

Women in the 1950s

WWII employment for women



Women's Auxiliary Corps laboratory technician conducts an experiment, Fort Jackson State Hospital, 1944



Aircraft engine technician and senior supervisor, Naval Air Base, 1942

Post-WWII employment



A secretary and her boss, an industrial designer, New York City, 1950

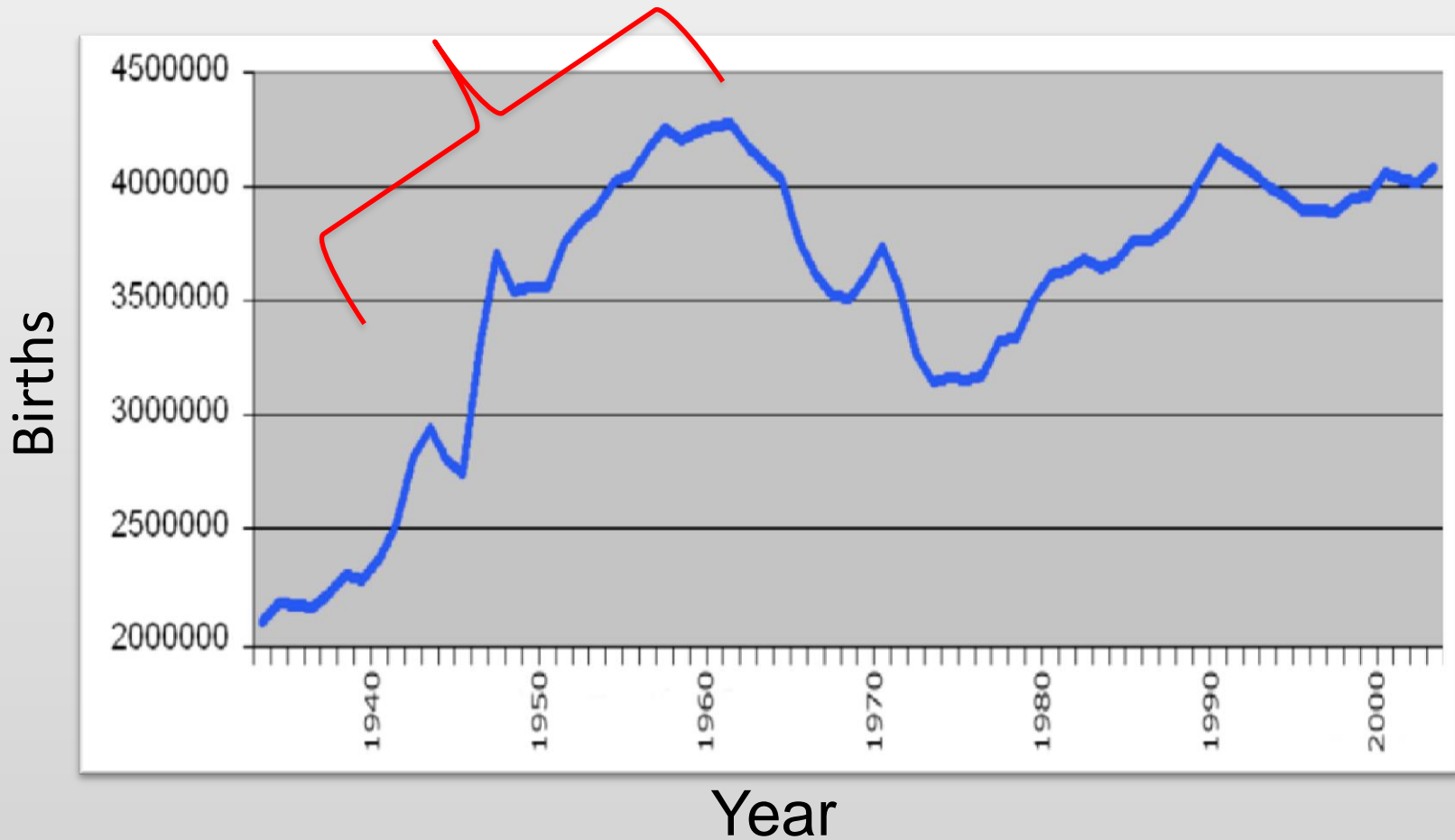
Social pressures



- *Early marriage*
- *Childbearing*
- *Stay-at-home motherhood*
- *Nuclear family*

Kennedy wedding, Jacqueline throwing the bouquet, 1953

The Baby Boom



Media portrayals of gender



A photo of the Cleaver family from *Leave it to Beaver*, a popular TV show in the 1950s-60s

Suburbia, home of the “happy housewife”



Levittown track homes of the 1950s

- *G.I. Bill*
- *Mass-produced, affordable homes*
- *Great Migration and “white flight”*

Household products marketed to women



A 1950s ad for an electric iron



A 1950s ad for a cleaning product

Central Historical Question

Is the image of the happy 1950s housewife accurate?