

# Monthly Vital Statistics Report

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Final Data From the National Center for Health Statistics

## Advance Report of Final Marriage Statistics, 1986

Most Americans marry at some time in their lives. Only 6 percent of men and women over 40 years of age in 1986 had never married. Data from the vital registration system show, however, that in recent years men and women have been waiting longer to marry, more of the brides and grooms have been married previously, and they are taking more time after divorce to remarry. In 1986 there were 189 million U.S. residents ages 15 years and over. Of these, 110 million were married, 50 million had never been married, 14 million were widowed, and 14 million were divorced (1). During the year, 6 percent of unmarried people got married.

There were 2,407,099 marriages in 1986, down slightly from 1985 (2,412,625) and 3 percent below the historic high level reached in 1984 (2,477,192). National marriage rates, too, dropped in 1986. The rate of 10.0 per 1,000 total population was down from 10.1 in 1985 and lower than it has been since 1977. Provisional data show that the marriage rate continued dropping, to 9.9 per 1,000 in 1987 and 9.7 in 1988. The 1988 rate was the lowest marriage rate since 1967.

The rate per 1,000 unmarried women 15 years of age and over was 56.2, down from 57.0 in 1985. The rate for unmarried women 15–44 years of age was 93.9, down from 94.9 in 1985. These three rates dropped approx-

imately 1 percent in 1986. The rates for unmarried women of all ages and those aged 15–44 years have been calculated for every year since 1940, and in that 46-year period they have never been as low as they were in 1986 (table 1 and figure 1).

Tables 1–3 show the numbers of marriages that are obtained annually from all States and the District of Columbia. Tables 4–11 contain detailed demographic information about brides and grooms that is reported by some or all of the 42 States and the District of Columbia in the marriage-registration area (MRA). Seventy-seven percent of U.S. marriages were in the MRA sample in 1986.

### Seasonal variation

Monthly number of marriages shows a seasonal cycle, being low at the start of the year and high in the summer (table 2). In 1986 the number in June (273,235) was 2.4 times the number in January (115,719). Another factor that affects the monthly total is the number of Saturdays that fall within a month, because Saturday is the preferred day for marriage in the United States. In 1986, for example, 54 percent of marriages were performed on Saturday. The effect of having five as compared with four Saturdays can be seen by comparing the months of May and

June in 1985 and 1986. May 1986 had five Saturdays and 7 percent more marriages than May 1985, with four Saturdays. June 1986 had four Saturdays and 8 percent fewer marriages than June 1985, which had five Saturdays.

The single day on which the most MRA marriages were performed in 1986 was Saturday, June 21, when 36,000 couples married. This was more than seven times the 1986 MRA daily average (5,000). Another day that is a big favorite for marriages, particularly when it falls on a weekend, is St. Valentine's Day. In 1986, 29,000 MRA couples married on Friday, February 14, more than married on any other single day except the four Saturdays in June.

### Geographic variation

Between 1985 and 1986, more States lost than gained in number of marriages (table 3). Of the 48 States and the District of Columbia having complete data for both years, marriages increased in only 19 States and the District of Columbia. These increases were generally small, 3 percent or less. In Hawaii, however, marriages increased 5 percent and in Tennessee, 9 percent. Hawaii has become a destination for nonresident couples to wed, and these "marriage migrants" represented approximately 43 percent of the 1986 marriages in that State. Of the 16,000

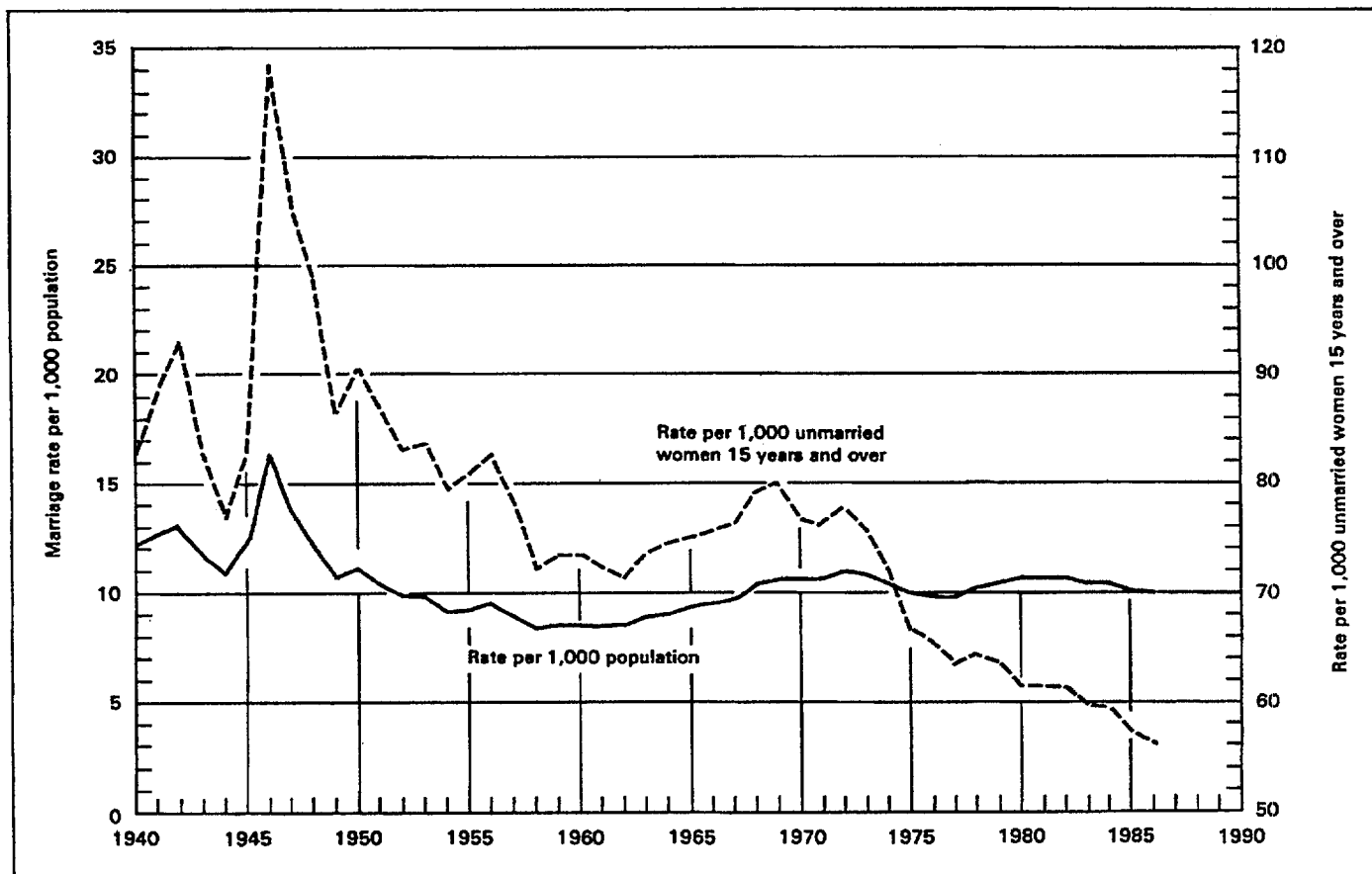


Figure 1. Marriage rates: United States, 1940-86

couples married in Hawaii, 7,000 were not residents of the State. In fact, it is due to nonresidents that the number of Hawaiian marriages increased; the number of residents who married declined.

The increase in the number of Tennessee marriages followed a change in marriage legislation that took effect in July 1985 when the requirement for a blood test was dropped. The number of marriages was already increasing in the second half of 1985, but the clearest comparison can be drawn between 1984, under the old legislation, and 1986, the first calendar year without the blood test requirement. The number of Tennessee marriages was nearly 5,000 greater in 1986 than in 1984. The increase was largely due to an increase in the number of brides and grooms who were residents of Tennessee. Conversely, the number of Tennessee residents who married out of State dropped between 1984 and 1986. Thus it seems likely that the change in legislation resulted in more marriages in

Tennessee to residents who would otherwise have married in another State.

Over the decade between 1976 and 1986, the number of U.S. marriages increased 12 percent. Among the 46 States and the District of Columbia that had comparable data for the 2 years, the number of marriages increased in 28 States and the District of Columbia and declined in 18 States. Increases were particularly striking for Hawaii (66 percent), Florida (50 percent), Kentucky (41 percent), Delaware (39 percent), Arizona (36 percent), Arkansas, New Hampshire, and Vermont (30 percent each). In contrast to the sizable increases reported for those States were declines of 10 percent in Nebraska and Indiana, 11 percent in Wyoming, 13 percent in Illinois, 18 percent in Oklahoma, 19 percent in West Virginia, and 31 percent in South Dakota.

It has frequently been noted that marriage rates are lower in the Northeast and Midwest than in the South and West. This was still true in 1986, but

the differences narrowed: the marriage rate was stable in the Northeast and decreased in the three other regions. Marriage rates for the individual States clustered around the U.S. rate of 10.0 per 1,000 population. Forty States and the District of Columbia had rates between 8.0 and 11.9 per 1,000 population. Six States had unusually high rates: Tennessee (12.4), Kentucky (12.5), Arkansas (13.7), Hawaii (15.2), South Carolina (16.0), and Nevada (113.0). Many of these States host the weddings of many nonresidents, which inflates marriage rates. Five States had unusually low rates: North Carolina (7.9), Nebraska and North Dakota (7.6 each), Pennsylvania (7.4), and West Virginia (7.3). Some of these States have low marriage rates because their residents marry elsewhere. For example, approximately 18,000 West Virginia women married in 1986, but only 13,000 married in their State of residence. This deflated the West Virginia rate. Similarly, of the 63,000 North Carolina women who married in

1986, only 46,000 married in their home State, while 14,000 married in South Carolina, thus inflating the rate for South Carolina (16.0 per 1,000) and lowering the rate for North Carolina (7.9).

Rates of marriage, like the numbers of marriages discussed above, generally declined between 1985 and 1986, dropping in 35 States, substantially in some. The marriage rate dropped more than 5 percent in four States: Louisiana, Montana, Oklahoma (6 percent each), and Alaska (8 percent).

### Total marriage rate

The total marriage rate (table 4) shows what would happen if the age-specific rates for a particular year were to continue throughout the lives of hypothetical groups of 1,000 men or women. This rate can be calculated separately for first marriages and for remarriages to show the implications of the current level of marriage rates on patterns of family formation in the United States.

The total marriage rates for 1986 show that during the course of the lives of every 1,000 women in the marriage-registration area, there would be 698.6 first marriages and 414.9 remarriages. These rates are virtually unchanged from 1985, but those for first marriages are considerably lower than they were in 1972. Such a low total first marriage rate indicates that the United States is in a period of postponement of or perhaps permanent departure from historical American marriage patterns, which were typified by almost universal marriage.

The total marriage rates for men imply that there would be 689.4 first marriages and 460.7 remarriages for every 1,000 men in the marriage-registration area. For men, the 1986 total first marriage rate was up slightly from 1985, but the figure for remarriages continued a generally downward trend that followed a rise and peak in 1981. The total remarriage rate for men was lower than at any time since 1972.

### Previous marital status

In 1986, 41 States and the District of Columbia reported whether marriages were first marriages or were remarriages, for both bride and groom; 38 States and the District of Columbia also reported whether the remarriage followed divorce or death of a spouse. In the marriages for which previous marital status of both bride and groom were reported, 66 percent of both brides and grooms were previously single, 31 percent were previously divorced, and 3 percent were previously widowed.

Most brides and grooms married spouses with the same previous marital status. In 75 percent of the marriages in 1986 the previous marital status of both bride and groom was the same. In 54 percent both were single, in 19 percent both were divorced, and in 1 percent both were widowed. In 11 percent of marriages a divorced man married a single woman, and in 11 percent a divorced woman married a single man. Only 4 percent of marriages paired a widowed person with a single or divorced spouse. However, previous marital status correlates highly with age. Most single people are young adults and most widowed people are middle-aged or older. Therefore, the marital status of the spouse also correlates with the bride's or groom's age. For example, more previously divorced women under 25 years of age married single than divorced or widowed men, and more divorced women aged 65 years and over married widowed than divorced or single men. These patterns are explained more fully in a recent report entitled "Remarriages and Subsequent Divorces" (2).

The proportions of marriages according to previous marital status have changed since 1970 (table 8). The proportion of primary marriages (marriages in which both bride and groom are single) declined from 69 percent in 1970 to 54 percent in 1986. Concurrently, marriages of previously divorced persons increased from 11 to 19 percent. The proportion of those in which the bride was single and the groom divorced increased from 7 to 11 percent, and the proportion in which the bride

was divorced and the groom single increased from 6 to 11 percent. Between 1970 and 1986 all combinations involving previously widowed brides and grooms decreased as a proportion of total marriages.

### Age at marriage

Although marriage can take place at any time in an adult's life, at first marriage 9 of 10 American brides and 8 of 10 American grooms were between the ages of 18 and 30 in 1986 (table 6 and figure 2). Sixty-five percent of previously divorced brides and 59 percent of previously divorced grooms married between 25 and 40. Seventy percent of previously widowed brides and 87 percent of previously widowed grooms were over 45 years of age.

The distribution of ages is often summarized by a single measure, such as the median or mean (average) age at marriage to facilitate comparisons over time and between sexes or marital status groups (table 7). The median is the age at which half the brides or grooms are younger and half older. In 1986 the median age at first marriage for brides was 23.3 years and for grooms, 25.1. The mean age of brides at first marriage was 24.3 and of grooms, 26.2 years.

Between 1985 and 1986, the ages at marriage of previously single and divorced brides and grooms continued the trend toward older age at marriage that had dominated the previous decade. The ages of previously widowed grooms, but not brides, also increased. The age at marriage of previously widowed brides has not been as consistent in trend.

### Rates by marital status and age

Analyses of American marriage patterns have repeatedly shown that divorced persons marry at far higher rates than do single persons and that both divorced and single people marry at higher rates than do widowed persons (table 5). In 1986 the marriage rate for divorced women was 79.5 per 1,000, 33 percent higher than the rate for single women (59.7) and more than

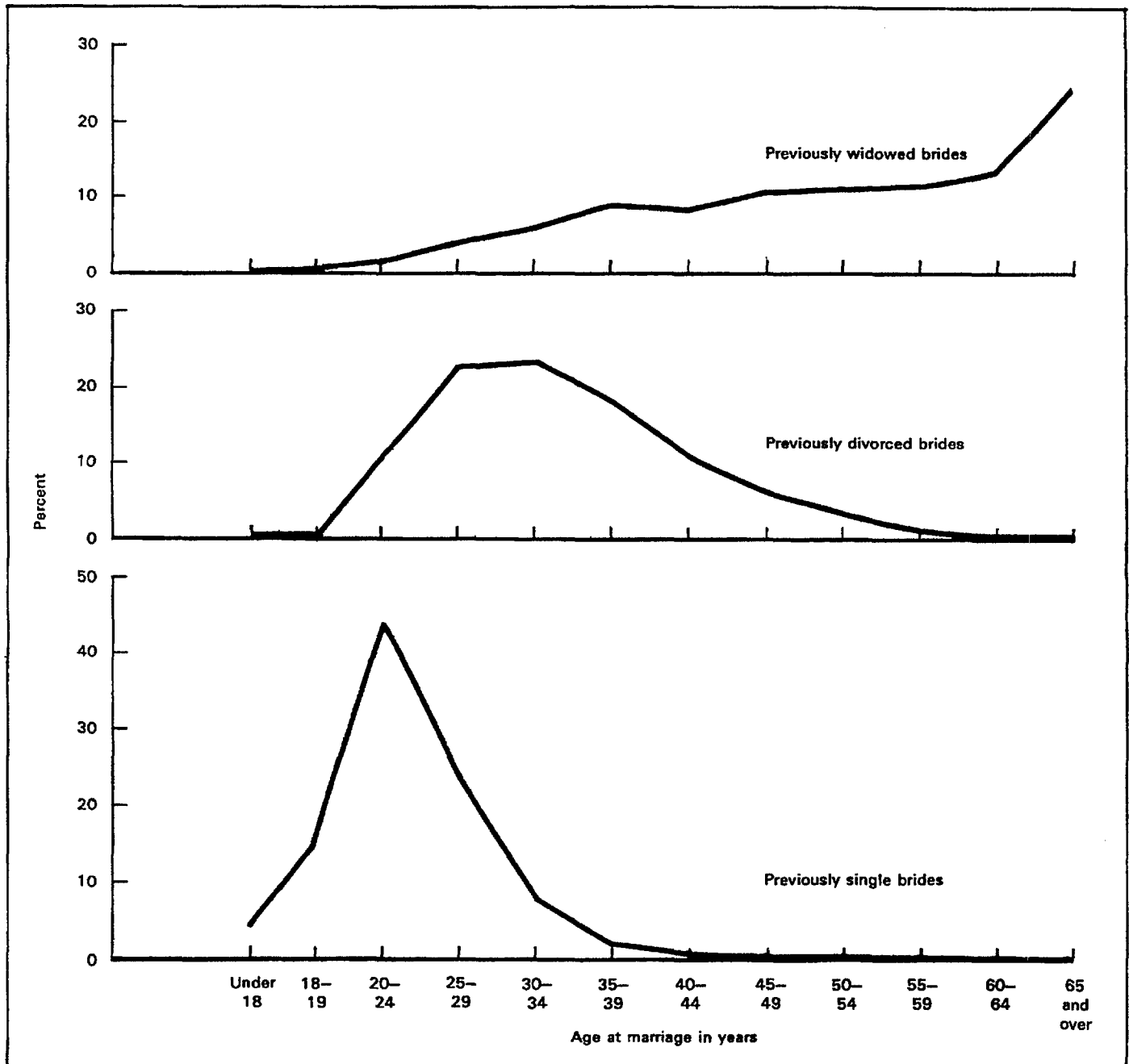


Figure 2. Percent distribution by marriages by age of bride, according to previous marital status: Marriage-registration area, 1986

14 times the rate for widowed women (5.5). The rate for divorced men was 117.8 per 1,000, 2.4 times the rate for single men (49.1) and 4.4 times the rate for widowed men (26.8).

By age, first marriage rates for women were higher than for men at ages under 30, but of those who remained unmarried past age 30, single men were more likely than single women to marry (table 6). For divorced persons, marriage rates were higher for men than women for all age groups over 25. For widowed persons marriage

rates were higher for men than women at all ages.

Age-specific first marriage rates reached their highest level for men and women at 25-29 years of age and then dropped steadily. Rates for single women dropped substantially for each added 5 years of age after reaching a peak at ages 25-29. Rates for single men did not reach as high a level at ages 25-29 and then did not drop as low.

There has been a shift over time to later marriage. This is reflected in first

marriage rates, which were highest at 20-24 years of age for women through 1983. Since 1984, rates for single women aged 25-29 have been the highest. A similar shift occurred for men in the early 1970's.

While the general patterns of marriage rates by marital status continued in 1986, all rates continued the downward trend that started in the early 1970's (figure 3). Between 1985 and 1986, rates dropped 2-4 percent for single, divorced, and widowed men and women. Cumulatively, between 1970

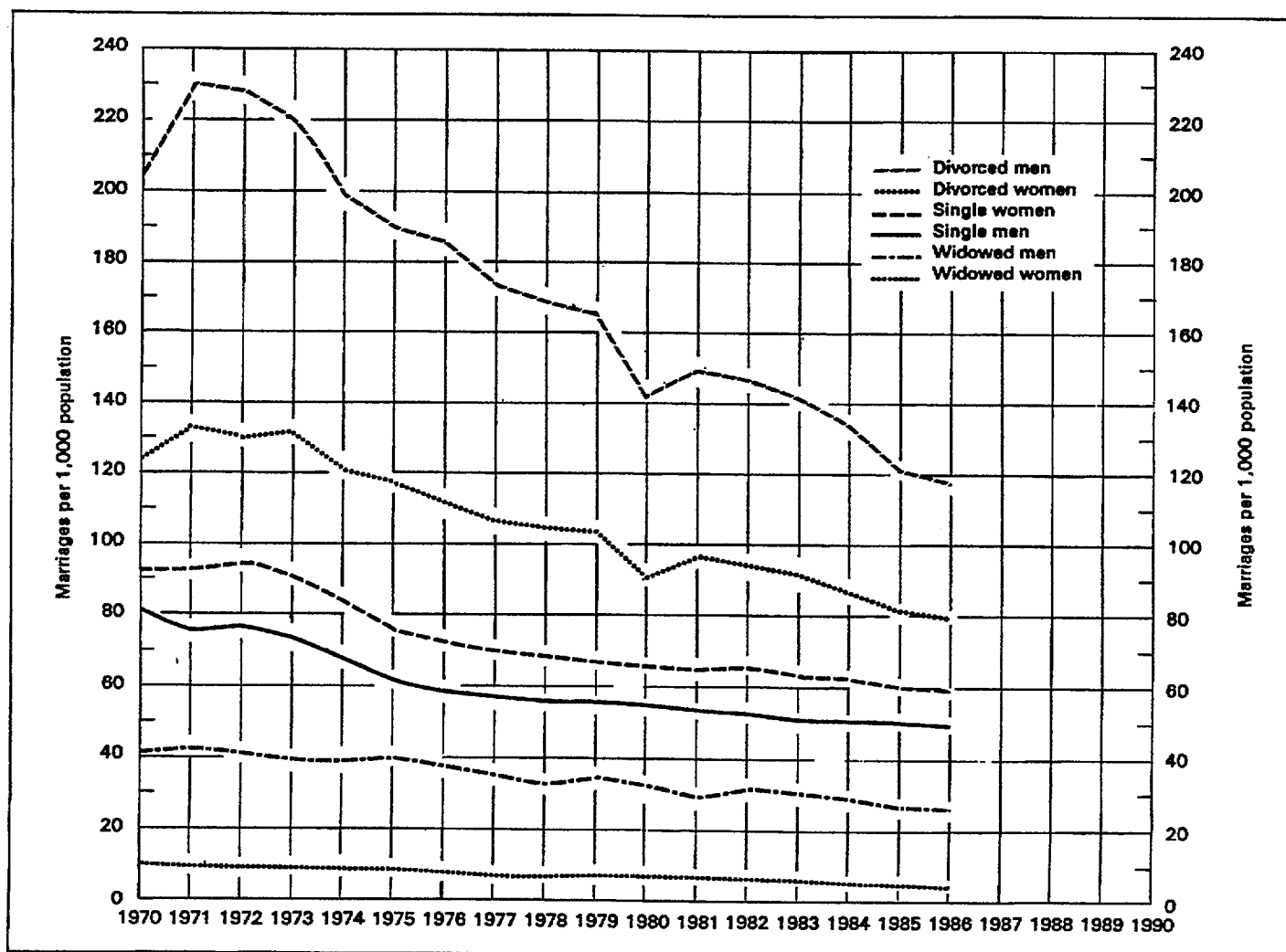


Figure 3. Marriage rates of single, divorced, and widowed men and women: Marriage-registration area, 1970-86

and 1986 the rate for single and divorced women dropped 36 percent and for widowed women, 46 percent. The rate for single men dropped 39 percent; for divorced men, 42 percent; and for widowed men, 34 percent.

First marriage rates declined in 1986 for women under age 30 and for men under age 40. These are the ages during which most first marriages occur, so the dominant trend in first marriage rates has been downward. In contrast, rates increased 3 to 4 percent for women in age groups 30 to 39. The first marriage rate for single women aged 30-34 has not been as high since 1973, and for women aged 35-39, not since 1974. For women in age groups over 39 some rates decreased and others increased in 1986. For men aged 40 to 59 first marriage rates increased considerably—11 percent for men 40-44, 24 percent for men 50-54, and 13 percent for men 55-59 years of age.

There was a remarkable drop in first marriages for females under 18 years of age. The first marriage rate for females aged 15-17 was 12.0 per 1,000 in 1986, 39 percent below the rate of 19.8 in 1980 and 66 percent below the rate of 35.0 in 1970. Since 1984, single young women 15-17 years of age have been less likely to marry than women 45-49 years. Trends and characteristics of teenage marriages during the 1970's are described in an earlier report (3).

### Interval to remarriage

The vast majority of previously divorced men and women remarry; in contrast, remarriage for widowed men and women is much less likely. It has been estimated that 76 percent of divorced women and 85 percent of divorced men will remarry but that only 7 percent of widows and 19 percent of widowed men will remarry (4).

Data from marriage records show that the interval to remarriage is shorter for divorced than for widowed persons and shorter for men than for women in either category (table 9). In 1986 several hundred brides and grooms remarried after intervals of more than 30 years, but most did so relatively quickly. In 1986 the interval to remarriage was less than one year for 27 percent of remarrying brides and 31 percent of remarrying grooms. The mean interval to remarriage was 3.7 years for divorced women and 3.4 years for divorced men. For previously widowed brides the interval was considerably longer, 6.3 years, but for previously widowed grooms the interval was only slightly longer, 3.7 years.

### Race

Race of bride and groom was reported on the marriage records of 34

States, representing approximately 1.2 million marriages in 1986. In this group of States, 87 percent of brides and grooms were white, 12 percent were black, and less than 2 percent were of other races.

Proportionately more white than black brides and grooms were remarrying after divorce. In the 33 States where both race and previous marital status were reported in 1986, 34 percent of white brides and grooms had been previously divorced, compared with 24 percent of black brides and 26 percent of black grooms.

Timing of marriage also differs by race (table 10). At first marriage in 1986 black brides were 2.2 years older (25.7 years) than white brides (23.5 years). Black grooms (27.3 years) were 1.8 years older than white grooms (25.5 years). Thus the amount of time spent never married is greater for black than for white Americans.

The age difference between races was smaller for remarriages after divorce than for first marriages. The mean age of previously divorced black brides was 35.9 years, 1.8 years older than that of previously divorced white brides (34.1 years). The difference in

groom's age at remarriage was less, 1.2 years. The mean age of previously divorced black grooms in 1986 was 39.0 years, compared with 37.8 for white grooms.

Age differentials are the reverse for previously widowed brides and grooms, however. Previously widowed black brides were 49.0 years of age on average, 5 years younger than previously widowed white brides (54.0). Previously widowed black grooms were 58.8 years of age, compared with 61.5 years for white grooms. These differences may reflect the earlier average age at death for black than white Americans.

Most U.S. brides marry grooms of the same race. In 1986, 86 percent of brides and grooms were both white, 11 percent were both black, and 1 percent were both of other races. Only 2 percent of couples were interracial.

### Educational attainment

The educational attainment of brides and grooms was reported on the marriage records of 21 States in 1986. There were more than 750,000 marriages in those States in 1986.

For all marital statuses and both sexes, the most common level of educational attainment was high school graduation (table 11). For brides with more than a high school education, similar proportions of those single and divorced had attended college but had not graduated (24 and 23 percent, respectively). However, twice as many previously single brides (16 percent) as previously divorced brides (8 percent) had graduated from college. The difference between the proportion of previously single and that of divorced brides that had completed some graduate training is smaller, 6.6 compared with 5.6 percent. In summary, brides who had been married and divorced previously had less education than did those who were marrying for the first time.

For men as well, more who were previously single than who were previously divorced had finished college (15 compared with 11 percent), although the difference was not as great as the twofold difference for women. In terms of graduate education, however, more previously divorced than single grooms had had an education beyond college (10 and 8 percent).

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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

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**Table 1. Marriages and marriage rates: United States, 1940-86**

[Data refer only to events occurring within the United States. Alaska included beginning 1959 and Hawaii beginning 1960. Beginning with 1978, data include nonlicensed marriages registered in California; see Technical notes. Rates per 1,000 population enumerated as of April 1 for census years and estimated as of July 1 for all other years]

Year	Number	Rate per 1,000—				
		Total population	Men 15 years of age and over	Women 15 years of age and over	Unmarried women 15 years and over	Unmarried women 15-44 years
1986	2,407,099	10.0	26.5	24.5	56.2	93.9
1985	2,412,625	10.1	26.9	24.8	57.0	94.9
1984	2,477,192	10.5	28.1	25.8	59.5	99.0
1983	2,445,604	10.5	28.0	25.7	59.9	99.3
1982	2,456,278	10.6	28.4	26.1	61.4	101.9
1981	2,422,145	10.6	28.4	26.1	61.7	103.1
1980	2,390,252	10.6	28.5	26.1	61.4	102.6
1979	2,331,337	10.4	28.1	25.8	63.6	107.9
1978	2,282,272	10.3	28.0	25.7	64.1	109.1
1977	2,178,367	9.9	27.2	25.0	63.6	109.8
1976	2,154,807	9.9	27.4	25.2	65.2	113.4
1975	2,152,662	10.0	27.9	25.6	66.9	118.5
1974	2,229,667	10.5	29.4	27.1	72.0	128.4
1973	2,284,108	10.8	30.7	28.2	76.0	137.3
1972	2,282,154	10.9	31.3	28.8	77.9	141.3
1971	2,190,481	10.6	30.7	28.2	76.2	138.9
1970	2,158,802	10.6	31.1	28.4	76.5	140.2
1969	2,145,000	10.6	31.4	28.9	80.0	149.1
1968	2,069,000	10.4	30.8	28.3	79.1	147.2
1967	1,927,000	9.7	29.1	26.9	76.4	145.2
1966	1,857,000	9.5	28.4	26.4	75.6	145.1
1965	1,800,000	9.3	27.9	26.0	75.0	144.3
1964	1,725,000	9.0	27.1	25.3	74.6	146.2
1963	1,654,000	8.8	26.4	24.7	73.4	143.3
1962	1,577,000	8.5	25.5	23.9	71.2	138.4
1961	1,548,000	8.5	25.5	24.0	72.2	145.4
1960	1,523,000	8.5	25.4	24.0	73.5	148.0
1959	1,494,000	8.5	25.2	23.8	73.6	149.8
1958	1,451,000	8.4	24.8	23.5	72.0	146.3
1957	1,518,000	8.9	26.4	24.9	78.0	157.4
1956	1,585,000	9.5	27.8	26.4	82.4	165.6
1955	1,531,000	9.3	27.2	25.8	80.9	161.1
1954	1,490,000	9.2	26.9	25.4	79.8	154.3
1953	1,546,000	9.8	28.2	26.7	83.7	163.3
1952	1,539,318	9.9	28.3	26.8	83.2	159.9
1951	1,594,694	10.4	29.4	28.1	86.6	164.9
1950	1,667,231	11.1	30.7	29.8	90.2	166.4
1949	1,579,798	10.6	29.4	28.5	86.7	158.0
1948	1,811,155	12.4	34.0	33.0	98.5	174.7
1947	1,991,878	13.9	37.9	36.8	106.2	182.7
1946	2,291,045	16.4	44.5	42.8	118.1	199.0
1945	1,612,992	12.2	35.8	30.5	83.6	138.2
1944	1,452,394	10.9	31.2	27.8	76.5	124.5
1943	1,577,050	11.7	32.2	30.6	83.0	133.5
1942	1,772,132	13.2	35.6	34.8	93.0	147.6
1941	1,695,999	12.7	34.0	33.7	88.5	138.4
1940	1,595,879	12.1	32.3	32.3	82.8	122.4

Table 2. Marriages and marriage rates, by month: United States, 1976, 1985, and 1986

[Rates on an annual basis per 1,000 population]

<i>Month</i>	<i>Number</i>			<i>Rate</i>		
	<i>1986</i>	<i>1985</i>	<i>1976<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>1986</i>	<i>1985</i>	<i>1976<sup>1</sup></i>
Total . . . . .	2,407,099	2,412,625	2,154,807	10.0	10.1	9.9
January . . . . .	115,719	117,347	121,950	5.7	5.8	6.6
February . . . . .	146,118	138,647	138,777	7.9	7.6	8.1
March . . . . .	154,203	164,246	136,198	7.6	8.1	7.4
April . . . . .	182,380	179,403	158,139	9.2	9.2	8.9
May . . . . .	245,457	229,084	199,627	12.0	11.3	10.9
June . . . . .	273,235	295,413	243,097	13.8	15.1	13.6
July . . . . .	215,705	219,233	218,705	10.5	10.8	11.9
August . . . . .	269,414	264,459	225,699	13.1	13.0	12.2
September . . . . .	219,901	225,318	184,926	11.1	11.5	10.4
October . . . . .	208,605	203,057	186,006	10.2	10.0	10.1
November . . . . .	186,078	186,691	161,894	9.4	9.5	9.0
December . . . . .	190,284	189,727	179,789	9.3	9.3	9.7

<sup>1</sup>Data exclude 30,125 nonlicensed marriages registered in California; see Technical notes.

Table 3. Marriages and marriage rates: United States, each region, division, and State, 1976, 1985, and 1986

[By place of occurrence. Data are counts of marriages performed, except as noted, Rates per 1,000 population estimated as of July 1]

Region, division, and State	Number			Rate		
	1986	1985	1976	1986	1985	1976
United States	2,407,099	2,412,625	<sup>1</sup> 2,154,807	10.0	10.1	<sup>1</sup> 9.9
Regions:						
Northeast	430,179	428,654	374,297	8.6	8.6	7.6
Midwest	515,207	520,500	544,351	8.7	8.8	9.4
South	916,665	919,147	<sup>1</sup> 792,837	11.0	11.2	<sup>1</sup> 11.2
West	545,048	544,324	<sup>1</sup> 443,322	11.2	11.4	<sup>1</sup> 11.3
Northeast:						
New England	114,273	114,331	95,596	9.0	9.0	7.8
Middle Atlantic	315,906	314,323	278,701	8.5	8.5	7.5
Midwest:						
East North Central	360,810	<sup>3</sup> 362,185	382,099	8.6	8.7	9.3
West North Central	154,397	158,315	162,252	8.8	9.0	9.6
South:						
South Atlantic	441,933	438,754	372,134	10.8	10.9	10.7
East South Central	176,251	171,808	159,488	11.6	11.4	11.4
West South Central	298,481	308,585	261,215	11.1	11.6	12.0
West:						
Mountain	232,807	233,701	<sup>1</sup> 216,208	17.9	18.3	<sup>1</sup> 21.4
Pacific	312,241	310,623	<sup>1</sup> 227,114	8.7	8.9	<sup>1</sup> 7.8
New England:						
Maine	11,983	12,248	11,302	10.2	10.5	10.4
New Hampshire	11,123	11,351	8,550	10.8	11.4	10.1
Vermont	5,698	5,549	4,396	10.5	10.4	9.1
Massachusetts	49,988	49,848	41,501	8.6	8.6	7.2
Rhode Island	8,103	8,011	6,905	8.3	8.3	7.3
Connecticut	27,378	27,324	22,942	8.6	8.6	7.4
Middle Atlantic:						
New York	<sup>4</sup> 166,986	<sup>4</sup> 163,995	136,968	<sup>4</sup> 9.4	<sup>4</sup> 9.2	7.6
New Jersey	61,362	61,189	51,291	8.0	8.1	7.0
Pennsylvania	87,558	89,139	90,442	7.4	7.5	7.6
East North Central:						
Ohio	98,533	<sup>2</sup> 94,373	96,776	9.2	<sup>2</sup> 8.8	9.0
Indiana	49,900	51,063	55,699	9.1	9.3	10.4
Illinois	96,189	97,712	110,847	8.3	8.5	9.8
Michigan	77,815	79,022	82,753	8.5	8.7	9.1
Wisconsin	38,373	40,015	36,024	8.0	8.4	7.9
West North Central:						
Minnesota	34,199	35,059	<sup>5</sup> 32,034	8.1	8.4	<sup>5</sup> 8.1
Iowa	23,311	24,578	25,727	8.2	8.5	8.9
Missouri	49,579	49,484	51,070	9.8	9.8	10.6
North Dakota	5,148	5,424	5,650	7.6	7.9	8.8
South Dakota	7,386	7,793	10,781	10.4	11.0	15.7
Nebraska	12,107	12,696	13,431	7.8	7.9	8.7
Kansas	22,667	23,281	23,559	9.2	9.5	10.2
South Atlantic:						
Delaware	5,484	5,356	3,943	8.7	8.6	6.6
Maryland	46,361	46,063	44,616	10.4	10.5	10.7
District of Columbia	5,125	5,039	4,611	8.2	8.1	6.6
Virginia	66,666	66,541	56,469	11.5	11.7	11.0
West Virginia	14,032	14,580	17,229	7.3	7.5	9.2
North Carolina	50,062	50,542	42,475	7.9	8.1	7.6
South Carolina	53,974	52,805	50,698	16.0	15.8	17.2
Georgia	70,866	72,312	65,950	11.6	12.1	12.9
Florida	129,363	125,516	86,143	11.1	11.0	9.9
East South Central:						
Kentucky	46,460	45,976	32,931	12.5	12.3	9.3
Tennessee	59,730	55,000	53,270	12.4	11.5	12.3
Alabama	45,778	46,082	46,515	11.3	11.5	12.4
Mississippi	24,283	24,750	26,772	9.3	9.5	11.0
West South Central:						
Arkansas	32,442	31,663	24,913	13.7	13.4	11.5
Louisiana	37,457	39,368	37,999	8.3	8.8	9.6
Oklahoma	33,805	35,922	40,983	10.2	10.9	14.5
Texas	194,777	201,632	157,320	11.7	12.3	12.2
Mountain:						
Montana	6,739	7,178	7,390	8.2	8.7	9.7
Idaho	11,958	12,277	13,104	11.9	12.2	15.3
Wyoming	5,210	5,386	5,862	10.3	10.6	14.8
Colorado	32,811	33,616	28,601	10.0	10.4	10.9
New Mexico	<sup>6</sup> 13,631	<sup>6</sup> 15,495	<sup>5</sup> 15,616	<sup>6</sup> 9.2	<sup>6</sup> 10.7	<sup>5</sup> 13.1
Arizona	36,025	35,723	26,534	11.0	11.2	11.3
Utah	17,119	17,519	<sup>5</sup> 14,693	10.3	10.6	<sup>5</sup> 11.6
Nevada	109,314	106,507	<sup>5</sup> 104,408	113.0	113.7	<sup>5</sup> 161.4

See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 3. Marriages and marriage rates: United States, each region, division, and State, 1976, 1985, and 1986—Con.**

[By place of occurrence. Data are counts of marriages performed, except as noted, Rates per 1,000 population estimated as of July 1]

Region, division, and State	Number			Rate		
	1986	1985	1976	1986	1985	1976
Pacific:						
Washington . . . . .	43,255	43,771	41,986	9.7	9.9	11.4
Oregon . . . . .	22,015	22,408	19,182	8.1	8.3	8.1
California . . . . .	225,018	222,848	151,284	8.3	8.5	6.9
Alaska . . . . .	5,734	6,175	4,893	10.8	11.8	12.5
Hawaii . . . . .	16,219	15,421	9,769	15.2	14.7	10.8

<sup>1</sup>Data exclude 30,125 nonlicensed marriages registered in California; see Technical notes.<sup>2</sup>Formerly North Central Region.<sup>3</sup>Data are incomplete.<sup>4</sup>Figure used for New York City is the total number of valid marriage certificates provided to NCHS.<sup>5</sup>Data include marriage licenses issued for some counties.<sup>6</sup>Data are premarital health examination forms issued.**Table 4. Total marriage rate by marriage order of women and men: Marriage-registration area, 1972–86**

[Based on sample data. Marriages per 1,000 women or men if age-sex specific rates for a given year were constant throughout their lives. Figures for marriage order not stated have been distributed. Beginning in 1977, figures exclude data for Iowa. For a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes]

Year	Total marriage rate		Total first-marriage rate		Total remarriage rate	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
1986 . . . . .	1,113.5	1,150.1	698.6	689.4	414.9	460.7
1985 . . . . .	1,113.0	1,155.5	699.3	688.9	413.7	466.6
1984 . . . . .	1,139.2	1,192.4	704.6	698.1	434.6	494.3
1983 . . . . .	1,131.9	1,189.4	703.0	697.4	428.9	492.0
1982 . . . . .	1,143.6	1,206.4	710.9	703.4	432.7	503.0
1981 . . . . .	1,113.9	1,218.0	687.2	711.4	426.7	506.6
1980 . . . . .	1,128.4	1,207.5	706.2	714.4	422.2	493.1
1979 . . . . .	1,130.0	1,243.2	704.4	739.4	425.6	503.8
1978 . . . . .	1,112.4	1,227.3	696.5	733.7	415.9	493.6
1977 . . . . .	1,098.4	1,213.9	687.6	727.7	410.8	486.2
1976 . . . . .	1,100.7	1,218.0	695.5	737.5	405.2	480.5
1975 . . . . .	1,125.7	1,246.2	720.8	774.4	404.9	471.8
1974 . . . . .	1,191.5	1,317.1	789.8	852.7	401.7	464.4
1973 . . . . .	1,249.1	1,382.3	843.4	920.0	405.7	462.3
1972 . . . . .	1,254.8	1,401.9	866.9	960.8	387.9	441.1

**Table 5. Marriage rates by previous marital status of women and men: Marriage-registration area, 1970–86**

[Based on sample data. Figures exclude data for Iowa beginning with 1977. Figures for previously divorced and previously widowed exclude data for Michigan and Ohio for all years, for South Carolina beginning with 1972, and for the District of Columbia for 1970. For a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes. Rates per 1,000 population 15 years and over in specified group enumerated as of April 1 for census years and estimated as of July 1 for all other years]

Year	Previous marital status of women			Previous marital status of men		
	Single	Divorced	Widowed	Single	Divorced	Widowed
1986 . . . . .	59.7	79.5	5.5	49.1	117.8	26.8
1985 . . . . .	61.5	81.8	5.7	50.1	121.6	27.7
1984 . . . . .	63.5	87.3	5.8	51.6	132.7	28.7
1983 . . . . .	63.8	91.6	6.2	51.8	142.1	30.7
1982 . . . . .	66.0	94.4	6.1	53.1	146.9	32.1
1981 . . . . .	64.9	96.3	6.5	53.8	150.8	30.8
1980 . . . . .	66.0	91.3	6.7	54.7	142.1	32.2
1979 . . . . .	67.8	104.0	7.7	56.3	165.6	35.3
1978 . . . . .	68.2	105.0	7.1	56.4	168.6	32.7
1977 . . . . .	69.2	107.3	7.6	56.7	173.4	35.3
1976 . . . . .	72.0	111.3	7.9	58.2	185.0	37.6
1975 . . . . .	75.9	117.2	8.3	61.5	189.8	40.4
1974 . . . . .	83.5	121.7	9.1	68.0	198.7	38.9
1973 . . . . .	90.9	131.0	9.3	73.9	221.3	39.3
1972 . . . . .	95.1	130.6	9.4	77.2	229.0	40.6
1971 . . . . .	93.3	132.8	9.6	75.2	230.7	42.5
1970 . . . . .	93.4	123.3	10.2	80.4	204.5	40.6

**Table 6. Marriages and percent distribution of marriages by age according to previous marital status of women and men, 1986, and marriage rates by age and previous marital status of women and men, 1984-86: Marriage-registration area**

[Based on sample data. For sampling errors of estimates and a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes. Marriages of persons under 15 years of age are included in the youngest age groups; rates are based on populations that exclude persons under 15 years of age. Rates for all marriages are based on the unmarried population; for first marriages, on the never-married population; and for remarriages, on the widowed and divorced populations. Rates per 1,000 population in specified age group estimated as of July 1]

Age and previous marital status	Women					Men				
	Number	Percent	Rate <sup>1</sup>			Number	Percent	Rate <sup>1</sup>		
	1986	1986	1986	1985	1984	1986	1986	1986	1985	1984
<b>All marriages</b>										
Total . . . . .	1,854,744	100.0	49.2	49.9	51.9	1,854,744	100.0	59.4	60.5	63.1
15-19 years . . . . .	242,797	13.1	32.5	34.8	38.5	92,362	5.0	11.5	12.2	13.7
15-17 years . . . . .	56,654	3.1	12.2	13.5	15.3	8,231	0.4	1.7	2.0	2.2
18-19 years . . . . .	186,143	10.0	65.8	68.8	74.1	84,131	4.5	27.2	27.9	30.5
20-24 years . . . . .	612,901	33.0	108.6	110.6	113.3	534,689	28.8	76.2	78.4	81.2
25-29 years . . . . .	427,787	23.1	121.2	122.2	128.1	491,724	26.5	108.5	111.7	118.0
30-34 years . . . . .	234,121	12.6	97.2	93.8	94.7	277,425	15.0	98.7	99.3	104.9
35-39 years . . . . .	137,757	7.4	70.1	72.5	75.1	170,071	9.2	93.1	103.9	104.6
40-44 years . . . . .	77,351	4.2	51.6	51.3	53.1	99,467	5.4	81.2	78.4	87.9
45-49 years . . . . .	45,998	2.5	36.3	34.7	38.7	62,231	3.4	69.0	69.3	73.7
50-54 years . . . . .	27,071	1.5	22.5	21.3	22.3	40,513	2.2	57.7	53.4	54.8
55-59 years . . . . .	16,337	0.9	11.5	12.4	12.4	29,419	1.6	40.3	38.7	40.7
60-64 years . . . . .	13,758	0.7	7.9	7.7	8.0	22,181	1.2	26.3	27.6	30.3
65 years and over . . . . .	18,866	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	34,662	1.9	13.5	14.1	14.2
<b>First marriages<sup>2</sup></b>										
Total . . . . .	1,179,837	100.0	59.7	61.5	63.5	1,178,768	100.0	49.1	50.1	51.6
15-19 years . . . . .	231,754	19.6	31.5	34.0	37.5	89,443	7.6	11.3	12.1	13.5
15-17 years . . . . .	55,209	4.7	12.0	13.4	15.0	8,072	0.7	1.7	2.0	2.1
18-19 years . . . . .	176,545	15.0	63.7	67.2	72.1	81,371	6.9	26.7	27.6	30.0
20-24 years . . . . .	528,637	44.8	99.6	102.1	104.4	490,847	41.6	72.5	74.5	77.3
25-29 years . . . . .	283,031	24.0	102.8	103.5	106.6	381,355	32.4	95.9	99.2	102.9
30-34 years . . . . .	91,047	7.7	68.4	66.3	64.3	142,466	12.1	70.6	70.7	72.0
35-39 years . . . . .	27,805	2.4	38.6	37.2	38.4	45,500	3.9	47.1	51.6	46.9
40-44 years . . . . .	8,654	0.7	22.7	24.1	23.7	14,463	1.2	28.2	25.4	27.1
45-49 years . . . . .	3,987	0.3	14.2	13.9	15.4	6,174	0.5	16.7	16.9	16.4
50-54 years . . . . .	2,077	0.2	8.5	7.7	7.9	3,359	0.3	13.9	11.2	11.6
55-59 years . . . . .	1,190	0.1	5.4	5.3	6.1	2,123	0.2	7.7	6.8	8.4
60-64 years . . . . .	881	0.1	3.7	4.4	3.7	1,589	0.1	4.8	5.7	5.4
65 years and over . . . . .	774	0.1	0.8	0.8	0.8	1,449	0.1	2.4	2.4	2.3
<b>Remarriages<sup>3</sup></b>										
Total . . . . .	632,068	100.0	36.3	36.1	37.6	634,525	100.0	93.1	95.7	103.1
15-19 years . . . . .	5,586	0.9	*	*	*	1,011	0.2	*	*	*
20-24 years . . . . .	66,033	10.4	267.3	254.5	248.3	28,919	4.6	215.8	247.9	229.1
25-29 years . . . . .	134,480	21.3	182.2	183.2	193.8	97,615	15.4	193.3	191.6	215.9
30-34 years . . . . .	138,828	22.0	131.8	123.8	127.3	129,308	20.4	169.9	163.1	178.1
35-39 years . . . . .	107,961	17.1	88.1	93.8	95.3	121,966	19.2	144.9	161.7	172.1
40-44 years . . . . .	67,646	10.7	61.3	59.8	62.9	83,744	13.2	119.6	119.0	133.3
45-49 years . . . . .	41,525	6.6	42.6	40.3	45.1	55,359	8.7	105.2	105.9	118.2
50-54 years . . . . .	24,651	3.9	26.1	25.0	26.5	36,713	5.8	80.9	79.9	83.4
55-59 years . . . . .	14,891	2.4	12.6	13.7	13.4	26,789	4.2	60.2	60.5	61.7
60-64 years . . . . .	12,656	2.0	8.5	8.2	8.7	20,320	3.2	40.6	40.6	44.8
65 years and over . . . . .	17,811	2.8	2.1	2.2	2.2	32,781	5.2	16.9	18.0	18.1
Previously widowed <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	51,865	100.0	5.5	5.7	5.8	48,531	100.0	26.8	27.7	28.7
15-24 years . . . . .	1,112	2.1	*	*	*	289	0.6	*	*	*
25-44 years . . . . .	14,339	27.6	44.4	42.9	45.2	6,094	12.6	95.3	102.8	124.6
45-64 years . . . . .	23,796	45.9	11.3	11.2	11.3	21,285	43.9	53.9	52.8	55.7
65 years and over . . . . .	12,618	24.3	1.8	1.9	1.9	20,863	43.0	15.4	16.1	16.4

See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 6. Marriages and percent distribution of marriages by age according to previous marital status of women and men, 1986, and marriage rates by age and previous marital status of women and men, 1984-86: Marriage-registration area—Con.**

[Based on sample data. For sampling errors of estimates and a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes. Marriages of persons under 15 years of age are included in the youngest age groups; rates are based on populations that exclude persons under 15 years of age. Rates for all marriages are based on the unmarried population; for first marriages, on the never-married population; and for remarriages, on the widowed and divorced populations. Rates per 1,000 population in specified age group estimated as of July 1]

Age and previous marital status	Women					Men				
	Number	Percent	Rate <sup>1</sup>			Number	Percent	Rate <sup>1</sup>		
	1986	1986	1986	1985	1984	1986	1986	1986	1985	1984
Remarriages—Con.										
Previously divorced <sup>a</sup> . . . . .	487,301	100.0	79.5	81.8	87.3	493,457	100.0	117.8	121.6	132.7
15-19 years . . . . .	4,041	0.8	*	*	*	574	0.1	*	*	*
20-24 years . . . . .	54,171	11.1	256.7	263.6	241.5	23,862	4.8	233.9	276.2	234.8
25-29 years . . . . .	111,026	22.8	176.5	183.6	204.1	81,062	16.4	186.3	187.8	211.7
30-34 years . . . . .	115,530	23.7	133.1	127.8	132.0	108,225	21.9	165.2	157.9	173.1
35-39 years . . . . .	88,308	18.1	89.7	96.7	100.3	102,643	20.8	142.6	160.0	173.9
40-44 years . . . . .	53,515	11.0	64.0	62.9	66.9	69,977	14.2	125.4	119.1	130.1
45-49 years . . . . .	30,858	6.3	47.5	46.1	49.5	44,608	9.0	102.5	105.8	117.8
50-54 years . . . . .	15,352	3.2	30.2	31.0	33.0	27,608	5.6	82.2	77.8	78.2
55-59 years . . . . .	7,288	1.5	16.2	17.4	17.6	17,034	3.5	54.2	57.0	58.8
60-64 years . . . . .	4,026	0.8	10.4	10.2	12.3	9,836	2.0	38.9	39.4	45.8
65 years and over . . . . .	3,186	0.7	5.4	4.8	4.8	8,028	1.6	21.1	23.8	23.9
Not stated if widowed or divorced . . . . .	92,902	...	...	...	...	92,537	...	...	...	...
Not stated if previously married . . . . .										
Total . . . . .	42,839	...	...	...	...	41,451	...	...	...	...

<sup>1</sup>All rates exclude data for Iowa.

<sup>a</sup>Figures for first marriages and remarriages exclude data for Iowa. These data are included in "Not stated if previously married."

<sup>b</sup>Data exclude remarriages in Michigan, Ohio, and South Carolina. These data are included in "Not stated if widowed or divorced."

Table 7. Median and mean age of bride and groom by previous marital status: Marriage-registration area, 1963-86

[Based on sample data. Figures by previous marital status exclude data for Iowa beginning with 1977. Figures for previously divorced and previously widowed exclude data for Michigan and Ohio for all years, for South Carolina beginning with 1972, and for the District of Columbia for 1970. For a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes]

Year	Previous marital status of bride					Previous marital status of groom				
	Total <sup>1</sup>	First marriage	Remarriage			Total <sup>1</sup>	First marriage	Remarriage		
			Total <sup>2</sup>	Previously divorced	Previously widowed			Total <sup>2</sup>	Previously divorced	Previously widowed
Median age										
1986	25.7	23.3	33.9	33.1	54.3	27.8	25.1	37.5	36.6	62.9
1985	25.3	23.0	33.6	32.8	54.6	27.5	24.8	37.1	36.1	62.7
1984	25.0	22.8	33.3	32.5	54.2	27.2	24.6	36.8	35.9	62.4
1983	24.8	22.5	32.9	32.0	54.0	27.0	24.4	36.2	35.3	62.0
1982	24.4	22.3	32.5	31.6	54.1	26.7	24.1	35.7	34.9	61.7
1981	24.1	22.0	32.1	31.2	53.6	26.3	23.9	35.3	34.4	61.0
1980	23.7	21.8	32.0	31.0	53.6	25.9	23.6	35.2	34.0	61.2
1979	23.4	21.6	31.9	30.8	55.2	25.8	23.4	35.3	33.9	61.7
1978	23.2	21.4	31.5	30.5	52.6	25.5	23.2	35.1	33.8	59.7
1977	22.9	21.1	31.4	30.2	53.1	25.2	23.0	34.9	33.6	60.1
1976	22.7	21.0	31.7	30.1	53.0	25.0	22.9	35.1	33.7	60.0
1975	22.4	20.8	32.0	30.2	52.4	24.7	22.7	35.5	33.6	59.4
1974	22.0	20.6	32.1	30.0	51.9	24.2	22.5	35.7	33.6	59.2
1973	21.9	20.6	32.3	30.2	52.1	24.1	22.5	36.3	33.9	59.3
1972	21.7	20.5	32.8	30.3	51.4	23.8	22.4	36.5	34.0	59.1
1971	21.7	20.5	32.9	30.2	51.8	23.7	22.5	36.9	34.1	59.1
1970	21.7	20.6	33.3	30.1	51.2	23.6	22.5	37.5	34.5	58.7
1969	21.6	20.6	33.8	30.4	51.3	23.5	22.4	38.2	34.7	59.0
1968	21.5	20.6	33.8	30.7	50.6	23.6	22.4	38.3	35.1	57.9
1967	21.4	20.5	35.0	31.3	50.0	23.8	22.6	39.1	35.5	57.7
1966	21.5	20.3	35.2	31.4	50.2	23.8	22.6	39.2	35.8	57.9
1965	21.4	20.4	35.5	31.7	50.1	23.6	22.5	39.6	36.0	57.8
1964	21.4	20.4	35.6	31.7	50.3	23.6	22.4	39.7	36.4	58.0
1963	21.3	20.3	35.6	31.8	49.7	23.7	22.5	39.8	36.3	58.0
Mean age										
1986	28.4	24.3	36.2	34.6	53.3	31.0	26.2	40.1	38.2	61.2
1985	28.1	24.0	36.1	34.3	53.3	30.8	25.9	39.9	37.9	61.1
1984	27.8	23.8	35.9	34.0	52.8	30.5	25.7	39.7	37.7	60.8
1983	27.6	23.5	35.6	33.7	52.6	30.3	25.5	39.3	37.3	60.2
1982	27.3	23.3	35.3	33.4	52.6	30.0	25.3	39.0	37.0	59.9
1981	27.0	23.0	35.0	33.0	52.2	29.8	25.0	38.7	36.6	59.5
1980	26.7	22.7	35.0	32.8	52.2	29.4	24.8	38.7	36.5	59.6
1979	26.7	22.5	35.4	32.8	53.4	29.5	24.6	38.9	36.4	60.0
1978	26.3	22.3	34.9	32.6	51.4	29.1	24.4	38.5	36.2	58.4
1977	26.2	22.2	35.0	32.5	51.8	29.0	24.3	38.6	36.1	58.9
1976	26.1	22.1	35.3	32.5	51.8	28.9	24.1	38.8	36.2	58.6
1975	25.9	21.9	35.5	32.7	51.2	28.7	24.0	39.1	36.3	58.2
1974	25.6	21.7	35.7	32.5	51.0	28.3	23.8	39.4	36.3	58.2
1973	25.5	21.7	36.0	32.8	51.0	28.1	23.8	39.6	36.4	58.1
1972	25.2	21.6	36.2	32.9	50.7	27.9	23.7	39.8	36.5	58.0
1971	25.1	21.6	36.4	32.8	50.6	27.8	23.7	40.3	36.6	57.7
1970	25.1	21.6	36.6	32.8	50.3	27.8	23.8	40.6	36.7	57.7
1969	25.1	21.6	36.9	33.0	50.4	27.7	23.8	40.9	36.9	57.7
1968	25.0	21.6	36.9	33.2	49.9	27.7	23.8	41.0	37.1	57.0
1967	25.1	21.6	37.4	33.3	49.7	28.0	24.0	41.4	37.4	56.7
1966	25.2	21.5	37.6	33.6	49.7	28.0	24.0	41.6	37.6	57.0
1965	25.2	21.6	37.7	33.6	49.7	28.1	24.0	42.0	37.8	56.7
1964	25.3	21.4	37.8	33.1	50.0	28.3	24.0	42.1	37.8	57.0
1963	25.2	21.5	37.7	33.5	49.3	28.2	24.1	42.3	37.8	56.8

<sup>1</sup>Figures include previous marital status not stated.  
<sup>2</sup>Figures include divorced or widowed not stated.

Table 8. Percent distribution of marriages by previous marital status of both bride and groom: Reporting States, 1970-86

[Based on sample data]

Year	Total	Wife previously single and husband previously—			Wife previously divorced and husband previously—			Wife previously widowed and husband previously—		
		Single	Divorced	Widowed	Single	Divorced	Widowed	Single	Divorced	Widowed
1986	100.0	54.4	11.0	0.3	10.7	18.9	1.3	0.5	1.4	1.4
1985	100.0	54.7	11.1	0.3	10.4	18.8	1.3	0.5	1.4	1.5
1984	100.0	55.0	11.1	0.4	10.2	18.8	1.3	0.5	1.4	1.5
1983	100.0	54.8	11.2	0.4	10.0	18.9	1.3	0.5	1.5	1.5
1982	100.0	55.1	11.3	0.4	9.8	18.8	1.3	0.5	1.4	1.5
1981	100.0	54.9	11.4	0.4	9.6	18.8	1.3	0.5	1.5	1.5
1980	100.0	56.5	10.8	0.4	9.3	17.8	1.4	0.5	1.5	1.6
1979	100.0	56.7	10.8	0.5	8.9	17.6	1.4	0.6	1.7	1.9
1978	100.0	57.3	10.7	0.5	8.7	17.4	1.4	0.6	1.7	1.7
1977	100.0	57.8	10.3	0.5	8.5	17.2	1.4	0.6	1.7	1.9
1976	100.0	58.9	10.1	0.6	8.2	16.4	1.5	0.6	1.8	2.0
1975	100.0	60.5	9.3	0.6	7.8	15.5	1.6	0.7	1.8	2.1
1974	100.0	63.1	8.6	0.6	7.3	14.0	1.4	0.8	2.0	2.1
1973	100.0	64.8	8.1	0.6	7.1	13.2	1.4	0.7	1.8	2.1
1972	100.0	67.1	7.6	0.6	6.6	12.0	1.4	0.8	1.8	2.1
1971	100.0	68.2	7.2	0.7	6.4	11.1	1.5	0.9	1.8	2.2
1970	100.0	68.8	6.9	0.7	6.4	10.7	1.4	0.9	1.8	2.4

NOTE: In 1970 previous marital status was reported by 38 registration States: Alabama, Alaska, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. In 1971-76 the District of Columbia also reported this item. After 1976, Iowa no longer reported it. In 1979 Colorado joined the MRA, bringing the total of reporting areas back to 38 States plus the District of Columbia for the 1979-86 period.



Table 9. Median and mean interval to remarriage in years by previous marital status of bride and groom: Reporting States, 1970-86

[Based on sample data.]

Year	Previous marital status of bride			Previous marital status of groom		
	All remarriages <sup>1</sup>	Previously divorced	Previously widowed	All remarriages <sup>1</sup>	Previously divorced	Previously widowed
Median interval						
1986	2.6	2.4	4.5	2.1	2.1	2.2
1985	2.5	2.3	4.6	2.0	2.0	2.1
1984	2.4	2.2	4.5	1.9	2.0	2.1
1983	2.3	2.1	4.3	1.8	1.8	2.0
1982	2.1	1.9	4.2	1.7	1.7	2.0
1981	2.0	1.9	4.1	1.6	1.6	2.0
1980	2.0	1.8	4.1	1.6	1.6	2.0
1979	1.9	1.7	4.3	1.5	1.4	2.0
1978	1.8	1.7	3.9	1.4	1.4	1.9
1977	1.7	1.5	4.1	1.3	1.3	1.9
1976	1.6	1.4	3.7	1.2	1.1	1.8
1975	1.6	1.3	3.7	1.2	1.1	1.7
1974	1.5	1.2	3.6	1.2	1.1	1.7
1973	1.5	1.2	3.7	1.1	1.0	1.8
1972	1.4	1.1	3.6	1.1	1.0	1.9
1971	1.4	1.1	3.6	1.1	1.0	1.8
1970	1.3	1.0	3.6	1.0	0.9	1.8
Mean interval						
1986	3.9	3.7	6.3	3.4	3.4	3.7
1985	3.8	3.6	6.5	3.3	3.2	3.7
1984	3.6	3.4	6.2	3.2	3.1	3.7
1983	3.5	3.3	6.1	3.0	3.0	3.5
1982	3.4	3.1	6.1	2.9	2.8	3.4
1981	3.3	3.0	6.0	2.8	2.7	3.5
1980	3.2	2.9	6.0	2.7	2.6	3.5
1979	3.2	2.9	6.0	2.6	2.5	3.5
1978	3.1	2.8	5.7	2.5	2.5	3.3
1977	3.0	2.7	5.8	2.5	2.3	3.4
1976	3.0	2.6	5.6	2.4	2.3	3.3
1975	2.9	2.5	5.6	2.4	2.3	3.2
1974	2.9	2.5	5.5	2.4	2.2	3.3
1973	2.9	2.6	5.5	2.3	2.2	3.2
1972	3.0	2.5	5.7	2.3	2.2	3.4
1971	3.0	2.6	5.5	2.4	2.3	3.3
1970	2.9	2.5	5.5	2.3	2.2	3.2

<sup>1</sup>Figures include divorced or widowed not stated.

NOTE: In 1970 data on interval between marriages were reported by 18 registration States (California, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Wisconsin, and Wyoming). By 1986, 9 additional States were reporting interval between marriages (Colorado, Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Oregon, and Virginia).

Table 10. Marriages and mean age at marriage by race and previous marital status of bride and groom: 34 reporting States, 1986

[Based on sample data.]

Race	Total	First marriage	Remarriage			Widowed or divorced not stated	Previous marital status not stated
			Total	Previously divorced <sup>1</sup>	Previously widowed <sup>1</sup>		
<b>Bride</b>							
Number							
All races . . . . .	1,212,983	745,909	448,664	377,567	40,129	30,968	18,410
White . . . . .	1,033,451	620,215	399,130	336,950	35,415	26,765	14,106
Black . . . . .	136,792	98,917	36,667	28,968	3,832	3,867	1,208
Other races . . . . .	18,877	13,896	4,791	4,194	322	275	190
Race not stated . . . . .	23,863	12,881	8,076	7,455	560	61	2,906
<b>Groom</b>							
All races . . . . .	1,212,983	751,214	444,364	377,873	36,922	29,569	17,405
White . . . . .	1,031,112	627,200	390,613	333,185	32,549	24,879	13,299
Black . . . . .	142,620	99,403	42,039	33,925	3,676	4,438	1,178
Other races . . . . .	16,295	12,362	3,740	3,286	258	196	193
Race not stated . . . . .	22,956	12,249	7,972	7,477	439	56	2,735
<b>Bride</b>							
Mean age							
All races . . . . .	28.4	23.8	36.0	34.3	53.4	34.8	25.4
White . . . . .	28.3	23.5	35.9	34.1	54.0	34.5	25.2
Black . . . . .	28.8	25.7	37.3	35.9	49.0	36.8	28.4
Other races . . . . .	28.0	25.4	35.5	34.9	45.3	34.3	26.3
Race not stated . . . . .	28.0	24.1	35.2	34.1	51.2	31.8	25.2
<b>Groom</b>							
All races . . . . .	31.0	25.8	39.9	37.9	61.2	38.5	27.2
White . . . . .	31.0	25.5	39.8	37.8	61.5	38.3	27.0
Black . . . . .	31.3	27.3	40.9	39.0	58.8	39.9	29.4
Other races . . . . .	30.0	27.3	38.9	37.8	54.7	36.7	30.5
Race not stated . . . . .	30.6	26.0	38.9	37.6	62.0	34.3	27.1

<sup>1</sup>Data exclude remarriages in South Carolina. These data are included in "Widowed or divorced not stated."

NOTE: Of the 42 States in the marriage-registration area in 1986, 34 reported race of bride and groom—Alabama, Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Those registration areas that did not report race are California, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, and Ohio.

Table 11. Marriages and percent distribution by educational attainment of bride and groom, according to previous marital status, and mean years of school completed: 21 reporting States, 1986

Previous marital status	Years of school completed								Mean and median
	Total	0-8 years	9-11 years	12 years	13-15 years	16 years	17 years or more	Not stated	
<b>Bride</b>									
	Number								Mean
Total . . . . .	754,379	18,982	86,024	275,892	159,016	89,392	41,230	83,843	13.4
Single . . . . .	490,422	8,762	51,244	169,959	106,009	70,509	28,583	55,356	13.6
Previously married . . . . .	261,379	10,184	34,682	105,501	52,852	18,744	12,597	26,819	13.0
Divorced . . . . .	234,562	7,098	30,809	95,961	48,563	16,950	11,773	23,408	13.1
Widowed . . . . .	24,924	3,056	3,657	9,048	3,982	1,695	739	2,747	12.3
Widowed or divorced not stated . . . . .	1,893	30	216	492	307	99	85	664	...
Not stated . . . . .	2,578	36	98	432	155	139	50	1,668	...
<b>Groom</b>									
Total . . . . .	754,379	27,244	79,106	273,307	140,273	93,031	57,731	83,687	13.5
Single . . . . .	491,027	11,412	50,148	180,636	91,493	66,608	35,486	55,244	13.6
Previously married . . . . .	260,990	15,798	28,883	92,370	48,649	26,343	22,174	26,773	13.2
Divorced . . . . .	236,637	11,162	26,056	85,733	45,705	23,875	20,377	23,729	13.3
Widowed . . . . .	22,713	4,544	2,637	6,240	2,755	2,408	1,692	2,437	12.2
Widowed or divorced not stated . . . . .	1,640	92	190	397	189	60	105	607	...
Not stated . . . . .	2,362	34	75	301	131	80	71	1,670	...
<b>Bride</b>									
	Percent distribution								Median
Total . . . . .	100.0	2.8	12.8	41.1	23.7	13.3	6.1	...	12.8
Single . . . . .	100.0	2.0	11.8	39.1	24.4	16.2	6.6	...	12.9
Previously married . . . . .	100.0	4.3	14.8	45.0	22.5	8.0	5.4	...	12.7
Divorced . . . . .	100.0	3.4	14.6	45.4	23.0	8.0	5.6	...	12.7
Widowed . . . . .	100.0	13.8	16.5	40.8	18.0	7.6	3.3	...	12.5
<b>Groom</b>									
Total . . . . .	100.0	4.1	11.8	40.8	20.9	13.9	8.6	...	12.8
Single . . . . .	100.0	2.6	11.5	41.5	21.0	15.3	8.1	...	12.9
Previously married . . . . .	100.0	6.7	12.3	39.4	20.8	11.2	9.5	...	12.8
Divorced . . . . .	100.0	5.2	12.2	40.3	21.5	11.2	9.6	...	12.8
Widowed . . . . .	100.0	22.4	13.0	30.8	13.6	11.9	8.3	...	12.5

NOTE: Of the 42 States in the marriage-registration area in 1986, 21 reported education of bride and groom—California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

## Technical notes

### Place and time of occurrence

Marriages and marriage rates for States and other areas are by place of occurrence. Marriages are those performed during the calendar year.

### Sources of data

Figures in tables 1-3 are based on totals reported by States and counties, except for New York City, where the count of marriages was taken from the 100-percent sample of marriage records. Figures in tables 4-11 are based on data tabulated from State-coded data tapes and from probability samples of records selected and coded in the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) from copies of the records sent by States participating in the marriage-registration area (MRA). In 1986 the MRA consisted of the District of Columbia and all except eight States—Arizona, Arkansas, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, and Washington. Marriages performed in the MRA included 77 percent of the marriages registered in the United States in 1986 and 79 percent in 1976.

### Nonlicensed (confidential) marriages for California

Section 4213 of the California Civil Code allows unmarried couples who have been living together to be married confidentially without obtaining a marriage license or health certificate. In March 1972 this section was amended to require county clerks to keep sealed records of these marriages and to report periodically the total number to the California State Department of Health Services. Since reporting began, nonlicensed marriages have increased rapidly, from 2,857 in 1973 to 83,773 in 1986. NCHS has not included the nonlicensed California marriages in totals or rates for years prior to 1978. However, beginning with final statistics for 1978, nonlicensed marriages, which totaled 37,462 in that year, are included in the national and geographic totals and rates.

### Marriage sample

Twelve States—Florida, Illinois, Maine, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York (except New York City), Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia—supplied State-coded data tapes of all their marriage records through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program, and 100 percent of these records were used by NCHS. For all other States in the MRA, records were sampled at rates designed to give a sample of at least 2,500 for each State. All records were included in the samples for Delaware, the District of Columbia, and Wyoming, where totals of less than 5,000 marriages had been expected, and for New York City and Wisconsin. All other States were sampled at 5, 10, 20, or 50 percent, depending on the number of marriages in the State. The total sample size, including records supplied through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program, was 782,881 marriages. Sampling errors shown in table I are for frequencies that equal a specified percent of the total MRA marriages.

Nonlicensed marriages registered in California are not available for inclusion in the MRA marriage sample.

**Table I. Approximate sampling errors of estimated number of marriages shown in table 6: Marriage-registration area, 1986**

Percent of total MRA marriages in subclass	Sampling error
1 or 99. . . . .	396
2 or 98. . . . .	557
3 or 97. . . . .	678
4 or 96. . . . .	779
5 or 95. . . . .	867
7 or 93. . . . .	1,015
10 or 90. . . . .	1,193
15 or 85. . . . .	1,420
20 or 80. . . . .	1,591
25 or 75. . . . .	1,722
50. . . . .	1,989

**HOW TO USE THE SAMPLING ERROR TABLE:** The total number of MRA marriages in 1986 (excluding nonlicensed California marriages) was 1,854,744. For any estimate of marriages shown in table 6, determine its percent of the total MRA marriages. Then look in the table of sampling errors for the row containing the computed percent to determine the sampling error for the estimated number of marriages for the year. For example, in 1988 there were an estimated 632,068 remarriages of women, or 34.9 percent of all 1988 marriages. Because 34.9 is between 25 and 50 percent, the sampling error is between 1,722 and 1,989, or, by interpolation, 1,828 remarriages. The chances are about 68 out of 100 that the actual number of 1988 remarriages is between 630,240 and 633,896 (632,068 ± 1,828).

The 5-percent sample of California marriages for 1986 was drawn only from licensed marriages. The corresponding weights for sample records were based on these totals. Because no information is available on the characteristics of persons obtaining nonlicensed marriages, no accurate estimate is available for the bias introduced in sample estimates by the omission of these marriages.

### Sampling errors

All statistics for the MRA are estimates based on the systematic sample of marriages described above; therefore, these statistics are subject to sampling errors. The sampling error is a measure of variation that occurs by chance between sample estimates and the actual quantity being estimated. The chance is about 68 in 100 that an estimate would differ from the true value by less than the sampling error and about 95 in 100 that the difference would be less than twice the sampling error.

### Population denominators

Marriage rates for the MRA by age, sex, and previous marital status for 1984, 1985, and 1986 are based on unpublished population estimates as of July 1, prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census (5). National and State rates for 1986 are based on population estimates as of July 1 published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census (6).

### Computation of percent distributions, medians, and means

Figures for marriage order and previous marital status not stated were subtracted from figures for marriages used as denominators before medians were computed. Computations of median and mean age at marriage were based on tabulations of ungrouped data.

NOTE: A list of references follows the text.

**Nonreporting bias**

Age was more than 99 percent complete on marriage records, but in

1986 marriage order for brides was not stated on 2 percent of the MRA records. No allocation of missing data was done before rates were calculated.

The percent not stated for grooms was similar.





This report represents summary tabulations from the final marriage statistics for 1986. More detailed tabulations for 1986 will be published in *Vital Statistics of the United States, Volume III—Marriage and Divorce*. Prior to the publication of that volume, the National Center for Health Statistics will respond to requests for unpublished data whenever possible.

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