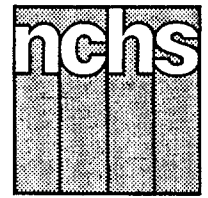


Monthly Vital Statistics Report



Final Data From the National Center for Health Statistics

Advance Report of Final Divorce Statistics, 1988

Contents

Divorces and divorce rates	1
Children involved in divorce	1
Age	3
Duration of marriage	4
Petitioner	4
Race	5
References	5
List of detailed tables	6
Technical notes	17

Divorces and divorce rates

The number of divorces in the United States in 1988 totaled 1,167,000, a slight increase over 1987 (1,166,000). After reaching the all-time peak of 1,213,000 in 1981, the number of divorces has fluctuated throughout the 1980's with no apparent pattern (table 1).

Despite the rise in the annual number of divorces, the divorce rate per 1,000 population (4.7) and the divorce rate per 1,000 married women 15 years of age and over (20.7) both dropped for the third consecutive year. Both rates increased sharply in the 1970's, peaked in the late 1970's and

early 1980's, and have generally declined throughout the remainder of the 1980's.

Divorce rates based on the place where the divorce was granted differed by region of the country and by State (table 2). As in previous years, the rates for the South (5.4) and West (5.3) were higher than those for the Midwest (4.5) and the Northeast (3.5). These differences by region were also present in 1978, but have narrowed since that time. Compared with 1987, the rate in 1988 declined 3 percent in the Northeast, 4 percent in the West, remained unchanged in the South, and increased 2 percent in the Midwest.

Divorce rates by State varied from 13.2 in Nevada to 3.0 in Massachusetts. After Nevada, the next four States with the highest divorce rates were Arizona (7.1), Oklahoma (7.1), Arkansas (7.0), and Wyoming (6.9). Other areas with low divorce rates were Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Wisconsin (all with 3.5), the District of Columbia (3.4), and Pennsylvania (3.2). Compared with 1987, divorce rates dropped for 17 States and the District of Columbia, increased for 18 States, and remained unchanged for 12 States. Because of incomplete data for

Indiana, Louisiana, and New Mexico, divorce rates for these States could not be compared.

Data for the preceding discussion are from counts of the annual number of divorces provided to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) by each State and the District of Columbia. Data for the following discussions on the children involved in divorce, ages at divorce and marriage, duration of marriage, and petitioner of divorce come from information on the divorce certificates of States that constitute the divorce-registration area (DRA). These 31 States and the District of Columbia accounted for 49 percent of all divorces in 1988. Subgroups of DRA States reported information on race and education.

Children involved in divorce

Three statistics measure the extent to which divorce affects children in the United States: the number of children involved in divorce, the average number of children per decree, and the rate per 1,000 children under 18 years of age (table 3). The estimated number of children involved in divorce in the United States in 1988 was 1,044,000, a slight increase over the number for



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Centers for Disease Control

National Center for Health Statistics

Manning Feinleib, M.D., Dr. P.H., Director



1987 (1,038,000). Generally, the number of children involved in divorce has been declining in the 1980's, after steep increases in the 1960's and early 1970's. This drop can be attributed partly to the decline in the divorce rate and the concurrent decline in the number of children in married-couple families.

The average number of children per decree is a ratio of the number of children involved in divorce to the number of divorces. In 1988, there were 0.89 children for every divorce, the same as in 1987. This number is strikingly close to the average number of children in married-couple families in the United States in 1988, 0.88 (1). There have been more divorces than children involved in divorce every year since 1979 (figure 1), when there was exactly one child per decree. For the 20 years previous to 1979, there were more children involved in divorce than there were divorces. This reversal is

related to changes in divorce levels and family size.

The rate of children involved in divorce per 1,000 children under 18 years of age was 16.4 in 1988, up slightly from 1987 (16.3) but 12 percent lower than the all-time high of 18.7 in 1981. The rate in 1988 was double that of 25 years ago in 1963 (8.2), indicating that twice as many children per 1,000 experience their parents' divorce today than a generation ago.

Slightly more than half of divorcing couples in 1988 had children under 18. Approximately 26 percent had 1 child, 20 percent had 2 children, and 7 percent had 3 or more children (table 4). For couples with children, the average number was lower for those that divorced (1.70) than for all married-couple households (1.84).

The percent of divorcing couples with children varied widely by State. In Oregon, 63 percent of divorcing couples had children, whereas the

comparable number for the District of Columbia was only 35 percent. Generally, the proportion of divorces with children involved was higher for Western and Midwestern States than for Southern and Northeastern States. Some of this difference can be attributed to differences in fertility between regions. In particular, fertility rates in States in the West are generally higher than those in the Northeast (2).

The proportion of divorces with children involved differed by the race and education of the couple (data not shown). For the 27 States and the District of Columbia that reported race, a slightly larger proportion of white couples (52 percent) had children at the time of divorce than did black couples (50 percent) and couples of other races (48 percent). Nineteen States reported both the race and educational attainment of the divorcing couple. In these States, there were opposite patterns by educational attainment in the

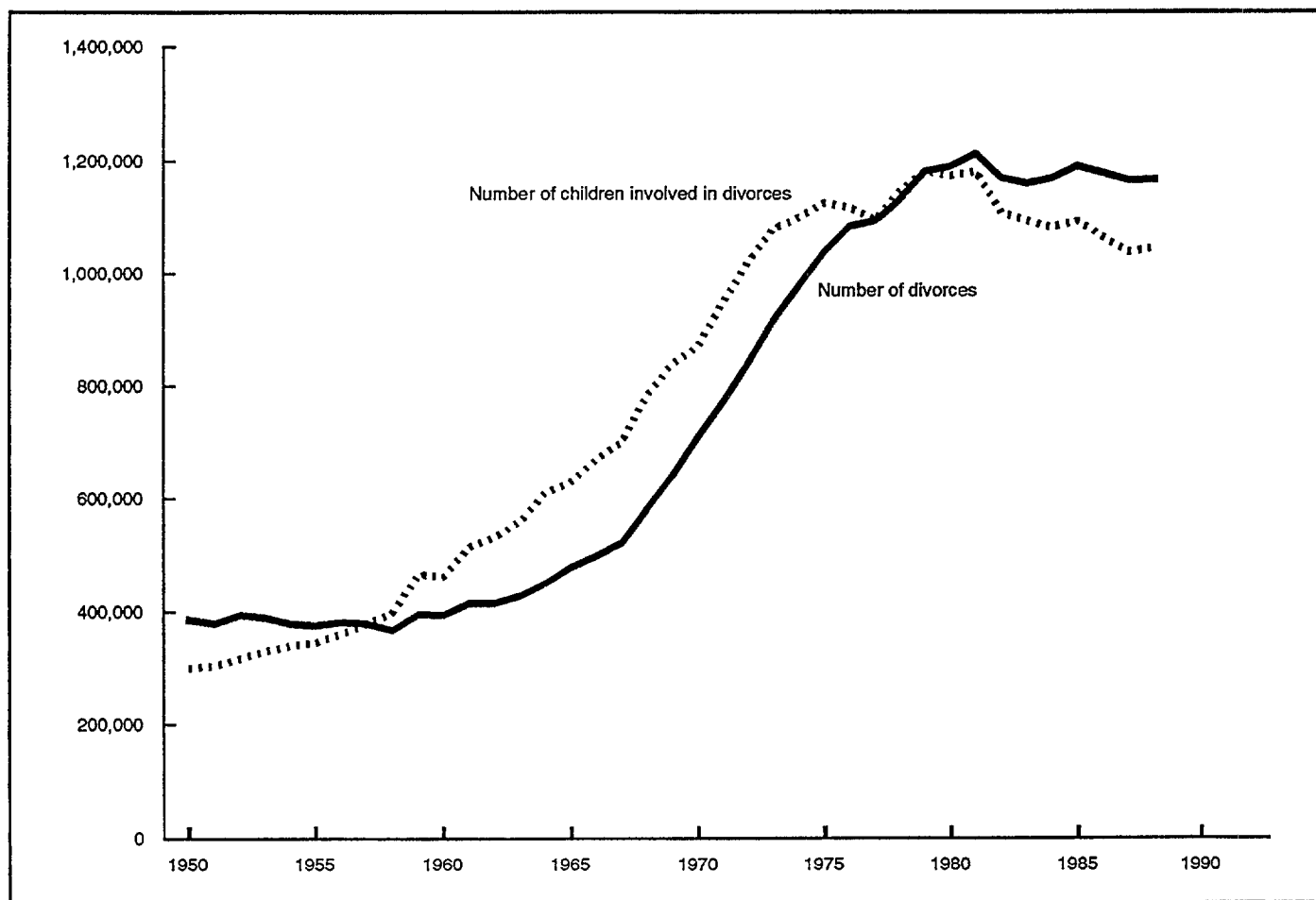


Figure 1. Estimated number of divorces and children involved in divorces: United States, 1950-88

proportion of divorces with children involved for white parents and black parents. For white men and women, those with less than high school educations had a larger percent of divorces involving children than did those with educational attainment beyond high school. However, for black men and women the reverse was true. The proportion of divorces with children present was lower for blacks with lower educational attainment and higher for those with higher educational attainment. For couples of other races, there were no clear patterns by education.

Age

The incidence of divorce per 1,000 married persons differed by sex and age (table 5). The divorce rate per 1,000 married men was 18.9 in 1988, 2 percent higher than the rate for

women, 18.5. This anomaly reflects the fact that, as of July 1, 1988, fewer men than women were reported as married (3), resulting in the slightly higher divorce rate for men. The rates for both men and women generally declined throughout the 1980's, although the gap between the rates for the sexes remained relatively constant.

Divorce rates were at their peak at an older age for men than for women (figure 2). The divorce rate for men jumped from 37.5 per 1,000 for ages 15-19 years to the peak of 55.9 for ages 20-24 years and then consistently declined for each successive age category. The rate for women started at its peak of 56.3 for ages 15-19 years and then declined with increasing age. The delayed peak for men can be attributed to the difference in ages between men and women at marriage. Generally,

men marry women younger than themselves, so at divorce, men often fall into an older 5-year age category than their spouses (4).

Except for men 65 years of age and over, all age-specific divorce rates for both men and women were higher in 1988 than in 1970 (table 5). There were particularly steep increases for teenagers, for whom the rates more than doubled. From 1980 to 1988, divorce rates have declined for age categories in which the majority of the divorces took place. For men, these age categories were 25-29, 30-34, and 35-39, which accounted for 58 percent of all divorces in 1988 (table 6). For women, the rates declined for age categories 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, and 35-39, which accounted for 73 percent of all divorces in 1988. The decline in the rates for the age categories where

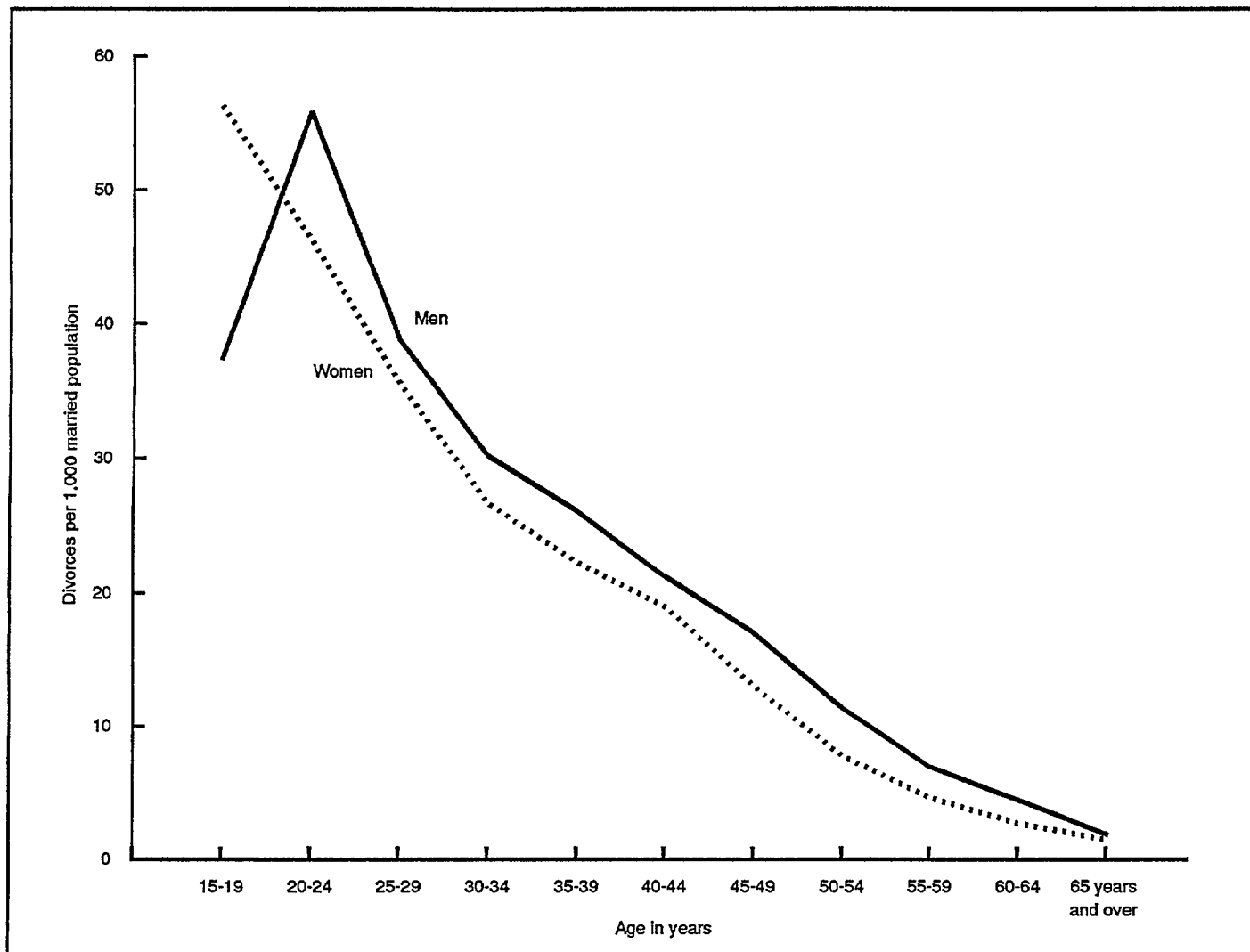


Figure 2. Age-specific divorce rates for men and women: Divorce-registration area, 1988

the bulk of the divorces occurred resulted in the overall decline in the rate for men and women of all ages from 1980 to 1988.

Two measures of the age at divorce, the mean and the median, had consistent patterns of variation according to the number of the marriage (table 7). The median age, or the age at which half of the cases fell above and half below, was 35.1 years of age for men and 32.6 years of age for women. The median age at divorce for first marriages was much lower than for remarriages. This can be attributed to the differences in the ages at marriage for first marriages and remarriages. Within remarriages, the median age at divorce for second marriages was about 4 years lower than for third or higher marriages. The mean (or average) age at divorce was higher than the median but had the same general differences by number of the marriage. The mean age at divorce for men and women, regardless of the number of the marriage, was 36.9 and 34.4 years of age, respectively. As with the medians, the mean ages at divorce for first marriages were much lower than for remarriages.

The trend in the median and mean ages at divorce from 1970–88 differed for first marriages and remarriages. After a brief decline in the early 1970's, the median and mean ages at divorce for first marriages increased to levels higher than those of 1970. For divorces of remarriages, the median and mean ages declined until the late 1970's and, despite recent increases, were still lower in 1988 than in 1970.

The largest proportion of divorces in 1988 was for men and women who had married at ages 20–24 years, 40 percent for men and 37 percent for women (table 8). For both sexes, a majority of the divorces were for those married at ages under 25 years.

The variation of the median age at marriage for divorcing men and women was similar to that of the mean age at marriage (table 9). For divorces of first marriages, the ages at marriage were approximately 10 years younger than for divorces of remarriages. These differences are fairly consistent with recent marriage data.

Duration of marriage

Most divorces occur relatively early in the marriage, as shown by the median and mean durations and the percent distribution of divorces by duration of the marriage. The median duration of all marriages that ended in divorce in 1988 was 7.1 years, the highest in 20 years (table 10). First marriages lasted approximately 2 years longer before divorce than second marriages, which in turn lasted approximately 2 years longer than third or higher marriages. The mean duration of marriages that ended in divorce in 1988 (9.7) was higher than the median and was the highest mean duration in the 1970–88 time period.

The proportion of divorces was highest for couples that had been married 3 years, and generally declined with increasing duration (figure 3). Over one-third of the divorces in 1988 were for couples married less than 5 years and almost two-thirds were for couples married less than 10 years (table 11). However, the proportion of divorces for couples married 20 years or more has been increasing in recent years and was about 12 percent in 1988.

Partly because of differences in State laws regarding divorce, the proportion of divorces for couples married less than a year varied widely by State. In Alabama, 8.8 percent of divorces were for couples married less than a year, whereas the comparable proportion for Maryland, Virginia, and Vermont was only 0.4 percent.

Petitioner

Wives petitioned for divorce more often than husbands, and were even more apt to do so when children were involved (table 12). Approximately 61 percent of the divorces in 1988 were petitioned by the wife, 32 percent by the husband, and 7 percent by the husband and wife jointly. The proportion of divorces petitioned by the wife was 65 percent when there were children involved and 56 percent when there were no children. From 1975–78, the proportion of divorces where the husband and wife petitioned jointly increased sharply, mostly due to revised divorce laws. In the last 10 years, the proportion of divorces filed jointly has fluctuated, but remained at levels higher than the mid-1970's. A

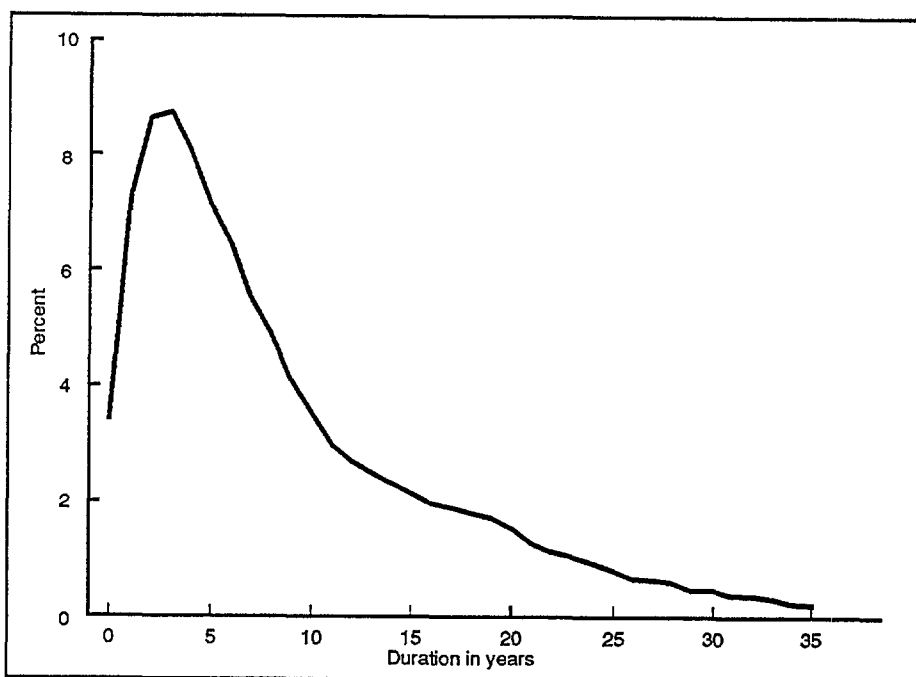


Figure 3. Percent distribution of divorces by duration of marriage: Divorce-registration area, 1988

slightly higher proportion of divorces were petitioned jointly when there were no children.

Race

For the 27 States and the District of Columbia that reported race on divorce records, approximately 87 percent of divorcing wives were white, 12 percent were black, and 2 percent were of other races (table 13). The distribution was basically the same for divorcing husbands. Of the 2 percent of divorces that were interracial, the largest group was white husbands and wives of races other than white or

black. The distributions by race were very similar to recent marriage data.

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List of detailed tables

1. Number and rate of divorces and annulments: United States, 1940-88	7	women at time of decree, 1988, and rates by age of men and women at time of decree, 1970, 1980, and 1982-88: Divorce-registration area ..	11	10. Median and mean duration of marriage at time of decree, by number of this marriage of husband and wife: Divorce-registration area, 1970-88	14
2. Number and rate of divorces and annulments: United States, each region, division, and State, 1978, 1987, and 1988	8	6. Percent distribution of divorces and annulments by age of husband and wife at time of decree: Divorce-registration area, 1978-88	11	11. Percent distribution of divorces and annulments by duration of marriage to decree and median and mean duration of marriage to decree: Divorce-registration area and each registration State, 1988 ...	15
3. Estimated number of children involved in divorces and annulments, average number of children per decree, and rate per 1,000 children under 18 years of age: United States, 1950-88	9	7. Median and mean age of husband and wife at time of decree, by number of this marriage: Divorce-registration area, 1970-88	12	12. Percent distribution of divorces and annulments by petitioner, according to presence of children at time of decree: Divorce-registration area, 1975-88	15
4. Number of divorces and annulments and percent distribution by number of children under 18 years of age involved: Divorce-registration area and each registration State, 1988	10	8. Percent distribution of divorces and annulments by age of husband and wife at time of this marriage: Divorce-registration area, 1978-88 ..	12	13. Divorces and annulments by race of wife and husband: 27 reporting States and the District of Columbia, 1988	16
5. Number of divorces and annulments by age of men and		9. Median and mean age of husband and wife at time of this marriage, by number of marriage: Divorce-registration area, 1970-88	13		

Table 1. Number and rate of divorces and annulments: United States, 1940-88

[Data refer only to events occurring within the United States. Alaska included beginning 1959 and Hawaii beginning 1960. Rates per 1,000 population enumerated as of April 1 for census years and estimated as of July 1 for all other years]

Year	Divorces and annulments	Rate per 1,000-	
		Total population	Married women 15 years and over
1988	1,167,000	4.7	20.7
1987	1,166,000	4.8	20.8
1986	1,178,000	4.9	21.2
1985	1,190,000	5.0	21.7
1984	1,169,000	5.0	21.5
1983	1,158,000	4.9	21.3
1982	1,170,000	5.0	21.7
1981	1,213,000	5.3	22.6
1980	1,189,000	5.2	22.6
1979	1,181,000	5.3	22.8
1978	1,130,000	5.1	21.9
1977	1,091,000	5.0	21.1
1976	1,083,000	5.0	21.1
1975	1,036,000	4.8	20.3
1974	977,000	4.6	19.3
1973	915,000	4.3	18.2
1972	845,000	4.0	17.0
1971	773,000	3.7	15.8
1970	708,000	3.5	14.9
1969	639,000	3.2	13.4
1968	584,000	2.9	12.5
1967	523,000	2.6	11.2
1966	499,000	2.5	10.9
1965	479,000	2.5	10.6
1964	450,000	2.4	10.0
1963	428,000	2.3	9.6
1962	413,000	2.2	9.4
1961	414,000	2.3	9.6
1960	393,000	2.2	9.2
1959	395,000	2.2	9.3
1958	368,000	2.1	8.9
1957	381,000	2.2	9.2
1956	382,000	2.3	9.4
1955	377,000	2.3	9.3
1954	379,000	2.4	9.5
1953	390,000	2.5	9.9
1952	392,000	2.5	10.1
1951	381,000	2.5	9.9
1950	385,000	2.6	10.3
1949	397,000	2.7	10.6
1948	408,000	2.8	11.2
1947	483,000	3.4	13.6
1946	610,000	4.3	17.9
1945	485,000	3.5	14.4
1944	400,000	2.9	12.0
1943	359,000	2.6	11.0
1942	321,000	2.4	10.1
1941	293,000	2.2	9.4
1940	264,000	2.0	8.8

Table 2. Number and rate of divorces and annulments: United States, each region, division, and State, 1978, 1987, and 1988

[Data are counts of decrees granted supplied by States except as noted. Figures for the divorce-registration States differ from those based on sample data shown in table 4. Rates per 1,000 population in each area estimated as of July 1]

Region, division, and State	Number			Rate		
	1988	1987	1978	1988	1987	1978
United States	11,167,000	11,166,000	1,130,000	14.7	14.8	5.1
Regions:						
Northeast	176,000	180,000	168,000	3.5	3.6	3.4
Midwest	1267,000	262,000	286,000	14.5	4.4	4.9
South	1456,000	1451,000	413,000	15.4	15.4	5.7
West	268,000	1273,000	263,000	5.3	15.5	6.4
Northeast:						
New England	47,008	46,008	45,368	3.6	3.6	3.7
Middle Atlantic	128,822	134,052	122,879	3.4	3.6	3.3
Midwest:						
East North Central	² 187,822	188,349	211,002	*	4.5	5.1
West North Central	74,750	73,846	75,078	4.2	4.2	4.4
South:						
South Atlantic	218,145	214,743	191,432	5.1	5.2	5.3
East South Central	² 87,164	86,793	² 80,543	² 5.7	5.7	² 5.6
West South Central ²	142,742	144,696	141,416	*	*	6.2
West:						
Mountain	² 87,394	² 85,619	78,229	² 6.6	*	7.3
Pacific	² 180,803	185,204	184,606	² 4.8	5.1	6.0
New England:						
Maine	6,044	5,886	6,192	5.0	5.0	5.6
New Hampshire	4,899	4,947	4,721	4.5	4.7	5.3
Vermont	2,585	2,426	2,055	4.6	4.4	4.1
Massachusetts	17,676	16,993	16,160	3.0	2.9	2.8
Rhode Island	3,795	3,684	3,475	3.8	3.7	3.6
Connecticut	12,009	12,072	12,765	3.7	3.8	4.1
Middle Atlantic:						
New York	62,924	67,993	58,043	3.5	3.8	3.3
New Jersey	26,897	27,222	26,575	3.5	3.5	3.6
Pennsylvania	39,001	38,837	38,261	3.2	3.3	3.2
East North Central:						
Ohio	49,244	49,294	59,200	4.5	4.6	5.5
Indiana	^{2,3} 35,437	35,289	³ 40,333	*	6.4	³ 7.4
Illinois	45,911	46,986	50,311	4.0	4.1	4.4
Michigan	² 40,103	39,857	45,029	² 4.3	4.3	4.9
Wisconsin	17,127	16,923	16,129	3.5	3.5	3.5
West North Central:						
Minnesota	15,245	14,931	14,393	3.5	3.5	3.6
Iowa	10,808	10,527	11,123	3.8	3.7	3.8
Missouri	24,948	24,984	26,308	4.9	4.9	5.4
North Dakota	2,363	2,256	2,071	3.5	3.4	3.2
South Dakota	2,649	2,696	2,449	3.7	3.8	3.6
Nebraska	6,262	6,234	6,066	3.9	3.9	3.9
Kansas	12,475	12,218	12,668	5.0	4.9	5.4
South Atlantic:						
Delaware	3,021	2,938	3,302	4.6	4.6	5.5
Maryland	16,807	15,522	16,497	3.6	3.4	3.9
District of Columbia	42,112	42,525	3,437	43.4	44.1	5.1
Virginia	26,013	25,608	22,654	4.3	4.3	4.3
West Virginia	9,352	9,141	9,698	5.0	4.8	5.1
North Carolina	32,396	31,577	26,558	5.0	4.9	4.6
South Carolina	14,662	13,835	11,901	4.2	4.0	3.9
Georgia	35,074	34,132	31,554	5.5	5.5	6.0
Florida	78,708	79,465	65,831	6.4	6.6	7.2
East South Central:						
Kentucky	19,953	19,795	² 13,759	5.4	5.3	² 3.8
Tennessee	31,287	30,324	28,412	6.4	6.2	6.4
Alabama	23,827	24,532	25,059	5.8	6.0	6.5
Mississippi	² 12,097	12,142	13,313	² 4.6	4.6	5.4
West South Central:						
Arkansas	16,747	16,088	^{2,5} 19,964	7.0	6.7	^{2,5} 8.9
Louisiana ²	8,538	9,591	13,229	*	*	3.2
Oklahoma	23,048	23,919	22,439	7.1	7.3	7.7
Texas	94,409	95,098	85,784	5.6	5.7	6.4
Mountain:						
Montana	4,070	4,116	4,884	5.1	5.1	6.2
Idaho	5,987	5,892	6,356	6.0	5.9	7.0
Wyoming	3,316	3,202	3,130	6.9	6.5	7.3
Colorado	18,651	18,590	18,590	5.7	5.6	6.7
New Mexico	² 8,477	² 7,138	9,608	² 5.6	*	7.7
Arizona	24,928	23,760	17,320	7.1	7.0	6.9
Utah	8,043	8,985	7,128	4.8	5.3	5.2
Nevada	13,922	13,936	11,213	13.2	13.8	15.6

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Number and rate of divorces and annulments: United States, each region, division, and State, 1978, 1987, and 1988—Con.

[Data are counts of decrees granted supplied by States except as noted. Figures for the divorce-registration States differ from those based on sample data shown in table 4. Rates per 1,000 population in each area estimated as of July 1]

Region, division, and State	Number			Rate		
	1988	1987	1978	1988	1987	1978
Pacific:						
Washington	26,369	26,967	26,485	5.7	5.9	6.8
Oregon	15,187	15,602	16,965	5.5	5.7	6.8
California	² 130,885	134,822	132,850	² 4.6	4.9	5.8
Alaska	3,342	3,394	3,469	6.4	6.5	8.7
Hawaii	5,020	4,419	4,837	4.6	4.1	5.2

¹Figures include estimates; see Technical notes.

²Data are incomplete; see Technical notes.

³Some counties reported divorce petitions filed rather than decrees granted.

⁴Figure used for the District of Columbia is the total number of valid divorce certificates provided to NCHS.

⁵Data include dismissals and legal separations; excluding these events, the number of divorces and annulments is 14,951 and the divorce rate is 6.7.

Table 3. Estimated number of children involved in divorces and annulments, average number of children per decree, and rate per 1,000 children under 18 years of age: United States, 1950–88

[Data refer to children under 18 years of age and only to events occurring within the United States. Beginning in 1960, estimated from frequencies based on sample data; for 1950–59, estimated from total counts. For estimating method, see Technical notes. Population enumerated as of April 1 for census years and estimated as of July 1 for all other years]

Year	Estimated number of children involved	Average number of children per decree	Rate per 1,000 children under 18 years of age
1988	1,044,000	0.89	16.4
1987	1,038,000	0.89	16.3
1986	1,064,000	0.90	16.8
1985	1,091,000	0.92	17.3
1984	1,081,000	0.92	17.2
1983	1,091,000	0.94	17.4
1982	1,108,000	0.94	17.6
1981	1,180,000	0.97	18.7
1980	1,174,000	0.98	17.3
1979	1,181,000	1.00	18.4
1978	1,147,000	1.01	17.7
1977	1,095,000	1.00	16.7
1976	1,117,000	1.03	16.9
1975	1,123,000	1.08	16.7
1974	1,099,000	1.12	16.2
1973	1,079,000	1.17	15.7
1972	1,021,000	1.20	14.7
1971	946,000	1.22	13.6
1970	870,000	1.22	12.5
1969	840,000	1.31	11.9
1968	784,000	1.34	11.1
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
1960	463,000	1.18	7.2
1959	468,000	1.18	7.5
1958	398,000	1.08	6.5
1957	379,000	0.99	6.4
1956	361,000	0.95	6.3
1955	347,000	0.92	6.3
1954	341,000	0.90	6.4
1953	330,000	0.85	6.4
1952	318,000	0.81	6.2
1951	304,000	0.80	6.1
1950	299,000	0.78	6.3

Table 4. Number of divorces and annulments and percent distribution by number of children under 18 years of age involved: Divorce-registration area and each registration State, 1988

[Based on sample data]

Area	All divorces and annulments Number	Number of children under 18 years of age involved						
		Total	None	1	2	3	4	5 or more
		Percent distribution						
Divorce-registration area	570,874	100.0	47.4	25.5	19.6	5.8	1.3	0.4
Alabama	23,970	100.0	49.6	26.0	17.2	5.9	1.1	0.2
Alaska	3,350	100.0	48.6	22.8	20.1	6.1	1.5	0.9
Connecticut	11,972	100.0	50.1	24.7	19.2	4.7	1.2	0.1
Delaware	3,025	100.0	46.1	27.7	19.4	5.1	1.4	0.2
District of Columbia	2,112	100.0	64.5	21.0	11.1	2.2	0.8	0.3
Georgia	35,100	100.0	49.6	26.4	18.3	4.6	0.8	0.3
Hawaii	5,017	100.0	47.8	24.2	18.9	6.5	2.0	0.6
Idaho ¹	6,000	100.0	47.6	21.9	19.8	7.3	2.1	1.2
Illinois	45,911	100.0	47.0	24.6	19.9	6.4	1.5	0.5
Iowa	10,816	100.0	40.4	25.2	23.5	8.8	1.7	0.3
Kansas	12,512	100.0	44.6	24.4	21.9	7.0	1.6	0.5
Kentucky	20,025	100.0	49.4	27.5	17.5	4.3	1.1	0.3
Maryland	17,055	100.0	52.2	26.4	16.9	3.5	0.7	0.4
Massachusetts	17,705	100.0	46.1	24.6	21.0	6.7	1.1	0.4
Michigan	40,240	100.0	44.6	23.9	22.0	7.5	1.5	0.4
Missouri	24,948	100.0	46.6	25.4	20.1	6.1	1.3	0.4
Montana	4,073	100.0	42.7	24.7	22.9	7.7	1.7	0.4
Nebraska	6,264	100.0	37.7	25.1	24.8	9.1	2.6	0.7
New Hampshire	4,899	100.0	42.0	25.3	24.1	6.5	1.4	0.2
New York	62,924	100.0	54.6	22.5	16.6	4.9	1.1	0.4
Ohio	49,260	100.0	45.4	27.5	20.0	5.5	1.3	0.2
Oregon	15,170	100.0	37.4	30.1	25.3	5.8	1.4	0.1
Pennsylvania	39,010	100.0	44.7	27.0	20.8	6.2	1.2	0.2
Rhode Island	3,795	100.0	43.9	26.1	21.8	6.5	1.4	0.4
South Carolina	14,672	100.0	46.4	28.0	19.1	5.2	1.0	0.2
South Dakota	2,651	100.0	40.4	24.3	22.9	8.9	2.2	0.8
Tennessee	31,360	100.0	51.1	26.2	17.6	3.9	1.1	0.1
Utah	8,002	100.0	39.3	22.9	20.4	9.9	4.7	2.8
Vermont	2,586	100.0	39.2	25.2	25.4	8.2	1.7	0.3
Virginia	26,013	100.0	51.1	26.9	17.1	4.0	0.7	0.1
Wisconsin	17,120	100.0	40.6	25.5	23.9	8.1	1.4	0.5
Wyoming	3,317	100.0	41.5	25.1	22.8	8.2	1.7	0.7

¹This State reports number of children affected by decree.

Table 5. Number of divorces and annulments by age of men and women at time of decree, 1988, and rates by age of men and women at time of decree, 1970, 1980, and 1982-88: Divorce-registration area

[Based on sample data. Prior to calculation of rates, figures for age not stated were distributed. Rates exclude data for Michigan, Ohio, and South Dakota. Rates per 1,000 married population in specified group enumerated as of April 1 for census years and estimated as of July 1 for all other years]

Age at time of decree	Number		Rate							
	1988	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1980	1970
Men										
All ages	570,874	18.9	18.8	19.0	19.4	19.2	19.3	19.4	19.8	14.2
15-19 years ¹	2,027	37.5	37.6	41.2	40.0	42.9	43.3	34.9	29.3	15.1
20-24 years	45,358	55.9	52.2	49.5	49.9	48.2	45.2	47.0	46.9	33.6
25-29 years	103,795	38.9	37.6	38.2	38.4	37.6	40.0	40.3	41.4	30.0
30-34 years	108,735	30.2	30.4	30.6	30.4	31.7	32.4	32.4	33.8	22.3
35-39 years	90,228	26.1	26.0	25.4	26.3	27.1	27.3	27.0	26.8	17.9
40-44 years	69,519	21.3	21.4	22.2	23.2	22.0	21.5	21.8	21.0	13.8
45-49 years	44,059	17.0	17.1	17.2	16.7	16.1	15.9	15.3	14.5	10.7
50-54 years	25,561	11.4	11.0	10.8	11.1	10.7	10.7	10.1	9.5	7.6
55-59 years	15,430	7.0	6.5	6.4	6.8	6.4	6.2	6.1	5.8	5.1
60-64 years	9,440	4.5	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.4
65 years and over	9,040	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.1	1.9	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9
Not stated	47,682	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Women										
All ages	570,874	18.5	18.6	18.8	19.2	18.8	18.9	19.0	19.5	14.0
15-19 years ¹	8,773	56.3	49.5	51.4	48.4	45.5	48.1	45.6	42.4	26.9
20-24 years	75,173	46.3	46.0	46.2	46.8	44.4	43.3	44.5	47.2	33.3
25-29 years	117,439	35.6	33.9	34.8	35.6	35.0	35.7	35.9	37.8	25.7
30-34 years	106,362	26.7	27.2	27.7	28.6	28.1	27.7	28.5	29.2	18.9
35-39 years	82,339	22.3	23.1	23.0	23.4	23.5	23.9	22.9	23.3	14.8
40-44 years	59,401	19.0	18.7	18.8	19.6	18.5	18.2	17.7	16.7	11.9
45-49 years	34,042	13.0	13.1	12.8	12.6	11.8	12.1	11.8	10.8	8.5
50-54 years	17,232	7.8	7.5	7.6	7.4	7.4	7.3	6.8	6.6	5.6
55-59 years	9,461	4.7	4.5	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.5
60-64 years	5,539	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.3
65 years and over	4,952	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.3
Not stated	50,161	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

¹Includes divorces of persons under 15 years of age.

Table 6. Percent distribution of divorces and annulments by age of husband and wife at time of decree: Divorce-registration area, 1978-88

[Based on sample data]

Age of husband and wife at time of decree	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978
Husband											
All ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	1.0
20-24 years	8.7	9.0	9.7	10.3	10.6	11.0	11.7	12.5	13.5	13.9	14.8
25-29 years	19.8	20.2	20.6	21.0	20.9	21.3	22.0	22.8	23.4	23.8	24.3
30-34 years	20.8	20.8	20.6	20.6	20.7	21.0	21.3	22.1	21.4	20.8	20.2
35-39 years	17.2	17.3	17.6	17.2	17.1	16.6	16.3	15.1	14.6	14.2	13.8
40-44 years	13.3	13.0	12.1	12.0	11.8	11.5	10.7	10.0	9.8	9.7	9.3
45-49 years	8.4	8.1	7.8	7.4	7.4	7.2	6.9	6.7	6.5	6.7	6.6
50-54 years	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.8	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.5
55-59 years	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.7
60-64 years	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.4
65 years and over	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
Wife											
All ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years	1.7	1.7	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.9	3.4	3.6	4.0
20-24 years	14.4	15.0	16.3	16.8	17.3	17.4	18.6	19.5	20.8	21.2	22.7
25-29 years	22.6	22.6	22.8	23.1	23.1	23.6	24.1	24.8	24.6	24.8	24.6
30-34 years	20.4	20.3	19.8	19.9	19.7	19.5	19.9	20.2	19.4	18.7	17.9
35-39 years	15.8	16.1	16.2	15.5	15.4	15.0	14.2	13.1	12.8	12.3	11.8
40-44 years	11.4	11.0	10.1	10.2	9.8	9.5	8.8	8.2	7.7	7.9	7.5
45-49 years	6.5	6.2	5.8	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.1	4.9	4.8	5.0	5.0
50-54 years	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.3
55-59 years	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.7
60-64 years	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
65 years and over	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7

Table 7. Median and mean age of husband and wife at time of decree, by number of this marriage: Divorce-registration area, 1970-88

[Based on sample data]

Year	Number of marriage of husband						Number of marriage of wife					
	Total	First marriage	Remarriage			Number of marriage not stated	Total	First marriage	Remarriage			Number of marriage not stated
			Total ¹	Second marriage	Third marriage or more				Total ¹	Second marriage	Third marriage or more	
Median age in years												
1988	35.1	32.7	40.8	39.7	44.1	35.3	32.6	30.6	37.5	36.6	40.1	32.7
1987	34.9	32.6	40.4	39.5	43.7	35.1	32.5	30.5	37.3	36.4	39.8	32.6
1986	34.6	32.4	40.0	39.2	43.5	34.9	32.1	30.2	37.0	36.1	39.4	32.2
1985	34.4	32.2	39.8	38.8	43.0	34.5	31.9	30.0	36.8	36.0	39.1	31.8
1984	34.3	32.2	39.6	38.5	42.7	34.4	31.7	30.0	36.4	35.7	38.5	31.5
1983	34.0	32.1	39.3	38.3	42.6	34.1	31.5	29.8	36.3	35.5	38.9	31.3
1982	33.6	31.7	39.1	38.0	42.4	33.7	31.1	29.5	35.8	35.0	38.8	30.9
1981	33.1	31.4	38.5	37.4	42.4	33.4	30.6	29.1	35.3	34.5	38.5	30.6
1980	32.7	31.0	38.3	37.3	41.9	32.8	30.3	28.8	35.2	34.3	38.3	30.1
1979	32.5	30.8	38.4	37.3	42.4	32.5	30.1	28.6	35.3	34.4	38.5	29.9
1978	32.0	30.5	38.2	36.9	41.1	32.5	29.7	28.3	35.1	33.9	38.7	29.7
1977	32.4	30.5	39.3	38.0	43.8	32.5	29.9	28.2	35.7	34.6	40.1	29.9
1976	32.3	30.2	39.6	38.2	44.3	31.9	29.7	28.1	36.2	34.9	40.8	29.2
1975	32.2	30.1	39.9	38.3	44.9	32.8	29.5	27.9	36.4	35.1	40.8	29.7
1974	32.2	30.2	40.3	38.7	45.0	32.0	29.5	27.7	36.7	35.4	41.3	29.2
1973	32.4	30.4	40.8	39.3	45.8	31.7	29.7	27.8	37.3	36.0	42.0	28.7
1972	32.6	30.4	40.9	39.4	45.6	32.4	29.8	27.9	37.7	36.2	42.6	29.6
1971	32.9	30.5	41.5	40.0	46.3	32.6	29.8	27.7	37.9	36.5	42.2	29.6
1970	32.9	30.5	41.5	39.9	46.5	33.1	29.8	27.7	38.2	36.5	42.8	29.3
Mean age in years												
1988	36.9	34.7	42.5	41.5	45.8	37.0	34.4	32.5	39.0	38.2	41.5	34.3
1987	36.8	34.6	42.3	41.3	45.5	37.2	34.2	32.4	38.8	38.0	41.4	34.4
1986	36.5	34.4	42.1	41.0	45.2	36.6	33.9	32.2	38.6	37.8	41.1	33.8
1985	36.4	34.3	41.9	41.0	44.9	36.4	33.7	32.0	38.5	37.7	41.2	33.6
1984	36.2	34.2	41.6	40.7	44.6	36.4	33.6	31.9	38.2	37.5	40.5	33.6
1983	36.1	34.1	41.4	40.5	44.6	36.1	33.5	31.8	38.1	37.2	41.0	33.1
1982	35.7	33.7	41.3	40.3	44.6	35.8	33.1	31.4	37.9	37.0	40.7	32.9
1981	35.4	33.4	40.9	39.8	44.5	35.8	32.7	31.1	37.6	36.7	40.5	32.7
1980	35.1	33.2	40.6	39.6	43.7	35.3	32.4	30.8	37.4	36.5	40.4	32.3
1979	35.0	33.1	40.7	39.7	44.2	35.4	32.3	30.7	37.4	36.6	40.5	32.5
1978	34.8	32.9	40.5	39.5	43.8	35.0	32.1	30.5	37.2	36.2	40.5	32.1
1977	35.1	33.0	41.4	40.4	45.3	35.1	32.4	30.5	38.1	37.2	41.6	32.2
1976	35.1	32.9	41.7	40.4	45.6	34.6	32.3	30.4	38.3	37.1	42.2	31.8
1975	35.0	32.8	41.7	40.4	45.8	35.6	32.3	30.3	38.5	37.4	42.1	32.5
1974	35.1	32.9	42.1	40.9	46.1	35.1	32.3	30.3	38.8	37.6	42.6	32.1
1973	35.3	33.1	42.4	41.1	46.4	34.9	32.5	30.4	39.1	38.0	42.7	31.6
1972	35.4	33.2	42.4	41.1	46.4	35.3	32.6	30.5	39.3	38.0	43.4	32.4
1971	35.6	33.2	42.7	41.4	46.8	35.2	32.7	30.4	39.4	38.2	43.0	32.3
1970	35.6	33.2	42.8	41.4	47.1	35.4	32.7	30.4	39.3	38.1	43.4	32.2

¹Includes remarried, number not stated.

Table 8. Percent distribution of divorces and annulments by age of husband and wife at time of this marriage: Divorce-registration area, 1978-88

[Based on sample data]

Age of husband and wife at time of this marriage	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978
Husband											
All ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years	12.4	12.8	13.7	14.2	14.9	15.4	16.1	17.0	18.0	18.4	19.3
20-24 years	40.2	40.5	40.8	41.4	41.9	42.5	43.0	44.0	44.0	44.3	44.7
25-29 years	21.8	21.3	21.0	20.5	20.1	19.7	19.3	18.7	18.4	18.0	17.5
30-34 years	10.8	10.6	10.4	10.3	9.7	9.3	9.0	8.6	8.1	7.9	7.4
35-39 years	6.2	6.3	5.8	5.5	5.4	5.1	5.0	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.1
40-44 years	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.9
45 years and over	5.0	5.0	4.9	4.8	4.9	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.2	4.3	4.1
Wife											
All ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years	29.6	30.4	31.7	32.6	34.0	35.1	36.6	38.3	39.9	41.0	42.8
20-24 years	36.5	36.5	36.4	36.7	36.4	36.3	36.2	35.9	35.5	35.1	34.2
25-29 years	15.9	15.4	14.8	14.4	13.8	13.3	12.7	12.1	11.4	11.0	10.5
30-34 years	8.1	7.9	7.6	7.2	6.8	6.7	6.2	5.8	5.6	5.4	5.0
35-39 years	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.0	4.0	3.7	3.6	3.2	3.1	3.1	2.8
40-44 years	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9
45 years and over	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.7

Table 9. Median and mean age of husband and wife at time of this marriage, by number of marriage: Divorce-registration area, 1970–88

[Based on sample data]

Year	Number of marriage of husband					Number of marriage of wife						
	Total	Remarriage			Number of marriage not stated	Total	Remarriage			Number of marriage not stated		
		First marriage	Total ¹	Second marriage			Third marriage or more	First marriage	Total ¹		Second marriage	Third marriage or more
Median age in years												
1988	24.6	22.8	33.4	31.8	38.5	24.7	22.3	20.8	30.1	28.7	34.9	22.3
1987	24.5	22.8	33.4	31.8	38.2	24.6	22.2	20.7	30.2	28.7	34.9	22.2
1986	24.3	22.7	33.2	31.6	38.0	24.6	22.0	20.6	30.0	28.6	34.7	22.1
1985	24.1	22.6	32.9	31.4	37.9	24.2	21.8	20.5	29.8	28.4	34.6	21.8
1984	24.0	22.5	32.7	31.3	37.5	24.2	21.7	20.4	29.6	28.3	34.0	21.6
1983	23.8	22.4	32.5	31.1	37.7	24.3	21.5	20.3	29.5	28.1	34.1	21.5
1982	23.7	22.3	32.4	31.0	37.6	23.9	21.3	20.2	29.2	28.0	34.3	21.4
1981	23.4	22.1	32.0	30.6	37.6	23.7	21.1	20.0	28.9	27.7	33.9	21.2
1980	23.3	22.0	31.8	30.4	37.1	23.7	20.9	19.9	28.8	27.4	33.9	21.0
1979	23.2	22.0	31.7	30.4	37.2	23.5	20.9	19.8	28.8	27.4	34.0	20.9
1978	23.0	21.9	31.5	30.1	37.1	23.2	20.7	19.7	28.5	27.1	34.1	20.6
1977	23.1	21.9	32.1	30.6	38.1	23.1	20.7	19.7	28.9	27.5	34.7	20.6
1976	23.1	21.9	32.5	30.7	38.6	22.8	20.7	19.7	29.3	27.6	35.2	20.4
1975	23.0	21.9	32.1	30.5	38.8	23.1	20.6	19.7	29.1	27.4	35.3	20.4
1974	23.0	21.8	32.6	30.8	39.1	23.1	20.6	19.6	29.3	27.7	35.5	20.4
1973	22.9	21.8	32.8	31.0	39.3	23.0	20.5	19.6	29.4	27.7	36.3	20.4
1972	23.0	21.8	32.7	30.8	39.0	22.9	20.5	19.5	29.5	27.7	36.8	20.4
1971	23.0	21.8	33.0	31.1	39.8	22.8	20.5	19.5	29.6	27.9	36.1	20.1
1970	23.0	21.8	33.0	31.1	39.8	22.7	20.4	19.4	29.6	27.7	36.8	19.9
Mean age in years												
1988	27.3	23.9	35.5	34.0	40.2	27.5	24.7	21.8	32.1	30.7	36.4	24.7
1987	27.2	23.9	35.5	34.0	40.2	27.6	24.7	21.7	32.1	30.7	36.5	24.8
1986	27.0	23.8	35.4	33.9	40.0	27.4	24.4	21.6	32.0	30.6	36.2	24.6
1985	26.9	23.7	35.3	33.8	39.8	27.3	24.3	21.5	31.9	30.6	36.4	24.3
1984	26.7	23.5	35.1	33.7	39.6	27.4	24.1	21.3	31.8	30.5	35.7	24.6
1983	26.6	23.4	34.9	33.5	39.5	27.2	24.0	21.2	31.7	30.4	36.2	24.2
1982	26.4	23.3	35.0	33.5	39.8	27.0	23.8	21.0	31.6	30.3	36.1	24.1
1981	26.1	23.1	34.6	33.2	39.6	26.9	23.5	20.9	31.4	30.1	35.9	23.9
1980	25.9	23.0	34.4	33.0	39.0	26.7	23.3	20.7	31.2	29.8	35.9	23.8
1979	25.8	22.9	34.5	33.1	39.2	26.6	23.2	20.6	31.2	29.9	35.9	23.6
1978	25.7	22.9	34.2	32.8	39.0	26.1	23.1	20.5	31.0	29.6	36.0	23.1
1977	25.9	22.9	34.9	33.5	40.0	26.0	23.3	20.5	31.6	30.2	36.6	22.9
1976	25.9	22.9	35.2	33.5	40.4	25.6	23.3	20.5	31.9	30.2	37.1	22.6
1975	25.8	22.9	35.0	33.4	40.5	26.2	23.2	20.4	31.8	30.3	37.0	23.0
1974	25.9	22.8	35.4	33.7	40.9	25.9	23.2	20.4	32.1	30.4	37.5	22.8
1973	25.9	22.8	35.5	33.8	40.9	25.9	23.2	20.3	32.1	30.5	37.6	22.7
1972	25.9	22.9	35.3	33.7	40.7	25.8	23.2	20.3	32.2	30.5	37.9	22.8
1971	26.0	22.9	35.6	33.8	41.3	25.3	23.2	20.2	32.3	30.6	37.7	22.3
1970	26.1	23.0	35.7	34.0	41.2	25.5	23.2	20.2	32.3	30.5	38.0	22.2

¹Includes remarried, number not stated.

Table 10. Median and mean duration of marriage at time of decree, by number of this marriage of husband and wife: Divorce-registration area, 1970–88

[Based on sample data]

Year	Number of marriage of husband						Number of marriage of wife				
	Total	Remarriage			Number of marriage not stated	First marriage	Remarriage				
		First marriage	Total ¹	Second marriage			Third marriage or more	Total ¹	Second marriage	Third marriage or more	Number of marriage not stated
Median duration in years											
1988	7.1	8.0	5.5	5.9	4.3	7.0	8.1	5.3	5.9	3.9	7.1
1987	7.0	7.9	5.3	5.7	4.0	7.0	8.0	5.1	5.6	3.7	7.0
1986	6.9	7.9	5.1	5.5	3.9	6.9	7.9	5.0	5.5	3.6	6.9
1985	6.8	8.0	4.9	5.4	3.7	6.5	8.0	4.8	5.4	3.5	6.5
1984	6.9	8.3	4.8	5.2	3.6	6.5	8.2	4.7	5.2	3.4	6.5
1983	7.0	8.4	4.8	5.2	3.6	6.6	8.4	4.7	5.2	3.3	6.6
1982	7.0	8.2	4.6	5.0	3.4	6.8	8.2	4.5	5.0	3.2	6.9
1981	7.0	8.1	4.5	4.9	3.3	6.8	8.0	4.4	4.9	3.1	6.8
1980	6.8	7.8	4.4	4.8	3.2	6.6	7.7	4.4	4.8	3.2	6.6
1979	6.8	7.8	4.4	4.8	3.3	6.6	7.7	4.4	4.8	3.0	6.7
1978	6.6	7.5	4.3	4.6	3.2	6.3	7.5	4.3	4.7	3.0	6.4
1977	6.6	7.5	4.6	4.8	3.5	6.4	7.4	4.6	4.9	3.4	6.4
1976	6.5	7.3	4.5	4.8	3.5	6.1	7.3	4.5	4.9	3.4	6.2
1975	6.5	7.3	4.5	4.8	3.6	6.4	7.2	4.5	5.0	3.2	6.4
1974	6.5	7.3	4.6	5.0	3.6	6.4	7.2	4.6	5.0	3.5	6.5
1973	6.6	7.5	4.6	4.9	3.7	6.3	7.5	4.8	5.2	3.6	6.3
1972	6.7	7.5	4.7	5.0	3.8	6.2	7.4	4.8	5.2	3.7	6.3
1971	6.7	7.6	4.9	5.2	3.8	6.5	7.5	4.9	5.4	3.7	6.5
1970	6.7	7.6	4.8	5.1	3.9	6.5	7.6	4.9	5.3	3.8	6.5
Mean duration in years											
1988	9.7	10.8	7.0	7.5	5.6	9.6	10.9	6.9	7.5	5.2	9.7
1987	9.6	10.8	6.9	7.4	5.4	9.5	10.8	6.8	7.3	5.0	9.6
1986	9.6	10.7	6.7	7.2	5.3	9.4	10.7	6.7	7.2	5.0	9.5
1985	9.5	10.7	6.7	7.2	5.1	9.2	10.7	6.6	7.1	4.9	9.2
1984	9.5	10.8	6.5	7.0	5.1	9.1	10.8	6.5	7.0	4.8	9.2
1983	9.6	10.8	6.6	7.0	5.1	9.1	10.8	6.5	7.0	4.9	9.2
1982	9.4	10.5	6.4	6.9	4.8	9.3	10.5	6.3	6.8	4.7	9.3
1981	9.3	10.4	6.3	6.7	4.9	9.1	10.4	6.3	6.7	4.7	9.2
1980	9.2	10.2	6.2	6.6	4.8	9.2	10.2	6.3	6.8	4.7	9.2
1979	9.3	10.3	6.3	6.7	5.0	9.1	10.2	6.3	6.8	4.7	9.2
1978	9.1	10.1	6.3	6.7	4.9	8.9	10.1	6.3	6.7	4.6	9.0
1977	9.2	10.2	6.5	6.9	5.3	9.0	10.1	6.6	7.0	5.1	9.1
1976	9.2	10.1	6.5	7.0	5.2	8.9	10.1	6.6	7.0	5.2	9.0
1975	9.2	10.0	6.7	7.1	5.4	9.1	10.0	6.8	7.3	5.1	9.1
1974	9.3	10.1	6.8	7.2	5.2	9.3	10.1	6.8	7.2	5.2	9.4
1973	9.4	10.3	6.9	7.3	5.6	9.2	10.3	7.0	7.6	5.2	9.3
1972	9.5	10.3	7.1	7.5	5.8	9.2	10.3	7.1	7.6	5.6	9.3
1971	9.5	10.4	7.1	7.6	5.6	9.4	10.4	7.2	7.7	5.4	9.4
1970	9.5	10.4	7.1	7.4	5.9	9.4	10.4	7.1	7.7	5.5	9.5

¹Includes remarried, number not stated.

Table 11. Percent distribution of divorces and annulments by duration of marriage to decree and median and mean duration of marriage to decree: Divorce-registration area and each registration State, 1988

[Based on sample data]

Area	Total	Less than 1 year	1-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	20-24 years	25 years and over	Median	Mean
Divorce-registration area	100.0	3.4	32.7	28.0	14.0	9.5	6.0	6.4	7.1	9.7
Alabama	100.0	8.8	39.7	24.0	10.9	7.7	4.4	4.6	5.2	8.0
Alaska	100.0	5.7	37.8	29.5	12.7	6.9	4.0	3.5	5.8	7.9
Connecticut	100.0	1.4	31.2	27.6	13.5	10.5	7.7	8.2	7.8	10.8
Delaware	100.0	1.9	31.8	28.6	14.3	10.6	6.7	6.2	7.5	10.1
District of Columbia	100.0	0.5	32.8	28.6	14.1	8.6	7.3	8.1	7.4	10.6
Georgia	100.0	6.0	38.6	27.2	13.0	7.2	3.7	4.3	5.8	8.1
Hawaii	100.0	2.7	35.4	29.6	13.6	8.3	5.2	5.1	6.6	9.1
Idaho	100.0	5.4	36.2	27.6	13.4	8.4	4.4	4.5	6.3	8.6
Illinois	100.0	3.4	33.1	27.4	14.3	9.7	5.9	6.1	7.1	9.7
Iowa	100.0	2.9	31.9	28.6	14.7	9.7	6.3	5.9	7.2	9.8
Kansas	100.0	5.7	38.0	27.0	12.1	8.2	4.3	4.8	5.9	8.4
Kentucky	100.0	6.8	37.7	25.8	12.4	7.7	4.3	5.3	5.8	8.5
Maryland	100.0	0.4	22.5	34.1	16.9	10.6	7.2	8.4	8.7	11.4
Massachusetts	100.0	0.7	26.1	28.4	15.7	11.7	8.5	9.0	8.8	11.6
Michigan	100.0	3.1	31.5	28.2	14.7	9.9	6.5	6.1	7.4	9.9
Missouri	100.0	4.2	35.6	28.3	13.2	8.7	5.0	5.0	6.5	8.9
Montana	100.0	4.5	33.8	28.7	13.2	9.5	5.3	4.9	6.7	9.1
Nebraska	100.0	2.6	32.6	28.8	13.8	10.4	5.9	6.0	7.1	9.8
New Hampshire	100.0	1.3	32.5	29.8	14.2	10.5	6.2	5.5	7.3	9.8
New York	100.0	1.6	31.9	27.0	14.3	10.5	6.9	7.8	7.6	10.5
Ohio	100.0	4.5	33.3	28.0	13.2	8.8	5.6	6.6	6.8	9.6
Oregon	100.0	3.5	33.4	29.7	14.2	9.7	5.4	4.1	6.8	9.1
Pennsylvania	100.0	1.1	23.9	29.3	16.3	12.1	7.5	9.7	9.1	11.8
Rhode Island	100.0	0.7	28.5	30.2	14.2	12.2	6.6	7.6	8.0	10.8
South Carolina	100.0	1.7	31.4	29.8	14.8	10.3	6.0	6.0	7.5	10.0
South Dakota	100.0	4.5	34.2	27.0	14.1	9.1	4.9	6.1	6.7	9.3
Tennessee	100.0	6.5	39.0	25.8	11.3	7.3	5.3	4.8	5.6	8.3
Utah	100.0	6.2	37.9	25.8	13.3	7.6	4.5	4.8	6.0	8.4
Vermont	100.0	0.4	28.8	30.4	15.8	11.8	6.3	6.4	8.1	10.6
Virginia	100.0	0.4	29.3	30.4	15.4	10.5	7.0	6.9	8.0	10.6
Wisconsin	100.0	1.1	29.7	30.6	14.6	10.1	8.0	5.9	7.8	10.4
Wyoming	100.0	5.8	35.6	27.0	13.8	7.9	5.4	4.5	6.3	8.7

¹Medians and means computed on data by single years of duration.

Table 12. Percent distribution of divorces and annulments by petitioner, according to presence of children at time of decree: Divorce-registration area, 1975-88

[Based on sample data]

Year	All divorces and annulments ¹				Children present				Children not present			
	Total ²	Husband	Wife	Husband and wife	Total ²	Husband	Wife	Husband and wife	Total ²	Husband	Wife	Husband and wife
1988	100.0	32.5	60.7	6.8	100.0	28.8	64.9	6.3	100.0	36.6	56.1	7.3
1987	100.0	32.7	60.7	6.5	100.0	28.8	65.1	6.1	100.0	36.9	56.1	7.0
1986	100.0	32.6	61.5	5.9	100.0	28.4	65.7	5.9	100.0	37.3	56.9	5.8
1985	100.0	32.4	61.8	5.7	100.0	28.6	65.9	5.5	100.0	36.8	57.3	5.9
1984	100.0	32.3	61.7	6.0	100.0	28.5	65.7	5.7	100.0	36.6	57.2	6.3
1983	100.0	31.8	62.1	6.1	100.0	28.0	65.9	6.0	100.0	36.0	57.8	6.2
1982	100.0	31.3	62.5	6.2	100.0	27.2	66.8	6.0	100.0	35.7	57.6	6.7
1981	100.0	30.5	63.1	6.3	100.0	27.0	67.2	5.8	100.0	34.5	58.3	7.1
1980	100.0	30.2	63.4	6.3	100.0	26.9	67.0	6.1	100.0	34.2	59.0	6.7
1979	100.0	29.8	63.7	6.5	100.0	26.2	67.6	6.1	100.0	34.2	58.7	7.1
1978	100.0	29.6	63.5	6.8	100.0	26.4	67.4	6.2	100.0	33.6	58.7	7.7
1977	100.0	30.2	64.8	5.0	100.0	26.4	68.8	4.8	100.0	34.6	60.1	5.3
1976	100.0	29.4	65.4	4.6	100.0	25.7	69.6	4.4	100.0	33.9	60.5	5.1
1975	100.0	29.4	67.2	2.8	100.0	25.6	71.4	2.6	100.0	34.2	62.0	3.2

¹Includes cases where presence of children is not stated.
²Includes cases in the category "other person" as petitioner.

Table 13. Divorces and annulments by race of wife and husband: 27 reporting States and the District of Columbia, 1988

[Based on sample data]

<i>Race of husband</i>	<i>Race of wife</i>				
	<i>All races</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Other races</i>	<i>Not stated</i>
All races	458,770	377,423	50,607	8,184	22,556
White	376,428	371,384	967	3,010	1,067
Black	52,420	2,693	49,143	390	194
Other races	7,571	2,360	360	4,745	106
Not stated	22,351	986	137	39	21,189

Technical notes

Definitions

Divorces include absolute divorces, annulments, and dissolutions of marriage. Data are tabulated by State where the decree was granted, not by State of residence. Date of divorce is defined as the date the decree was granted.

Sources of data

Nationwide counts

Data in tables 1 and 2 come from counts of the number of divorce decrees reported annually by States and counties to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). For the District of Columbia, the count of divorces was taken from a 100-percent sample of divorce records. When divorces are not reported for some counties, the following criteria are applied for the data shown in table 2:

1. The State totals are published as reported even when there are non-reporting counties.
2. If the population of nonreporting areas in the latest available census is less than 1 percent of the State population, the State total does not have a footnote to indicate that the data are incomplete.
3. If the population of nonreporting areas is 1.0–9.9 percent of the State population, data for the State and division have the footnote “Data are incomplete.” Rates are computed and no estimates are made for the missing data.
4. If the population of nonreporting areas is 10 percent or more of the State population, the State and division totals have the footnote “Data are incomplete,” and the divorce rate is not computed. Estimates are made for inclusion in the totals for the region and for the United States, and rates are computed. Figures for the region and United States have the footnote “Figures include estimates.”

Sample data

Information about the characteristics of divorcing couples is available

only from States that participate in the divorce-registration area (DRA). Data in tables 3–13 come from a probability sample of divorce records from the States participating in the DRA. The DRA has expanded from 28 States in 1970 to 31 States and the District of Columbia in 1988. About 49 percent of the divorces in the United States in 1988 took place in the DRA.

Divorce sample

The probability sample of divorce records for 1988 was selected by using five different sampling rates. For the District of Columbia and for each State in the DRA, either 5, 10, 20, 50, or 100 percent of the divorce records were included. Sampling rates were selected

so that the expected sample would contain at least 2,500 records for each State. This criterion required 100-percent sampling for Alaska, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Montana, New Hampshire, South Dakota, and Wyoming. One hundred percent of the divorce records also were included for eight additional States—Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia. These eight States supplied State-coded data tapes of 100 percent of their divorce records through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program.

Table I shows sampling errors for estimates that constitute 1, 10, 25, 50, 75, 90, and 99 percent of the annual divorce totals. These sampling errors are shown for the DRA for 1978, 1987,

Table I. Sampling error of estimated percent: Divorce-registration area, 1978, 1987, and 1988, and each registration State, 1988

[Figures for Alaska, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont, Virginia, and Wyoming have no sampling errors in 1988 because all records were tabulated]

Area and year	Sampling error of estimated percent			
	1 or 99	10 or 90	25 or 75	50
Divorce-registration area				
1988	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
1987	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
1978	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2
Registration States, 1988				
Alabama	0.2	0.6	0.8	1.0
Alaska	...	...	...	...
Connecticut	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.5
Delaware	...	...	...	...
District of Columbia	...	...	...	...
Georgia	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.8
Hawaii	...	...	...	...
Idaho	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.6
Illinois	...	...	...	...
Iowa	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.5
Kansas	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.4
Kentucky	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.7
Maryland	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.8
Massachusetts	0.1	0.5	0.7	0.8
Michigan	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.7
Missouri	...	...	...	...
Montana	...	...	...	...
Nebraska	...	...	...	...
New Hampshire	...	...	...	...
New York	...	...	...	...
Ohio	0.2	0.6	0.9	1.0
Oregon	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.8
Pennsylvania	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.8
Rhode Island	...	...	...	...
South Carolina	...	...	...	...
South Dakota	...	...	...	...
Tennessee	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.8
Utah	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.6
Vermont	...	...	...	...
Virginia	...	...	...	...
Wisconsin	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.8
Wyoming	...	...	...	...

and 1988 and for the District of Columbia and each DRA State for 1988.

Estimates of children involved in divorce

To make the national estimates of children involved in divorce, shown in table 3, it was assumed that the average number of children per decree for the United States was the same as the average in the DRA. This average was multiplied by the national divorce total to estimate the national number of children involved in divorce. For 1950–59, the average number of children per

decree was calculated using data from all reporting States; for 1960, from a nationwide sample; for 1961–69, from 16 States; and thereafter, from all DRA States.

Computation of rates, percent distributions, medians, and means

Divorce rates for 1988 are based on populations estimated as of July 1, 1988 (3,5). Percent distributions, means, and medians exclude cases for which the pertinent information (number of children, duration of marriage,

or age) is not stated. Mean and median ages at marriage and at decree, and mean and median duration of marriage were computed using ungrouped data.

The mean and the median are both measures of central tendency. The mean is computed by summing the values of the item under consideration and dividing this sum by the number of observations included. The median is the middle value of a set of observations that have been arranged in order of magnitude. There are an equal number of observations above and below the median.

Symbols

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

This report represents summary tabulations from the final divorce 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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