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Keywords

income inequality, parenthood, women's employment, assortative mating, economic homogamy

Disciplines

Economics | Family, Life Course, and Society | Finance | Gender and Sexuality | Income Distribution | Inequality and Stratification | Social and Behavioral Sciences

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ABSTRACT

The growing economic similarity of spouses has contributed to rising income inequality across households. Explanations have typically centered on assortative mating, but recent work has argued that changes in women's employment and spouses' division of paid work have played a more important role. Using three U.S. nationally representative surveys, we examine the role of parenthood in spouses' earnings correlations between 1968-2015, asking to what extent: (1) changes in spouses' earnings correlations are due to changes before versus after first birth; (2) changes in spouses' pre-birth correlations are due to changes in assortative mating versus shifting roles in marriage, and (3) observed trends have been driven by changes in women's employment. We find that parenthood is an increasingly important mechanism, with growing economic similarity after 1990 due almost entirely to changes following parenthood. Prior to 1990, changes in economic similarity before parenthood played a larger role, although these were not driven by assortative mating at the time of marriage. Instead, we show that increases in women's employment within marriage explain the rise of both pre- and post-birth similarity. An assessment of the aggregate-level implications points to the growing significance of earnings similarity after parenthood for rising income inequality across families.

INTRODUCTION

Growing economic similarity between spouses has contributed to increasing economic inequality across households. When there are more households that have two high-earning partners and more that have two low-earning partners, economic disparities across households grow, as the doubly-advantaged move further apart from the rest (Schwartz 2010). The dominant explanation for the increase in economic similarity among spouses has been assortative mating, or the increased tendency for partners to match on socio-economic characteristics. Empirical support for this hypothesis, however, has been weak. Recent research points instead to women's employment as playing a pivotal role in explaining the rise of spouses' economic similarity (Boertien and Permanyer 2019; Breen and Salazar 2011; Gonalons-Pons and Schwartz 2017; Greenwood et al. 2014). Further, the bulk of work on aggregate-level inequality has found no link between conventional measures of assortative mating (i.e., educational homogamy) and changes in economic inequality (Boertien and Permanyer 2019; Breen and Salazar 2010; 2011; Eika, Mogstad, and Zafar 2014; Hryshko, Juhn, and McCue 2015; Kremer 1997; Sudo 2017; Torche 2010; Western, Bloome, and Percheski 2008; but see Fernandez and Rogers, 2001; Greenwood et al, 2014).

Only a handful of studies have addressed the relationship between women's employment, earnings similarity, and inequality. Breen and Salazar (2010) argued that relatively high levels of women's employment were critical for assortative mating to affect inequality given that the resemblance between spouses' earnings would necessarily be higher in dual-earner versus single-earner families. They found that educational homogamy increased inequality in Denmark but not in the U.S., and speculated that this was because of higher levels of women's employment in Denmark. Consistent with this reasoning, Greenwood et al. (2014) used U.S. Census data and

showed that women's labor force participation moderated the extent to which educational assortative mating contributed to inequality. Their results showed, for instance, that a reduction in educational assortative mating back to 1960s levels would only decrease inequality if women remained employed at 2005 levels. Using a similar approach, Boetiger and Permañer (2019) suggested that high levels of employment among low-educated women could contain rather than mediate the dis-equalizing potential of educational assortative mating. Moving beyond cross-sectional simulations, Gonalons-Pons and Schwartz (2017) showed that increases in economic homogamy in the U.S. between 1970 and 2013 were largely driven by increasing economic similarity during marriage and strongly correlated with changes in women's employment over the life course.

While suggestive, these studies have not yet directly assessed the mechanisms behind the increase in spouses' economic similarity. We advance this line of research and posit that changes linked to how family roles—in particular parenthood—condition women's economic contributions to the household is an important mechanism of increased economic homogamy. Parenthood has conventionally been a key point in the life course when women's employment declines (Byker 2015; Lu, Wang, and Han 2017) and the earnings of husbands and wives diverge (Killewald and García-Manglano 2016; Musick, Gonalons-Pons, and Schwartz 2017). But mothers' employment and earnings have shifted dramatically across cohorts, from marginal attachment in earlier cohorts to a model that much more often combines work and family (Goldin 2006; Goldin and Mitchell 2017; Ruggles 2015). Parallel with broad shifts in women's economic advancement, we argue that substantial declines in the economic penalties associated with parenthood suggest a narrowing of the gap in spouses' earnings following parenthood over time.

To assess these arguments, we look carefully at how family transitions have shaped spouses' earnings associations and ultimately aggregate-level inequality over time, with a particular focus on parenthood as a key turning point in spouses' economic trajectories. First, we decompose changes in overall earnings associations into changes due to shifts in earnings associations before and after the transition to parenthood. This locates the timing of increases in earnings homogamy before or after first birth. Second, we disaggregate changes in pre-birth earnings similarity to examine the extent to which these can be explained by matching at the time of marriage (assortative mating) or changes in men's and women's economic behavior following marriage but before parenthood. Third, we assess the role of women's employment in shifting pre- and post-birth earnings similarity. This analysis offers more precise estimates of the contribution of women's employment to shifts in economic homogamy than prior research (Gonalons-Pons and Schwartz 2017; Greenwood et al. 2014; Boertien and Permanyer 2019).

Our study makes two novel contributions. First, we broaden the scope of prior research by studying key family junctures and how they impact economic homogamy: the beginning of marriage, between marriage and parenthood, and following parenthood. Previous research has differentiated only spouses' economic homogamy at the beginning of marriage and after marriage, leaving open questions about the role of parenthood in this process (Gonalons-Pons and Schwartz 2017). Second, we consider the possibility that the primary drivers of economic homogamy have changed over time and, in addition to studying overall shifts, we compare an earlier and later period,1968-1990 and 1990-2014. This extends prior work that has largely analyzed single periods of time and helps us identify how and when mechanisms of change in economic homogamy come into play.

BACKGROUND

<u>Parenthood as a key mechanism</u>

Changes in women's response to parenthood may be an important mechanism driving increases in spouses' economic homogamy. Parenthood has conventionally been a "critical moment" in women's lives in which they cut back employment to accommodate new time demands at home (Baxter, Hewitt, and Haynes 2008). Panel studies have shown that parenthood "crystalizes a gendered division of labor" (Sanchez and Thomson 1997: 747), reducing women's time in employment and increasing their time in housework and childcare, while having little impact on men's work hours (Lundberg and Rose 2000). Cross-national studies confirm that parenthood effects are pervasive, despite wide variation in cultural and policy contexts (Boeckmann, Misra, and Budig 2015; Musick, Bea, and Gonalons-Pons 2019; Cooke 2014; Budig, Misra, and Boeckmann 2012; Gangl and Ziefle 2009). Shifts in the division of labor following parenthood tend to be long-lasting (Abendroth, Huffman, and Treas 2014; Aisenbrey, Evertsson, and Grunow 2009) and result in enduring declines in women's economic contributions to the family (Musick, Bea, and Gonalons-Pons 2019).

The extent to which parenthood leads to a heavily specialized gender division of labor is nonetheless declining. Over the past decades, women have become more likely to remain employed after parenthood, while men's labor supply remains unchanged upon parenthood (Musick, Gonalons-Pons, and Schwartz 2017; Juhn and McCue 2017). Between 1960 and 2000, the employment rate of mothers with young children grew faster than any other group, going from 28% to 65% (Cotter, England, and Hermsen 2007). Women return to work faster than they did in the past, reducing the length of spells out of employment around childbirth (Laughlin 2011) and are less likely to drop out of the labor market upon the transition to parenthood

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(Musick, Gonalons-Pons, and Schwartz 2017; Byker 2015). These changes are consistent with the transition from a male-breadwinner to a dual-earner family model, in which women's economic contributions to the household shift from being conceived as secondary and largely incompatible with family needs to being perceived as necessary and positive for families' well-being (Ruggles 2015; Goldin 2006).

In addition to changes in women's employment, shifts in the motherhood wage penalty and fatherhood wage premium also have the potential to contribute to increases in spouses' economic homogamy, although evidence is relatively weak. Some studies show that motherhood wage penalties – which capture effects of work interruptions, job changes, and discrimination – have declined over the past decades (Pal and Waldfogel 2016; Glauber 2008), but others find no substantial change (Jee, Misra, and Murray-Close 2019). Studies show little change in fatherhood wage bonuses (Lundberg and Rose 2000; Glauber 2018).

Taken together, research shows that parenthood is a key family transition that has conventionally lowered spouses' economic homogamy largely by reducing women's employment levels, and that this decline in economic homogamy following parenthood has likely become less pronounced as women remain employed after childbirth. This pattern is consistent with research showing that parenthood is a key mechanism of economic inequality between men and women but one that has declined in recent decades (Goldin and Mitchell 2017; Goldin 2014).

Changes in Economic Similarity Prior to Parenthood

Although research points to parenthood as a key mechanism explaining life course variation in women's employment and earnings (Blau and Kahn 2016; Goldin 2014),

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historically, many women also dropped out of the labor force upon marriage (Kessler-Harris 1982; Goldin 1988). Beginning in the 1920s, the majority of single women regularly engaged in wage employment (Ruggles 2015), whereas cultural expectations and institutional barriers in place until the 1960s discouraged and precluded women from remaining employed after getting married (e.g., marriage bars allowing employers to discriminate against married women were not fully outlawed until 1964) (Goldin 1988). Married childless women were less likely to work than their unmarried, childless counterparts in 1960, and this relationship reversed by 1990 (e.g., married childless women who turned aged 25 in the 1960s were 5% less likely to work than childless unmarried women, whereas married childless women who turned aged 25 in the 1990s were 3% *more* likely to work than childless unmarried women; Juhn and McCue 2016).

Thus, in addition to changes in women's employment following parenthood, stronger attachment to the labor market following marriage may also have contributed to growing spouses' economic homogamy. Wage returns to marriage could play a role, as well, although evidence suggests that these are unlikely to contribute to earnings disparities between spouses over time. Both women and men receive marriage premiums, and the size of the premium is only slightly larger for men (Korenman and Neumark 1991; Gray 1997; Chun and Lee 2001; Killewald and Gough 2013; Budig and Lim 2016). There is also little evidence of substantial change in wage premiums in recent decades (Gray 1997; Budig and Lim 2016).

Rather than changes in employment following marriage or parenthood, another explanation for increases in spouses' economic similarity is assortative mating, or economic characteristics at the time of marriage. This has indeed been the most common explanation for increased economic similarity between spouses. Some scholars emphasize that changes in the meaning of marriage contribute to accentuating the relevance of socioeconomic similarity on the

marriage market (Sweeney 2002; Sweeney and Cancian 2004; Buss et al. 2001). Others point out that growing income inequality can put pressure on "marrying well" and result in increased homogamy (Fernandez, Guner, and Knowles 2005). Additionally, developments like the intensification of patterns of income segregation in schools and neighborhoods (Reardon and Bischoff 2011) could also lead to segregated marriage markets and greater socioeconomic homogamy.

Although there is strong evidence for increasing similarity in partners' education (Schwartz and Mare 2005), the support for increases in matching on earnings or earnings potential is much weaker (Gonalons-Pons and Schwartz 2017). Educational homogamy has not directly translated into greater similarity in earnings at the beginning of marriage. Cross-sectional estimates of spouses' earnings similarity that average across couples at all marital durations show increases in tandem with increased educational similarity (Schwartz 2010), but estimates of earnings similarity at the beginning of marriage show little change over the past decades (Gonalons-Pons and Schwartz 2017). The discrepancy between increased educational similarity and stalled earnings similarity at the point of marriage suggests that growing wage inequality within educational groups (Lemieux 2006) leaves ample room for economic dissimilarity despite greater educational similarity (Boertien and Permanyer 2019). The stalled economic similarity at the point of marriage raises skepticism about assortative mating as a key driver of observed increases in spouses' economic similarity during marriage, and points instead to mechanisms related to family transitions and their impact on women's employment and earnings.

OUR APPROACH

Our study focuses on the transition to parenthood as a mechanism of rising earnings homogamy and the role of women's employment in this process. We adopt a life-course approach to track how spouses' earnings similarity changes with key family formation events and to estimate how they contribute to trends in overall earnings homogamy and inequality. Because we are interested in how mechanisms that drive earnings homogamy can shift over time, all our analyses are conducted for the overall period 1968-2015 and also for 1968-1990 and 1990-2015. This design allows us to assess the relative importance of parenthood as a driver of spouses' economic similarity in earlier vs. later periods (1968-1990 and 1990-2015). Our analyses progress in three steps.

First, we analyze the extent to which changes in spouses' earnings homogamy are driven by changes in homogamy before and after parenthood. We use couples in the year prior to childbirth as our pre-birth measure of homogamy and couples in the 10 years after parenthood as our measure of post-birth homogamy. We tested the sensitivity of our results to our definitions of pre- and post-parenthood, including all married childless couples in our measure of pre-birth homogamy (versus couples in the year prior to birth, which could be affected by pregnancy), and following couples for 18 years after childbirth in our measure of post-birth homogamy.

Second, our analysis asks whether changes in earnings homogamy before parenthood are driven by changes in assortative mating or changes in earnings that happen soon after marriage but before parenthood. In this analysis, we use couples in their first year of marriage to measure assortative mating, and childless couples in the years following marriage to measure homogamy after marriage but before parenthood.

Third, we examine the role of women's employment as a driver of changes in economic homogamy before and after parenthood. In this set of analyses, we return to our initial measurement strategy and use couples in the year before birth as our pre-birth measurement and couples in the 10 years after birth as our post-birth measurement. Using a re-weighting approach, we estimate the contribution of changes in women's employment to increases in earnings homogamy before and after parenthood.

Building on past literature, we have the following expectations about the drivers of changes in couples' economic homogamy between 1968 and 2015. (1) We expect that changes in spouses' economic similarity after parenthood will play a major role in explaining increases in couples' economic homogamy, and they will be largely driven by changes in women's employment. (2) We expect that changes in spouses' economic similarity before parenthood will play a smaller role in explaining increases in couples' economic homogamy, given past research finding small changes in this part of couples' life course. (3) Of shifts before parenthood, we expect they will be driven more by shifts in women's employment patterns between the start of marriage and parenthood and less by changes in assortative mating as measured at the start of marriage. We synthesize our findings by assessing their implications for aggregate-level inequality. If our expectations above are confirmed, we will find that changes in how parenthood shapes women's economic contributions to families are a key driver of the contribution of economic homogamy to inequality across families.

DATA, MEASURES, METHODS

Data and samples

Our primary data source is the 1968-2015 March Current Population Surveys (CPS),

which has been extensively used to study changes in inequality in the United States. The CPS is

a cross-sectional household survey that records annual earning measures from the previous year

from all adults in the household. It is well-suited to our analysis because it has large samples,

includes information on both partners in the household, and is consistent across a long span of

time. The limitation is that it includes only basic demographic information. In particular, we

know the age of the oldest child in the household, which we can use to proxy entry into

parenthood. We do not, however, have information on the timing of marriage in the CPS. To

disaggregate the pre-birth trend into changes due to assortative mating and marriage we use data

from the 1960, 1970, and 1980 U.S. decennial censuses (Ruggles et al. 2010) (after which

marriage dates are no longer available) and the 1984 to 2014 Survey of Income and Panel

Dynamics (Census Bureau 2015).

The CPS sample we use in most analyses comprises married couples with wives ages 45

and below with an oldest own child ages 0 to 10 years old (N = 333,455 couples). We restrict the

sample to young parents to minimize the inclusion of re-partnered couples, attrition due to

divorce, and older couples with children out of the household and thus not reported on the CPS

roster. In sensitivity analyses we expand this sample to include all married childless couples and

couples with an eldest own child age 0 to 18 years old (N = 680,794 couples). We use Census

and SIPP information on the timing of marriage to decompose pre-birth homogamy trends. Our

Census (N = 445,336 couples) and SIPP (N = 56,869 couples) samples are comprised of married

childless couples with wives ages 45 and below, i.e., couples in their first year of marriage and

the years that follow as long as they do not have a child. Unlike the annual CPS and SIPP data, Census data is only available once per decade, and we use linear interpolation to generate trends for the intervening years.

We use the correlation coefficient to measure the association between spouses' earnings. The correlation is a useful summary measure that can be easily incorporated into our analysis of inequality. Other measures of association from log-linear models show trends similar to those presented here (see Online Appendix Figure S2). We use *annual earnings adjusted for inflation to 2012 dollars using the consumer price index (CPI-U)* (Crawford and Church 2014) and top-coded consistently across all years to avoid measures of inequality and homogamy being affected by changes in surveys' top-coding schemes. We follow Burkhauser et al. (2004) and impose a top-code equal to the maximum percentage of the husband/wife sample with top-coded earnings in the March CPS in each year; a maximum of 3% of husbands had their earnings top-coded, whereas <1% of wives' earnings were top-coded. We measure *employment as non-zero annual earnings*, i.e., we count as employed any part-time or part-year employment, meaning that not employed here indicates substantial detachment from the labor force.

Table 1 presents summary statistics for key measures across datasets. In our CPS main analysis sample, we measure *pre-birth homogamy* as the correlation between wives' and husbands' earnings in the year before parenthood and *post-birth homogamy* as the correlation between wives' and husbands' earnings in years 0 to 10 after parenthood. In the CPS sample with alternative measures, we measure pre-birth homogamy as the correlation between wives' and husbands' earnings for all married childless couples and post-birth homogamy correlations include couples up to 18 years past their first birth. In the Census and SIPP analyses, we identify *assortative mating* as the correlation between wives' and husbands' earnings in their first year of

marriage, and *married, childless homogamy* as the correlation between wives' and husbands' earnings in the years that follow marriage without children. Table 1 shows that earnings correlation measures are systematically lower for parents than for childless couples, and that this pattern tends to mirror changes in women's earnings and employment while men's earnings remain relatively constant.

Methods

We use decomposition methods to analyze changes in couples' earnings homogamy between 1968 and 2015. The first part of the analysis follows prior work on this topic (Gonalons-Pons and Schwartz 2017) that adapts classic methods for decomposing change in correlation trends into parts due to differences in rates and differences in composition (Kitagawa 1955). This method generates counterfactual correlation trends that estimate the contribution of changes in earnings correlations among given population subgroups to overall changes in economic homogamy. In our analysis, the population subgroups are defined by the timing of marriage and parenthood. This method is first used to decompose overall trends in economic similarity into parts due to changes before and after parenthood, and then to further decompose trends in economic similarity before parenthood into parts due to changes in assortative mating and changes following marriage but before parenthood. We briefly summarize how this method works below and refer to Gonalons-Pons and Schwartz (2017) for more details.

The first step is to construct a dataset with earnings correlations by year and time since birth and reconstruct the period correlation trend estimated from individual-level data as the weighted average of earnings correlations among couples from different first birth cohorts. The reconstructed correlation for 1968, for instance, is the weighted average of post-birth earnings correlations for couples with children ages 0-10 who had a first birth from 1958-1968, and pre-

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birth earnings correlations for couples who had a first birth in 1969. Next, we simulate

counterfactual trends holding constant or "fixing" key components of interest. The first

simulation constrains pre-birth homogamy to remain constant between 1968 and 2015. This

means we assign 1969 pre-birth correlation values to all birth cohorts that follow 1969 cohort

and leave post-birth correlation trajectories evolve as observed. This estimates what trends in the

correlation would have been if earnings associations before parenthood had not changed over

this period. The second simulation constraints pre-birth and post-birth homogamy to remain at

the 1969 birth cohort levels, i.e., we assign all couples who had a birth between 1969 and 2015

the pre- and post-birth correlation values of couples who had their first birth in 1969. This

estimates what trends in the correlation would have been if earnings association before and after

parenthood had not changed over this period. The final simulation further adjusts for

compositional changes in the distribution of couples by time since birth and for changes in

earnings similarities among couples who had their first births before 1969.

Below are the equations for the reconstructed correlation trend and the first simulation

(Online Supplement Table S1 summarizes equations for all simulations in the analyses):

$$\tilde{r}_t = \sum_i r_{ti} w_{ti} \qquad\qquad \text{where } i = \text{-1 to 10} \qquad (1)$$

$$r'_t = \sum_i r'_{ti} w_{ti} \qquad\qquad \text{where } i = \text{-1 to 10} \qquad (2)$$

where r is the correlation between spouses' earnings, t is year, i is the time since first birth in

years, and w is the proportion of couples at time i in year t. In equation (1) $\tilde{r}_t$ reconstructs the

cross-sectional correlation trend as a weighted average of correlation coefficients across groups.

In equation (2) r'_t estimates the counterfactual correlation trend that would be observed if

earnings associations before parenthood had not changed since 1968 (or since the 1969 first birth

cohort); r'_{ti} is obtained from a cohort-to-period transformation where all first birth cohorts have

the 1969 cohort pre-birth correlations and their own post-birth correlation trajectories, or $r'_{ci} =$

$r_{1969,1} + (r_{ci} - r_{c1})$ where c is cohort and $c > 1969$, else $r'_{ci} = r_{ci}$.

One important limitation of the correlation decomposition above is that it cannot

adequately identify the extent to which changes in the correlation are driven by shifts in

women's employment, because we cannot calculate separate correlations for the group of

couples in which wives work versus do not work, given that all nonworking wives will have zero

earnings. We solve this problem in the second part of the analysis by using a re-weighting

method that can identify the role of women's employment in driving changes in earnings

correlations before and after parenthood. This re-weighting method has been most extensively

employed in research on income inequality (DiNardo, Fortin, and Lemieux 1996; Lemieux 2002)

and is based on a re-weighting factor that yields counterfactual estimates for any distributional

statistic showing the value that would have prevailed if the distribution according to any given

categorical variable (x) had been fixed at a given period (Lemieux 2002; Daly and Valletta

2006). We apply this approach to estimate counterfactual correlations that would have prevailed

if patterns of women's employment had not changed since 1968. Following prior research, we

stratify changes in women's employment by husband's earnings decile to account for shifts in

the association between husbands' earnings and wives' employment over time (Schwartz 2010).

The first step requires going back to our individual-level dataset and dividing the sample

by women's employment status (2 cells) and husbands' earnings decile (10 cells), resulting in 2 x

10 cells for each year and time since birth. If we let θ_{jty} be the proportion of sample in cell j in

time since birth t and year y, and θ_{jts} be the proportion of sample in cell j in time since birth t

and year s, which we set at 1968, we can use these two quantities to calculate the reweighting

factor, $\psi_{jt} = \theta_{jts}/\theta_{jty}$. Applied to individual-level data this can be written as:

$$\psi_{ijt} = \sum_j x_{ijty}\theta_{jts}/\theta_{jty}$$

where x_{ijty} are dummy variables identifying J cells and ψ_{ijt} is an individual-level re-weighting

factor that assigns to each observation the period s to period t ratio of the sample proportions of

the cell to which it belongs. For instance, if only 20% of women married to top-decile earning

men were employed the year before birth in 1968 and this increased to 60% by year 2000, the re-

weighting factor for employed women married to top-decile earning men in 2000 would equal

.2/.6 and the factor for non-employed women married to top-decile income men would be .8/.4,

thus deflating the observations with working wives and inflating those of non-working wives to

match the 1968 distribution.

We multiply the re-weighting factors by the sample probability weights and obtain new

weights that we use in our analysis. We re-calculate all correlations for each year and time since

birth using these re-weights that adjust for shifts in the prevalence of women's employment by

husbands' decile. Following the example above, this analysis estimates the pre-birth correlation

that would have prevailed in 2000 if women's employment by husbands' decile was the same as

in 1968. The difference between the observed pre-birth correlation and the re-weighted pre-birth

correlation estimates the contribution of changes in women's employment to shifts in pre-birth

correlations. The remaining difference, or residual, captures changes in earnings correlation

driven by things other than changes in the patterns of women's employment by husbands' decile.

Because we measure women's employment annually, residual changes in the correlation can

reflect changes in women's short-term employment, hours, wages, and jobs. Online Supplement

Table S1 Panel B summarizes how these equations are employed for analyses of women's

employment as drivers of pre- and post-birth correlations, respectively.

RESULTS

Trends in earnings homogamy before and after parenthood

Figure 1 shows trends in the correlation between husbands' and wives' earnings before parenthood, after parenthood, and at the time of marriage by data source from 1960-2015 (recall that our Census time series begins in 1960). Figure 1 shows that earnings associations are higher before parenthood and lower after parenthood. This is in line with research cited above indicating that parenthood is a crucial event that shifts wives' economic contributions and lowers couples' earnings similarity. Both CPS and Census data show that post-birth earnings correlations notably increased since the 1970s, from about -.1 to about .2. This is consistent with our hypothesis that declining parenthood penalties on women's employment and earnings are contributing to increase spouses' economic similarity.

We find that economic similarity before the transition to parenthood also increased, but only during the first half of this period. CPS, Census and SIPP data indicate that pre-birth earnings correlations increased from about .1 in 1968 to about .2 in 1990, remaining flat thereafter. This pre-birth correlation trend is replicated using the alternative specification that includes all childless married couples (versus earnings in the year prior to birth, which could be affected by pregnancy; see Online Appendix Figure S1). Last, consistent with prior findings on this topic (Gonalons-Pons and Schwartz 2017), we find little evidence that economic similarity among newlyweds has changed since the 1960s.

Taken together, these descriptive patterns suggest that parenthood has the potential to be a crucial mechanism to explain the increase in spouses' economic homogamy. These patterns also suggest that changes in economic similarity before parenthood might have played a role in the earlier period, and that those changes are likely related to shifts following after marriage as

opposed to at marriage entry, consistent with the reduction of women's labor force exits after

marriage before parenthood rather than changes in assortative mating.

Correlation decomposition by parenthood

We start by reporting the results of the first decomposition that estimates the extent to

which changes in earnings correlations are driven by changes in what happens before and after

parenthood. This first simulation fixes the correlation before parenthood to be constant at its

initial values (1968) for all cohorts and leaves post-birth correlations to vary as observed,

simulating trends in economic homogamy if spouses' economic similarity before parenthood had

not changed since 1968. The second simulation fixes the correlations before and after birth to be

constant at the 1968 values for all first birth cohorts after 1968 and estimates economic

homogamy trends if spouses' earnings correlation before and after birth had not changed since

1968. The difference between changes in the observed trend and changes in the first simulated

trend estimate the contribution of changes in pre-birth correlations to overall changes in

economic homogamy, while the difference between changes in the first and second simulated

trends estimate the contribution of changes in post-birth correlations to overall changes in

economic homogamy.

Table 2 present results for this first decomposition. In Panel A, we show that between

1968 and 2015, 54% the increase in the correlation between spouses' earnings was driven by

changes in couples' similarity before birth and 44% was due to changes after birth. The

remaining 2% is the compositional component, which captures changes in the composition of

couples by time since first birth and changes in earnings correlation among parents who had their

first child before 1968. This first result reveals that increasing similarity after parenthood is an

important component of the overall increase in spouses' economic similarity between 1968 and 2015, but the role it plays is smaller than we anticipated. This finding is, however, consistent with descriptive patterns presented in Figure 1 showing increase in earnings correlation before birth between 1968 and 1990.

We further disaggregate our decomposition into two periods: change between 1968-1990 and between 1990-2015. Panels B and C of Table 2 summarize the results. These indicate that the drivers of increasing economic homogamy are remarkably different in the first and second periods. In the first period from 1968 to 1990, changes in pre-birth correlations account for 57% and changes in post-birth correlations account for 33% of the increase in spouses' economic homogamy. In the second period from 1990 to 2015, changes in post-birth earnings correlations account for 94% of the increase in economic similarity, and changes in pre-birth earnings correlations play no role. Thus, changes in pre-birth homogamy contribute non-trivially only in the first period, whereas changes in post-birth homogamy contribute in both periods and become the sole drivers of increases in economic homogamy in the second period from 1990 to 2015. This result indicates that shifts in economic responses to parenthood are becoming an increasingly important mechanism of economic homogamy, bolstering support for our expectation that changes in the transition to parenthood would play a critical role in increasing economic homogamy.

How sensitive are these results to alternative specifications? In additional analyses reported in Online Supplement Table S2 we use our alternative measure of pre-birth homogamy that includes all childless couples, not just couples in their year before birth, and the alternative measure of post-birth homogamy that includes couples in years 0 to 18 after parenthood. The results show that our findings are robust to these alternative measures of pre-birth and post-birth

homogamy, and hold whether we substitute both measures simultaneously or only one at a time.

The patterns of pre- and post-birth contributions to overall increases in economic homogamy are

similar using these alternative measures, confirming that increases in economic homogamy in the

year before birth reflect shifts among married childless couples more generally (and not only

changes in adjustments during pregnancy) and that our results apply to a broad sample of parents

with older children.

Disaggregating changes before parenthood

　　We consider two drivers for the increase in spouses' earnings correlations before

parenthood using data from the 1960-80 Censuses and 1984-2014 SIPP that include information

on date of first marriage and first birth. First, increasing pre-birth homogamy can result from

shifts in economic adjustments following marriage but before parenthood, as suggested in

research reporting a declining negative effect of marriage on women's employment (Goldin

1988; Ruggles 2015). This is in contrast to the assortative mating explanation, which suggests

that rising economic similarity before birth results from the increasing tendency of couples to

match on socioeconomic characteristics. Descriptive trends in Figure 1 showed that our indicator

of assortative mating, i.e., economic similarity among newlyweds, stayed remarkably flat over

this period, suggesting little support for the latter explanation. We test this more directly using

the same method as above to decompose changes in pre-birth correlations into changes driven by

shifts in economic similarity among newlyweds and shifts in economic similarity in the years

after marriage and before parenthood.

　　Panel A of Table 3 shows Census results covering the period between 1960-1980 and

Panel B shows SIPP results covering years 1984-2014. Increases in pre-birth economic

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homogamy are generally small, consistent with descriptive patterns in Figure 1. We find that

changes in earnings similarity among newlyweds, our measure of assortative mating, do not

contribute to observed increases in earnings correlations among married childless couples in

either period. Our results indicate instead that increases in economic homogamy before birth are

driven by changes following marriage but before parenthood. The next section will test directly

whether these changes are related to shifts in women's employment, as previous research

suggests.

Role of employment in driving changes pre- and post-birth

This section assesses the extent to which changes in women's employment explain

changes in economic homogamy. Table 4 shows that shifts in women's employment have played

an important role in increases in spouses' economic homogamy before and after birth. Panel A of

Table 4 reports results for pre-birth homogamy trends. Consistent with findings in Table 3, we

observe that pre-birth homogamy only increased in the first period, stalling after 1990[1]. We find

that changes in women's employment account for the entirety of the increase in pre-birth

economic homogamy, 114% for the overall period and 92% in the first period. This lends

substantial support to the expectation that declining negative effects of marriage on women's

employment are an important part of the story behind increasing economic similarity before

parenthood, particularly in combination with results in Table 3 showing that newlyweds did not

contribute to this increase. The remaining increase in pre-birth economic homogamy, the

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[1] Recall that estimates of change in pre-birth correlations from Tables 3 and 4 do not exactly match because we are using different datasets with slightly different start and end dates. For the earlier period, Table 3 Census data shows that pre-birth correlations between 1960-1980 increased in 0.046 points and Table 4 CPS data shows that pre-birth correlations between 1968-1990 increased in 0.085 points. For the later period, SIPP data shows that between 1984-2014 pre-birth correlations slightly increased in 0.005 and Table 4 CPS data shows that between 1990-2015 pre-birth correlation actually slightly decreased -0.017. The main takeaway is that change in pre-birth correlation is only substantial in the earlier period.

residual, can reflect shifts in short-term employment status, work hours, jobs, and wages. For example, as women became less likely to entirely quit jobs upon marriage, they may also have become less likely to reduce work hours or downgrade job positions, thus contributing to increasing earnings similarity after marriage and before parenthood.

Panel B shows results for the contribution of women's employment to increases in economic homogamy after parenthood. The results confirm that changes in women's employment are an important driver of increasing earnings correlation after parenthood in both periods. Changes in how women's employment responds to first births accounts for 65% of the overall change in post-birth economic homogamy 1968-2015, and 63% and 46% in periods 1968-1990 and 1990-2015 respectively. These results are consistent with research reporting substantial reductions in the negative effects of parenthood on women's employment. Our results also show that the role of women's employment as a driver of post-birth earnings correlations is declining over time. This pattern is not entirely surprising given that our measure of employment sets a low bar, i.e., we count as employed anyone with earnings in a given year, including those with part-time and part-year labor force attachment. Changes in the degree of attachment, including longer hours or full-year effort, will be captured by the residual. Thus, the growing residual in the later period should not be interpreted to mean that changes in women's employment play a weaker role in shaping spouses' economic homogamy after parenthood, but that changes in complete detachment over the course of a year have played less of a role since the 1990s (Killewald and Zhuo 2015).

The increasing importance of the residual may also include changes in wages, as women are also becoming less likely to downgrade to lower paying jobs. Research on the motherhood wage penalty offers some support here, in showing that marriage wage gaps may have declined

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over time (Pal and Waldfogel 2016; Glauber 2018). Changes in men's earnings with parenthood could also lead to increases in post-birth economic similarity captured in the residual. If men are becoming increasingly likely to take time off, reduce work hours, or change jobs to accommodate the needs of parenthood, this could translate into greater economic similarity. Sensitivity analyses that adjust for the distribution for men's employment (instead of women's employment), however, find little support for this explanation, consistent with recent research (Musick, Gonalons-Pons, and Schwartz 2017).

Consequences for inequality between households

Our analyses confirm that the growing economic homogamy is increasingly driven by changes in spouses' economic similarity after parenthood. What do these patterns imply for inequality across households? We synthesize our findings by analyzing their implications for inequality across households. Following prior literature, we use a standard decomposition of the coefficient of variation (CV) to estimate the contribution of changes in earnings correlations to changes in income inequality (see Cancian et al. 1993 for details). This analysis uses the simulated correlation trends estimated above (Table 2 and Table 4) and calculates how inequality would have evolved under the following four counterfactual scenarios: 1) if women's employment before birth had not changed since 1968, 2) if earnings correlations before birth had not changed since 1968, 3) if women's employment before and after birth had not changed since 1968, and 4) if earnings correlations before and after birth had not changed since 1968. Full decomposition tables are available in the Online Appendix Table S3.

Figure 2 summarizes the results of this analysis for the entire period as well as for the earlier and later periods, 1968-1990 and 1990-2015. The top panel shows the contribution of

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changes in economic homogamy to aggregate-level changes in income inequality, and the

bottom panel shows the drivers of change in economic homogamy. We find that income

inequality as measured by the CV increased by .24 points between 1968 and 2015, and that

changes in spouses' earnings correlation account for 31% of this increase, aligning with previous

published results (Gonalons-Pons and Schwartz 2017; Schwartz 2010). Changes in economic

similarity *before parenthood* account for 45% of the contribution of the correlation to increases

in inequality from 1968-2015, and this increase is entirely due to shifts in women's employment.

Increasing economic similarity *after parenthood* accounts for 53%, and over half of this

contribution is due to shifts in women's employment. Disaggregating results for the two periods

1968-1990 and 1990-2015 confirms patterns reported above, showing the increasing relevance of

changes in economic homogamy after parenthood in the more recent period. Increases in

economic similarity before parenthood are an important driver of the contribution of the

correlation to increasing inequality between 1968 and 1990, while increasing economic

similarity after parenthood is virtually the sole driver of changes in the correlation after 1990 and

its contribution on increased income inequality. In sum, these results confirm that the transition

to parenthood is becoming the primary driver of increased economic homogamy and its impact

on increased inequality.

DISCUSSION

This paper examines the mechanisms of increased economic homogamy among married couples in the U.S. and its implications for economic inequality across households. Our focus has been to analyze parenthood as a core mechanism driving trends in spouses' economic homogamy. We hypothesized that the declining negative effects of parenthood on women's economic contributions to families, in particular through employment changes, would play a central role in increasing spouses' earning similarity over this period. We assessed this mechanism alongside others, such as assortative mating and economic adjustments post-marriage. Our results show that changes following parenthood have played a central role in increasing spouses' economic homogamy in the U.S., and that this is increasingly the case. We find that changes before parenthood also played an important role, but only until the 1990s. Our analyses also confirm that shifts in women's employment have been pivotal to increasing economic homogamy both before and after parenthood, while assortative mating has played a negligible role.

Our study adds to the growing body of research that challenges assortative mating as the primary explanation for increasing economic homogamy. Although assortative mating has been the dominant frame in prior work studying couples' homogamy and its implications for inequality, recent studies raised serious questions about its explanatory power and point to changes in women's employment and shifts in the division of paid labor among married couples as a crucially underappreciated mechanism (Breen and Salazar 2011; Greenwood et al. 2014; Gonalons-Pons and Schwartz 2017). Our study contributes to this body of research in two important ways. First, we are the first to quantify the contribution of observed changes in women's employment over the life course to shifts in spouses' economic homogamy. These estimates underscore how changes in women's employment are heavily patterned by key family

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transitions. Second, by separately analyzing earlier and later periods, we illustrate how the mechanisms driving changes in economic homogamy change over time. We show that increases in spouses' economic homogamy prior to birth were important in the earlier period, but that changes following the transition to parenthood have become the primary driver of increases in spouses' economic homogamy.

The relatively large contribution of changes before parenthood in the earlier period to overall increases in economic homogamy was somewhat unexpected, but this finding is consistent with prior work on marriage and women's employment (Goldin 1988; Kessler-Harris 1982). We uncover novel evidence that the point at which women's labor supply is affected by family formation has changed. It used to be common for women to drop out of the labor force right after marriage. Thus, from 1968-1990, as this effect was ebbing, spouses' economic similarity after marriage but before parenthood notably increased, leading to substantial increases in economic homogamy. After this effect waned, parenthood became the primary contributor to increasing economic homogamy. Women's growing labor market attachment after parenthood can be seen in parallel with other economic changes, such as increased wages and work hours. By following women through these three important points in their lives – marriage, post-marriage/pre-birth, and post-birth – we have been able to track where and when shifts have occurred. We not only confirm that changes in parenthood are a key driver in increasing economic homogamy, but we also uncover something that past literature has focused much less on – the role of reduced marriage effects on women's employment.

Our findings have several implications for future research and debates about economic homogamy and its implications for income inequality. Our research indicates that increased economic homogamy has not been driven by changes in mating preferences, but rather changes

in the division of paid work—in particular, increases in women's paid labor—among married couples. More attention should be paid to changes in the economic organization of families and its relationship with inequalities between families. Furthermore, our findings indicate that some forms of increased gender equality within families have the potential to exacerbate income inequality across households. This finding demands two relevant qualifiers. First, concerning the size of this relationship, it is important to note that about 15% of the increased income inequality across households can be attributed to shifts in women's employment before and after parenthood; this is consistent with research showing that men's earnings continue to be the primary driver of growing income inequality across households (Sudo 2017; Harkness 2013). Second, concerning the nature of the relationship, increased gender equality within families can take many different forms and some might exacerbate the dis-equalizing potential more than others. Variations in how gender equality within families evolves across socioeconomic groups, for instance, may shape this relationship. Future research should examine these configurations in more detail.

Our analyses have some limitations that are important to note. First, in relying on multiple datasets to conduct our analysis, we are vulnerable to various forms of measurement error. We sought to address this limitation by benchmarking estimates across datasets and examining the sensitivity of our conclusions to alternative specifications of key measures. We also tested the sensitivity of our analyses to analogous decomposition methods building off log-linear models, and we found that our conclusions were robust. Second, our measure of women's employment only identifies changes in annual non-employment spells, and does not capture how shorter-term employment changes shape spouses' economic similarity. This is an important limitation given that prior research has shown a large prevalence of short-time employment

interruptions around parenthood (Byker 2015; Musick, Gonalons-Pons, and Schwartz 2017; Lu, Wang, and Han 2017). Including short-time employment changes would, we anticipate, accentuate the contribution of shifts in women's employment to economic homogamy, particularly in the later period. Last, our sample is restricted to married couples and does not apply to dynamics among cohabiting couples, which comprise a growing share of households (Musick and Michelmore 2015; Kennedy and Bumpass 2008). Limitations in our data pose challenges to identifying transitions to parenthood among cohabiting couples in earlier decades, and data on transitions to cohabitation is often missing altogether. Future research could extend this work and include cohabiting couples in analyses for recent decades.

Increasing economic homogamy among married partners is contributing to growing income inequality, yet our understanding of the mechanisms driving economic similarity has been limited. Our analysis shows that changes in economic homogamy are intimately linked to family transitions (marriage, parenthood) and to women's employment responses to these family transitions. Our research contributes to conversations about economic homogamy, but also to conversations about the link between family processes and economic inequality more broadly. We show that family processes and shifts in the economic organization of families are crucial to understanding how partnering, having children, and dividing work shapes inequality.

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TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 1. Trends in the correlation between husbands' and wives' earnings before parenthood, after parenthood, and at the time of marriage by data source, 1960-2015
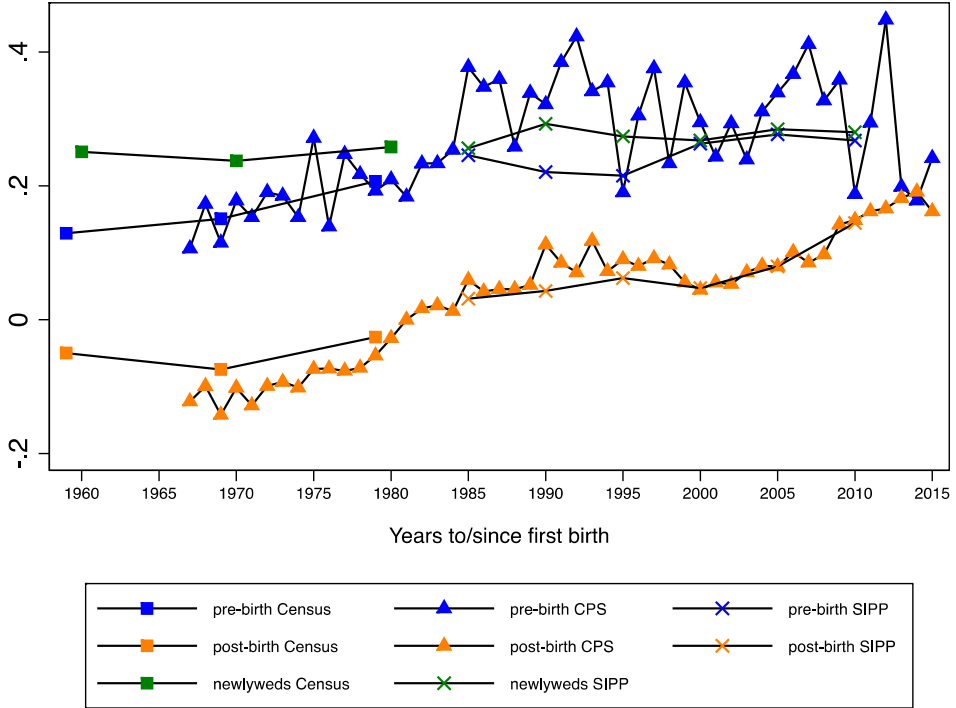
Sources: 1968-2015 Current Population Survey (CPS); 1960, 1970 and 1980 U.S. decennial censuses; 1984-2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP).

Figure 2. Contributions of pre- and post- birth correlations to overall change in earnings inequality, CPS 1968-2015
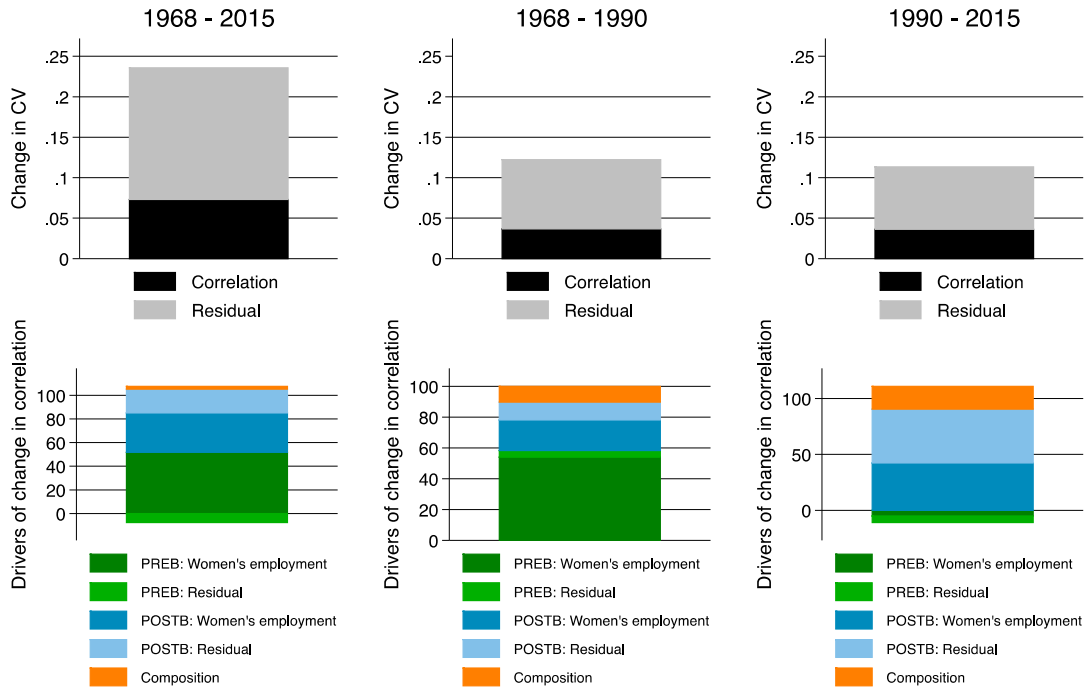
Source: 1968-2015 Current Population Survey (CPS)

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for all datasets by key family transitions and first and last year of observation

Dataset	Period	Measure	Operationalization	N	r	W	H	W employment
CPS	1968	*Pre-birth*	Year before parenthood	548	0.12	7013.37	33144.59	0.66
		Post-birth	Years 0-10 after parenthood	6906	-0.12	4695.47	40969.82	0.41
	2015	*Pre-birth*	Year before parenthood	583	0.23	30155.04	54445.49	0.82
		Post-birth	Years 0-10 after parenthood	6235	0.18	24792.65	55130.50	0.67
Census	1960	*Assortative mating*	Year of marriage	4823	0.31	12072.18	24000.39	0.76
		Married, childless	Childless married	46415	0.15	9931.46	30124.88	0.61
	1980	*Assortative mating*	Year of marriage	8023	0.29	17297.53	33146.11	0.84
		Married, childless	Childless married	64647	0.19	18879.41	42482.66	0.78
SIPP	1984	*Assortative mating*	Year of marriage	326	0.32	1594.00	3152.13	0.71
		Married, childless	Childless married	1052	0.14	1870.59	3431.42	0.79
	2014	*Assortative mating*	Year of marriage	141	0.39	1644.83	3082.21	0.62
		Married, childless	Childless married	2002	0.22	3062.43	3934.51	0.83
Sensitivity tests								
CPS alternative measures	1968	*Pre-birth*	Childless married	3032	0.13	13260.54	34066.57	0.77
		Post-birth	Years 0-18 after parenthood	7077	-0.12	4700.58	41228.16	0.41
	2015	*Pre-birth*	Childless married	2538	0.25	30976.47	48515.49	0.83
		Post-birth	Years 0-18 after parenthood	10420	0.17	24198.98	53798.78	0.69

Sources: 1968-2015 Current Population Survey (CPS); 1960, 1970 and 1980 U.S. decennial censuses; 1984-2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP).

Table 2. Decomposition of trends in the correlation between husbands' and wives' earnings by parenthood, CPS 1968-2015

Decomposition	Change	Explained change	% Contribution
A. 1968 - 2015			
Observed	0.262		
Prebirth fixed	0.121	0.140	53.6
Postbirth fixed	0.006	0.116	44.2
Residual	0.000	0.006	2.1
Total		0.262	100
B. 1968 - 1990			
Observed	0.155		
Prebirth fixed	0.066	0.089	57.6
Postbirth fixed	0.015	0.051	32.9
Residual	0.000	0.015	9.5
Total		0.155	100
C. 1990 - 2015			
Observed	0.107		
Prebirth fixed	0.111	-0.004	-3.3
Postbirth fixed	0.010	0.101	94.2
Residual	0.000	0.010	9.1
Total		0.107	100

Sources: 1968-2015 Current Population Survey (CPS)

Table 3. Decomposition of trends in the correlation between husbands' and wives' earnings before parenthood, Census 1960-1980 and SIPP 1984-2014

Decomposition	Change	Explained change	% Contribution
A. Census 1960 - 1980			
Observed	0.046		
Newlyweds fixed	0.065	-0.018	-39.6
Childless married fixed	0.012	0.053	114.0
Residual	0.000	0.012	25.6
Total		0.046	100
B. SIPP 1984 - 2014			
Observed	0.005		
Newlyweds fixed	0.008	-0.003	-52.6
Childless married fixed	0.002	0.006	112.9
Residual	0.000	0.002	39.7
Total		0.005	100

Sources: 1960, 1970 and 1980 U.S. decennial censuses; 1984-2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP).

Table 4. Women's employment contributions to changes in the correlation between husbands' and wives' earnings before and after parenthood, CPS 1968-2015

Decomposition	Change	Explained change	% Contribution
A. Before parenthood			
1968 - 2014			
Observed	0.068		
Women's employment fixed	-0.010	0.078	114.10
Residual	0.000	-0.010	-14.10
Total		0.068	100
1968 - 1990			
Observed	0.086		
Women's employment fixed	0.006	0.079	92.66
Residual	0.000	0.006	7.34
Total		0.086	100
1990 - 2014			
Observed	-0.017		
Women's employment fixed	-0.009	-0.008	46.63
Residual	0.000	-0.009	53.37
Total		-0.017	100
B. After parenthood			
1968 - 2014			
Observed	0.261		
Women's employment fixed	0.091	0.170	65.02
Residual	0.000	0.091	34.98
Total		0.261	100
1968 - 1990			
Observed	0.145		
Women's employment fixed	0.054	0.091	63.05
Residual	0.000	0.054	36.95
Total		0.145	100
1990 - 2014			
Observed	0.116		
Women's employment fixed	0.062	0.054	46.73
Residual	0.000	0.062	53.27
Total		0.116	100

Sources: 1968-2015 Current Population Survey (CPS)

Figure S1. Trends in the correlation between husbands' and wives' earnings before parenthood, after parenthood, and at the time of marriage including alternative measures by data source, 1960-2014
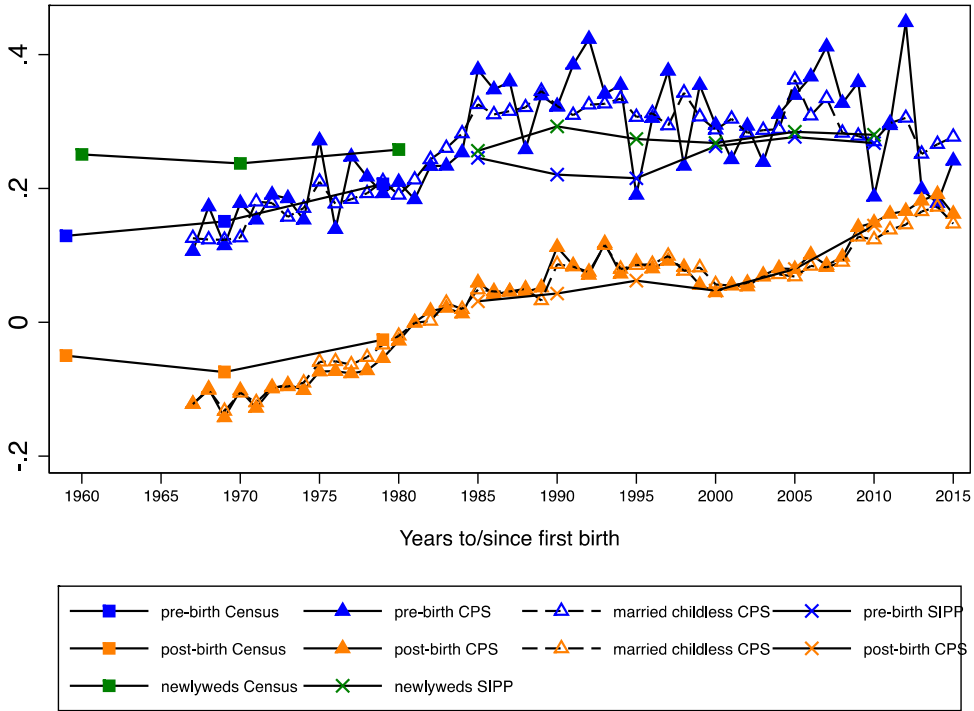
Notes: Pre-birth = year before parenthood; Post-birth = years 0 to 10 after parenthood; Married childless = all childless married couples; Newlyweds = couples in their first year of marriage. For more details about operationalization see Table 1.
Sources: 1968-2015 Current Population Survey (CPS); 1960, 1970 and 1980 U.S. decennial censuses; 1984-2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP).

Figure S2. Trends in the predicted association between husbands' and wives' earnings from loglinear models, CPS 1960-2015
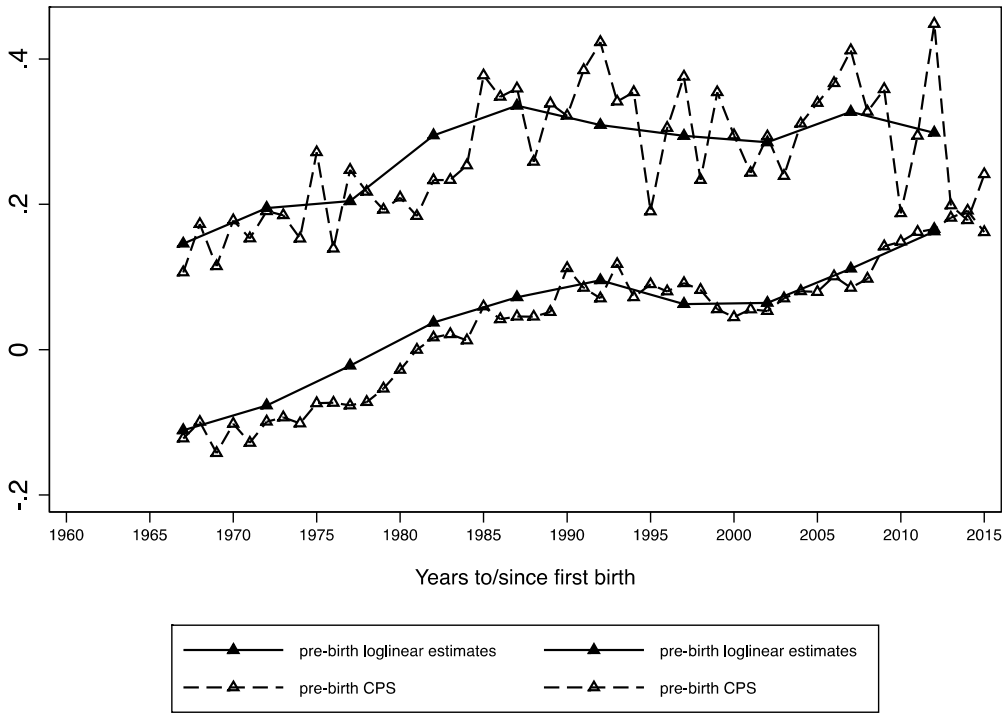
Source: 1968-2015 Current Population Survey (CPS)

Table S1. Summary of equations

A. Simulations for Decomposition of Trends in the Correlation Between Husbands' and Wives' Earnings

Trend or Simulation	By first birth cohort and time since first birth		By year
(1) Observed	N/a		$\tilde{r}_t = \sum\limits_i r_{ti} w_{ti}$
(2) Correlation for Pre-birth from 1968-2015 Fixed at 1969 Cohort Values	$r'_{ci} = r_{1969,1} + (r_{ci} - r_{c1})$	where $i = 1$ to 12 and ($c > 1969$, else $r'_{ci} = r_{ci}$)	$r'_t = \sum\limits_i r'_{ti} w_{ti}$
(3) Correlation for Pre- and Post-birth from 1968-2015 Fixed at 1969 Cohort Values	$r''_{ci} = r_{1969,i}$	where $i = 1$ to 12 and ($c > 1969$, else $r'_{ci} = r_{ci}$)	$r''_t = \sum\limits_i r''_{ti} w_{ti}$
(4) Correlation for Pre- and Post-birth from 1968-2015 Fixed at 1969 Cohort Values for All Cohorts & Constant Distribution	$r'''_{ci} = r_{1969,i}$	where $i = 1$ to 12 and $c < 1969$	$r'''_t = \sum\limits_i r'''_{ti} w_{1968i}$

B. Simulations for Decomposition of Women's Employment Contributions to Trends in the Correlation Before and After Parenthood

Trend or Simulation	By year	
(1) Observed Pre-birth Correlation	$\tilde{r}_{to} = \sum\limits_i r_{ti} w_{ti}$	where $i = 1$
(2) Pre-birth Correlation with Women's Employment fixed at 1968	$r^*_{t0} = \sum\limits_i r_{ti} w_{ti} \, ; \psi$	where $i = 1$ and ψ are the re-weighting factor applied to the individual-level data
(3) Observed Post-Birth Correlation	$\tilde{r}_{t1} = \sum\limits_i r_{ti} w_{ti}$	where $i = 2$ to 12
(4) Correlation for Pre- and Post-birth from 1968-2015 Fixed at 1969 Cohort Values for All Cohorts & Constant Distribution	$r^*_{t1} = \sum\limits_i r_{ti} w_{ti} \, ; \psi$	where $i = 2$ to 12 and ψ are the new weights obtained after applying the re-weighting factor

Table S2. Decomposition of trends in the correlation between husbands' and wives' earnings by parenthood using alternative measures, CPS 1968-2015

Decomposition	Change	Explained change	% Contribution
A. 1968 - 2015			
Observed	0.226		
Pre-birth fixed	0.070	0.155	68.8
Post-birth fixed	0.008	0.063	27.8
Residual	0.000	0.008	3.3
Total		0.226	100.0
B. 1968 - 1990			
Observed	0.159		
Pre-birth fixed	0.050	0.109	68.7
Post-birth fixed	0.025	0.025	15.9
Residual	0.000	0.025	15.4
Total		0.159	100
C. 1990 - 2015			
Observed	0.129		
Pre-birth fixed	0.151	-0.022	-16.8
Post-birth fixed	0.002	0.149	115.3
Residual	0.000	0.002	1.6
Total		0.129	100

Notes: Pre-birth = all childless married couples; Post-birth = years 0 to 18 after parenthood.

Sources: 1968-2015 Current Population Survey (CPS)

Table S3. Decomposition table for CV results

Decomposition		Change	Explained change	% Contribution
A. 1968 - 2015				
Observed		0.236		
Pre-birth fixed		0.163	0.073	31.0
Post-birth fixed		0.000	0.163	69.0
	Total		0.236	100.0
	Drivers of change			
	Pre-birth women's employment			51.7
	Pre-birth residual			-7.6
	Post-birth women's employment			33.4
	Post-birth residual			20.3
	Composition			2.3
B. 1968 - 1990				
Observed		0.122		
Pre-birth fixed		0.085	0.037	30.1
Post-birth fixed		0.000	0.085	69.9
	Total		0.122	100.0
	Drivers of change			
	Pre-birth women's employment			54.0
	Pre-birth residual			4.3
	Post-birth women's employment			19.8
	Post-birth residual			11.6
	Composition			10.3
C. 1990-2015				
Observed		0.113		
Pre-birth fixed		0.077	0.036	32.0
Post-birth fixed		0.000	0.077	68.0
	Total		0.113	100.0
	Drivers of change			
	Pre-birth women's employment			-5.1
	Pre-birth residual			-5.8
	Post-birth women's employment			42.3
	Post-birth residual			48.2
	Composition			20.4

Sources: 1968-2015 Current Population Survey (CPS)