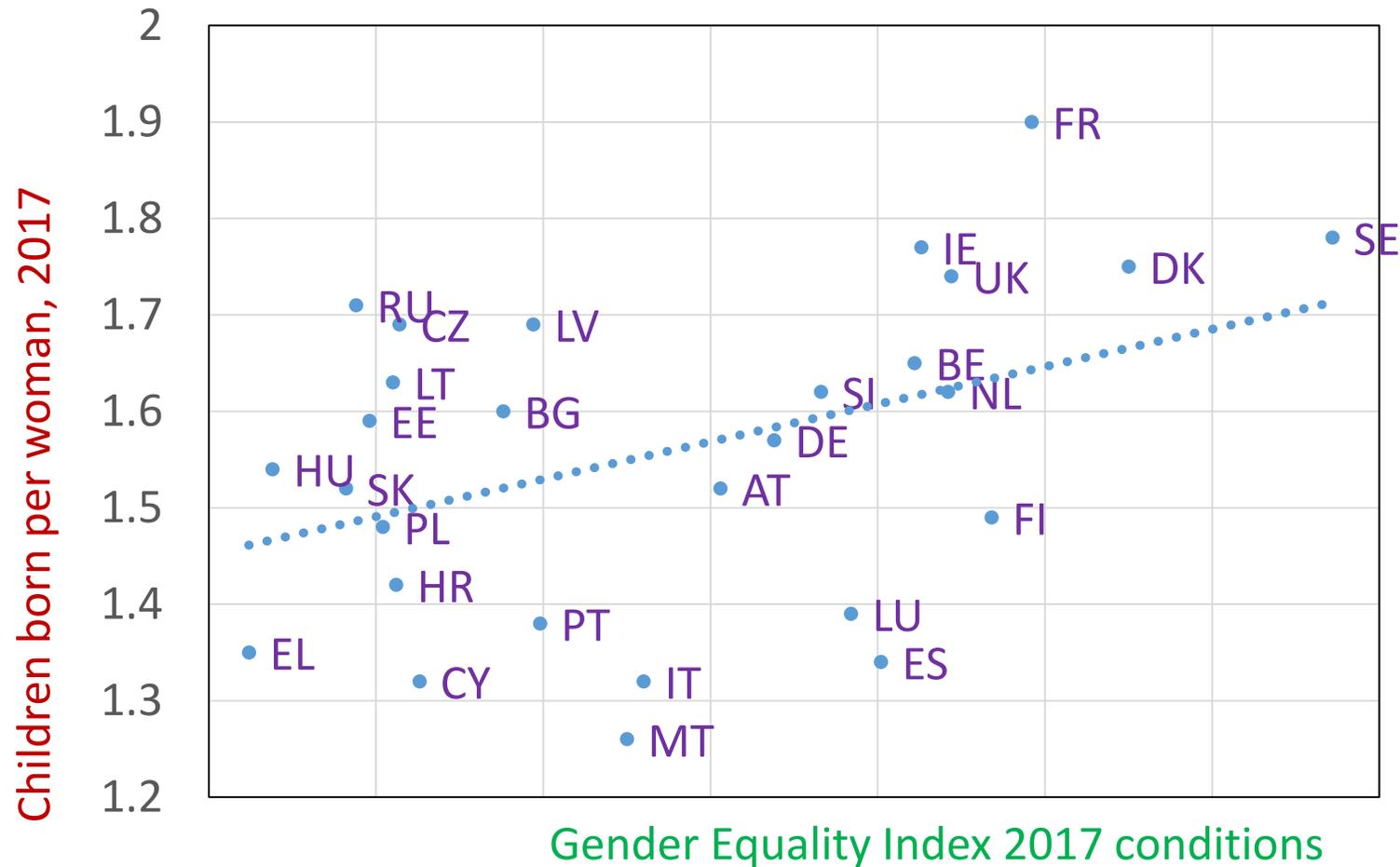
*The European Equalities Institute,
Vilnius*

A weighted aggregation of male-female gaps in multiple indicators

Domains	Sub-domains
Work	Participation; segregation; quality of work
Money	Financial resources; economic situation
Knowledge	Educational attainment; segregation; lifelong learning
Time	Economic activities; care activities; social activities
Power	Political power; social power; economic power
Health	Status; behaviour, access

Also monitored: violence and intersectional inequalities, but not in the Index

Total Fertility & Gender Equality: a positive association in EU countries, 2017



Careers & childbearing

COVID Crisis and beyond

Compatibility: Immediate threats

- Interruption of Non- maternal childcare
 - school
 - state/private day care
 - informal care
- Disproportionate effect on mothers
- Working from home affecting men and women differently
- Increase in domestic violence

Longer term questions

- Level and composition of employment
- Economic Inequality
- Education
- Environment
- Family formation

5.

Conclusions

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- Women's paid work does not necessarily curtail childbearing
- In Britain it doesn't not seem to have been necessary to confine Mrs Typical to the home to ensure that her 'vital duties' are carried out
- Motherhood does not necessarily lower a woman's earnings, although many British mothers have accepted a compromise.
- Shared parenting is not unthinkable though not the norm.
- A gender equitable balance of work and life, of production and reproduction, as called for in Cairo, 1994, still had a way to go.
- The COVID crisis may be a setback or a watershed.

Acknowledgements



- Thanks for listening
- Thanks to my father as well as my mother
- Thanks to the ESRC for funding (grant number ES/S012583/1).