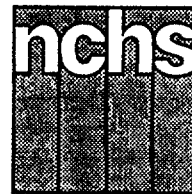


Monthly Vital Statistics Report



Final Data From the National Center for Health Statistics

Advance Report of Final Marriage Statistics, 1988

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Highlights

A total of 2,395,926 couples married in the United States in 1988, a slight decrease from 1987 (0.3 percent) and the fourth consecutive annual decline.

The rate of marriage also declined, from 9.9 per 1,000 total population in 1987 to 9.7 in 1988, lower than it has been since 1967. This represented the fourth consecutive annual decline in the rate. Between 1972 and 1988 the marriage rate for unmarried women 15-44 years of age dropped

every year except 1981, reaching a record low of 91.0 per 1,000 in 1988. The persistent decline in this rate indicates that quite apart from variations in the size of the marriageable population, there has been a persistent decline in the rate at which eligible women marry.

Marriage rates were highest for men and women in their twenties and dropped after age 30. Single women ages 20-24 were 5 times as likely to marry as single women 40-44 and 34 times as likely to marry as single women 60-64. The drop was not as steep for men as for women. Single men aged 25-29 were 3 times as likely to marry as single men 40-44 and 20 times as likely to marry as single men 60-64.

The age distribution of brides and grooms shifted to older ages during the 1970's and 1980's. In 1988 proportionately fewer brides and grooms were under 25 years of age when they first married and more were between 25 and 40 years than in 1970.

The increase in age at marriage is summarized by the median and mean ages at marriage. The median age of brides at first marriage rose every year since 1974, from 20.6 to 23.7 in 1988, increasing 3.1 years. The median age

of grooms at first marriage also rose for 14 consecutive years, from 22.5 in 1974 to 25.5 in 1988.

The majority (54 percent) of marriages united brides and grooms who were both single. The next most frequent combination (19 percent) was that both spouses were previously divorced. Relatively few (1 percent) were both widowed. In 1988 the proportion of single brides who married previously divorced grooms was virtually the same as the proportion of previously divorced brides who married single grooms (11 percent each).

The interval between marriages lengthened between 1970 and 1988. The median interval since last marriage ended for previously divorced women was 2.5 years in 1988, up from 1.0 years in 1970. The interval to remarriage for previously divorced men increased from 0.9 years in 1970 to 2.3 years in 1988.

White brides and grooms were younger than black brides and grooms at first marriage and at remarriage after divorce.

People with more education generally married at a later age than those with less education. The average age at which previously single high school graduates married was 23.4 years for



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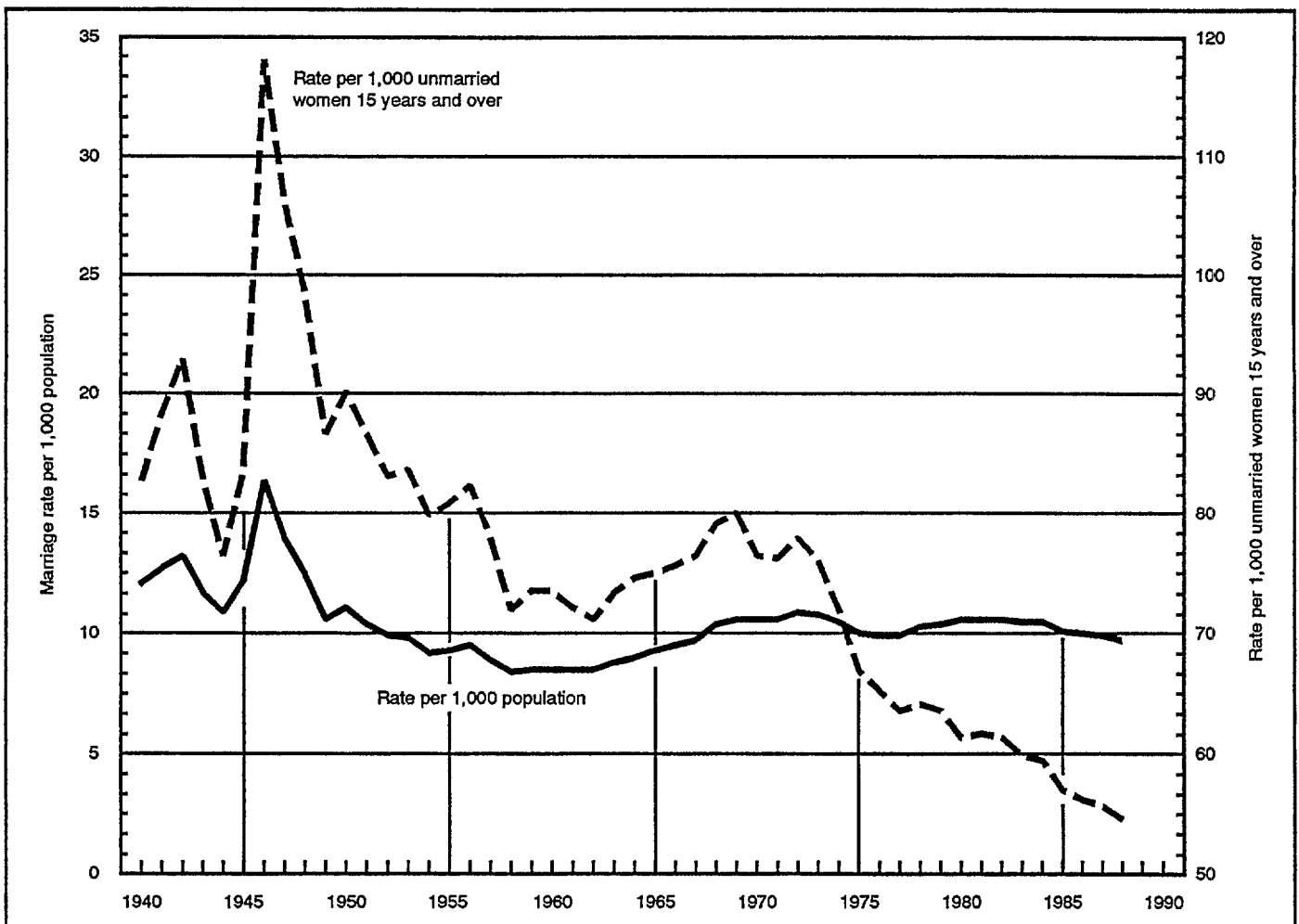


Figure 1. Marriage rates: United States, 1940-88

women and 25.2 for men. The average age at which single college graduates married was 26.7 for women and 28.2 for men. These figures indicate that men and women currently remain unmarried for several years after they have completed their formal education.

The increase of about 3 years in the average age at first marriage between 1970 and 1988 is related in part to an increased proportion of men and women going to college. But this is not the only factor. Generally, even those that did not attend college married later in 1988 than in 1970. In fact, the average age at first marriage increased by at least 2 years for all but the lowest educational grouping for both brides and grooms.

Number and rates

In 1988, 2,395,926 couples married in the United States, a slight decrease from 1987 (0.3 percent) (table 1).

Though slight, this was the fourth consecutive annual decline. The duration of the downward trend is unusual inasmuch as the number of marriages increased in 31 of the 48 years between 1940 and 1988 and never before dropped for more than 3 years consecutively. There was an increase in marriages at the beginning of World War II; an abrupt drop in 1943 and 1944, when millions of young men were overseas in the Armed Forces; and a postwar surge to 2.3 million in 1946, a figure that was not exceeded until 1979. The postwar surge receded quickly during the late 1940's, and the annual total fluctuated around 1.5 or 1.6 million in the 1950's. During the 14-year period 1959-73, the annual total of marriages increased every year, reaching 2.3 million again in 1973. During the mid-1970's, marriages dipped for 2 years before resuming their upward trend. The annual total fluctuated again in the 1980's, reached an all-time high in

1984, and then declined every year from 1984 through 1988. Provisional data indicate that the number of marriages increased slightly again in 1989 and 1990.

The rate of marriage also declined, from 9.9 per 1,000 total population in 1987 to 9.7 in 1988, lower than it has been since 1967 (figure 1). This represents the fourth consecutive annual decline in the rate. Unlike the trend in the number of marriages, which was generally upward during the 1940-88 period, the marriage rate has cycled up and down several times in response to wars, economic cycles, variations in the number of young adults reaching marriageable age, and changes in marital patterns. The rate per 1,000 total population reached a historic high of 16.4 in 1946 in the wake of demobilization and a low of 8.4 in 1958, when an economic recession combined with small numbers of young adults reaching marriageable age. The rate rose again, crested at

10.9 in 1972 (less than the record high), and fell to 9.9 in 1976–77 before another, weaker recovery to 10.6 in 1980–82. After 1982 the marriage rate declined to 9.7 per 1,000 population in 1988. Provisional data indicate that the rate stabilized in 1989 and increased to 9.8 in 1990.

One of the underlying factors that account for cycles in the marriage rate is the variation in the number of unmarried young adults who reach marriageable age. A rate that takes into account fluctuations of this kind is the marriage rate per 1,000 unmarried women 15–44 years of age. Between 1972 and 1988 this rate dropped every year except 1981. The rate reached a record high of 199.0 per 1,000 unmarried women 15–44 years of age in 1946. Then the rate drifted generally downward, dropping below 100 in 1983 and continuing down to 91.0 in 1988. The persistent declines in this rate indicate that quite apart from variations in the size of the marriageable population, there has been a persistent decline in the rate at which eligible women marry.

Geographic variation

Although the national total of marriages declined slightly in 1988, data presented in table 2 indicate that the decrease occurred in only 13 States and the District of Columbia and that the magnitude of the decrease was large in just a few States. Substantial declines were reported by California (down 4,887), Nevada (down 6,308), Texas (down 15,408), and Illinois (down 17,311). The number of marriages in Illinois dropped from 95,613 in 1987 to 78,302 in 1988, when a new law required that all applicants for marriage licenses have a blood test for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection.

It is well recognized that the strictness of legislation in a State affects the level of marriage in that State relative to other States. Some States, such as Texas, do not require premarital blood tests. In Illinois, there already was a required blood test for syphilis in 1988 when the HIV test was added. Such tests are intended to protect the health of the potential spouse and future

children by making applicants aware of serious contagious illnesses.

In 1988, presumably because of the blood test for HIV, many residents of Illinois chose to marry in other States, and some people may have chosen not to marry at all. Data are not available by State of residence for all 50 States, but the number of Illinois residents who married was reported for places in the marriage-registration area (MRA), which comprises 42 States and the District of Columbia. The total number of Illinois women who married within the MRA dropped 8 percent, from 97,981 in 1987 to 90,016 in 1988. The number of Illinois brides who married in their home State dropped 18 percent from 90,350 to 74,073. The number of Illinois brides who married in other States, particularly neighboring States, increased substantially, doubling and even more than tripling in some States.

The 8-percent decline in the number of marriages in Texas in 1988 may be due in part to the institution of a 3-day waiting period. State publications also suggest that the decrease may be attributed to the general economic climate, explaining that a flagging economy and lack of employment opportunities can result in postponement of marriage and can also cause outmigration of younger individuals who are most likely to marry (1).

Marriage rates based on the place where the couple married differed by region of the country and by State (table 2). As in previous years, rates for the Northeast and Midwest (8.4 in each) were substantially lower than rates for the South (10.8) and West (11.0). These differences were even more pronounced in 1978. Compared with 1987, the marriage rate was unchanged in the Northeast, declined 1 percent or less in the Midwest and South, and dropped nearly 4 percent in the West.

Rates of marriage varied considerably among States, from 6.7 in Illinois to 15.7 in Hawaii and South Carolina and 111.3 in Nevada. California, New Mexico, Nevada, Texas, and Illinois all

reported substantial declines in rates of marriage in 1988. However, two of those States, Nevada and Texas, still had marriage rates that were well above the national average. The other three, California, New Mexico, and Illinois, had rates considerably below the national average.

Some of these differences among States are attributable to out-of-State marriages. For example, for years many California residents have married in Nevada, and in 1988 many Illinois residents married in nearby States. Several of these nearby States showed sharply increased rates: Iowa (10 percent), Wisconsin (9 percent), Tennessee and Kentucky (6 percent each), and Missouri and Indiana (3 percent each). These increases reflect in part the Illinois residents who married in these nearby States. However, the rates in these States for 1989 can be expected to drop because the legislation that required a blood test for HIV in Illinois was repealed in June of 1989.

Tables 1–3 are based on total counts of marriages that are obtained annually from all States and the District of Columbia. Tables 4–14 contain detailed demographic information about brides and grooms. This information is drawn from a sample of certificates of marriages performed in the marriage-registration area. Eighty-one percent of all marriages in 1988 took place in the MRA. The national number of marriages declined 0.3 percent in 1988, but the number in the MRA increased 0.6 percent. This is because some of the eight States that are not in the MRA are among the States where marriages dropped sharply, in particular Texas and Nevada.

In the following discussion of tables 1–3, related information from the MRA has been used to enhance the analysis.

Monthly and daily variation

In 1988 marriages continued to follow the typical seasonal swings from low in the winter to high in the summer months (table 3). June was the month in which the greatest number of couples married, and

¹Texas Department of Health. Texas Vital Statistics 1988. Austin, Texas: Texas Department of Health. 1989.

January had the fewest. In 1987 the months with the highest and lowest numbers of marriages were the same—but even though the annual total in 1988 was less than that for 1987, 6 months (March, April, July, September, October, and December) had more marriages in 1988 than in 1987. This annual variation in monthly totals corresponds in part to the number of Saturdays a month contains in a particular year. More than half of U.S. marriages were performed on Saturdays, so having a fifth Saturday among the 30 or 31 days in a month causes a substantial increase in the monthly marriage total.

Valentine's Day in 1988 (a Sunday) had more marriages than any other day in February. The day in 1988 on which the greatest number of marriages occurred was Saturday, June 25.

Total marriage rate

The total marriage rate is a hypothetical rate that combines a set of annual rates for different age groups to show what the lifetime implication of a set of rates would be if they were to continue. In 1988 the total marriage rate per thousand was 1,115.7 for women and 1,145.2 for men (table 4). The rate may be separated into a first-marriage rate and a remarriage rate. In 1988 the total first-marriage rate was 709.1 for women and 702.1 for men, higher than these rates have been since 1982. This means that if current age-specific rates were to continue, 71 percent of women and 70 percent of men would marry at least once. Both rates rose for the second consecutive year in 1988. In contrast, total remarriage rates declined for the second consecutive year. The total remarriage rate was 406.6 for women and 443.1 for men. That is, for every 100 women there would be 41 remarriages, and for every 100 men there would be 44 remarriages. Some of these marriages would be third or higher order marriages.

Rates by marital status and age

The marriage rates for unmarried women aged 15–44 and 15 years and over in table 1 show the trend in mar-

riage for all unmarried women, without regard to whether they were single or had been divorced or widowed. Information about the previous marital status of both bride and groom is available from 38 States and the District of Columbia in the MRA and is important in understanding the decline in the marriage rate.

It is clear from the data in table 5 that marriage rates for both sexes and for each previous marital status have dropped substantially since 1970. The marriage rate for single women has dropped 37 percent; for divorced women, 36 percent; and for widowed women, 48 percent. The marriage rate for single men dropped 40 percent; for divorced men, 46 percent; and for widowed men, 38 percent.

Table 5 also shows that the marriage rate varies enormously according to previous marital status. In 1988 the marriage rate for single women was 58.4 per 1,000, 26 percent below the marriage rate for divorced women (78.6) but more than 10 times the rate for widows (5.3). The 1988 marriage rate for single men (48.3 per 1,000) was less than half the rate for divorced men (109.7) but nearly twice the rate for widowed men (25.1). Thus, marriage rates were higher for divorced than for single persons, and rates for both single and divorced persons were far higher than rates for widowed persons.

Throughout the 1970–88 period, marriage rates for single women were consistently higher than marriage rates for single men. In contrast, marriage rates for divorced women were consistently lower than marriage rates for divorced men, and marriage rates for widowed women were a small fraction of rates for widowed men.

Table 6 shows marriage rates by age as well as by previous marital status of brides and grooms. Regardless of marital status, marriage rates reached a peak for men and women in their twenties and dropped after age 30. For example, in 1988 the marriage rate for single women was 28.9 per 1,000 for those 15–19 years of age, rose to 106.7 for those aged 25–29, and dropped substantially with each additional 5 years of age. Single women aged 25–29 were 5 times as likely to

marry as single women aged 40–44 and 37 times as likely to marry as single women aged 60–64 years. The marriage rate for single men was 10.5 per 1,000 at 15–19 years of age, climbed to 93.9 at 25–29 years of age, and then also dropped with each additional 5 years of age. The decline, however, was not as steep as that for women. Single men aged 25–29 years were 3 times as likely to marry as single men aged 40–44 and 20 times as likely to marry as single men aged 60–64 years.

Although at younger ages marriage rates for single and divorced women were higher than rates for men, there is a crossover point at which men's rates exceed women's. For example, women who were 20–24 years of age and previously divorced had the highest rates of marriage of any group shown in table 6 (262.2 per 1,000). For each age group after 20–24 years, however, marriage rates for divorced men exceeded rates for divorced women, the men being twice as likely as women to remarry at ages 40–44 and 3 times as likely at ages 60–64. In part these higher marriage rates for men reflect the higher death rates of divorced men, which reduces the pool of divorced men available for remarriage, thus raising the marriage rate for those who are alive. It is also true that single and widowed men die at higher rates than do single and widowed women.

Previous marital status

The majority (54 percent) of marriages united brides and grooms that were both single (table 7). The next most frequent combination (19 percent) was that both spouses were previously divorced. Relatively few (1 percent) were both widowed. In 1988 the proportion of single brides who married previously divorced grooms was virtually the same as the proportion of divorced brides who married single grooms (11 percent each). Widowed men married divorced and widowed women in almost equal proportions. During the 1970's, when the number of divorces was climbing steadily, the proportion of brides and grooms who had been divorced also increased and the proportion of

primary marriages (first marriages for both brides and grooms) declined from 69 percent in 1970 to 57 percent in 1980. During the 1980's the proportions began to stabilize, and in 1988 the proportion of marriages of divorced men to single or divorced women actually decreased. The percent of marriages increased for two groups between 1987 and 1988—primary marriages and marriages of single men to divorced brides.

Age at marriage

There was a shift in the age distribution of marriages to older ages during the 1970's and 1980's (table 8). In 1988, 18 percent of the previously single brides were teenagers, down from 30 percent in 1980 and 42 percent in 1970. In 1988, 43 percent of the previously single brides were aged 20–24 years, down only slightly from 47 percent in 1980. The biggest change in the age distribution since 1970 was the increase in the proportion of previously single brides who were between 25 and 40 years of age. The proportion of brides who were 25–29 years of age when they married for the first time doubled from 1970 (8 percent) to 1980 (16 percent) and tripled from 1970 to 1988 (26 percent). The ages of previously single grooms showed the same shift after 1970. There was a decrease in the proportion of single grooms under 25 and a corresponding increase in the proportions over 25 and under 40.

For previously divorced brides, the distribution by age was much less concentrated than for single brides. Nearly a quarter of these remarriages were for women in each of the age groups 25–29 and 30–34 years. There was also less change between 1970 and 1988 in the distribution of marriages by age of divorced than of single brides. The proportion aged 30–34 years was virtually unchanged from 1980 to 1988, but the proportion of those younger diminished and the proportion of those older increased.

The increase in age at marriage is summarized by the median and mean ages at marriage (table 9). The median age of brides at first marriage rose every year, from 20.6 in 1974 to

23.7 in 1988, increasing 3.1 years. The median age of grooms at first marriage also rose for 14 consecutive years, from 22.5 in 1974 to 25.5 in 1988. These increases reflect both an increase in time spent in school and an increasing tendency for men and women to work for several years before marriage. The median age of previously divorced brides increased each year, from a low of 30.1 in 1976 to 33.6 in 1988. The median age of previously divorced grooms was at a low of 33.6 in 1977 and rose 3.4 years to 37.0 in 1988.

Increases in the median ages of previously widowed brides and grooms did not show such consistency. In 1988 the median age of previously widowed brides was 53.9, and of previously widowed grooms, 63.0.

Interval to remarriage

The interval between marriages is calculated using the date when a previous marriage ended. This was reported by 27 States in 1988. Although some people who remarried had been divorced or widowed for decades, most were remarrying within a few years after divorce. The median interval to remarriage in 1988 for previously divorced brides was 2.5 years and for previously widowed brides was 4.6 years (table 10). Both of these measures were unchanged from 1987. For both previously divorced and previously widowed grooms, the median interval to remarriage in 1988 was 2.3 years, up from 2.2 years each in 1987. For each year since 1970, the interval to remarriage has been longer (0.1–0.3 years) for divorced women than for divorced men. The difference in interval to remarriage between widowed men and women is greater. The interval to remarriage was approximately 2 years longer for widowed women than for widowed men throughout the 1970–88 period.

Between 1970 and 1988 the interval between marriages lengthened for divorced and widowed men and women. The median interval since last marriage ended for previously divorced women was 2.5 years in 1988, up from 1.0 years in 1970. The interval to remarriage for previously divorced

men showed a similar increase, from 0.9 years in 1970 to 2.3 years in 1988. The median interval to remarriage for previously widowed brides rose from 3.6 years in 1970 to 4.5 years in 1984 and then fluctuated between 4.5 and 4.6 years. The interval to remarriage for previously widowed men increased only 0.5 years, from 1.8 years in 1970 to 2.3 years in 1988.

Race

In 1988, 34 States reported the race of bride and groom on marriage records. Among brides for whom race was stated, 87 percent were white, 11 percent were black, and fewer than 2 percent were of other races. The proportions were similar for grooms (table 11). Where race was reported for both bride and groom, 86 percent were both white, 11 percent were both black, and 1 percent were both of other races (data not shown). Only 2 percent of couples in the 34-State area married interracially.

Marriage patterns by previous marital status and age differ by race. About one-third of white brides and grooms (34 and 33 percent, respectively) had been divorced, compared with only a quarter of black brides and grooms (23 and 25 percent, respectively). This is a consequence of the tendency of black couples to separate without obtaining a legal divorce (2). The mean ages at marriage show that white brides and grooms were younger than black brides and grooms at first marriage and at remarriage after divorce (table 11).

Educational attainment

In 1988, 23 States reported educational attainment of brides and grooms. Education is a socioeconomic characteristic which is strongly associated with income and consequently with the ability of couples to provide for their families. The proportion of

²London KA. Cohabitation, marriage, marital dissolution, and remarriage: United States, 1988. Advance data from vital and health statistics; no 194. Hyattsville, Maryland: National Center for Health Statistics. 1990.

brides who had not completed high school was relatively small; only 3 percent had 0–8 years of schooling, and 12 percent had attended high school but had not graduated (table 12). Most brides (40 percent) were high school graduates. The second largest group (24 percent) had attended college but had not obtained a degree. Fifteen percent of the brides had graduated from college, and an additional 6 percent had a graduate-level education.

The amount of education varied for single, divorced, and widowed brides. Previously single brides were twice as likely as previously divorced brides to have completed college (18 percent, compared with 9 percent). The proportion of previously single brides who had a graduate school education was also higher than the proportion of previously divorced brides (7 percent, compared with 5 percent). Previously widowed brides had less education in general than either divorced or single brides.

The percent distribution by education for grooms followed the same pattern as for brides, except that more of the men were in the two extremes of the educational range (0–8 years of schooling and 17 years or more). Moreover, the differences between previously single grooms and previously divorced grooms were not as great as were such differences for brides. Approximately 17 percent of previously single grooms had completed college, compared with 12 percent of previously divorced grooms.

It can be seen in table 13 that although overall, single brides and grooms had more education than those who were previously divorced, the relationship holds only for brides under 45 years of age and for grooms in age groups from 18 to 44. The relationship reverses at age 45. For women 45–54 years of age, previously single brides had less education than previously divorced brides, and for those 55 years and over, there was virtually no difference. For men in all age groups 45 and over, previously divorced grooms had more education than previously single grooms.

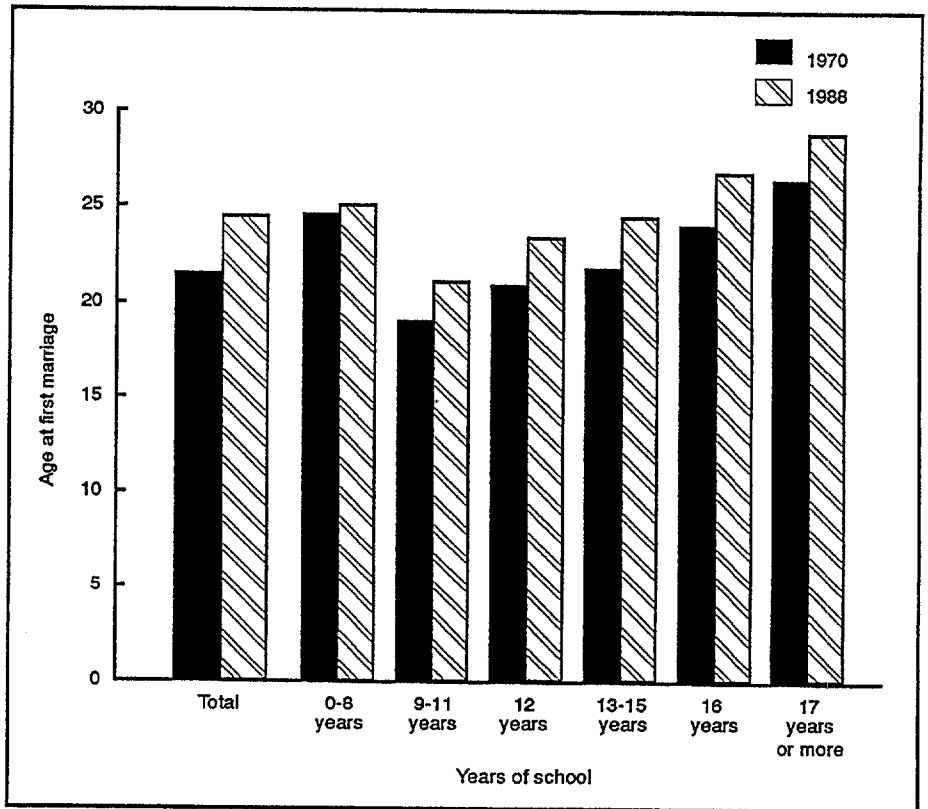


Figure 2. Average age of bride at first marriage, by years of school completed: Uniform group of 14 States, 1970 and 1988

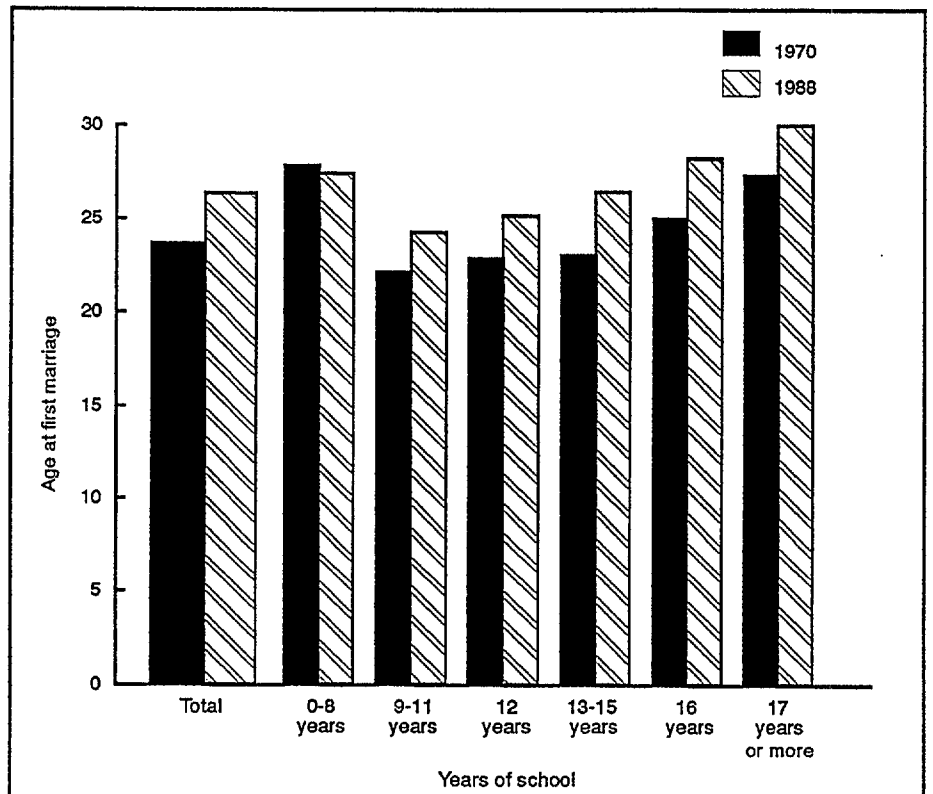


Figure 3. Average age of groom at first marriage, by years of school completed: Uniform group of 14 States, 1970 and 1988

It should be noted that educational level at marriage depends to some extent on age. Earlier in the 20th century, it was not as common for Americans to attend and graduate from high school as it is now. As the century progressed, more and more people did so. This is reflected by the drop in the average educational level across the three oldest age groups, which are shown in table 13. In addition, brides and grooms who are still teenagers have not had time to complete college or attend graduate school. The average educational attainment of grooms under age 18 was 10.7 years in 1988, and that of

grooms 18–19 years of age was 11.9 years.

Table 14 displays the relationship among education, age, and previous marital status differently than does table 13. It shows that people with more education generally married at a later age than those with less education. For example, the average age at which previously single high school graduates married was 23.4 years for women and 25.2 years for men. The average age at which single college graduates married was 26.7 years for women and 28.2 years for men. A comparison of the average ages at marriage for these educational groups with

the typical ages at graduation indicates that men and women remained unmarried for several years after they completed their formal education.

The increase of about 3 years in age at first marriage between 1970 and 1988 is related in part to an increased proportion of men and women going to college. But this is not the only factor. Generally, even those who did not attend college married later in 1988 than in 1970. In fact, the average age at first marriage increased by at least 2 years for all but the lowest educational grouping for both brides and grooms (figures 2 and 3).

Symbols

- Data not available
 - ... Category not applicable
 - Quantity zero
 - 0.0 Quantity more than zero but less than 0.05
 - * Figure does not meet standard of reliability or precision
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Table 1. Marriages and marriage rates: United States, 1940–88

[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
1988	2,395,926	9.7	25.9	23.9	54.6	91.0
1987	2,403,378	9.9	26.2	24.2	55.7	92.4
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: United States, each region, division, and State, 1978, 1987, and 1988

[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		
	1988	1987	1978	1988	1987	1978
United States	2,395,926	2,403,378	2,282,272	9.7	9.9	10.3
Regions:						
Northeast	423,481	421,399	382,201	8.4	8.4	7.8
Midwest	500,801	504,301	562,612	8.4	8.5	9.6
South	913,290	910,672	832,840	10.8	10.9	11.4
West	558,354	567,006	504,619	11.0	11.4	12.2
Northeast:						
New England	116,037	113,083	99,742	9.0	8.8	8.1
Middle Atlantic	307,444	308,316	282,459	8.2	8.2	7.6
Midwest:						
East North Central	344,486	353,110	394,249	8.2	8.4	9.5
West North Central	156,315	151,191	168,363	8.8	8.6	9.9
South:						
South Atlantic	454,217	445,342	390,527	10.7	10.7	10.9
East South Central	184,256	176,825	165,830	12.0	11.6	11.5
West South Central	274,817	288,505	276,483	10.2	10.7	12.2
West:						
Mountain	238,138	245,130	234,451	17.9	18.6	21.8
Pacific	320,216	321,876	270,168	8.6	8.8	8.8
New England:						
Maine	12,553	12,124	11,658	10.4	10.2	10.5
New Hampshire	11,116	10,854	9,120	10.2	10.3	10.2
Vermont	6,125	5,914	4,804	11.0	10.8	9.6
Massachusetts	49,941	49,029	42,882	8.5	8.4	7.5
Rhode Island	8,410	8,056	7,277	8.5	8.2	7.6
Connecticut	27,892	27,106	24,001	8.6	8.4	7.8
Middle Atlantic:						
New York	² 158,418	² 160,548	136,784	² 8.8	² 9.0	7.7
New Jersey	61,063	60,550	52,993	7.9	7.9	7.2
Pennsylvania	87,963	87,218	92,682	7.3	7.3	7.8
East North Central:						
Ohio	97,881	95,882	103,754	9.0	8.9	9.6
Indiana	51,465	49,550	58,050	9.3	9.0	10.7
Illinois	78,302	95,613	105,923	6.7	8.3	9.3
Michigan	75,386	74,418	88,333	8.2	8.1	9.6
Wisconsin	41,452	37,647	38,189	8.5	7.8	8.2
West North Central:						
Minnesota	33,654	33,683	33,480	7.8	7.9	8.4
Iowa	25,090	23,062	28,030	8.9	8.1	9.6
Missouri	50,330	48,397	52,878	9.8	9.5	10.9
North Dakota	4,966	5,028	5,651	7.4	7.5	8.7
South Dakota	7,328	6,993	10,638	10.3	9.9	15.4
Nebraska	12,242	11,808	13,711	7.6	7.4	8.8
Kansas	22,705	22,220	23,975	9.1	9.0	10.3
South Atlantic:						
Delaware	5,645	5,410	4,322	8.6	8.4	7.2
Maryland	47,258	45,161	45,029	10.2	10.0	10.7
District of Columbia	4,947	5,142	4,624	8.0	8.3	6.9
Virginia	68,947	67,004	58,967	11.5	11.3	11.2
West Virginia	13,768	13,455	17,275	7.3	7.1	9.0
North Carolina	51,918	50,414	43,852	8.0	7.9	7.6
South Carolina	54,602	53,396	52,960	15.7	15.6	17.4
Georgia	69,060	68,868	68,171	10.9	11.1	12.9
Florida	138,072	136,492	95,327	11.2	11.4	10.4
East South Central:						
Kentucky	49,459	46,918	¹ 33,301	13.3	12.6	¹ 9.2
Tennessee	65,326	61,358	57,529	13.3	12.6	12.9
Alabama	44,552	44,820	47,720	10.9	11.0	12.4
Mississippi	24,919	23,729	27,280	9.5	9.0	11.0
West South Central:						
Arkansas	34,935	32,190	25,096	14.6	13.5	11.2
Louisiana	34,052	36,177	39,877	7.7	8.1	9.8
Oklahoma	32,923	31,823	43,683	10.2	9.7	15.0
Texas	172,907	188,315	167,827	10.3	11.2	12.4
Mountain:						
Montana	6,784	6,540	8,136	8.4	8.1	10.4
Idaho	12,165	11,428	13,570	12.1	11.5	14.9
Wyoming	4,726	4,699	6,298	9.9	9.6	14.6
Colorado	31,438	31,931	31,129	9.5	9.7	11.3
New Mexico	³ 12,722	³ 13,990	⁴ 16,582	³ 8.4	³ 9.3	⁴ 13.2
Arizona	⁴ 35,661	⁴ 36,207	27,725	⁴ 10.2	⁴ 10.7	11.0
Utah	17,360	16,745	16,365	10.3	10.0	12.0
Nevada	117,282	123,590	114,646	111.3	122.7	159.5

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Marriages and marriage rates: United States, each region, division, and State, 1978, 1987, and 1988—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		
	1988	1987	1978	1988	1987	1978
Pacific:						
Washington	45,076	43,503	45,210	9.7	9.6	11.6
Oregon	23,405	22,301	21,055	8.5	8.2	8.4
California	229,148	234,035	188,056	8.1	8.5	8.2
Alaska	5,306	5,470	5,111	10.1	10.4	12.7
Hawaii	17,281	16,567	10,736	15.7	15.3	11.6

¹Data are incomplete.
²Figure used for New York City is the total number of valid marriage certificates provided to NCHS.
³Data are premarital health examination forms issued.
⁴Data include marriage licenses issued for some counties.

Table 3. Marriages and marriage rates, by month: United States, 1978, 1987, and 1988

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

Month	Number			Rate		
	1988	1987	1978	1988	1987	1978
Total	2,395,926	2,403,378	2,282,272	9.7	9.9	10.3
January	113,236	116,748	114,206	5.5	5.7	6.1
February	146,106	160,247	128,353	7.5	8.6	7.6
March	151,533	148,592	150,624	7.3	7.2	8.0
April	192,738	175,614	177,705	9.6	8.8	9.8
May	225,471	247,075	202,384	10.8	12.0	10.7
June	262,474	269,334	261,584	13.0	13.5	14.3
July	243,124	214,462	231,494	11.7	10.4	12.3
August	237,354	255,460	239,937	11.4	12.3	12.7
September	232,640	228,777	222,599	11.5	11.4	12.2
October	225,015	223,258	184,838	10.8	10.8	9.8
November	174,220	175,305	174,381	8.6	8.7	9.5
December	192,015	188,506	194,167	9.2	9.1	10.2

Table 4. Total marriage rate by marriage order of women and men: Marriage-registration area, 1972–88

[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
1988	1,115.7	1,145.2	709.1	702.1	406.6	443.1
1987	1,106.2	1,138.6	699.4	689.6	406.8	449.0
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, 1970-88

[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 ages 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
1988	58.4	78.6	5.3	48.3	109.7	25.1
1987	58.9	80.7	5.4	48.8	115.7	26.1
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. Marriage rates by age and previous marital status of women and men: Marriage-registration area, 1983–88

[Based on sample data. Figures exclude data for Iowa. For 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					
	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983
All marriages												
Total	48.1	48.3	49.2	49.9	51.9	52.5	57.4	58.3	59.4	60.5	63.1	64.1
15–19 years	29.6	29.8	32.5	34.8	38.5	40.1	10.6	10.5	11.5	12.2	13.7	14.4
15–17 years	11.5	11.6	12.2	13.5	15.3	16.3	1.7	1.6	1.7	2.0	2.2	2.2
18–19 years	56.9	59.2	65.8	68.8	74.1	75.2	24.0	24.6	27.2	27.9	30.5	31.4
20–24 years	105.5	104.9	108.6	110.6	113.3	115.9	73.7	73.6	76.2	78.4	81.2	83.9
25–29 years	121.2	121.8	121.2	122.2	128.1	126.8	104.7	107.1	108.5	111.7	118.0	117.1
30–34 years	93.0	96.9	97.2	93.8	94.7	98.1	90.7	95.0	98.7	99.3	104.9	109.4
35–39 years	70.0	70.9	70.1	72.5	75.1	74.1	77.9	85.9	93.1	103.9	104.6	106.0
40–44 years	51.0	51.6	51.6	51.3	53.1	52.8	80.1	84.8	81.2	78.4	87.9	92.7
45–49 years	34.9	37.0	36.3	34.7	38.7	38.9	63.2	67.3	69.0	69.3	73.7	78.8
50–54 years	21.9	20.3	22.5	21.3	22.3	22.7	50.4	57.9	57.7	53.4	54.8	51.3
55–59 years	11.5	11.2	11.5	12.4	12.4	12.8	40.4	38.4	40.3	38.7	40.7	45.9
60–64 years	7.4	8.2	7.9	7.7	8.0	8.8	27.1	29.5	26.3	27.6	30.3	34.8
65 years and over	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	13.1	13.1	13.5	14.1	14.2	15.1
First marriages¹												
Total	58.4	58.9	59.7	61.5	63.5	63.8	48.3	48.8	49.1	50.1	51.6	51.8
15–19 years	28.9	29.2	31.5	34.0	37.5	38.8	10.5	10.4	11.3	12.1	13.5	14.1
15–17 years	11.4	11.5	12.0	13.4	15.0	15.9	1.6	1.5	1.7	2.0	2.1	2.2
18–19 years	55.6	57.8	63.7	67.2	72.1	72.6	23.7	24.4	26.7	27.6	30.0	30.9
20–24 years	97.9	97.8	99.6	102.1	104.4	106.9	70.5	70.7	72.5	74.5	77.3	79.5
25–29 years	106.7	105.4	102.8	103.5	106.6	105.2	93.9	96.4	95.9	99.2	102.9	100.6
30–34 years	63.9	68.6	68.4	66.3	64.3	61.2	67.0	69.3	70.6	70.7	72.0	69.0
35–39 years	41.2	41.9	38.6	37.2	38.4	38.3	41.2	45.1	47.1	51.6	46.9	45.4
40–44 years	20.6	21.7	22.7	24.1	23.7	21.8	29.8	31.2	28.2	25.4	27.1	27.0
45–49 years	11.8	14.4	14.2	13.9	15.4	13.9	14.9	16.3	16.7	16.9	16.4	18.5
50–54 years	7.3	8.1	8.5	7.7	7.9	9.0	13.2	14.1	13.9	11.2	11.6	10.7
55–59 years	4.8	4.5	5.4	5.3	6.1	7.5	8.6	7.3	7.7	6.8	8.4	10.4
60–64 years	2.9	3.8	3.7	4.4	3.7	3.3	4.8	5.5	4.8	5.7	5.4	8.0
65 years and over	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	2.2	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.9
Remarriages¹												
Total	35.5	35.8	36.3	36.1	37.6	38.4	86.7	90.8	93.1	95.7	103.1	109.1
15–19 years	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
20–24 years	253.7	239.6	267.3	254.5	248.3	244.4	225.7	198.2	215.8	247.9	229.1	241.8
25–29 years	169.9	182.6	182.2	183.2	193.8	186.8	193.9	187.3	193.3	191.6	215.9	223.1
30–34 years	137.2	135.7	131.8	123.8	127.3	140.0	160.9	169.6	163.1	178.1	206.0	206.0
35–39 years	88.5	88.3	88.1	93.8	95.3	92.3	128.5	137.9	144.9	161.7	172.1	175.8
40–44 years	62.4	63.6	61.3	59.8	62.9	63.3	117.0	121.9	119.6	119.0	133.3	143.4
45–49 years	42.3	43.7	42.6	40.3	45.1	46.9	95.8	100.7	105.2	105.9	118.2	120.8
50–54 years	26.0	23.0	26.1	25.0	26.5	26.1	67.9	82.6	80.9	79.9	83.4	77.0
55–59 years	12.8	12.6	12.6	13.7	13.4	13.7	57.8	58.0	60.2	60.5	61.7	66.3
60–64 years	8.1	8.9	8.5	8.2	8.7	9.7	38.7	43.6	40.6	40.6	44.8	49.1
65 years and over	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	16.3	16.3	16.9	18.0	18.1	18.9
Previously widowed ²	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.7	5.8	6.2	25.1	26.1	26.8	27.7	28.7	30.7
15–44 years	42.0	46.9	44.4	42.9	45.2	51.3	65.4	91.2	95.3	102.8	124.6	149.3
45–64 years	10.6	10.9	11.3	11.2	11.3	12.2	50.0	55.9	53.9	52.8	55.7	59.5
65 years and over	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	15.0	14.9	15.4	16.1	16.4	16.8
Previously divorced ²	78.6	80.7	79.5	81.8	87.3	91.6	109.7	115.7	117.8	121.6	132.7	142.1
15–19 years	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
20–24 years	262.2	247.7	256.7	263.6	241.5	240.4	222.3	207.2	233.9	276.2	234.8	239.5
25–29 years	172.3	183.0	176.5	183.6	204.1	204.4	191.4	182.7	186.3	187.8	211.7	214.4
30–34 years	137.7	137.4	133.1	127.8	132.0	145.3	162.4	172.1	165.2	157.9	173.1	202.0
35–39 years	90.3	91.5	89.7	96.7	100.3	99.3	126.5	135.7	142.6	160.0	173.9	172.6
40–44 years	66.9	68.7	64.0	62.9	66.9	67.0	116.3	123.1	125.4	119.1	130.1	137.7
45–49 years	46.4	47.9	47.5	46.1	49.5	50.8	95.8	99.5	102.5	105.8	117.8	126.6
50–54 years	30.3	29.8	30.2	31.0	33.0	32.4	67.4	84.5	82.2	77.8	78.2	77.2
55–59 years	17.0	16.9	16.2	17.4	17.6	18.9	54.1	54.3	54.2	57.0	58.8	67.1
60–64 years	11.8	11.8	10.4	10.2	12.3	12.9	40.1	43.1	38.9	39.4	45.8	49.3
65 years and over	5.1	4.3	5.4	4.8	4.8	4.9	20.4	20.4	21.1	23.8	23.9	26.2

¹Figures for first marriages and remarriages exclude data for Iowa.
²Data exclude remarriages in Michigan, Ohio, and South Carolina.

Table 7. Percent distribution of marriages by previous marital status of both bride and groom: Reporting States, 1970–88

[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
1988	100.0	54.5	10.7	0.4	10.9	19.0	1.3	0.5	1.4	1.3
1987	100.0	54.3	11.0	0.4	10.7	19.1	1.3	0.5	1.4	1.4
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 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. Starting in 1971, the District of Columbia also reported this item. After 1976, Iowa no longer reported it. Starting in 1979, Colorado joined the States that reported this item, bringing the total of reporting areas back to 38 States and the District of Columbia for the 1979–88 period.

Table 8. Marriages, 1988, and percent distribution of marriages, 1970, 1980, 1987, and 1988 by age according to previous marital status of women and men: Marriage-registration area

[Based on sample data. For sampling errors of estimates and a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes]

Age and previous marital status	Women					Men				
	Number	Percent				Number	Percent			
		1988	1988	1987	1980		1970	1988	1988	1987	1980	1970
All marriages										
Total	1,852,275	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1,852,275	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years	218,358	11.8	12.1	21.1	32.5	83,726	4.5	4.5	8.5	14.0
Under 18 years	50,893	2.7	2.9	5.6	10.0	7,765	0.4	0.4	0.9	1.6
18-19 years	167,465	9.0	9.2	15.6	22.5	75,961	4.1	4.1	7.6	12.4
20-24 years	583,641	31.5	32.3	37.1	39.7	497,398	26.9	27.8	35.7	45.9
25-29 years	447,175	24.1	23.7	18.7	10.4	503,901	27.2	26.9	23.8	16.7
30-34 years	243,678	13.2	13.1	9.3	4.7	292,072	15.8	15.4	12.3	6.6
35-39 years	144,146	7.8	7.6	4.8	3.2	170,593	9.2	9.2	6.5	4.2
40-44 years	89,292	4.8	4.5	2.9	2.7	109,708	5.9	5.8	4.0	3.3
45-49 years	51,005	2.8	2.7	2.0	2.3	67,636	3.7	3.5	2.8	2.7
50-54 years	26,762	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	42,481	2.3	2.2	2.1	1.9
55-59 years	16,133	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.2	28,633	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.5
60-64 years	13,056	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.8	21,454	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1
65 years and over	19,029	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	34,673	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.9
First marriages¹										
Total	1,180,626	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1,188,216	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years	209,513	17.7	18.1	30.4	41.8	81,484	6.9	6.9	12.7	18.4
Under 18 years	49,587	4.2	4.4	8.2	13.0	7,633	0.6	0.6	1.3	2.1
18-19 years	159,926	13.5	13.7	22.2	28.8	73,851	6.2	6.3	11.4	16.3
20-24 years	510,836	43.3	44.2	47.3	46.0	459,815	38.7	40.2	50.0	57.0
25-29 years	307,594	26.1	25.2	16.0	7.7	402,266	33.9	33.2	25.7	16.2
30-34 years	100,743	8.5	8.4	4.0	2.0	161,050	13.6	13.0	7.5	4.1
35-39 years	33,466	2.8	2.6	1.1	0.9	51,824	4.4	4.2	2.0	1.8
40-44 years	9,862	0.8	0.8	0.5	0.6	17,123	1.4	1.3	0.9	1.0
45-49 years	4,115	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	6,377	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6
50-54 years	1,951	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	3,515	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
55-59 years	1,133	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	2,135	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
60-64 years	667	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	1,310	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
65 years and over	746	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	1,317	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Remarriages¹										
Total	632,313	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	626,113	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years	4,297	0.7	0.7	1.7	2.9	563	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3
20-24 years	57,835	9.1	9.8	15.3	18.8	25,279	4.0	4.2	7.2	10.1
25-29 years	129,471	20.5	21.0	24.4	19.2	90,178	14.4	15.2	20.1	18.5
30-34 years	138,559	21.9	22.2	20.6	13.1	125,642	20.1	20.1	21.9	14.6
35-39 years	108,409	17.1	17.1	12.7	10.7	116,062	18.5	18.7	15.4	12.0
40-44 years	78,124	12.4	11.5	8.1	9.6	90,930	14.5	14.1	10.2	10.7
45-49 years	46,302	7.3	7.0	5.6	8.4	60,239	9.6	9.1	7.3	9.5
50-54 years	24,433	3.9	3.7	4.0	5.7	38,482	6.1	5.9	5.6	7.0
55-59 years	14,769	2.3	2.3	2.6	4.6	26,127	4.2	4.2	4.0	5.7
60-64 years	12,179	1.9	2.1	2.1	3.3	19,795	3.2	3.2	3.0	4.2
65 years and over	17,935	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.6	32,816	5.2	5.2	5.1	7.3
Previously widowed ²	50,636	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	47,276	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 25 years	820	1.6	1.8	3.0	4.6	222	0.5	0.5	0.7	1.1
25-29 years	2,454	4.8	4.7	5.6	5.0	758	1.6	1.6	1.8	2.5
30-34 years	3,413	6.7	7.4	6.3	5.2	1,533	3.2	2.9	3.5	3.0
35-39 years	4,281	8.5	8.1	7.2	7.4	1,954	4.1	4.3	3.8	4.0
40-44 years	4,918	9.7	9.0	8.6	10.2	2,596	5.5	5.2	5.0	6.6
45-49 years	5,284	10.4	10.6	10.5	13.7	3,029	6.4	6.2	7.3	9.8
50-54 years	5,302	10.5	10.4	12.6	14.2	4,006	8.5	8.3	10.9	11.9
55-59 years	5,188	10.2	10.2	11.4	13.8	5,315	11.2	11.9	13.6	14.9
60-64 years	6,409	12.7	13.0	13.2	11.5	7,210	15.3	15.7	14.5	13.7
65 years and over	12,567	24.8	24.7	21.6	14.2	20,653	43.7	43.4	38.9	32.4
Previously divorced ²	494,541	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	493,414	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years	3,727	0.8	0.8	1.7	3.6	448	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.4
20-24 years	48,516	9.8	10.5	16.7	22.8	21,114	4.3	4.5	7.7	11.9
25-29 years	109,740	22.2	22.6	26.7	23.2	76,764	15.6	16.3	21.7	22.0
30-34 years	115,375	23.3	23.6	22.5	15.2	107,500	21.8	21.7	24.1	17.4
35-39 years	89,755	18.1	18.2	13.6	11.7	98,270	19.9	20.1	16.9	13.9
40-44 years	62,222	12.6	11.7	8.0	9.6	75,837	15.4	15.1	10.8	11.6
45-49 years	34,568	7.0	6.6	5.0	6.8	49,324	10.0	9.5	7.4	9.6
50-54 years	15,675	3.2	3.0	2.8	3.4	28,826	5.8	5.7	5.2	5.9
55-59 years	7,595	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.1	17,266	3.5	3.4	3.0	3.6
60-64 years	4,157	0.8	0.9	0.7	1.0	10,093	2.0	2.0	1.7	2.0
65 years and over	3,211	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.6	7,972	1.6	1.7	1.4	1.5

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 8. Marriages, 1988, and percent distribution of marriages, 1970, 1980, 1987, and 1988 by age according to previous marital status of women and men: Marriage-registration area—Con.

[Based on sample data. For sampling errors of estimates and a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes]

<i>Age and previous marital status</i>	<i>Women</i>					<i>Men</i>				
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>				<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>			
	<i>1988</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>1987</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1970</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>1987</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1970</i>
Not stated if widowed or divorced	87,136	...	...	...	...	85,423	...	...	...	...
Not stated if previously married										
Total	39,336	...	...	...	...	37,946	...	...	...	...

¹Figures for first marriages and remarriages exclude data for Iowa beginning in 1977; these data are included in "Not stated if previously married."

²Data exclude remarriages in Michigan and Ohio for all years, for South Carolina beginning in 1972, and for the District of Columbia for 1970. These data are included in "Not stated if widowed or divorced."

Table 9. Median and mean age of bride and groom by previous marital status: Marriage-registration area, 1964–88

[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 ¹	First marriage	Remarriage			Total ¹	First marriage	Remarriage			
			Total ²	Previously divorced	Previously widowed			Total ²	Previously divorced	Previously widowed	
											Median age
1988	26.1	23.7	34.5	33.6	53.9	28.1	25.5	38.0	37.0	63.0	
1987	25.9	23.6	34.1	33.3	53.9	28.0	25.3	37.7	36.7	62.8	
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	
											Mean age
1988	28.8	24.6	36.7	35.0	53.1	31.3	26.5	40.5	38.6	60.9	
1987	28.6	24.5	36.4	34.7	53.1	31.2	26.4	40.3	38.4	60.9	
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	58.7	
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	

¹Figures include previous marital status not stated.
²Figures include divorced or widowed not stated.

Table 10. Median and mean interval to remarriage in years by previous marital status of bride and groom: Reporting States, 1970–88

[Based on sample data]

Year	Previous marital status of bride			Previous marital status of groom		
	All remarriages ¹	Previously divorced	Previously widowed	All remarriages ¹	Previously divorced	Previously widowed
Median Interval in years						
1988	2.7	2.5	4.6	2.3	2.3	2.3
1987	2.6	2.5	4.6	2.2	2.2	2.2
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 in years						
1988	4.1	3.9	6.4	3.6	3.6	3.9
1987	4.0	3.8	6.4	3.6	3.5	3.8
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

¹Figures 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 1988, 11 additional States were reporting interval between marriages (Alabama, Colorado, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Oregon, and Virginia).

Table 11. Marriages and mean age at marriage by race and previous marital status of bride and groom: 34 reporting States, 1988

[Based on sample data]

Race	Total	First marriage	Remarriage			Widowed or divorced not stated	Previous marital status not stated
			Total	Previously divorced ¹	Previously widowed ¹		
Bride							
Number							
All races	1,221,711	753,423	455,095	387,536	40,205	27,354	13,193
White	1,057,799	638,095	409,653	350,478	35,798	23,377	10,051
Black	132,035	95,343	36,118	28,959	3,622	3,537	574
Other races	20,833	15,080	5,542	4,775	447	320	211
Race not stated	11,044	4,905	3,782	3,324	338	120	2,357
Groom							
All races	1,221,711	764,937	444,578	382,308	36,506	25,764	12,196
White	1,056,018	650,499	396,208	342,147	32,309	21,752	9,311
Black	137,579	96,381	40,596	33,228	3,656	3,712	602
Other races	18,087	13,554	4,325	3,863	273	189	208
Race not stated	10,027	4,503	3,449	3,070	268	111	2,075
Bride							
Mean age							
All races	28.8	24.2	36.4	34.7	53.2	35.7	26.0
White	28.7	23.9	36.3	34.5	53.7	35.4	25.7
Black	29.2	26.0	37.8	36.3	49.2	37.9	26.5
Other races	28.4	25.7	36.0	35.1	46.4	35.4	24.3
Race not stated	29.3	24.4	37.1	35.7	54.0	27.9	27.3
Groom							
All races	31.3	26.2	40.2	38.3	61.1	39.4	28.1
White	31.2	25.9	40.1	38.1	61.6	39.1	27.5
Black	31.7	27.6	41.5	39.8	57.4	41.3	31.6
Other races	30.6	27.8	39.5	38.5	54.2	37.4	28.9
Race not stated	32.0	26.5	40.7	39.6	56.3	32.5	29.5

¹Data 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 1988, 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 12. Marriages and percent distribution by educational attainment of bride and groom, according to previous marital status, and mean and median years of school completed: 23 reporting States, 1988

[Based on sample data]

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		
Bride										
		Number								Mean
Total	850,296	20,601	96,740	318,733	192,298	116,200	50,752	54,972	13.5	
Single	545,158	10,010	56,398	191,572	126,743	91,821	36,062	32,552	13.7	
Previously married	302,798	10,541	40,143	126,805	65,244	24,257	14,616	21,192	13.1	
Divorced	272,106	7,251	35,042	115,585	60,252	22,219	13,998	18,359	13.1	
Widowed	27,780	3,220	4,697	10,169	4,475	1,882	1,155	2,182	12.4	
Widowed or divorced not stated	2,912	70	404	1,051	517	156	63	651	...	
Not stated	2,340	50	199	356	311	122	74	1,228	...	
Groom										
Total	850,296	28,587	89,769	324,453	167,952	117,934	66,651	54,950	13.5	
Single	551,218	12,438	56,110	210,261	110,938	85,594	43,035	32,842	13.7	
Previously married	297,277	16,130	33,541	113,871	56,965	32,267	23,524	20,979	13.3	
Divorced	269,769	11,666	30,089	105,777	53,291	29,358	21,344	18,244	13.3	
Widowed	25,054	4,361	3,122	7,416	3,287	2,755	2,058	2,055	12.4	
Widowed or divorced not stated	2,454	103	330	678	387	154	122	680	...	
Not stated	1,801	19	118	321	49	73	92	1,129	...	
Bride										
		Percent distribution								Median
Total	100.0	2.6	12.2	40.1	24.2	14.6	6.4	...	12.9	
Single	100.0	2.0	11.0	37.4	24.7	17.9	7.0	...	13.0	
Previously married	100.0	3.7	14.3	45.0	23.2	8.6	5.2	...	12.7	
Divorced	100.0	2.9	13.8	45.6	23.7	8.8	5.3	...	12.7	
Widowed	100.0	12.6	18.3	39.7	17.5	7.4	4.5	...	12.5	
Groom										
Total	100.0	3.6	11.3	40.8	21.1	14.8	8.4	...	12.9	
Single	100.0	2.4	10.8	40.6	21.4	16.5	8.3	...	12.9	
Previously married	100.0	5.8	12.1	41.2	20.6	11.7	8.5	...	12.8	
Divorced	100.0	4.6	12.0	42.1	21.2	11.7	8.5	...	12.8	
Widowed	100.0	19.0	13.6	32.2	14.3	12.0	8.9	...	12.5	

NOTE: Of the 42 States in the marriage-registration area in 1988, 23 reported education of bride and groom—Alabama, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Table 13. Average education by age at marriage according to previous marital status: 23 reporting States, 1988

[Based on sample data]

Age	Total	Previous marital status		
		Single	Divorced	Widowed
Bride				
Mean years of school completed				
All ages	13.5	13.7	13.1	12.4
12-17 years	10.6	10.6	10.1	*
18-19 years	12.3	12.3	11.2	*
20-24 years	13.6	13.8	12.3	12.0
25-29 years	14.1	14.7	13.0	12.5
30-34 years	13.9	14.7	13.4	13.1
35-44 years	13.7	14.6	13.5	13.1
45-54 years	13.0	12.7	13.2	12.4
55-64 years	12.1	12.4	12.3	12.0
65 years and over	11.9	11.8	11.8	11.9
Groom				
All ages	13.5	13.7	13.3	12.4
12-17 years	10.7	10.7	11.8	*
18-19 years	11.9	11.9	11.6	*
20-24 years	13.2	13.3	12.3	12.2
25-29 years	13.9	14.2	12.8	12.9
30-34 years	13.9	14.5	13.3	13.5
35-44 years	14.0	14.6	13.8	13.6
45-54 years	13.4	13.3	13.5	12.9
55-64 years	12.5	11.4	12.7	12.5
65 years and over	11.8	11.3	11.8	11.8

NOTE: Of the 42 States in the marriage-registration area in 1988, 23 reported education of bride and groom—Alabama, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Table 14. Average age at marriage by educational attainment according to previous marital status: 23 reporting States, 1988

[Based on sample data]

Years of school completed	Total	Previous marital status		
		Single	Divorced	Widowed
Bride				
Mean age in years				
Total	28.6	24.4	34.7	52.6
0-8 years	35.4	24.4	39.6	60.2
9-11 years	26.8	21.0	33.4	51.3
12 years	28.1	23.4	34.0	51.6
13-15 years	28.4	24.5	34.9	50.4
16 years	28.9	26.7	36.2	52.0
17 years or more	31.7	28.8	38.1	51.7
Groom				
Total	31.0	26.3	38.2	60.5
0-8 years	41.5	27.7	46.6	67.3
9-11 years	29.3	24.2	36.3	59.8
12 years	29.6	25.2	36.6	58.4
13-15 years	30.6	26.4	37.8	56.9
16 years	31.9	28.2	40.1	60.0
17 years or more	34.6	29.9	42.0	60.6

NOTE: Of the 42 States in the marriage-registration area in 1988, 23 reported education of bride and groom—Alabama, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, 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 is the total number of valid marriage certificates provided to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). Figures in tables 4–14 are based on data tabulated from State-coded data tapes and from probability samples of records selected and coded in NCHS from copies of the records sent by States that participated in the marriage-registration area (MRA). In 1988 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 81 percent of the marriages registered in the United States in 1988 and 79 percent of those in 1978.

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, the number of nonlicensed marriages has increased rapidly, from 2,857 in 1973 to 90,494 in 1987. The number fell to 88,203 in 1988. NCHS has not included 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 regional totals and rates.

Marriage sample

Total counts of marriages are available from all States and are shown in tables 1–3. Data on characteristics of bride and groom shown in tables 4–14 are available only from States in the MRA and exclude nonlicensed marriages in California.

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 fewer 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 778,827 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 1988 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 of the bias introduced in sample estimates by the omission of these marriages.

Marriage rates were lower for the MRA than for the entire United States. The crude marriage rate for the MRA (9.1 per 1,000) was 6 percent below the U.S. rate (9.7), and the rate for unmarried women 15 years of age

Table I. Approximate sampling errors of estimated number of marriages shown in table 8: Marriage-registration area, 1988

Percent of total MRA marriages in subclass	Sampling error
1 or 99	393
2 or 98	553
3 or 97	674
4 or 96	775
5 or 95	862
7 or 93	1,009
10 or 90	1,186
15 or 85	1,412
20 or 80	1,581
25 or 75	1,712
50	1,977

HOW TO USE THE SAMPLING ERROR TABLE: The total number of MRA marriages in 1988 (excluding nonlicensed California marriages) was 1,852,275. For any estimate of marriages shown in table 8, 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 632,313 remarriages of women, or 34.9 percent of all 1988 marriages (table 8). Because 34.9 is between 25 and 50 percent, the sampling error is between 1,712 and 1,977, or, by interpolation, 1,817 remarriages. The chances are about 68 out of 100 that the actual number of 1988 remarriages is between 630,496 and 634,130 (632,313 ± 1,817).

and over (48.1 per 1,000) was 12 percent below the U.S. rate (54.6). This is because residents in the MRA constituted 86 percent of the U.S. population, but only 81 percent of U.S. marriages occurred in the MRA and 77 percent were included in the MRA sample. At least two reasons for these differences can be identified.

First, many residents of States in the MRA married in States not in the MRA and were not counted in the MRA marriage total. However, because they lived within the MRA, they were counted in the population on which the rates were based. Nevada accounted for a large proportion of this net loss from the MRA total.

A second reason was that the 88,203 nonlicensed California marriages were not in the MRA sample to count as marriages, but the entire population of California was in the population on which MRA rates were based. If these 88,203 marriages had been included in the MRA sample, the rate would have been 50.4 rather than 48.1 per 1,000 unmarried women 15 years of age and over.

There may also be a difference in the rate at which residents of States in the MRA marry, divorce, and remarry compared with residents of States not in the MRA.

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 chances are 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 1983-88 are based on unpublished

population estimates as of July 1, prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census (3). National and State rates for 1988 are based on population estimates as of July 1, published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census (4).

³U.S. Bureau of the Census. Unpublished estimates by marital status consistent with United States population estimates, by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin; 1980 to 1988. Current population reports; series P-25, no 1045. Washington: U.S. Department of Commerce. 1990.

⁴U.S. Bureau of the Census. State population and household estimates, with age, sex, and components of change; 1981-88. Current population reports; series P-25, no 1044. Washington: U.S. Department of Commerce. 1989.

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. Percent distributions were calculated excluding not-stated cases. Computations of median and mean age at marriage were based on tabulations of ungrouped data.

Nonreporting bias

Age was completed on more than 99 percent of marriage records, but in 1988 marriage order for brides was not stated on 2 percent of the MRA records. No missing data were allocated before rates were calculated. The percent not stated for grooms was similar.

This report represents summary tabulations from the final marriage statistics for 1988. More detailed tabulations for 1988 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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