

Working Women and Childbearing: United States

Statistics are presented on age at first marriage, number of children ever born, length of interval between births, and expected completed family size according to women's labor force participation, income, and occupation. These statistics are shown for all currently married women 15-44 years of age and for subgroups classified by age, race, and education.

**Data From the National Survey of
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Symbols

- - - Data not available
 - . . . Category not applicable
 - Quantity zero
 - 0.0 Quantity more than zero but less than 0.05
 - Z Quantity more than zero but less than 500 where numbers are rounded to thousands
 - * Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision
-

Working Women and Childbearing

by H. Theodore Groat, Ph.D., Jerry W. Wicks, Ph.D., and
Arthur G. Neal, Ph.D., Bowling Green State University, and
Gerry E. Hendershot, Ph.D., Division of Vital Statistics

Introduction

The National Survey of Family Growth, a periodic survey conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics, is designed to provide information on fertility, family planning, and closely related aspects of maternal and child health. This report presents statistics on age at marriage, number of children ever born, length of interval between births, and expected completed family size according to

indicators of women's participation in the labor force such as employment, occupation, and earnings. The statistics are presented in detailed tables 1-16 and discussed in the text with text tables A-H and figures 1-3. They are based on personal interviews with a nationally representative sample of currently married women 15-44 years of age, conducted in 1976. For a related report on an earlier cycle of the National Survey of Family Growth see *Vital and Health Statistics*, Series 23, No. 4.¹

Summary of principal findings

The data in this report show that the employment experiences of women who were currently married in 1976 were associated with their patterns of family formation. Generally, labor force participation was associated with a later age at first marriage, a smaller number of children ever born, longer birth intervals, and a lower expected family size. These associations between employment and family formation were not equally strong, however, or even consistent across all combinations of age, race, education, and other demographic and socioeconomic variables. Thus the nature of the relationships between work outside the home and family formation and growth was found to vary by selected characteristics of the wives as well as by the measures of employment and fertility that were used.

The relationships between work and fertility discussed in this report may have arisen because employment causes women to change their fertility, or because women's previous fertility experiences cause them either to enter or leave the labor force. Both of these factors may be involved.

Approximately 73 percent of all currently married women had been employed for 6 months or more prior to their first marriage, and this premarital employment was strongly associated with a later age at first marriage. For all races, ages, and educational levels combined, nearly three-fourths of premaritally employed women married after reaching 19 years of age compared with less than two-fifths of nonpremaritally employed women (table A). The most striking differences in age at marriage occurred between wives with low educational levels and no premarital employment and wives with a college education who were employed prior to marriage.

An overwhelming majority of wives (about 84 percent) had been employed at some time since their first marriage. In the aggregate, these women had borne an average of 2.0 children compared with an average of 2.3 children ever born to wives with no work experience outside the home (table B). The

sharpest fertility differentials by this employment measure, however, were found among women 30-44 years of age (figure 1).

Table C shows that the overall difference in the average number of children ever born to women currently in the labor force (1.8) versus those not in the labor force (2.3) was 0.5. Variations in cumulative fertility by labor force participation were greatest among younger women (15-29 years of age) with a college education. Among white women under 30 years of age who had completed college, those in the labor force had borne an average of 0.8 fewer children than their counterparts who were not in the labor force (0.4 and 1.2 children, respectively). For black wives in this age group who had completed college, employment status was associated with a mean difference of 0.6 children ever born between those women who were in the labor force (0.7) and those who were not (1.3). Within most educational levels greater fertility differentials by labor force participation were found among the older than among the younger black wives.

Fertility also was associated with the ratio of wives' earnings to their total family incomes. For white wives, those who earned less than 25 percent of their family incomes had borne one more child on the average than those who earned 50 percent or more (table D and figure 2). This pattern was particularly pervasive among the wives who were 30-44 years of age or more.

Labor force participation in the intervals between births was also related to lower levels of childbearing. For instance, among women with at least one child, those who worked before their first birth were less likely than those who did not work to have second and higher order births. Also, among women who had a second birth, those who worked between the first and second births were less likely than those who did not to have third and higher order births. Generally, women who worked during any particular birth interval had lower subsequent fertility than women who did not.

Table A. Percent of currently married women 15-44 years of age first married before age 19,¹ by premarital employment status, race, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

<i>Race, age, and education</i>	<i>All currently married women</i>	<i>Premarital employment status</i>	
		<i>Ever employed</i>	<i>Never employed</i>
All races ²			
Percent first married before age 19			
15-44 years	36.2	26.6	62.6
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	71.6	45.6	87.4
High school, 9-11 years	77.2	65.7	88.2
High school, 12 years	38.8	29.2	70.5
College, 13-15 years	16.2	12.2	31.8
College, 16 years or more	4.4	3.0	8.9
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	58.5	48.5	67.7
High school, 9-11 years	63.7	52.6	79.5
High school, 12 years	34.7	28.1	65.8
College, 13-15 years	18.1	14.2	39.8
College, 16 years or more	6.7	5.3	11.2
White			
15-44 years	36.6	27.1	64.7
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	72.7	44.5	89.3
High school, 9-11 years	77.5	65.5	89.8
High school, 12 years	39.3	29.7	73.0
College, 13-15 years	15.6	12.1	30.9
College, 16 years or more	3.9	3.1	6.7
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	61.1	50.7	70.9
High school, 9-11 years	67.1	54.9	86.5
High school, 12 years	35.5	28.8	68.7
College, 13-15 years	17.7	14.2	38.3
College, 16 years or more	6.6	5.4	10.4
Black			
15-44 years	34.6	22.2	52.6
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	*63.2	*71.6	*60.1
High school, 9-11 years	68.5	60.6	73.7
High school, 12 years	38.5	29.0	55.4
College, 13-15 years	19.6	8.5	36.6
College, 16 years or more	9.9	1.7	32.8
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	49.6	35.2	58.1
High school, 9-11 years	40.7	29.1	48.2
High school, 12 years	24.9	15.7	45.2
College, 13-15 years	29.9	18.2	64.0
College, 16 years or more	8.1	7.8	*9.9

¹Excludes women whose first birth occurred before first marriage.

²Includes white, black, and other races.

The association of work with lower fertility was also reflected in the length of birth intervals by employment status. For example, for all races, ages, and educational levels combined, women who had been employed between the time they married and the birth of their first child were less likely to have a

short birth interval than their counterparts who had not been employed. The interval between marriage and first birth was 12 months or less for 26.6 percent of women who worked during that interval compared with 56.1 percent of women who did not work (table E). Among white and black wives within most

Table B. Mean number of children ever born to currently married women 15-44 years of age,¹ by employment status since first marriage, race, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

<i>Race, age, and education</i>	<i>All currently married women</i>	<i>Employment status since first marriage</i>	
		<i>Ever employed</i>	<i>Never employed</i>
All races ²			
Mean number of children ever born			
15-44 years	2.05	2.01	2.28
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	1.94	2.01	1.86
High school, 9-11 years	1.54	1.56	1.50
High school, 12 years	1.17	1.13	1.33
College, 13-15 years	0.95	0.91	1.24
College, 16 years or more	0.69	0.69	0.67
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	3.63	3.53	3.84
High school, 9-11 years	3.30	3.21	3.77
High school, 12 years	2.79	2.75	3.15
College, 13-15 years	2.49	2.43	2.92
College, 16 years or more	2.05	2.02	2.58
White			
15-44 years	2.01	1.96	2.28
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	1.92	1.99	1.85
High school, 9-11 years	1.49	1.50	1.47
High school, 12 years	1.14	1.10	1.35
College, 13-15 years	0.90	0.86	1.24
College, 16 years or more	0.67	0.67	0.58
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	3.42	3.29	3.72
High school, 9-11 years	3.25	3.14	3.86
High school, 12 years	2.78	2.74	3.12
College, 13-15 years	2.43	2.37	2.88
College, 16 years or more	2.04	2.00	2.65
Black			
15-44 years	2.57	2.55	2.73
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	*2.47	*2.30	*2.84
High school, 9-11 years	1.94	2.14	1.50
High school, 12 years	1.55	1.60	1.31
College, 13-15 years	1.36	1.40	*1.07
College, 16 years or more	*0.86	*0.84	*1.25
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	5.31	4.96	6.47
High school, 9-11 years	3.85	3.79	4.25
High school, 12 years	2.99	2.95	3.67
College, 13-15 years	3.11	3.05	4.08
College, 16 years or more	*2.18	2.17	*2.92

¹Excludes women whose first birth occurred before first marriage.
²Includes white, black, and other races.

educational categories, those who were employed between marriage and the birth of their first child were significantly less likely than women who were not employed to have a short first birth interval. Current labor force participation, the nature of the work, and the relative contributions of employed wives to their total family incomes were related to

expected completed family size. Wives who were in the labor force and those who were not expected average completed families of 2.5 and 2.8 children, respectively (table F and figure 3). The difference in expected family size between black wives who were in the labor force (3.0 children) and those who were not (3.5 children) exceeded the difference between

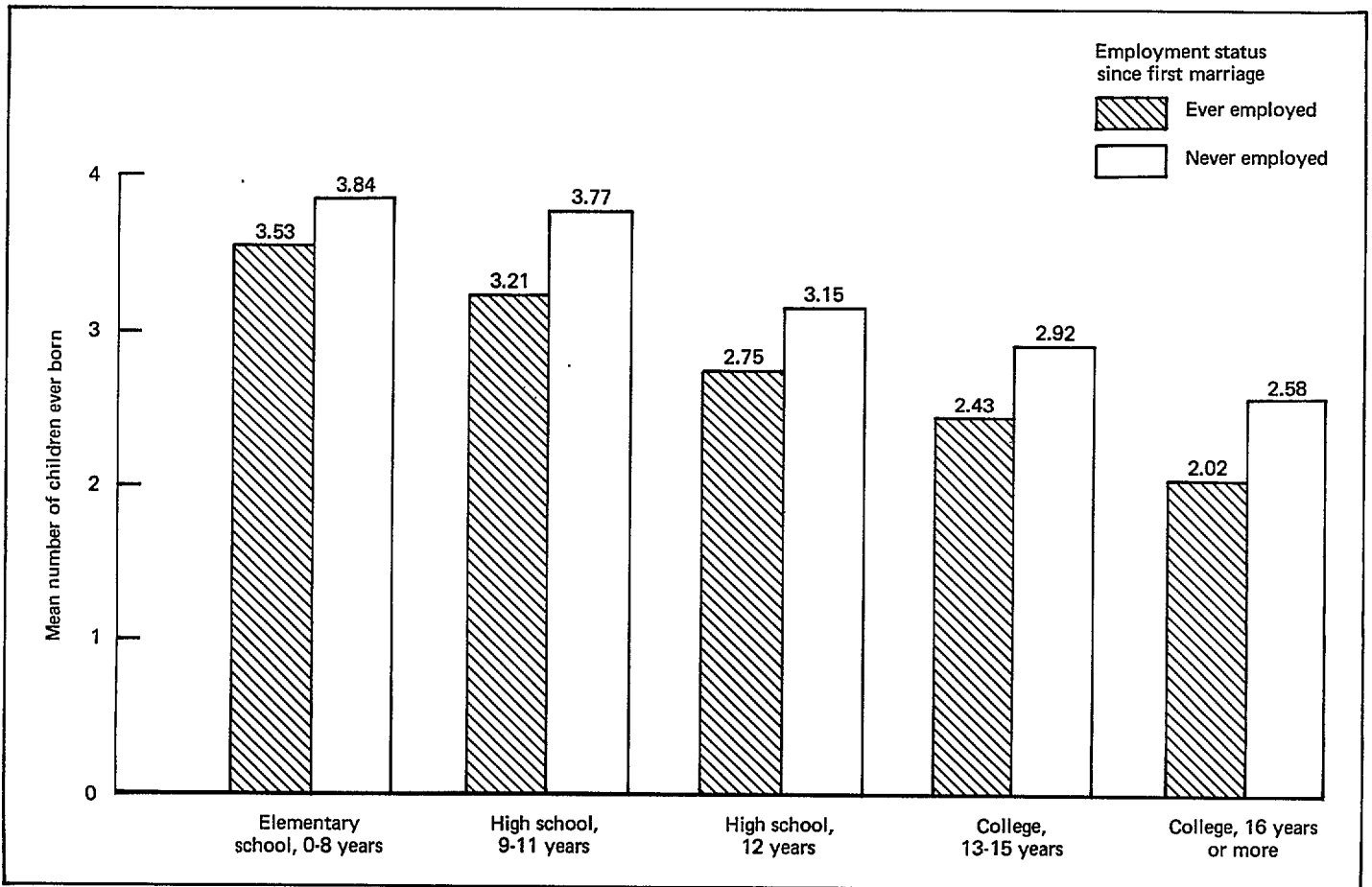


Figure 1. Mean number of children ever born to currently married women 30-44 years of age, by employment status since first marriage and education: United States, 1976

their white counterparts (2.5 versus 2.8 children, respectively).

For currently employed women, the data in table G show that professionally employed wives expected to have 0.4 fewer children than wives currently employed in blue collar occupations (2.4 versus 2.8, respectively). Within age and education categories, however, these data fail to yield a consistent pattern. In several instances wives employed in sales and clerical occupations, for example, reported lower levels of expected family size than wives in either professional or blue collar occupational categories.

For all races, ages, and education levels combined, significant differences in expected family size were reported by wives who contributed varying proportions to their total family incomes. For instance, wives who contributed less than 25 percent of their total family incomes expected an average family size of 2.7 children, in contrast with an expected family size of only 2.3 children among those who contributed 50 percent or more to their family incomes (table H). These differentials were more pronounced among wives 30 years of age and over than among those who were younger.

Table C. Mean number of children ever born to currently married women 15-44 years of age, by current labor force status, race, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

<i>Race, age, and education</i>	<i>All currently married women</i>	<i>Current labor force status</i>	
		<i>In labor force</i>	<i>Not in labor force</i>
All races ¹			
Mean number of children ever born			
15-44 years	2.05	1.81	2.28
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	1.94	1.94	1.94
High school, 9-11 years	1.54	1.24	1.65
High school, 12 years	1.17	0.87	1.45
College, 13-15 years	0.95	0.69	1.29
College, 16 years or more	0.69	0.40	1.20
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	3.63	3.39	3.72
High school, 9-11 years	3.30	3.13	3.47
High school, 12 years	2.79	2.69	2.90
College, 13-15 years	2.49	2.40	2.58
College, 16 years or more	2.05	1.91	2.24
White			
15-44 years	2.01	1.74	2.26
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	1.92	1.88	1.95
High school, 9-11 years	1.49	1.13	1.62
High school, 12 years	1.14	0.80	1.46
College, 13-15 years	0.90	0.61	1.29
College, 16 years or more	0.67	0.35	1.23
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	3.42	3.07	3.56
High school, 9-11 years	3.25	3.08	3.41
High school, 12 years	2.78	2.68	2.87
College, 13-15 years	2.43	2.33	2.53
College, 16 years or more	2.04	1.85	2.29
Black			
15-44 years	2.57	2.42	2.83
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	*2.47	*2.54	*2.41
High school, 9-11 years	1.94	1.97	1.92
High school, 12 years	1.55	1.61	1.48
College, 13-15 years	1.36	1.39	1.30
College, 16 years or more	*0.86	*0.72	1.29
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	5.31	4.83	5.70
High school, 9-11 years	3.85	3.49	4.40
High school, 12 years	2.99	2.75	3.61
College, 13-15 years	3.11	2.92	3.57
College, 16 years or more	*2.18	*2.25	1.81

¹ Includes white, black, and other races.

Table D. Mean number of children ever born to currently married women 15-44 years of age in the labor force, by percent of family income from wife's employment, race, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Race, age, and education	All currently married women in labor force	Percent of family income from wife's employment		
		Less than 25 percent of total	25-49 percent of total	50 percent of total or more
All races ¹		Mean number of children ever born		
15-44 years	1.81	2.22	1.68	1.38
15-29 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	1.94	1.96	1.89	*2.68
High school, 9-11 years	1.24	1.00	1.34	1.44
High school, 12 years	0.87	1.02	0.78	0.81
College, 13-15 years	0.69	0.94	0.61	0.48
College, 16 years or more	0.40	0.74	0.41	0.31
30-44 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	3.39	2.93	3.90	3.99
High school, 9-11 years	3.13	3.69	2.77	2.84
High school, 12 years	2.69	3.05	2.56	2.12
College, 13-15 years	2.40	2.60	2.32	2.39
College, 16 years or more	1.91	2.34	1.87	1.65
White				
15-44 years	1.74	2.19	1.60	1.22
15-29 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	*1.88	*2.00	*1.73	*2.68
High school, 9-11 years	1.13	0.99	1.13	1.34
High school, 12 years	0.80	0.97	0.69	0.74
College, 13-15 years	0.61	0.89	0.47	0.42
College, 16 years or more	0.35	0.71	0.38	0.22
30-44 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	3.07	2.74	3.91	3.29
High school, 9-11 years	3.08	3.61	2.74	2.62
High school, 12 years	2.68	3.03	2.51	2.07
College, 13-15 years	2.33	2.55	2.27	2.22
College, 16 years or more	1.85	2.30	1.81	1.43
Black				
15-44 years	2.42	2.79	2.44	2.28
15-29 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	*2.54	*1.89	*4.00	-
High school, 9-11 years	*1.97	*1.44	*2.56	*1.92
High school, 12 years	*1.61	*1.53	1.83	1.47
College, 13-15 years	*1.39	*1.54	*1.58	*1.20
College, 16 years or more	*0.72	*1.57	*0.90	*0.67
30-44 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	*4.83	*7.03	*3.81	*5.93
High school, 9-11 years	3.49	5.12	3.07	4.12
High school, 12 years	2.75	3.43	3.03	2.24
College, 13-15 years	2.92	*3.57	2.70	2.71
College, 16 years or more	*2.25	*3.05	*2.72	*1.90

¹Includes white, black, and other races.

Table E. Percent of currently married, fertile¹ women 15-44 years of age whose first birth was less than 12 months after marriage,² by employment status in the first birth interval, race, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms.]

<i>Race, age, and education</i>	<i>All currently married women with at least 1 child ever born</i>	<i>Employment status between marriage and first birth</i>	
		<i>Ever employed</i>	<i>Never employed</i>
		Percent	
All races ³			
15-44 years	38.8	26.6	56.1
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	60.1	46.5	62.3
High school, 9-11 years	50.7	25.7	58.8
High school, 12 years	43.1	30.8	64.5
College, 13-15 years	34.4	18.5	67.7
College, 16 years or more	23.3	14.6	61.1
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	38.7	37.3	38.9
High school, 9-11 years	48.1	32.5	56.6
High school, 12 years	37.4	28.7	52.2
College, 13-15 years	33.1	23.2	56.1
College, 16 years or more	26.1	18.8	49.3
White			
15-44 years	37.7	25.4	55.6
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	59.7	48.1	61.8
High school, 9-11 years	49.8	25.5	57.0
High school, 12 years	41.9	29.7	64.2
College, 13-15 years	32.3	17.1	65.5
College, 16 years or more	17.8	10.0	63.6
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	38.8	36.1	39.3
High school, 9-11 years	46.8	31.1	56.2
High school, 12 years	36.7	28.1	51.6
College, 13-15 years	31.8	21.3	56.9
College, 16 years or more	25.3	17.2	50.7
Black			
15-44 years	53.7.	41.8	68.5
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	*86.0	*78.3	*79.7
High school, 9-11 years	59.9	42.3	72.8
High school, 12 years	60.7	49.0	71.2
College, 13-15 years	51.0	33.2	82.2
College, 16 years or more	59.7	49.2	76.7
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	46.9	44.2	58.3
High school, 9-11 years	60.5	49.4	65.1
High school, 12 years	52.1	39.3	68.6
College, 13-15 years	48.6	44.9	48.4
College, 16 years or more	34.6	29.9	75.1

¹Women who have borne at least 1 child.

²Excludes women whose first birth occurred before first marriage.

³Includes white, black, and other races.

Table F. Mean total expected family size of currently married women 15-44 years of age, by current labor force status, race, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

<i>Race, age, and education</i>	<i>All currently married women</i>	<i>Current labor force status</i>	
		<i>In labor force</i>	<i>Not in labor force</i>
All races ¹			
Mean total expected family size			
15-44 years	2.63	2.53	2.81
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	2.88	2.79	2.95
High school, 9-11 years	2.46	2.18	2.57
High school, 12 years	2.23	2.16	2.31
College, 13-15 years	2.09	2.06	2.14
College, 16 years or more	2.04	1.95	2.22
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	3.81	3.65	4.03
High school, 9-11 years	3.54	3.42	3.72
High school, 12 years	2.94	2.85	3.04
College, 13-15 years	2.68	2.62	2.75
College, 16 years or more	2.35	2.21	2.56
White			
15-44 years	2.63	2.48	2.77
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	2.86	2.77	2.94
High school, 9-11 years	2.43	2.15	2.53
High school, 12 years	2.20	2.10	2.29
College, 13-15 years	2.07	2.03	2.13
College, 16 years or more	2.06	1.97	2.24
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	3.63	3.27	3.79
High school, 9-11 years	3.48	3.36	3.61
High school, 12 years	2.92	2.83	3.01
College, 13-15 years	2.65	2.57	2.73
College, 16 years or more	2.33	2.12	2.62
Black			
15-44 years	3.10	3.01	3.47
15-29 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	*3.26	*2.94	*3.56
High school, 9-11 years	2.61	2.49	2.69
High school, 12 years	2.64	2.76	2.47
College, 13-15 years	2.25	2.24	2.27
College, 16 years or more	*1.76	1.61	*2.18
30-44 years			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	5.15	5.39	6.22
High school, 9-11 years	4.18	3.88	5.19
High school, 12 years	3.31	3.13	3.80
College, 13-15 years	3.18	3.01	3.54
College, 16 years or more	*2.47	2.60	*1.88

¹Includes white, black, and other races.

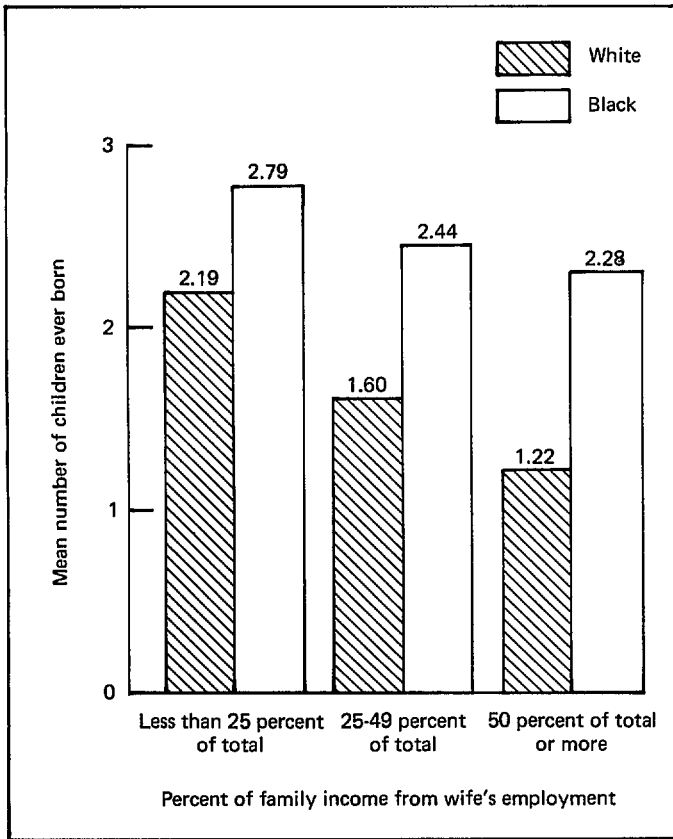


Figure 2. Mean number of children ever born to currently married women 15-44 years of age in the labor force, by percent of family income from wife's employment and race: United States, 1976

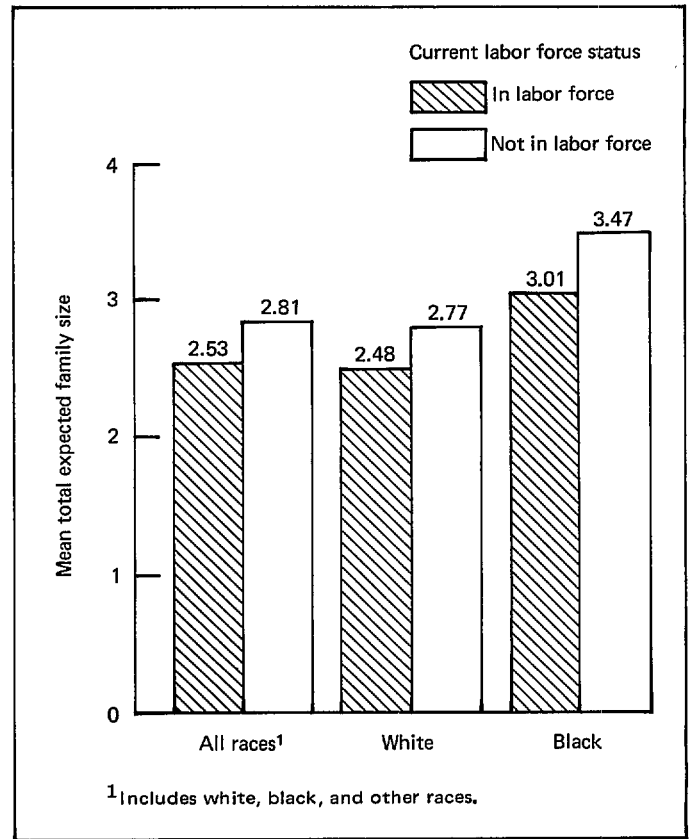


Figure 3. Mean total expected family size of currently married women 15-44 years of age, by current labor force status and race: United States, 1976

Table G. Mean total expected family size of currently married women 15-44 years of age in the labor force, by occupation, race, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

<i>Race, age, and education</i>	<i>All currently married women in labor force</i>	<i>Occupation</i>		
		<i>Professional</i>	<i>Sales and clerical</i>	<i>Blue collar</i>
All races ¹				
Mean total expected family size				
15-44 years	2.53	2.36	2.44	2.79
15-29 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	2.79		*3.21	2.69
High school, 9-11 years	2.18	*2.00	1.93	2.28
High school, 12 years	2.16	2.24	2.18	2.10
College, 13-15 years	2.06	1.93	2.11	2.03
College, 16 years or more	1.95	1.89	2.01	2.45
30-44 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	3.65	*3.40	3.02	3.75
High school, 9-11 years	3.42	3.49	3.08	3.56
High school, 12 years	2.85	2.95	2.78	2.93
College, 13-15 years	2.62	2.68	2.46	2.96
College, 16 years or more	2.21	2.23	1.95	2.20
White				
15-44 years	2.48	2.33	2.44	2.67
15-29 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	2.77	-	*3.42	2.62
High school, 9-11 years	2.15	*2.00	2.01	2.23
High school, 12 years	2.10	2.17	2.14	2.02
College, 13-15 years	2.03	1.88	2.09	2.02
College, 16 years or more	1.97	1.90	2.05	2.45
30-44 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	3.27	*3.40	3.09	3.31
High school, 9-11 years	3.36	3.59	3.11	3.47
High school, 12 years	2.83	2.93	2.77	2.88
College, 13-15 years	2.57	2.66	2.40	2.87
College, 16 years or more	2.12	2.15	1.87	*2.02
Black				
15-44 years	3.01	2.57	2.59	3.44
15-29 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	*2.94	-	*2.11	*3.24
High school, 9-11 years	2.49	-	*2.36	2.48
High school, 12 years	2.76	*3.23	2.77	2.67
College, 13-15 years	*2.24	*2.41	2.20	*2.28
College, 16 years or more	*1.61	*1.54	*1.77	-
30-44 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	5.39	-	*2.00	5.40
High school, 9-11 years	*3.88	*2.91	*2.51	4.10
High school, 12 years	3.13	3.46	2.87	3.22
College, 13-15 years	*3.01	*2.93	2.82	*3.43
College, 16 years or more	*2.60	*2.54	*3.25	*3.19

¹Includes white, black, and other races.

Table H. Mean total expected family size of currently married women 15-44 years of age in the labor force, by percent of family income from wife's employment, race, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

<i>Race, age, and education</i>	<i>All currently married women in labor force</i>	<i>Percent of family income from wife's employment</i>		
		<i>Less than 25 percent of total</i>	<i>25-49 percent of total</i>	<i>50 percent of total or more</i>
All races ¹				
Mean total expected family size				
15-44 years	2.53	2.73	2.46	2.32
15-29 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	2.79	3.00	2.54	*3.11
High school, 9-11 years	2.18	2.08	2.25	2.19
High school, 12 years	2.16	2.28	2.21	2.05
College, 13-15 years	2.06	2.07	2.04	2.06
College, 16 years or more	1.95	2.10	1.83	1.94
30-44 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	3.65	3.15	3.97	4.46
High school, 9-11 years	3.42	3.88	3.04	3.21
High school, 12 years	2.85	3.04	2.84	2.42
College, 13-15 years	2.62	2.64	2.55	2.50
College, 16 years or more	2.21	2.36	2.15	2.13
White				
15-44 years	2.48	2.69	2.41	2.20
15-29 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	2.77	3.04	2.42	*3.11
High school, 9-11 years	2.15	2.26	2.12	2.12
High school, 12 years	2.10	2.19	2.17	2.00
College, 13-15 years	2.03	2.02	1.98	2.02
College, 16 years or more	1.97	2.12	1.87	1.94
30-44 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	3.27	2.95	3.94	3.80
High school, 9-11 years	3.36	3.79	3.00	3.04
High school, 12 years	2.83	3.02	2.78	2.36
College, 13-15 years	2.57	2.63	2.50	2.39
College, 16 years or more	2.12	2.32	2.09	1.79
Black				
15-44 years	3.01	3.45	2.96	2.92
15-29 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	*2.94	*2.70	*4.00	-
High school, 9-11 years	*2.49	*1.75	*2.98	*2.53
High school, 12 years	2.76	3.28	2.61	2.59
College, 13-15 years	*2.24	*2.57	2.46	*2.36
College, 16 years or more	*1.61	*1.57	*1.43	*1.53
30-44 years				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	*5.39	*7.03	*4.09	*6.17
High school, 9-11 years	3.88	5.65	3.35	4.16
High school, 12 years	3.13	3.62	3.49	2.69
College, 13-15 years	3.01	*2.56	2.97	*2.72
College, 16 years or more	2.60	*3.05	*2.91	2.51

¹Includes white, black, and other races.

Sources and limitations of the data

The data used in this report are from Cycle II of the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics in 1976. NSFG is a periodic multipurpose statistical survey designed to provide information about various facets of fertility, family planning, and other aspects of socioeconomic and health behavior that are closely related to childbearing. On the basis of a nationwide, multistage, area probability sample of households in the conterminous United States, personal interviews were conducted with 8,611 women 15-44 years of age who were, or had ever been, married or who had never been married but had offspring living with them in their households.

Statistics based on the sample were weighted to produce the estimates of national population statistics in this report. The sample design and estimating procedures are discussed in appendix I. The analytically important statistics estimated for this report are means and percents. The bases of these statistics (the population to which they apply) are only shown in the detailed tables.

Because the statistics in this report are based on a sample and not a complete count, they are subject to sampling variability, which are chance differences between the sample estimate and the true population value. The magnitude of sampling variability (the standard error) for statistics in this report has been estimated, and where it is large, the statistic is marked with an asterisk. Also, differences between statistics that are discussed in the text have been tested (by using the normal deviate test) for the probability of their having occurred by chance. Unless otherwise noted, differences discussed in the text are significant at the 0.05 level; that is, differences of that size or larger would occur by chance in only 5 percent or fewer of repeated samples.

Some women selected for the sample were not interviewed either because they were not at home despite repeated calls, or they would not agree to be interviewed. Responses were imputed to the missing

women by multiplying respondent cases by a non-response adjustment factor. For a portion of the women who were interviewed some items of information were not obtained; for most items the amount of such missing information was very small (less than 2 percent), and in the statistics reported here it is assumed that the nonresponse cases were distributed identically to known responses.

In addition to sampling variability and missing data, there are other sources of potential error such as respondents giving biased information and errors in data processing. The amount of error resulting from these sources is not known but is believed to be small because of the rigorous quality controls applied in the fieldwork and data processing. All of these potential sources of error are discussed more fully in appendix I.

The present report is limited to women who were married at the time of the interview, which includes wives who had been married more than once as well as those who had been continuously married. In addition, the report includes data for wives (and husbands) with varying fecundity, including both voluntary and involuntary sterility. For these reasons the findings are likely to be different from those that would have been obtained in a population with identical marital histories and fecundity status.

Many of the tables in this report are based on information collected by a series of questions, reproduced in appendix III, concerning a woman's employment before her first marriage, between her first marriage and first birth, between first and second births, and between second and third births. Whether a woman worked in these intervals is related to such measures of family formation as age at first marriage, the spacing of births, and the number of children ever born. If a woman's first birth occurred before her first marriage, then there was no interval between marriage and first birth in which she could have worked or about which she could be questioned; neither was she asked about her employment before

her first marriage, because that interval would have overlapped with the interval between first and second births, and she was asked about that separately. Thus for women whose first birth occurred before marriage, no information was obtained about premarital employment or employment in the interval between marriage and first birth (the first birth interval). These women were excluded from tables and figures in which premarital employment, employment in the first birth interval, or employment since first marriage were variables—text tables A, B, and E; figure 1; and detailed tables 1, 2, 3, 7, 10, and 11. In other tables, however, in which intervals before or after marriage were not at issue, being married at the time of the first birth was not a criterion for inclusion in the table.

To be considered as “employed” in an interval, a woman must have worked continuously for pay for 6 months or more. Thus women whose first birth occurred within 6 months of marriage could not have been “employed” between marriage and first birth (if the questions were asked and responded to exactly as intended). In tables E, 7, and 11, employment in the

first birth interval was used as a variable; the “not employed” category tends to include most, if not all, of these women, whose first birth was conceived before marriage (although born after marriage). Because women who first conceived premaritally may differ in ways related to subsequent fertility from those who first conceived after marriage, their concentration in one employment status group could affect interpretations of the relationship between first interval employment and family growth. Where this factor may have an important bearing on an interpretation, it is mentioned in the text.

Other terms used in the report are defined in appendix II. The reader is advised to consult these definitions because they frequently have implications for interpreting the data presented here.

The text tables show statistics for all races combined and for white women and black women separately. In the detailed tables, however, statistics are shown only for all races combined because of the production cost and statistical unreliability of the estimates for separate racial groups.

Background

Many studies report a strong relationship between female labor force participation and family formation. These studies show that employed women have borne, or have expected to bear, fewer children than nonemployed women. Moreover, the relationship is found to persist when other factors known to affect fertility, such as education, income, marital duration, and fecundity, are controlled. This association between employment and fertility is of interest because of its implications for future fertility trends and differentials.

An unquestionable association exists between female employment and lower fertility. However, the relationship is not equally strong among all segments of the population, and the precise explanation of the relationship has not yet been determined. Four possible explanations have been suggested:²

1. Women with fewer children are more likely to seek work—low fertility “causes” employment.
2. Women who work are more likely to limit their childbearing—employment “causes” low fertility.
3. Both (1) and (2) are true for different women or at different times—low fertility and employment “cause” each other.
4. Finally, neither (1) nor (2) is true—neither low fertility nor employment is a cause of the other, but each condition is caused by the same factors, so they tend to occur together.

The explanation is expected to vary according to the social and economic circumstances of the woman, her family, and society. For many women, however, considerable evidence suggests that working influences them to limit their fertility.³ The rationale for this interpretation of the work-fertility relationship—that work tends to cause lower fertility—is a basis for the organization of this report, and for this reason a discussion follows.

Childbearing decisions may be viewed partly as the result of competing factors that affect women’s

search for some combination of familial and extra-familial gratifications. In the past, most women were expected to seek their personal identification and fulfillment as wives and mothers. However, based on a steady increase in their educational attainment and increasing participation in the labor force, women’s traditional roles have been undergoing significant changes. With new options, alternatives to childbearing have become more realistic possibilities for many women. In this regard, improvements in contraceptive technology, as well as the general availability of abortion services, have become especially important in recent years.

Some incompatibilities exist between the roles of mother and worker because of the present structure of both family and economic life. Therefore, fertility levels should reflect choices by increasing numbers of women between the perceived advantages of working and childbearing. For example, women who highly value the social interactions, stimulations, and other psychic benefits of employment or prospective employment might be expected to limit their childbearing either to enter or to remain in the labor force. It seems likely that the experience of employment, especially of certain kinds, may alter the relative value to women of familial versus nonfamilial activities so that fewer children are desired. In addition, the variety of communications to which employed women are exposed may be associated with a greater awareness and acceptance of methods of fertility control as well as an increased motivation to use these methods conscientiously.

From this perspective, the timing of employment relative to the birth of the first child would be especially important because preferences for childbearing over other activities are more readily altered before the birth of the first child. After the first child has been born, child care responsibilities may make certain options unacceptable or not feasible for many women.⁴

Related to this line of reasoning is an economic

perspective that emphasizes the costs and benefits of children relative to other resources such as consumer goods and services. With total income constraining couples from realizing all their desires and choices, decisions presumably are made on the basis of perceived costs and benefits to make the maximum use of family resources. Stated simply, this position argues that when the perceived costs involved in bearing a child, including the earnings lost by the wife's not working, outweigh the perceived benefits, women are more likely to emphasize their roles as workers and consequently to postpone or limit their roles as parents. An important factor from this perspective is the extent to which the wife's actual or potential income may contribute to the total income of her family. The higher the ratio of the wife's income contribution to that of her husband, the more likely she should be (theoretically) to choose the role of worker over that of parent. When the wife's actual or potential earnings are high relative to her husband's, the wife's employment would appear valuable from the perspective of household decisionmaking.

The preference for work or childbearing has also been associated with women's attitudes toward their role in society.⁵ By dividing these orientations into two major types—traditional and modern—the direction of change is believed to be from the former to the latter. Experiences such as a college education and premarital employment are viewed as achieve-

ments associated with a greater emphasis on a modern sex-role orientation. Presumably women with this orientation are more likely than their more traditionally oriented counterparts to view large families as too costly (beyond solely monetary concerns) relative to their benefits.

Because of the previously mentioned rationale for expecting negative associations between employment and fertility, this report is organized to facilitate an examination of these associations among currently married women 15-44 years of age in 1976.

Because educational attainment continues to be one of the most significant variables related to differences in fertility, most of the tables in this report include detailed cross-classifications by level of education. In addition, the report is organized so that an examination of employment and fertility relationships by reference to several different measures of both employment and fertility at different stages in the process of family development are permitted.

Although this organization is according to certain theoretical explanations of the relationship between work and fertility, other explanations may, and should, be considered by the reader. Patterns of family growth are often complex and result from many interacting factors. Even when a particular variable, such as employment, is related to family growth in a theoretically predictable manner, inferences about causality must be made cautiously.

Labor force participation and family formation variables

Age at first marriage and premarital employment status

The possible associations between labor force participation and family formation begin with premarital employment status and age at first marriage. Conditions associated with age at marriage are potentially important for shaping the sequence by which women become involved in the labor force relative to childbearing. Women who marry at an early age have less time for premarital employment, while women who delay marriage until later have greater opportunities for developing occupational interests and achieving financial independence. Thus it seems likely that the opportunities for premarital employment and its corresponding lifestyle afforded by delayed marriage are implicated in the associations between premarital employment and age at first marriage shown in table A.

Employment prior to marriage was associated clearly with a later age at first marriage. For all races, ages, and educational levels combined, women who worked before marriage were much less likely to marry before 19 years of age than women who had not (26.6 versus 62.6 percent, respectively). This same pattern appears in the data for white and black women separately.

Having been employed prior to marriage was also associated with later age at marriage within virtually all of the educational categories. The size of the differences in age at marriage by premarital employment status was affected, however, by the level of educational attainment. The maximum differences in age at marriage were obtained from the combined effects of education and premarital employment. Early first marriages occurred most often among women with less than a complete high school education who had never been premaritally employed. In contrast, the subgroup characterized by the smallest percent married before 19 years of age consisted of women with 4 years or more of college who had been employed prior to marriage.

The previously mentioned patterns are revealed in greater detail in table 1, which lists percent distributions of currently married women by specific ages at first marriage, according to age and education. To illustrate, among young women with a high school education, the proportion married by 17 years of age was approximately one-fourth as great for those who had been premaritally employed as for those who had not been so employed. Another example from the same table shows that younger college graduates (15-29 years of age) who were employed prior to marriage, in contrast with their counterparts who were not, exhibited significantly greater proportions of women who were first married at 22 years of age and over.

Number of children ever born

Premarital employment status.—Associations between premarital employment status and age at marriage may also be reflected in relationships between premarital employment status and the number of children ever born. This association exists because women who marry in their earlier years are generally characterized by longer marital durations, higher fecundity, and an increased probability of having experienced a premarital pregnancy.⁶ Because of these and other complexities, the reader is cautioned about drawing conclusions regarding the causal ordering of relationships between labor force participation and the family formation variables.

Table 2 shows the association between premarital employment status and the number of children ever born. Within most age and educational categories, childlessness was more prevalent among wives with premarital employment than among those without such employment. For each of the educational categories except elementary school, for example, more wives 15-29 years of age who had been premaritally employed, compared with their counterparts who had not been so employed, were at zero parity. The difference among women with 4 years or

more of college, however, was not statistically significant. Among wives 30-44 years of age, who had had a longer time in which to have children, more premaritally employed than not employed women were either childless or the parents of only one child. For example, 15.6 percent of the premaritally employed women in this age group with at least 4 years of college were childless, in contrast with only 3.8 percent of those not employed. Larger percents of women 30-44 years of age without premarital employment, compared with their counterparts who had been employed, had borne five or more children.

Employment status since first marriage.—Most studies of employment and fertility emphasize marital employment, which is very salient to cumulative fertility among samples of married women. Marital employment, however, has several different aspects potentially related to different levels of childbearing. One of these aspects is employment status since first marriage. To be classified as employed since first marriage wives must have been continuously employed, either part-time or full-time, for at least 6 months subsequent to their first marriage. All others are classified as “never employed since first marriage.” Table B shows the average number of children ever born to women in these two marital employment categories.

Because the criterion of marital employment used is not very restrictive, the majority of wives fell into the “employed” category. Never having been employed since first marriage was nonetheless characteristic of approximately 15.6 percent of all currently married wives 15-44 years of age (computed from table 3). Among women 30-44 years of age (as table B shows), never having been employed since first marriage was associated with a larger average number of children ever born. This pattern held for this age group across each of the five separate educational categories (although it was not statistically significant for some of them). For instance, women 30-44 years of age with 4 years or more of college who had been employed since first marriage had given birth to an average of 0.56 fewer children than their counterparts who had never been employed since first marriage. For women under 30 years of age, however, whose childbearing was less likely to have been completed, the relationships between employment status and number of children were less consistent.

Cumulative fertility is also shown by employment status since first marriage and age at first marriage in table 3. These data show that within both the younger and the older age categories, among women who married at 19 years of age and over, higher proportions of women with employment since first marriage than women without such employment were still at zero parity, although not all of those differences were statistically significant. Among wives 30 years of age and over, having fewer than two children

was more common among women who married late (19 years of age and over) and were employed after marriage than among women in other combinations of marital employment and marriage-age categories. Conversely, in the same age group having five or more children was associated with early marriage (18 years of age and under) and never having been employed subsequently.

Current labor force status.—Of the various measures of female employment used in the study of fertility and work relationships, current labor force participation probably has been the most prevalent. The U.S. Bureau of the Census, for example, has long provided statistical data to document that currently employed women have had consistently lower fertility than women who were not currently employed.⁷ Furthermore, evidence suggests that the inverse relationship between work and fertility is strongest during the earlier rather than the later stages of family formation.⁸ Table C, which lists the mean number of children ever born to married women by current labor force status, supports this contention.

Approximately 49.2 percent of all currently married women 15-44 years of age were in the labor force in 1976 (computed from table 4). For all races and educational levels within this population, wives who were currently in the labor force had given birth to an average of 1.8 children compared with an average of 2.3 children ever born to wives who were not currently in the labor force (table C). Among white wives the fertility differences by employment status were especially noteworthy for the most highly educated women in the earlier stages of the family life cycle (15-29 years of age). For example, young wives with 4 years or more of college who were in the labor force had an average of 0.8 fewer children than their counterparts who were not in the labor force (0.4 and 1.2 children, respectively). This same pattern persists in a greatly attenuated form among wives 30-44 years of age.

Table 4, which shows the percent distributions of currently married women by number of children ever born and current employment status, permits a more detailed examination of differences in childbearing by labor force participation. The average cumulative fertility differences by employment status among wives reflected in table C are shown in table 4 as resulting from the higher proportions of employed women who were childless and lower proportions at every other parity when compared with women who were not employed. Differences in the prevalence of childlessness between women employed and not employed were very large in some age-education groups. To illustrate, 72.2 percent of the currently employed wives in the youngest age category (15-29 years) with 4 years or more of college had not yet given birth to a child. Within the same age and educational category, however, only 26.6 percent of

the wives who were not in the labor force were childless. Generally similar findings are also shown for women 30-44 years of age.

The age at which women marry is related to their subsequent patterns of fertility by marriage duration: earlier marriage means longer durations of marriage, and longer marital durations are associated with longer durations at risk of marital fertility. Thus the association between not being employed and having high fertility may be explained by early marriage among women who are not employed. The question, then, is whether associations between employment status and cumulative fertility can be found among categories of wives who married within the same age range. Table 5 addresses this question.

Regardless of current labor force status, the age at which women first marry is related to their cumulative fertility. For wives under 30 years of age, the relationship of marriage after reaching age 23 to the likelihood of being childless, for example, is strong. The combinations of age at first marriage and current employment status are especially interesting, however, because of the large differentials in fertility revealed by these cross-classifications. Thus 71.9 percent of the younger wives who married at 23 years of age or more and who were currently in the labor force had borne no children. In sharp contrast, only 16.3 percent of wives the same age who married before 19 years of age and were not currently employed were childless. Moreover, large differences persist among wives 30-44 years of age in the labor force who married at 23 years of age or over and among those not in the labor force who married at 18 years of age or under (28.7 and 3.3 percent, respectively).

Wives' contributions to family incomes.—The concept of "opportunity costs" has been used frequently to explain the lower fertility found among employed wives, especially among career or professional women. Opportunity costs are composed of the wages or salaries that women would presumably forego by having children instead of working. The basic hypothesis, therefore, is that the greater the opportunity costs, the more likely women would be to enter the labor force and to have relatively low fertility. A related concept is "relative income," or the proportion of total family income that is contributed or might be contributed by an employed wife. Again, presumably, the greater the wife's contribution to total family income relative to that of the husband, the greater the opportunity costs of the wife's staying out of the labor force in order to bear and rear children. Several studies of relative income contributions have provided support for this presumption.⁹ Table D, which is limited to wives currently in the labor force, is directed toward this reasoning.

These data clearly show that cumulative fertility

for all educational levels combined was related to the ratio of wives' employment income to their total family income: the higher the relative income, the lower the fertility. Among white wives, for instance, an average difference of 1.0 children ever born was found between those contributing less than 25 percent to their total family income and those contributing 50 percent or more (figure 2). For the younger white wives (15-29 years of age) this association between higher relative income contributions and lower fertility was significant only among those with at least some college education. Among the white wives 30-44 years of age, however, where the duration of time had been sufficient to allow for the greatest variability in both childbearing and income, the average number of children was smaller among wives whose earnings provided at least half the family income in all education categories beyond elementary school.

The percent distributions of currently married women in the labor force by number of children ever born and relative income contributions are shown in table 6. The lower parity wives (0-1) are shown to have been disproportionately prevalent among families in which the wives contributed the highest proportions to their total family income. Generally, this same pattern was maintained among wives regardless of educational attainment levels. Collectively, then, these data show an inverse relationship between the ratio of wives' incomes to their total family incomes and their cumulative fertility as of 1976: the greater the relative contribution of a wife's income to her family's income, the lower her cumulative fertility.

Employment status within birth intervals.—Family formation may be viewed as a process in which fertility behavior at any particular time is the result of previous events and circumstances and of new events and reevaluations as the process unfolds. Observed associations between measures of current employment and fertility such as current labor force participation and the number of children ever born do not reveal employment and fertility relationships that might have existed at earlier junctures. The successive intervals between births may be viewed as examples of such junctures. More specifically, labor force participation within each successive birth interval may be related to the likelihood of reaching a given level of cumulative childbearing.

Tables 7-9 deal with associations between labor force participation and cumulative fertility among wives who were either employed or not employed in their first, second, or third birth intervals. Wives who were employed between marriage and first birth, compared with wives who were not, were more likely to have borne only one child (table 7). The likelihood of having five children or more was also associated with labor force experience in the first birth interval.

For example, 13.0 percent of wives without employment in the first birth interval, in contrast with 6.2 percent of those who were employed, had reached a fertility level of five children or more ever born.

Comparable associations between labor force participation and fertility were found in the second and third birth intervals (tables 8 and 9). At each level of childbearing through the third child, then, women who had been in the labor force prior to the birth of their first, second, or third child had a smaller number of children ever born at the time of the interview compared with women who had not been in the labor force during these birth intervals. Generally, these findings applied to women 30-44 years of age within most levels of educational attainment, although some of the differences were not statistically significant. Among younger women, the employment differentials in fertility within education groups were smaller, less consistent, and less reliable.

Length of birth intervals

Premarital employment status.—Having been continuously employed either part-time or full-time for at least 6 months prior to first marriage was shown previously to be associated with both age at marriage and the number of children ever born. These relationships, however, may be explained by other variables such as fecundity, educational attainment, and premarital pregnancy. For example, becoming pregnant while still in school and prior to marriage and then carrying the pregnancy through gestation to a successful parturition after marriage obviously lessens the time during which premarital employment might occur. In addition, women who enter the labor force prior to marriage, in comparison with women who do not, tend to have completed more years of schooling (see table 1) and, presumably, to have experienced greater opportunities to develop occupational and other extrafamilial interests. Thus the opportunities for premarital employment afforded by not becoming pregnant (or by terminating an unwanted pregnancy), as well as the orientations in lifestyle implied by higher levels of education and employment prior to marriage, are implicated in the associations between premarital employment and the length of the first birth interval shown in table 10.

Among currently married women with at least one child ever born, those who were employed before marriage, in contrast with those who were not, were more likely to have a long interval (24 months or more) between marriage and first birth. (Note that women whose first birth was before marriage were not included in this table.) The shortest first birth interval, less than 8 months after the first marriage, may be considered an imperfect index of pregnancies premaritally conceived. On the basis of this index, wives who had been employed prior to marriage were

less likely than those who had not been employed to have borne first children who were conceived prior to marriage. The same difference was found for most age-education categories, although some of the differences in these more detailed categories were not statistically significant.

Marital employment status prior to the first birth.—Approximately 60.5 percent of the currently married women 15-44 years of age with at least one child ever born had been employed continuously for 6 months or more during the interval between marriage and the birth of the first child. Table E shows the percent of fertile women with an interval of less than 12 months between marriage and birth. For all races, ages, and educational levels, women who were employed between their marriage and the birth of their first child, compared with women who were not so employed, were more likely to have a first birth interval of 12 months or more. Having been employed between marriage and the birth of the first child was more strongly associated than educational attainment with the length of the first birth interval. To illustrate, for the younger white wives (15-29 years of age) with 4 years or more of college, the percents with short first birth intervals for women who had been employed and for women who had not been employed were 10.0 and 63.6, respectively. This differential is greater than those obtained between the lowest and the highest levels of education within either category of employed or not employed. Comparisons by other race, age, and educational groupings show similar results. Women whose first birth was within 6 months after marriage could not be employed in that interval; because they also had short birth intervals, this biased the relationship.

The previously mentioned findings are also reflected in the percent distributions of first births by the length of the first birth interval, according to employment status between marriage and first birth (table 11). Approximately 44.7 percent of the first births among all women who were employed between marriage and the birth of their first child occurred 24 months or more after marriage. By contrast, only 14.2 percent of the first births among women who were not employed during the first birth interval occurred after the first 2 years of marriage. The most striking pattern of delayed childbearing is revealed among college graduates under 30 years of age who had been employed in the first birth interval: 69.8 percent of them had given birth to their first child after a marital duration of 2 years or more.

Employment status in the second birth interval.—Among all currently married women 15-44 years of age with at least two children ever born, 29.9 percent had been employed for 6 months or more during the interval between the first and the second birth (computed from table 12). For those wives who had been employed during that time, 26.8 percent had

their second child less than 2 years after the birth of their first child. In comparison, 48.6 percent of the wives who were not employed during the second birth interval had their second child within 23 months following their first birth. The data in table 12 reveal comparable employment differentials in the frequency of short intervals among wives within all age-education categories, although some of those differences are not statistically significant.

In summary, employment before marriage as well as marital employment in both the first and second birth intervals was strongly associated with a pattern of delayed childbearing. This pattern was generally found among currently married women of all races and ages, within all levels of educational attainment.

Expected family size

The previous sections of this report have dealt with associations between various measures of labor force participation and fertility as measured by the number of children ever born and the length of intervals between births. The observed relationships between employment and fertility variables necessarily included wives who were in varying stages of the family-forming process. Collectively, the respective analyses of children ever born and birth intervals by employment variables indicated that female labor force participation was strongly associated with patterns of lower cumulative fertility and delayed childbearing.

A remaining question is the extent to which labor force participation variables may be related to eventual completed family size. A definitive answer would require a sample of women who were no longer at risk of additional childbearing. The use of total expected family size, however, may serve as a proxy measure of completed family size. Beyond the obvious use of tapping fertility differentials by a measure likely to be close to actual completed family size, the use of prospective fertility also permits the examination of an idea frequently put forward in studies of work and fertility. That is, women who become most involved in their occupational roles, and who, because of their work commitments, skills, and incomes, have the highest opportunity costs if they forego employment for childbearing, should also expect the smallest completed family size.¹⁰ This idea is examined in the following discussions of expected family size by current labor force participation, the nature of the employment, and the contributions that employed wives make to their total family incomes.

In interpreting differences in total expected family size, it should be noted that the measure has two components: children ever born at time of interview and additional expected births. Children ever born is a fixed, well-known quantity, with little

measurement error; additional expected births, on the other hand, is often uncertainly known and changeable, and therefore subject to considerably more measurement error. As women progress through the life cycle, total expected family size is constituted more by children ever born and less by additional expected births. Therefore, more measurement error exists in total expected family size among younger women than among older women, and findings about total expected family size can be presented with greater confidence among older women than among younger women.

Current labor force participation.—In 1976 currently married women 15-44 years of age expected to have an average completed family size of 2.6 children (table F). Wives who were in the labor force and those who were not expected average completed families of 2.5 and 2.8 children, respectively (figure 3). The difference in average expected family size between black wives in the labor force (3.0) and those not in the labor force (3.5) was about 0.5 children, and the difference between these respective averages for white wives (2.5 and 2.8) was about 0.3 children. By most combinations of race, age, and education, the data in table F show a pattern of lower expected family size for wives who were in the labor force compared with wives who were not, although some of the differences are not statistically significant.

Fertility had been declining in the years before the survey among virtually all segments of the population,¹¹ and this trend toward lower fertility is clearly reflected in the differences in expected family size by age shown in table F. Within most categories of educational attainment, and among wives who were in as well as out of the labor force, younger women (15-29 years of age) expected to have a considerably smaller completed family size than their older counterparts (30-44 years of age). The greater fertility among women 30 years of age and over might be expected to reveal more substantial differentials by labor force participation, which the data show. Large fertility differences by labor force participation among women in this age group are found within the two extremes of educational attainment. White working wives 30-44 years of age with the lowest (elementary school) level of education had an average expectation of 0.5 fewer children than their counterparts not in the labor force; also, white working wives 30-44 years of age with the highest level of education (4 years or more of college) expected 0.5 fewer children than their nonemployed counterparts. Large differences in expected family size by labor force participation were also found among black wives.

Being in the labor force was associated with very low expected family size among the most highly educated, younger wives. The distributions of total

expected family size (table 13) among wives less than 30 years of age, for example, show that 18.2 percent of those who had 4 years or more of college and who were in the labor force expected to have fewer than two children. In contrast, only 8.9 percent of the wives who were in the same age and education category, but who were not in the labor force, expected to have a comparably small completed family size.

Additional data on the distributions of expected family size indicate that current labor force status also is associated with sharp fertility differentials among wives who were first married at 23 years of age or over (table 14). Among women 30-44 years of age who first married after reaching age 23, wives who were in the labor force, as compared with those who were not, expected to have fewer children. However, labor force status was not associated with any difference in expected family size among wives 30-44 years of age who married at under 19 years of age.

Occupational category.—Previous studies of employment and fertility have provided some support for the idea that more gratifying work is associated with lower fertility. Generally this support has come from findings that women who worked because they wanted to work expected to have fewer children than women who worked because of perceived economic necessity.¹² The implication, therefore, is that not only being employed but also the nature of that employment might be associated with differential fertility. Table G permits a partial exploration of this question.

Grouping occupational categories into professional (including managerial and technical), sales and clerical, and blue collar (including craftsmen, operatives, and all others), and limiting the population to women currently in the labor force, professionally employed and sales women, compared with wives in blue collar jobs, expected to have smaller average completed family size. For all races and educational levels combined, professionally employed wives expected to have 0.4 fewer children than their counterparts employed in blue collar occupations. Overall differences in expected family size by occupational category were striking among black wives, where those in blue collar and professional occupations expected an average completed family size of 3.4 and 2.6 children, respectively.

When examined within age and education categories, however, the data do not show the fertility of blue collar workers to be consistently higher. In some categories wives employed in blue collar occupations reported lower levels of expected fertility than wives in either of the other two occupational classifications.

Wives' contributions to family incomes.—Approximately one-fourth of all currently married women 15-44 years of age who were in the labor force in 1976 contributed as much or more than their husbands to their total family incomes. As noted earlier, the greater the wife's contribution to family income relative to the contribution of her husband, the lower the average number of children ever born. Thus the relative incomes of wives and husbands have been associated with the opportunity costs that couples would presumably incur by the wife's staying out of the labor force to bear a child or additional children. Table H and table 16 examine this premise in relation to total expected family size.

For all races, ages, and educational levels combined, the expected family size reported by wives who contributed less than 25 percent, between 25 and 49 percent, and 50 percent or more to their family incomes averaged 2.7, 2.5, and 2.3 children, respectively (table H). An average difference of 0.4 expected children separated women in the lowest from those in the highest relative income categories. This difference compared with an average difference for the same income categories of 0.8 children ever born (table D).

Among the younger white wives (15-29 years of age), most differences in expected family size by relative income contributions were small and inconsistent. Regardless of the magnitude of their income contributions to their families, most younger white wives in the labor force expected to have relatively small families. The sharp differences in children ever born between relative income groups which were noted previously (table D) among white wives with the highest levels of education indicate differences in the timing and spacing of births, not in the total expected family size.

The older white wives, in contrast with those under 30 years of age, reported significant differences by relative income contributions in both the number of children ever born and expected family size. For example, white wives who completed high school and whose employment contributed less than 25 percent to their family incomes, expected 3.0 children, in contrast with 2.4 children expected by their counterparts who contributed 50 percent or more (table H) to their family income. The data for black wives were less consistent, although the sample size within some combinations of income and education does not permit reliable estimates. Nonetheless, a very low average expected family size (2.5) among older black wives was reported by those with both the highest educational attainment and the highest percent of total family income from the wife's earnings.

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List of detailed tables

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Table 1. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age by age at first marriage,¹ according to premarital employment status, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Employment status, age, and education	Number of women in thousands	Age at first marriage										
		All women	17 years or less	18 years	19 years	20 years	21 years	22 years	23 years	24 years	25 years	26 years or more
EVER EMPLOYED BEFORE MARRIAGE												
Percent distribution												
15-44 years												
All educational levels ²	18,471	100.0	10.8	15.8	16.4	14.7	13.1	9.8	6.3	3.6	2.6	6.9
Elementary school, 8 years or less	767	100.0	29.9	*17.8	*14.4	*6.6	*7.9	*4.4	*1.3	*3.1	*3.8	*10.7
High school, 9-11 years	2,184	100.0	36.1	21.7	11.6	10.9	*8.3	*2.5	*2.3	*1.8	*0.8	*3.8
High school, 12 years	9,600	100.0	8.9	19.7	21.0	16.2	12.7	6.9	4.7	*2.9	*2.2	5.0
College, 13-15 years	3,212	100.0	*3.1	10.2	17.0	18.4	17.5	14.1	*6.6	*3.5	*3.7	*5.9
College, 16 years or more	2,678	100.0	*1.3	*2.9	*3.7	10.4	14.8	22.0	16.2	*8.0	*4.1	16.6
15-29 years												
Elementary school, 8 years or less	198	100.0	*28.6	*16.9	*19.3	*10.0	*3.7	*10.7	-	*3.7	*7.0	-
High school, 9-11 years	847	100.0	40.6	25.1	*12.5	*11.8	*4.9	*2.0	*1.5	*0.9	*0.2	*0.6
High school, 12 years	4,292	100.0	8.1	21.1	25.3	18.5	11.2	7.0	*4.4	*2.4	*1.3	*0.7
College, 13-15 years	1,529	100.0	*1.3	*10.9	20.5	21.2	19.5	*12.7	*5.0	*4.1	*2.2	*2.7
College, 16 years or more	1,239	100.0	*0.4	2.5	*4.7	*14.3	21.5	23.6	16.5	*8.0	*3.0	*5.5
30-44 years												
Elementary school, 8 years or less	569	100.0	30.4	*18.1	*12.7	*5.4	*9.4	*2.3	*1.8	*2.9	*2.7	*14.3
High school, 9-11 years	1,336	100.0	33.1	19.5	*11.1	*10.4	*10.6	*2.9	*2.8	*2.5	*1.2	*5.9
High school, 12 years	5,308	100.0	9.6	18.5	17.4	14.4	13.9	6.9	*4.9	*3.2	*2.8	8.5
College, 13-15 years	1,683	100.0	*4.7	*9.5	*13.8	15.8	15.7	15.4	*8.2	*3.0	*5.1	*8.8
College, 16 years or more	1,439	100.0	*2.1	*3.2	*2.8	*7.1	*8.9	20.6	*15.9	*8.0	*5.2	26.2
NEVER EMPLOYED BEFORE MARRIAGE												
15-44 years												
All educational levels ²	6,759	100.0	43.1	19.5	12.3	6.4	7.6	4.4	2.4	*0.9	*1.0	2.4
Elementary school, 8 years or less	946	100.0	63.1	*11.2	*3.9	*4.1	*3.8	*3.4	*2.5	*0.5	*1.6	*5.9
High school, 9-11 years	1,824	100.0	68.9	14.8	6.4	3.1	*2.0	*1.1	*0.9	*0.5	*0.6	*1.7
High school, 12 years	2,447	100.0	36.2	32.1	17.4	*5.1	*3.7	*1.8	*1.3	*0.3	*0.1	*2.0
College, 13-15 years	701	100.0	20.9	*14.4	28.2	*16.4	8.1	*5.3	*4.9	*0.3	*1.0	*0.5
College, 16 years or more	842	100.0	*4.2	*5.9	*5.7	*11.4	35.2	19.7	*6.7	*4.7	*3.4	*3.1
15-29 years												
Elementary school, 8 years or less	318	100.0	77.1	*10.2	*0.5	*5.3	*3.8	-	*2.5	*0.2	*0.2	-
High school, 9-11 years	888	100.0	75.5	*12.7	*5.2	*1.7	*2.5	0.9	*0.3	*0.1	*0.8	*0.3
High school, 12 years	1,305	100.0	32.6	37.9	18.8	*4.3	*3.2	1.3	*0.1	*0.1	*0.3	*1.5
College, 13-15 years	385	100.0	*17.3	*14.5	32.4	*19.2	*7.6	5.5	*2.7	*0.2	-	*0.6
College, 16 years or more	392	100.0	*4.5	*4.4	*4.0	*13.3	40.0	17.2	*7.0	*5.4	*2.0	*2.3
30-44 years												
Elementary school, 8 years or less	628	100.0	55.9	*11.7	*5.5	*3.4	*3.7	*5.2	*2.5	*0.7	*2.4	*8.9
High school, 9-11 years	936	100.0	62.6	16.9	*7.5	*4.3	*1.6	*1.2	*1.5	*0.9	*0.4	*3.1
High school, 12 years	1,142	100.0	40.3	25.5	15.8	*6.0	*4.1	*2.3	*2.8	*0.5	-	*2.7
College, 13-15 years	316	100.0	*25.5	*14.2	*22.9	*12.8	*8.7	*5.0	*7.7	*0.5	*2.3	*0.3
College, 16 years or more	450	100.0	*4.0	*7.1	*7.2	*9.8	31.0	*21.8	*6.4	*4.2	*4.6	*3.9

¹Excludes women whose first birth occurred before first marriage.

²Includes some women whose educational level was not ascertained.

Table 2. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age by number of children ever born,¹ according to premarital employment status, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

<i>Employment status, age, and education</i>	<i>Number of women in thousands</i>	<i>Children ever born</i>						
		<i>All women</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5 or more</i>
EVER EMPLOYED BEFORE MARRIAGE								
15-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	767	100.0	*9.0	*16.3	20.3	22.9	*13.5	18.0
High school, 9-11 years	2,184	100.0	12.9	23.6	26.2	16.3	*8.0	13.1
High school, 12 years	9,600	100.0	16.7	21.5	29.1	18.6	7.6	6.5
College, 13-15 years	3,212	100.0	24.4	22.6	26.3	16.9	*7.0	*2.7
College, 16 years or more	2,678	100.0	33.8	21.3	26.9	12.8	*3.3	*2.0
Percent distribution								
15-29 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	198	100.0	*13.1	*36.6	*24.0	*21.7	*3.9	*0.7
High school, 9-11 years	847	100.0	*23.2	35.4	29.6	*9.7	*1.5	*0.6
High school, 12 years	4,292	100.0	30.2	34.8	26.9	*6.9	*1.1	-
College, 13-15 years	1,529	100.0	40.5	33.7	22.2	*3.2	*0.4	*0.1
College, 16 years or more	1,239	100.0	54.8	27.1	*14.0	*3.2	*0.4	*0.4
30-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	569	100.0	*7.5	*9.2	*19.0	23.4	*16.9	24.0
High school, 9-11 years	1,336	100.0	*6.4	16.1	24.0	20.5	12.1	20.9
High school, 12 years	5,308	100.0	*5.7	10.7	30.9	28.1	12.9	11.8
College, 13-15 years	1,683	100.0	*9.7	12.5	30.1	29.4	13.1	*5.1
College, 16 years or more	1,439	100.0	15.6	16.3	38.0	21.1	*5.7	*3.3
NEVER EMPLOYED BEFORE MARRIAGE								
15-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	946	100.0	*7.0	*12.4	23.5	21.9	*11.8	23.4
High school, 9-11 years	1,824	100.0	*7.9	22.1	20.0	20.2	*12.0	17.7
High school, 12 years	2,447	100.0	12.6	25.6	30.2	15.2	10.0	*6.4
College, 13-15 years	701	100.0	*14.2	20.6	36.3	*14.5	*9.4	*5.0
College, 16 years or more	842	100.0	23.6	17.5	37.8	*14.2	*3.1	*3.7
15-29 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	318	100.0	*15.1	*19.6	*28.6	*24.8	*5.5	*6.3
High school, 9-11 years	888	100.0	*13.2	36.0	23.5	18.8	*6.1	*2.3
High school, 12 years	1,305	100.0	19.3	36.1	32.9	*8.8	*2.3	*0.5
College, 13-15 years	385	100.0	*23.1	32.1	35.8	*8.9	*0.2	-
College, 16 years or more	392	100.0	46.5	26.0	*24.1	*3.4	-	-
30-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	628	100.0	*2.9	*8.8	20.8	20.5	*15.0	32.0
High school, 9-11 years	936	100.0	*2.9	*8.8	16.7	21.6	17.6	32.4
High school, 12 years	1,142	100.0	*5.0	13.5	27.1	22.4	18.8	13.1
College, 13-15 years	316	100.0	*3.4	*6.7	37.0	*21.3	*20.5	*11.1
College, 16 years or more	450	100.0	*3.8	*10.1	49.7	23.6	*5.8	*7.0

¹Excludes women whose first birth occurred before first marriage.

Table 3. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age by number of children ever born,¹ according to employment status since first marriage, age, and age at first marriage: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

<i>Employment status since first marriage, age, and age at first marriage</i>	<i>Number of women in thousands</i>	<i>Children ever born</i>						
		<i>All women</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5 or more</i>
EVER EMPLOYED SINCE FIRST MARRIAGE		Percent distribution						
15-44 years								
Married at age 10-18	7,805	100.0	11.1	19.2	26.6	19.3	11.6	12.2
Married at age 19-22	11,307	100.0	21.7	20.6	29.6	16.6	5.9	5.6
Married at age 23-44	3,765	100.0	32.8	21.0	25.5	13.8	*3.2	*3.8
15-29 years								
Married at age 10-18	3,328	100.0	21.8	32.9	29.9	11.5	*3.0	*1.0
Married at age 19-22	5,508	100.0	38.3	30.8	25.0	*5.5	*0.3	*0.1
Married at age 23-44	1,174	100.0	61.2	22.5	*13.3	*2.9		*0.1
30-44 years								
Married at age 10-18	4,478	100.0	*3.2	9.0	24.2	25.1	17.9	20.5
Married at age 19-22	5,799	100.0	*5.9	10.8	33.9	27.3	11.3	10.9
Married at age 23-44	2,591	100.0	19.9	20.3	31.0	18.7	*4.6	*5.4
NEVER EMPLOYED SINCE FIRST MARRIAGE								
15-44 years								
Married at age 10-18	1,922	100.0	13.0	22.2	24.4	17.4	11.0	11.9
Married at age 19-22	1,694	100.0	15.1	21.4	30.0	16.7	9.4	*7.3
Married at age 23-44	612	100.0	*16.1	*15.8	33.3	22.6	*6.8	*5.3
15-29 years								
Married at age 10-18	1,216	100.0	20.0	33.3	28.0	*12.5	*4.8	*1.3
Married at age 19-22	965	100.0	25.1	36.4	27.4	*8.3	*2.2	*0.6
Married at age 23-44	141	100.0	*27.6	46.5	*20.9	*4.5	*0.5	
30-44 years								
Married at age 10-18	705	100.0	*1.1	*2.9	18.3	25.8	21.8	30.2
Married at age 19-22	728	100.0	*1.9	*1.5	33.5	27.9	18.9	*16.2
Married at age 23-44	471	100.0	*12.7	*6.6	37.1	28.0	*8.6	*6.9

¹Excludes women whose first birth occurred before first marriage.

Table 4. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age by number of children ever born, according to current labor force status, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Current labor force status, age, and education	Number of women in thousands	Children ever born						
		All women	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
CURRENTLY IN LABOR FORCE		Percent distribution						
15-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	550	100.0	*9.8	*15.0	*17.4	20.3	*18.2	19.3
High school, 9-11 years	1,785	100.0	13.1	20.1	24.3	16.3	*9.8	16.4
High school, 12 years	6,477	100.0	24.0	21.7	24.0	16.9	6.6	6.8
College, 13-15 years	2,305	100.0	33.3	19.5	23.3	14.9	*5.6	*3.4
College, 16 years or more	2,360	100.0	44.8	16.3	23.2	11.9	*1.6	*2.2
15-29 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	132	100.0	*20.1	*27.7	*17.4	*17.4	*12.0	*5.5
High school, 9-11 years	549	100.0	28.8	33.5	23.7	*13.0	*0.7	*0.2
High school, 12 years	2,979	100.0	43.3	33.1	18.0	*4.7	*0.9	*0.0
College, 13-15 years	1,191	100.0	53.4	27.0	16.7	*2.8	*0.1	*0.1
College, 16 years or more	1,158	100.0	72.2	18.9	*6.6	*1.9	*0.5	-
30-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	418	100.0	*6.6	*11.0	*17.4	*21.2	*20.1	23.7
High school, 9-11 years	1,236	100.0	*6.2	14.1	24.6	17.8	*13.8	23.5
High school, 12 years	3,498	100.0	*7.5	12.0	29.0	27.4	11.5	12.6
College, 13-15 years	1,113	100.0	*11.9	*11.4	30.4	27.9	*11.5	*6.9
College, 16 years or more	1,203	100.0	18.5	*13.8	39.1	21.5	*2.8	*4.4
CURRENTLY NOT IN LABOR FORCE								
15-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	1,251	100.0	*7.1	*12.8	24.8	22.1	*11.2	21.9
High school, 9-11 years	2,680	100.0	10.4	22.4	24.1	19.4	*9.6	14.1
High school, 12 years	6,481	100.0	10.4	20.7	34.2	18.8	9.2	6.6
College, 13-15 years	1,964	100.0	13.3	21.9	34.3	17.7	*9.5	*3.2
College, 16 years or more	1,563	100.0	16.2	22.6	37.2	15.9	*5.7	*2.4
15-29 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	414	100.0	*12.8	23.8	31.9	24.1	*3.9	*3.5
High school, 9-11 years	1,389	100.0	15.7	33.6	30.1	*13.7	*5.0	*1.8
High school, 12 years	3,079	100.0	17.5	33.4	37.5	9.6	*1.7	*0.2
College, 13-15 years	879	100.0	21.8	36.9	33.2	7.2	*0.7	*0.2
College, 16 years or more	670	100.0	26.6	35.0	32.0	5.7	-	*0.7
30-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	837	100.0	*4.3	7.4	21.4	21.0	14.8	31.0
High school, 9-11 years	1,291	100.0	*4.8	*10.2	17.7	25.4	14.5	27.4
High school, 12 years	3,402	100.0	*4.1	9.2	31.3	27.0	16.0	12.5
College, 13-15 years	1,085	100.0	*6.4	*9.7	35.2	26.3	16.7	*5.7
College, 16 years or more	893	100.0	*8.4	*13.4	41.1	23.5	*10.1	*3.6

Table 5. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age by number of children ever born, according to current labor force status, age, and age at first marriage: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

<i>Labor force status, age, and age at first marriage</i>	<i>Number of women in thousands</i>	<i>Children ever born</i>						
		<i>All women</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5 or more</i>
CURRENTLY IN LABOR FORCE		Percent distribution						
15-44 years								
Married at age 10-18	4,442	100.0	13.3	20.8	23.8	18.4	11.4	12.2
Married at age 19-22	6,611	100.0	30.8	20.0	23.8	15.7	*4.5	*5.2
Married at age 23-44	2,270	100.0	44.6	17.6	22.0	11.0	*2.5	*2.4
15-29 years								
Married at age 10-18	1,809	100.0	28.9	37.7	21.1	*9.8	*2.0	*0.5
Married at age 19-22	3,320	100.0	54.1	27.4	15.0	*3.0	*0.4	*0.0
Married at age 23-44	834	100.0	71.9	17.9	*9.1	*1.1	-	-
30-44 years								
Married at age 10-18	2,633	100.0	*2.6	*9.2	25.7	24.3	17.9	20.2
Married at age 19-22	3,291	100.0	*7.3	12.6	32.6	28.5	8.5	10.5
Married at age 23-44	1,436	100.0	28.7	17.5	29.4	16.7	*3.9	*3.8
CURRENTLY NOT IN LABOR FORCE								
15-44 years								
Married at age 10-18	5,277	100.0	10.0	18.9	28.2	19.3	11.5	12.0
Married at age 19-22	6,381	100.0	10.5	21.4	35.5	17.7	8.4	6.5
Married at age 23-44	2,107	100.0	15.5	23.1	31.4	19.3	*5.0	*5.7
15-29 years								
Married at age 10-18	2,734	100.0	16.3	29.9	34.9	13.0	*4.4	*1.5
Married at age 19-22	3,151	100.0	17.6	36.1	36.2	8.9	*0.8	*0.3
Married at age 23-44	475	100.0	33.3	37.9	22.0	*6.5	*0.1	*0.1
30-44 years								
Married at age 10-18	2,543	100.0	*3.3	*7.1	21.1	26.1	19.0	23.4
Married at age 19-22	3,230	100.0	*3.6	*7.0	34.9	26.2	15.8	12.5
Married at age 23-44	1,632	100.0	*10.3	18.8	34.1	23.0	*6.4	*7.3

Table 6. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age in the labor force by number of children ever born, according to percent of family income from wife's employment, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Percent of family income from wife's employment, age, and education	Number of women in thousands	Children ever born							
		All women	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more	
WIFE'S INCOME LESS THAN 25 PERCENT OF TOTAL									
15-44 years									
			Percent distribution						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	158	100.0	*12.4	*14.5	*20.2	*24.4	*23.8	*4.7	
High school, 9-11 years	477	100.0	*15.9	*19.5	*18.2	*17.2	*9.5	*19.7	
High school, 12 years	1,884	100.0	14.1	16.5	29.2	20.6	*9.7	*9.9	
College, 13-15 years	704	100.0	18.9	19.0	34.0	20.0	*4.6	*3.4	
College, 16 years or more	387	100.0	24.6	*15.5	33.2	24.4	*0.7	*1.7	
15-29 years									
Elementary school, 8 years or less	48	100.0	*13.9	*27.1	*20.1	*27.1	*11.7	-	
High school, 9-11 years	171	100.0	37.0	36.1	*17.5	*9.0	-	*0.4	
High school, 12 years	679	100.0	36.7	31.5	25.7	*5.3	*0.7	-	
College, 13-15 years	320	100.0	37.8	*30.8	*31.2	*0.3	-	-	
College, 16 years or more	164	100.0	48.0	32.7	*16.4	*2.9	-	-	
30-44 years									
Elementary school, 8 years or less	110	100.0	*11.7	*9.0	*20.3	*23.2	*29.0	*6.8	
High school, 9-11 years	306	100.0	*4.1	*10.1	*18.7	*21.8	*14.9	30.4	
High school, 12 years	1,205	100.0	*1.4	*8.1	31.2	29.2	14.7	15.5	
College, 13-15 years	384	100.0	*3.2	*9.2	36.3	36.5	*8.5	*6.3	
College, 16 years or more	224	100.0	*7.4	*2.8	45.4	40.1	*1.3	*2.9	
WIFE'S INCOME 25-49 PERCENT OF TOTAL									
15-44 years									
Elementary school, 8 years or less	138	100.0	*14.3	*13.7	*13.1	*11.3	*21.6	*26.0	
High school, 9-11 years	588	100.0	*13.1	*17.0	30.3	*17.5	*9.1	*13.0	
High school, 12 years	2,388	100.0	29.7	21.7	21.5	13.9	*6.4	*6.9	
College, 13-15 years	817	100.0	36.5	20.7	19.6	*13.4	*6.6	*3.2	
College, 16 years or more	913	100.0	45.7	*14.4	25.6	*8.3	*2.4	*3.7	
15-29 years									
Elementary school, 8 years or less	55	100.0	25.9	25.0	21.3	-	17.3	10.5	
High school, 9-11 years	171	100.0	31.0	25.3	25.1	16.9	1.4	0.4	
High school, 12 years	1,148	100.0	48.9	29.4	17.8	3.0	0.9	-	
College, 13-15 years	421	100.0	56.0	30.1	11.7	1.9	0.2	0.2	
College, 16 years or more	430	100.0	71.4	19.9	6.0	1.5	1.2	-	
30-44 years									
Elementary school, 8 years or less	83	100.0	6.6	6.3	7.6	18.8	24.4	36.3	
High school, 9-11 years	417	100.0	5.7	13.7	32.4	17.7	12.3	18.2	
High school, 12 years	1,240	100.0	11.9	14.6	24.9	23.9	11.4	13.2	
College, 13-15 years	396	100.0	15.8	10.7	27.9	25.8	13.5	6.4	
College, 16 years or more	483	100.0	22.9	9.5	43.0	14.3	3.4	7.0	
WIFE'S INCOME 50 PERCENT OF TOTAL OR MORE									
15-44 years									
Elementary school, 8 years or less	118	100.0	*5.6	*13.2	*16.0	*11.2	*11.2	42.9	
High school, 9-11 years	399	100.0	*12.3	28.2	22.5	*18.4	*7.9	*10.7	
High school, 12 years	1,290	100.0	33.0	28.7	19.6	13.7	*3.4	*1.6	
College, 13-15 years	432	100.0	49.6	20.9	*15.6	*6.9	*4.8	*2.3	
College, 16 years or more	739	100.0	56.8	20.3	*12.4	*7.6	*1.1	*1.7	
15-29 years									
Elementary school, 8 years or less	13	100.0	-	*42.1	*11.4	*35.8	-	*10.7	
High school, 9-11 years	159	100.0	*14.4	*41.6	*30.1	*13.3	*0.6	-	
High school, 12 years	793	100.0	45.0	35.2	*14.5	*3.9	*1.3	*0.1	
College, 13-15 years	305	100.0	66.1	*21.4	*10.8	*1.7	-	-	
College, 16 years or more	452	100.0	78.1	*15.3	*4.2	*2.3	-	-	
30-44 years									
Elementary school, 8 years or less	104	100.0	*6.3	*9.5	*16.5	*8.0	*12.6	47.0	
High school, 9-11 years	241	100.0	*11.0	*19.4	*17.5	*21.8	*12.7	*17.7	
High school, 12 years	496	100.0	*13.7	*18.4	27.7	29.4	*6.9	*4.0	
College, 13-15 years	128	100.0	*10.1	*19.6	*26.9	*19.3	*16.4	*7.8	
College, 16 years or more	287	100.0	*23.3	*28.2	*25.2	*16.0	*2.9	*4.4	

Table 7. Number and percent distribution of currently married, fertile¹ women 15-44 years of age by number of children ever born,² according to employment status in the first birth interval, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Employment status between marriage and first birth, age, and education	Number of women in thousands	All women with at least 1 child ever born	Children ever born				
			1	2	3	4	5 or more
EVER EMPLOYED							
15-44 years							
			Percent distribution				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	384	100.0	*16.2	28.4	30.6	*5.6	*19.1
High school, 9-11 years	1,137	100.0	30.5	34.1	17.3	*7.4	10.6
High school, 12 years	6,384	100.0	29.0	35.6	20.0	8.5	6.9
College, 13-15 years	1,956	100.0	31.0	36.9	20.3	*8.2	*3.7
College, 16 years or more	1,919	100.0	33.3	40.5	20.1	*4.6	*1.5
15-29 years							
Elementary school, 8 years or less	94	100.0	*29.8	53.4	*15.3	*1.6	-
High school, 9-11 years	376	100.0	48.1	35.1	*13.7	*1.6	*1.5
High school, 12 years	2,385	100.0	53.2	38.0	*7.7	*1.1	-
College, 13-15 years	766	100.0	56.7	37.7	*4.5	*0.9	*0.3
College, 16 years or more	633	100.0	58.4	33.4	*7.3	*0.8	-
30-44 years							
Elementary school, 8 years or less	290	100.0	*11.8	*20.4	35.6	*6.9	*25.3
High school, 9-11 years	761	100.0	21.8	33.7	19.1	*10.3	*15.1
High school, 12 years	4,000	100.0	14.6	34.1	27.3	12.9	11.1
College, 13-15 years	1,190	100.0	14.4	36.5	30.4	*12.8	*5.9
College, 16 years or more	1,286	100.0	21.0	44.0	26.4	*6.5	*2.2
NEVER EMPLOYED							
15-44 years							
Elementary school, 8 years or less	954	100.0	16.9	21.4	22.7	16.5	22.5
High school, 9-11 years	2,086	100.0	23.0	23.3	22.6	12.6	18.5
High school, 12 years	3,252	100.0	21.4	33.1	23.8	12.3	9.4
College, 13-15 years	935	100.0	25.1	35.2	21.7	*13.3	*4.6
College, 16 years or more	475	100.0	*18.0	48.3	*16.5	*5.6	*11.6
15-29 years							
Elementary school, 8 years or less	265	100.0	35.0	*24.8	*28.8	*6.0	*5.4
High school, 9-11 years	856	100.0	42.0	33.3	16.9	*6.4	*1.4
High school, 12 years	1,367	100.0	42.7	40.6	*13.3	*3.0	*0.4
College, 13-15 years	360	100.0	49.5	41.5	*9.0	-	-
College, 16 years or more	134	100.0	56.1	*35.2	*5.2	-	*3.5
30-44 years							
Elementary school, 8 years or less	689	100.0	*9.9	20.0	20.3	20.6	29.1
High school, 9-11 years	1,231	100.0	*9.7	16.4	26.5	17.0	30.4
High school, 12 years	1,885	100.0	*6.0	27.6	31.4	19.1	15.9
College, 13-15 years	575	100.0	*9.9	31.3	29.7	21.7	*7.5
College, 16 years or more	341	100.0	*3.0	53.5	*20.9	*7.9	*14.8

¹Women who have borne at least 1 child.

²Excludes women whose first birth occurred before first marriage.

Table 8. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age with at least 2 children by total number of children ever born, according to employment status in the second birth interval, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Employment status between first and second birth, age, and education	Number of women in thousands	Children ever born				
		All women with at least 2 children ever born	2	3	4	5 or more
EVER EMPLOYED						
15-44 years						
Percent distribution						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	329	100.0	28.9	33.2	*11.6	26.3
High school, 9-11 years	1,068	100.0	45.7	28.8	*8.9	16.6
High school, 12 years	2,837	100.0	56.0	26.5	*9.6	*7.9
College, 13-15 years	904	100.0	58.4	26.3	*11.2	*4.1
College, 16 years or more	669	100.0	70.5	25.0	*2.6	*1.9
15-29 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	99	100.0	51.7	*33.9	*8.6	*5.8
High school, 9-11 years	362	100.0	68.8	27.8	-	*3.4
High school, 12 years	1,001	100.0	80.7	15.7	*3.5	*0.1
College, 13-15 years	249	100.0	87.0	*12.4	*0.3	*0.3
College, 16 years or more	138	100.0	87.2	*12.8	-	-
30-44 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	229	100.0	*19.1	32.8	*12.9	35.2
High school, 9-11 years	706	100.0	33.8	29.4	*13.4	23.4
High school, 12 years	1,836	100.0	42.6	32.4	*12.8	*12.2
College, 13-15 years	655	100.0	47.5	31.6	*15.3	*5.6
College, 16 years or more	532	100.0	66.2	28.2	*3.3	*2.4
NEVER EMPLOYED						
15-44 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	1,075	100.0	28.2	25.2	18.8	27.7
High school, 9-11 years	1,893	100.0	31.0	26.2	17.8	25.0
High school, 12 years	5,047	100.0	42.2	30.6	14.8	12.4
College, 13-15 years	1,415	100.0	48.0	29.5	15.1	*7.3
College, 16 years or more	1,154	100.0	55.2	29.1	*9.6	*6.1
15-29 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	226	100.0	45.9	36.7	*10.4	*7.0
High school, 9-11 years	546	100.0	54.1	29.6	*13.6	*2.7
High school, 12 years	1,179	100.0	72.1	23.7	*3.7	*0.5
College, 13-15 years	339	100.0	80.1	*17.7	*1.8	*0.4
College, 16 years or more	213	100.0	75.4	*20.0	*2.5	*2.2
30-44 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	850	100.0	23.5	22.2	21.0	33.2
High school, 9-11 years	1,348	100.0	21.7	24.8	19.5	34.0
High school, 12 years	3,867	100.0	33.1	32.7	18.1	16.1
College, 13-15 years	1,076	100.0	38.0	33.2	19.3	*9.5
College, 16 years or more	941	100.0	50.6	31.1	*11.2	*7.0

Table 9. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age with at least 3 children by total number of children ever born, according to employment status in the third birth interval, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

<i>Employment status between second and third birth, age, and education</i>	<i>Number of women in thousands</i>	<i>Children ever born</i>			
		<i>All women with at least 3 children ever born</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5 or more</i>
EVER EMPLOYED					
15-44 years					
		Percent distribution			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	275	100.0	46.6	*15.7	37.7
High school, 9-11 years	605	100.0	47.5	25.1	27.4
High school, 12 years	1,266	100.0	64.0	18.0	18.0
College, 13-15 years	344	100.0	62.9	28.6	*8.5
College, 16 years or more	237	100.0	75.7	*11.4	*12.9
15-29 years					
Elementary school, 8 years or less	48	100.0	68.8	*19.3	*12.0
High school, 9-11 years	112	100.0	80.1	*8.7	*11.2
High school, 12 years	182	100.0	95.8	*3.8	*0.4
College, 13-15 years	15	100.0	94.8	-	5.2
College, 16 years or more	22	100.0	100.0	-	-
30-44 years					
Elementary school, 8 years or less	227	100.0	41.8	*14.9	43.2
High school, 9-11 years	493	100.0	40.0	28.9	31.1
High school, 12 years	1,084	100.0	58.7	20.4	21.0
College, 13-15 years	329	100.0	61.5	29.8	8.7
College, 16 years or more	215	100.0	73.2	12.6	14.2
NEVER EMPLOYED					
15-44 years					
Elementary school, 8 years or less	692	100.0	31.4	28.2	40.3
High school, 9-11 years	1,235	100.0	38.1	22.7	39.2
High school, 12 years	2,675	100.0	48.5	28.9	22.5
College, 13-15 years	736	100.0	57.3	28.6	*14.0
College, 16 years or more	459	100.0	69.9	*19.8	*10.4
15-29 years					
Elementary school, 8 years or less	119	100.0	67.6	*19.1	*13.3
High school, 9-11 years	225	100.0	65.1	*28.5	*6.3
High school, 12 years	289	100.0	72.9	*25.1	*2.0
College, 13-15 years	65	100.0	87.4	*10.5	*2.2
College, 16 years or more	34	100.0	86.0	-	*14.0
30-44 years					
Elementary school, 8 years or less	573	100.0	23.9	30.1	46.0
High school, 9-11 years	1,009	100.0	32.1	21.4	46.6
High school, 12 years	2,386	100.0	45.6	29.4	25.0
College, 13-15 years	671	100.0	54.4	30.4	*15.2
College, 16 years or more	425	100.0	68.6	21.3	*10.1

Table 10. Number and percent distribution of currently married, fertile¹ women 15-44 years of age by length of the first birth interval,² according to premarital employment status, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Employment status, age, and education	Number of women in thousands	Length of the first birth interval				
		All women with at least 1 child ever born	0-7 months	8-11 months	12-23 months	24 months or more
EVER EMPLOYED BEFORE MARRIAGE						
15-44 years		Percent distribution				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	631	100.0	*14.9	24.4	32.0	28.7
High school, 9-11 years	1,718	100.0	24.0	22.0	32.8	21.2
High school, 12 years	7,648	100.0	16.9	20.2	29.7	33.2
College, 13-15 years	2,375	100.0	15.4	17.4	28.7	38.4
College, 16 years or more	1,755	100.0	9.5	13.1	26.1	51.3
15-29 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	152	100.0	*26.9	*16.6	*26.2	*30.3
High school, 9-11 years	559	100.0	26.0	13.8	43.3	17.0
High school, 12 years	2,807	100.0	26.3	*14.5	28.3	30.8
College, 13-15 years	883	100.0	18.8	*13.1	26.8	41.3
College, 16 years or more	558	100.0	*14.5	*7.0	19.7	58.8
30-44 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	480	100.0	*11.1	26.8	33.8	28.2
High school, 9-11 years	1,159	100.0	23.1	26.0	27.6	23.3
High school, 12 years	4,841	100.0	11.5	23.5	30.5	34.5
College, 13-15 years	1,493	100.0	13.4	20.0	29.9	36.7
College, 16 years or more	1,197	100.0	*7.2	16.0	29.1	47.7
NEVER EMPLOYED BEFORE MARRIAGE						
15-44 years		Percent distribution				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	723	100.0	16.9	32.3	26.7	24.0
High school, 9-11 years	1,441	100.0	30.3	18.1	31.6	20.0
High school, 12 years	1,965	100.0	28.3	16.7	30.0	25.0
College, 13-15 years	530	100.0	30.2	*8.3	28.3	33.3
College, 16 years or more	625	100.0	*12.1	17.9	21.1	49.0
15-29 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	209	100.0	*26.9	42.1	*18.4	*12.7
High school, 9-11 years	661	100.0	39.2	*16.0	31.3	*13.4
High school, 12 years	917	100.0	34.0	14.6	26.8	24.6
College, 13-15 years	248	100.0	39.2	*2.4	*20.4	38.1
College, 16 years or more	197	100.0	*19.7	*9.4	*13.9	57.0
30-44 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	514	100.0	*12.8	28.2	30.2	28.8
High school, 9-11 years	780	100.0	22.5	20.0	31.8	25.7
High school, 12 years	1,048	100.0	23.3	18.5	32.9	25.4
College, 13-15 years	283	100.0	22.2	13.5	35.3	29.1
College, 16 years or more	428	100.0	8.5	21.8	24.3	45.4

¹Women who have borne at least 1 child.

²Excludes women whose first birth occurred before first marriage.

Table 11. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age with at least 1 child ever born by length of the first birth interval,¹ according to employment status in the first birth interval, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Employment status, age, and education	Number of women in thousands	Length of the first birth interval				
		All women with at least 1 child ever born	0-7 months	8-11 months	12-23 months	24 months or more
EVER EMPLOYED BETWEEN MARRIAGE AND FIRST BIRTH						
15-44 years		Percent distribution				
Elementary school, 8 years or less	384	100.0	*11.0	28.5	25.2	35.3
High school, 9-11 years	1,137	100.0	16.3	13.9	34.8	35.0
High school, 12 years	6,384	100.0	13.7	15.8	29.4	41.2
College, 13-15 years	1,956	100.0	10.4	10.9	30.9	47.8
College, 16 years or more	1,919	100.0	*5.8	11.6	21.9	60.7
15-29 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	94	100.0	*15.1	*31.4	*27.4	*26.0
High school, 9-11 years	376	100.0	*15.6	*10.1	47.8	26.5
High school, 12 years	2,385	100.0	20.2	10.6	28.7	40.6
College, 13-15 years	766	100.0	*11.6	*6.8	26.4	55.2
College, 16 years or more	633	100.0	*8.5	*6.1	*15.6	69.8
30-44 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	290	100.0	*9.7	27.6	24.5	38.2
High school, 9-11 years	761	100.0	16.7	15.8	28.2	39.3
High school, 12 years	4,000	100.0	9.8	18.9	29.8	41.5
College, 13-15 years	1,190	100.0	9.6	13.6	33.8	43.0
College, 16 years or more	1,286	100.0	4.5	14.3	25.0	56.2
NEVER EMPLOYED BETWEEN MARRIAGE AND FIRST BIRTH						
15-44 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	954	100.0	18.1	27.3	31.4	23.2
High school, 9-11 years	2,086	100.0	34.4	23.1	29.8	12.6
High school, 12 years	3,252	100.0	30.6	26.6	30.6	12.2
College, 13-15 years	935	100.0	34.5	26.0	22.7	16.7
College, 16 years or more	475	100.0	27.5	25.2	35.5	*11.9
15-29 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	265	100.0	31.1	30.9	*19.8	*18.2
High school, 9-11 years	856	100.0	42.1	16.7	31.5	9.7
High school, 12 years	1,367	100.0	42.8	21.2	26.5	*9.5
College, 13-15 years	360	100.0	48.6	*19.2	*21.9	*10.3
College, 16 years or more	134	100.0	47.9	*13.2	*28.7	*10.3
30-44 years						
Elementary school, 8 years or less	689	100.0	*13.0	25.9	35.9	25.2
High school, 9-11 years	1,231	100.0	28.9	27.7	28.7	14.7
High school, 12 years	1,885	100.0	21.8	30.5	33.6	14.2
College, 13-15 years	575	100.0	25.7	30.4	23.2	20.7
College, 16 years or more	341	100.0	*19.4	29.9	38.2	*12.5

¹Excludes women whose first birth occurred before first marriage.

Table 12. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age with at least 2 children ever born by length of the second birth interval, according to employment status in the second birth interval, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Employment status, age, and education	Number of women in thousands	Length of the second birth interval					
		All women with at least 2 children ever born	11 months or less	12-23 months	24-35 months	36-47 months	48 months or more
EVER EMPLOYED BETWEEN FIRST AND SECOND BIRTH							
15-44 years				Percent distribution			
Elementary school, 8 years or less	329	100.0	3.7	33.7	*24.7	*18.5	*19.4
High school, 9-11 years	1,068	100.0	2.7	*21.5	*23.0	20.6	32.1
High school, 12 years	2,837	100.0	3.4	23.0	28.3	19.5	25.8
College, 13-15 years	904	100.0	1.3	*27.6	*25.9	22.9	22.4
College, 16 years or more	669	100.0	1.5	*23.5	*23.3	*26.8	*24.9
15-29 years							
Elementary school, 8 years or less	99	100.0	-	41.2	*26.1	*28.8	*3.9
High school, 9-11 years	362	100.0	*2.5	25.2	*19.6	27.5	25.2
High school, 12 years	1,001	100.0	*2.0	22.1	29.1	22.0	24.8
College, 13-15 years	249	100.0	-	*22.6	*17.8	*27.8	31.9
College, 16 years or more	138	100.0	*1.2	*21.2	*29.4	*27.0	*21.3
30-44 years							
Elementary school, 8 years or less	229	100.0	*5.3	30.4	*24.1	*14.0	*26.2
High school, 9-11 years	706	100.0	*2.9	19.6	24.8	17.1	35.6
High school, 12 years	1,836	100.0	*4.2	23.5	27.8	18.1	26.3
College, 13-15 years	655	100.0	*1.8	29.5	29.0	21.0	18.8
College, 16 years or more	532	100.0	*1.6	24.1	21.7	26.7	25.9
NEVER EMPLOYED BETWEEN FIRST AND SECOND BIRTH							
15-44 years							
Elementary school, 8 years or less	1,075	100.0	*5.8	46.3	25.6	*10.7	*11.7
High school, 9-11 years	1,893	100.0	*4.9	51.8	20.5	11.5	11.3
High school, 12 years	5,047	100.0	*3.6	43.2	29.6	13.7	9.9
College, 13-15 years	4,415	100.0	*3.3	44.8	29.6	*12.7	*9.6
College, 16 years or more	1,154	100.0	*2.4	39.9	34.8	*13.5	*9.4
15-29 years							
Elementary school, 8 years or less	226	100.0	*5.4	50.6	*19.3	*16.5	*8.2
High school, 9-11 years	546	100.0	*6.7	49.7	22.0	*9.9	*11.6
High school, 12 years	1,179	100.0	*3.4	31.4	40.6	16.8	*7.7
College, 13-15 years	339	100.0	*1.7	47.8	29.5	13.2	*7.7
College, 16 years or more	213	100.0	*2.8	38.5	43.9	*9.9	*5.0
30-44 years							
Elementary school, 8 years or less	850	100.0	*5.9	45.1	27.2	*9.1	*12.7
High school, 9-11 years	1,348	100.0	*4.2	52.7	19.8	*12.1	*11.2
High school, 12 years	3,867	100.0	*3.6	46.8	26.3	12.7	10.6
College, 13-15 years	1,076	100.0	*3.8	43.9	29.7	*12.5	*10.2
College, 16 years or more	941	100.0	*2.3	40.3	32.7	14.4	*10.3

Table 13. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age by total expected family size, according to current labor force status, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Current labor force status, age, and education	Number of women in thousands	Total expected family size						
		All women	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
CURRENTLY IN LABOR FORCE								
15-44 years								
Percent distribution								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	550	100.0	*1.9	*11.2	22.3	20.2	21.9	22.3
High school, 9-11 years	1,785	100.0	*2.2	*11.3	34.9	20.5	*11.6	19.5
High school, 12 years	6,477	100.0	*2.3	12.4	43.8	24.8	9.2	7.4
College, 13-15 years	2,305	100.0	*3.5	12.4	50.7	21.9	*7.2	*4.3
College, 16 years or more	2,360	100.0	*8.2	10.7	58.1	16.6	*3.5	*2.8
15-29 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	132	100.0	-	*10.7	43.5	*21.2	*14.8	*9.8
High school, 9-11 years	549	100.0	*4.1	*14.9	54.3	*18.6	*5.2	*2.9
High school, 12 years	2,979	100.0	*2.6	14.6	57.8	18.8	*5.3	*1.0
College, 13-15 years	1,191	100.0	*3.5	*14.3	65.3	*11.9	*3.4	*1.6
College, 16 years or more	1,158	100.0	*7.7	*10.5	69.8	*8.9	*2.6	*0.5
30-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	418	100.0	*2.6	*11.4	*15.5	*19.9	24.2	26.3
High school, 9-11 years	1,236	100.0	*1.4	*9.9	26.8	21.2	14.3	26.4
High school, 12 years	3,498	100.0	*2.2	10.7	32.3	29.7	12.4	12.7
College, 13-15 years	1,113	100.0	*3.4	*10.5	36.3	31.8	*11.0	*7.1
College, 16 years or more	1,203	100.0	*8.8	*10.9	47.3	23.7	*4.4	*4.9
CURRENTLY NOT IN LABOR FORCE								
15-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	1,251	100.0	*1.3	*5.1	22.1	28.3	18.4	24.9
High school, 9-11 years	2,680	100.0	*1.1	8.6	34.3	24.4	14.1	17.6
High school, 12 years	6,481	100.0	*1.2	8.9	43.3	26.7	12.2	7.7
College, 13-15 years	1,964	100.0	*1.2	12.4	47.0	23.5	11.7	*4.2
College, 16 years or more	1,563	100.0	*2.6	*4.2	59.3	22.5	*8.4	*3.1
15-29 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	414	100.0	*0.4	*3.4	34.9	36.1	*18.3	*6.9
High school, 9-11 years	1,389	100.0	*1.3	*9.3	48.1	23.5	*12.5	*5.3
High school, 12 years	3,079	100.0	*1.1	11.2	57.7	21.5	*6.6	*1.9
College, 13-15 years	879	100.0	*1.7	16.1	60.3	16.7	*4.0	*1.3
College, 16 years or more	670	100.0	*5.2	*3.7	69.1	18.0	*1.9	*2.1
30-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	837	100.0	*1.7	5.9	15.6	24.5	18.4	33.8
High school, 9-11 years	1,291	100.0	*0.7	*7.8	19.6	25.4	15.7	30.7
High school, 12 years	3,402	100.0	*1.3	*6.9	31.2	31.1	16.9	12.6
College, 13-15 years	1,085	100.0	*0.7	*9.7	37.0	28.6	17.5	*6.4
College, 16 years or more	893	100.0	*0.9	*4.6	52.8	25.4	*12.7	*3.7

Table 14. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age by total expected family size, according to current labor force status, age, and age at first marriage: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Current labor force status, age, and age at first marriage	Number of women in thousands	Total expected family size						
		All women	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
CURRENTLY IN LABOR FORCE								
15-44 years								
Percent distribution								
Married at age 10-18	4,442	100.0	*1.3	10.6	37.8	23.0	14.1	13.3
Married at age 19-22	6,611	100.0	*3.2	12.1	48.2	23.7	6.4	6.3
Married at age 23-44	2,270	100.0	9.2	13.7	53.6	16.2	*4.7	*2.5
15-29 years								
Married at age 10-18	1,809	100.0	*2.2	14.5	54.4	19.4	*7.5	*1.9
Married at age 19-22	3,320	100.0	*4.1	13.7	62.3	14.8	*3.8	*1.3
Married at age 23-44	834	100.0	*5.8	*10.8	70.6	*10.4	*2.3	*0.1
30-44 years								
Married at age 10-18	2,633	100.0	*0.7	*8.0	26.8	25.3	18.4	20.7
Married at age 19-22	3,291	100.0	*2.4	10.6	34.5	32.3	8.9	11.3
Married at age 23-44	1,436	100.0	*11.1	15.3	44.4	19.4	*6.0	*3.9
CURRENTLY NOT IN LABOR FORCE								
15-44 years								
Married at age 10-18	5,277	100.0	*1.3	8.9	35.5	25.3	14.9	14.0
Married at age 19-22	6,381	100.0	*0.8	8.1	45.9	25.4	11.8	8.0
Married at age 23-44	2,107	100.0	*2.4	9.2	48.2	25.7	*8.2	*6.3
15-29 years								
Married at age 10-18	2,734	100.0	*1.4	10.6	50.7	23.8	9.3	*4.3
Married at age 19-22	3,151	100.0	*0.9	10.3	58.8	21.3	*6.9	*1.7
Married at age 23-44	475	100.0	*5.4	*7.7	66.1	*13.2	*6.0	*1.6
30-44 years								
Married at age 10-18	2,543	100.0	*1.3	*7.2	20.1	26.9	20.6	24.0
Married at age 19-22	3,230	100.0	*0.8	*6.0	34.4	29.0	16.2	13.6
Married at age 23-44	1,632	100.0	*1.6	*9.6	43.3	29.2	*8.8	*7.6

Table 15. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age in the labor force by total expected family size, according to occupation, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Occupation, age, and education	Number of women in thousands	Total expected family size						
		All women	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
PROFESSIONAL								
15-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	31	100.0	-	*20.4	-	*17.7	*43.2	*18.8
High school, 9-11 years	102	100.0	-	*2.7	*29.0	*28.4	*11.5	*28.4
High school, 12 years	967	100.0	*2.0	*10.8	40.4	26.4	*10.4	*9.9
College, 13-15 years	678	100.0	*2.3	*14.1	48.5	*17.9	*12.0	*5.2
College, 16 years or more	1,797	100.0	*7.9	12.2	57.7	15.3	*3.8	*3.2
Percent distribution								
15-29 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
High school, 9-11 years	5	100.0	-	-	100.0	-	-	-
High school, 12 years	372	100.0	*4.8	*11.0	56.1	*18.2	*7.4	*2.5
College, 13-15 years	235	100.0	*3.5	*16.4	70.3	*7.0	*2.5	*0.4
College, 16 years or more	795	100.0	*8.3	*10.9	72.8	*5.0	*3.0	-
30-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	31	100.0	-	*20.4	-	*17.7	*43.2	*18.8
High school, 9-11 years	97	100.0	-	*2.8	*25.0	*30.0	*12.2	*30.0
High school, 12 years	595	100.0	*0.2	*10.7	30.1	31.9	*12.4	*14.8
College, 13-15 years	443	100.0	*1.7	*12.9	38.0	23.2	*16.7	*7.6
College, 16 years or more	1,002	100.0	*7.5	13.2	45.5	23.6	*4.4	*5.8
SALES AND CLERICAL								
15-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	67	100.0	-	*6.0	*34.6	*35.9	*9.4	*14.1
High school, 9-11 years	492	100.0	*5.3	*12.1	41.2	*17.5	*11.4	*12.5
High school, 12 years	3,326	100.0	*1.8	13.1	44.5	25.1	9.1	*6.4
College, 13-15 years	1,193	100.0	*4.7	11.3	53.0	21.7	*6.0	*3.3
College, 16 years or more	453	100.0	*10.3	*6.8	62.7	*18.0	*0.4	*1.7
15-29 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	24	100.0	-	*7.3	*36.1	*9.0	*23.6	*24.0
High school, 9-11 years	147	100.0	*13.9	*19.8	41.6	*13.8	*5.6	*5.2
High school, 12 years	1,558	100.0	*1.3	15.1	58.0	19.9	*5.0	*0.7
College, 13-15 years	681	100.0	*3.8	11.2	64.9	15.0	*4.2	*0.9
College, 16 years or more	306	100.0	*7.2	11.0	63.1	16.6	-	*2.1
30-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	43	100.0	-	*5.2	*33.6	*53.6	-	*7.6
High school, 9-11 years	345	100.0	*1.7	*8.8	41.0	*19.0	*13.8	*15.7
High school, 12 years	1,769	100.0	*2.3	11.4	33.0	29.4	12.6	11.2
College, 13-15 years	512	100.0	*5.9	11.4	38.2	30.1	8.2	*6.2
College, 16 years or more	147	100.0	15.3	-	62.1	20.4	*1.1	*1.1
BLUE COLLAR								
15-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	444	100.0	*2.4	*11.5	*21.2	*18.4	22.6	23.8
High school, 9-11 years	1,182	100.0	*1.0	*11.8	32.3	21.2	*11.8	21.9
High school, 12 years	2,183	100.0	*3.3	12.1	44.2	23.7	*8.8	*7.9
College, 13-15 years	427	100.0	*2.0	*12.6	47.2	29.3	*2.9	*6.0
College, 16 years or more	105	100.0	*6.2	*1.4	51.2	*34.7	*6.5	-
15-29 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	108	100.0	-	*11.5	45.3	24.2	*12.7	*6.3
High school, 9-11 years	387	100.0	-	13.4	58.5	21.3	*5.1	*1.7
High school, 12 years	1,049	100.0	*3.8	15.1	58.0	17.2	*5.1	*0.8
College, 13-15 years	269	100.0	*3.0	20.3	61.2	*8.9	*2.3	*4.3
College, 16 years or more	56	100.0	-	*2.6	*58.7	*29.2	*9.5	-
30-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	336	100.0	*3.2	*11.5	*13.5	*16.6	25.8	29.4
High school, 9-11 years	794	100.0	*1.5	*11.2	20.6	21.2	*14.7	30.9
High school, 12 years	1,134	100.0	*2.9	*9.5	32.2	29.3	*12.1	14.1
College, 13-15 years	158	100.0	*0.6	*0.9	*26.0	60.1	*3.8	*8.5
College, 16 years or more	49	100.0	*13.5	-	*42.4	*41.2	*2.9	-

Table 16. Number and percent distribution of currently married women 15-44 years of age in the labor force by total expected family size, according to percent of family income from wife's employment, age, and education: United States, 1976

[Statistics are based on a sample of the household population of the conterminous United States. See appendixes for discussion of the sample design, estimates of sampling variability, and definitions of terms]

Percent of family income from wife's employment, age, and education	Number of women in thousands	Total expected family size						
		All women	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
WIFE'S INCOME LESS THAN 25 PERCENT OF TOTAL								
15-44 years								
Percent distribution								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	158	100.0	*4.9	*7.7	*26.0	*23.9	29.5	*7.9
High school, 9-11 years	477	100.0	*4.1	*6.1	35.5	*20.2	*12.9	*21.2
High school, 12 years	1,884	100.0	*1.1	*7.9	42.6	26.3	12.7	*9.4
College, 13-15 years	704	100.0	*0.9	*9.5	52.8	28.0	*5.5	*3.3
College, 16 years or more	387	100.0	*4.8	*5.3	56.7	28.9	*0.8	*3.5
15-29 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	48	100.0	-	*4.0	*36.2	*37.0	*13.1	*9.7
High school, 9-11 years	171	100.0	*4.7	*13.2	59.5	*14.6	*7.5	*0.4
High school, 12 years	679	100.0	*1.9	*10.5	61.1	17.5	*7.1	*2.0
College, 13-15 years	320	100.0	*1.9	*10.8	70.7	*12.7	*3.4	*0.5
College, 16 years or more	164	100.0	-	*9.0	71.6	*19.4	-	-
30-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	110	100.0	*7.2	*9.4	*21.3	*17.9	*37.1	*7.1
High school, 9-11 years	306	100.0	*3.8	*2.4	*22.9	23.1	*15.7	32.2
High school, 12 years	1,205	100.0	*0.6	*6.6	32.6	31.1	15.7	*13.5
College, 13-15 years	384	100.0	*0.2	*8.5	39.3	39.6	*7.0	*5.3
College, 16 years or more	224	100.0	*7.8	*3.0	47.5	34.8	*1.3	*5.6
WIFE'S INCOME 25-49 PERCENT OF TOTAL								
15-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	138	100.0	*1.0	*13.5	*25.9	*8.1	*23.9	*27.6
High school, 9-11 years	588	100.0	*1.0	*11.8	36.9	24.8	*10.1	*15.5
High school, 12 years	2,388	100.0	*2.2	14.0	42.4	24.5	*8.7	*8.2
College, 13-15 years	817	100.0	*5.0	*13.1	48.9	19.7	*8.6	*4.7
College, 16 years or more	913	100.0	*11.2	*9.8	60.6	*11.2	*3.1	*4.0
15-29 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	55	100.0	-	*18.4	*51.2	-	*19.0	*11.5
High school, 9-11 years	171	100.0	-	*19.4	48.3	*25.3	*2.1	*4.9
High school, 12 years	1,148	100.0	*2.0	*12.5	57.9	22.3	*4.0	*1.1
College, 13-15 years	421	100.0	*2.8	*17.6	63.3	*11.0	*2.8	*2.5
College, 16 years or more	430	100.0	*11.1	*10.7	69.7	*6.1	*2.5	-
30-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	83	100.0	*1.7	*10.2	*9.0	*13.6	*27.2	*38.3
High school, 9-11 years	417	100.0	*1.4	*8.9	32.6	24.5	*13.2	*19.5
High school, 12 years	1,240	100.0	*2.4	15.2	28.6	26.3	*12.9	14.6
College, 13-15 years	396	100.0	*7.1	*8.9	35.5	27.8	*13.9	*6.8
College, 16 years or more	483	100.0	*11.3	*9.1	52.2	*15.9	*3.8	*7.8
WIFE'S INCOME 50 PERCENT OF TOTAL OR MORE								
15-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	118	100.0	-	*9.6	*16.1	*11.3	*14.1	48.8
High school, 9-11 years	399	100.0	-	*18.1	38.0	*19.9	*9.3	*14.7
High school, 12 years	1,290	100.0	*4.2	14.8	51.4	20.9	*6.8	*1.9
College, 13-15 years	432	100.0	*4.9	*18.0	50.3	*16.0	*6.6	*4.3
College, 16 years or more	739	100.0	*7.9	16.6	56.1	*12.6	*4.9	*1.9
15-29 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	13	100.0	-	-	*53.6	*35.8	-	*10.7
High school, 9-11 years	159	100.0	-	*17.0	59.1	*17.2	*6.2	*0.6
High school, 12 years	793	100.0	*3.6	16.5	59.1	*14.0	*6.4	*0.3
College, 13-15 years	305	100.0	*4.3	*17.0	61.3	*11.1	*4.1	*2.2
College, 16 years or more	452	100.0	*8.5	*11.4	69.2	*7.1	*2.5	*1.3
30-44 years								
Elementary school, 8 years or less	104	100.0	-	*11.0	*10.6	*7.7	*16.2	54.5
High school, 9-11 years	241	100.0	-	*18.8	*25.5	*21.4	*11.2	*23.1
High school, 12 years	496	100.0	*5.2	*12.0	38.5	32.3	*7.4	*4.7
College, 13-15 years	128	100.0	*6.1	*20.0	*26.0	*27.0	*12.0	*8.9
College, 16 years or more	287	100.0	*7.1	*24.1	37.1	*20.6	*8.4	*2.7

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Appendix I. Technical notes

Background

This report is one of a series based on the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG) conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). The NSFG was designed to provide data on fertility, family planning, and aspects of maternal and child health that are closely related to childbearing.

The NSFG is a periodic survey based on personal interviews with a nationwide sample of women. A detailed description of the methods and procedures used in Cycle I of the NSFG can be found in "National Survey of Family Growth, Cycle I: Sample design, estimation procedures, and variance estimation," Series 2, No. 76, of *Vital and Health Statistics*.¹⁴ The present report is based on Cycle II of the NSFG. A detailed description of the methods and procedures of Cycle II can be found in "National Survey of Family Growth, Cycle II: Sample design, estimation procedures, and variance estimation," Series 2, No. 87 of *Vital and Health Statistics*.¹⁵ This appendix presents a summary discussion of the more important technical aspects of Cycle II.

Fieldwork for Cycle II was carried out under a contract with NCHS by Westat, Inc., between January and September of 1976. The sample is representative of women 15-44 years of age in the household population of the conterminous United States who were ever married or had coresident offspring. Interviews were completed with 8,611 women; 3,009 respondents were black women, and the other 5,602 respondents were of races other than black.

The interview focused on the respondents' marital and pregnancy histories, their use of contraception and the planning status of each pregnancy, their use of maternal care and family planning services, fecundity impairments and their expectations about future births, and a wide range of social and economic characteristics. Although the time required to com-

plete the interviews varied considerably, the average Cycle II interview lasted about 58 minutes.

Statistical design

The NSFG is based on a multistage area probability sample. Black households were sampled at higher rates than other households so that reliable estimates of statistics could be presented separately for white and black women. In addition, the sample was designed to provide tabulations for each of the four major geographic regions of the United States.

The first stage of the sample design consisted of drawing a sample of primary sampling units (PSU's). A PSU consisted of a county, a small group of contiguous counties, or standard metropolitan statistical area as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census in 1970. The second and third stages of sampling were used to select several segments (clusters of 15 to about 60 dwelling units) within each PSU. A systematic sample of dwelling units was then selected from each segment. Each sample dwelling unit was visited by an interviewer who listed all household members. If a woman 15-44 years of age, ever-married or never-married with offspring in household, was listed as being in the household, an extended interview was conducted. If more than one woman in the household met the eligibility criteria, one of the women was randomly selected for an extended interview.

The statistics in this report are estimates for the national population and were computed by multiplying each sample case by the number of women she represented in the population. The multipliers, or final weights, ranged from 647 to 43,024 and averaged 3,822. They were derived by using three basic steps:

- *Inflation by the reciprocal of the probability of selection.*—The probability of selection is the product of the probabilities of selection of the PSU, segment, household, and sample person within the household.

NOTE: A list of references follows the text.

- *Nonresponse adjustment.*—The weighted estimates were ratio adjusted for nonresponse by a multiplication of two factors. The first factor adjusted for nonresponse to the screener by imputing the characteristics of women in responding households to women in nonresponding households in the same PSU and stratum. The second factor adjusted for nonresponse to the interview by imputing the characteristics of responding women to nonresponding women in the same age-race category and PSU. Response to the screener was 93.8 percent; the response to the interview was 88.2 percent, yielding a combined response rate of approximately 82.7 percent.
- *Poststratification by marital status, age, and race.*—The estimates were ratio adjusted within each of the 12 age-race categories to an independent estimate of the population of ever-married women. The independent estimates were derived from the U.S. Bureau of the Census Current Population Surveys of March 1971-March 1976. The numbers of never-married women with coresident offspring were inflated by the first and second steps only.

The effect of the ratio-estimating process was to make the sample more closely representative of the population of women 15-44 years of age living in households in the conterminous United States, who were ever married or with coresident offspring. The final poststratification reduced the sample variance of the estimates for most statistics.

All figures were individually rounded; aggregate figures (numbers) were rounded to the nearest thousand. Aggregate numbers and percents may not sum to the total because of the rounding.

Measurement process

Field operations for Cycle II included pretesting the interview schedule, selecting the sample, interviewing respondents, and performing specified quality control checks. Interviewers, all of whom were female, were trained for 1 week prior to fieldwork. The first five interview schedules were reviewed; after a high level of quality was achieved by an interviewer, this review was reduced to a sample of questionnaires, unless an unacceptable level of accuracy was found. A 10-percent sample of respondents was recontacted by telephone to verify that the interview had taken place and that certain key items were accurately recorded.

A portion of the interview schedule applicable to this report is reproduced in appendix III. The complete schedule for currently married women was reprinted elsewhere.¹⁶ Two different forms of the questionnaire were used, one for interviewing cur-

rently married women and the other for interviewing widowed, divorced, separated, or never-married women with coresident offspring. The two forms differed mainly in wording when reference was made to the husband; some questions in one schedule did not appear in the other.

Data reduction

The responses of each woman to the interview questions were translated into predetermined numerical codes, and these code numbers were recorded on computer tapes. The first few questionnaires coded by each coder were checked completely; after an acceptable level of quality was reached, verification of coding was performed on a systematic sample of each coder's questionnaires. The data were edited by computer to identify inconsistencies between responses, as well as code numbers that were not allowed in the coding scheme; these errors were corrected.

Missing data on age and race were imputed because they were used in the nonresponse adjustments and for poststratification purposes. Unlike Cycle I, however, other missing data were not imputed to expedite release of the data. Therefore, percents and other statistics in Cycle II were based on cases with known data. For most variables, the level of missing data was less than 1 percent. The level of missing data is noted in the section entitled "Definitions of terms" for each item that was missing 2 percent or more of the responses. This fact is noted in the text for those few variables for which missing data may pose a problem for analysis (for example, poverty level income).

Reliability of estimates

Because the statistics presented in this report are based on a sample, they may differ somewhat from the figures that would have been obtained if a complete census had been taken by using the same questionnaires, instructions, interviewing personnel, and field procedures. This chance difference between sample results and a complete count is referred to as sampling error.

Sampling error is measured by a statistic called the standard error of estimate. The chances are about 68 out of 100 that an estimate from the sample would differ from a complete count by less than the standard error. The chances are about 95 out of 100 that the difference between the sample estimate and a complete count would be less than twice the standard error. The relative standard error of an estimate is obtained by dividing the standard error of the estimate by the estimate itself, and is expressed as a percent of the estimate. Numbers and percents that have a relative standard error that is more than 25

NOTE: A list of references follows the text.

percent are considered unreliable. These figures are marked with an asterisk to caution the user but may be combined to make other types of comparisons of greater reliability.

Estimation of standard errors.—Because of the complex multistage design of the NSFG sample, conventional formulas for calculating sampling errors are inapplicable. Standard errors were, therefore, estimated empirically by using a technique known as balanced half-sample replication. This technique produces highly reliable, unbiased estimates of sampling errors. Its application to the NSFG has been described elsewhere.^{14,15}

Because it would be prohibitively expensive to estimate, and cumbersome to publish, a standard error for each percent or other statistic by this technique, standard errors were computed for selected statistics and population subgroups that were chosen to represent a wide variety of demographic characteristics and a wide variation in the size of the estimates themselves. Curves were then fitted to the relative standard error estimates (ratio of the standard error to the estimate itself) for numbers of women according to the model

$$RSE(N') = (A + B/N')^{1/2}$$

where N' is the number of women and A and B are the parameters whose estimates determine the shape of the curve. Separate curves were fitted for women of all races combined, black women, and women of races other than black, because different sampling rates were used for black and other women. The estimates of A and B are shown in table I.

To calculate the estimated standard error or relative standard error of an aggregate or percent, the appropriate estimates of A and B are used in the equations:

$$RSE_{N'} = (A + B/N')^{1/2}$$

$$SE_{N'} = (A + B/N')^{1/2} \times N'$$

$$RSE_{P'} = (B/P' \times (100 - P')/X')^{1/2}$$

$$SE_{P'} = (B \times P' \times (100 - P')/X')^{1/2}$$

where

N' = number of women

P' = percent

X' = number of women in the denominator of the percent

SE = standard error

RSE = relative standard error

Tables II and III show some illustrative standard errors of aggregates and percents of currently married women of all races from Cycle II of NSFG.

Testing differences.—The standard error of a difference between two comparative statistics such as the proportion of those who are surgically sterile among white couples compared with black couples is approximately the square root of the sum of the squares of the standard errors of the statistics considered separately, or calculated by the formula:

if

$$d = P'_1 - P'_2$$

then

$$\sigma_d = \sqrt{(P'_1)^2 \cdot (RSE_{P'_1})^2 + (P'_2)^2 \cdot (RSE_{P'_2})^2}$$

where P'_1 is the estimated percent for one group and P'_2 is the estimated percent for the other group, and $RSE_{P'_1}$ and $RSE_{P'_2}$ are the relative standard errors of P'_1 and P'_2 , respectively. This formula will represent the actual standard error quite accurately for the

Table I. Parameters used to compute estimated standard errors and relative standard errors of numbers and percents of women, by marital status and race: 1976 National Survey of Family Growth

Marital status and race	Parameter	
	A	B
Currently married		
All races	-0.0001858989	6751.0619
Black	-0.0006310400	2798.6440
White and all other	-0.0002056235	7021.1665
Ever married		
All races	0.0001700390	6486.5185
Black	-0.0004520643	2848.2362
White and all other	0.0000422037	7111.5185

Table II. Approximate relative standard errors and standard errors for estimated numbers of currently married women of all races combined: 1976 National Survey of Family Growth

Size of estimate	Relative standard error	Standard error
50,000	36.7	18,000
100,000	25.9	26,000
500,000	11.5	58,000
1,000,000	8.1	81,000
3,000,000	4.5	136,000
5,000,000	3.4	171,000
7,000,000	2.8	195,000
10,000,000	2.2	221,000
20,000,000	1.2	246,000

NOTE: A list of references follows the text.

Table III. Approximate standard errors expressed in percentage points for estimated percents of currently married women of all races combined: 1976 National Survey of Family Growth

Base of percent	Estimated percent								
	2 or 98	5 or 95	7 or 93	10 or 90	15 or 85	20 or 80	30 or 70	40 or 60	50
	Standard error expressed in percentage points								
100,000	3.6	5.7	6.6	7.8	9.3	10.4	11.9	12.7	13.0
500,000	1.6	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.2	4.7	5.3	5.7	5.8
1,000,000	1.2	1.8	2.1	2.5	2.9	3.3	3.8	4.0	4.1
3,000,000	0.7	1.0	1.2	1.4	1.7	1.9	2.2	2.3	2.4
5,000,000	0.5	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.3	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.8
7,000,000	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.6
10,000,000	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.3
20,000,000	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.9

Example of use of table III: If 30 percent of currently married women in a specific category used the oral contraceptive pill and the base of that percent was 10,000,000, then the 30-percent column and the 10,000,000 row would indicate that 1 standard error is 1.2 percentage points and 2 standard errors are twice that, or 2.4 percentage points. Therefore, the chances are about 95 out of 100 that the true percent in the population was between 27.6 and 32.4 percent (30.0 percent \pm 2.4 percent). This is called a 95-percent confidence interval. In addition, the relative standard error of that 30-percent estimate is 1.2 percent divided by 30 percent or 4.0 percent.

difference between separate and uncorrelated characteristics although it is only a rough approximation in most other cases.

A statistically significant difference among comparable proportions or other statistics from two or more subgroups is sufficiently large when a difference of that size or larger would be expected by chance in less than 5 percent of repeated samples of the same size and type if no true difference existed in the populations sampled. Such a difference would be statistically significant at the 0.05 level. By this criterion, if the observed difference or a larger one could be expected by chance in more than 5 percent of repeated samples, then one cannot be sufficiently confident to conclude that a real difference exists between the populations. When an observed difference is large enough to be statistically significant, the true difference in the population is estimated to lie between the observed difference plus or minus 2 standard errors of that difference in 95 out of 100 samples.

Although the 5-percent criterion is conventionally applied, it is in a sense arbitrary; depending on the purpose of the particular comparison, a different level of significance may be more useful. For greater confidence one would test for significance at the 0.01 (1-percent) level, but if one can accept a 10-percent chance of concluding a difference exists when there actually is none in the population, a test of significance at the 0.10 level would be appropriate.

The term "similar" means that any observed difference between two estimates being compared is not statistically significant, but terms such as "greater," "less," "larger," and "smaller" indicate that the observed differences are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, by using a two-tailed *t*-test with 40 degrees of freedom. Statements about differences that are qualified in some way (for example, by the

phrases "the data suggest" or "some evidence") indicate that the difference is significant at the 0.10 level but not at the 0.05 level.

When a substantial difference observed is found not to be statistically significant, one should not conclude that no difference exists, but simply that such a difference cannot be established with 95-percent confidence from this sample. Lack of comment in the text about any two statistics does *not* mean that the difference was tested and found not to be significant.

The number of replicates in the balanced half-sample replication design (40 for Cycle II) can reasonably be used as an estimate of the number of degrees of freedom, although the exact value of the degrees of freedom is unknown. Therefore, in this report, differences between sample statistics are compared by using a two-tailed *t*-test with 40 degrees of freedom.

Example: In 1976, 29.0 percent of 24,795,000 currently married white women or their husbands had been surgically sterilized, compared with 21.6 percent of 2,169,000 currently married black women or their husbands. To test this racial difference at the 0.05 level of significance, compute

$$t = \frac{29.0 - 21.6}{\sqrt{(29.0)^2 \cdot RSE_{(29.0)}^2 + (21.6)^2 \cdot RSE_{(21.6)}^2}}$$

By using the parameters from table I in the formula for the RSE of a percent,

$$RSE_{(29.0)} = \sqrt{\frac{7021.1665}{29.0} \cdot \frac{(100 - 29.0)}{24,795,000}} = 0.026$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} \text{RSE}_{(21.6)} &= \sqrt{\frac{2798.6440}{21.6} \cdot \frac{(100 - 21.6)}{2,169,000}} \\ &= 0.068 \end{aligned}$$

Thus

$$\begin{aligned} t &= \frac{29.0 - 21.6}{\sqrt{(29.0)^2(0.026)^2 + (21.6)^2(0.068)^2}} \\ &= 4.48 \end{aligned}$$

The two-tailed 0.95 critical value ($1 - \alpha$) for a t statistic with 40 degrees of freedom is 2.02. Therefore, the difference is significant at that 0.05 level.

Nonsampling error

Although sampling error affects the precision or reliability of survey estimates, nonsampling error introduces bias. To minimize nonsampling error, stringent quality control procedures were introduced at every stage of the survey, including a check on completeness of the household listing; extensive training and practice of interviewers; field editing of questionnaires; short verification interviews with a subsample of respondents; verification of coding and editing; and independent recode of a sample of questionnaires by NCHS; keypunch verification; and an extensive computer "cleaning" to check for inconsistent responses, missing data, and invalid codes. A detailed description of some of these procedures follows; others were previously discussed.

The results of any survey are subject to at least four types of potential nonsampling errors, including interview nonresponse; nonresponse to individual questions or items within the interview; inconsistency of responses to questions; and errors of recording, coding, and keying by survey personnel.

A discussion of interview nonresponse and item nonresponse follows. The third and fourth types of errors cannot be accurately measured, but the quality control procedures (some of which are discussed under the sections "Measurement process" and "Data reduction") of the survey were designed to reduce such nonsampling errors to a minimum.

Interview nonresponse.—Interview nonresponse occurs when no part of an interview is obtained. It can result from failures at any of three principal steps: (1) failing to list all households in sample segments, (2) failing to screen all listed households, and (3) failing to interview an eligible woman in each screened household. A discussion of these steps follows.

The completeness of listing cannot be tested directly because it requires an independent, accurate

enumeration of the households that should have been listed. In NSFG, listing completeness and accuracy were tested indirectly in two ways. First, an independent relisting of about 20 percent of the segments was performed, and any differences between the two lists were pointed out to listers by supervisory staff and reconciled. Second, listing accuracy was tested by the missed dwelling unit (DU) procedure at the time of screening: if the first structure in a segment was included in the sample, the whole segment was checked to see if any structures had been missed in the listing process; if the first structure was a multiple-DU structure, the entire structure was checked for missed DU's. About 700 dwelling units, or about 2 percent of the sample of DU's designated for screening, were included in the sample as a result of the missed DU procedure.

Of the original sample of 32,653 DU's screened, 5,490 were found vacant, not DU's, or group quarters. Of the remaining DU's, 6.2 percent were not screened successfully. This figure included 2.5 percent refusals to have household members listed, 0.4 percent with language problems, 1.7 percent where no one could be found at home, and 1.7 percent for other reasons such as being refused access to the unit or because of illness.

Of the 25,480 households for which screening was completed, 10,202 were found to contain an eligible respondent. However, interviews were not completed in 11.8 percent of these cases because of refusals by the eligible respondents (5.8 percent), language problems (0.6 percent), no contact after repeated calls (1.8 percent), or other problems (3.6 percent).

The nonresponse adjustment for interview nonresponse described earlier imputes the characteristics of responding women of the same age group, race, marital status, and geographic area to nonresponding women.

Item nonresponse.—Item nonresponse may have occurred when a respondent refused to answer a question or did not know the answer to a question, when the question was erroneously not asked or the answer was not recorded by the interviewer, or where the answer was not codable. Nonresponse to individual questions was very low in Cycle II, as in Cycle I. Some examples of item nonresponse among a total of 8,611 respondents are number of pregnancies, 3 cases; religion of respondent, 17 cases; religion of husband, 232 cases; education, 14 cases; occupation, 185 cases; and poverty-level income, 1,348 cases. Most of the items with relatively high levels of missing data were characteristics of the respondent's current or last husband, and the sources and amount of income.

Unlike Cycle I of NSFG, missing data items were not imputed in Cycle II, except for a few respondents with missing information on age and race, which were

required for the nonresponse and poststratification adjustments. A small amount of missing data was tolerated in Cycle II to facilitate faster release of data and data tapes from NSFG. Assignment of missing data codes and editing of selected variables were performed by the NSFG staff when necessary or desirable for analysis, as explained in the appropriate section of the definitions.

As with all survey data, responses to NSFG are subject to possible deliberate misreporting by the respondent. Such misreporting cannot be detected directly, but it can be detected indirectly by the extensive computer "cleaning" and editing procedures used in NSFG.

Appendix II. Definitions of terms

Household population.—The household population consists of persons living in households. A household is a person or a group of persons, where no more than five persons are unrelated to the head of the household, who occupy a room or group of rooms intended as separate living quarters; that is, the occupants do not live and eat with any other persons in the structure. Either direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall, or complete kitchen facilities for the exclusive use of the occupants of the household must be present.

Marital status.—Persons were classified as “married,” “widowed,” “divorced,” “separated,” or “never married.” Married persons included those who reported themselves as married or as informally married (living with a partner or a common-law spouse). Persons who were temporarily separated for reasons other than marital discord, such as vacation, illness, or Armed Forces duty were classified as “married.”

Race.—Classification by race was based on interviewer observation and was reported as black, white, or other. Race refers to the race of the woman interviewed.

Age.—Age of women at different events in their lives is classified according to the last completed year or age at last birthday. Age is generally calculated by subtracting the reported date (month and year) of birth from the reported date of the event for which age is being calculated. In some instances, the month of an event was unreported and age was then calculated by using the years only. In other instances, the respondent did not recall a given date but did recall her age at the time of the event and reported this directly.

Age of the respondent at the interview (current age) was known for every case because this was a sampling criterion. However, for other events (such as marriage, birth of a child, or divorce) the date may not have been completely reported, or neither date nor age at the event may have been recorded. In these

cases, age was imputed by imputing a year in which the event was presumed to have occurred. These imputations were then checked for consistency with the dates and ages reported at other related events.

Education.—Education was classified according to the highest grade or year of regular school or college that was completed. Determination of the highest year of regular school or college completed by the respondent was based on responses to a series of questions concerning (a) the last grade or year of school attended, (b) whether that grade was completed, (c) whether any other vocational or nonacademic schooling was obtained, and (d) whether such other schooling was included in the years of regular school or college reported in (a).

Children ever born.—The number of children born alive to a woman.

Birth interval.—A birth interval is the period between marriage and the date of a woman’s first live birth, or between the dates of two successive live births (if she has had more than one), or between the date of her most recent live birth (or marriage if she has had no live births) and the interview. The latter interval is called the “open” interval, because it has not been “closed” by a birth; the other intervals are “closed” intervals. Closed intervals are numbered from the earliest to the most recent. Also, the first interval is only defined when marriage precedes the first live birth. The dates of births needed to define birth intervals are obtained from each respondent as part of the complete history of her pregnancies.

Total births expected.—The number of children a woman expects to have by the time she completes her childbearing. This number is the sum of the children ever born and the additional births expected. Additional births expected are the number of children a woman expects to give birth to in the future, including current pregnancy, if applicable. Women who were sterile or married to sterile men were classified as “expecting zero additional births.” Those physically able to have births were asked whether

they and their husbands intended to have any babies in the future and, if so, how many. Women who did not know whether they intended any future births, or did not know a particular number they intended to have, were asked for the smallest and largest numbers they expected to have. Women who reported a particular number of children they intended to have were asked how sure they were about having specifically that number. Those uncertain of having that specific number were asked for the maximum and minimum numbers they expected to have.

For each woman, there is a maximum, minimum, and central number of additional births expected. If a woman reported the specific number of births she intended to have, that number was considered the central number she expected. If she was sure about it, that was also the minimum and maximum number she expected. For a woman who was not sure of having her intended number, the smallest and largest numbers she expected were her minimum and maximum numbers, respectively. For a woman who did not report any specific number of intended future births, the average of the smallest and the largest numbers expected became her central expected number. In this report, total births expected refers to the central number.

Employment in life-cycle stages.—In addition to her current employment status, respondents were asked: “Did you ever work for pay continuously for 6 months or more either part-time or full-time?” in various, specified earlier periods as appropriate: before first marriage, since first marriage, between marriage and first birth, between first and second birth, between second and third birth, and between the third and last birth. Within these periods, women were classified as “employed” if they worked for pay continuously for 6 months or more and classified as “not employed” if they did not. The rate of nonresponse to these questions was low, its maximum was for questions about employment between the births of the third and the last child: Employment status was not ascertained for 3 percent of women asked about the period, and duration of employment was not ascertained for 9 percent. Missing values were imputed.

Labor force status.—A woman was categorized as being “in the labor force” if she was working full time; part time; had a job, but was not at work because of temporary illness, vacation, or a strike; or if she was unemployed, laid off, or looking for work.

Income.—To determine the wife’s income, women who had ever worked were asked: “How much did

you earn on this job?” If the woman had had more than one job, she was asked about her earnings on the last job. If the woman did not know her income or refused to answer the question the interviewer continued: “Here is a card showing amounts of weekly and yearly earnings. Next to each amount is a letter. Would you tell me which *letter* represents your salary on this job?”

Weekly incomes were converted to annual amounts. To determine family income, women were asked: “In the past 12 months—that is, since (month/year), what was your total combined family income, that is, yours, your husband’s, and any other family member living here now? Include income from all sources, such as wages, salaries, Social Security, or retirement benefits, help from relatives, rent from property, and so forth.”

If the woman did not know or refused to answer, the interviewer continued by handing her a card, as described earlier. For a woman in the labor force, earnings from her last job, if any, were divided by total family income, to obtain the percent of family income derived from the wife’s employment. It should be noted that the wife’s total contribution to family income may have been greater than stated, because she may have had income from sources other than her employment. About 6 percent of women who ever worked did not report their earnings on the last job, and about 13 percent of women did not report family income in the last 12 months.

Occupation.—Occupation was determined by asking women: “What (is/was) your (main) occupation? That is, what (is/was) your job called? What (are/were) your most important activities or duties? What kind of place (do/did) you work for? What do they make or do?” The answers to those questions were recorded verbatim and used by coders to find the most appropriate standard job title in the 1970 U.S. Census occupation classification. If the responses indicated more than one occupation, the primary occupation was coded. If none was primary, the first-mentioned occupation was coded. Although the classification used was very detailed, occupations have been grouped into major categories for this report, according to the practice of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. For a more detailed discussion, see the Department of Commerce publication, *1970 Census of Population, Detailed Characteristics, U.S. Summary*.¹³

NOTE: A list of references follows the text.

Appendix III. Selected sections of the Currently-Married Women Questionnaire of the National Survey of Family Growth

Box 44. IF 1ST BIRTH BEFORE (FIRST) MARRIAGE (CHECK DATES ON B & P RECORD), CONTINUE. OTHERWISE, GO TO F-19.

F-18. Before the birth of your (first) child, did you ever work for pay continuously for six months or more either part-time or full-time?

Yes 1 43
No 2

Box 45. IF TWO OR MORE LIVE BIRTHS, GO TO F-19C. OTHERWISE, GO TO BOX 46.

F-19. ASK ALL THAT APPLY, THEN GO TO BOX 46.

Did you ever work for pay continuously for six months or more either part-time or full-time:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	
A. . . . before you were (first) married?	1	2	44
B. IF ANY LIVE BIRTHS: . . . between the time of your (first) marriage and the birth of your (first) child?	1	2	45
C. IF 2 OR MORE LIVE BIRTHS: . . . between the birth of your first child and the birth of your second child?	1	2	46
D. IF 3 OR MORE LIVE BIRTHS: . . . between the birth of your second child and the birth of your third child?	1	2	47
E. IF 4 OR MORE LIVE BIRTHS: . . . between the birth of your third child and the birth of your last child?	1	2	48

Box 46. IF NO LIVE BIRTHS, GO TO F-24.

IF ONE OR MORE LIVE BIRTHS **AND** "YES" TO LAST QUESTION ASKED, GO TO F-20.
"NO" TO LAST QUESTION ASKED, GO TO F-22.

F-20. How long before the delivery of your (last) child did you stop working?

Less than one month 00 (F-21)
NUMBER OF MONTHS _____ (F-21) 49 50
One year or more 12 (F-22)

F-21. Why did you stop when you did? (RECORD VERBATIM. IF "BECAUSE PREGNANT," PROBE.)

_____ 51 52

F-22. Have you worked for pay continuously for six months or more either part-time or full-time since your (last) child was born?

Yes 1 (F-23) 53
No 2 (F-25)

F-23. In what month and year did you begin to work after your (last) child was born?

MONTH/YEAR (F-25) 54 55 56 57

F-24. Since you were (first) married, have you ever worked for pay continuously for six months or more either part-time or full-time?

Yes 1 58
No 2

F-25. How many weeks during the past 12 months did you work either full-time or part-time, including paid vacations and paid sick leave?

NUMBER OF WEEKS _____ (Box 47) 59 60
Did not work 00 (F-32)

Box 47. IF R CURRENTLY PREGNANT AND WORKED IN LAST 12 MONTHS, CONTINUE. OTHERWISE, GO TO F-32.

F-26. Last week, were you working full-time, part-time, going to school, keeping house, or what? (CIRCLE ONE CODE ONLY. IF MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE, CODE RESPONSE WITH SMALLEST NUMBER.)

Working full-time (35 hours or more) 01 (F-27)
Working part-time (1 to 34 hours). 02 (F-27)
With a job but not at work because of temporary illness, vacation, strike. 03 (F-27)
With a job but on maternity leave. 04 (F-28) 61-62
Unemployed, laid off, looking for work 05 (F-27)
In school. 06 (F-28)
Keeping house. 07 (F-28)
Other (SPECIFY) _____ 08 (F-28)

F-27. How long before the end of your current pregnancy do you plan to stop (working/looking for work)?

NUMBER OF WEEKS OR NUMBER OF MONTHS (F-29)
Is not going to stop 00 (F-30) 63 64

F-28. When did you stop working?

MONTH/YEAR

65 66 67 68

BEGIN DECK 20

F-29. Why (did/will) you stop at that time? (RECORD VERBATIM. IF "BECAUSE PREGNANT," PROBE.)

13 14

F-30. After this pregnancy, do you expect to (return to/look for) a job at some time in the future?

Yes 1 (F-31)
No 2 (Box 48) 15
Don't know 8 (Box 48)

F-31. When do you expect to begin working (again)?

MONTH/YEAR

16 17 18 19

Box 48. IF CURRENTLY WORKING, GO TO Box 49. IF NOT CURRENTLY WORKING, GO TO F-38.

F-32. Last week, were you working full-time, part-time, going to school, keeping house, or what? (CIRCLE ONE CODE ONLY. IF MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE, CODE RESPONSE WITH SMALLEST NUMBER.)

- Working full-time (35 hours or more) 01 (Box 49)
- Working part-time (1 to 34 hours). 02 (Box 49)
- With a job but not at work because of temporary illness, vacation, strike. 03 (Box 49)
- Unemployed, laid off, looking for work 05 (Box 49) 20-21
- In school. 06 (F-33)
- Keeping house. 07 (F-33)
- Other (SPECIFY) _____ 08 (F-33)

F-33. Do you expect to look for a job sometime in the future?

- Yes. 1 (F-34)
- No 2 (Box 50) 22
- Don't know 8 (Box 50)

F-34. When do you expect to begin working (again)?

- _____/____/_____ (Box 50)
- MONTH/YEAR
- Don't know 98 (Box 50)

23	24	25	26

Box 49. IF CHILD(REN) AGED 0-12 IN HOUSEHOLD, (SEE SCREENER), CONTINUE. OTHERWISE, GO TO BOX 50.

F-35. Do you have any regular arrangement for the care of your child(ren) while you are working, with a family member or outside the family?

- Yes. 1 (F-36) 27
- No 2 (Box 50)

F-36. Who takes care of your child(ren) and where? (CODE ALL THAT APPLY.)

- By husband, in respondent's home 01
- By other relative, in respondent's home. 02
- By non-relative, in respondent's home. 03
- In relative's home 04 28-29
- In non-relative's home 05
- In day care or other special organized facility. . 06
- Other (SPECIFY) _____ 07

F-37. During the average week of the school year, how many hours per week of child care do you use for (your child/each of your children)? (RECORD HOURS FOR EACH CHILD AGED 0-12. RECORD "0" IF NO DAY CARE. CARE BY ANOTHER CHILD AGED 0-12 DOES NOT COUNT AS DAY CARE.)

CHILD NUMBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	30	31	32
HOURS	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____			

Box 50. IF R HAS EVER WORKED, CONTINUE. OTHERWISE, GO TO F-44.

F-38. What (is/was) your (last) occupation? That is, what (is/was) your job called?

F-39. What (are/were) your most important activities or duties?

F-40. What kind of place (do/did) you work for? That is, what (do/did) they make or do?

33 34 35 36 37

F-41. How many hours a week (do/did) you usually work at this job?

38 39

HOURS PER WEEK

F-42. And how much (do/did) you earn on this job?

\$_____ per hour week month year (CIRCLE ONE) (F-44)

Refused 97 (F-43)
Don't Know. 98 (F-43)

40 41 42 43 44 45 46

F-43. Here is a card showing amounts of weekly and yearly earnings. Next to each amount is a letter. Would you tell me which letter represents your salary on this job? (ENTER LETTER.)

HAND CARD 5

LETTER

47 48

F-44. Are you Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish or something else?

Roman Catholic 1 (F-47)
Protestant 2 (F-45)
Jewish 3 (F-46)
Other (SPECIFY) _____ 4 (F-46)
None 0 (F-48)

49

F-45. What denomination is that?

Baptist. 21
Lutheran 22
Methodist. 23
Presbyterian 24
Episcopalian 25
No specific denomination . . . 28
Other Protestant (SPECIFY) _____ 29

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