

First Marriages

United States, 1968-1976

An analysis of national trends and patterns in first marriage for the period 1968-76, including national estimates, variation by State, and first-marriage rates by age and sex. Discusses selected characteristics of persons marrying for the first time, specifically, age, race, residency, nativity, education, and previous marital status of spouse.

DHEW Publication No. (PHS) 79-1913

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
Public Health Service
Office of Health Research, Statistics, and Technology
National Center for Health Statistics
Hyattsville, Md. September 1979

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS

DOROTHY P. RICE, *Director*

ROBERT A. ISRAEL, *Deputy Director*

JACOB J. FELDMAN, Ph.D., *Associate Director for Analysis*

GAIL F. FISHER, Ph.D., *Associate Director for the Cooperative Health Statistics System*

ROBERT A. ISRAEL, *Acting Associate Director for Data Systems*

JAMES T. BAIRD, JR., Ph.D., *Associate Director for International Statistics*

ROBERT C. HUBER, *Associate Director for Management*

MONROE G. SIRKEN, Ph.D., *Associate Director for Mathematical Statistics*

PETER L. HURLEY, *Associate Director for Operations*

JAMES M. ROBEY, Ph.D., *Associate Director for Program Development*

PAUL E. LEAVERTON, Ph.D., *Associate Director for Research*

ALICE HAYWOOD, *Information Officer*

DIVISION OF VITAL STATISTICS

JOHN E. PATTERSON, *Director*

ALICE M. HETZEL, *Deputy Director*

ALICE M. HETZEL, *Chief, Marriage and Divorce Statistics Branch*

RITA U. HOFFMAN, *Chief, Programming Branch*

MABEL G. SMITH, *Chief, Statistical Resources Branch*

Vital and Health Statistics-Series 21-No. 35

DHEW Publication No. (PHS) 79-1913

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 79-607106

CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Summary	1
Composition of Marriages by Marriage Order	2
National Trend	2
Geographic Variation	3
Characteristics of First Marriages	4
Month of Marriage	4
Type of Ceremony	5
Social and Demographic Characteristics	5
Age at First Marriage	5
Race	12
Nativity and Resident Status	14
Education	17
List of Detailed Tables	28
Appendix: Technical Notes	37

LIST OF TEXT FIGURES

1. Marriages by marriage order: Marriage-registration area, 1976	2
2. First marriage rates by sex: Each region, 1970	3
3. Seasonal variation in first marriages and remarriages of brides: Marriage-registration area, 1976....	5
4. First marriages by age at marriage for brides and grooms: Marriage-registration area, 1976	6
5. First marriage rates by sex: Marriage-registration area, 1968-76	8
6. First marriage rates by single years of age 18-29, by sex: Marriage-registration area, 1976	9
7. First marriage rates by single years of age 18-29, by sex: Marriage-registration area, 1968, 1972, and 1976	10
8. Percent of grooms who married younger brides, brides of the same age, and older brides, when both bride and groom were marrying for the first time, by age of groom: Marriage-registration area, 1976	12
9. Average number of years groom was older than bride at first marriage of both, by age of groom: Marriage-registration area, 1976	12
10. Percent of brides and grooms under 25 years of age at first marriage, by race: Reporting States, 1970-75	15
11. Percent of previously single (never-married) and previously divorced brides and grooms who were born in the State where married, by age at marriage: Marriage-registration area, 1975	19

12. Percent distribution of first marriages by years of school completed for brides and grooms: 11 selected States, 1975	22
13. Median years of school completed by previously single (never-married) and previously divorced brides and grooms, by age at marriage: 11 selected States, 1975	24
14. Percent of previously single (never-married) and previously divorced brides and grooms who completed 16 years or more of school (equivalent to college graduation), by age at marriage: 11 selected States, 1975	25
15. Median age of bride and groom at first marriage, by years of school completed: 11 selected States, 1975	27

LIST OF TEXT TABLES

A. Percent distribution of marriages by marriage order of bride and groom: Marriage-registration area, 1969-76	2
B. Estimated number and rate of first marriages by sex: United States, 1968-76	3
C. Percent distribution of first marriages by age of bride and groom: Marriage-registration area, 1968 and 1976	5
D. Percent of population single (never-married), by sex and age, with change: United States, 1970 and 1976	7
E. First marriage rates by single years of age 18-29, by sex, with percent change: Marriage-registration area, 1968 and 1976	11
F. Median age and first and third quartiles of age at first marriage of both bride and groom (primary marriage), with interquartile range: Marriage-registration area, 1968-76	11
G. Median age of bride and groom at first marriage: Marriage-registration area, each region, division, and State, 1976	13
H. Number and percent distribution of first marriages of both bride and groom (primary marriages) by race of groom, according to race of bride: 35 reporting States, 1975	14
J. Number of first marriages and median age and first and third quartiles of age at first marriage of bride and groom and change from 1970 to 1975, by race, with interquartile range: Uniform group of 33 reporting States, 1970 and 1975	16
K. Percent of all marriages that were first marriages for brides and grooms, by race: Reporting areas, 1970-75	17
L. Percent of brides and grooms who were born in and resident of the State where married by marriage order: Marriage-registration area, 1975	17
M. Percent of previously single (never-married) and previously divorced brides and grooms who were born in the State where married, by age at marriage, with median age: Reporting States, 1975	18
N. Percent of previously single (never-married) and previously divorced brides and grooms who were residents of the State where married, by age at marriage: Reporting States, 1975	20
O. Number and percent distribution of first marriages, by years of school completed by brides and grooms: 11 selected States, 1969-75	21
P. Median years of school completed and percent who completed 16 years or more of school, for brides and grooms at first marriage: 11 selected States and each State, 1970 and 1975	22
Q. Median years of school completed and percent who completed 16 years or more of school by age at marriage for previously single (never-married) and previously divorced brides and grooms: 11 selected States, 1975	23
R. Median age at first marriage for brides and grooms, by years of school completed: 11 selected States, 1970 and 1975	26
S. Percent of all marriages that were first marriages, by years of school completed by brides and grooms: 11 selected States, 1970 and 1975	26

SYMBOLS

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

FIRST MARRIAGES: UNITED STATES, 1968 - 1976

Barbara Foley Wilson and Elaine Hume,^a Division of Vital Statistics

INTRODUCTION

This report presents detailed information about the characteristics of persons who first married in the years 1968-76, a period when an estimated 1.5-1.7 million first marriages occurred each year. The topics covered include the national trend in numbers and rates of first marriage, geographic variations, seasonal fluctuations, whether the ceremony was civil or religious, and social and demographic characteristics of the bride and groom such as age, race, residence, birthplace, and education.

Statistics on first marriages are not available for the entire United States. The data in this report are based on samples of records from States that participate in the marriage-registration area (MRA). These are States that have central files of marriage certificates and sufficiently complete reporting of demographic items on their records to warrant collection, processing, and publication in the official United States annual reports. The MRA was composed of 41 States and the District of Columbia from 1971 to 1976. Estimates of first-marriage totals and rates for the United States were based on detailed data from the MRA and actual counts of all marriages performed in the United States.

SUMMARY

There were an estimated 1.5-1.7 million first marriages every year from 1968 to 1976. The number of first marriages peaked in 1972 at 1.7

million, and then dropped sharply to 1.5 million in 1975 and 1976.

More first marriages (13 percent) took place in June than in any other month in 1976. A majority of brides and grooms (65 and 60 percent, respectively) were born in the State where they first married.

Median age at first marriage was 21.0 years for brides and 22.9 for grooms in 1976. In marriages where both persons were marrying for the first time (primary marriages), the median age was lower, 20.7 for brides and 22.5 for grooms. The older a groom was at first marriage, the greater was the difference in age between spouses. The median age of brides at first marriage in 1976 was the highest it has been in more than a decade.

First-marriage rates were highest in the South and lowest in the Northeast. Because more previously married men than women marry never-married spouses, first-marriage rates for women are higher than those for men. Age-specific rates for both sexes dropped after 1968, some as much as 40-50 percent. The percent of men and women 20-24 years of age who had never married rose 7 percent between 1970 and 1976. White brides and grooms tended to be younger than black persons marrying for the first time, and both white and black persons were younger than persons of other races.

Previously single grooms had, on the average, more education than brides had. The number of marrying persons who completed 16 years of education (college equivalent) increased for both sexes between 1970 and 1975, more for brides than for grooms.

^aFormerly with the Division of Vital Statistics.

COMPOSITION OF MARRIAGES BY MARRIAGE ORDER

The proportion of brides and grooms who were single prior to this marriage, that is, never previously married, varies from year to year, from State to State, and with other personal characteristics such as age, race, and education. In 1969, 77 percent of the brides and of the grooms in the MRA were marrying for the first time. By 1976, the proportion dropped to 69 percent for brides. In the same period the proportion of grooms who were marrying for the first time dropped to 67 percent (table A). Marriages in which both the bride and the groom were never previously married, that is, "primary marriages," accounted for almost 70 percent of all marriages in the MRA in 1969, but the proportion had dropped to 59 percent by 1976. For the MRA in 1976, figure 1 displays the proportion of primary marriages in relation to the proportions for other combinations of first marriage or remarriage of brides and grooms.

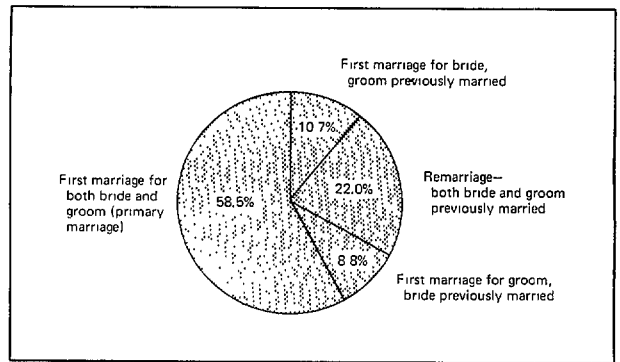


Figure 1. Marriages by marriage order: Marriage-registration area, 1976

NATIONAL TREND

Sample data from the MRA provided a basis for estimating the total number of first marriages performed in the United States from 1968 to 1976, years during which the composition of the MRA remained fairly constant. South Carolina and Minnesota entered the registration area in

Table A. Percent distribution of marriages by marriage order of bride and groom: Marriage-registration area, 1969-76

[Based on sample data. Excludes marriages for which marriage order was not stated for either bride or groom]

Sex and year	All marriages	First marriage—			Remarriage—		
		Total	For both	Remarriage for spouse	Total	First marriage for spouse	Remarriage for both
<u>Bride</u>		Percent distribution					
1976	100.0	69.2	58.5	10.7	30.8	8.8	22.0
1975	100.0	70.1	60.1	9.9	29.9	8.6	21.3
1974	100.0	72.1	62.9	9.2	27.9	8.1	19.8
1973	100.0	73.3	64.6	8.7	26.7	7.9	18.9
1972	100.0	75.0	66.7	8.2	25.0	7.4	17.6
1971	100.0	75.6	67.7	8.0	24.4	7.3	17.0
1970	100.0	76.2	68.6	7.6	23.8	7.3	16.5
1969	100.0	76.9	69.6	7.3	23.1	7.2	15.9
<u>Groom</u>							
1976	100.0	67.3	58.5	8.8	32.7	10.7	22.0
1975	100.0	68.7	60.1	8.6	31.3	9.9	21.3
1974	100.0	71.0	62.9	8.1	29.0	9.2	19.8
1973	100.0	72.4	64.6	7.9	27.6	8.7	18.9
1972	100.0	74.2	66.7	7.4	25.8	8.2	17.6
1971	100.0	75.0	67.7	7.3	25.0	8.0	17.0
1970	100.0	75.8	68.6	7.3	24.2	7.6	16.5
1969	100.0	76.8	69.6	7.2	23.2	7.3	15.9

1971, bringing the total for the MRA to 41 States and the District of Columbia for the years 1971-76. Approximations of national first-marriage totals were derived by applying the proportion of first marriages in the MRA to the annual number of marriages performed in the United States (table B).

First marriages increased from an estimated 1.6 million in 1968 to 1.7 million in 1972, and declined after that to 1.5 million in 1976.

More brides than grooms were previously single. In the second half of the 1960's the differences between first-marriage totals for men and those for women were small. Only 2,000 more women than men married for the first time in 1968. The differences rose sharply to 41,000 in 1976. More divorced men than women were marrying single partners.

Relating national first marriages estimated for women and men to the never-married population 15-44 years of age yields first-marriage rates that measure the likelihood of marriage within the broad age range where most first marriages occur (table B). Between 1968 and 1976, first-marriage rates declined about 30 percent. During this period, first-marriage rates for women were consistently 20-30 percent higher than those for men. In 1976 there were 94 marriages for every 1,000 single women aged 15-44, and 71 marriages for every 1,000 single men in this same group.

GEOGRAPHIC VARIATION

The number of first marriages for each year from 1968 to 1976 is shown in table 1 for each reporting State. Most States reached a peak number in the early 1970's and then experienced a decline.

Regional rates.—In 1970 data were available to compute estimates of first-marriage rates per 1,000 single persons aged 15-44 years for each geographic region. As might be expected, there were noticeable regional differences. The South led the Nation for women, with a first-marriage rate of 143.2, followed by the West with a rate of 127.5. The North Central Region ranked third at 112.3, and the Northeast had the lowest first-marriage rate (97.2).

The regional pattern in the first-marriage rate for men was similar. The highest rate occurred in the South (111.1). Rates for the West and North Central were very close, 95.7 and 93.7, respectively, and the lowest rate was in the Northeast (84.4). Thus there was a narrower range for men than for women in the first-marriage rates across the country (figure 2).

Table B. Estimated number and rate of first marriages, by sex: United States, 1968-76

[Based on sample data. Rates are first marriages per 1,000 single persons 15-44 years of age]

Year	Number		Rate	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
1976.....	1,491,000	1,450,000	93.7	71.0
1975.....	1,507,000	1,479,000	97.7	75.2
1974.....	1,605,000	1,581,000	108.1	82.9
1973.....	1,672,000	1,654,000	116.4	89.9
1972.....	1,709,000	1,691,000	121.5	93.3
1971.....	1,656,000	1,641,000	119.6	91.4
1970.....	1,643,000	1,636,000	123.3	99.8
1969.....	1,650,000	1,646,000	129.6	102.9
1968.....	1,604,000	1,602,000	129.5	101.3

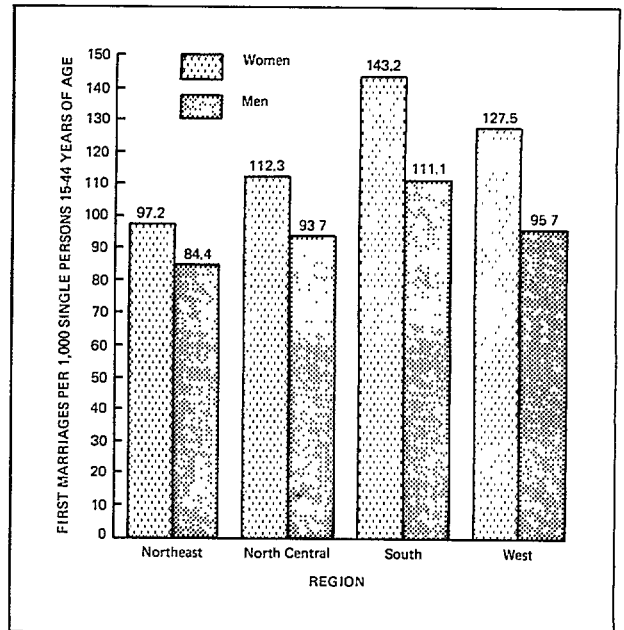


Figure 2. First marriage rates by sex: Each region, 1970

The rates shown in figure 2 are based on data from the MRA plus three States—Colorado, Minnesota, and Nevada—that were specially sampled in 1970. These three States recorded marriage order or previous marital status, so that this information could be combined with data from the registration States to make a more complete picture.

State variations.—Differences in first-marriage rates were much more pronounced among States than among regions (table 2). In 1970 rates among women ranged from as low as 72.1 in the District of Columbia to as high as 177.3 in South Dakota, more than twice as great. However, among men, Alaska ranked lowest, with a rate of 66.5, and South Dakota ranked highest (138.5). Wide variations are observed, in part because the rates relate the number of first marriages *occurring* in each State, rather than the number of *State residents* who first married in a given year, to the eligible population residing in the respective States. State laws regulate minimum age at marriage, blood test and other medical requirements, and waiting periods before and after issuance of a license. If the laws in one State are more lenient than those in another, residents may cross State lines to marry. First-marriage rates are, therefore, influenced to some extent by the number of nonresident marriages performed in each State. They are also influenced by the age and sex composition of the population of the State.

In considering variation among States, Nevada is a special case. Although it is frequently regarded as a State for divorce, in fact, marriages (97,605 in 1970) are more than 10 times as frequent as divorces (9,138 in 1970). Of these marriages, 44 percent were first marriages for brides, of whom over 90 percent were not residents of Nevada. Because the number of out-of-State residents who marry in Nevada is large in comparison with the number of Nevada residents who are eligible to marry, the first-marriage rates based on occurrence are difficult to interpret; for example, in 1970 there were 1,789.9 first marriages per 1,000 single resident women aged 15-44 years.

Rate differentials among States can be expected to change as the result of a 1971

Supreme Court ruling that laws discriminating on the basis of sex are unconstitutional. Prior to 1971 most States set an older minimum age at marriage for men than for women. In response to the 1971 Supreme Court ruling, the age minimums have been equalized. By late 1975 the minimum age for marriage without parental consent was 18 years in 47 States. The minimum age was 19 for both sexes in Wyoming and Nebraska and 21 in Mississippi.¹ In general, this equalization enables men 18-20 years of age to marry in most States where they previously would have needed parental permission or else would have had to cross a State border to marry under a more lenient law.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FIRST MARRIAGES

Month of Marriage

If first marriages occurred randomly throughout the year, 8 or 9 percent of the annual total would take place each month. But, in fact, only 5 or 6 percent of first marriages are performed in January and February; about 13 percent take place in June. Approximately half as many first marriages are performed during the first 3 months of the year as in the 3 months of June through August.

First marriages are more closely linked to the seasons than remarriages are. In remarriages, December is chosen about as frequently as June (figure 3).

Seasonality is also related to age at marriage. First marriages involving brides under 18 years of age are distributed more evenly throughout the year than are those involving brides in older age groups. First marriages of brides 20-24 years of age are most seasonal, dipping very low in the first quarter of the year and peaking sharply in summer.

¹Council of State Governments: *The Book of the States, 1974-75*. Lexington, Ky. Council of State Governments, 1975. P. 236.

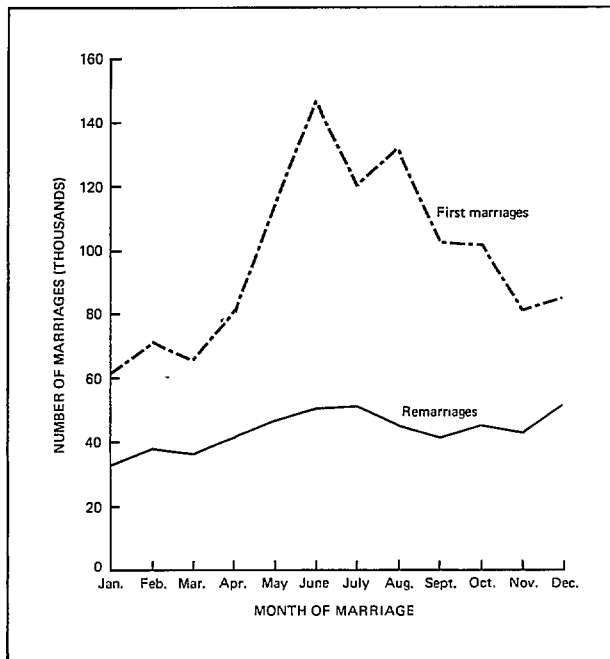


Figure 3. Seasonal variation in first marriages and remarriages of brides: Marriage-registration area, 1976

Type of Ceremony

Approximately 80 percent of first marriages are performed in a religious setting. The percent is even higher for brides and grooms 20-24 years of age.

In comparison, about 60 percent of remarriages occur in a religious setting and about 40 percent are civil in setting.

The proportion of first-marriage ceremonies performed in 1976 that were religious in nature varied among States from under 45 percent in South Carolina to around 99 percent in West Virginia.

SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Age at First Marriage

The age of bride and groom at first marriage is an important demographic characteristic because it relates to fertility, mobility, education, and divorce. For instance, it has been found that the younger the age at first marriage

during the childbearing years, the higher the fertility.²

Percent distribution.—The number of first marriages in the MRA distributed by age is shown in figure 4. In 1976, about 18 percent of single grooms were under 20 years of age, 52 percent were 20-24, and 30 percent were 25 years and older (table C). The modal age for grooms was 21 years. In comparison, numbers of single brides were concentrated at younger ages. About 38 percent of the brides were under 20 years of age, 45 percent were 20-24 years, and 17 percent were 25 years of age and older. The modal age for brides at first marriage was 19 in 1976. In general, the distribution of grooms by age at first marriage was less concentrated than that of brides. For every age after 20 years there were more grooms than brides marrying for the first time.

Between 1968 and 1976 these proportions changed slightly. The distribution by age at first marriage shifted upward as proportionately more people married at ages over 24 years. The effect of these changes can be seen in the single population, according to information published

Table C. Percent distribution of first marriages by age of bride and groom: Marriage-registration area, 1968 and 1976

[Based on sample data]

Age	1976		1968	
	Bride	Groom	Bride	Groom
Percent distribution				
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 18 years	11.9	2.1	12.3	1.8
18-19 years	26.4	15.4	29.2	16.1
20-24 years	44.8	52.2	46.2	56.6
25-29 years	11.6	21.0	7.8	16.7
30-34 years	2.7	5.2	1.9	4.3
35-44 years	1.6	2.7	1.6	3.0
45 years and over	0.9	1.4	0.9	1.5

²U.S. Bureau of the Census: *The Methods and Materials of Demography*, by H. S. Shryock, J. S. Siegel, and associates. 2d printing (rev.). Washington. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973. P. 789.

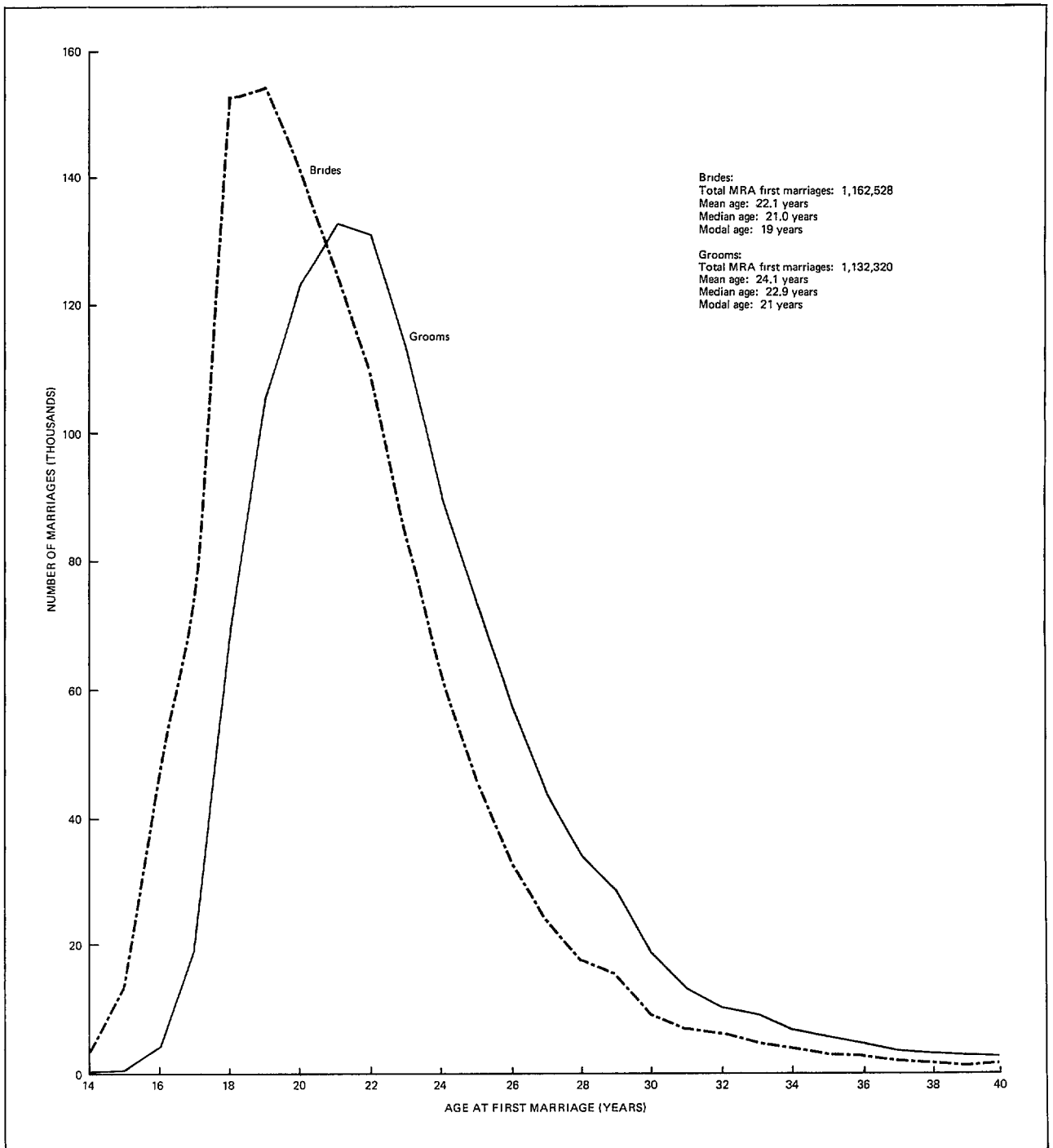


Figure 4. First marriages by age at marriage for brides and grooms: Marriage-registration area, 1976

Table D. Percent of population single (never-married), by sex and age, with change: United States, 1970 and 1976

[Based on sample data]

Age	Women			Men		
	1976	1970	Change, 1970 to 1976 ¹	1976	1970	Change, 1970 to 1976 ¹
	Percent					
Total, 14 years and over	23.0	22.1	0.9	29.8	28.1	1.7
Under 35 years	45.3	44.4	0.9	56.2	54.8	1.4
35 years and over	5.0	6.1	-1.1	5.8	7.3	-1.5
14-17 years.....	97.0	97.3	-0.3	99.4	99.4	-
18 years.....	84.0	82.0	2.0	95.6	95.1	0.5
19 years.....	72.1	68.8	3.3	87.9	89.9	-2.0
20-24 years.....	42.6	35.8	6.8	62.1	54.7	7.4
20 years	60.9	56.9	4.0	80.9	78.3	2.6
21 years	51.2	43.9	7.3	72.7	66.2	6.5
22 years	41.4	33.5	7.9	61.6	52.3	9.3
23 years	31.2	22.4	8.8	52.2	42.1	10.1
24 years	26.4	17.9	8.5	39.8	33.2	6.6
25-29 years.....	14.8	10.5	4.3	24.9	19.1	5.8
25 years	22.7	14.0	8.7	32.1	26.6	5.5
26 years	17.4	12.2	5.2	30.6	20.9	9.7
27 years	13.4	9.1	4.3	23.6	16.5	7.1
28 years	10.9	8.9	2.0	22.4	17.0	5.4
29 years	10.1	8.0	2.1	16.7	13.8	2.9
30-34 years.....	7.0	6.2	0.8	12.3	9.4	2.9
35-39 years.....	5.2	5.4	-0.2	7.9	7.2	0.7
40-44 years.....	4.2	4.9	-0.7	6.6	6.3	0.3
45-54 years.....	4.4	4.9	-0.5	5.6	7.5	-1.9
55-64 years.....	4.9	6.8	-1.9	5.6	7.8	-2.2
65 years and over	5.9	7.7	-1.8	4.4	7.5	-3.1

¹Differences shown were derived by using rounded percentages.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1976," Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 306.

by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Between 1970 and 1976 the percent of the population that had never married rose for both sexes at every specified age between 18 and 29 except for males of age 19 (table D).

As noted, in 1971 the Supreme Court ruled that laws discriminating on the basis of sex are unconstitutional. Most States responded by lowering the age for marriage without parental consent to 18 years for men. For first marriages in 1972 the number of grooms 18-20 years of age rose 8 percent. This was more than the increase in first marriages for grooms of all ages (4 percent). In 1973, as the effect of the statutory changes receded, the number of grooms 18-20 years dropped by 4 percent; the number of first

marriages for grooms of all ages dropped by 3 percent.

First-marriage rates.—Because different numbers of men and women reach marriageable age each year, rates provide better indexes for studying change than the numbers alone.

The rates described in this section are based on first marriages that occurred in the MRA between 1968 and 1976 and are calculated per 1,000 single persons 14 years of age and over. The rates declined between 1968 and 1971, rose slightly in 1972 (when the number of marriages peaked), and then dropped again each year through 1976 (figure 5).

The first-marriage rate for women was consistently higher than that for men throughout

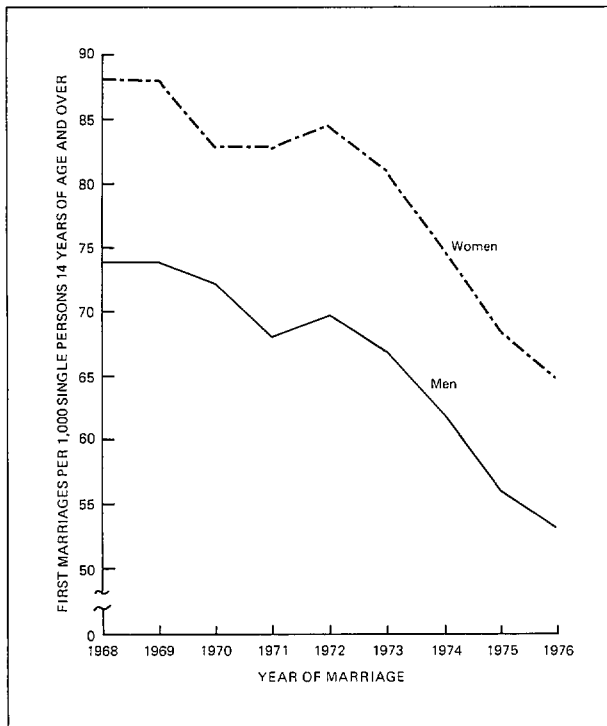


Figure 5. First marriage rates by sex: Marriage-registration area, 1968-76

this period, but rates for both sexes dropped. The first-marriage rate for women was 88.0 per 1,000 single women 14 years of age and over in 1968 and dropped 26 percent to 64.8 in 1976. The first-marriage rate for men was 73.8 per 1,000 in 1968 and dropped 28 percent to 53.1 in 1976.

First-marriage rates by single years of age from 18 to 29 are charted in figures 6 and 7 and are listed in table 3 for 1968-76. Like the numbers of first marriages, first-marriage rates vary sharply with age, but they peak at ages about 4 years older (figure 6). In 1976 the first-marriage rate was highest at age 23 for women (155.3 per 1,000 single 23-year-old women) and at age 25 for men (135.8 per 1,000 single 25-year-old men). The rates for both sexes at each age under age 30 are shown for 1976 in figure 6. They form a distinct curvilinear pattern, with higher rates for women than men under 25 years of age and the consistently lower rates for women at age 25 and older.

The rates by single years of age in 1968, 1972, and 1976 are plotted in figure 7. It can be seen that the rates dropped in that time period across all ages from 18 to 29, as much as 40-50 percent for some ages (table E).

Median and range.—The median age of brides at first marriage was 21.0 years and that of grooms was 22.9 years in 1976. When both bride and groom were marrying for the first time (primary marriage), the ages were slightly less: 20.7 years for brides, 22.5 years for grooms. The mean ages of brides and grooms are a year or so higher than the median ages, reflecting the positively skewed distributions in which many spouses are over 30 but none is under 10 years of age (table 4).

From 1968 to 1974 there was considerable stability in these measures (table 4). In primary marriages, the median age of grooms dropped from 1970 to 1971, the year of the Supreme Court decision, but the mean and mode showed no change. From 1974 to 1976, however, both median and mean ages increased 0.3-0.4 years for brides and grooms, both in first marriages and in primary marriages. The large proportions of single men and women shown in table D will cause a rise in these measures when, and if, the postponed marriages occur.

The interquartile range (difference between the 25th and 75th percentiles) is a measure of the dispersion, or spread, of a distribution around its median (the 50th percentile). From 1968 to 1976 the interquartile range of age of brides in primary marriages widened from 3.4 to 4.2 years. At the same time the interquartile range in age of grooms widened from 4.1 to 4.6 years (table F).

Differences in age.—Men usually marry women younger than themselves. In 1976 approximately 71 percent of grooms were older than their brides when both were marrying for the first time, 15 percent were the same age, and 14 percent of the grooms were younger than their brides. The percent of grooms marrying younger or older brides varied by age at marriage. The percent of grooms who married younger women rose with age from 44 percent of grooms 18 years of age to 86 percent of grooms aged 35 and over. The opposite pattern

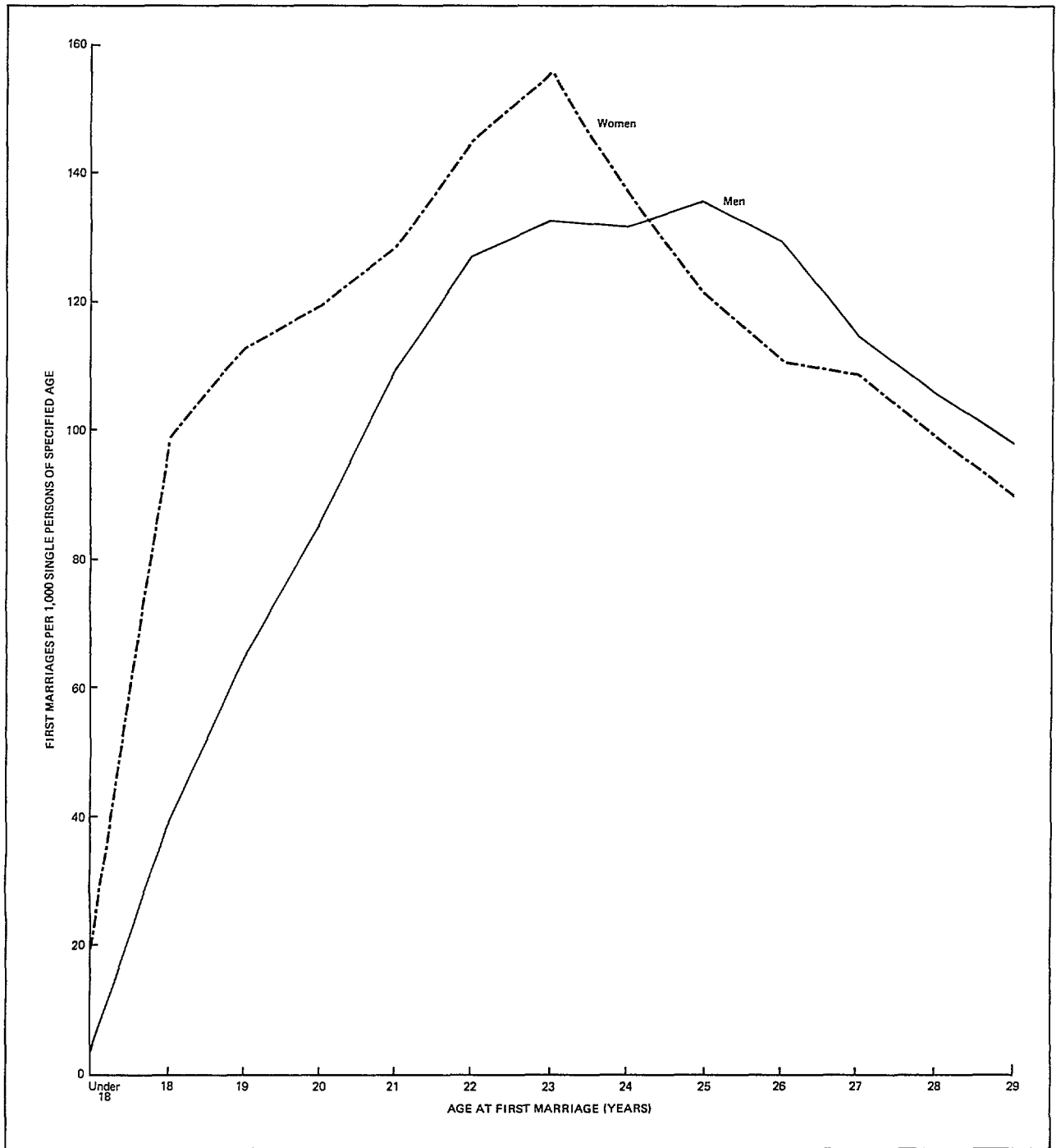


Figure 6. First marriage rates by single years of age 18-29, by sex: Marriage-registration area, 1976

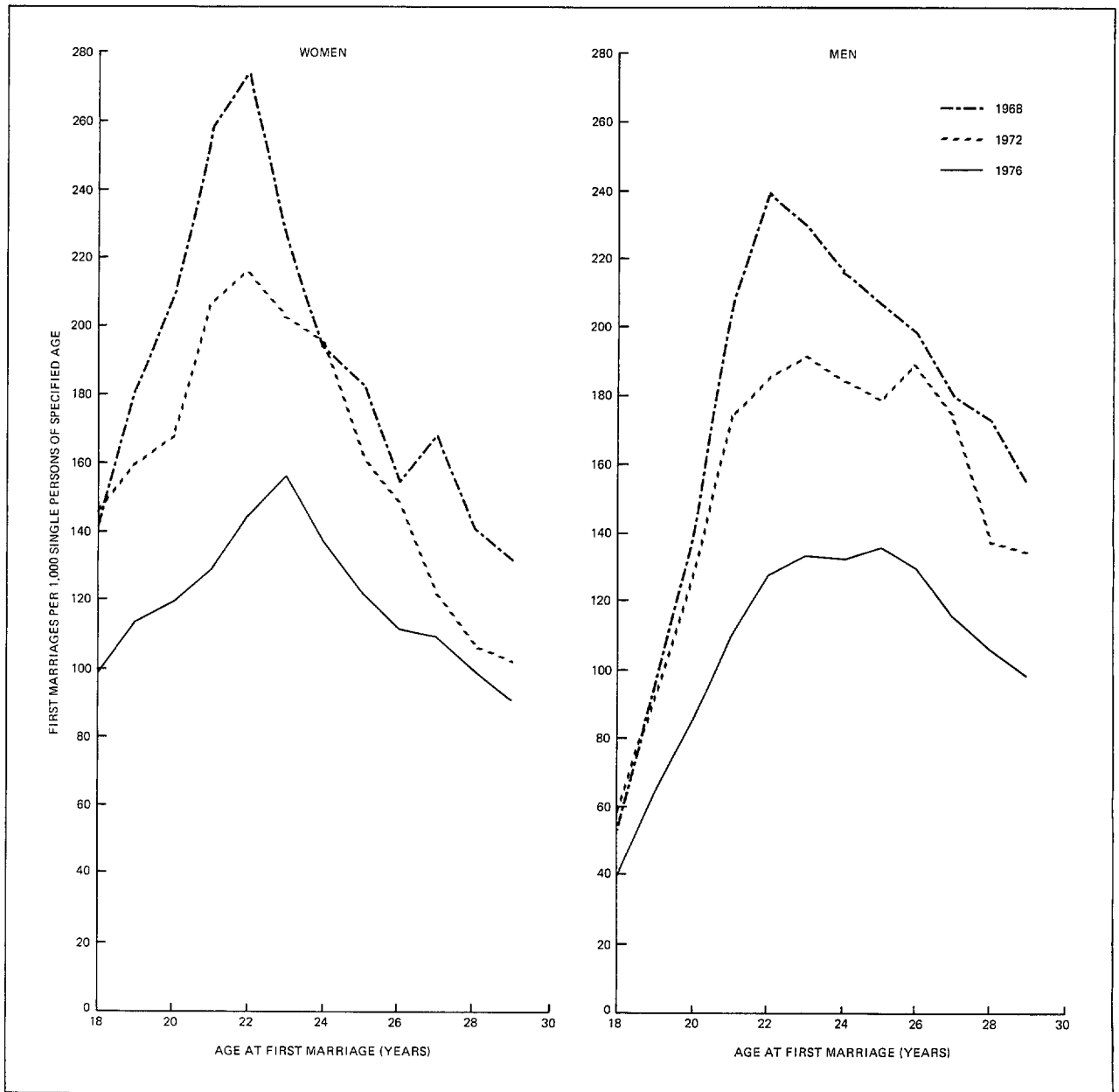


Figure 7. First marriage rates by single years of age 18-29, by sex: Marriage-registration area, 1968, 1972, and 1976

was apparent for grooms who married older brides and brides of the same age (figure 8 and table 5).

The age difference between bride and groom also increased as age of the groom increased. Over all ages the average (mean) age difference between brides and grooms in primary marriages

was 2.0 years. However, at 18 years of age the average difference was 0.3 years. The difference rose steadily to almost 5 years for grooms at age 30 and to 10 years for grooms at age 44 (figure 9).

Previous marital status of spouse.—Age at first marriage varies with the previous marital

Table E. First marriage rates by single years of age 18-29, by sex, with percent change: Marriage-registration area, 1968 and 1976

[Based on sample data. Rates are first marriages per 1,000 single persons of specified age]

Age	Women			Men		
	1976	1968	Percent change, 1968 to 1976	1976	1968	Percent change, 1968 to 1976
	Rate			Rate		
18 years.....	98.4	140.8	-30.1	38.8	53.7	-27.7
19 years.....	112.7	180.8	-37.7	64.4	95.8	-32.8
20 years.....	119.3	209.0	-42.9	85.4	137.5	-37.9
21 years.....	128.4	257.8	-50.2	109.5	206.4	-46.9
22 years.....	144.1	273.4	-47.3	126.8	238.1	-46.7
23 years.....	155.3	225.6	-31.2	132.6	229.2	-42.1
24 years.....	137.0	194.1	-29.4	131.7	215.4	-38.9
25 years.....	121.6	182.2	-33.3	135.8	206.0	-34.1
26 years.....	110.7	153.9	-28.1	129.3	197.8	-34.6
27 years.....	108.6	167.4	-35.1	114.8	178.6	-35.7
28 years.....	99.5	140.5	-29.2	105.9	172.1	-38.5
29 years.....	90.1	130.7	-31.1	98.0	154.0	-36.4

Table F. Median age and first and third quartiles of age at first marriage of both bride and groom (primary marriage), with interquartile range: Marriage-registration area, 1968-76

[Based on sample data. Medians computed on single years of age]

Sex and year	Age at first marriage of both bride and groom (primary marriage)			Inter-quartile range
	First quartile	Median	Third quartile	
Bride				
1976.....	18.8	20.7	23.0	4.2
1975.....	18.7	20.5	22.8	4.1
1974.....	18.6	20.3	22.6	4.0
1973.....	18.6	20.3	22.5	3.9
1972.....	18.6	20.3	22.5	3.9
1971.....	18.7	20.3	22.4	3.7
1970.....	18.7	20.4	22.5	3.8
1969.....	18.8	20.4	22.3	3.5
1968.....	18.8	20.4	22.2	3.4
Groom				
1976.....	20.5	22.5	25.1	4.6
1975.....	20.4	22.4	24.9	4.5
1974.....	20.3	22.2	24.7	4.4
1973.....	20.3	22.2	24.7	4.4
1972.....	20.3	22.1	24.6	4.3
1971.....	20.4	22.2	24.5	4.1
1970.....	20.4	22.3	24.4	4.0
1969.....	20.5	22.2	24.4	3.9
1968.....	20.5	22.1	24.6	4.1

status of spouse. The median age of single men marrying single women in 1976 was 22.5 years; of single men marrying divorcees, 26.2 years; and of single men marrying widows, 36.0 years. The median age of single women marrying single men was 20.7 years; of single women marrying divorced men, 23.4 years; and of single women marrying widowers, 35.0 years (table 6). The median ages and the first and third quartiles of age at first marriage are also shown in table 6. As might be expected, the median age and the first and third quartiles of age at first marriage for both women and men were lowest when both partners were single and highest when either was previously widowed.

The difference between brides and grooms in median ages was about 2 years when single women married single men, 6 years when they married divorced men, and 14 years when they married widowers.

Geographical variations in age at first marriage.—There are pronounced geographic differences in age at first marriage. As shown by data for 1976, brides were youngest in the South, particularly in the East South Central Region, and, specifically, in Kentucky where the median age of bride at first marriage was 19.5 years (table G). They were oldest in the Northeast, particularly in the Middle Atlantic

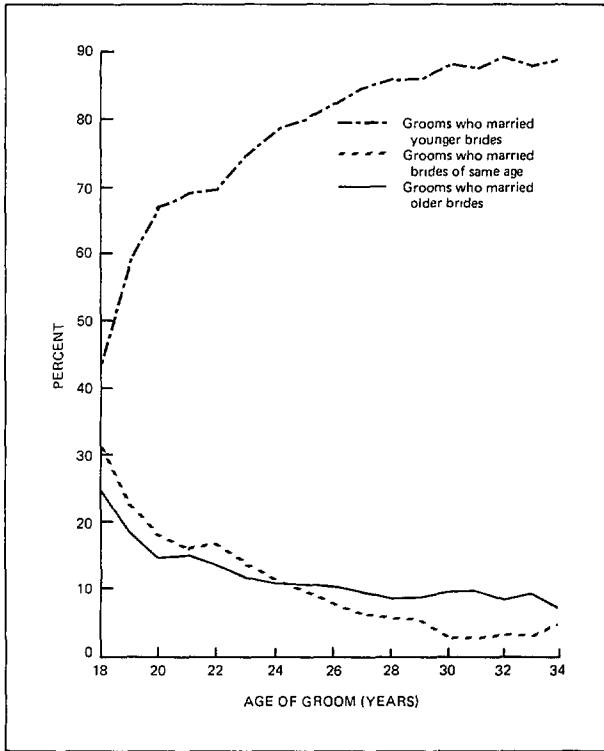


Figure 8. Percent of grooms who married younger brides, brides of the same age, and older brides, when both bride and groom were marrying for the first time, by age of groom: Marriage-registration area, 1976

Division; in the State of New York, the median age at first marriage was 22.3 years for brides. Outside the Northeast, one State, Hawaii, had a higher median age of bride at first marriage (22.6 years). Brides and grooms marrying in the District of Columbia were older still. In California, the median age of bride at first marriage was 21.7 years, higher than in several of the northeastern States (table G).

The ages of grooms showed the same geographic variations as those of brides did. In every State the median age of groom was higher than that of the bride by about 2 years.

Race

In this section, statistics on first marriage by race are presented mainly for 1975. These statistics are based on information from the 35 States in the MRA that reported the race of

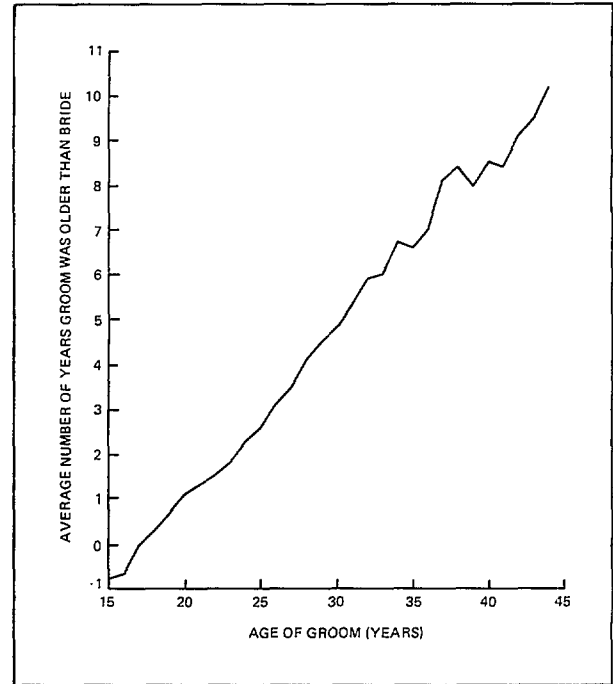


Figure 9. Average number of years groom was older than bride at first marriage of both, by age of groom: Marriage-registration area, 1976

brides and grooms with at least 90-percent completeness in 1975. Six large States (California, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, New York, and Ohio) and the District of Columbia did not identify race on their marriage records.

Marriages by race.—In the United States men and women who marry are generally of the same race. In 1975, 86.7 percent of the primary marriages for which race was reported paired white brides and grooms; 11.3 percent paired black brides and grooms; and 0.8 percent paired brides and grooms both of other races; less than 2 percent of the marriages were interracial. The category “other” races includes all races and national origins except white or black, that is, Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, American Indians, Hawaiians, and Eskimos. Interracial marriages in the “other” category have not been separately identified from marriages between partners of the same “other” race and are not included in the data on interracial marriages.

Table G. Median age of bride and groom at first marriage: Marriage-registration area, each region, division, and State, 1976

[Based on sample data. Medians computed on single years of age]

Area	Bride	Groom	Area	Bride	Groom
Marriage-registration area	21.0	22.9			
REGION			West North Central—Con.		
Northeast	21.9	23.8	North Dakota.....	—	—
North Central.....	20.7	22.5	South Dakota.....	20.3	22.3
South	20.2	22.3	Nebraska.....	20.7	22.5
West	21.3	23.3	Kansas.....	19.9	22.0
GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION			South Atlantic		
New England.....	21.7	23.6	Delaware.....	21.4	23.1
Middle Atlantic.....	22.0	23.8	Maryland.....	21.2	23.3
East North Central.....	20.8	22.6	District of Columbia.....	24.2	25.7
West North Central.....	20.5	22.3	Virginia.....	20.6	22.7
South Atlantic.....	20.5	22.6	West Virginia.....	19.7	21.9
East South Central.....	19.6	21.7	North Carolina.....	20.3	22.1
West South Central.....	*	*	South Carolina.....	19.9	22.1
Mountain.....	*	*	Georgia.....	20.2	22.2
Pacific.....	*	*	Florida.....	20.7	22.8
New England			East South Central		
Maine.....	20.3	22.3	Kentucky.....	19.5	21.6
New Hampshire.....	21.4	23.2	Tennessee.....	19.6	21.7
Vermont.....	20.9	23.1	Alabama.....	19.7	21.8
Massachusetts.....	22.1	23.9	Mississippi.....	19.8	21.8
Rhode Island.....	21.6	23.4	West South Central		
Connecticut.....	22.1	23.8	Arkansas.....	—	—
Middle Atlantic			Louisiana.....	20.0	21.9
New York.....	22.3	24.2	Oklahoma.....	—	—
New Jersey.....	22.2	24.1	Texas.....	—	—
Pennsylvania.....	21.4	23.1	Mountain		
East North Central			Montana.....	20.4	22.6
Ohio.....	20.7	22.5	Idaho.....	19.9	22.0
Indiana.....	20.1	21.9	Wyoming.....	20.3	22.2
Illinois.....	21.2	23.0	Colorado ¹	20.3	22.2
Michigan.....	20.8	22.7	New Mexico.....	—	—
Wisconsin.....	21.1	22.8	Arizona.....	—	—
West North Central			Utah.....	20.3	22.4
Minnesota.....	21.2	23.0	Nevada ¹	21.1	23.8
Iowa.....	20.5	22.2	Pacific		
Missouri.....	20.1	22.0	Washington.....	—	—
			Oregon.....	20.9	22.7
			California.....	21.7	23.6
			Alaska.....	20.8	23.4
			Hawaii.....	22.6	24.4

¹1970 data from a special sample.

The most frequent interracial pairing was that of black grooms to white brides, but this represented only 0.4 percent of the primary marriages in the 35 reporting States. There were almost as many white grooms who married brides of "other" races, and white brides who married grooms of "other" races, about 0.3 percent each (table H).

Race differentials in age at first marriage.—There was a distinct differential in age at first marriage by race. White persons were youngest; black persons were intermediate; persons of other races were oldest (figure 10 and table 7).

In 1975 the median age at first marriage for white brides was 20.4 years. Black brides were a year older (21.4 years), and brides of other races were older still (22.4 years). The ages of grooms showed similar differentials by race. These data are based on the 35 States that reported race in 1975.

Between 1970 and 1975, the distribution of age at first marriage shifted upward for all races, but the shift was most pronounced for black brides and grooms. This finding is based

on data from a uniform group of 33 States (described in table J) that reported race both years with sufficient completeness for comparison. The effect of removing two States (Illinois and South Carolina) from the group of 35 States reporting race in 1975 was to change the medians by 0.1 or 0.2 of a year, but the interracial differentials remained.

There was more variability in the age of grooms than of brides, as measured by the interquartile range, and the difference was greatest for grooms of "other" races and least for white grooms.

Race differentials in marriage order.—The proportion of all marriages that were first marriages varied among the races (table K). The proportion was lowest among white persons, intermediate for black persons, and highest for persons of "other" races. Between 1970 and 1975 these proportions dropped for all races as divorce and remarriage became more common in all racial groups; but the differences by race remained.

Nativity and Residence Status

In the United States, weddings customarily take place near the home of the bride. According to statistics for the MRA in 1975, 92 percent of brides lived in the State where they first married and 65 percent were born there as well. At first marriage, grooms married in their State of residence somewhat less often than brides did; about 88 percent married in the State where they lived and 60 percent were also born there. At remarriage, fewer brides and grooms were born in, or were residents of, their State of marriage, as compared with first-marrying brides and grooms (table L).

Of course, brides and grooms are older at remarriage and have had more time to move out of the State where they were born. Comparing single with divorced brides and grooms (in the 38 States that report this information) shows that age alone does not account for the difference (table M). The percent who were born in the State where they married was generally higher for previously single than for previously divorced persons for most ages through the

Table H. Number and percent distribution of first marriages of both bride and groom (primary marriages) by race of groom, according to race of bride: 35 reporting States, 1975

[Based on sample data. Excludes primary marriages for which race was not stated for either bride or groom. A list of reporting States appears in table II]

Race of bride	Total	Race of groom		
		White	Black	Other
Number				
Total	656,513	572,181	76,955	7,377
White	574,153	569,466	2,513	2,174
Black	74,843	563	74,233	47
Other	7,517	2,152	209	5,156
Percent distribution				
Total	100.0	87.2	11.7	1.1
White	87.5	86.7	0.4	0.3
Black	11.4	0.1	11.3	0.0
Other	1.1	0.3	0.0	0.8

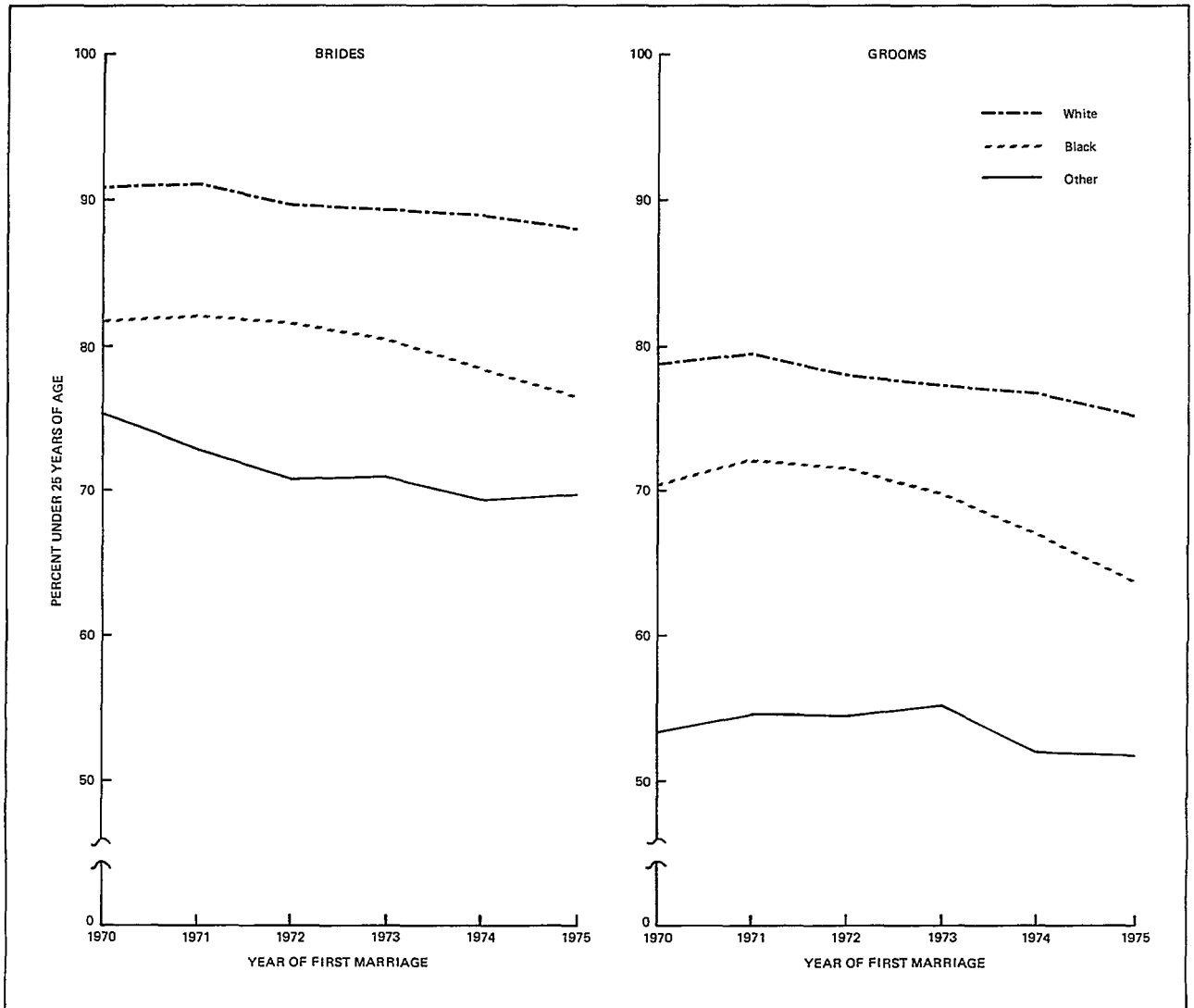


Figure 10. Percent of brides and grooms under 25 years of age at first marriage, by race: Reporting States, 1970-75

mid-twenties. After these ages the relationship generally reverses (figure 11).

Like the difference in nativity status between single and divorced brides and grooms, there is also a difference in residency status. Single persons in their early twenties were more likely to be residents of their State of marriage than the previously divorced (table N).

For the year 1970 only, data on first marriages are available from two States that are not in the MRA, Colorado and Nevada. The charac-

teristics of marriages in Colorado were rather typical of those in the MRA. With 24,988 marriages in 1970, approximately 72 percent of brides and grooms were marrying for the first time. The median age was 20.3 years for brides and 22.2 years for grooms. Of those marrying in Colorado, about 92 percent of brides and 82 percent of grooms were residents of that State, not very different from the average for the MRA States. However, Colorado did record a low proportion of marrying persons who were born

Table J. Number of first marriages and median age and first and third quartiles of age at first marriage of bride and groom and change from 1970 to 1975, by race, with interquartile range: Uniform group of 33 reporting States, 1970 and 1975

[Based on sample data. Computed on single years of age. Reporting States are Alabama, Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming]

Sex and race	Number of first marriages	Age at first marriage			Inter-quartile range
		First quartile	Median	Third quartile	
<u>Bride</u>					
1975					
Total	663,050	18.6	20.5	22.9	4.3
White	579,493	18.6	20.3	22.7	4.1
Black	68,917	19.1	21.3	24.7	5.6
Other	8,073	19.8	22.5	25.7	5.9
Not stated	6,567	19.3	21.2	23.5	4.2
1970					
Total	704,766	18.6	20.3	22.4	3.8
White	614,305	18.6	20.3	22.3	3.7
Black	79,240	18.7	20.6	23.3	4.6
Other	7,216	19.7	22.1	24.9	5.2
Not stated	4,005	18.8	20.6	22.9	4.1
Change from 1970 to 1975					
Total	-41,716	-	+0.2	+0.5	+0.5
White	-34,812	-	-	+0.4	+0.4
Black	-10,323	+0.4	+0.7	+1.4	+1.0
Other	+857	+0.1	+0.4	+0.8	+0.7
Not stated	+2,562	+0.5	+0.6	+0.6	+0.1
<u>Groom</u>					
1975					
Total	652,400	20.3	22.4	25.2	4.9
White	568,987	20.2	22.3	24.9	4.7
Black	69,232	21.0	23.3	26.9	5.9
Other	7,680	21.7	24.8	28.2	6.5
Not stated	6,501	21.0	23.2	25.6	4.6
1970					
Total	706,352	20.4	22.2	24.5	4.1
White	616,332	20.3	22.2	24.4	4.1
Black	79,247	20.4	22.5	25.6	5.2
Other	6,790	21.7	24.4	28.0	6.3
Not stated	3,983	20.7	22.5	25.1	4.4
Change from 1970 to 1975					
Total	-53,952	-0.1	+0.2	+0.7	+0.8
White	-47,345	-0.1	+0.1	+0.5	+0.6
Black	-10,015	+0.6	+0.8	+1.3	+0.7
Other	+890	-	+0.4	+0.2	+0.2
Not stated	+2,518	+0.3	+0.7	+0.5	+0.2

Table K. Percent of all marriages that were first marriages for brides and grooms, by race: Reporting areas, 1970-75

[Based on sample data. Excludes marriages for which race and marriage order were not stated for either bride or groom]

Sex and race	1975 ¹	1974 ²	1973 ²	1972 ²	1971 ³	1970 ⁴
Bride						
Percent of all marriages that were first marriages						
Total	70.0	72.0	73.2	74.9	75.6	76.1
White	67.6	69.6	70.9	72.8	73.9	74.5
Black	74.9	77.7	79.3	80.5	81.7	80.5
Other	77.5	78.9	81.4	83.3	82.5	83.6
Groom						
Total	68.7	70.9	72.4	74.1	74.9	75.8
White	66.7	68.9	70.4	72.4	73.9	74.5
Black	72.5	75.1	77.1	78.1	79.2	79.2
Other	79.5	80.4	82.4	82.4	83.0	85.2

¹Percents based on data from the 42 areas in the marriage-registration area excluding California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and the District of Columbia.

²Percents based on data from the 42 areas in the marriage-registration area excluding California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, and Ohio.

³Percents based on data from the 42 areas in the marriage-registration area excluding California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and parts of Illinois.

⁴Percents based on data from the 40 areas in the marriage-registration area excluding California, Michigan, New York, Ohio, parts of Illinois, and marriages performed after July 1, 1970, for Maryland.

Table L. Percent of brides and grooms who were born in and residents of the State where married, by marriage order: Marriage-registration area, 1975

[Based on sample data]

Sex and nativity and resident status in State where married	First marriages	Remarriages
Bride		
Percent		
Born in and resident of State where married	64.8	50.8
Resident of State where married.....	91.9	85.9
Groom		
Born in and resident of State where married	60.1	48.1
Resident of State where married.....	87.9	84.7

there: 50 percent of brides and 41 percent of the grooms were born in Colorado, quite a bit lower than the 66 percent of brides and 60 percent of grooms averaged over States in the 1970 MRA.

Nevada, with 97,605 marriages in 1970, was not at all typical of the MRA States. Among these Nevada marriages, 44 percent of brides and 45 percent of grooms were marrying for the first time, comparatively very low proportions. The median age at first marriage was 21.1 years for brides and 23.8 years for grooms compared with 20.6 years and 22.5 years, respectively in the MRA. The most unusual characteristics of Nevada marriages were the residency statuses of the spouses: most of the persons marrying in Nevada did not live there. Approximately 8 percent of brides and grooms were residents of Nevada, 71 percent of California, 4 percent of Oregon, 3 percent of Utah and Arizona each, and 1 percent of Washington and Idaho.

In Nevada, marriage applications do not show State of birth, so such information is not available for analysis.

Education

In 1975, 16 States reported education, but the analysis presented here deals with the

Table M. Percent of previously single (never-married) and previously divorced brides and grooms who were born in the State where married, by age at marriage, with median age: Reporting States, 1975

[Based on sample data. Reporting States are those in the marriage-registration area excluding South Carolina, Michigan, and Ohio where previous marital status is not recorded, and the District of Columbia where State of birth is not recorded]

Age	Bride		Groom	
	Previously single	Previously divorced	Previously single	Previously divorced
	Percent born in State where married			
Total.....	65.4	51.5	60.9	49.2
Under 18 years	67.6	64.5	64.3	67.4
18 years.....	69.7	60.2	67.2	60.2
19 years.....	70.1	60.6	68.0	57.5
20 years.....	68.6	56.8	67.2	59.3
21 years.....	69.0	58.5	66.1	56.1
22 years.....	67.6	58.5	64.1	55.3
23 years.....	66.2	57.9	62.5	62.7
24 years.....	63.9	58.4	60.9	60.2
25 years.....	59.8	56.9	58.4	58.1
26 years.....	54.1	57.4	56.3	58.1
27 years.....	53.4	55.7	53.5	52.9
28 years.....	50.4	53.9	51.2	54.0
29 years.....	44.7	54.1	47.0	52.2
30-34 years.....	43.1	50.5	43.3	49.0
35-44 years.....	34.0	45.8	40.6	45.2
45-54 years.....	37.9	41.9	41.6	43.4
55-64 years.....	44.3	37.5	39.2	38.9
65 years and over.....	49.0	37.6	35.0	38.9
Median age.....	20.6	29.0	22.4	32.6

11 States that reported education for the period 1969-75 and did so with at least 90-percent completeness of reporting. The reporting States span the country from West to East and include Hawaii, California, Utah, Nebraska, Kansas, Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont. There were approximately 300,000 first marriages in the 11 States selected for analysis in 1969 (table O). The number peaked in 1972, as it did in the entire MRA, and then dropped about 15 percent by 1975. Except for college graduates, the number of brides and grooms in each education group was lower in 1975 than it had been in 1969 in the 11 States. In contrast, the number of brides who had completed 16 years or more of school increased more than 10 percent and the number of grooms increased more than 5 percent in the 6-year period.

Percent distribution.—Figure 12 shows the percent distributions of years of school completed for both brides and grooms. In 1975 about 42 percent of brides and 40 percent of grooms had completed 12 years of school, 4 percent of brides and 5 percent of grooms had 8 years or less, and 14 percent of brides and 17 percent of grooms had 16 years or more.

Between 1969 and 1975 the distribution of marriages by education shifted upward slightly. Proportionately fewer persons with 9-11 years of school married, and proportionately more had completed 16 years or more before marriage.

Inter-State differentials.—Two summary measures to compare educational differentials across States are median years of school completed and the percent that have passed some milestone such as high school or college graduation.

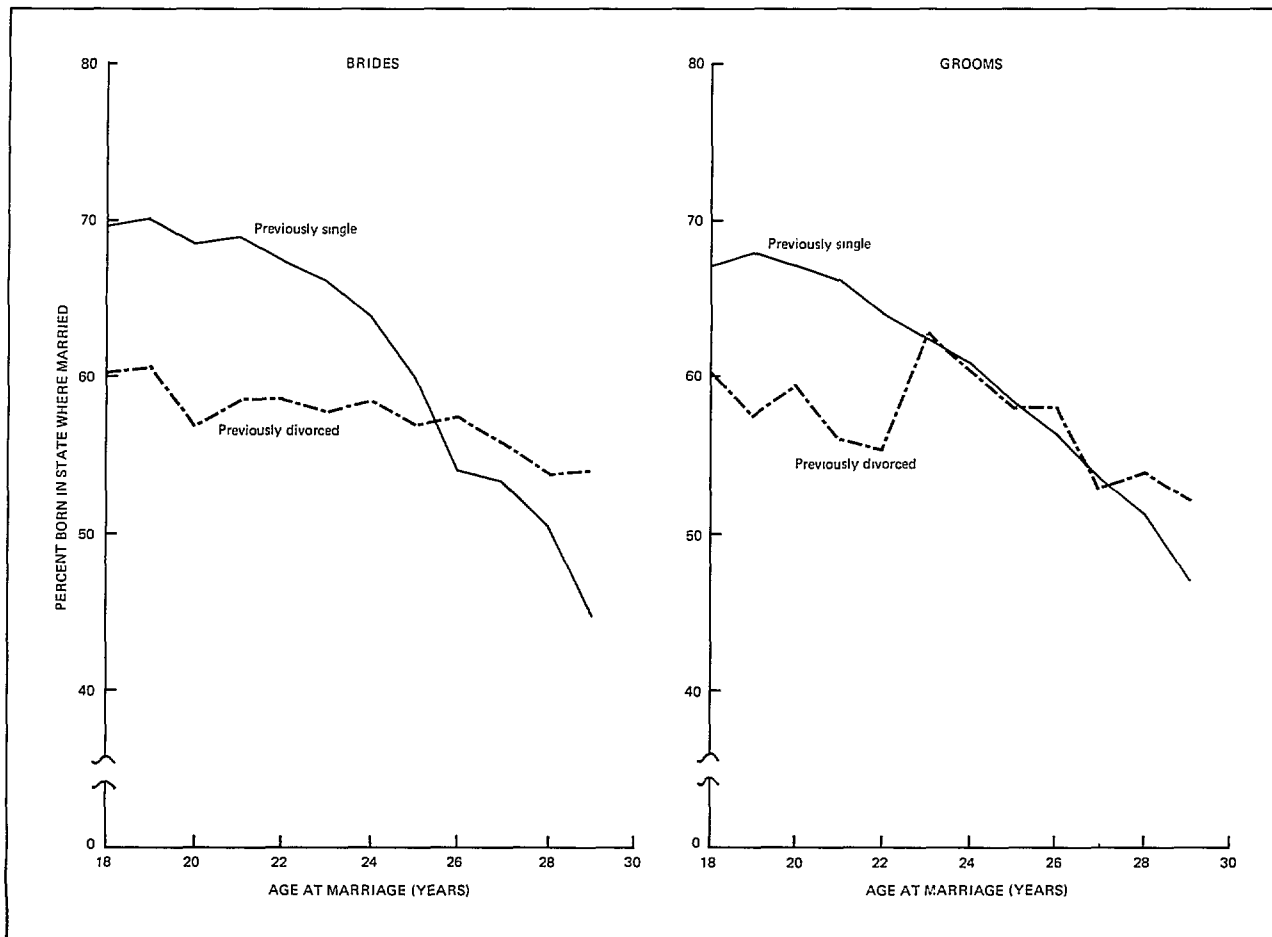


Figure 11. Percent of previously single (never married) and previously divorced brides and grooms who were born in the State where married, by age at marriage: Marriage-registration area, 1975

Among individual States reporting in 1975, the median years of school completed by brides ranged from 12.4 in Tennessee to 13.0 in Utah. The median for grooms ranged from 12.5 in Tennessee and Virginia to 13.3 in Utah. Between 1970 and 1975 some of the medians increased slightly. The medians declined only in Utah, but were still much higher than in any other reporting State (table P). In almost every State the percent of grooms who finished 16 years or more was higher than that of brides. For grooms, the percent in 1975 ranged from 11 percent in Tennessee to 25 percent in Rhode

Island. The percent of brides who had 16 years of school ranged from 9 percent in Tennessee to 20 percent in Hawaii.

Between 1970 and 1975 the percent of brides and grooms who had finished 16 years of school rose slightly for both sexes in most States.

Age at marriage and previous marital status.—Up to age 25, education of brides increased with age at first marriage (table Q).

On the average, just as men are older at first marriage than women are, grooms tended to have more years of school than brides had.

Table N. Percent of previously single and previously divorced brides and grooms who were residents of the State where married, by age at marriage: Reporting States, 1975

[Based on sample data. Reporting States are those in the marriage-registration area excluding South Carolina, Michigan, and Ohio where previous marital status is not recorded]

Age	Bride		Groom	
	Previously single	Previously divorced	Previously single	Previously divorced
Percent resident of State where married				
Total.....	92.2	86.1	88.2	84.9
Under 18 years	90.0	90.1	83.0	*
18 years.....	93.7	88.3	89.2	95.8
19 years.....	94.1	85.3	90.5	80.8
20 years.....	94.0	85.2	91.3	83.9
21 years.....	93.9	87.5	90.4	83.6
22 years.....	93.4	88.5	88.8	85.2
23 years.....	92.5	87.3	87.2	88.0
24 years.....	91.7	88.6	86.6	85.9
25 years.....	89.9	88.1	86.6	86.7
26 years.....	89.8	88.0	87.3	88.7
27 years.....	88.5	86.8	87.2	86.9
28 years.....	87.2	86.6	85.7	86.6
29 years.....	88.2	88.5	85.7	87.4
30-34 years.....	86.4	87.0	85.3	85.2
35-44 years.....	86.0	83.9	83.8	84.4
45-54 years.....	80.5	82.4	83.6	81.8
55-64 years.....	84.6	80.6	82.5	82.2
65 years and over.....	88.3	87.7	88.0	84.4

However, at almost every specified age, brides had as much, or more, education than grooms of the same age.

Over all ages, persons who were first marrying had only slightly more education than those remarrying after divorce. But there is a distinct difference between these two groups at specific ages. For every specified age under 30 years and for the age group 30-34 years, single brides and grooms had higher median years of school completed than those divorced (figure 13). After age 35 the differences diminished, and even reversed.

Another way to analyze the relationship between previous marital status and education is to compare how many in each group completed 16 years or more of school. About 14 percent of first-married brides had completed 16 years of school (college graduation equivalent) compared with 9 percent of previously divorced brides, over all ages. At specific ages,

the difference between groups was even greater (figure 14). In contrast, over all ages, more divorced grooms (18.2 percent) than single grooms (17.2 percent) had completed 16 years or more of school.

Age at first marriage by education.—Predictably, age at first marriage increased with education (table R). The lowest median ages were found among the groups that had 9-11 years of school and the highest were for the groups with 16 years or more completed. Single brides and grooms who had never attended high school were an exception to this pattern. These persons were generally older than those who had completed high school, but younger than those who had attended college (figure 15).

Between 1970 and 1975 there was a change in median age by education, that is, a divergence between subgroups. Brides and grooms who had completed 12 years or less of school married at about the same age in 1975 as in 1970. However,

Table O. Number and percent distribution of first marriages, by years of school completed by brides and grooms: 11 selected States, 1969-75

[Based on sample data. Selected States are California, Hawaii, Kansas, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia]

Sex and years of school completed	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969
Bride							
Number							
Total.....	266,859	285,714	303,642	311,981	297,137	300,040	301,570
0-8 years.....	10,093	12,112	13,163	13,932	11,972	11,671	12,579
9-11 years.....	46,753	53,279	57,492	59,224	55,793	57,299	57,561
12 years.....	110,053	117,416	121,150	126,671	120,985	122,206	123,290
13-15 years.....	60,421	63,197	67,089	70,648	66,728	69,314	67,563
16 years or more.....	37,623	36,679	38,193	37,409	35,273	35,569	33,928
Not stated.....	1,916	3,031	6,555	4,097	6,386	3,981	6,649
Percent distribution							
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
0-8 years.....	3.8	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.1	3.9	4.3
9-11 years.....	17.6	18.8	19.4	19.2	19.2	19.4	19.5
12 years.....	41.5	41.5	40.8	41.1	41.6	41.3	41.8
13-15 years.....	22.8	22.4	22.6	22.9	23.0	23.4	22.9
16 years or more.....	14.2	13.0	12.9	12.2	12.1	12.0	11.5
Groom							
Number							
Total.....	263,610	284,191	302,356	311,511	297,797	301,575	304,066
0-8 years.....	13,015	14,496	16,335	16,928	15,391	16,514	17,265
9-11 years.....	39,348	44,028	45,441	48,967	45,726	46,319	48,100
12 years.....	103,221	111,265	116,483	120,086	114,691	116,061	117,356
13-15 years.....	60,915	66,782	70,387	75,677	72,844	74,512	72,032
16 years or more.....	45,090	44,831	47,115	45,669	42,884	44,455	42,709
Not stated.....	2,021	2,789	6,595	4,186	6,261	3,714	6,604
Percent distribution							
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
0-8 years.....	5.0	5.2	5.5	5.5	5.3	5.5	5.8
9-11 years.....	15.0	15.6	15.4	15.9	15.7	15.6	16.2
12 years.....	39.5	39.5	39.4	39.1	39.3	39.0	39.5
13-15 years.....	23.3	23.7	23.8	24.6	25.0	25.0	24.2
16 years or more.....	17.2	15.9	15.9	14.9	14.7	14.9	14.4

over this period, there was a distinct rise in the median age at first marriage among brides and grooms who had attended or completed college.

Marriage order by education.—As noted previously, about 70 percent of all brides were marrying for the first time in 1975. However, the proportion of all marriages that were first marriages varied with education. Only 52 percent of brides with elementary education were

single compared with 78 percent of the brides with college or graduate educations (table S).

For grooms the trend is in the same direction but the proportion single is highest for those with incomplete college educations. In 1975 about 49 percent of all grooms with 0-8 years of education, 73 percent of grooms with 13-15 years, and 68 percent of those with 16 years or more were single. The proportion of

first marriages to all marriages is roughly the same for the two sexes across all education groups except the highest. Proportionately more brides with 16 years or more of school were marrying for the first time than grooms were.

A time trend is also apparent in the data that shows proportion of all marriages that are first marriages. The proportion of brides who were single dropped between 1970 and 1975 for all educational groups except for brides with 0-8 years of education.

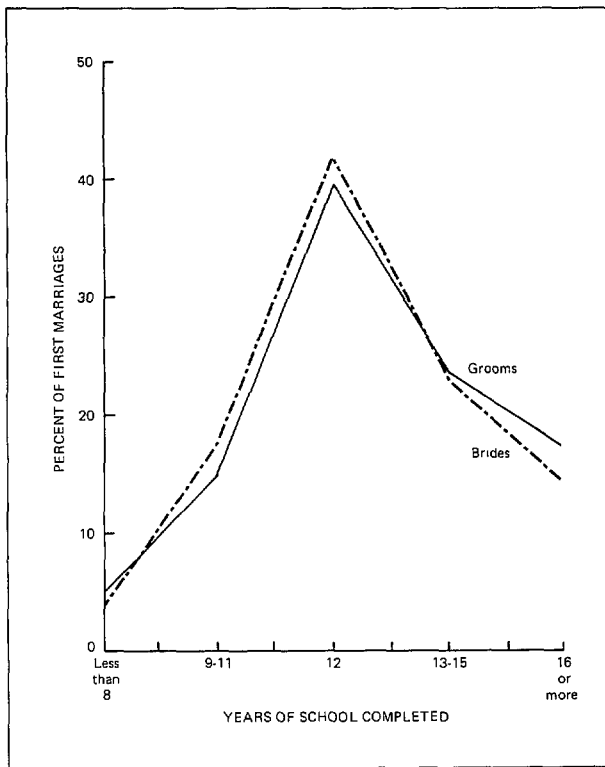


Figure 12. Percent distribution of first marriages by years of school completed for brides and grooms: 11 selected States, 1975

Table P. Median years of school completed and percent who completed 16 years or more of school, for brides and grooms at first marriage: 11 selected States and each State, 1970 and 1975

[Based on sample data. Medians computed on single years of school. Percents based on figures excluding education not stated. Selected States are California, Hawaii, Kansas, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia]

State	Bride		Groom	
	1975	1970	1975	1970
Median years of school completed				
Total	12.7	12.6	12.8	12.7
California.....	12.8	12.7	12.9	12.8
Hawaii	12.9	12.8	12.9	12.8
Kansas	12.8	12.8	12.9	12.9
Nebraska.....	12.9	12.8	12.9	12.9
New Hampshire	12.7	12.7	12.7	12.7
North Carolina.....	12.6	12.6	12.7	12.6
Rhode Island.....	12.7	12.7	12.8	12.8
Tennessee	12.4	12.4	12.5	12.5
Utah	13.0	13.1	13.3	13.7
Vermont.....	12.7	12.7	12.7	12.7
Virginia.....	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5
Percent who completed 16 years or more of school				
Total	14	12	17	15
California.....	16	13	20	16
Hawaii	20	17	22	17
Kansas	13	13	18	15
Nebraska.....	15	13	19	16
New Hampshire	16	11	19	14
North Carolina.....	14	10	16	11
Rhode Island.....	19	17	25	21
Tennessee	9	9	11	12
Utah	15	14	16	16
Vermont.....	17	14	19	17
Virginia.....	13	12	13	14

Table Q. Median years of school completed and percent who completed 16 years or more of school, by age at marriage for previously single (never-married) and previously divorced brides and grooms: 11 selected States, 1975

[Based on sample data. Medians computed on single years of school. Percents based on figures excluding education not stated. Selected States are California, Hawaii, Kansas, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia]

Age at marriage	Bride		Groom	
	Previously single	Previously divorced	Previously single	Previously divorced
Median years of school completed				
Total.....	12.7	12.5	12.8	12.7
Under 18 years	10.9	9.9	10.9	*
18 years	12.4	10.9	12.1	*
19 years	12.6	11.9	12.4	11.1
20 years	12.8	12.1	12.5	12.0
21 years	13.3	12.3	12.7	12.2
22 years	14.3	12.4	13.0	12.4
23 years	14.4	12.5	13.7	12.5
24 years	14.7	12.5	13.7	12.6
25 years	14.7	12.6	14.4	12.6
26 years	14.6	12.6	14.5	12.7
27 years	14.3	12.7	14.6	12.9
28 years	14.7	12.7	14.5	12.9
29 years	14.5	12.7	14.5	12.9
30-34 years	13.3	12.7	13.8	12.8
35-44 years	12.4	12.5	12.6	12.8
45-54 years	12.2	12.4	12.1	12.5
55-64 years	12.4	12.5	8.4	12.5
65 years and over.....	12.2	10.1	12.1	11.3
Percent who completed 16 years or more of school				
Total.....	14.2	9.1	17.2	18.2
Under 20 years	0.2	-	-	-
20 years	0.9	0.2	0.7	0.8
21 years	10.7	0.7	5.2	0.1
22 years	32.0	2.1	17.8	2.4
23 years	35.3	3.3	25.3	2.1
24 years	40.7	4.0	28.0	6.2
25 years	41.3	7.7	34.3	7.2
26 years	40.3	11.0	35.7	11.6
27 years	37.6	10.0	39.8	19.8
28 years	42.2	13.3	39.6	23.6
29 years	40.0	15.1	34.0	21.0
30-34 years	34.2	13.2	34.7	21.1
35-44 years	19.9	9.3	23.9	21.7
45-54 years	11.0	10.2	16.0	19.9
55-64 years	18.1	12.1	2.2	19.0
65 years and over.....	10.3	7.9	7.2	16.4

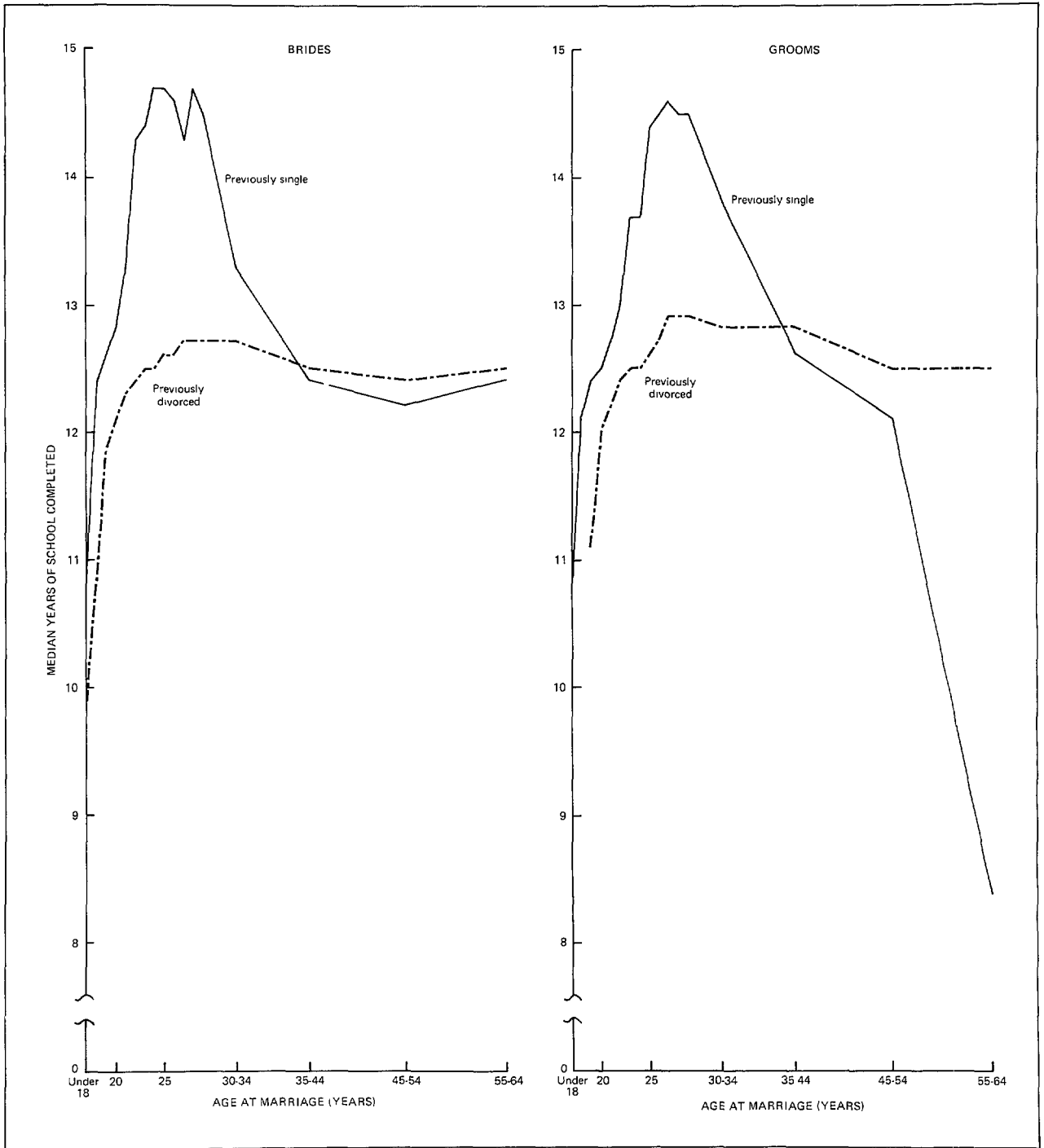


Figure 13. Median years of school completed by previously single (never-married) and previously divorced brides and grooms; by age at marriage: 11 selected States, 1975

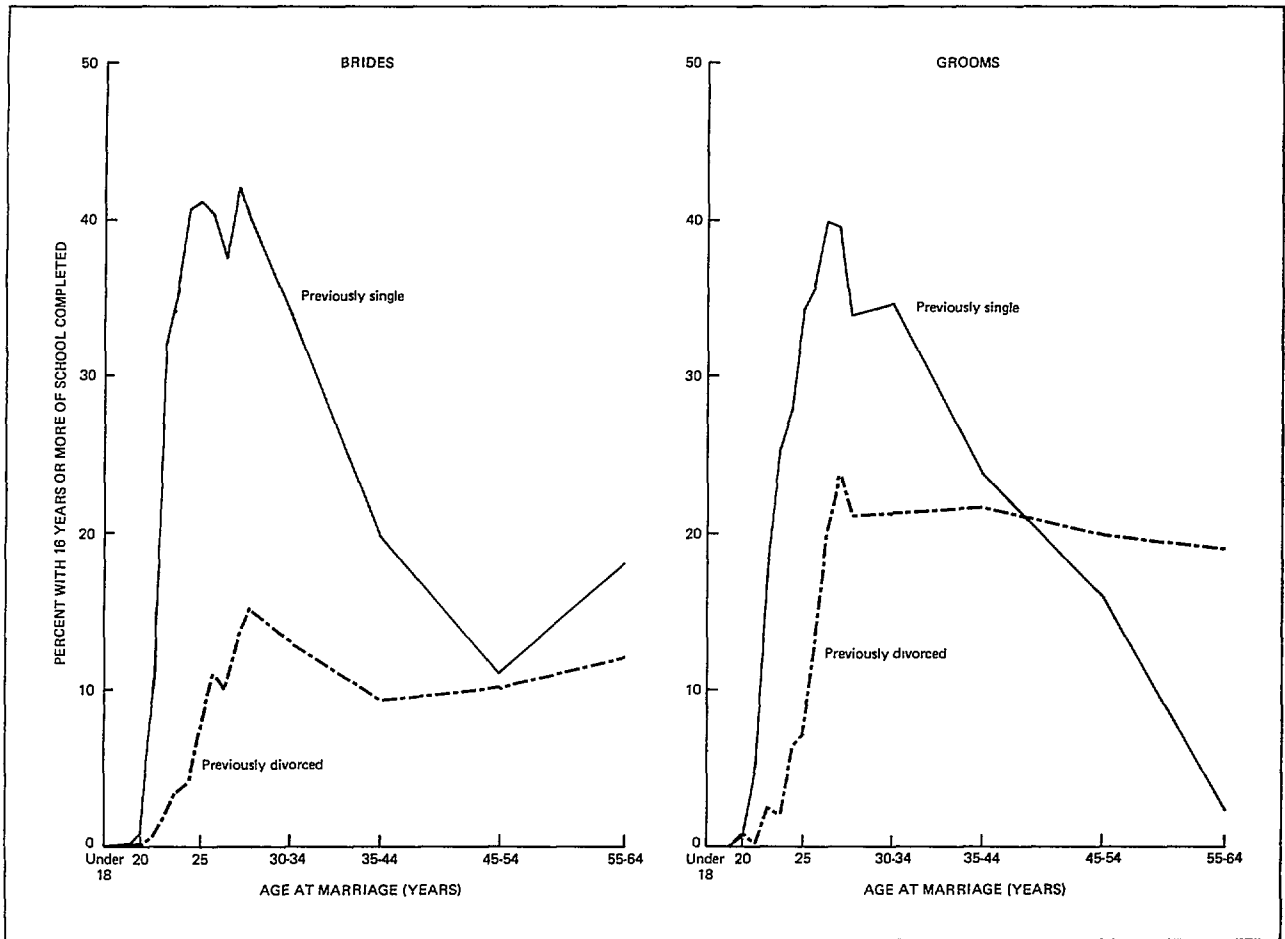


Figure 14. Percent of previously single (never-married) and previously divorced brides and grooms who completed 16 years or more of school (equivalent to college graduation), by age at marriage: 11 selected States, 1975

Table R. Median age at first marriage for brides and grooms, by years of school completed: 11 selected States, 1970 and 1975

[Based on sample data. Median age computed on single years of age. Selected States are California, Hawaii, Kansas, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia]

Years of school completed	Bride		Groom	
	1975	1970	1975	1970
	Median age			
Total	20.7	20.4	22.7	22.4
0-8 years	21.0	21.3	24.5	24.4
9-11 years	18.0	17.8	20.2	20.5
12 years	19.9	19.9	21.7	21.8
13-15 years	21.4	21.1	23.1	22.2
16 years	23.7	23.2	25.0	23.9
More than 16 years	26.0	24.9	26.9	26.3

Table S. Percent of all marriages that were first marriages, by years of school completed by brides and grooms: 11 selected States, 1970 and 1975

[Based on sample data. Selected States are California, Hawaii, Kansas, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont and Virginia]

Sex and years of school completed	1975	1970
<u>Bride</u>		
	Percent	
Total	69.6	75.1
0-8 years	51.5	49.2
9-11 years	66.6	71.0
12 years	68.7	74.2
13-15 years	73.2	83.3
16 years or more	78.3	84.9
<u>Groom</u>		
Total	68.7	75.4
0-8 years	49.2	51.7
9-11 years	68.9	74.6
12 years	70.2	75.7
13-15 years	72.8	83.2
16 years or more	67.7	76.9

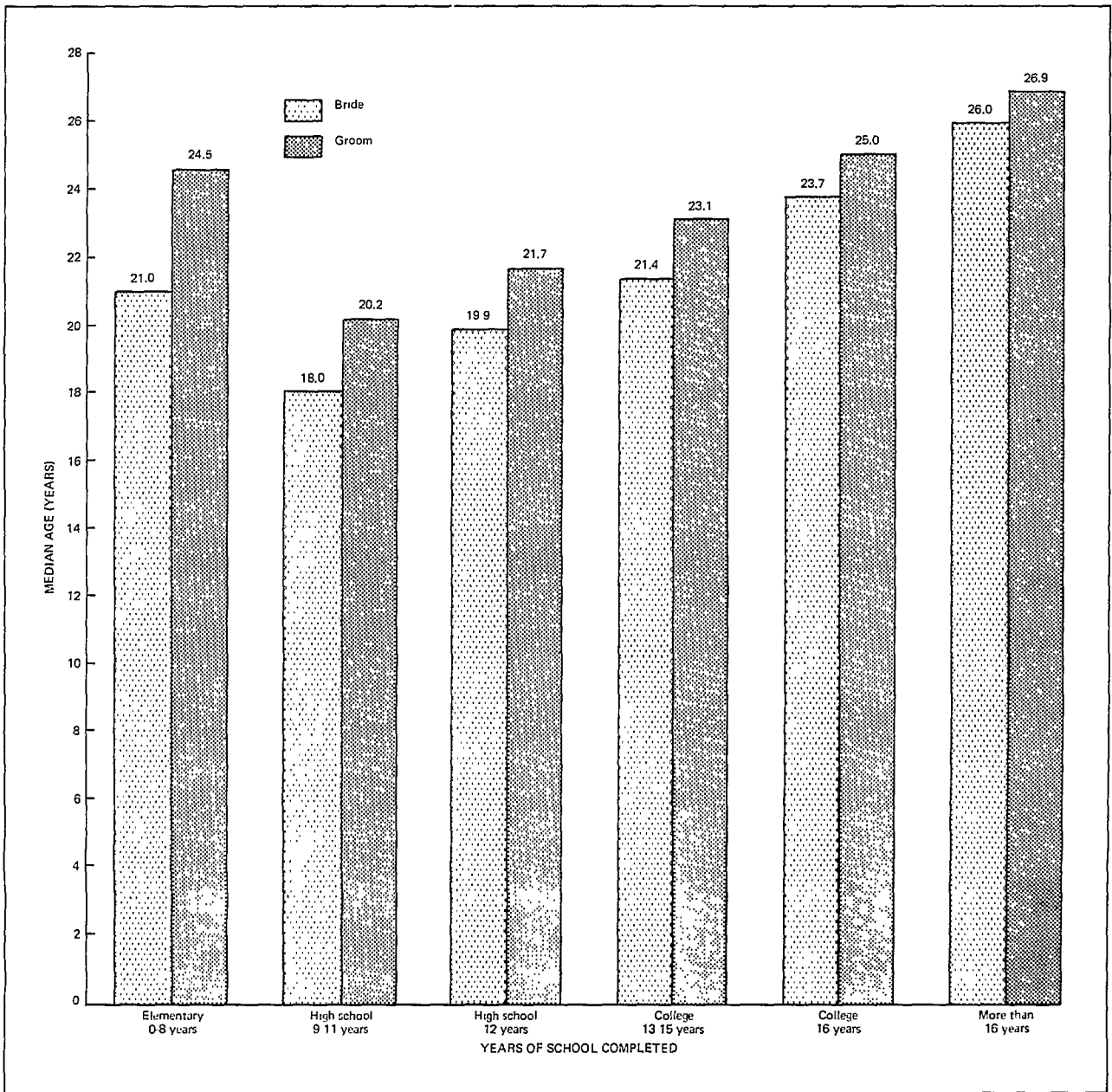


Figure 15. Median age of bride and groom at first marriage, by years of school completed: 11 selected States, 1975



LIST OF DETAILED TABLES

1. Number of first marriages for brides and grooms: Marriage-registration area and each registration State, 1968-76.....	29
2. First marriage rates by sex, with percent change: Marriage-registration area and each registration State, 1960 and 1970.....	31
3. First marriage rates by sex and age: Marriage-registration area, 1968-76.....	32
4. Median, mean, and modal age at first marriage of bride and of groom and at first marriage of both bride and groom (primary marriages): Marriage-registration area, 1968-76.....	33
5. Number of first marriages of both bride and groom (primary marriages) and percent distribution of grooms married to younger brides, brides of the same age, and older brides, by age of groom: Marriage-registration area, 1976.....	33
6. Median age and first and third quartiles of age of previously single (never-married) brides and grooms, by previous marital status of spouse: Marriage-registration area, 1976.....	34
7. Percent distribution of first marriages by race and age of bride and groom: Reporting States 1970-75.....	35

Table 1. Number of first marriages for brides and grooms: Marriage-registration area and each registration State, 1968-76

[Based on sample data]

State	Brides								
	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968
Marriage-registration area.....	1,162,528	1,190,562	1,271,284	1,330,868	1,363,929	1,308,536	1,251,802	1,258,013	1,225,041
Alabama.....	29,070	28,280	30,980	33,120	35,100	34,480	34,390	34,950	33,680
Alaska.....	2,818	2,727	2,335	2,413	2,358	2,195	2,119	1,989	1,891
California.....	107,680	108,260	115,080	122,120	127,740	122,400	127,780	127,480	122,020
Connecticut.....	16,995	17,190	18,680	19,985	19,485	18,785	19,880	19,880	19,390
Delaware.....	2,864	2,950	3,173	3,293	3,459	3,645	3,456	3,261	3,184
District of Columbia.....	3,532	3,348	4,004	4,516	5,278	5,662	5,906	6,562	6,684
Florida.....	48,774	49,259	53,892	54,377	50,644	48,260	44,860	42,190	40,610
Georgia.....	36,840	35,040	38,720	43,060	43,060	40,480	41,220	41,680	40,780
Hawaii.....	6,706	6,712	6,826	6,992	7,242	7,340	8,286	7,822	7,298
Idaho.....	7,580	7,445	7,485	7,215	7,195	7,030	6,735	6,375	6,505
Illinois.....	75,540	78,100	83,000	84,540	85,860	¹ 74,480	83,780	83,380	81,120
Indiana.....	35,630	36,040	39,390	40,450	42,560	40,400	40,990	40,800	39,320
Iowa.....	² 11,420	20,100	21,630	21,745	21,770	20,660	19,720	19,870	20,315
Kansas.....	15,445	16,150	16,940	17,355	17,540	17,050	16,675	16,770	16,475
Kentucky.....	22,960	22,930	23,590	25,110	26,510	27,580	28,370	28,410	26,100
Louisiana.....	¹ 24,680	¹ 24,590	² 25,900	² 27,215	² 27,000	² 25,315	² 24,785	² 24,790	² 24,445
Maine.....	7,654	7,708	8,334	8,586	8,824	³ 7,906	8,306	7,940	7,850
Maryland.....	30,960	31,280	32,600	33,890	36,630	38,350	39,570	40,440	39,610
Massachusetts.....	32,260	33,190	35,450	38,010	39,870	39,690	39,960	40,050	38,610
Michigan.....	58,240	58,220	62,540	67,940	70,760	69,840	69,500	70,680	69,160
Minnesota.....	24,290	24,990	26,330	26,170	26,020	24,650	...	...	...
Mississippi.....	17,410	17,150	18,910	19,890	19,995	20,310	18,805	19,015	18,390
Missouri.....	33,079	33,352	35,700	36,730	38,130	37,060	36,650	36,750	35,890
Montana.....	5,132	5,114	5,600	5,792	5,766	5,390	5,322	5,024	4,762
Nebraska.....	9,775	9,776	10,685	11,075	11,250	11,595	12,040	11,775	11,005
New Hampshire.....	5,483	5,811	6,116	6,416	6,764	6,730	6,950	7,108	6,760
New Jersey.....	39,720	41,240	45,000	47,610	47,320	46,700	45,220	46,620	45,490
New York.....	104,731	111,038	116,780	124,160	133,320	133,540	133,220	134,300	132,200
North Carolina.....	30,290	30,110	33,670	35,880	38,940	37,530	38,750	40,440	39,700
Ohio.....	67,040	71,620	76,720	73,100	73,340	69,680	70,340	68,520	67,740
Oregon.....	12,555	13,060	14,150	14,090	14,520	13,315	12,940	12,995	12,360
Pennsylvania.....	¹ 64,020	¹ 63,580	² 62,780	² 66,160	² 66,160	² 61,340	² 62,960	² 67,600	² 66,340
Rhode Island.....	5,347	5,281	5,822	6,376	6,500	6,118	6,332	6,292	6,096
South Carolina.....	31,987	32,456	36,020	39,810	42,190	40,570	...	...	...
South Dakota.....	7,000	6,820	7,576	7,996	8,136	7,708	7,832	7,818	7,386
Tennessee.....	31,500	31,000	34,750	38,630	39,770	35,870	31,440	30,970	30,650
Utah.....	11,725	12,150	12,436	12,454	11,544	10,510	10,038	9,702	8,560
Vermont.....	3,187	3,329	3,469	3,894	3,971	3,974	3,699	3,671	3,530
Virginia.....	37,316	38,280	39,920	42,450	40,720	38,020	38,050	39,540	39,620
West Virginia.....	12,085	12,590	13,015	14,075	14,500	13,205	12,410	12,375	12,130
Wisconsin.....	28,650	29,580	32,370	33,470	33,520	30,510	30,280	30,170	28,910
Wyoming.....	² 2,778	² 2,716	² 2,916	² 2,708	² 2,668	² 2,303	² 2,236	² 2,009	² 2,475

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Number of first marriages for brides and grooms: Marriage-registration area and each registration State, 1968-76—Con.

[Based on sample data]

State	Grooms								
	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968
Marriage-registration area.....	1,132,320	1,169,029	1,252,770	1,317,466	1,351,500	1,299,337	1,247,366	1,257,357	1,225,232
Alabama.....	28,260	27,440	30,500	32,280	34,500	34,740	34,320	34,890	33,650
Alaska.....	2,761	2,710	2,368	2,389	2,380	2,242	2,160	1,997	1,934
California.....	104,220	106,960	114,200	121,500	127,460	121,720	127,340	128,100	121,620
Connecticut.....	16,405	16,640	18,425	19,470	19,090	18,465	19,690	19,470	19,110
Delaware.....	2,780	2,892	3,108	3,255	3,432	3,639	3,470	3,278	3,146
District of Columbia.....	3,172	3,130	3,686	4,186	5,022	5,448	5,724	6,252	6,354
Florida.....	47,118	47,870	52,540	53,444	49,938	48,360	44,540	42,310	40,510
Georgia.....	36,680	35,500	39,140	44,020	44,040	41,800	41,920	42,760	41,680
Hawaii.....	6,530	6,546	6,676	7,010	7,106	7,214	8,352	7,914	7,252
Idaho.....	7,430	7,390	7,715	7,290	7,445	7,105	6,765	6,765	6,910
Illinois.....	73,080	77,460	81,700	83,740	84,640	¹ 73,240	83,360	83,320	81,140
Indiana.....	34,480	36,260	39,480	40,280	42,250	40,170	41,290	41,000	40,250
Iowa.....	² 11,350	19,500	21,205	21,595	21,370	20,565	19,455	19,620	19,995
Kansas.....	15,445	16,305	17,120	17,575	17,535	16,930	16,780	17,125	16,935
Kentucky.....	22,550	22,230	23,150	24,420	26,610	27,370	28,580	28,470	25,850
Louisiana.....	¹ 23,940	¹ 24,260	² 25,655	¹ 27,430	¹ 27,070	² 25,295	¹ 25,050	¹ 24,905	¹ 24,340
Maine.....	7,544	7,532	8,310	8,630	8,856	³ 7,834	8,316	7,974	7,870
Maryland.....	29,600	30,420	31,810	33,480	35,750	37,420	39,400	40,340	39,540
Massachusetts.....	31,120	32,180	35,030	37,320	39,190	39,000	39,130	39,480	38,400
Michigan.....	55,020	56,180	61,200	66,740	69,260	69,500	68,740	69,860	69,880
Minnesota.....	24,190	25,000	26,500	26,520	26,070	25,180	...	...	...
Mississippi.....	17,320	16,950	18,715	19,675	20,185	20,050	18,505	19,150	18,530
Missouri.....	32,053	32,540	34,910	35,850	37,240	35,870	35,720	37,040	35,650
Montana.....	5,170	5,192	5,646	5,716	5,802	5,472	5,404	5,050	4,886
Nebraska.....	9,770	9,706	10,485	10,845	11,135	11,720	12,120	11,885	11,185
New Hampshire.....	5,319	5,710	6,090	6,344	6,684	6,636	6,948	7,112	6,874
New Jersey.....	38,180	39,640	43,300	46,390	46,340	45,700	45,100	45,800	44,400
New York.....	100,687	107,231	113,700	121,820	130,580	130,720	131,420	131,880	130,360
North Carolina.....	30,090	30,050	33,570	36,020	39,130	38,260	39,170	40,690	40,120
Ohio.....	65,320	70,460	74,680	72,280	73,320	67,740	69,440	68,920	67,100
Oregon.....	12,310	12,950	13,085	13,790	14,095	13,100	12,800	12,750	12,215
Pennsylvania.....	¹ 62,560	¹ 62,220	² 61,500	² 64,440	² 64,160	² 60,520	² 61,660	² 67,360	² 65,860
Rhode Island.....	5,170	5,179	5,740	6,242	6,480	6,074	6,338	6,240	6,160
South Carolina.....	32,005	32,608	35,790	40,440	42,620	41,290	...	...	...
South Dakota.....	6,790	6,915	7,592	7,962	8,094	7,760	7,844	7,886	7,522
Tennessee.....	30,780	31,000	34,700	38,140	39,790	36,330	32,080	31,720	31,410
Utah.....	11,855	12,010	12,500	12,544	11,742	10,622	10,180	9,784	8,594
Vermont.....	3,163	3,244	3,400	3,786	3,921	3,971	3,657	3,666	3,520
Virginia.....	36,847	36,900	39,710	42,350	40,530	38,320	38,610	39,830	40,510
West Virginia.....	11,840	12,155	12,855	13,765	14,370	13,030	12,425	12,310	12,100
Wisconsin.....	28,570	29,270	32,330	33,740	33,510	30,530	30,240	30,410	29,290
Wyoming.....	² 2,846	² 2,694	² 2,954	² 2,753	² 2,758	² 2,385	² 2,323	² 2,044	¹ 2,580

¹Marriage order was not stated for 5.0-9.9 percent of the marriages in this State.

²Marriage order was not stated for 10.0 percent or more of the marriages in this State.

³Sample was 6.7 percent low.

Table 2. First marriage rates by sex, with percent change: Marriage-registration area and each registration State, 1960 and 1970

[Based on sample data. Rates are first marriages per 1,000 single population 15-44 years of age]

Area	Women			Men		
	1970	1960	Percent change, 1960 to 1970	1970	1960	Percent change, 1960 to 1970
Marriage registration area	95.9	105.3	-8.9	79.8	80.6	-1.0
Northeast:						
Maine.....	140.3	137.5	+2.0	109.9	94.6	+16.2
New Hampshire.....	152.8	187.6	-18.6	120.4	135.4	-11.1
Vermont.....	118.9	130.3	-8.7	97.4	97.8	-0.4
Massachusetts.....	89.9	—	...	80.0	—	...
Rhode Island.....	95.4	102.8	-7.2	70.6	71.8	-1.7
Connecticut.....	95.2	105.0	-9.3	80.6	82.9	-2.8
New York.....	98.1	—	...	86.5	—	...
New Jersey.....	96.5	105.0	-8.1	81.7	80.4	+1.6
Pennsylvania.....	92.1	95.8	-3.9	81.1	81.4	-0.4
North Central:						
Ohio.....	100.2	107.7	-7.0	86.5	87.0	-0.6
Indiana.....	132.1	—	...	108.5	—	...
Illinois.....	115.8	—	...	96.2	—	...
Michigan.....	117.9	121.4	-2.9	98.0	96.0	+2.1
Wisconsin.....	97.4	108.8	-10.5	82.2	84.2	-2.4
Iowa.....	115.5	155.5	-25.7	95.7	119.8	-20.1
Missouri.....	130.0	—	...	106.3	—	...
South Dakota.....	177.3	146.1	+21.4	138.5	99.4	+39.3
Nebraska.....	126.7	135.3	-6.4	104.7	96.8	+8.2
Kansas.....	125.0	137.9	-9.4	94.9	90.7	+4.6
South:						
Delaware.....	98.0	92.4	+6.1	81.2	69.1	+17.5
Maryland.....	152.8	206.7	-26.1	124.9	147.0	-15.0
District of Columbia.....	72.1	—	...	70.9	—	...
Virginia.....	129.9	147.0	-11.6	95.3	98.9	-3.6
West Virginia.....	111.3	—	...	92.7	—	...
North Carolina.....	120.7	—	...	89.5	—	...
Georgia.....	150.3	184.5	-18.5	114.3	132.4	-13.7
Florida.....	118.9	129.0	-7.8	91.8	87.0	+5.5
Kentucky.....	153.1	135.8	+12.7	112.1	91.3	+22.8
Tennessee.....	133.8	131.7	+1.6	107.3	96.2	+11.5
Alabama.....	163.1	145.6	+12.0	132.2	109.4	+20.8
Mississippi.....	133.2	137.4	-3.1	103.7	97.0	+6.9
Louisiana.....	113.8	112.2	+1.4	93.3	86.9	+7.4
West:						
Montana.....	125.2	147.0	-14.8	95.8	94.3	+1.6
Idaho.....	166.8	237.6	-29.8	121.4	165.7	-26.7
Wyoming.....	157.8	162.5	-2.9	113.7	106.7	+6.6
Colorado.....	122.9	—	...	96.8	—	...
Utah.....	135.1	137.7	-1.9	116.5	106.4	+9.5
Oregon.....	101.6	107.5	-5.5	82.2	81.7	+0.6
California.....	98.9	115.4	-14.3	73.2	75.3	-2.8
Alaska.....	146.1	161.6	-9.6	66.5	45.4	+46.5
Hawaii.....	148.7	110.1	+35.1	98.0	64.0	+53.1

Table 3. First marriage rates by sex and age: Marriage-registration area, 1968-76

[Based on sample data. For States in the marriage-registration area, 1968-76, see table II in appendix]

Sex and age	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968
Women, all ages.....	64.8	68.1	74.8	81.0	84.5	82.8	82.9	87.9	88.0
Under 18 years.....	19.8	21.7	25.2	27.2	28.3	26.2	25.6	25.4	25.0
18 years.....	98.4	110.6	130.1	137.2	145.3	139.1	136.2	142.2	140.8
19 years.....	112.7	120.3	137.6	154.0	159.8	163.5	169.8	180.7	180.8
20 years.....	119.3	125.4	148.2	157.8	166.7	180.6	192.7	209.0	209.0
21 years.....	128.4	142.5	158.1	184.6	206.0	204.1	233.3	254.1	257.8
22 years.....	144.1	166.0	177.8	203.4	215.3	219.7	253.0	262.8	273.4
23 years.....	155.3	156.8	169.5	180.3	202.4	215.2	231.4	244.3	225.6
24 years.....	137.0	145.8	150.3	169.0	194.6	176.8	197.3	195.6	194.1
25 years.....	121.6	124.6	138.7	173.6	161.5	166.4	161.6	169.3	182.2
26 years.....	110.7	127.1	142.0	136.5	148.0	133.3	146.4	143.0	153.9
27 years.....	108.6	106.9	102.0	131.4	120.9	110.7	127.9	151.6	167.4
28 years.....	99.5	99.2	107.5	104.2	106.9	121.0	105.7	130.0	140.5
29 years.....	90.1	99.3	99.7	100.2	102.1	101.0	93.3	116.6	130.7
30-34 years.....	67.2	62.4	66.2	74.5	76.5	75.0	66.5	76.3	---
35-44 years.....	30.0	31.8	35.0	41.1	39.9	37.6	31.4	35.8	---
45-64 years.....	9.3	9.2	9.6	11.3	10.8	9.5	8.8	9.9	10.4
65 years and over.....	1.1	1.1	0.8	1.0	1.1	1.4	1.1	0.9	1.1
Men, all ages.....	53.1	56.0	61.8	66.8	69.7	67.9	72.1	73.8	73.8
Under 18 years.....	3.2	3.4	4.2	4.4	4.4	4.1	3.9	3.6	3.4
18 years.....	38.8	45.0	52.7	56.6	59.0	53.9	54.6	56.7	53.7
19 years.....	64.4	71.4	81.9	89.2	94.0	90.4	94.6	96.8	95.8
20 years.....	85.4	94.4	109.3	119.0	127.1	121.6	129.9	136.4	137.5
21 years.....	109.5	120.0	139.3	159.9	173.5	166.6	198.0	198.5	206.4
22 years.....	126.8	132.9	158.8	174.2	184.0	183.6	224.9	224.4	238.1
23 years.....	132.6	147.6	164.9	178.7	190.8	196.3	249.3	238.9	229.2
24 years.....	131.7	135.2	167.6	173.0	183.3	191.6	235.9	200.3	215.4
25 years.....	135.8	144.8	155.9	177.6	178.2	187.4	208.8	218.1	206.0
26 years.....	129.3	134.7	146.8	149.0	188.6	171.4	189.2	197.4	197.8
27 years.....	114.8	134.9	135.6	161.1	173.4	152.4	175.1	189.8	178.6
28 years.....	105.9	109.2	143.0	134.6	136.4	139.7	160.9	150.6	172.1
29 years.....	98.0	129.1	102.5	116.4	133.9	114.7	145.6	152.0	154.0
30-34 years.....	72.8	78.2	83.3	98.0	87.3	80.6	98.8	102.6	---
35-44 years.....	39.3	37.2	37.4	41.4	41.9	43.8	44.7	47.1	---
45-64 years.....	12.4	13.0	12.6	15.6	16.5	14.6	14.1	13.8	14.9
65 years and over.....	3.1	3.0	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.2	3.4	2.7	3.6

Table 4. Median, mean, and modal age at first marriage of bride and of groom and at first marriage of both bride and groom (primary marriage): Marriage-registration area, 1968-76

[Based on sample data]

Year	First marriage						First marriage for both bride and groom (primary marriage)					
	Median age		Mean age		Modal age		Median age		Mean age		Modal age	
	Bride	Groom	Bride	Groom	Bride	Groom	Bride	Groom	Bride	Groom	Bride	Groom
1976	21.0	22.9	22.1	24.1	19	21	20.7	22.5	21.4	23.4	18	21
1975	20.8	22.7	21.9	24.0	18	21	20.5	22.4	21.3	23.3	18	21
1974	20.6	22.5	21.7	23.8	18	21	20.3	22.2	21.1	23.1	18	21
1973	20.6	22.5	21.7	23.8	18	21	20.3	22.2	21.1	23.1	18	21
1972	20.5	22.4	21.6	23.7	18	21	20.3	22.1	21.1	23.1	18	21
1971	20.5	22.5	21.6	23.7	18	21	20.3	22.2	21.1	23.1	18	21
1970	20.6	22.5	21.6	23.8	19	21	20.4	22.3	21.1	23.1	19	21
1969	20.6	22.4	21.6	23.8	19	22	20.4	22.2	21.2	23.2	19	22
1968	20.6	22.4	21.6	23.8	19	21	20.4	22.1	21.2	23.3	19	21

Table 5. Number of first marriages of both bride and groom (primary marriages) and percent distribution of grooms married to younger brides, brides of the same age, and older brides, by age of groom: Marriage-registration area, 1976

[Based on sample data]

Age of groom	Primary marriages	Total	Groom married to—		
			Younger bride	Bride of same age	Older bride
	Number		Percent distribution		
Total	983,005	100.0	70.5	15.2	14.3
Under 18 years.....	22,947	100.0	36.8	27.3	35.9
18 years	66,610	100.0	43.6	31.8	24.6
19 years	100,345	100.0	59.1	22.5	18.4
20 years	115,288	100.0	66.9	18.2	14.9
21 years	124,011	100.0	69.1	15.9	15.1
22 years	120,373	100.0	69.6	16.7	13.7
23 years	101,894	100.0	74.4	14.0	11.6
24 years	78,776	100.0	78.3	11.0	10.7
25 years	61,178	100.0	79.8	9.6	10.6
26 years	46,841	100.0	82.2	7.5	10.3
27 years	34,440	100.0	84.4	6.1	9.4
28 years	25,905	100.0	86.0	5.6	8.4
29 years	20,667	100.0	86.0	5.5	8.5
30 years	13,351	100.0	87.9	2.7	9.4
31 years	9,010	100.0	87.7	2.7	9.6
32 years	6,943	100.0	88.7	3.1	8.2
33 years	6,123	100.0	87.9	3.0	9.1
34 years	4,281	100.0	88.6	4.4	7.0
35 years and over.....	24,022	100.0	86.4	2.6	10.9

Table 6. Median age and first and third quartiles of age of previously single (never-married) brides and grooms, by previous marital status of spouse: Marriage-registration area, 1976

[Based on sample data]

Sex and previous marital status of spouse	Age of bride	Age of groom
<u>Previously single brides</u>		
First quartile of age		
All grooms	19.0	20.8
Single grooms	18.8	20.5
Divorced grooms.....	20.5	25.9
Widowed grooms	25.0	35.8
<u>Previously single grooms</u>		
All brides	19.1	20.7
Single brides	18.8	20.5
Divorced brides.....	23.4	23.1
Widowed brides	28.4	27.2
<u>Previously single brides</u>		
Median age		
All grooms	21.0	23.2
Single grooms	20.7	22.5
Divorced grooms.....	23.4	29.5
Widowed grooms	35.0	49.1
<u>Previously single grooms</u>		
All brides	21.2	22.9
Single brides	20.7	22.5
Divorced brides.....	26.6	26.2
Widowed brides	38.4	36.0
<u>Previously single brides</u>		
Third quartile of age		
All grooms	23.6	26.6
Single grooms	23.0	25.1
Divorced grooms.....	27.2	34.8
Widowed grooms	49.0	62.4
<u>Previously single grooms</u>		
All brides	24.0	25.8
Single brides	23.0	25.1
Divorced brides.....	30.8	30.3
Widowed brides	51.6	49.7

Table 7. Percent distribution of first marriages by race and age of bride and groom: Reporting States, 1970-75

[Based on sample data. A list of reporting States appears in table II]

Race and age	Bride						Groom					
	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970
White	Percent distribution											
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 18 years.....	15.8	16.7	16.8	16.9	16.3	14.9	3.0	3.2	3.2	3.0	2.9	2.6
18-19 years	29.7	30.8	31.2	31.1	31.1	30.7	18.7	19.8	20.0	19.7	18.9	17.8
20-24 years	42.5	41.4	41.3	41.8	43.5	45.3	53.3	53.5	54.1	55.3	57.7	58.6
25-29 years	8.6	7.8	7.4	6.9	6.1	6.1	17.6	16.8	16.0	15.5	14.3	14.7
30-34 years	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.3	4.1	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.2	3.2
35-44 years	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.1
45 years and over	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Black												
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 18 years.....	11.0	13.4	13.9	15.7	15.6	15.7	1.0	1.4	1.7	1.9	1.8	2.1
18-19 years	24.9	25.2	26.9	27.6	27.2	26.2	13.6	15.3	16.3	17.0	16.9	16.9
20-24 years	40.4	39.8	39.7	38.4	39.4	40.0	48.9	50.3	51.8	52.8	53.4	51.2
25-29 years	13.8	12.3	10.8	9.9	9.2	9.5	21.1	18.5	17.3	15.9	15.8	17.0
30-34 years	4.4	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.4	7.0	6.6	6.0	5.2	4.9	5.7
35-44 years	3.5	3.7	3.2	3.0	3.2	3.2	5.1	5.2	4.4	4.6	4.5	4.4
45 years and over	2.0	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.9	3.2	2.7	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.7
Other												
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 18 years.....	8.4	8.5	8.5	8.3	7.5	7.2	1.1	1.1	2.0	1.2	1.3	0.7
18-19 years	19.3	17.3	18.9	18.7	19.4	19.3	11.7	11.4	11.8	10.9	12.5	11.3
20-24 years	42.0	43.5	43.6	43.9	46.1	48.9	38.8	39.3	41.3	42.4	40.7	41.3
25-29 years	21.9	21.6	20.3	20.5	18.8	17.1	31.9	31.9	29.4	28.6	28.4	28.1
30-34 years	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.4	4.7	4.3	9.9	10.4	9.6	10.0	10.1	10.8
35-44 years	2.4	3.4	2.8	2.5	3.0	2.7	5.5	4.3	4.1	4.8	4.5	5.3
45 years and over	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.6	1.1	1.5	1.9	2.1	2.5	2.5

APPENDIX

CONTENTS

Technical Notes	37
Sources of Data	37
Marriage Sample	37
Estimating Procedures	37
Information Not Stated	38
Standard Errors	38
Incomplete Reporting	38

LIST OF APPENDIX TABLES

I. Number of marriages in marriage sample and sampling errors of estimated frequency expressed as a percent of area total: Marriage-registration area, 1968-76	38
II. States in the marriage-registration area that have race as an item on marriage records, 1968-75	39

APPENDIX

TECHNICAL NOTES

The marriage statistics presented in this report were derived primarily from data published annually by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) in *Vital Statistics of the United States*, volume III. Population data were obtained, as indicated in the text, from the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

The following notes give a technical explanation of the data analyzed here. A complete discussion of technical aspects of the marriage data published each year by NCHS appears in the appendix of the appropriate annual vital statistics volume. Similar explanations and discussions accompany the population enumerations and estimates published by the Bureau of the Census.

Sources of Data

Marriage data for the United States (the 50 States and the District of Columbia) and the marriage-registration area (MRA) refer to events occurring during the calendar year and registered within the specified areas. Tabulations for States and other areas are by place of occurrence and include events occurring to nonresidents of the areas. Marriages of members of the Armed Forces or other U.S. nationals that occur outside the United States are excluded.

Since its inception in 1957, the MRA has expanded from 30 States to 41 States and the District of Columbia. Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have been a part of the MRA since 1957, but are not included in this report. States in the MRA maintain central files of marriage records and reporting forms that conform closely in content with the U.S. Standard Certificate of Marriage. The statistical items are reported with sufficient completeness to warrant collection, processing, and publication of the data in the

official U.S. annual reports. From 1968 to 1976 marriages in the MRA accounted for 78-81 percent of all marriages occurring in the United States.

Marriage Sample

Marriage records were sampled at different rates to give a minimum sample of approximately 2,500 records for each State, producing a 4-percent relative variance on a 1-percent estimate. All records were sampled for States with fewer than 5,000 records. Through the Cooperative Health Statistics System, Florida supplied a State-coded computer tape of its marriage records in 1972, and 100 percent were used. This system was expanded to include 10 States in 1976—Florida, Maine, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York (except New York City), Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia.

Estimating Procedures

National first-marriage totals for women and men were estimated from sample data for the MRA. The estimates were computed by multiplying the proportion of first-marrying brides and grooms in the registration area times the unrounded marriage total for the United States in each year from 1968 to 1976. The basic assumption was made that the proportion of first marriages in the registration area was the same as the proportion in the entire country. It is believed, however, that the figures are slightly overestimated, because the proportion of first marriages for States outside of the MRA is known to be slightly lower, with a correspondingly higher proportion of remarriages, than the

proportion in the MRA. The unrounded estimates were used to compute first-marriage rates per 1,000 single population 15-44 years of age for women and men in the United States. Estimates were rounded to the nearest thousand.

Regional estimates used to compute first-marriage rates per 1,000 single population aged 15-44 for women and men were estimated in a similar manner. The proportion of first marriages based on data from the registration States in each region including three States specially sampled in 1970 was applied to the unrounded regional marriage total in 1970. First-marriage totals were available for all States in the Northeast. The North Central Region included all States but Minnesota; the South, all but South Carolina, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas; and in the West, all but New Mexico, Arizona, and Washington.

Information Not Stated

"Not stated" cases arise primarily from lack of responses to items on the reporting forms and from variations in items requested on the forms used by the States in the MRA. For the number of not stated cases of each characteristic for each State, refer to *Vital Statistics of the United States*, volume III of the specified year. Marriage order, indicating whether a person was marrying for the first time or whether he or she was re-marrying, was not stated for either bride or groom for less than 4 percent of all marriages in the MRA between 1968 and 1976. "Not stated" cases were distributed proportionately to obtain State first-marriage totals used in the numerator

of rates shown in table 2. Percent distributions and median ages were computed excluding figures with information not stated.

Standard Errors

Estimates computed from samples vary somewhat about the value that would be obtained from a complete count of the same population. The standard error, or sampling error, is a measure of this sampling variability. On the average, estimates will differ from the corresponding total count by less than the standard error about 68 percent of the time. Approximate standard errors of estimates shown in this report may be obtained from table I.

Incomplete Reporting

The items "race of bride" and "race of groom" do not appear on marriage records for all States in the MRA. Between 1968 and 1975, the item was no longer recorded in some States where it had been previously reported. In table II, reporting States are listed by year.

The data on race in table H show primary marriages (i.e., first marriage of both bride and groom) in the 35 States that reported race in 1975.

In order to analyze changes over time, table J shows data from a uniform group of 33 States that reported both race and marriage order in 1970 and 1975. Figures in table K show data from the expanding MRA from 1970 to 1975. In spite of all the deletions and additions,

Table I. Number of marriages in marriage sample and sampling errors of estimated frequency expressed as a percent of area total: Marriage-registration area, 1968-76

Year	All marriages	Estimated percent										
		1 or 99	2 or 98	3 or 97	4 or 96	5 or 95	7 or 93	10 or 90	15 or 85	20 or 80	25 or 75	50
	Number	Sampling error (standard error) of estimated frequency expressed as percent of area total										
1976.....	1,706,628	424	597	728	836	930	1,088	1,279	1,523	1,706	1,847	2,132
1975.....	1,718,641	448	631	768	883	982	1,149	1,351	1,608	1,802	1,950	2,252
1974.....	1,791,452	459	646	787	904	1,006	1,177	1,384	1,647	1,846	1,998	2,307
1973.....	1,846,501	468	659	803	922	1,026	1,201	1,412	1,681	1,883	2,038	2,353
1972.....	1,848,928	468	658	802	922	1,025	1,200	1,411	1,679	1,881	2,036	2,352
1971.....	1,770,654	471	663	807	927	1,031	1,207	1,420	1,690	1,893	2,049	2,366
1970.....	1,674,104	457	643	783	899	1,000	1,171	1,377	1,639	1,836	1,987	2,295
1969.....	1,660,547	457	643	783	900	1,001	1,172	1,378	1,640	1,837	1,989	2,296
1968.....	1,603,396	450	633	772	886	986	1,154	1,357	1,615	1,809	1,959	2,262

Table II. States in the marriage-registration area that have race as an item on marriage records, 1968-75

["X" denotes presence of race on State certificate]

State	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968
Alabama.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Alaska.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
California.....								
Connecticut.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Delaware.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
District of Columbia.....		1	X	X	X	X	X	X
Florida.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Georgia.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hawaii.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Idaho.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Illinois.....	X	X	X	X	2X	2X	2X	X
Indiana.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Iowa.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Kansas.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Kentucky.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Louisiana.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Maine.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Maryland.....						3X	X	X
Massachusetts.....					4X	X	X	X
Michigan.....								
Minnesota.....	X	X	X	X	X	5	5	5
Mississippi.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Missouri.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Montana.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Nebraska.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
New Hampshire.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
New Jersey.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
New York.....								
North Carolina.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ohio.....								
Oregon.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pennsylvania.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rhode Island.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
South Carolina.....	X	X	X	X	X	5	5	5
South Dakota.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tennessee.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Utah.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Vermont.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Virginia.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
West Virginia.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wisconsin.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wyoming.....	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

¹Race was not reported after July 1, 1974.

²Race was not reported for Cook and DuPage Counties.

³Race was not reported after July 1, 1970.

⁴Race was not reported after November 1971.

⁵South Carolina and Minnesota were not in the marriage-registration area until 1971.

interracial differentials in age at marriage remain. Before 1970, race was not tabulated by marriage order so the analysis does not go back to 1968.

In table M, the States used to compare single to divorced brides and grooms by residence

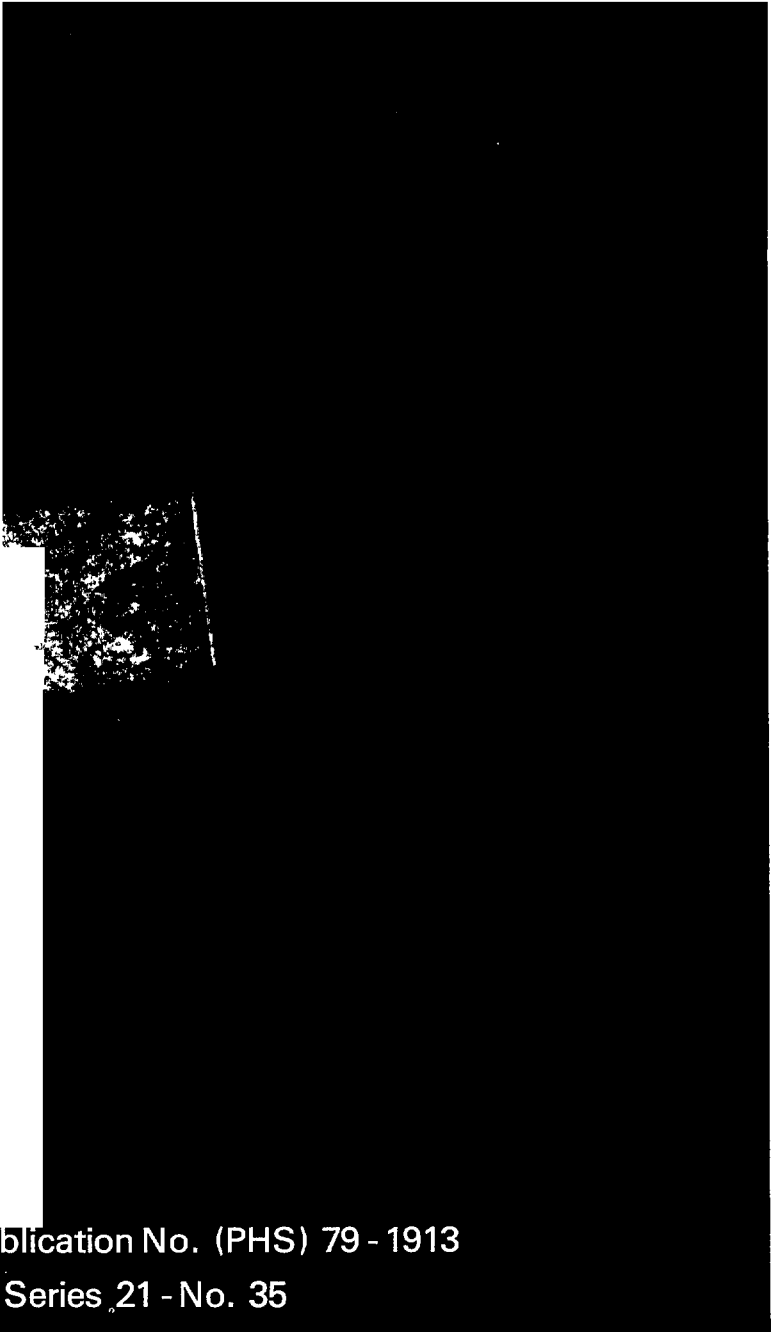
and nativity status are the States in the MRA *except* for Michigan, Ohio, and South Carolina, where previous marital status is not recorded, and the District of Columbia, where State of birth is not recorded.

VITAL AND HEALTH STATISTICS Series

- Series 1. Programs and Collection Procedures.*—Reports which describe the general programs of the National Center for Health Statistics and its offices and divisions and data collection methods used and include definitions and other material necessary for understanding the data.
- Series 2. Data Evaluation and Methods Research.*—Studies of new statistical methodology including experimental tests of new survey methods, studies of vital statistics collection methods, new analytical techniques, objective evaluations of reliability of collected data, and contributions to statistical theory.
- Series 3. Analytical Studies.*—Reports presenting analytical or interpretive studies based on vital and health statistics, carrying the analysis further than the expository types of reports in the other series.
- Series 4. Documents and Committee Reports.*—Final reports of major committees concerned with vital and health statistics and documents such as recommended model vital registration laws and revised birth and death certificates.
- Series 10. Data From the Health Interview Survey.*—Statistics on illness, accidental injuries, disability, use of hospital, medical, dental, and other services, and other health-related topics, all based on data collected in a continuing national household interview survey.
- Series 11. Data From the Health Examination Survey and the Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.*—Data from direct examination, testing, and measurement of national samples of the civilian noninstitutionalized population provide the basis for two types of reports: (1) estimates of the medically defined prevalence of specific diseases in the United States and the distributions of the population with respect to physical, physiological, and psychological characteristics and (2) analysis of relationships among the various measurements without reference to an explicit finite universe of persons.
- Series 12. Data From the Institutionalized Population Surveys.*—Discontinued effective 1975. Future reports from these surveys will be in Series 13.
- Series 13. Data on Health Resources Utilization.*—Statistics on the utilization of health manpower and facilities providing long-term care, ambulatory care, hospital care, and family planning services.
- Series 14. Data on Health Resources: Manpower and Facilities.*—Statistics on the numbers, geographic distribution, and characteristics of health resources including physicians, dentists, nurses, other health occupations, hospitals, nursing homes, and outpatient facilities.
- Series 20. Data on Mortality.*—Various statistics on mortality other than as included in regular annual or monthly reports. Special analyses by cause of death, age, and other demographic variables; geographic and time series analyses; and statistics on characteristics of deaths not available from the vital records based on sample surveys of those records.
- Series 21. Data on Natality, Marriage, and Divorce.*—Various statistics on natality, marriage, and divorce other than as included in regular annual or monthly reports. Special analyses by demographic variables; geographic and time series analyses; studies of fertility; and statistics on characteristics of births not available from the vital records based on sample surveys of those records.
- Series 22. Data From the National Mortality and Natality Surveys.*—Discontinued effective 1975. Future reports from these sample surveys based on vital records will be included in Series 20 and 21, respectively.
- Series 23. Data From the National Survey of Family Growth.*—Statistics on fertility, family formation and dissolution, family planning, and related maternal and infant health topics derived from a biennial survey of a nationwide probability sample of ever-married women 15-44 years of age.

For a list of titles of reports published in these series, write to:

Scientific and Technical Information Branch
National Center for Health Statistics
Public Health Service
Hyattsville, Md. 20782



DHEW Publication No. (PHS) 79 - 1913

Series 21 - No. 35

NCHS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
Public Health Service
Office of Health Research, Statistics, and Technology
National Center for Health Statistics
3700 East West Highway
Hyattsville, Maryland 20782

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

For publication in the
Vital and Health Statistics
Series call 301 430 NCHS

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEW
HEW 396



THIRD CLASS