

A Demographic Study Of European Settlement at the Cape



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Objectives

1. To develop a more comprehensive picture of what family life was like for European settlers in the Cape during the first 200 years of settlement.
2. To provide a comparison of the demographic characteristics of Dutch settlers in the Cape, with their counterparts who remained in Europe spanning the same time period.
3. To provide other useful comparisons and an understanding of the economic implications of these demographic features.



Contextualization

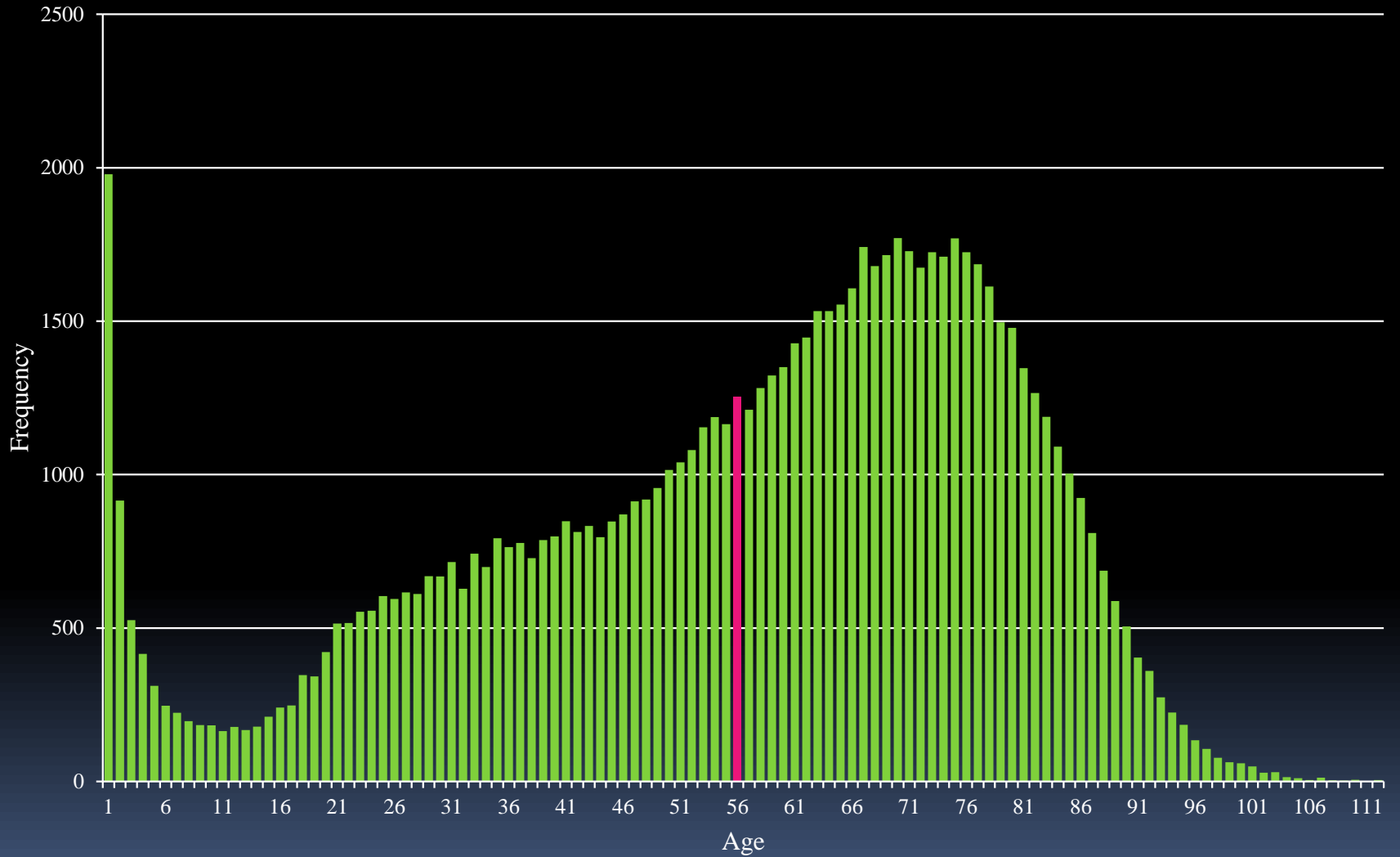
This study builds on the pioneering work of Robert Ross (1975), who was the first to use genealogical registers and parish records to describe the population dynamics of the Cape Colony.

This study builds on Ross's work in 3 fundamental ways:

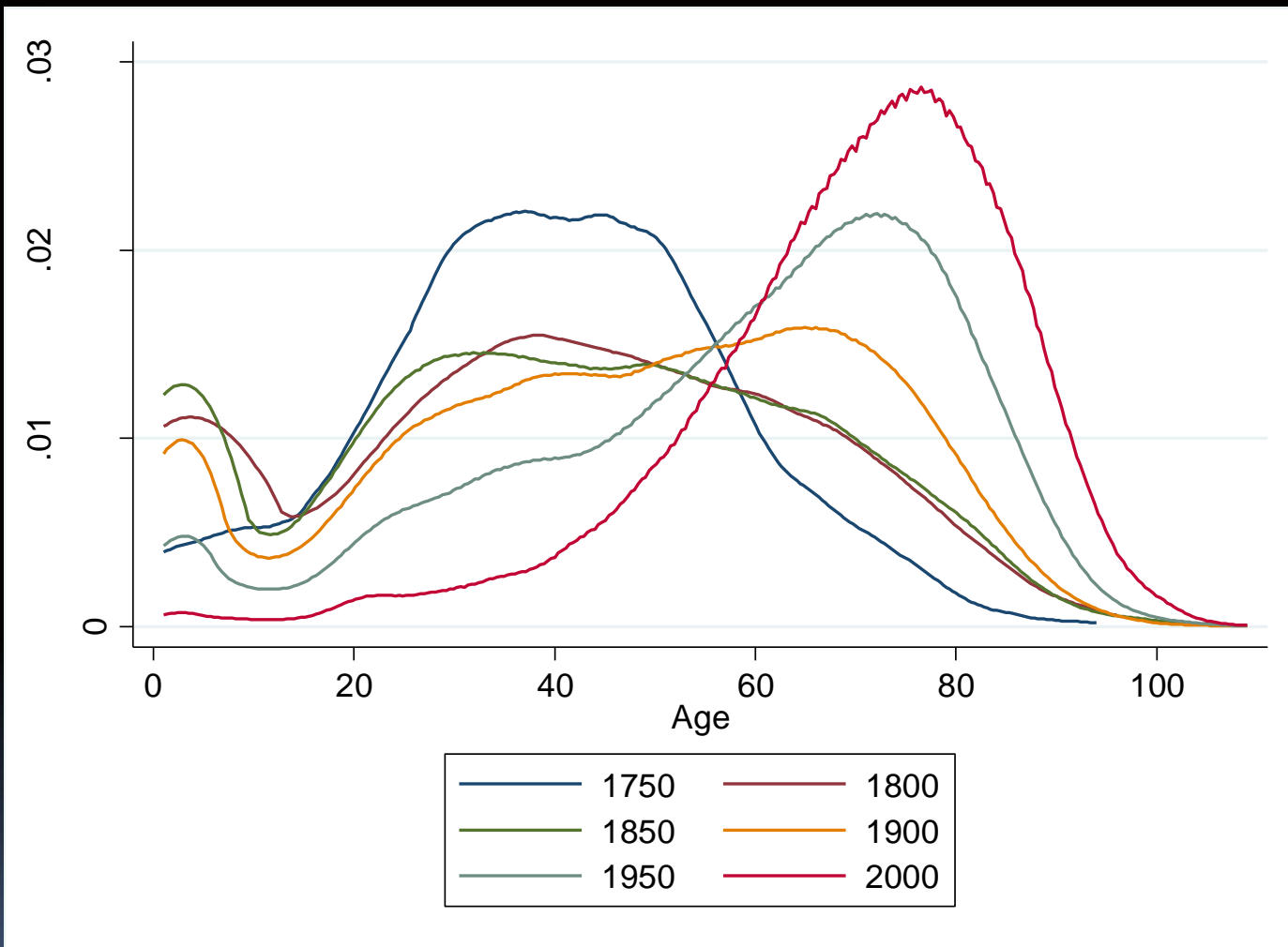
1. Data source and scope
2. Focus on mortality and family size
3. Paternal vs. maternal lineage

Some work-in-progress results

Age Distribution

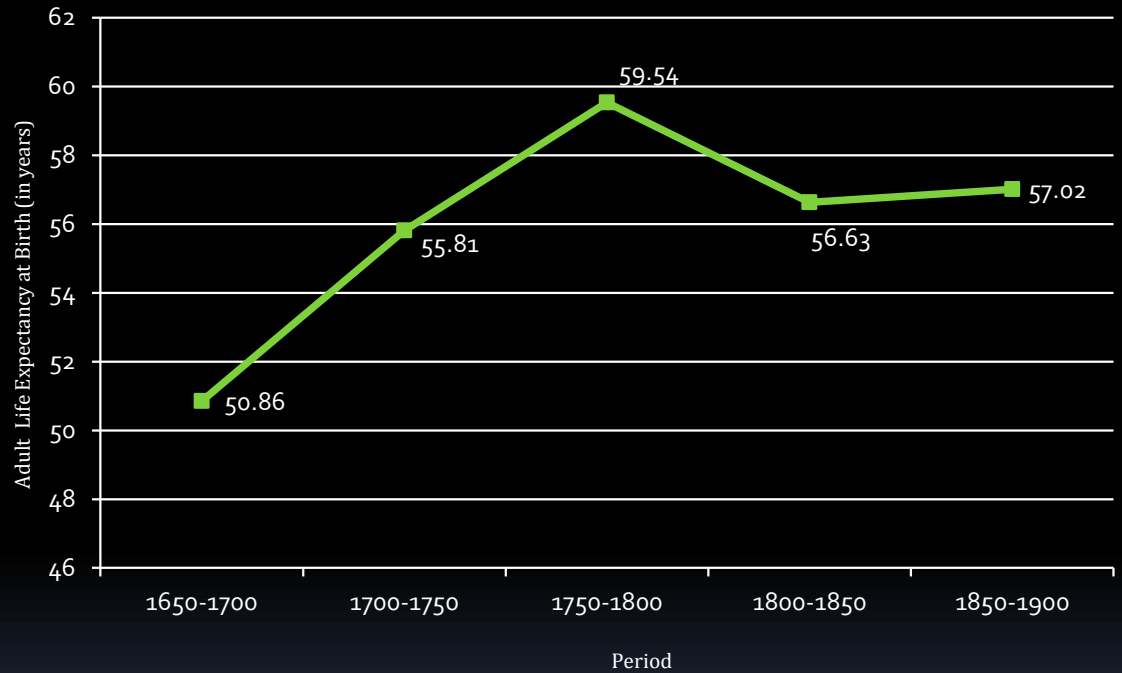


Age distribution by half century



Adult Life Expectancy

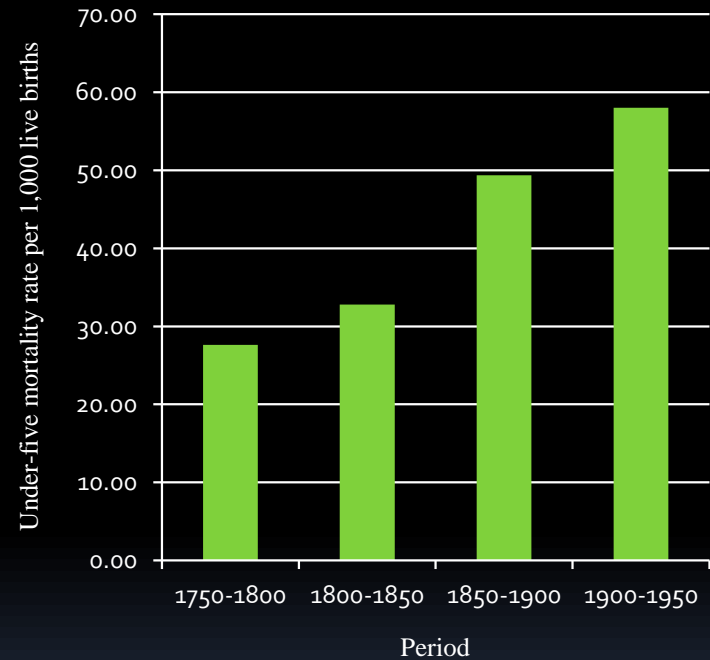
Period	Adult Life Expectancy (Years)
1650-1700	50.86
1700-1750	55.81
1750-1800	59.54
1800-1850	56.63
1850-1900	57.02



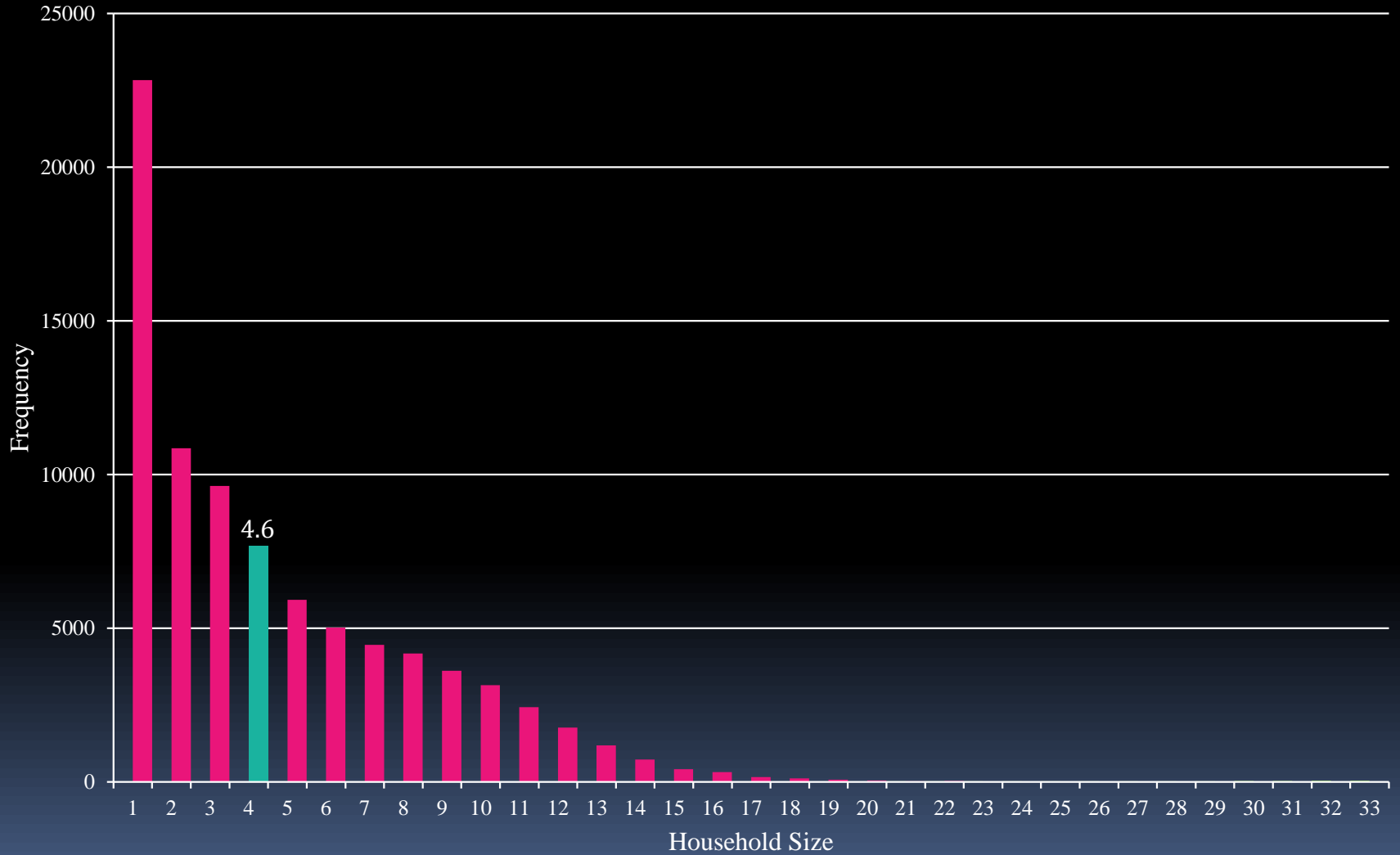
Under 5 mortality rates

Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)

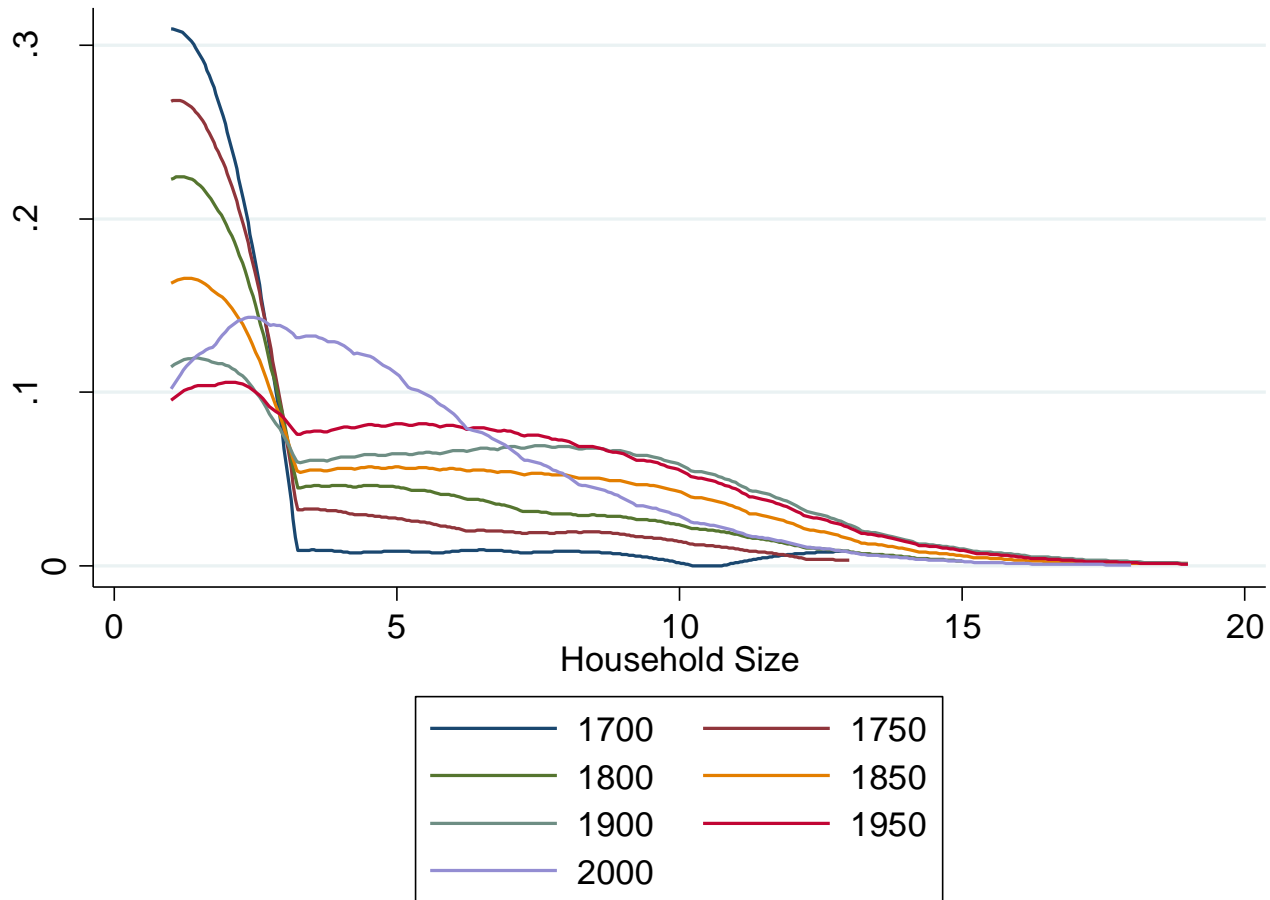
Period	Under-five Mortality
1750-1800	27.62
1800-1850	32.78
1850-1900	49.36
1900-1950	58.02



Mean household size



Household size by half century



Comparisons

Early childhood mortality rates (per 1,000 live births) and Life Expectancy at Birth: 1726-1805

*Gilze and Rijen
(Netherlands)*

	Early Childhood Mortality	Life Expectancy
Lower Class	55.8	30.9
Middle Class	35.2	<u>38.0</u>
Upper Class	24.6	45.2

Cape Colony (South Africa)

No Class Distinction	125.7	<u>39.5</u>
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Jona Schellekens (1989): "Mortality and Socio-economic Status in Two Eighteenth-century Dutch Villages".



Other interesting questions

- Life expectancy by gender
- Life expectancy linked to ranking in family
- Mean age of father at first child

- Marriage Patterns:
 - Mean age at first marriage
 - Divorce rates
 - Re-marriage rates
 - Comparisons with marriage patterns in Holland

What, if anything, can these demographic statistics tell us about what family life and standards of living were really like at the Cape?

Thank you