



The Development of Couples

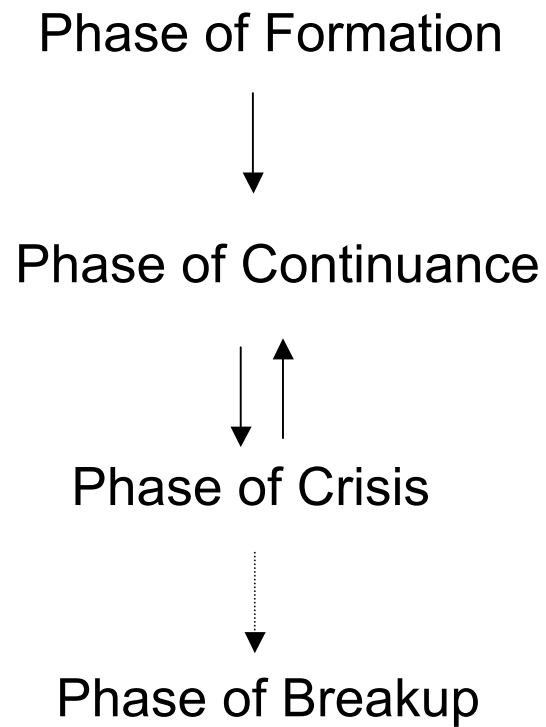
A Relational View on the Dynamics of Intimate Relationships

Dr. Caroline Ruiner

CRFR International Conference 2010
Changing Families in a Changing World
University of Edinburgh, 18th June 2010

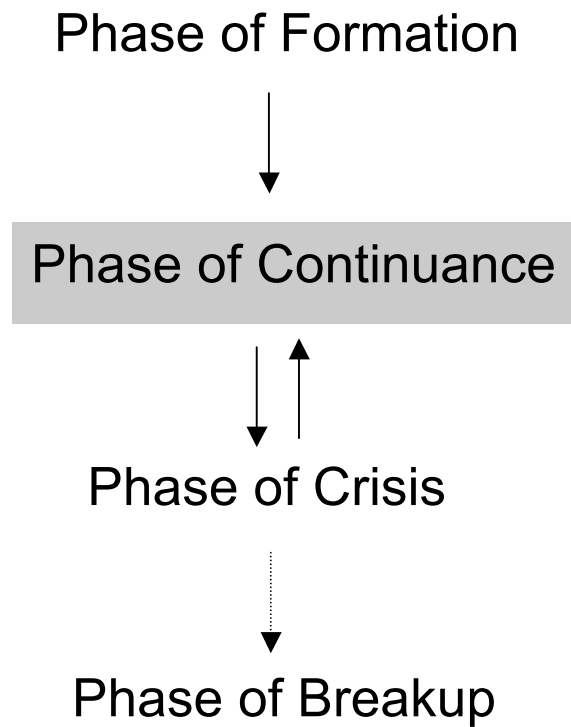


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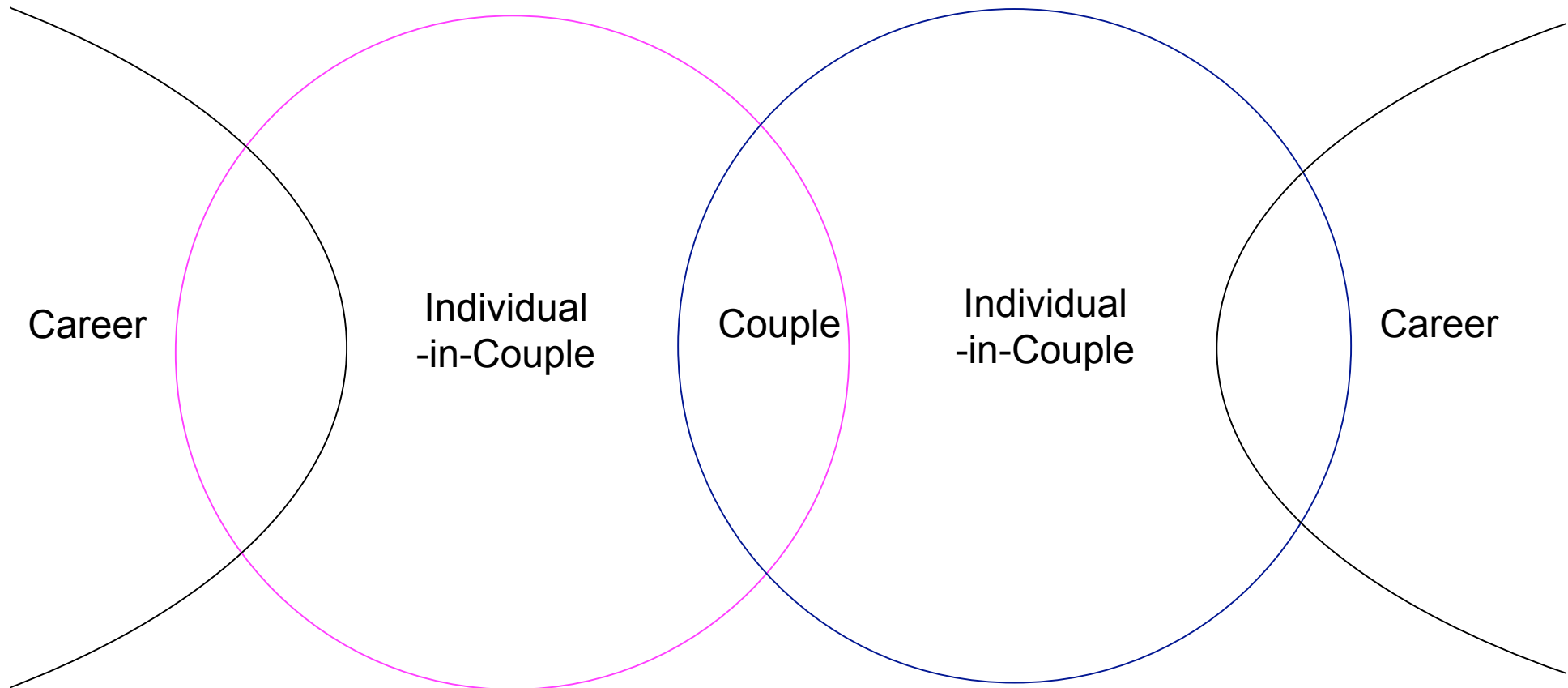


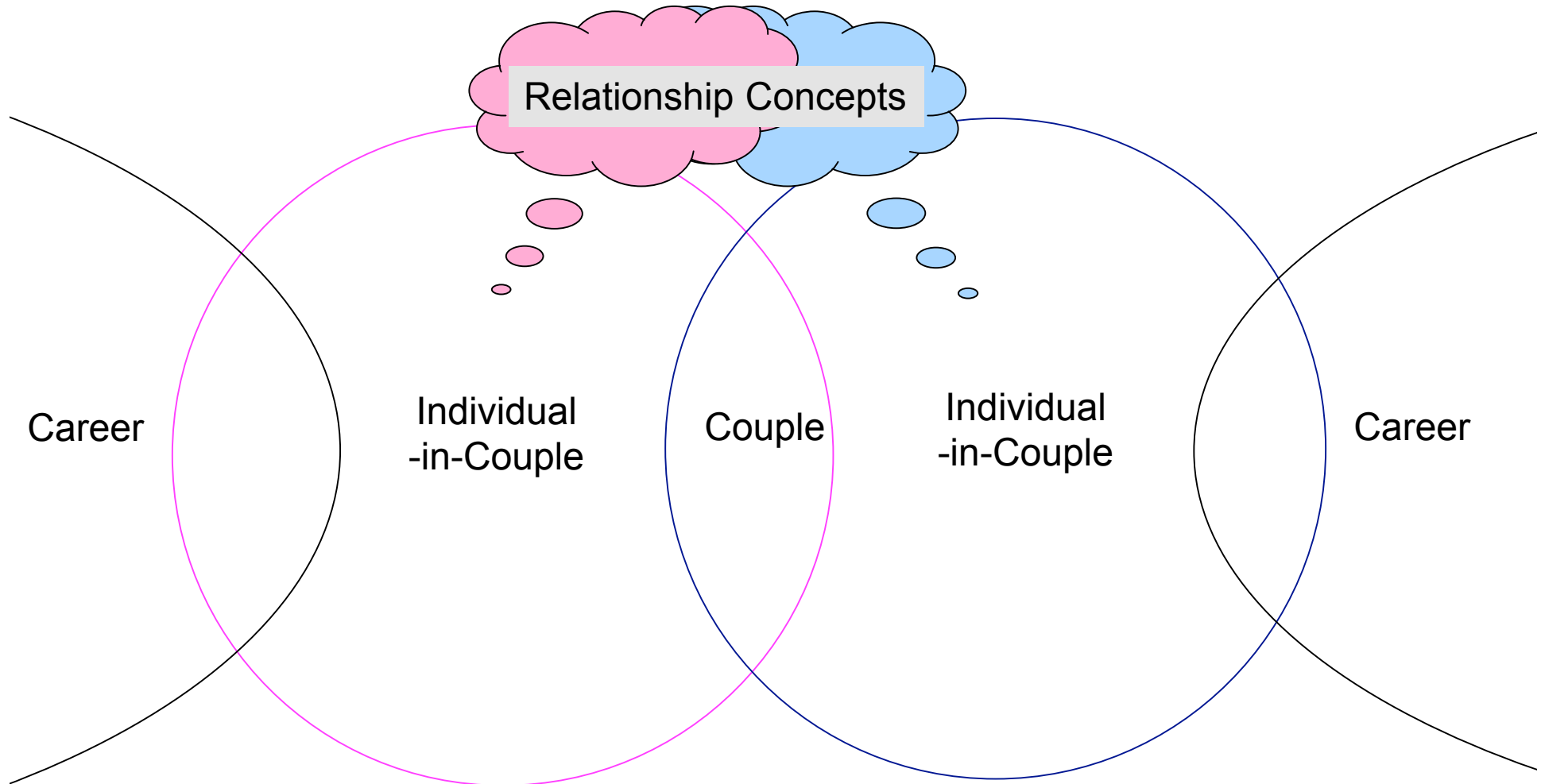
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Relational View on Couples





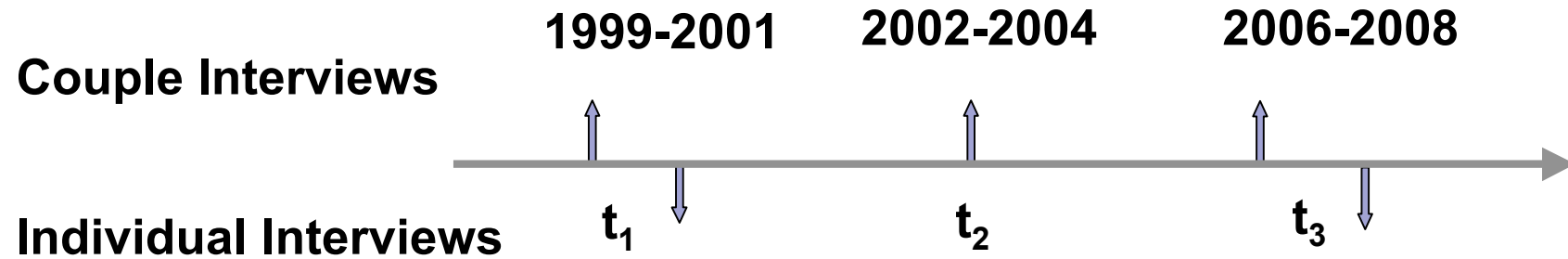


Relationship Concepts

Collectivistic	Individualistic
Prioritize the couple	Prioritize the individuals
The relationship is seen as permanent and unquestionable.	The relationship can be cancelled (in principle) at will at any time
Generalized reciprocity	Exchange of equivalents
Primarily seen as joint money	Primarily seen as individual money



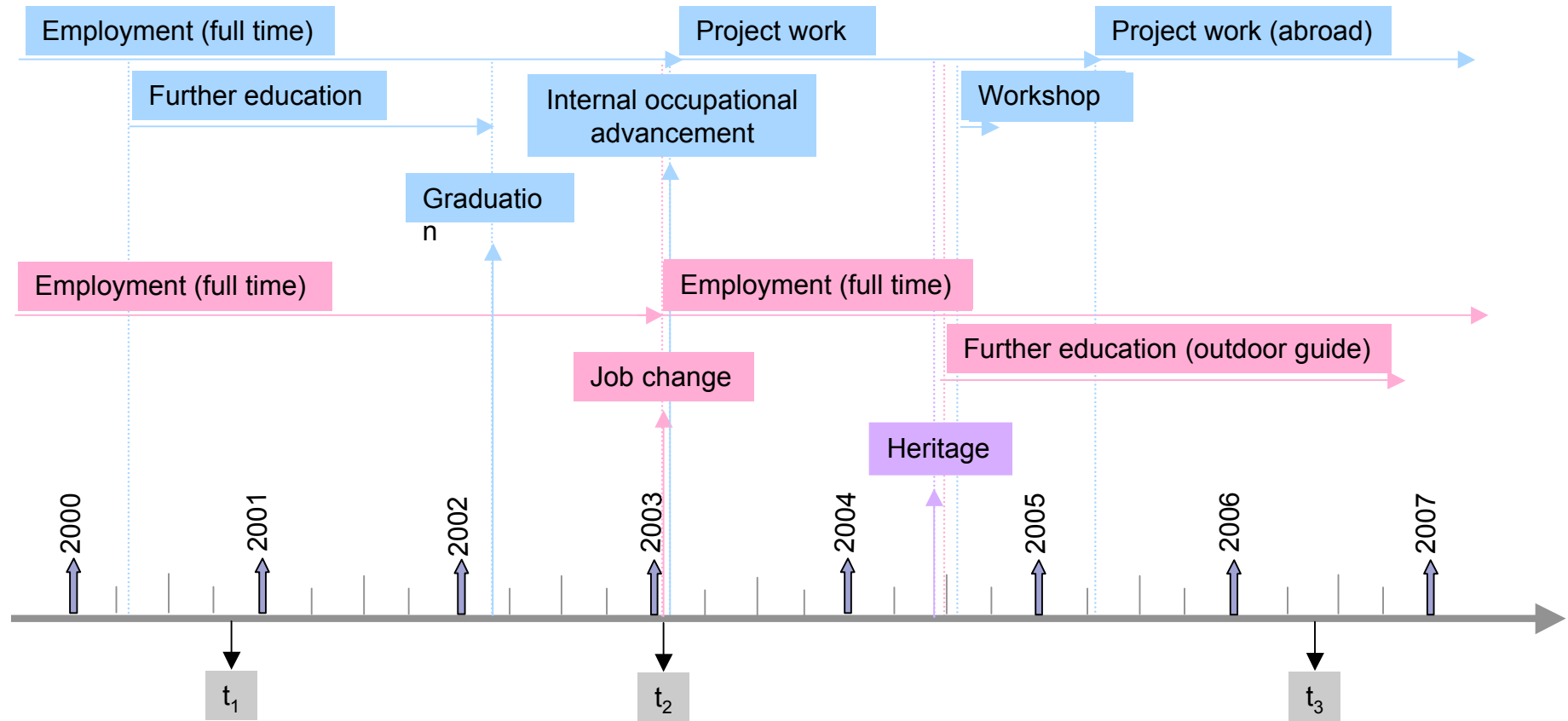
Data and Methods





Mrs. C (*1965) and Mrs. C (*1964)

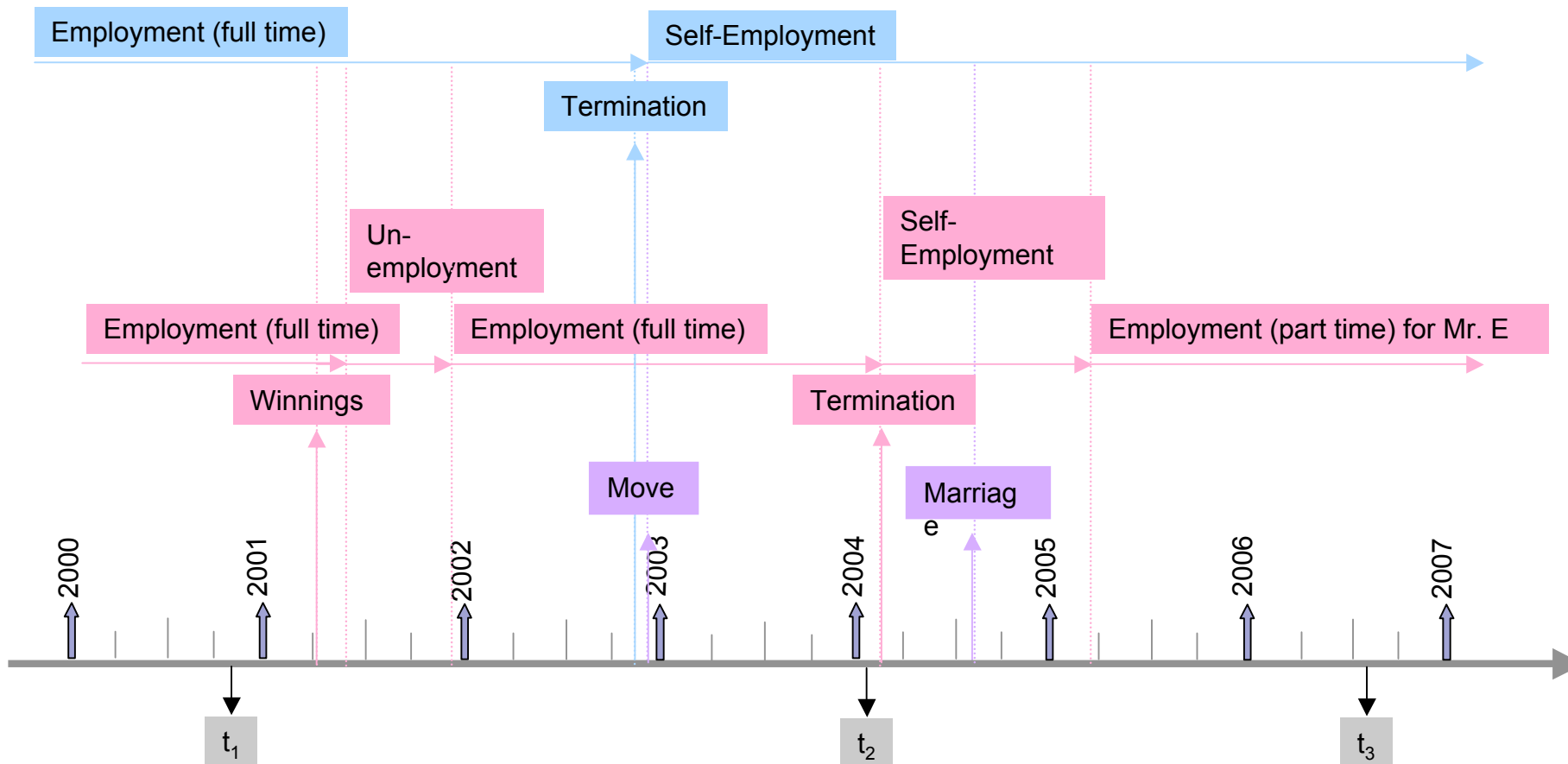
The 'Firm'





Mrs. E (*1968) and Mr. E (*1968)

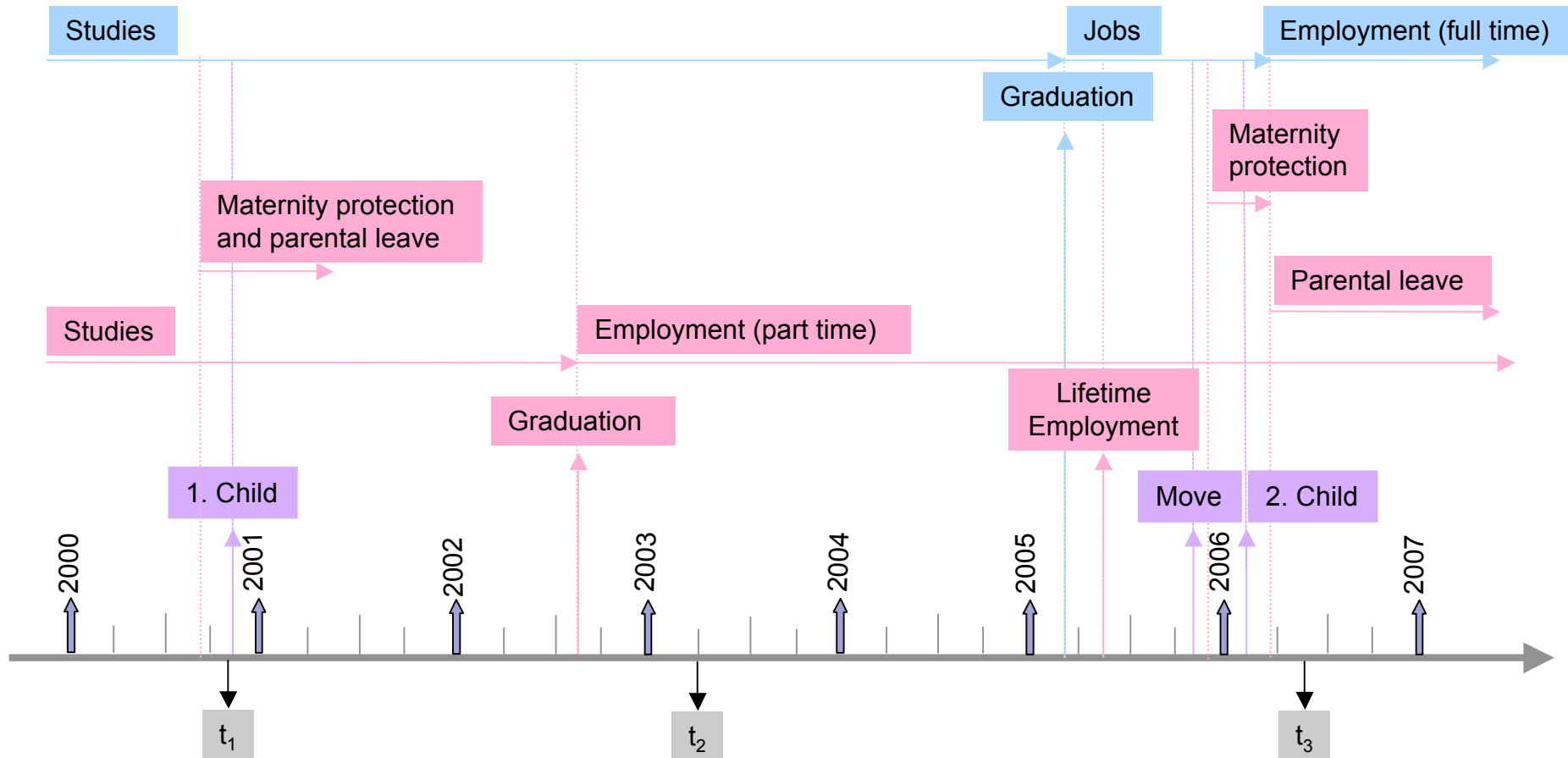
The 'Pure Relationship'





Mrs. B (*1976) und Mr. B (*1974)

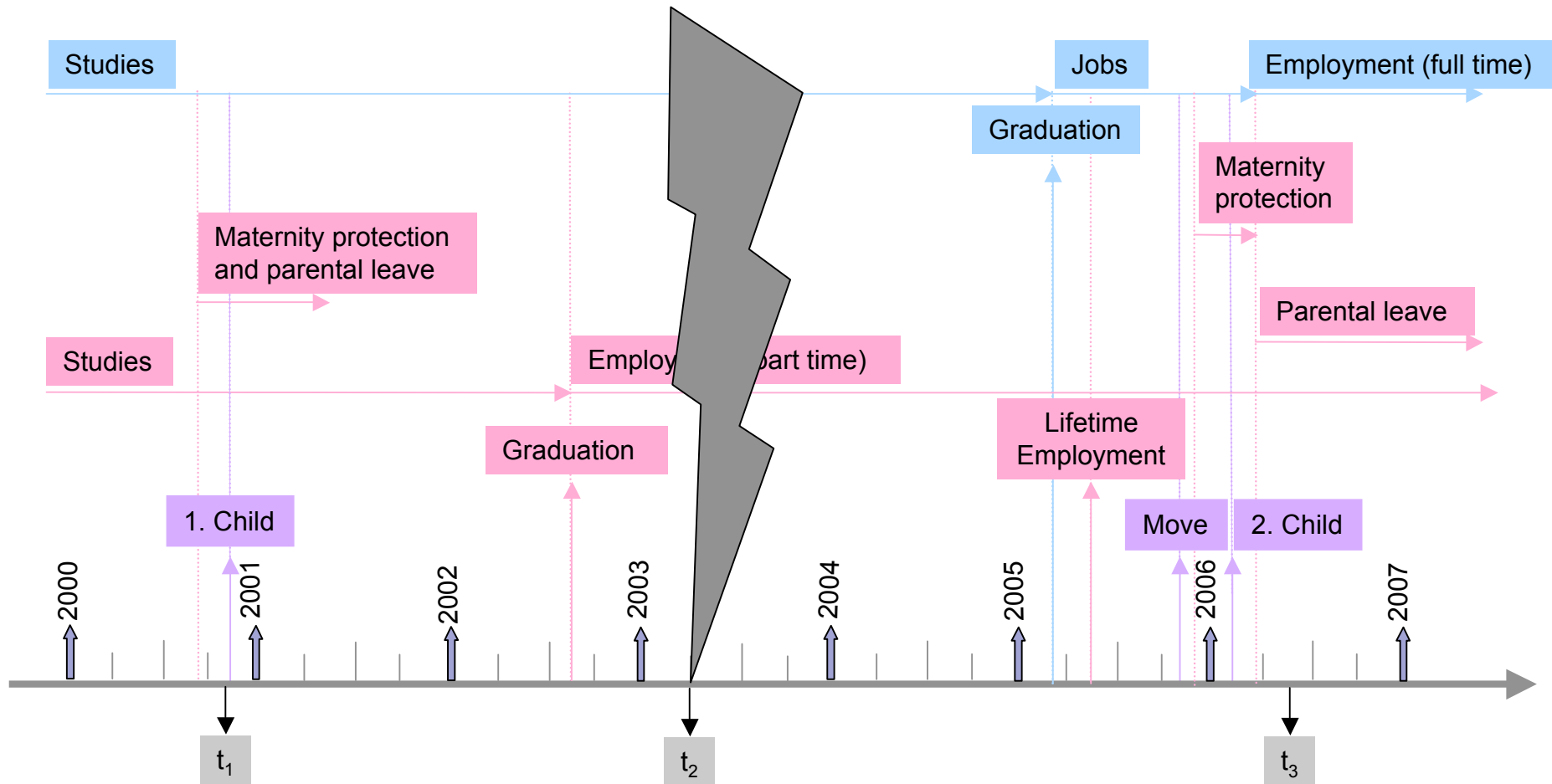
The 'Ill-Matched Couple'





Mrs. B (*1976) und Mr. B (*1974)

The 'Ill-Matched Couple'





Conclusion

Against the background of the relationship concepts ('objective') biographical events are construed and made relevant for the development of the relationship

→ The key to understand the development of couples and the effects of (biographical) events for intimate relationships is the constructed reality

The development of couples is influenced by the 'relationship concepts' of the individuals-in-couples

- Converging relationship concepts:
 - Biographical events as well as the development are jointly interpreted
 - Couples remain in the phase of continuance

- Diverging relationship concepts:
 - Different notions lead to different interpretations of the biographical events
 - Couples might enter the phase of crisis, relationship becomes instable

→ The (converging) relationship concepts are the 'glue' of intimate relationships



Thank You

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The Analysis of Qualitative Panel Data

Processing Level: The 'objective' development

Perceiving Level: Differentiating the subjective experiencing of events and changes by the individuals-in-couples and their interactive construction in the couple.

Amendment Level: Eventual amendment of experiencing of events and changes in memory and retrospective interpretations.



Overview Interviews

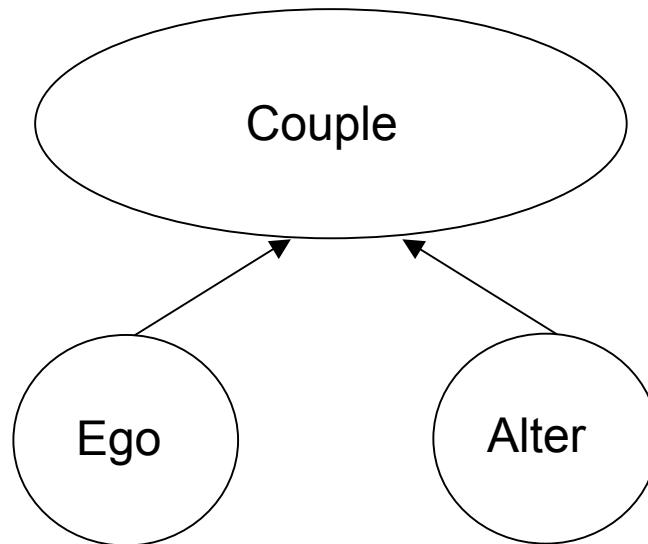
International (2000-2001)	Joint Interviews	Single Interviews
Sweden	5	15
Spain	12	24
USA	12	24
In total International	29	63
Germany (1999-2008)		
t ₁ (1999-2001)	11	22
t ₂ (2002-2004)	9	3
t ₃ (2006-2008)	8	15
In total Germany	28	40
Interviews added together	57	103



Qualitative Sequential Method of Analysis

Step 1	Extensive analysis of identified key sequences
Step 2	Paraphrasing the key sequence a) What is told? b) How is it told? c) How can the interaction between the interviewees be identified?
Step 3	Identification of 'attention markers' that are implicated in the key sequence a) What questions asks the text the researcher? b) What questions will the text be asked based on theoretical knowledge
Step 4	Development of initial interpretive answers to the questions in step 3
Step 5	Creation of conjectures about the case
Step 6	Decision of selection of other key sequences

Collectivistic Relationship Concept



Individualistic Relationship Concept

