

# **Increases in Divorces**

## **United States - 1967**

Analysis of the increases of divorce totals and rates in the United States, comparison with foreign countries, changes in the divorced and separated populations, and remarriage and death of the divorced and of other marital status groups.

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*IN THIS REPORT are described the increases in the number of divorces and annulments that have occurred in the United States. The national divorce total grew from 428,000 in 1963 to 523,000 in 1967, a 22-percent increase in 4 years. Divorces were up much more than could be accounted for by changes in numbers of the married population and its age composition. In recent years, only about one-fourth of the total increase can be explained by changes in the population. Divorces increased in the great majority of States. Since 1963 they have increased not only in the United States but also in most foreign countries.*

*The divorce rate for States included in the divorce-registration area is negatively associated with median duration of marriage at decree: States that have a high median duration tend to have low rates and vice versa.*

*The number of children involved in divorces increased about 25 percent from 1963 to 1967 in spite of a simultaneous decline in numbers of births in the general population.*

*In 1967 divorced persons comprised 2.1 percent of all men and 3.2 percent of all women 14 years of age and over; these percents showed some increase from earlier years. Separated men and women represented 1.4 and 2.2 percent, respectively, of the population. Divorced persons tended to have higher death rates and marriage rates than those belonging to other marital status categories.*

#### SYMBOLS

Data not available-----	---
Category not applicable-----	...
Quantity zero-----	-
Quantity more than 0 but less than 0.05-----	0.0
Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision-----	*

# INCREASES IN DIVORCES

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## TRENDS IN DIVORCE

### National Totals and Rates

The number of divorces and annulments granted in the United States increased from the post-World War II minimum of 368,000 in 1958 to 499,000 in 1966 and to 523,000 in 1967 (table 1),

an increase of 155,000, or 42.1 percent. The 1967 figure was the second highest national total ever observed for the United States; the all-time high was 610,000 in 1946. The provisional national estimates for 1968 (582,000) and 1969 (660,000) as well as provisional monthly figures for 1970 indicate that the numbers have continued to increase.

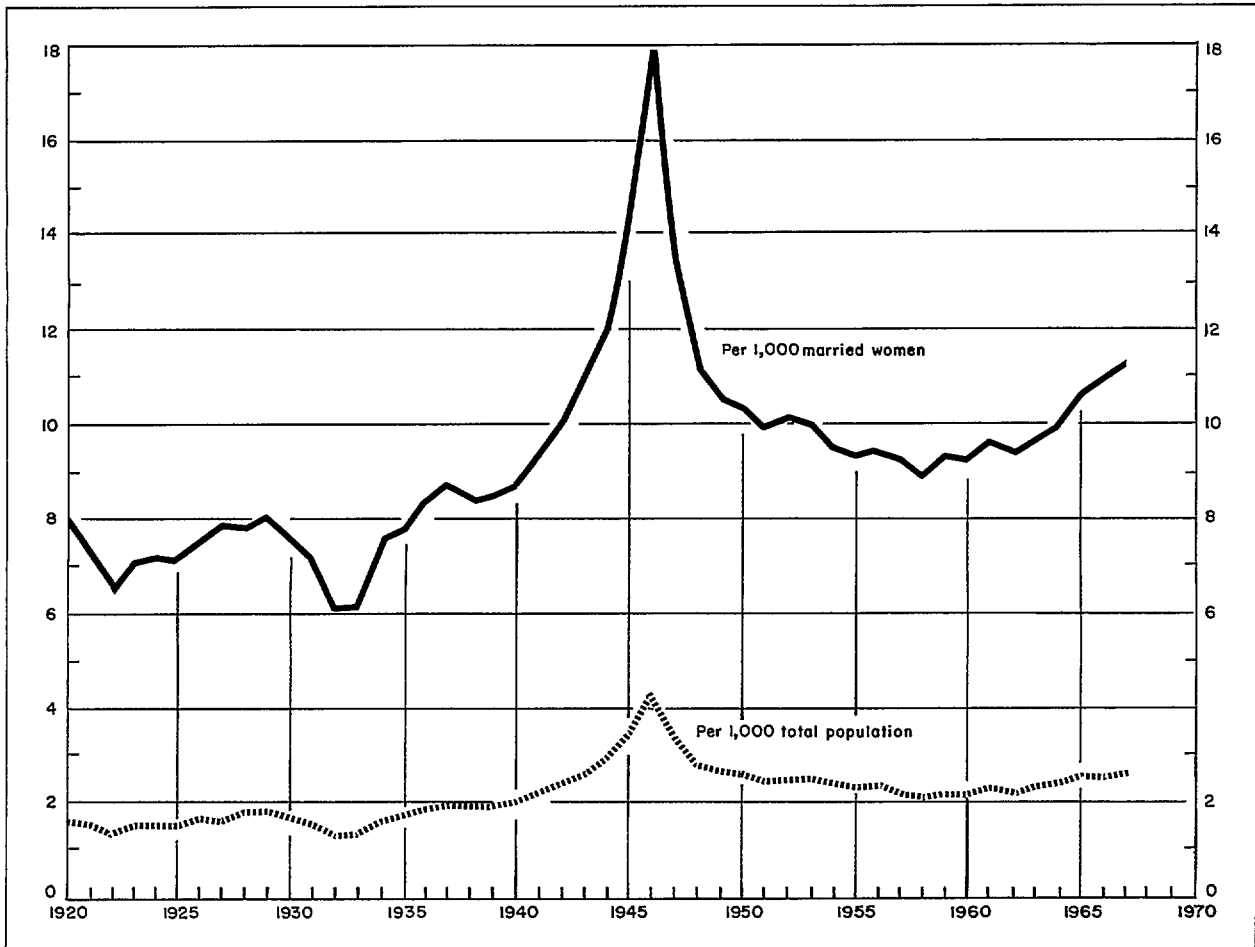


Figure 1. Divorce rates: United States, 1920-67.

During the last few years the number of divorces has increased more rapidly than the total population and the married population of the United States. For the 9 years 1955 through 1963 the rate per 1,000 total population varied between 2.1 and 2.3, but it increased to 2.4 in 1964, to 2.5 in 1965 and 1966, and to 2.6 in 1967. Provisional data show an increase to 2.9 in 1968 and 3.3 in 1969. Current provisional data indicate that the rate will probably be still higher in 1970. The rate per 1,000 married women rose from 9.6 in 1963 to 10.9 in 1966 and to 11.2 in 1967. No similar increases have been observed since the years immediately following the end of World War II (fig. 1).

The recent increases in the number of divorces in the United States are the consequence of (1) the growth of the married population and, particularly, of the number of young married persons, who have a much higher likelihood of divorce than older people, and (2) the increase in the age-specific divorce rates. The impact of higher rates was much stronger than that of the growing population and its changing age distribution.

For the years 1955 through 1967, changes in divorces that could be accounted for by changes in the size and age distribution of the population were estimated by applying a single set of age-

specific divorce rates to the married female population (see appendix). Estimates were obtained for the annual divorce totals that would have occurred if age-specific rates had not changed during the whole period. Changes in annual divorce totals due exclusively to changes in the size and age distribution of the married population were computed from these figures. Changes that could be attributed to changed age-specific rates were obtained by subtraction. The two types of changes are shown in table A.

The estimates indicate that one-third of the cumulative increase in divorces from 1955 to 1967 was due to changes in the population and two-thirds to the higher rates. Both factors contributed approximately equally to the cumulative increase during the period 1955-63, but increasing age-specific divorce rates contributed almost three-quarters of the cumulative increase from 1963 to 1967.

The total number of persons directly involved in divorce includes not only the divorced husbands and wives but also their children, particularly those who are still dependent. The total number of persons involved in divorce in the United States has been for many years over one million annually, but it increased to 1½ million in 1964 and to 1 3/4 million in 1967. The number of

Table A. Changes in the annual number of divorces from preceding year: United States, 1955-67

Year	Number of divorces	Total change	Change due to population change	Change due to change in age-specific rates
1967-----	523,000	+24,000	+6,000	+18,000
1966-----	499,000	+20,000	+7,000	+13,000
1965-----	479,000	+29,000	+7,000	+22,000
1964-----	450,000	+22,000	+5,000	+17,000
1963-----	428,000	+15,000	+4,000	+11,000
1962-----	413,000	-1,000	+8,000	-9,000
1961-----	414,000	+21,000	-1,000	+22,000
1960-----	393,000	-2,000	+3,000	-5,000
1959-----	395,000	+27,000	+5,000	+22,000
1958-----	368,000	-13,000	+3,000	-16,000
1957-----	381,000	-1,000	-1,000	-
1956-----	382,000	+5,000	+3,000	+2,000
1955-----	377,000	...	...	...

Table B. Disruption of marriage by death and divorce: United States, 1950, 1960, and 1963

(Mortality data for 1963 based on a probability sample; other data based on complete counts)

Year	All disruptions	Death of husband	Death of wife	Divorce
	Number			
1963-----	1,278,112	597,814	252,298	428,000
1960-----	1,190,769	558,801	238,968	393,000
1950-----	1,058,615	453,656	219,815	385,144
	Rate per 1,000 married women			
1963-----	28.6	13.3	5.7	9.6
1960-----	28.0	13.1	5.6	9.2
1950-----	28.1	12.1	5.8	10.3

husbands and wives alone was over one million in that year.

The annual total number of persons involved in divorce has grown rapidly in recent years. It increased 22 percent from 1953 to 1962 and 29 percent during a much shorter period, 1962 through 1967. The rate per 1,000 total population declined from 7.0 in 1953 to a minimum of 6.5 in 1958; it changed little from 1959 to 1962 (7.1 and 7.3, respectively), but increased 21 percent from 1962 (7.3) to 1967 (8.8).

#### Disruption by Death and Divorce

About one-third of all marriage disruptions that take place in the United States are due to divorce, while the remainder are due to the death of one spouse—almost one-half to the death of the husband and about one-fifth to that of the wife. Mortality statistics by marital status are not available for recent years; the latest available figures are for 1963. Some information about the distribution and trend of all types of disruptions can be obtained by comparing the 1963 data with those for 1960 and 1950 (table B); however, the pattern may have changed considerably in recent years because of the rapid increase in the number of divorces.

The total number of disruptions was slightly over one million in 1950, and it increased to almost 1.2 million in 1960 and to 1.3 million in 1963. All three types of disruption increased between 1950 and 1963, but those by death of husband and by death of wife increased more rapidly than by divorce: the increases were 31.8, 14.8, and 11.1 percent, respectively. Almost 29 disruptions per 1,000 married women took place in 1963. This rate was probably higher in more recent years as the divorce rate increased after 1963.

#### Divorce Rates for Foreign Countries

Recent increases in the divorce rates are not only a national but also a worldwide phenomenon. From 1962 to 1967 the crude rate increased by 0.1 or more in 16 of the foreign countries listed in table 2, declined in three, and changed by less than 0.1 in two. (Rates for 1967 were not available for two countries.) The increase was particularly pronounced in the Soviet Union, where the rate increased from 1.3 per 1,000 population in 1963 to 2.77 in 1966, although it had changed little in earlier years. In 1966 and 1967 the Soviet Union had the highest divorce rate among the countries that reported divorce data to the



United Nations. Before 1966, however, the United States (from 1962 through 1965) and Egypt (from 1958 through 1961) had the highest divorce rates. The lowest rate was found in Portugal—less than 0.1 during the 1958-67 period. The following 11 countries and areas reported that they have no legal provisions for granting absolute divorces: Argentine, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Paraguay, Philippines, Santa Lucia, and Spain.

### Geographic Distribution

The divorce rate per 1,000 population varied considerably among the States. In 1967 the lowest rates were 0.4 for New York and 1.0 for New Jersey and Rhode Island, and the highest rates were 22.3 for Nevada and 6.2 for Arizona. In general, the rates were lowest for the Northeast Region and highest for the West (fig. 2). The rates for all four regions increased in recent years (table C). From 1965 to 1967 the divorce rate increased in 40 States and the District of Columbia, declined in seven, remained unchanged in one, and was not available for two States.

Within a State, rates were higher for standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA's) than for the remainder of the State. The national rate for all SMSA's combined increased from 2.3 per

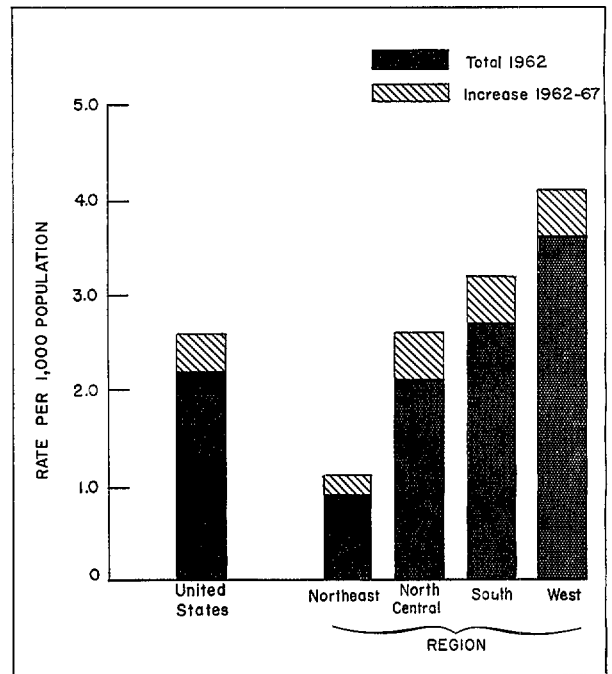


Figure 2. Divorce rates per 1,000 population: United States and each region, 1962-67.

1,000 population in 1960 to 2.6 in 1965, while the rate for all nonmetropolitan countries combined went from 2.1 to 2.2.

Table C. Divorce rates: United States and each region, 1960-67  
(By place of occurrence)

Year	United States	Region			
		North-east	North Central	South	West
Rate per 1,000 population					
1967-----	2.6	1.1	2.6	3.2	4.1
1966-----	2.5	1.1	2.5	3.0	4.0
1965-----	2.5	1.0	2.4	2.9	4.0
1964-----	2.4	1.0	2.2	2.8	3.8
1963-----	2.3	0.9	2.2	2.8	3.6
1962-----	2.2	0.9	2.1	2.7	3.6
1961-----	2.3	0.8	2.2	2.8	3.5
1960-----	2.2	0.9	2.1	2.8	3.4

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

### Divorce-Registration Area

Changes in the number of divorces are connected with changes in the demographic characteristics of husbands and wives who divorce. Statistical data about these characteristics are not nationwide but are limited to States participating in the divorce-registration area (DRA). For many of the DRA States much of the demographic information is poorly reported, and for some variables reliable statistics can be obtained for only a few States.

It is difficult to say how representative the DRA is of the United States. The number of participating States has been increasing, but some regions of the country are still poorly represented. The crude divorce rate for the DRA has been consistently lower than that for the United States, but the numerical difference has never been larger than 0.2. For 1967 the rate was 2.5 for the DRA and 2.6 for the Nation; for 1966 it was 2.4 and 2.5, respectively.

During the years 1963-67, 22 States participated in the DRA, and the number of divorces granted in these States represented about 35 percent of the national total. Several States were added to the DRA after 1967. States in the DRA and criteria for admission to the DRA are listed in the appendix.

### Age of Husband and of Wife

Available data show that about one-third of the divorcing husbands and two-fifths of the wives were in their twenties at time of divorce. The numbers of divorcing persons declined with age, but small numbers of husbands and wives divorced even when they were over age 75.

Median age at decree declined slightly from 1963 to 1967 for both husbands and wives (table D). During the same period, median age at marriage for divorced persons also declined. Thus persons who divorced in 1967 were on the average slightly younger than those who divorced in 1963, and they were married on the average at a slightly younger age. The likelihood of divorce was highest for young married persons and it declined with age.

### Duration of Marriage

The largest number of decrees per single year of duration were granted 1-2 years after marriage, and the number declined consistently with increasing duration (table E).

Between 1963 and 1967, the percent increase in the number of divorces varied by the length of marriage. The increase in the number of divorces granted before the fifth wedding anniversary was much larger than that for all divorces, and so was the increase for the comparatively small

Table D. Median age of husband and of wife at decree and at marriage: divorce-registration area, 1962-67

(Based on a probability sample)

Year	Median age of husband		Median age of wife	
	At decree	At marriage	At decree	At marriage
1967-----	33.6	23.5	30.1	20.3
1966-----	33.8	23.5	30.4	20.3
1965-----	34.1	23.7	30.5	20.4
1964-----	34.0	23.7	30.6	20.4
1963-----	34.8	23.9	31.3	20.6
1962 <sup>1</sup> -----	34.5	24.0	31.0	20.7

<sup>1</sup>1962 data exclude Rhode Island.

Table E. Number of divorces, by duration of marriage at decree, with percent increase: divorce-registration area, 1963 and 1967

(Based on a probability sample)

Duration of marriage	1967	1963	Percent increase 1963-67
	Number		
Total--	186,628	152,594	22.3
Less than 1 year-----	10,782	7,942	35.8
1-2 years----	32,679	25,875	26.3
3-4 years----	28,096	21,789	28.9
5-9 years----	43,679	36,536	19.6
10-14 years--	26,948	22,711	18.7
15-19 years--	18,692	17,487	6.9
20-24 years--	13,264	10,367	27.9
25-29 years--	7,234	5,317	36.1
30+ years----	5,255	4,570	15.0

group with 20-29 years duration. Smallest increases occurred for couples married 15-19 years.

As a result of these changes, the median duration for the DRA declined from 7.5 years in 1963 to 7.1 years in 1966 and 1967. Prior to 1963 it tended to increase. During all these years there was pronounced variation among the DRA States both in the magnitude and in the direction of the change (table 3).

There was a negative association between duration of marriage at decree and the divorce rate, as illustrated by table F, where the median duration for registration States is compared with the rates. States that have low divorce rates tend to have a high median of duration and vice versa. The size of the rate is positively associated with the proportion of divorcing couples with a marriage duration of less than 1 year.

### Marriage Order

Available data are not sufficient to identify trends in characteristics of the spouses other than age and duration of marriage. The great majority of husbands and wives who were divorced were married only once, almost 20 percent were married twice, and a small proportion

three times or more. Persons who have been married more than once have a higher likelihood to divorce than those who were married only once.

### Race

The divorce rate usually differs for various racial groups in a State and for the same racial group in various States. In the reporting Southern States divorce rates for Negroes were lower than or equal to the rates for white persons. In the reporting Northern States the rates for Negroes were much higher than those for white persons and than those for Negro persons in the Southern States. This may be due to the urban and mobile character of large segments of the Negro population in the North.

In about 99 percent of all cases for which race of both spouses was reported, either both husband and wife were reported as being white or neither was. In the latter case, there is no information as to whether the husband and wife belonged to the same racial group or to different ones. In a very small number of cases, the couples were reported as interracial, i.e., one spouse white and the other of a different race. A high proportion of all interracial divorces were reported in Hawaii. In the remaining reporting States the numbers were very small, though increasing: 247 in 1963, 460 in 1964, 521 in 1965, 606 in 1966, and 628 in 1967. In spite of the increase, divorces reported as interracial made up only 0.6 percent of all decrees granted in reporting States other than Hawaii.

### Socioeconomic Status

Information about the socioeconomic status of the divorced couple, including occupation, education, and income, is not currently collected from the DRA States. For some States data on education will become available in a few years. Studies conducted outside NCHS indicate that the likelihood of divorce declines as one moves up the occupational scale.<sup>1-5</sup>

### Children Involved in Divorce

The number of children involved in divorce has increased more rapidly than the number of divorces granted (fig. 3). In 1967, 701,000 chil-

Table F. Number of registration States, by size of divorce rate and median duration of marriage at decree: divorce-registration area, 1967

(Duration of marriage based on a probability sample)

Median duration of marriage	Total, DRA	Rate per 1,000 population			
		Under 2.0	2.0-2.9	3.0-3.9	4.0 or more
Number of registration States					
All durations-----	22	4	7	8	3
5.0-5.9 years-----	8	-	-	5	3
6.0-6.9 years-----	5	-	2	3	-
7.0-7.9 years-----	4	1	3	-	-
8.0 years or more-----	5	3	2	-	-

dren were involved in divorce, twice as many as in 1954 or 1955. The ratio of children per decree has been growing for many years, and it continued to grow in 1967 although fewer children have been born each year from 1961 to 1967. Hence the rate of children involved in divorce per 1,000 children under age 18 in the population has increased considerably, from 7.8 in 1961 to 9.9 in 1967 (table G).

In recent years about 40 percent of the divorced couples in the DRA reported no children under 18, 40 percent reported one or two children, and about 20 percent reported three children or more. Occasionally, divorced couples have reported as many as 18 children. For divorced couples with children, the ratio was 2.18 children per couple in 1967. Over one-half of all children under 18 involved in divorce came from two- and three-children families, and over 25 percent came from families with four, five, and six children. The remaining children came from families with one child and with seven children or more.

## DIVORCED POPULATION

### The Divorced and the Separated

The divorced population living in the United States at any given time differs from the persons

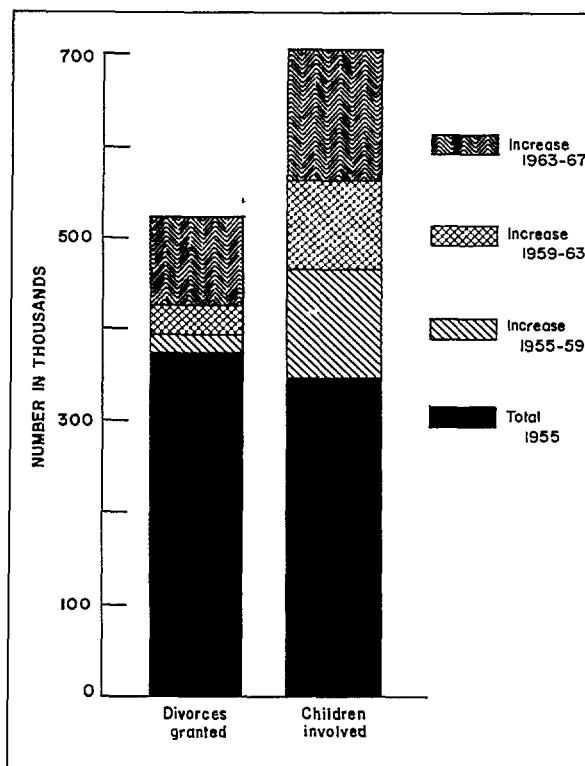


Figure 3. Increases in the number of divorces and in the number of children involved in divorce: United States, 1955-67.

Table G. Estimated number of children under age 18 involved in divorce, mean number per decree, and rate per 1,000 children: United States, 1961-67

Year	Estimated number of children	Mean number of children per divorce	Rate per 1,000 children
1967-----	701,000	1.34	9.9
1966-----	669,000	1.34	9.5
1965-----	630,000	1.32	8.9
1964-----	613,000	1.36	8.7
1963-----	562,000	1.31	8.2
1962-----	532,000	1.29	7.9
1961-----	516,000	1.25	7.8

who have divorced during the year. The divorced population comprises all men and women who have ever divorced, including those who divorced abroad, but excluding divorced persons who died, remarried, or left the country.

In a discussion of the divorced population, mention should be made of a similar marital status category, the separated. These are persons who are married but living apart from their spouses because of marital discord. The separated are occasionally grouped with the divorced as persons "with disrupted marriages."<sup>6</sup> The separated differ from the divorced in that they are legally married, can not remarry, and can at any time legitimately resume their marital life together. They may or may not have obtained decrees of legal separation, of divorce from bed and board, or of separate maintenance. In many cases separation is a preliminary step to divorce, though some separated couples become reconciled and others remain separated, but not divorced, for the rest of their lives.

The numbers of separated men and women would be expected to be approximately equal, but many more women than men report themselves as separated. There were 1,317,620 separated

women and 873,471 men at the time of the 1960 census, and estimates for subsequent years showed similar differences. It is believed that these differences are due in part to "differences in the completeness and accuracy of reporting on marital status for men and women."<sup>7</sup> Because of the discrepancies in reporting, rates for a given year are quite different for separated men than for separated women. For 1967 the divorce rate per 1,000 separated persons was 575.4 for men and 322.6 for women; in 1960 it was 435.2 and 301.4, respectively. Also the annual estimates of separated men and women varied greatly between consecutive years, showing in some cases increases and declines as large as 11 percent. It is likely that much of this variation is due to sampling variability of population estimates published in *Current Population Reports*.<sup>8</sup>

Both the divorced and the separated represent only small fractions of the total population (table 4). Their proportion was higher among women than among men, among the nonfarm than among the farm population, and among the "all other" group than among the white (table H). In particular, the proportion of persons who are not white reporting themselves as separated was almost six times that of white men and women.

The numbers of divorced men and women, as estimated annually by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, increased during the 1961-67 period by 23.2 and 25.6 percent, respectively. This increase was more rapid than that of the total population, and the divorced accounted for increased percentages of the population aged 14 years and over during the same period (table 4). There was also an increase of 11.1 percent in the numbers of separated women, but estimates for men show no discernible trend (the 1967 figure is slightly smaller than that for 1961).

#### Remarriages and Deaths of the Divorced

Deaths rates by marital status for 1959-61, the latest available, show high death rates for the divorced population. Age-specific death rates for

Table H. Percent distribution of the population aged 14 years and over by marital status, according to sex, residence, and color: United States, 1967

Sex and marital status	Total, 14 years and over	Residence		Color	
		Nonfarm	Farm	White	All other
<u>Men</u>					
Percent distribution					
Total-----	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Divorced-----	2.1	2.2	0.8	2.1	2.7
Separated-----	1.4	1.4	0.8	0.9	5.2
Widowed-----	3.2	3.3	2.3	3.1	4.5
Married, not separated-----	66.6	66.7	64.3	68.0	54.6
Single-----	26.7	26.4	31.7	25.9	33.0
<u>Women</u>					
Total-----	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Divorced-----	3.2	3.3	0.7	3.1	4.0
Separated-----	2.2	2.3	0.7	1.5	8.4
Widowed-----	12.6	12.9	8.6	12.5	13.5
Married, not separated-----	61.0	60.7	67.3	62.4	49.6
Single-----	20.9	20.9	22.7	20.5	24.5

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Marital status and family status on March 1967, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 170, Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, Feb. 1968, p. 3.

divorced men were higher than those for all other marital status categories except for the widowed under 35 years of age (table 5). Age-specific death rates for divorced women were higher than those for the single and the married, but in most cases they were lower than those for the widowed.

Marriage rates for both men and women were considerably higher for the divorced than for the

widowed and the single of the same sex and age group (table J). In particular, age-specific rates for divorced women were generally more than twice those for the single or for the widowed. The highest marriage rate was for divorced women under 25 years of age; in 1960 almost one-half of that group remarried. A similar relationship was observed for 1967.

Table J. Marriage rates, by sex, age, and marital status: marriage-registration area, 1960

(Marriages based on a probability sample. Data for Ohio and Michigan are excluded)

Sex and age	Total	Marital status			
		Divorced	Widowed	Single	
<u>Men</u>		Rate per 1,000 population			
All ages, 14 years and over-----	74.9	170.8	36.8	72.0	
14-24 years-----	73.6	367.0	182.9	72.1	
25-29 years-----	201.1	400.7	151.4	184.3	
30-34 years-----	130.2	313.8	176.6	95.7	
35-44 years-----	86.8	206.1	122.3	45.8	
45-54 years-----	56.5	122.1	106.3	17.0	
55-64 years-----	33.6	65.8	52.4	8.0	
65 years and over-----	14.1	30.6	15.9	3.9	
<u>Women</u>					
All ages, 14 years and over-----	64.2	124.4	10.5	89.8	
14-24 years-----	117.1	442.1	153.0	112.7	
25-29 years-----	177.5	325.6	139.2	142.6	
30-34 years-----	113.5	205.5	77.2	78.5	
35-44 years-----	63.2	117.7	47.6	34.8	
45-54 years-----	30.0	60.6	26.3	12.0	
55-64 years-----	9.8	22.7	9.6	4.4	
65 years and over-----	2.3	9.0	2.2	0.9	

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## DETAILED TABLES

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Table 1. Number of divorces and divorce rates: United States, 1945-69

Year	Number of decrees	Total population	Married women	Year	Number of decrees	Total population	Married women
		Rate per 1,000				Rate per 1,000	
1969 <sup>1</sup> -----	660,000	3.3	---	1956-----	382,000	2.3	9.4
1968 <sup>1</sup> -----	582,000	2.9	---	1955-----	377,000	2.3	9.3
1967-----	523,000	2.6	11.2	1954-----	379,000	2.4	9.5
1966-----	499,000	2.5	10.9	1953-----	390,000	2.5	9.9
1965-----	479,000	2.5	10.6	1952-----	392,000	2.5	10.1
1964-----	450,000	2.4	10.0	1951-----	381,000	2.5	9.9
1963-----	428,000	2.3	9.6	1950-----	385,000	2.6	10.3
1962-----	413,000	2.2	9.4	1949-----	379,000	2.7	10.6
1961-----	414,000	2.3	9.6	1948-----	408,000	2.8	11.2
1960-----	393,000	2.2	9.2	1947-----	483,000	3.4	13.6
1959-----	395,000	2.2	9.3	1946-----	610,000	4.3	17.9
1958-----	368,000	2.1	8.9	1945-----	485,000	3.5	14.4
1957-----	381,000	2.2	9.2				

<sup>1</sup>Provisional data.

Table 2. Divorce rates: United States and selected foreign countries, 1958-67

(Foreign countries are listed according to the size of their latest rate)

Country	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962	1961	1960	1959	1958
	Rate per 1,000 population									
United States-----	2.64	2.54	2.47	2.35	2.26	2.22	2.26	2.17	2.23	2.12
U.S.S.R-----	2.74	2.77	1.56	1.47	1.30	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.1
Hungary-----	2.06	2.03	2.01	1.95	1.82	1.73	1.74	1.66	2.20	1.51
United Arab Republic (Egypt) <sup>1</sup> -----	1.85	2.10	2.17	2.15	2.11	2.03	2.32	2.50	2.40	2.43
East Germany-----	<sup>2</sup> 1.55	1.50	1.44	1.51	1.33	1.36	1.44	1.34	1.32	1.26
Denmark-----	<sup>2</sup> 1.43	1.40	1.37	1.37	1.38	1.38	1.43	1.46	1.42	1.46
Czechoslovakia-----	1.39	1.42	1.32	1.20	1.22	1.20	1.19	1.12	1.15	1.18
Sweden-----	1.36	1.32	1.24	1.20	1.12	1.17	1.16	1.20	1.18	1.17
Austria-----	1.21	1.19	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.12	1.14	1.13	1.20	1.17
German Federal Republic-----	1.00	0.92	0.93	0.91	0.84	0.82	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83
England and Wales-----	0.88	0.80	0.78	0.72	0.67	0.61	0.54	0.51	0.52	0.49
Poland-----	0.85	0.77	0.75	0.67	0.64	0.59	0.56	0.50	0.53	0.55
Japan-----	0.83	0.80	0.79	0.75	0.73	0.75	0.74	0.74	0.78	0.81
Australia-----	0.82	0.85	0.75	0.71	0.69	0.67	0.64	0.65	0.73	0.70
Switzerland-----	---	0.82	0.84	0.83	0.82	0.83	0.86	0.87	0.89	0.85
Israel-----	0.78	0.85	0.90	0.89	0.95	0.92	0.88	0.93	1.01	1.04
France-----	0.75	0.74	0.72	0.69	0.63	0.65	0.71	0.66	0.66	0.71
Mexico-----	0.72	0.65	0.58	0.49	0.48	0.47	0.46	0.43	0.46	0.41
Belgium-----	---	0.61	0.59	0.58	0.56	0.51	0.50	0.50	0.48	0.47
Netherlands-----	0.59	0.55	0.50	0.51	0.49	0.48	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.47
Scotland-----	0.58	0.68	0.51	0.46	0.43	0.39	0.35	0.35	0.32	0.34
Canada-----	0.55	0.51	0.46	0.45	0.41	0.36	0.36	0.39	0.37	0.37
Venezuela-----	<sup>2</sup> 0.24	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.25	0.22	0.23	0.25	0.23	0.20
Portugal-----	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.09	0.08	0.08	0.09

<sup>1</sup>Data include "revocable divorces" among Moslem population, which approximate legal separations.

<sup>2</sup>Provisional.

Source: United Nations: Demographic Yearbook, 1963, 1966, and 1968.

Table 3. Median duration of marriage at decree: divorce-registration area and each registration State, 1961-67

(Based on a probability sample. Medians computed on data by single years)

Area	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962	1961
	Median duration of marriage in years						
Divorce-registration area-----	7.1	7.1	7.2	7.4	7.5	7.3	7.1
Alabama-----	6.2	5.8	6.6	6.9	7.5	7.1	7.3
Alaska-----	5.8	6.4	6.0	6.0	6.8	6.2	6.3
Georgia-----	6.1	6.2	6.1	6.4	6.3	5.9	6.6
Hawaii-----	7.0	5.8	5.8	6.7	7.2	7.0	6.3
Idaho-----	5.3	5.0	5.1	5.1	5.0	5.6	4.7
Iowa-----	6.3	6.3	5.9	6.0	6.1	6.2	5.5
Kansas-----	5.9	6.0	5.9	6.3	6.5	5.9	6.5
Maryland-----	9.9	9.6	9.2	9.8	10.3	9.4	9.4
Michigan-----	7.8	7.7	7.9	8.0	8.0	8.0	7.6
Missouri-----	6.0	5.8	5.8	6.1	6.9	6.1	6.6
Montana-----	5.5	6.0	5.8	5.6	5.9	5.9	5.2
Nebraska-----	6.9	6.3	6.3	6.5	6.7	6.1	6.5
Ohio-----	7.1	7.5	7.8	7.7	7.7	7.7	---
Oregon-----	5.9	6.3	5.9	6.6	5.8	6.5	6.4
Pennsylvania-----	9.0	8.4	8.9	8.6	8.7	9.6	8.6
Rhode Island-----	8.9	9.3	9.1	9.0	9.0	---	---
South Dakota-----	7.0	6.8	6.3	6.9	6.3	6.6	6.3
Tennessee-----	5.8	6.0	6.1	6.6	6.6	6.4	6.1
Utah-----	5.6	5.5	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.5	5.2
Virginia-----	8.8	8.8	9.0	8.9	9.2	8.6	8.6
Wisconsin-----	8.1	8.5	8.2	8.3	8.1	7.2	8.4
Wyoming-----	5.5	6.1	5.5	5.1	5.3	5.3	4.8

Table 4. Number and percent of persons aged 14 years and over divorced and separated, by sex: United States, 1961-67

Year	Men			Women		
	Divorced and separated	Divorced	Separated	Divorced and separated	Divorced	Separated
	Number in thousands					
1967-----	2,329	1,420	909	3,952	2,331	1,621
1966-----	2,415	1,461	954	3,850	2,232	1,618
1965-----	2,495	1,429	1,066	3,739	2,079	1,660
1964-----	2,370	1,379	991	3,651	2,082	1,569
1963-----	2,262	1,329	933	3,348	1,941	1,407
1962-----	2,278	1,274	1,004	3,220	1,787	1,433
1961-----	2,100	1,153	947	3,311	1,856	1,455
	Percent of population 14 years and over					
1967-----	3.5	2.1	1.4	5.4	3.2	2.2
1966-----	3.7	2.2	1.5	5.4	3.1	2.3
1965-----	3.8	2.2	1.6	5.3	2.9	2.3
1964-----	3.7	2.1	1.5	5.3	3.0	2.3
1963-----	3.6	2.1	1.5	4.9	2.8	2.1
1962-----	3.7	2.1	1.6	4.8	2.7	2.1
1961-----	3.4	1.9	1.5	5.0	2.8	2.2

Source: Population data from Current Population Reports, Series P-20, Nos. 105, 114, 122, 135, 144, 159, and 170.

Table 5. Death rates, by age, sex, and marital status: United States, 1959-61

Age	Men					Women				
	Total	Di- vorced	Wid- owed	Mar- ried	Single	Total	Di- vorced	Wid- owed	Mar- ried	Single
	Age-specific death rate									
Total, 15+ years-	14.7	31.3	85.9	12.8	7.5	10.5	9.9	44.2	5.5	5.7
15-19 years-----	1.3	1.8	3.9	1.3	1.3	0.5	1.2	2.7	0.6	0.5
20-24 years-----	1.8	3.7	6.6	1.3	2.2	0.7	1.4	2.5	0.6	0.9
25-29 years-----	1.7	4.6	7.1	1.3	2.8	0.9	1.8	2.4	0.7	1.6
30-34 years-----	2.0	6.1	6.5	1.6	4.1	1.2	2.5	3.3	1.0	2.5
35-39 years-----	2.8	9.2	8.5	2.3	5.9	1.8	3.4	3.9	1.5	3.2
40-44 years-----	4.6	14.1	12.0	3.8	8.8	2.8	4.8	5.2	2.4	4.4
45-49 years-----	7.5	20.9	16.3	6.3	12.5	4.2	6.2	6.8	3.7	5.6
50-54 years-----	12.2	30.2	24.1	10.6	18.1	6.3	8.5	9.4	5.6	7.1
55-59 years-----	18.1	39.7	31.1	15.9	23.5	9.0	11.5	12.2	8.0	8.8
60-64 years-----	28.4	55.2	43.1	25.0	37.4	14.7	17.2	18.2	12.9	14.5
65-69 years-----	41.6	73.2	58.1	36.6	53.2	22.6	25.3	26.0	20.0	21.2
70-74 years-----	59.5	93.0	74.6	52.4	74.9	36.7	40.0	39.9	32.5	34.6
75-79 years-----	87.7	126.3	103.4	76.8	105.0	61.3	67.5	64.6	53.3	59.4
80-84 years-----	138.5	187.7	153.5	121.3	158.7	108.0	117.2	110.2	94.0	108.4
85+ years-----	228.4	260.5	250.7	191.1	231.6	201.1	190.2	205.7	134.8	210.6

Source: Data obtained from unpublished tabulations in the Division of Vital Statistics.

## APPENDIX

### SOURCES AND QUALITY OF DATA

#### Definitions and Sources of Data

The term "divorce" as used in this report includes decrees of absolute divorce and of annulment of marriage, but it excludes decrees that do not permit the parties to remarry, such as divorces from bed and board (*a mensa et thoro*), legal separations, and separate maintenance. Annulments represent about 3 percent of all absolute divorces and annulments combined.

National and regional divorce totals are based on complete counts of events by place of occurrence with

estimates for a few nonreporting counties. Alaska has been included in the United States data since 1959 and Hawaii since 1960. Detailed statistics are limited to the divorce-registration area (DRA) and are obtained from a probability sample of records drawn in the National Center of Health Statistics (NCHS) from the records of all divorces granted in States participating in the DRA.

During the years 1963-67, 22 States and the Virgin Islands participated in the DRA, but data for the Virgin Islands are not included in the national statistics. The

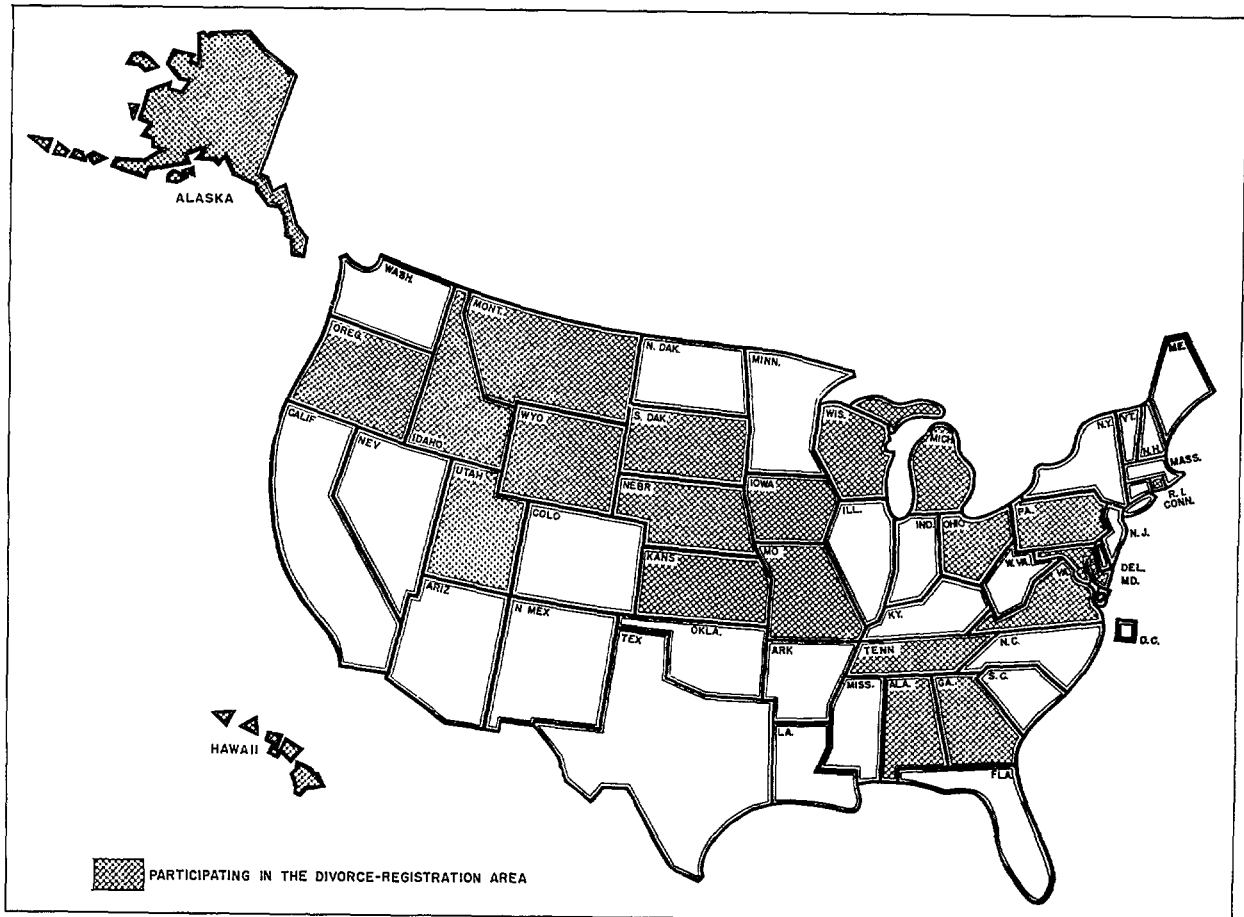


Figure 1. Divorce-registration area, 1963-67.

participating States were Alabama, Alaska, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming (fig. 1). During 1963-67 about 35 percent of all the divorces in the United States were granted in the DRA States (table 1).

The DRA was established in 1958 to promote national divorce statistics. Criteria for admission are as follows:

1. Statewide central files of divorce and annulment records.
2. Use of a divorce record form that includes items conforming closely to those on the Standard Record of Divorce and Annulment (fig. II).
3. Regular reporting from all local areas to the State office.
4. Agreement to carry out in cooperation with NCHS a test of completeness and accuracy of divorce registration.

### Sampling Rate and Sampling Error

Sampling rates vary among the DRA States, depending on the size of their annual divorce totals. The samples include 100, 50, 20, or 10 percent of all records. The intended minimum size of a sample is 1,000 records except for States where less than 1,000 divorces are granted annually.

All statistics estimated from probability samples have a sampling error. The sampling error is the amount which, when added to and subtracted from an estimate, gives the interval that would contain the actual value being estimated in approximately 68 out of 100 similarly selected samples. The smaller the proportion of all records included in the sample, the larger the sampling errors. Hence States with 50 percent of all records included in the sample have the smallest sampling errors, and those with only 10 percent of all records have the largest errors. Sampling errors of frequencies for the DRA depend on relative contributions of States with varying sampling rates. Sampling errors.

(State) DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (Division) OF VITAL STATISTICS			FORM APPROVED BUREAU BUREAU NO. 68-8547
COUNTY	<b>STANDARD RECORD OF DIVORCE OR ANNULMENT</b>		STATE FILE NO.
			LOCAL FILE NO.
<b>HUSBAND</b>			
1. NAME a. (First) b. (Middle) c. (Last)			2. DATE (Month) (Day) (Year) OF BIRTH
3. USUAL RESIDENCE a. (City) b. (County) c. (State)			4. PLACE (State or foreign country) OF BIRTH
5. NUMBER OF THIS MARRIAGE	6. RACE OR COLOR WHITE NEGRO OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> (specify)	7a. USUAL OCCUPATION	7b. KIND OF BUSINESS OR INDUSTRY
<b>WIFE</b>			
8. MAIDEN NAME a. (First) b. (Middle) c. (Last)			9. DATE (Month) (Day) (Year) OF BIRTH
10. USUAL RESIDENCE a. (City) b. (County) c. (State)			11. PLACE (State or foreign country) OF BIRTH
12. NUMBER OF THIS MARRIAGE	13. COLOR OR RACE WHITE NEGRO OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> (specify)	14a. USUAL OCCUPATION	14b. KIND OF BUSINESS OR INDUSTRY
15. PLACE OF THIS MARRIAGE a. (County) b. (State or foreign country)			16. DATE OF (Month) (Day) (Year) MARRIAGE
17. NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER 18	18. PLAINTIFF HUSBAND WIFE <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	19. DECREE GRANTED TO HUSBAND WIFE <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	20. LEGAL GROUNDS FOR DECREE
I hereby certify that the above persons were divorced on:			DATE OF RECORDING (Month) (Day) (Year)
SIGNATURE OF COURT OFFICIAL			TITLE OF COURT OFFICIAL

Figure II. Standard Record of Divorce or Annulment.

Table I. Annual number of divorces in the United States and DRA, percent of all divorces in DRA, and number of States in DRA: 1958-67

Year	United States	DRA <sup>1</sup>	Percent of all divorces in DRA	Number of States in DRA
1967-----	523,000	186,628	35.7	22
1966-----	499,000	173,562	34.8	22
1965-----	479,000	164,942	34.4	22
1964-----	450,000	160,987	35.8	22
1963 <sup>2</sup> -----	428,000	152,594	35.7	22
1962 <sup>3</sup> -----	413,000	147,106	35.6	21
1961 <sup>4</sup> -----	414,000	125,128	30.2	20
1960 <sup>5</sup> -----	393,000	94,074	23.9	18
1959 <sup>6</sup> -----	395,000	90,246	22.8	17
1958 <sup>7</sup> -----	368,000	71,888	19.5	14

<sup>1</sup>Figures include only data for States in the DRA. Data for Alaska and Hawaii included when they became States; data for the Virgin Islands excluded.

<sup>2</sup>Rhode Island admitted to the DRA.

<sup>3</sup>Ohio admitted to the DRA.

<sup>4</sup>Michigan and Missouri admitted to the DRA.

<sup>5</sup>Data for Hawaii included.

<sup>6</sup>Data for Alaska included. Kansas and Maryland admitted to the DRA.

<sup>7</sup>DRA organized with 14 States, Alaska, Hawaii, and the Virgin Islands.

for the DRA shown in table II were computed on the assumption that each group of States with the same sampling rate contributed to the DRA statistics in proportion to the divorce total for the group.

As an example of the use of table II, the number of divorces terminating marriages of 15-19 years duration was 18,692 in 1967, or 10 percent of all divorces in the DRA for that year (table E). From table II the sampling error for this estimate is 307. The estimate  $18,692 \pm 307$  yields the interval 18,385 to 18,999 that would contain the number of divorces ending marriages of 15-19 years duration in 1967 in approximately 68 out of 100 similarly selected samples. To obtain the sampling error for 10 percent, 307 is divided by the DRA total (186,628), producing a sampling error of 0.16 percent, also shown in table II. Thus the chances are about 68 out of 100 that the actual percent of divorces in the DRA terminating marriages of 15-19 years duration falls between 9.84 and 10.16.

### Completeness of Reporting

Completeness of reporting individual demographic items on divorce records varies considerably among DRA States. Often many items are left blank. This is particularly true of personal characteristics of husband

Table II. Sampling error of estimated frequencies and percentages: divorce-registration area 1966-67

Estimates	1967	1966
Frequencies expressed as percentage of DRA total:		
1 or 99-----	102	98
10 or 90-----	307	297
25 or 75-----	444	428
50-----	512	494
Percentages:		
1 or 99-----	0.05	0.05
10 or 90-----	0.16	0.17
25 or 75-----	0.23	0.24
50-----	0.28	0.28

and of wife—age, race, and number of this marriage. In addition Ohio does not require the reporting of race, and Nebraska does not require reporting the number of this marriage. There was some improvement in reporting from 1963 to 1967 (table III). Even so, in 1967 information on age for two States was stated on less than 10 percent of the records. In contrast, 10 States reported this information on over 90 percent of their records. The average item completeness for registration States is shown in figure III.

Percent distributions and medians shown in this report were computed from data that exclude numbers of not stated cases.

### Methods of Estimating

The national estimate of the number of children involved in divorce is prepared by multiplying the national divorce total by the ratio between children involved in divorce and divorce decrees in the following DRA States: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Estimates were also made of annual numbers of divorces that would have been granted in the United States if age-specific divorce rates were stable and if all changes of the national annual totals were due exclusively to the changing size and age distribution of the married population. This was accomplished by applying the estimated age-specific divorce rates shown in table 8 of *Vital and Health Statistics*, Series 21, No. 17, to the married female population classified by age as estimated for each year 1955 through 1967 and published in *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20. Differences between the resulting estimates and the observed national totals were attributed to variations in age-specific rates.

Table III. Percent completeness of reporting of selected demographic characteristics: divorce-registration area, 1963-67

Year	Average of the five items	Characteristic				
		Age of husband	Race of husband	Number of this marriage of husband	Duration of marriage	Number of children
1967-----	75.7	64.5	58.4	63.1	97.4	95.3
1966-----	75.5	63.5	58.2	62.7	97.6	95.6
1965-----	74.8	62.1	58.7	61.5	97.4	94.3
1964-----	71.2	58.3	58.1	54.7	96.1	90.3
1963-----	70.2	53.8	56.2	52.6	97.1	91.3

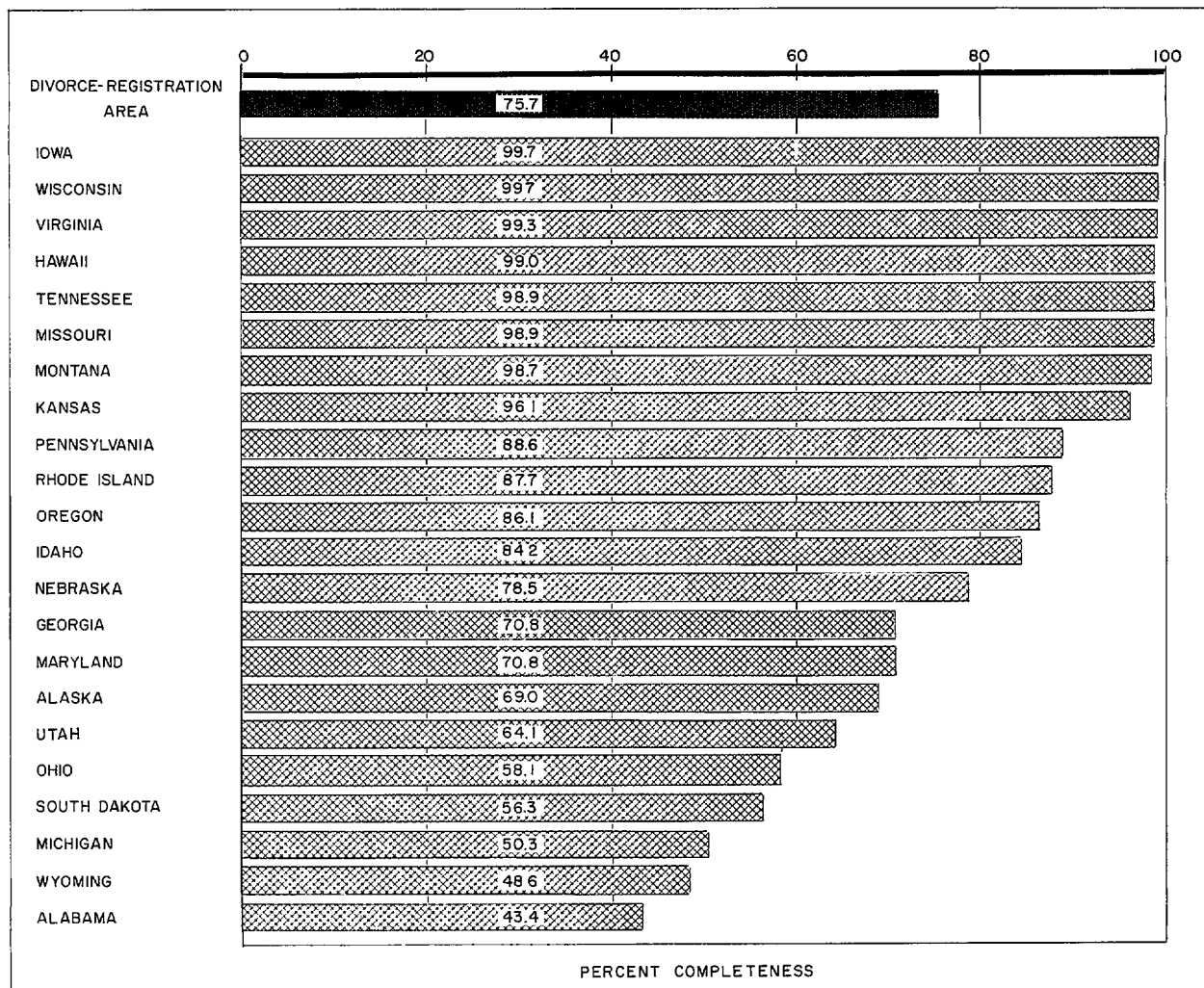


Figure III. Average completeness of reporting selected demographic characteristics: divorce-registration area and each registration State, 1967.

(Included in the computation of the averages are the following items: age, race, number of this marriage, duration of marriage, and number of children)

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