



No More One Way: Redesigning Work to Promote Gender Equality *and* Life Quality

Phyllis Moen, PhD
University of Minnesota
USA
September 25, 2014

MINNEAPOLIS
United States
67°
Fair
High: 72° Low: 51°
Wind: W 5 mph
Humidity: 54%

CEO Mary Barra wasn't Just Sexist, It was Lazy

Posted by Aimee Terravechia · July 5, 2014



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LIVING CAREER

Matt Lauer Asked Mary Barra If She Can Be a Good Mom and Run GM

Charlotte Alter @charlottealter | June 26, 2014

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Just months after Sen. Barbara Boxer said she was disappointed in Barra "woman to woman."

In an exclusive [TODAY show](#) interview with Mary Barra, Matt Lauer asked the General Motors CEO if it was possible for her to run a major automaker and be a good mom at the same time.

Here's a [transcript](#) of that part of the interview:

“ LAUER: You're a mom, I mentioned, two kids. You said in an interview not long ago that your kids told you they're going to hold you accountable for one job and that is being a mom.



Gender Inequality and Life Quality – (Re)Produced at Multiple Levels over the Life Course

- **State-Level Gendered Institutions**
 - Labor Market Policies, Regulations
 - Policies Setting Temporal Organization of Work/Careers
 - Family Care Work
- **Organizational-Level Gendered Institutions**
 - Lock-Step Occupational/Organizational Career Paths
 - Rigid Job Routines, Clocks, and Calendars
 - Inflexibility, Little Support, Culture, Stereotypes, Discrimination
- **Couple/Individual-Level Strategic Selections**

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Our U.S.
Research

- **Organizational-Level Gendered Institutions**

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- Couple/Individual Strategic Selections

No More One Way....



1
The BIG
Question

2
Research on
Changing
Organizations

3
The Way
Forward

Increasing gender equality and life quality

No More One Way....



1
The BIG
Question

Increasing gender equality and life quality



Why does gender inequality persist when most Americans and Europeans now endorse and believe in gender equality?

Key Question.....

1950s Breadwinner-Homemaker (Career Mystique/Feminine Mystique)

Work

Family

Men

Breadwinner

Women

Homemaker

Replaced **Feminine** Mystique with **Career** Mystique

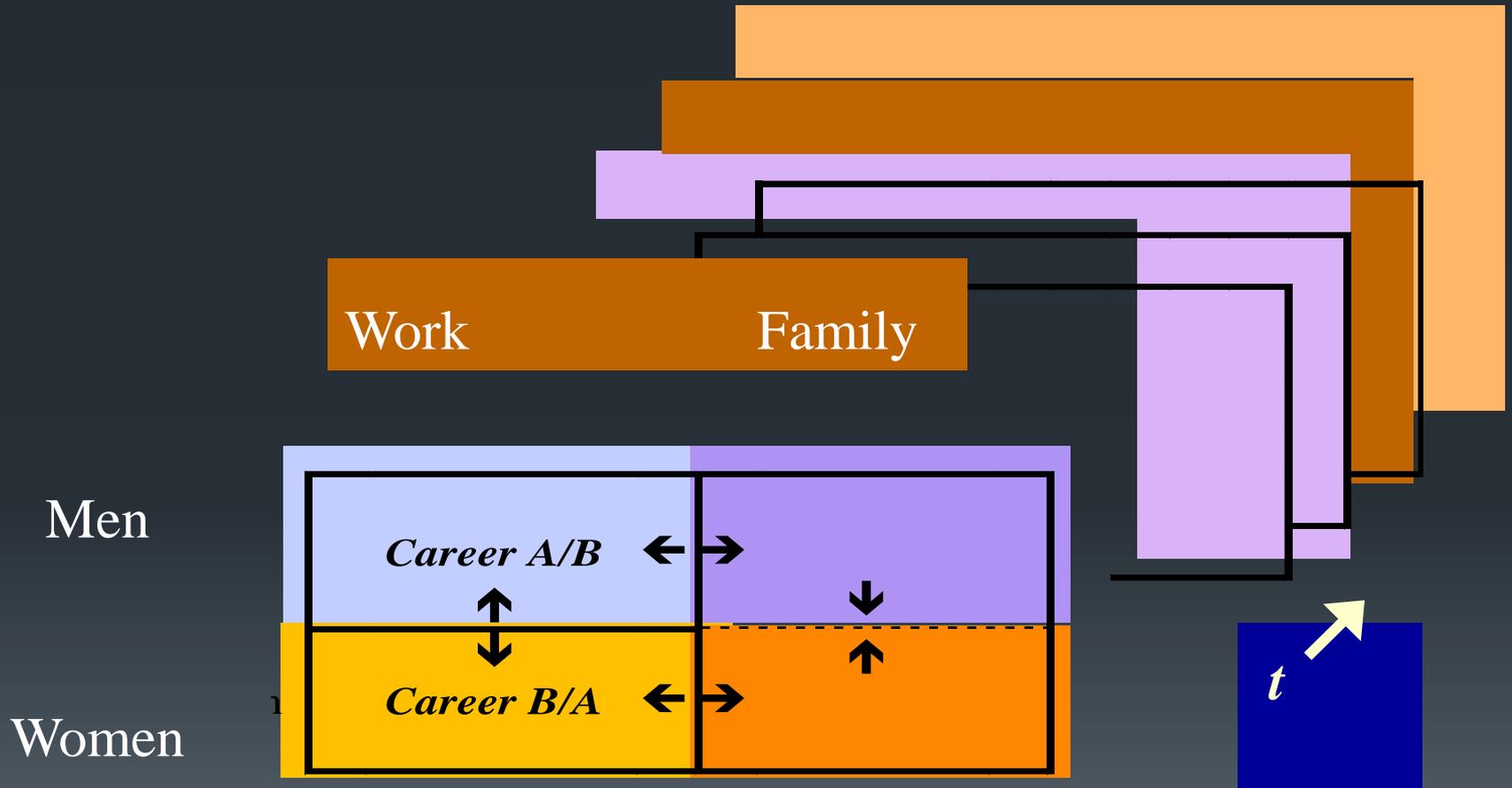


Education
(Preparation)

Continuous Work,
Status Attainment

Retire or
Die

Coupled Careers: Double Interface over the Life Course



1970s – 2000s

Social Organization of Work – An Uneasy Career Mystique

- Women as well as Men
- Intensification (Do more with less)
- Extensification (24/7)
- Uncertainty, Insecurity
- **Mirage**: Approaching Gender Equality
- **KEY**: No Replacement for Career Mystique

Women Embraced the Career Mystique...**Plus**





Challenge: How to Remove Time Constraints and Open up Possibilities for Women and Men at all Stages of the Life Course?

How to Institutionalize **Alternative Work-Time** and **Career Path Options** that Promote **Life Quality and Gender Equality**?

No More One Way....



Increasing gender equality and life quality 



work, family & health network

Supporting Partners

The Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD)

Regina Bures, Program Official

Rosalind Berkowitz King, Project Scientist

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)/ National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH)

Casey Chosewood,

Senior Medical Officer for Total Worker Health

National Institute on Aging

Lis Nielsen, Program Official

The Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR)

Tisha Wiley, Program Official

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI)

Michael Twery, Program Official

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NIH

Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development



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Organizational Contexts: Key Settings Shaping Gender Equality and Life Quality

- Theory and research:
 - Importance of social institutions/environments reproducing gender disparities and poor life quality
- **Work:** **key** social environment
 - Most adults spend most waking hours on the job

Traditional Work Patterns



Traditional Work Patterns



Flexibility as Accommodation

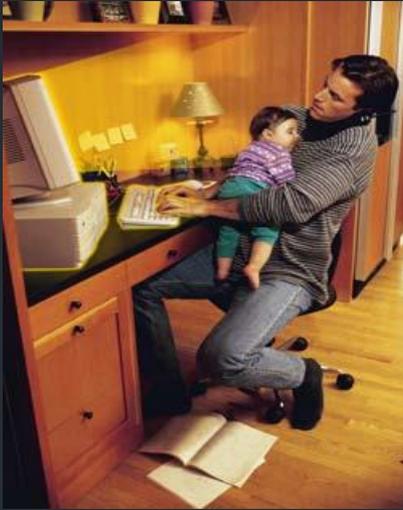
What? Flextime, telecommuting, part-time options (in jobs considered full-time)

Why? Help a more diverse workforce manager work-family challenges.

How? Individual employee requests an arrangement. Manager decides whether to allow, sometimes with guidance from policy and/or HR.

Benefits – Some employees get to change their work arrangements.

Challenges – Uneven access (even in same workplace, job). Users worry about “flex stigma” → career consequences, job at risk. Others avoid.



Traditional Work Patterns



Flexibility for Business Needs

What? Highly variable hours, with difficulty “bounding” work as well as downsizing, layoffs, contract work.

Why? Pressure to be more “nimble” + new technologies

How? (1) Professionals and managers – take work home, high technology use, “blurring” of work and non-work time and space due to pressure to be constantly available & instantly responsive. (2) Hourly service workers – hours vary week to week, report but sent home, software vs. local managers determine schedules.

Benefits – Employers get hours they need, without extra labor costs.

Challenges – Employees and families absorbing high and variable work loads and insecurities (and unpredictable, varying income for hourly workers).

Going by the
Wayside -

**Traditional
Work Patterns
(Replaced with Rigidity PLUS)**

**Flexibility as
Accommodation
(Employee
Initiated)**

Wary

**Flexibility for
Business Needs
(Management
Initiated)**

Weary

Work Teams Differ in Work-to-Family Conflict, Job Satisfaction, and Emotional Exhaustion (Baseline)

- Work-to-Family Conflict, Job Satisfaction, and Emotional Exhaustion correlate highly within teams

	ICC
Work-to-Family Conflict	.18
Job Satisfaction	.17
Emotional Exhaustion	.13
Perceived Stress	.06
Psychological Distress	.01



**Traditional
Work Patterns**
(Replaced with Rigidity PLUS)

**Flexibility as
Accommodation**
(Employee
Initiated)

**Flexibility for
Business Needs**
(Management
Initiated)

Work Redesign
(Changing Clocks and Calendars of Work)

Work Redesign as a Way of Promoting Life Quality and Gender Equality....

- **What?** Reconsider when, where, how, and what work is done, as a team, work group, or organization.
 - Aims for structural and cultural change – affects what we do, how we understand it, what we expect of ourselves and others.
- **Why?** Need to make work more effective, efficient, equitable, *and* sustainable.
- **How?** Teams or department work with facilitator to look at work practices, processes, communication routines, then experiment and adjust, keeping work and life goals both in mind.

The Work, Family & Health Network's (WFHN) STAR Initiative

- Designed to:
 - Promote greater **temporal flexibility**
 - Provide greater **supervisor support** for family and personal issues
 - Reduce low value work and **emphasize outcomes, not time** at work:
- Method: Randomized field trial
- **NOT** explicitly about gender or work-family issues...rather, “new ways of working”

Experimental Study of STAR



- Information technology (IT) division of Fortune 500 firm
- Group-randomized trial
 - 27 groups received STAR
 - 29 groups continued with “business as usual” practices
 - Same survey so examine **changes for 694 employees** over time
- STAR Overview
 - Participatory workshops – look at current culture, change work practices, team processes. Hope to meet business needs and increase employees’ control over when & where they work, and increase employees’ support for personal lives
 - Training supervisors – identify supportive behaviors (personal support, professional support), track own behaviors over a week using iPod Touch, compare with own goals and with peers
 - 8 hours for employees, 12 hours for managers

Our Research Questions

- We investigate whether STAR...
 1. Increases employees' control over when and where they work and sense that their supervisors support their family and personal lives?
 2. Reduces work-life conflicts and the “time squeeze”?
 3. Unintentionally increases work hours or perceived job demands (through permeability of work over time and space)?
 4. Promotes Health and Life Quality

But Where
is Gender?



What are you doing to save time?



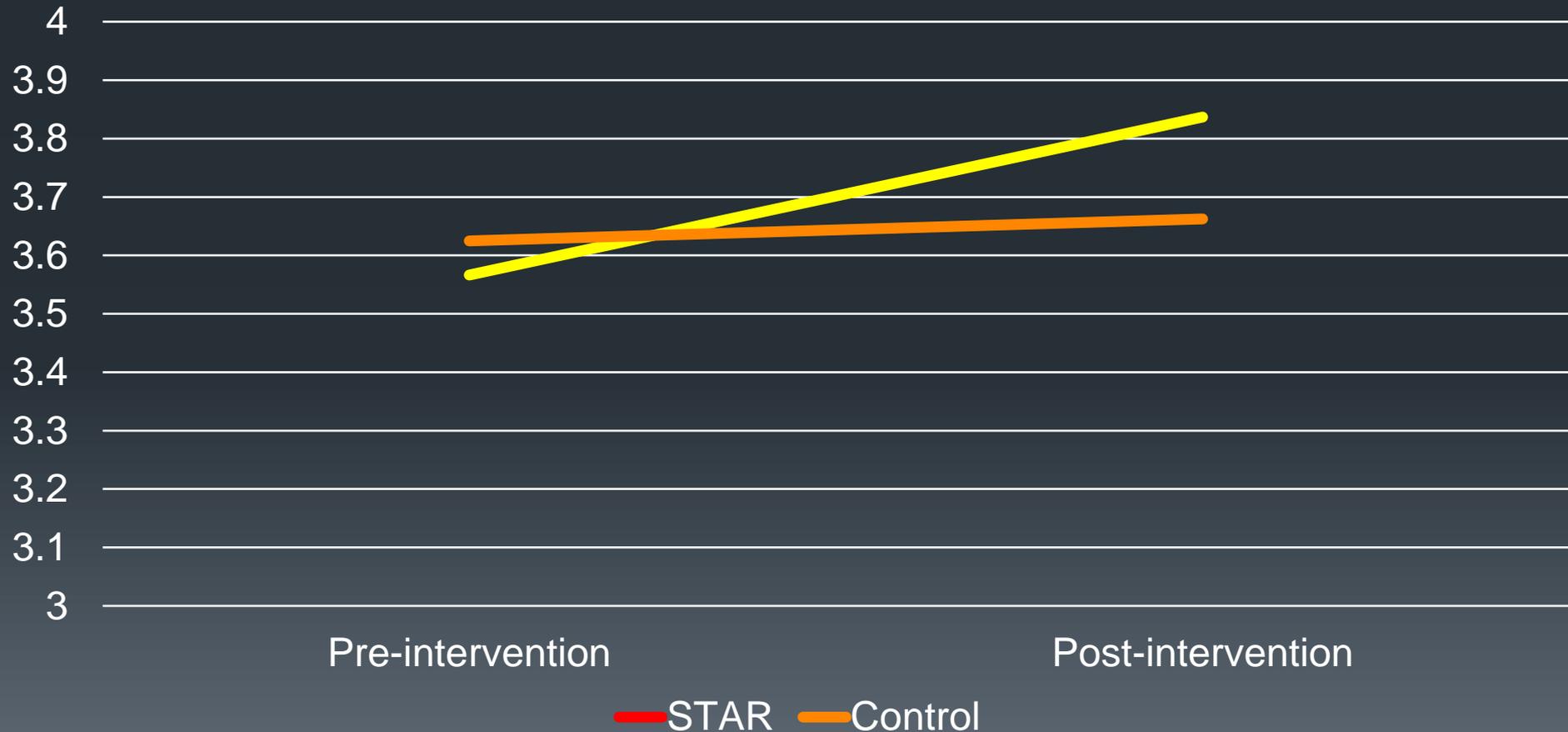
Gender Deliberately Downplayed –

- STAR is not a “woman-friendly,” or “family-friendly” initiative
- But a work redesign affecting all workers

Improving Life Quality and Gender Equality: STAR increases Schedule Control for Women *and* Men

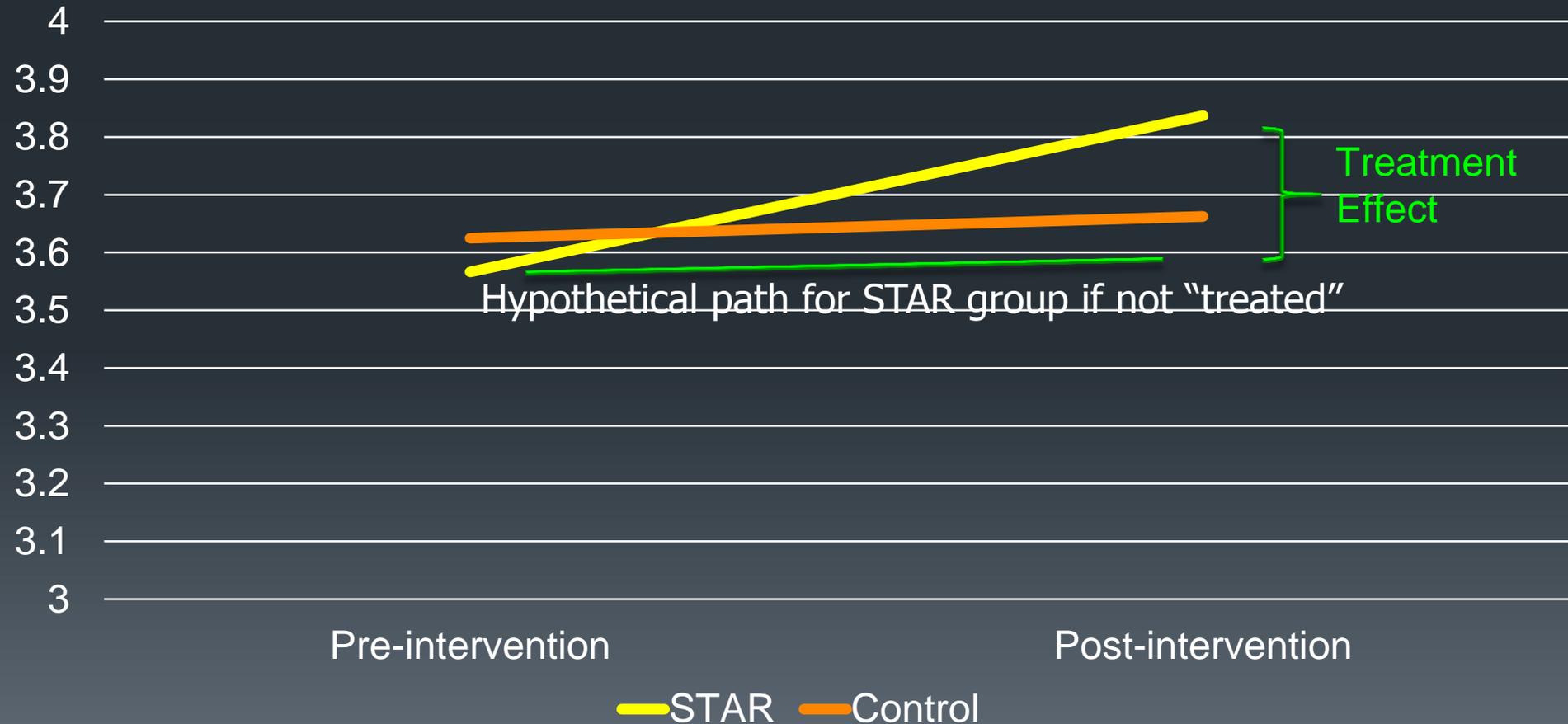


Change in Schedule Control:
STAR vs. Control groups



Improving Life Quality and Gender Equality: STAR increases Schedule Control for Women *and* Men

Change in Schedule Control:
STAR vs. Control groups



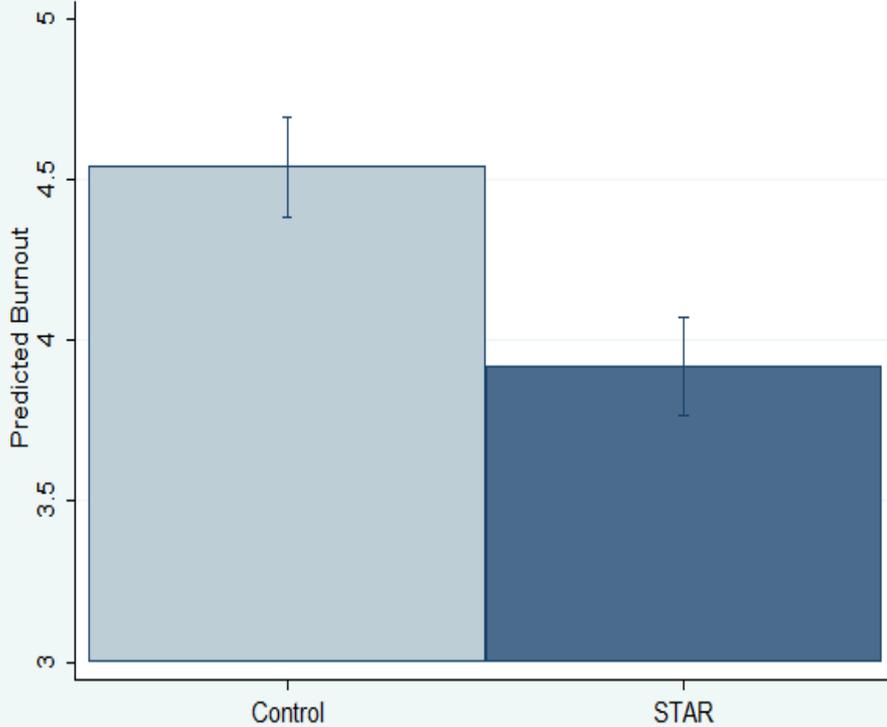
Improving Life Quality and Gender Equality: Evidence of Benefits of STAR for Women *and* Men

- **Increased**
 - Control over work time
 - Supervisor support for personal and family life
 - Saying have “enough time” with family
- **Decreased**
 - Work-to-family conflict
 - Family-to-work conflict
- **No Effect** on work hours or work intensity

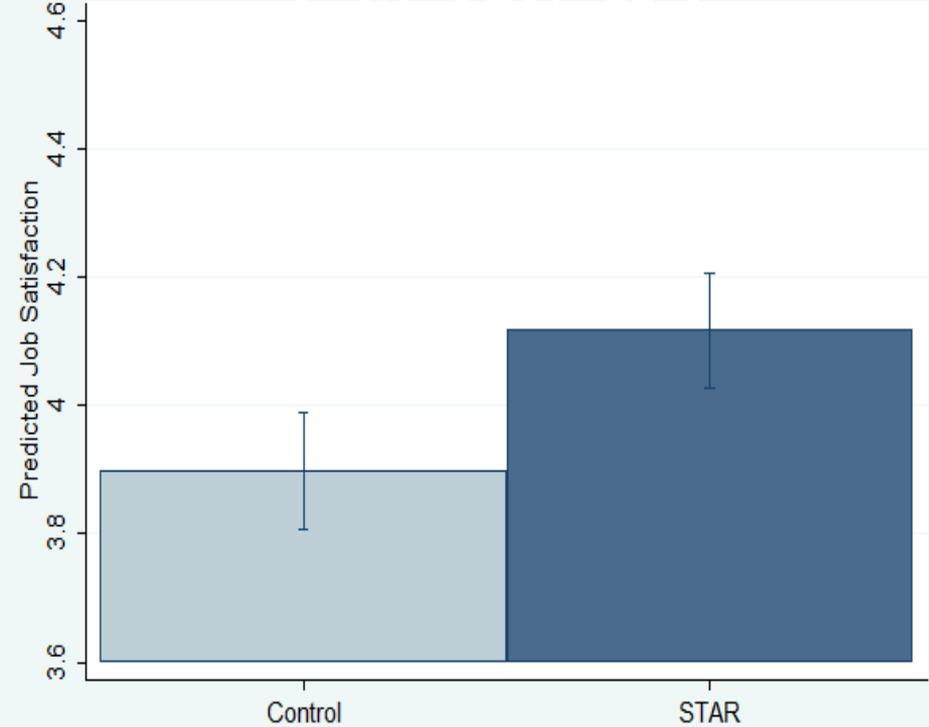
Kelly, Moen, et al. (2014). *American Sociological Review* and reported in *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Harvard Business Review blog*

Improving Life Quality and Gender Equality: STAR reduces burnout, increases job satisfaction over 12 months

**Predicted Burnout by Wave 3
(with 95% CIs)**



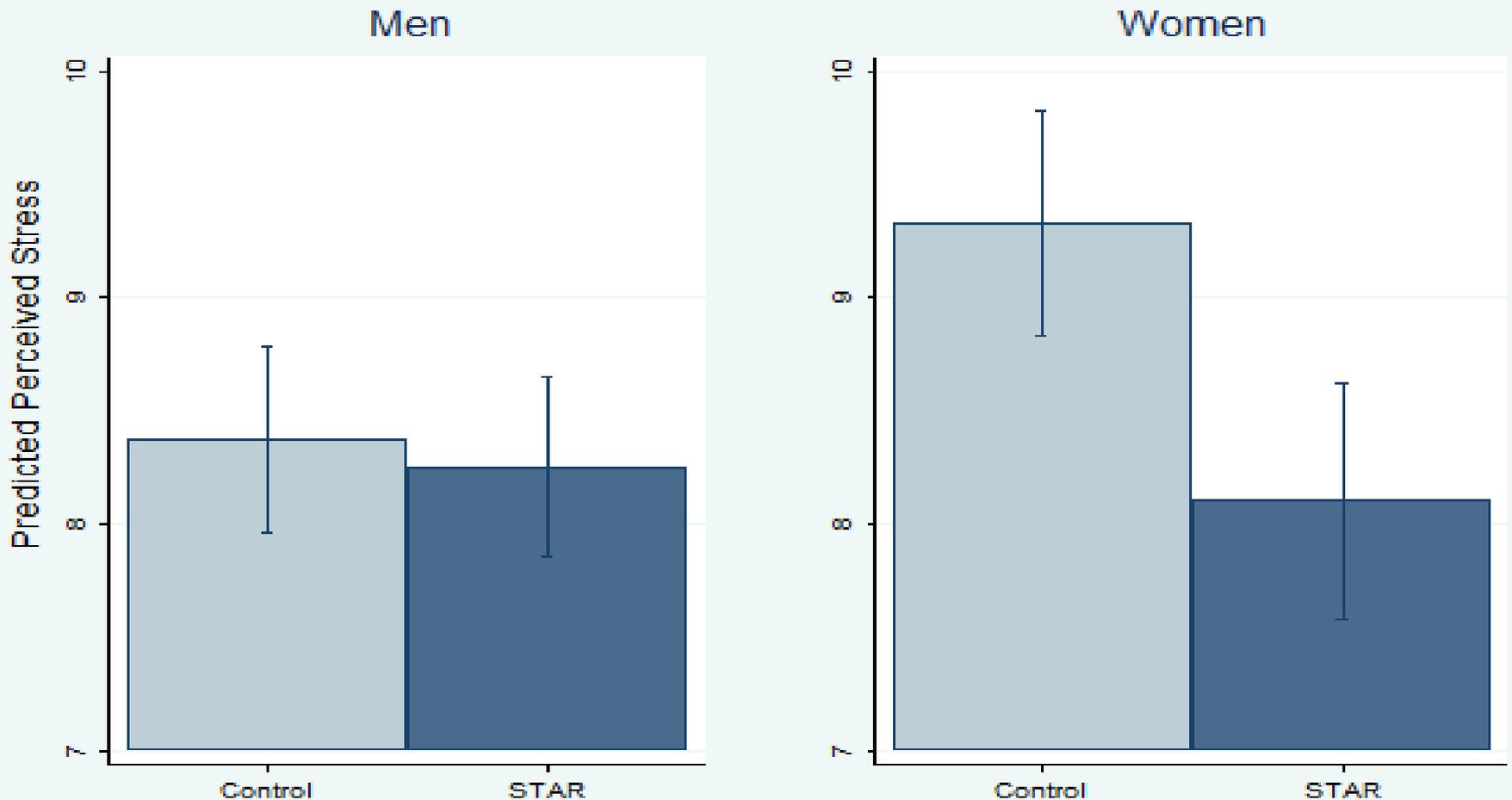
**Predicted Job Satisfaction by
Wave 3**



Improving Life Quality and Gender Equality: STAR Reduces Women's Stress



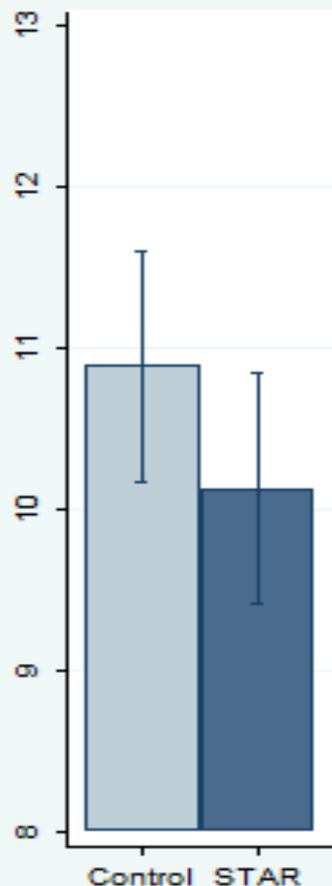
Predictive Perceived Stress by Wave 3, by Gender and STAR



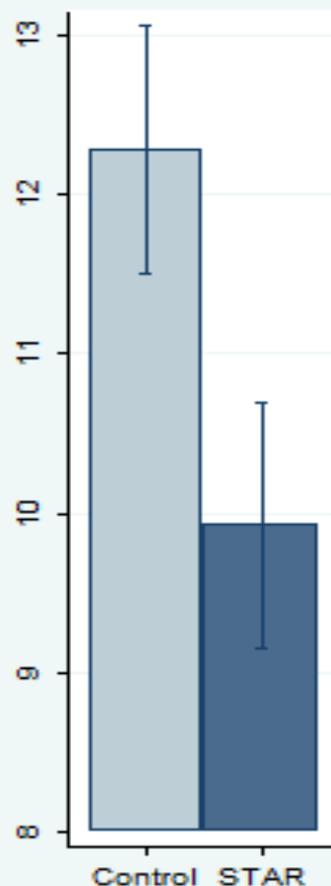
STAR Reduces Psychological Distress for Women without Children at Home

Predicted Psychological Distress by Wave 3 with 95% CIs

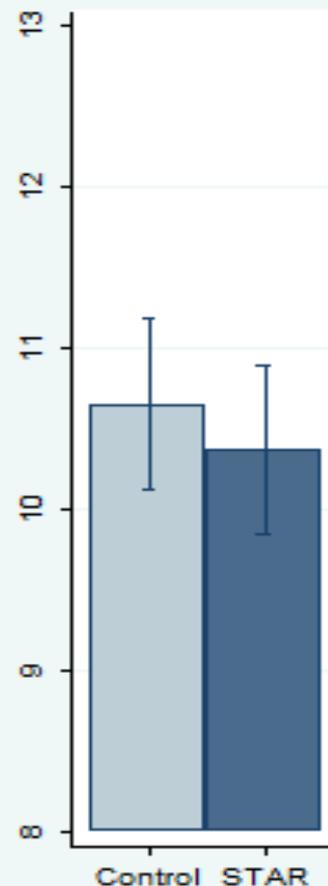
women with kids at home



women w/o kids at home



men with kids at home



men w/o kids at home



Improving Life Quality and Gender Equality: Health Benefits for Women *and* Men (ROWE Study)

Best Buy Co., Inc. headquarters (2006-08)

Quasi-experimental study: compare employees in departments moving to ROWE with employees in later-adopting departments

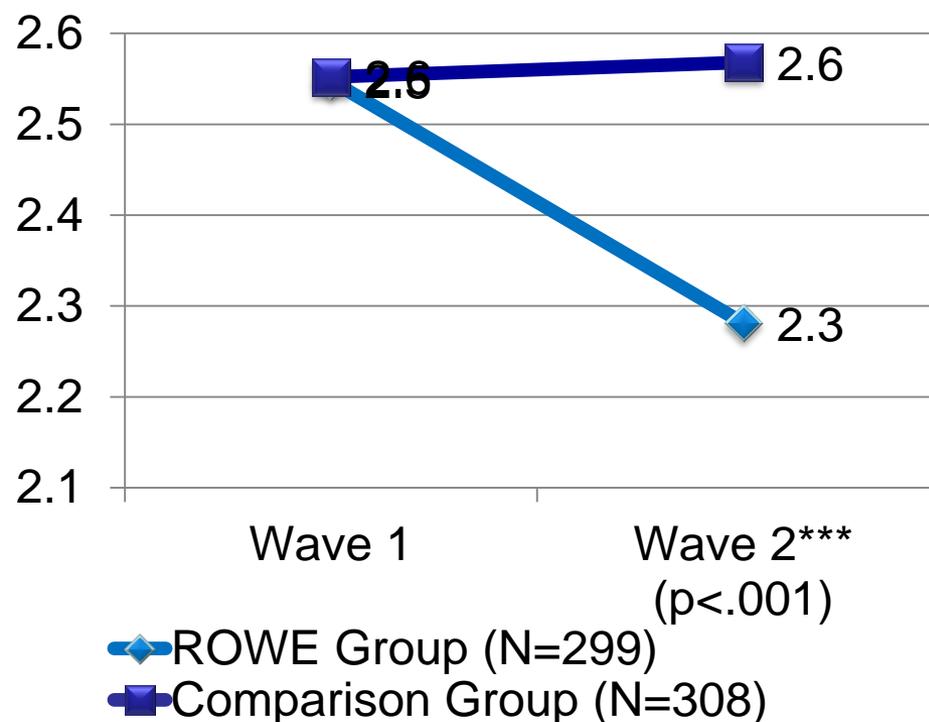
- ROWE **increased sleep** on nights before work
- ROWE **reduced smoking**
- ROWE **increased exercise**, especially among single adults

Moen, Kelly, et al. 2011 *Journal of Health & Social Behavior*

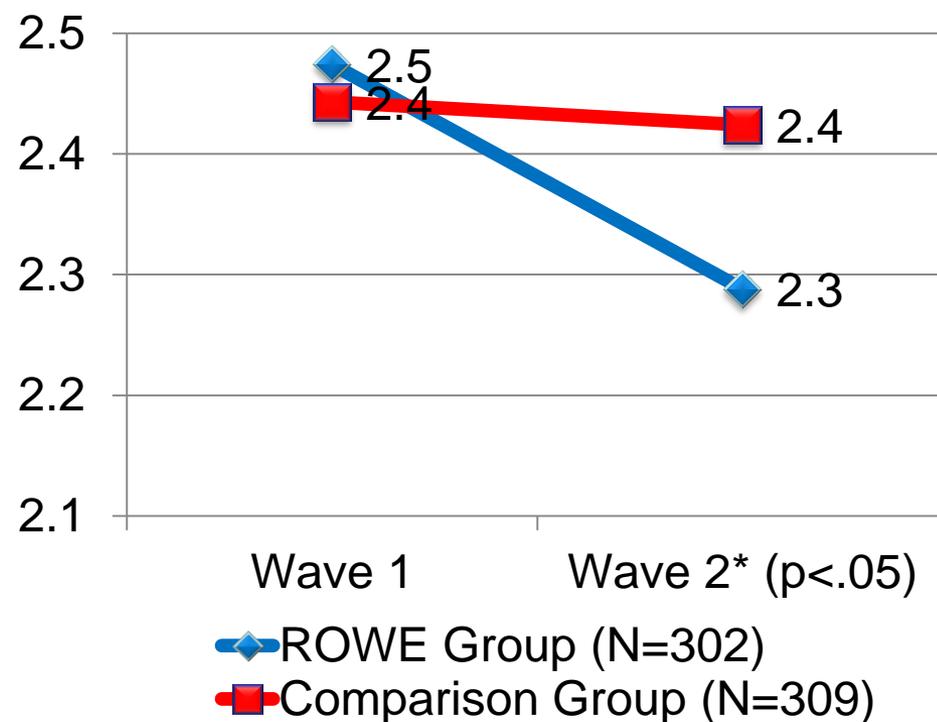
Moen, Kelly, et al. 2013 *Social Science & Medicine*

Improving Life Quality and Gender Equality: ROWE Encourages Healthier Behaviors when Sick for Women *and* Men

Working When Sick



Not Going to the Doctor When Sick



No More One Way....



Increasing gender equality and life quality

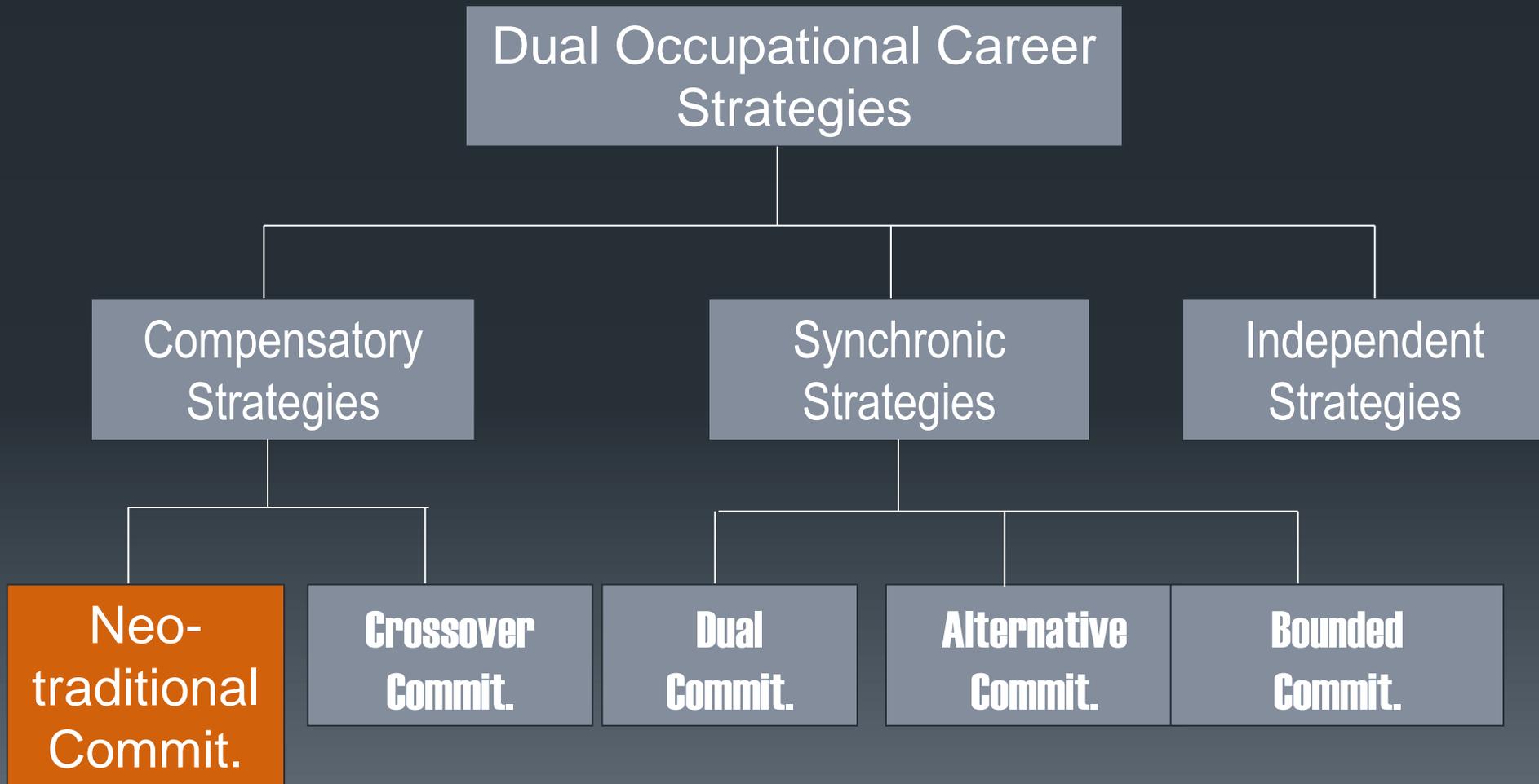


Implications for Life Quality and Gender Equality?

Most Working Women and Men Can't Lean In to Careers **and** Caring...Result?

- Women Accommodating **Occupational Careers** to Family and Personal Care (& Husband's Career)

Dual-Earner Couples' Constrained Career Strategies



Implications for Life Quality and Gender Equality?

Most Working Women and Men Can't Lean In to Careers **and** Caring...Result?

- Accommodating Occupational Careers to Family and Personal Care
- Accommodating **Family and Personal Care** to Occupational Careers

“Work-Friendly” Career Development Strategies

Dual Occupational Career Strategies

Compensatory Strategies

Synchronic Strategies

Independent Strategies

Neo-traditional Commit.

Crossover Commit.

Dual Commit.

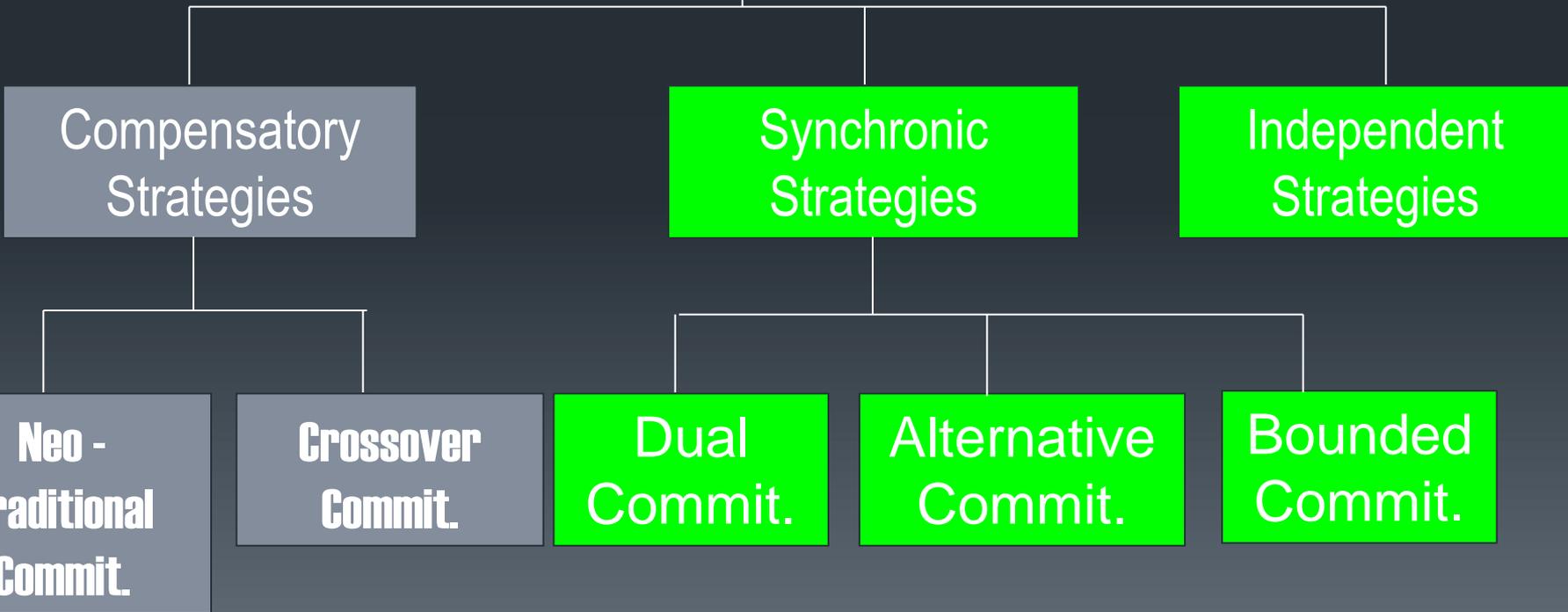
Alternative Commit.

Bounded Commit.

“Egalitarian” Career Strategies

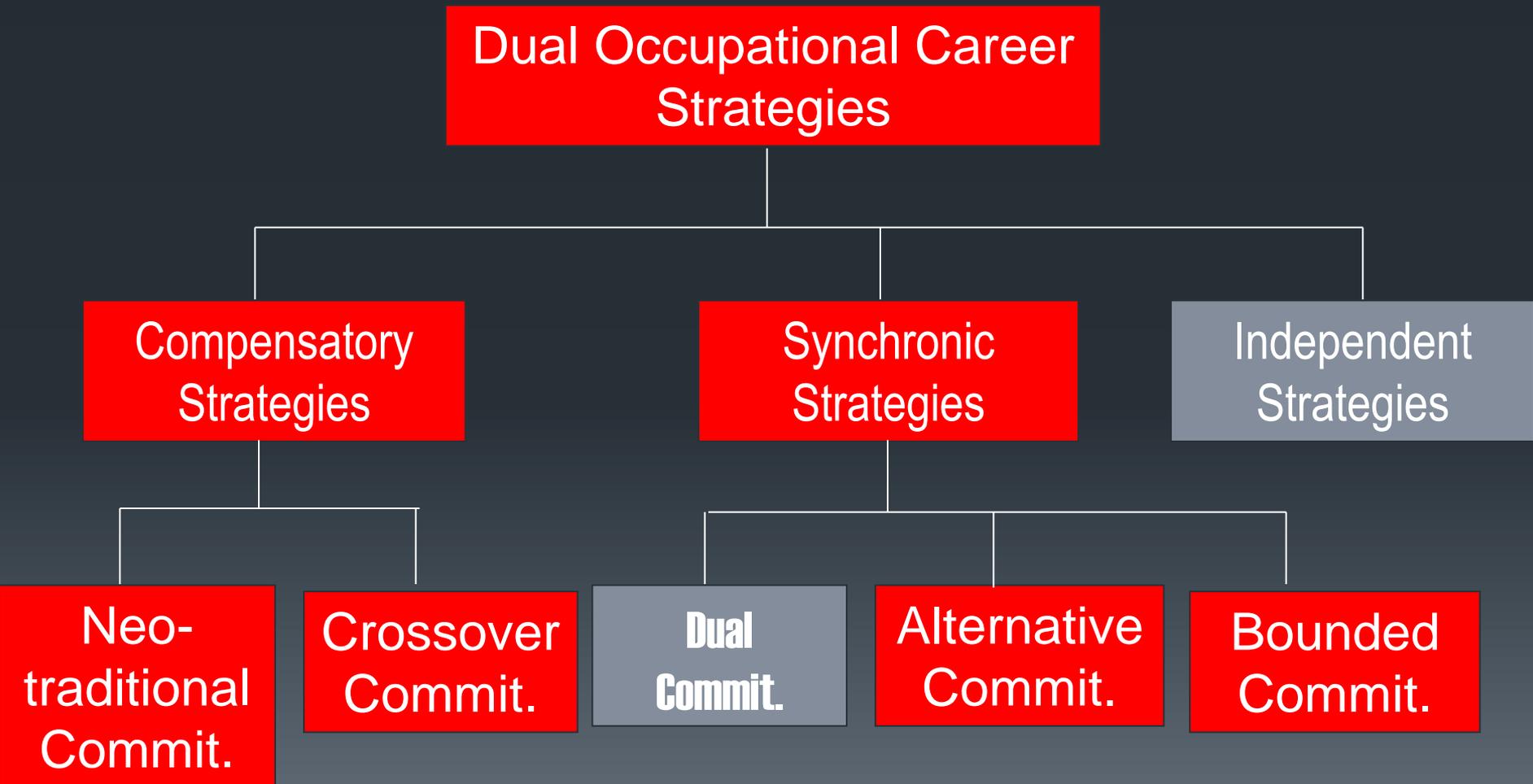


Dual Occupational Career Strategies





“Family-Friendly” Career Strategies



“Egalitarian” and “Family Friendly” Career Strategies? Need Work Redesign

Dual Occupational Career Strategies

NEEDED: WORK REDESIGN

Compensatory Strategies

Synchronic Strategies

Independent Strategies

Neo-traditional Commit.

Crossover Commit.

Dual Commit.

Alternative Commit.

Bounded Commit.

Key to Equality *and* Life Quality?

Control over...

- sufficient earnings and other resources
- Including resource of **time**

But also...a Sustainable Model beyond Career Mystique

- alternative paths, possibilities for the future
- more equitable sharing of paid work, family care work, risks, stresses, and health

No More One Way!

Conclusions: Key Challenges to Organizations



1. Updating Outdated Concepts, Categories, and Cultures around **Temporal Organization of Work**
2. Opening up Gendered Life Course (Cumulative Inequalities) – **Alternative Career Pathways** for Men and Women
3. Seeking **Transformation**, not Assimilation or Accommodation
4. Focusing on **Prevention** of Inequality & Poor Life Quality

Thank you!

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