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Advance Report of Final Marriage Statistics, 1982

In 1982, 2,456,278 couples married in the United States. This was the seventh consecutive annual increase, and 1 percent more than the number in 1981. It was also a new national record for the number of marriages (table 1).

The increase in the number of marriages was accompanied by a proportionate increase in total population and, therefore, the marriage rate remained at 10.6 per 1,000 population for the third straight year (figure 1). According to provisional data, the marriage rate dropped to 10.5 in 1983 and 1984.

While the marriage rate per 1,000 population increased during the late 1970's and stabilized in the early 1980's, the marriage rate per 1,000 unmarried women 15 years and over followed a generally downward trend in the last decade. The rate was 77.9 per 1,000 unmarried women in 1972 and fell every year except 1978 and 1981, dropping 21 percent by 1982 when it reached 61.4. This rate, recorded since 1940, has never been lower.

The rate computed by relating total marriages to unmarried women 15–44 years of age has also reached historically low levels since it started falling in 1973. In 1982 the rate was 101.9 per 1,000 unmarried women 15–44 years of age, meaning that 10 out of 100 unmarried women in the most marriageable ages were wed that year. In 1972 the rate was 141.3. It dropped 27 percent to 102.6 in 1980, increased slightly in 1981 to 103.1, then dropped to 101.9 in 1982. At its highest point, in 1946, at the end of World War II, this rate was 199.0, virtually double the rate in 1982.

Seasonal variation

Marriages are highly seasonal. In the United States marriages peak in the summer and dip in the winter (table 2). With rare exceptions, 1980 being the most recent, June has the most marriages. In 1980 there were more marriages in August than

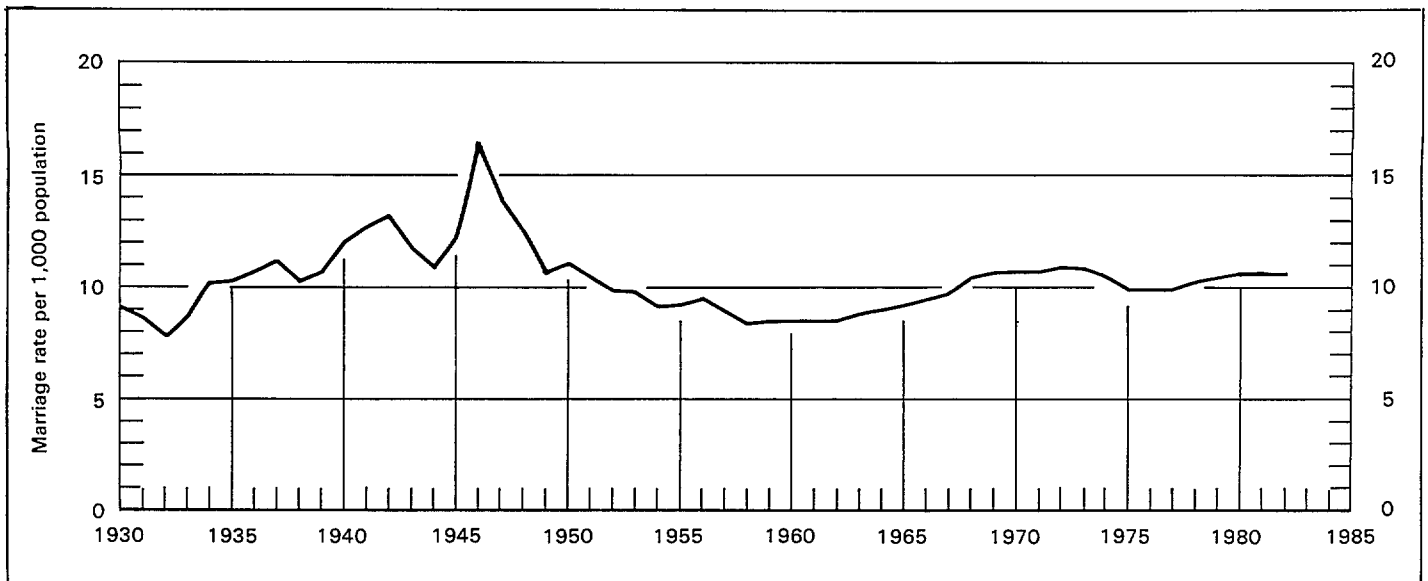


Figure 1. Marriage rates: United States, 1930–82

in June. Because over half of weddings occur on Saturdays, the monthly totals are affected by the number of Saturdays in a month; and, in 1980, June had only four Saturdays while August had five. In both 1981 and 1982 June had four Saturdays and in both years June had 279,000 marriages. In contrast, July 1982 had five Saturdays and 31,000 more marriages than July 1981, which had four Saturdays.

Geographic variation

Marriages and marriage rates for the four regions, the nine geographic divisions, and the 50 States and the District of Columbia are shown in table 3. Of the four regions, the West had the highest marriage rate in 1982, 12.2 per 1,000 total population, 42 percent higher than the rate for the Northeast, which had the lowest, 8.6. The rank order was the same in 1972 and 1981 as it was in 1982. However, between 1972 and 1982 the rates converged and the variation was not as great in 1982 as it had been in 1972. Three regions (West, South, and North Central) had lower rates in 1982 than in 1972, while the Northeast had the same rate as a decade earlier. The Northeast was the only region to report a higher marriage rate in 1982 than in 1981.

Among States, the 1982 marriage rate was highest in Nevada (121.3 per 1,000). This reflects the fact that the rates in table 3 are calculated for the place where the marriage occurred and are affected by marriages of residents of other States. Many out-of-State residents, particularly Californians, marry in Nevada. Because Nevada's population is relatively small and California's is relatively large, the Nevada rate is greatly inflated and the California rate is slightly depressed. States other than Nevada had rates that ranged from 7.9 per 1,000 in Pennsylvania to 16.6 in South Carolina. In 1982 Pennsylvania replaced Delaware as the State with the lowest marriage rate. Traditionally, many residents of Delaware had been marrying in Maryland. A change in Delaware's legislation in July 1982 has resulted in more Delaware residents marrying in their home State.

Although the marriage rate for the United States was the same in 1982 as it was in 1981, there were only four States in which the rates were unchanged (Florida, Maine, New Mexico, and Virginia). In 23 States rates dropped from 1 to 7 percent with the greatest drop reported by Wyoming. In the District of Columbia and the 21 States for which data were complete in 1982, marriage rates rose from 1 to 8 percent. The greatest increase between 1981 and 1982 was reported by Hawaii where the rate rose from 12.5 to 13.5 per 1,000 population.

At the national level, the marriage rate was 3 percent lower in 1982 than in 1972. The change varied for different States, however. Among the 48 States and the District of Columbia for which data were complete in both years, marriage rates were lower in 30 States. In 11 of these States 1982 rates were more than 10 percent lower than 1972 rates (Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Nevada, New Hampshire, South Carolina, South Dakota, West Virginia, and Wyoming).

In Nevada the rate was 38 percent lower in 1982 than it had been a decade earlier. While the predominant pattern was one of lower marriage rates, the rates were 1 to 23 percent higher in 18 States and the District of Columbia. The greatest increase, 23 percent, was reported for Alaska where the rate was 14.4 in 1982 compared with 11.7 in 1972.

Total marriage rate

Numbers of marriages are obtained annually from all States and the District of Columbia. Detailed information about characteristics of brides and grooms is reported by the 42 States and the District of Columbia in the marriage-registration area (MRA), which accounted for 80 percent of all marriages in the United States in 1982. It is for these States that age, previous marital history, and other characteristics can be studied.

Table 4 shows the total marriage rate (TMR) for the MRA for the period 1972-82. The TMR indicates the total number of marriages 1,000 men or women would have if they experienced throughout their lives the age-specific rates observed for a specified year. In 1982 the total marriage rate for women was 1,143.6. In other words, 1,000 women would have 1,144 marriages if 1982 age-specific rates were to persist. The TMR for men in 1982 was 1,206.4, 5 percent higher than the rate for women. For both men and women the total marriage rate dropped sharply between 1972 and 1977 and then reversed and rose in 1978 and 1979. The rates have fluctuated separately since 1979. In 1982 the TMR for women was 9 percent lower than it was in 1972; for men it was 14 percent lower. In every year the TMR for men was higher than that for women.

Table 4 also shows the total first marriage rate (TFMR) for 1972-82. This indicates the number of men or women who would ever marry per 1,000 in the population if the age-specific rates for that year were to continue throughout their lives. In 1982 the TFMR was 710.9 for women and 703.4 for men. In other words, if the 1982 age-specific first marriage rates were to continue, about 70 percent of American men and women would ever marry. Both rates were much higher in 1972 and dropped sharply by 1977, 21 percent for women and 24 percent for men. Changes after 1977 have been much smaller. The disparity in the rates for men and women narrowed as the rates for men fell faster than the rates for women through 1977, and then the rates for women rose as the rates for men generally declined. In 1982 the rates crossed and the TFMR for women was 1 percent higher than that for men.

Previous marital status

The number of marriages and marriage rates for the MRA by previous marital status are shown in table 5. It should be noted that the marriage rate for unmarried women 15 years of age and over in the MRA (54.1 per 1,000) is lower than the rate for unmarried women 15 years of age and over in the United States (61.4 per 1,000), shown in table 1. Such a difference would be expected because many of the States that do not par-

ticipate in the MRA are in the South and West Regions where marriage rates tend to be higher than in the Northeast and North Central Regions. Presumably age and marital status specific rates are also likely to be lower in the MRA than in the entire United States.

Because there are more unmarried women than unmarried men, the marriage rate for men is higher than the rate for women. For specific categories of previous marital status there are differences in the numbers of marriages for men and women as well as in the rates. The rate of first marriage is higher for women while the rate of remarriages—both for the previously widowed and the previously divorced—is higher for men.

During the last decade there has been an increase in the proportion of marriages that are remarriages for one or both spouses. In 1972, 33 percent of marriages were remarriages of one or both spouses. By 1982 this proportion had increased to 45 percent (table 6).

Age at marriage

Marriage rates specific for age and sex as well as for previous marital status are shown in table 5. For women there was no consistent pattern in the changes in the rates between 1981 and 1982; some increased, some decreased, and some did not change. For men, on the other hand, the rates generally decreased for ages under 40 years and increased for older men. Rates for previously widowed men increased at all ages.

Median age of bride and groom at marriage for the MRA is shown in table 7. The median is the age at which half the brides and grooms were younger and half were older when they married. In 1982 the median age of brides was 24.4 years and that of grooms, 26.7 years. These figures have been increasing since 1972 for brides and since 1969 for grooms.

As expected, brides and grooms marrying for the first time are younger than those who are remarrying. The median age at first marriage in 1982 was 22.3 years for women and 24.1 years for men, while the median ages at marriage for previously divorced women and men were 31.6 years and 34.9 years, respectively. Previously widowed women and men married at older ages; the medians were 54.1 years for women and 61.7 years for men. For every specific marital status, median age at marriage was higher in 1982 than in 1972.

The trends in age of bride and groom in different combinations of marriage history, described by the mean or average age, are shown in table 8. Age at marriage and age difference between spouses varies with the marital status of both the bride and groom. Specifically, in 1982 when the marriage was a first

marriage of both spouses, the average age of the bride was 22.6 years, and of the groom, 24.6 years; the average age difference was 2.0 years. Single brides marrying previously married men were older (26.2 years) and so were their husbands (33.2 years); the average age difference was 7.0 years. Previously married brides marrying single men were still older (29.8 years), but their husbands were younger than themselves (28.9 years) by 0.9 year. Oldest of all were the couples in which both partners had been married previously. Brides were 37.8, grooms were 42.0, and the age difference was 4.2 years.

The majority of marriages, 55 percent in 1982, were primary marriages; that is, a first marriage for both bride and groom. For these marriages, as was shown, the age difference was 2.0 years, on the average. The lower graph in figure 2 shows that this average summarizes a very strong tendency for age difference to increase progressively with increased age of groom. In 1982 grooms 20 years old (20.5) married brides 0.7 year younger (19.8); grooms 25 years old (25.5) married brides 2.1 years younger (23.4); grooms 30 years old (30.5) married brides 4.0 years younger (26.5); and at age 40 (40.5) grooms were 9.0 years older than their brides (31.5), on the average. A strikingly different pattern emerges when age difference is calculated for each specific age of bride. In the upper graph of figure 2, the age disparity shrinks progressively with increased age of bride. At age 15 years (15.5) brides are 4.6 years younger than their grooms (20.1). The age difference narrows until age 30 when the age difference becomes negative and the husband is younger than the bride, on the average. Brides 40 years old (40.5) married grooms 2.5 years younger (38.0). It should be noted that at these relatively mature ages few people were marrying for the first time and even fewer brides and grooms were both marrying for the first time.

There was very little change in age difference between spouses during the period 1970 to 1982 (table 8). In first marriages for both bride and groom the mean age difference was 2.0 years in each year from 1972 to 1982. The age difference when the wife was previously single and the husband previously married ranged only from 6.8 to 7.0 years during the 13 years. For remarriages of both spouses the age difference ranged only from 4.1 to 4.4 years. The only combination of marriage history that showed a distinct trend was marriages where the wife had been married before but the husband had not. In 1971–73 there was no difference in the average age of these husbands and wives; by 1982 the brides were 0.9 year older than the grooms, on the average. The age difference was always smallest for this combination and it is the only combination in which wives are older than their husbands.

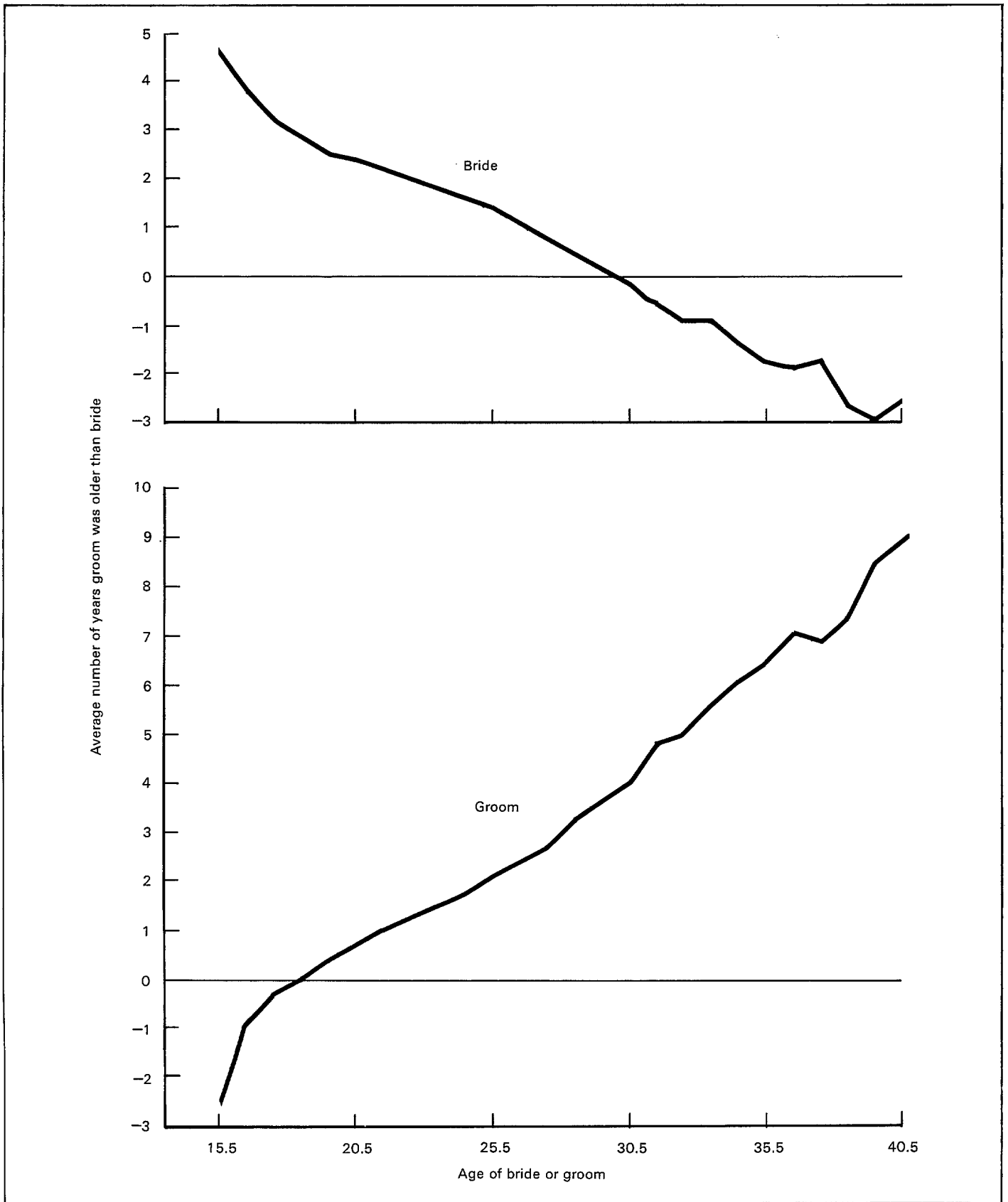


Figure 2. Average number of years groom was older than bride at first marriage of both by age for brides and grooms: Marriage-registration area, 1982

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This report represents summary tabulations from the final marriage statistics for 1982. More detailed tabulations for 1982 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.

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, 1940-82

[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	Unmarried women 15 years and over	Unmarried women 15-44 years
1982	2,456,278	10.6	61.4	101.9
1981	2,422,145	10.6	61.7	103.1
1980	2,390,252	10.6	61.4	102.6
1979	2,331,337	10.4	63.6	107.9
1978	2,282,272	10.3	64.1	109.1
1977	2,178,367	9.9	63.6	109.8
1976	2,154,807	9.9	65.2	113.4
1975	2,152,662	10.0	66.9	118.5
1974	2,229,667	10.5	72.0	128.4
1973	2,284,108	10.8	76.0	137.3
1972	2,282,154	10.9	77.9	141.3
1971	2,190,481	10.6	76.2	138.9
1970	2,158,802	10.6	76.5	140.2
1969	2,145,000	10.6	80.0	149.1
1968	2,069,000	10.4	79.1	147.2
1967	1,927,000	9.7	76.4	145.2
1966	1,857,000	9.5	75.6	145.1
1965	1,800,000	9.3	75.0	144.3
1964	1,725,000	9.0	74.6	146.2
1963	1,654,000	8.8	73.4	143.3
1962	1,577,000	8.5	71.2	138.4
1961	1,548,000	8.5	72.2	145.4
1960	1,523,000	8.5	73.5	148.0
1959	1,494,000	8.5	73.6	149.8
1958	1,451,000	8.4	72.0	146.3
1957	1,518,000	8.9	78.0	157.4
1956	1,585,000	9.5	82.4	165.6
1955	1,531,000	9.3	80.9	161.1
1954	1,490,000	9.2	79.8	154.3
1953	1,546,000	9.8	83.7	163.3
1952	1,539,318	9.9	83.2	159.9
1951	1,594,694	10.4	86.6	164.9
1950	1,667,231	11.1	90.2	166.4
1949	1,579,798	10.6	86.7	158.0
1948	1,811,155	12.4	98.5	174.7
1947	1,991,878	13.9	106.2	182.7
1946	2,291,045	16.4	118.1	199.0
1945	1,612,992	12.2	83.6	138.2
1944	1,452,394	10.9	76.5	124.5
1943	1,577,050	11.7	83.0	133.5
1942	1,772,132	13.2	93.0	147.6
1941	1,695,999	12.7	88.5	138.4
1940	1,595,879	12.1	82.8	122.4

Table 2. Marriages and marriage rates, by month: United States, 1972, 1981, and 1982
 [Rates on an annual basis per 1,000 population]

<i>Month</i>	<i>Number</i>			<i>Rate</i>		
	<i>1982</i>	<i>1981</i>	<i>1972</i>	<i>1982</i>	<i>1981</i>	<i>1972</i>
Total	2,456,278	2,422,145	2,282,154	10.6	10.6	10.9
January	136,175	132,650	134,970	7.0	6.8	7.7
February.....	145,044	158,168	138,738	8.2	9.0	8.4
March	160,941	154,448	153,208	8.2	8.0	8.7
April.....	184,918	179,699	170,827	9.7	9.6	10.0
May	247,358	242,937	185,637	12.6	12.5	10.5
June.....	279,177	279,479	273,167	14.7	14.8	15.9
July	253,286	222,298	220,986	12.9	11.4	12.5
August.....	244,535	263,613	243,941	12.4	13.5	13.7
September.....	224,341	219,928	210,310	11.8	11.6	12.2
October.....	220,611	208,952	172,856	11.2	10.7	9.7
November	175,369	176,401	171,129	9.2	9.3	9.9
December	184,523	183,572	206,385	9.3	9.4	11.6

Table 3. Marriages and marriage rates: United States, each region, division, and State, 1972, 1981, and 1982

[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		
	1982	1981	1972	1982	1981	1972
United States	2,456,278	2,422,145	2,282,154	10.6	10.6	10.9
Regions:						
Northeast	421,944	407,485	425,955	8.6	8.3	8.6
North Central	564,613	565,246	577,429	9.6	9.6	10.1
South	916,857	906,110	818,405	11.7	11.8	12.4
West	552,864	543,304	460,365	12.2	12.3	12.7
Northeast:						
New England	111,925	108,603	107,111	9.0	8.7	8.9
Middle Atlantic	310,019	298,882	318,844	8.4	8.1	8.5
North Central:						
East North Central	1,390,631	390,965	409,206	19.4	9.4	10.0
West North Central	173,982	174,281	168,223	10.0	10.1	10.2
South:						
South Atlantic	429,808	421,595	394,392	11.2	11.2	12.2
East South Central	1,167,120	1,168,992	170,054	111.2	111.5	12.8
West South Central	319,929	315,523	253,959	12.7	12.9	12.6
West:						
Mountain	240,493	235,122	209,980	19.9	20.1	23.3
Pacific	312,371	308,182	250,385	9.4	9.5	9.1
New England:						
Maine	12,388	12,279	11,739	10.9	10.9	11.3
New Hampshire	10,584	9,987	9,752	11.2	10.7	12.5
Vermont	5,568	5,229	5,088	10.7	10.2	11.0
Massachusetts	48,654	47,802	48,189	8.5	8.3	8.4
Rhode Island	7,885	7,559	7,858	8.3	7.9	8.1
Connecticut	26,846	25,747	24,485	8.6	8.2	8.0
Middle Atlantic:						
New York	156,720	148,228	161,872	8.9	8.4	8.8
New Jersey	59,949	58,010	58,476	8.1	7.8	8.0
Pennsylvania	93,350	92,644	98,496	7.9	7.8	8.3
East North Central:						
Ohio	1,102,905	99,959	96,297	19.6	9.3	9.0
Indiana	55,924	55,566	61,262	10.2	10.1	11.6
Illinois	107,023	109,074	118,592	9.3	9.5	10.5
Michigan	82,633	85,252	94,447	9.1	9.3	10.5
Wisconsin	42,146	41,114	38,608	8.9	8.7	8.6
West North Central:						
Minnesota	37,409	37,638	32,227	9.1	9.2	8.3
Iowa	27,188	27,153	26,603	9.4	9.3	9.3
Missouri	53,836	54,124	53,372	10.9	11.0	11.2
North Dakota	6,176	6,204	5,886	9.2	9.4	9.3
South Dakota	8,353	8,662	12,151	12.0	12.6	17.9
Nebraska	14,350	14,363	14,106	9.0	9.1	9.3
Kansas	26,670	26,137	23,878	11.1	11.0	10.6
South Atlantic:						
Delaware	4,827	4,545	4,362	8.0	7.6	7.6
Maryland	47,867	47,128	49,924	11.2	11.1	12.2
District of Columbia	5,571	5,318	6,292	8.9	8.4	8.5
Virginia	62,099	61,410	55,863	11.3	11.3	11.6
West Virginia	16,467	16,721	18,270	8.4	8.6	10.2
North Carolina	51,058	48,109	48,766	8.5	8.1	9.2
South Carolina	53,496	54,420	59,983	16.6	17.2	22.1
Georgia	72,603	70,950	68,756	12.9	12.7	14.3
Florida	115,820	112,994	82,176	11.1	11.1	10.9
East South Central:						
Kentucky	134,238	132,217	35,423	19.3	18.8	10.6
Tennessee	57,867	60,063	56,164	12.4	13.0	13.7
Alabama	47,431	48,710	49,764	12.0	12.4	14.1
Mississippi	27,584	28,002	28,703	10.7	11.0	12.4

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Marriages and marriage rates: United States, each region, division, and State, 1972, 1981, and 1982—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		
	1982	1981	1972	1982	1981	1972
West South Central:						
Arkansas	28,041	27,673	25,202	12.2	12.1	12.5
Louisiana	45,581	44,929	38,981	10.4	10.5	10.4
Oklahoma	47,660	48,159	40,767	14.8	15.5	15.3
Texas	198,647	194,762	149,009	13.0	13.2	12.7
Mountain:						
Montana	8,185	8,209	7,674	10.2	10.3	10.7
Idaho	14,065	14,173	12,086	14.4	14.8	15.8
Wyoming	6,799	7,057	5,357	13.4	14.4	15.4
Colorado	37,739	37,210	27,095	12.3	12.5	11.3
New Mexico ²	17,614	17,218	14,167	12.9	12.9	13.1
Arizona	31,408	31,906	² 23,318	10.9	11.4	² 11.6
Utah	18,427	17,914	13,935	11.7	11.8	12.3
Nevada	106,256	101,435	106,348	121.3	119.9	194.4
Pacific:						
Washington	48,228	50,025	41,618	11.3	11.9	12.1
Oregon	24,186	22,904	19,265	9.1	8.6	8.8
California	220,064	217,304	175,924	8.9	9.0	8.5
Alaska	6,410	5,731	3,828	14.4	13.8	11.7
Hawaii	13,483	12,218	9,750	13.5	12.5	11.8

¹Data are incomplete.

²Data include marriage licenses issued for some counties.

Table 4. Total marriage rates and total first marriage rates: Marriage-registration area, 1972-82

[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. 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	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
1982	1,143.6	1,206.4	710.9	703.4
1981	1,113.9	1,218.0	687.2	711.4
1980	1,128.4	1,207.5	706.2	714.4
1979	1,130.0	1,243.2	704.4	739.4
1978	1,112.4	1,227.3	696.5	733.7
1977	1,098.4	1,213.9	687.6	727.7
1976	1,100.7	1,218.0	695.5	737.5
1975	1,125.7	1,246.2	720.8	774.4
1974	1,191.5	1,317.1	789.8	852.7
1973	1,249.1	1,382.3	843.4	920.0
1972	1,254.8	1,401.9	866.9	960.8

Table 5. Marriages and marriage rates, by age and previous marital status of women and men: Marriage-registration area, 1981 and 1982

[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 group estimated as of July 1]

Age and previous marital status	Women				Men			
	Number ¹		Rate ²		Number ¹		Rate ²	
	1982	1981	1982	1981	1982	1981	1982	1981
All marriages								
Total.....	1,912,684	1,886,396	54.1	54.3	1,912,684	1,886,396	65.8	66.8
15-19 years	340,197	362,600	43.0	44.3	132,470	144,897	15.7	16.5
15-17 years	84,943	94,754	17.9	19.1	12,818	15,249	2.6	2.9
18-19 years	255,254	267,846	81.0	83.8	119,652	129,648	33.7	36.9
20-24 years	685,773	688,527	121.7	121.7	632,089	645,359	88.0	96.0
25-44 years	769,715	722,311	99.9	99.9	965,494	918,770	114.1	118.3
25-29 years	395,910	372,126	130.5	129.2	477,761	457,565	120.8	129.4
30-34 years	201,921	193,458	99.7	98.2	258,802	250,149	117.9	119.8
35-39 years	110,978	97,791	74.7	74.9	145,522	130,905	104.2	110.6
40-44 years	60,906	58,936	52.4	55.0	83,409	80,151	91.5	84.0
45-64 years	98,706	94,545	18.7	17.8	148,767	145,049	54.4	51.4
45-49 years	40,366	37,733	38.3	---	55,208	54,885	73.7	---
50-54 years	25,469	24,926	22.1	---	40,576	39,829	56.1	---
55-59 years	18,197	18,115	13.5	---	30,085	29,503	47.1	---
60-64 years	14,674	13,771	8.5	---	22,898	20,832	36.8	---
65 years and over.....	18,293	18,413	2.1	2.2	33,864	32,321	15.9	14.8
First marriages								
Total.....	1,239,819	1,218,502	66.0	64.9	1,215,640	1,189,287	53.1	53.8
15-19 years	323,242	342,711	41.7	42.8	127,778	139,886	15.1	16.2
15-17 years	82,407	91,444	17.6	18.7	12,498	14,793	2.5	2.9
18-19 years	240,935	251,267	78.5	80.7	115,280	125,093	33.1	36.2
20-24 years	584,726	576,060	111.9	110.0	576,082	579,777	83.1	89.6
25-44 years	323,071	291,383	80.7	79.3	497,378	455,194	82.9	83.7
25-29 years	234,954	212,029	106.5	102.6	345,374	320,105	102.4	106.5
30-34 years	63,373	57,528	62.1	62.7	110,274	97,929	74.0	70.8
35-39 years	18,419	15,620	38.1	37.5	31,431	27,088	43.7	45.4
40-44 years	6,325	6,206	21.7	22.6	10,299	10,072	24.8	22.3
45-64 years	7,903	7,558	8.6	7.9	12,774	12,990	12.6	12.5
45-49 years	3,473	3,340	14.4	---	5,250	5,523	18.2	---
50-54 years	2,031	2,055	9.6	---	3,490	3,661	12.9	---
55-59 years	1,468	1,307	6.9	---	2,518	2,315	10.9	---
60-64 years	931	856	3.6	---	1,516	1,491	6.8	---
65 years and over.....	777	790	0.9	0.9	1,628	1,440	3.3	2.8
Remarriages								
Total.....	628,832	616,385	39.2	39.9	654,428	647,014	113.2	112.5
15-19 years	7,888	8,930	*	*	1,329	1,158	*	*
20-24 years	82,339	89,638	260.6	274.1	38,653	44,056	292.8	323.9
25-44 years	432,312	415,518	119.5	119.7	449,036	441,852	190.8	198.1
25-29 years	152,519	150,566	192.8	193.5	121,566	124,110	229.8	257.5
30-34 years	135,267	132,296	137.5	128.3	143,791	147,087	212.4	216.3
35-39 years	90,756	80,789	92.1	92.1	111,901	101,868	168.5	176.9
40-44 years	53,770	51,867	62.6	66.0	71,778	68,787	148.3	139.8
45-64 years	89,109	85,103	20.8	19.9	133,787	129,696	79.1	74.2
45-49 years	36,152	33,849	45.2	---	49,183	48,557	108.6	---
50-54 years	23,027	22,294	24.8	---	36,473	35,643	82.1	---
55-59 years	16,447	16,337	14.6	---	27,116	26,583	67.6	---
60-64 years	13,483	12,623	9.4	---	21,015	18,913	53.5	---
65 years and over.....	17,184	17,196	2.2	2.3	31,623	30,252	19.8	18.5

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 5. Marriages and marriage rates, by age and previous marital status of women and men: Marriage-registration area, 1981 and 1982—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 group estimated as of July 1]

Age and previous marital status	Women				Men			
	Number ¹		Rate ²		Number ¹		Rate ²	
	1982	1981	1982	1981	1982	1981	1982	1981
Previously widowed ³	55,040	56,787	6.1	6.5	51,789	51,970	32.1	30.8
15-24 years	1,607	1,895	49.0	48.4	257	478	138.6	116.7
25-44 years	15,248	15,722			7,364	7,807		
45-64 years	25,951	26,793			23,806	23,826		
65 years and over	12,234	12,377	1.9	2.0	20,362	19,859	17.6	16.9
Previously divorced ³	487,089	474,515	94.4	96.3	513,266	506,833	146.9	150.8
15-19 years	6,215	7,236	*	*	1,068	907	*	*
20-24 years	69,327	75,154	263.6	280.4	32,268	37,140	275.8	323.0
25-44 years	358,435	342,939	129.6	129.1	381,448	373,747	187.5	197.9
25-29 years	127,690	126,012	205.0	202.6	103,482	105,188	220.2	256.6
30-34 years	114,105	110,333	144.4	133.6	122,209	125,526	208.9	217.2
35-39 years	74,594	66,077	98.0	97.0	95,692	86,210	166.7	176.7
40-44 years	42,046	40,517	71.0	76.7	60,065	56,823	148.3	137.6
45-64 years	50,461	46,708	31.3	30.2	91,431	88,519	85.9	82.6
45-49 years	25,306	23,184	51.8	---	39,205	38,639	113.6	---
50-54 years	13,821	12,646	31.1	---	26,622	25,625	85.3	---
55-59 years	7,400	7,096	20.6	---	16,066	15,837	70.5	---
60-64 years	3,934	3,782	12.3	---	9,538	8,418	53.3	--
65 years and over	2,651	2,478	5.3	5.7	7,051	6,520	26.0	23.0
Not stated if widowed or divorced	86,703	85,083	...	...	89,373	88,211	...	...
Not stated if previously married								
Total	44,033	51,509	...	...	42,616	50,095	...	...

¹Figures for first marriages and remarriages exclude data for Iowa; these data are included in "Not stated if previously married."
²All rates exclude data for Iowa.
³Data exclude remarriages in Michigan, Ohio, and South Carolina. These data are included in "Not stated if widowed or divorced."

Table 6. Percent distribution of marriages by marriage order of both bride and groom: Marriage-registration area, 1970-82

[Based on sample data. Beginning in 1977, figures exclude data for Iowa. Computed from totals excluding marriage order not stated. For a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes]

Year	All marriages	Marriage order of bride and groom			
		First marriage of bride and groom	First marriage of bride, remarriage of groom	Remarriage of bride, first marriage of groom	Remarriage of bride and groom
1982	100.0	54.8	11.6	10.3	23.3
1981	100.0	54.7	11.8	10.1	23.4
1980	100.0	56.2	11.3	9.8	22.7
1979	100.0	56.4	11.2	9.5	22.9
1978	100.0	57.1	11.1	9.3	22.5
1977	100.0	57.5	10.8	9.0	22.6
1976	100.0	58.5	10.7	8.8	22.0
1975	100.0	60.1	9.9	8.6	21.3
1974	100.0	62.9	9.2	8.1	19.8
1973	100.0	64.6	8.7	7.9	18.9
1972	100.0	66.7	8.2	7.4	17.6
1971	100.0	67.7	8.0	7.3	17.0
1970	100.0	68.6	7.6	7.3	16.5

Table 7. Median age of bride and groom by previous marital status: Marriage-registration area, 1963-82

[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	Median age of bride					Median age of groom				
	Total	First marriage	Remarriage			Total	First marriage	Remarriage		
			Total	Previously divorced	Previously widowed			Total	Previously divorced	Previously widowed
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

Table 8. Mean age at marriage of bride and groom and age difference between spouses by marriage order of both: Marriage-registration area, 1970-82

[Based on sample data. Beginning in 1977, figures exclude data for Iowa. For a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes]

Year	Marriage order of bride and groom				
	All marriages	First marriage of bride and groom	First marriage of bride, remarriage of groom	Remarriage of bride, first marriage of groom	Remarriage of bride and groom
Mean age of bride in years					
1982	27.3	22.6	26.2	29.8	37.8
1981	27.0	22.4	26.0	29.4	37.5
1980	26.7	22.1	25.8	29.3	37.4
1979	26.7	21.9	25.6	29.3	38.0
1978	26.3	21.7	25.4	29.1	37.3
1977	26.2	21.6	25.3	28.8	37.5
1976	26.1	21.4	25.4	28.9	37.8
1975	25.9	21.3	25.3	29.0	38.1
1974	25.6	21.1	25.5	29.2	38.4
1973	25.5	21.1	25.6	29.2	38.8
1972	25.2	21.1	25.5	29.4	39.1
1971	25.1	21.1	25.8	29.4	39.5
1970	25.1	21.1	26.0	29.5	39.8
Mean age of groom in years					
1982	30.0	24.6	33.2	28.9	42.0
1981	29.8	24.3	32.9	28.6	41.7
1980	29.4	24.1	32.6	28.5	41.7
1979	29.5	23.9	32.5	28.7	42.1
1978	29.1	23.7	32.4	28.5	41.6
1977	29.0	23.6	32.2	28.5	41.7
1976	28.9	23.4	32.3	28.6	42.0
1975	28.7	23.3	32.2	28.8	42.4
1974	28.3	23.1	32.4	29.0	42.6
1973	28.1	23.1	32.4	29.2	43.0
1972	27.9	23.1	32.5	29.4	43.3
1971	27.8	23.1	32.8	29.4	43.8
1970	27.8	23.1	32.9	29.6	44.2
Age difference in years ¹					
1982	2.8	2.0	7.0	-0.9	4.2
1981	2.8	2.0	6.9	-0.8	4.2
1980	2.8	2.0	6.9	-0.8	4.2
1979	2.8	2.0	6.9	-0.6	4.1
1978	2.8	2.0	6.9	-0.5	4.2
1977	2.8	2.0	6.9	-0.3	4.2
1976	2.8	2.0	6.9	-0.2	4.2
1975	2.8	2.0	6.8	-0.3	4.3
1974	2.7	2.0	6.9	-0.2	4.2
1973	2.7	2.0	6.8	-0.0	4.2
1972	2.7	2.0	7.0	-0.0	4.2
1971	2.7	2.1	7.0	0.0	4.3
1970	2.6	2.0	6.9	0.2	4.4

¹Age of groom minus age of bride. Average ages and age differences were calculated and rounded separately. Therefore, age difference may differ slightly from the figure that would be obtained by direct subtraction. Negative numbers indicate that brides were older than grooms, on average.

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. Figures in tables 4-8 are based on data tabulated from State-coded data tapes and from probability samples of records selected and coded at the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) from copies of the records sent by States participating in the marriage-registration area (MRA). In 1982 the MRA consisted of the District of Columbia and all except eight States—Arizona, Arkansas, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, and Washington. In 1972 it consisted of the District of Columbia and all States except nine; Colorado joined in 1979. Marriages performed in the MRA included 81 percent of the marriages registered in the United States in 1972 and 80 percent in 1982.

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 periodically to report 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 58,324 in 1982. 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 that were designed to give a sample of at least 2,500 for each State. All records were included in the sample for Alaska, Delaware, and the District of Columbia, where totals of less than 5,000 marriages had been anticipated, and for New York City. One-half of all records were included from 3 States, one-fifth from 6

Table 1. Approximate sampling errors of estimated numbers of marriages shown in table 5: Marriage-registration area, 1981 and 1982

<i>Percent of total MRA marriages in subclass</i>	<i>1982 sampling error</i>	<i>1981 sampling error</i>
1 or 99.....	418	417
2 or 98.....	588	586
3 or 97.....	716	714
4 or 96.....	823	821
5 or 95.....	915	913
7 or 93.....	1,071	1,069
10 or 90.....	1,259	1,256
15 or 85.....	1,499	1,495
20 or 80.....	1,679	1,675
25 or 75.....	1,818	1,814
50.....	2,099	2,094

HOW TO USE THE SAMPLING ERROR TABLE: The total numbers of MRA marriages in 1981 and 1982 (excluding nonlicensed California marriages) were 1,886,396 and 1,912,684, respectively. For any estimate of marriages shown in table 5, determine its percent of the total MRA marriages for the corresponding year. 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 that year. For example, in 1982 there were an estimated 628,832 remarriages of women, or 32.9 percent of all 1982 MRA marriages. Because 32.9 is between 25 and 50 percent, the sampling error is between 1,818 and 2,099, or, by interpolation, about 1,907 marriages. The chances are about 68 out of 100 that the actual number of 1982 remarriages is between 626,925 and 630,739 (628,832 ± 1,907).

States, one-tenth from 11 States, and one-twentieth from 8 States. The total sample size, including records supplied through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program, was 742,883 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. The 5-percent sample of California marriages for 1982 was drawn only from licensed marriages. 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 previously; 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. Chances are about 68 out of 100 that an estimate would differ from the true value by less than the sampling error, and about 95 out of 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 1981 and 1982 are based on unpublished

population estimates as of July 1 prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. National and State rates for 1982 are based on population estimates as of July 1 published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.^{1,2}

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 de-

¹U.S. Bureau of the Census: Estimates of the population of the United States, by age, sex, and race: 1980 to 1983. *Current Population Reports*. Series P-25, No. 949. Washington. U.S. Government Printing Office, May 1984.

²U.S. Bureau of the Census: Estimates of the population of States, by age: July 1, 1981, to 1983. *Current Population Reports*. Series P-25, No. 951. Washington. U.S. Government Printing Office, May 1984.

nominators before percent distributions and medians were computed. Computations of median and mean age at marriage were based on tabulations of ungrouped data.

Nonreporting bias

Age was more than 99 percent complete on marriage records, but in 1981, 22 percent of marriage records from Minnesota, 10 percent of records from Pennsylvania, and 8 percent of records from Louisiana were not completed for marriage order of bride (information on whether the marriage was a first marriage or remarriage). For all other States, missing data was negligible. In 1982 marriage order of bride was not stated for 15 percent of Minnesota's records and 7 percent of Louisiana's records. No allocation of missing data was done before rates were calculated. The percent not stated for grooms was similar.

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