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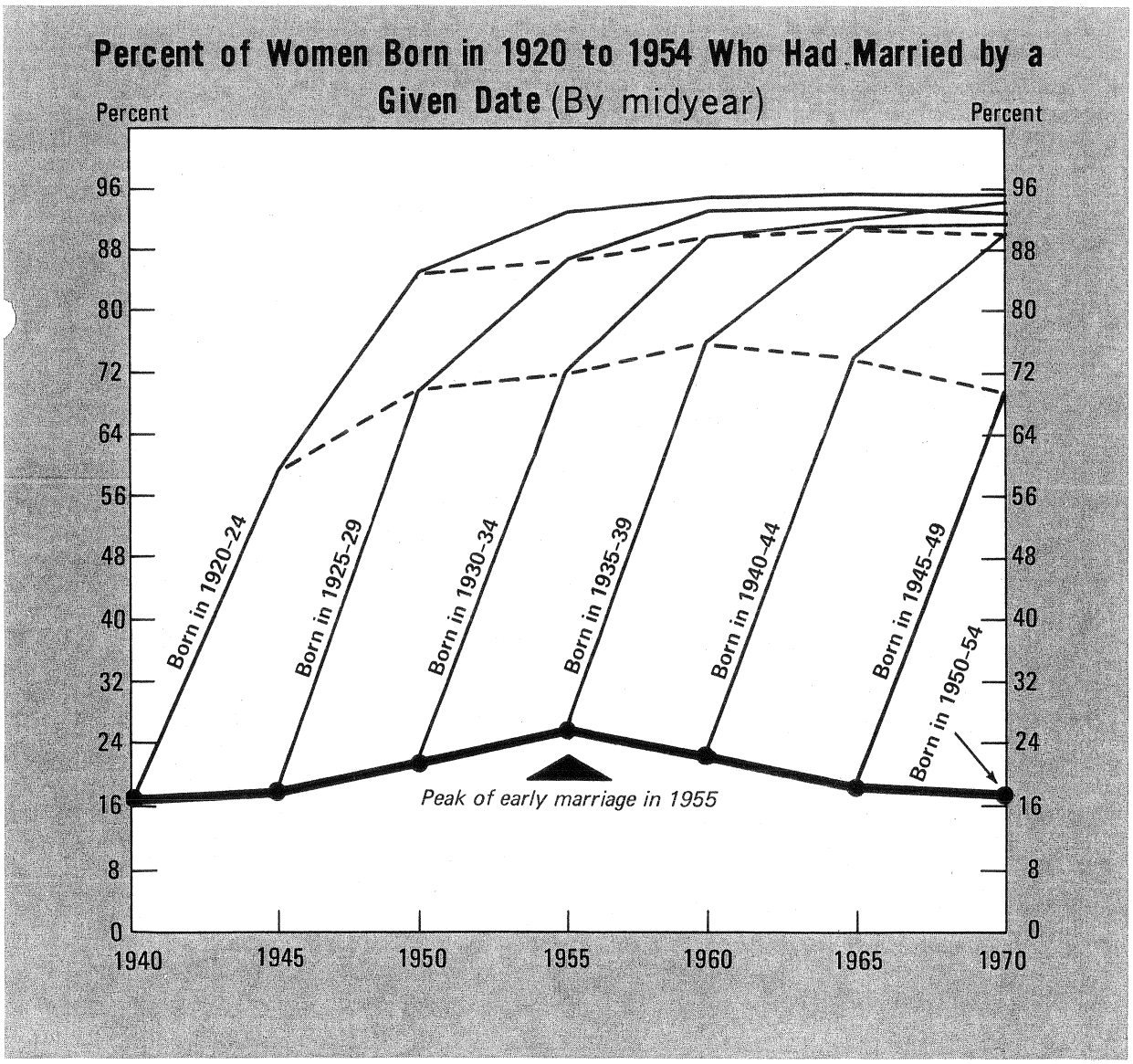
MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE BY YEAR OF BIRTH: JUNE 1971



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MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE BY YEAR OF BIRTH: JUNE 1971

INTRODUCTION

This report presents detailed results obtained from a survey on the marital history of men and women in the United States conducted in June 1971 by the Bureau of the Census, an agency within the Social and Economic Statistics Administration. The report includes information on when the first and last marriages began, and when and how the first and last marriages ended. Data are classified by year of birth, race, and sex. An earlier study of the marital history experiences of American men and women was made in 1967.[1] In general, the text presentation discusses highlights of the data reported in detailed tables and is only illustrative of the kind of analyses that can be made from these data.

Text tables B through H feature selected information about women, but comparable information for men can be derived from the detailed tables. Similarly, text tables C through H feature information about one "birth cohort" of women, generally those born in 1920 to 1924. These women were about 46 to 51 years old in June 1971 when the survey was taken. Only a relatively small proportion of these women will enter first marriage or will become divorced after 1971.

Information for all of the birth cohorts, from 1900-1904 to 1950-1954, appears in the text tables (A and C through H) and detailed tables, but it is significant that among the younger cohorts exposure to marital "risk" has been quite limited. Therefore, one should not use the data in table A to conclude that the 1940 to 1944 cohort is less likely eventually to marry (or to remarry) than the 1900 to 1904 cohort.

Since the data are based on a sample, they are subject to sampling variability, which may be relatively large for the smaller figures and for small differences between figures. For further discussion of the sampling variability, see the section on "Reliability of the estimates."

[1]See P-20, No. 223, Social and Economic Variations in Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: 1967

FIRST MARRIAGE AND REMARRIAGE BY YEAR OF BIRTH

All but 4 percent of the women born between 1915 and 1919 (approximately 52 to 56 years old at the time of the survey), and all but 5 percent of the men born in the same period, have been married at least once. About 79 percent of these persons have been married once, 14 percent have been married twice, and 3 percent have been married three or more times (tables A and 1). Persons born in 1900 to 1904 had several more years in which to marry, yet 7 percent of them had never married; 74 percent had been married only once, and 16 percent had been married twice.

Persons born between 1900 and 1954 were about 16 to 71 years old at the survey date. White persons born in this period were less likely than Negroes to have remained single until the survey date and were more likely to have been married only once. Thus, 22 percent of white men in this group were still single, compared with 29 percent of the Negro men. Seventeen percent of white women born in this period were still single, compared with 25 percent of the Negro women. Moreover, about 11 percent of the whites and 14 percent of the Negroes were remarried.

Unless marriage patterns change substantially in the future, persons 45 to 54 years old have had most of the first marriages and divorces they will ever have. Among 78.5 percent of the couples with the husband in this age range in 1971, both the husband and the wife had been married only once; among 6.3 percent, both the husband and wife had been married twice; and among 0.6 percent, both had been married three or more times. The remaining 14.6 percent of the married couples with the husband 45 to 54 were distributed among various other combinations of times married for the husband and wife (table 11).

Table A. Percent Distribution of Persons Born Between 1900 and 1954 by Number of Times Married, Year of Birth, Race, and Sex: June 1971

Race and year of birth	Men					Women				
	Total (percent)	Single in 1971	Ever married in 1971: times married			Total (percent)	Single in 1971	Ever married in 1971: times married		
			Once	Twice	3 or more times			Once	Twice	3 or more times
Total born in 1900 to 1954...	100.0	23.2	66.5	9.0	1.3	100.0	17.5	70.5	10.4	1.6
RACE										
White.....	100.0	22.4	67.4	8.8	1.3	100.0	16.6	71.6	10.2	1.5
Negro.....	100.0	29.2	58.3	10.9	1.6	100.0	24.5	61.0	12.8	1.7
Other.....	100.0	30.9	61.6	5.8	1.4	100.0	22.4	71.1	5.0	1.3
YEAR OF BIRTH										
1950 to 1954.....	100.0	90.6	9.4	0.1	-	100.0	75.0	24.2	0.8	(Z)
1945 to 1949.....	100.0	39.9	57.9	2.2	0.1	100.0	24.5	70.5	4.7	0.2
1940 to 1944.....	100.0	15.1	77.8	6.5	0.6	100.0	8.6	81.7	8.8	1.0
1935 to 1939.....	100.0	8.6	80.8	9.8	0.8	100.0	5.4	81.1	11.9	1.6
1930 to 1934.....	100.0	6.6	80.3	11.2	1.9	100.0	4.3	82.0	12.0	1.7
1925 to 1929.....	100.0	6.2	81.1	11.2	1.6	100.0	4.7	79.8	13.6	1.9
1920 to 1924.....	100.0	5.7	78.9	13.4	2.0	100.0	4.2	78.7	14.2	2.8
1915 to 1919.....	100.0	5.2	79.6	12.8	2.5	100.0	4.4	78.5	14.5	2.6
1910 to 1914.....	100.0	5.2	78.1	14.5	2.2	100.0	4.9	77.8	14.8	2.5
1905 to 1909.....	100.0	5.2	76.3	15.7	2.9	100.0	7.0	75.2	15.4	2.4
1900 to 1904.....	100.0	6.6	73.7	16.4	3.3	100.0	7.0	73.8	16.3	2.9

- Represents zero. Z Less than 0.05 percent.

In general, the higher the family income and the educational level of the husband and wife, the greater the likelihood of both partners having been married only once (tables 12 and 13). In 71.7 percent of the households where the husband was 35 to 54 years old and the family income was less than $5,000, both the husband and the wife had been married only once. However, both had been married only once in 77.2 percent of the households where the family income was $5,000 to $9,999, 80.8 percent of those with an income of $10,000 to $14,999, and 83.0 percent of those with incomes of $15,000 or more. Both partners had been married only once in 75 percent of the households where neither the husband nor the wife was a high school graduate. But, in 83.1 percent of the households where the husband and the wife had graduated from high school and 90.4 percent of those where both partners were college graduates, the husband and wife had been married only once.

MARRIAGE ANNIVERSARIES

Of the 49.0 million married women in the United States in 1971, 15.9 million, or 32 percent, had celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of their current marriage, and 1.2 million, or 2.5 percent, had celebrated their fiftieth anniversary (tables B and 16). One-half of the married women who were still in their first marriage had been married less than 18.5 years and one-half had been married longer. Of those who were married to their second or subsequent husband, half had been married to their current husband less than 9.6 years and half had been married longer.

Table B. Duration of Current Marriage, for Married Women by Race and Number of Times Married: June 1971

(Numbers in thousands)

Race and number of years in current marriage	Total		Married once		Married more than once	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All married women	48,991	100.0	42,175	100.0	6,815	100.0
10 years and over	32,335	66.0	29,031	68.8	3,303	48.5
20 years and over	21,185	43.2	19,572	46.4	1,612	23.7
25 years and over	15,861	32.4	14,893	35.3	967	14.2
30 years and over	10,665	21.8	10,163	24.1	501	7.4
35 years and over	7,260	14.8	6,975	16.5	285	4.2
40 years and over	4,435	9.1	4,295	10.2	140	2.1
45 years and over	2,640	5.4	2,566	6.1	74	1.1
50 years and over	1,222	2.5	1,194	2.8	28	0.4
55 years and over	500	1.0	496	1.2	4	0.1
60 years and over	131	0.3	131	0.3	-	-
65 years and over	34	0.1	34	0.1	-	-
Median years	17.0	-	18.5	-	9.6	-
Negro married women	4,234	100.0	3,464	100.0	776	100.0
10 years and over	2,545	60.1	2,113	61.0	434	55.9
20 years and over	1,446	34.2	1,239	35.8	208	26.8
25 years and over	1,024	24.2	891	25.7	134	17.3
30 years and over	635	15.0	561	16.2	75	9.7
35 years and over	396	9.4	358	10.3	38	4.9
40 years and over	234	5.5	216	6.2	18	2.3
45 years and over	106	2.5	100	2.9	6	0.8
50 years and over	51	1.2	47	1.4	4	0.5
55 years and over	23	0.5	23	0.7	-	-
60 years and over	10	0.2	10	0.3	-	-
65 years and over	2	(Z)	2	0.1	-	-
Median years	13.9	-	14.6	-	12.4	-

- Represents zero.
Z Less than 0.05 percent.

PERCENT OF WOMEN WHO MARRY

Of the women born in 1920 to 1924, 16.5 percent were married by 1940, when most of them were still in their teens (tables C and 6). Ten years later 86.2 percent of them were married; another ten years later, in 1960, 94.5 percent were married, and by 1971, fully 95.7 percent.

A peak of early marriage was recorded for 1955, when 24.6 percent of the (mostly teenage) women born in 1935 to 1939 were married (see cover chart). After this level was reached, the corresponding proportions of youthful marriages for subsequent cohorts declined. Thus, only 16.6 percent of the women who were born in 1950 to 1954 had been married by 1970--when most of them were still in their teen ages.

A consistently smaller proportion of Negro women than of white women born in 1900 to 1954 had been married by each of the dates shown at the top of table C (although the difference is not statistically significant for 1930). This fact is related to the tendency for the first marriages of Negro women to be distributed over a wider range of ages than those of white women.[2]

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[2] See figure 1 of Walt Saveland and Paul C. Glick, "First-Marriage Decrement Tables by Color and Sex for the United States in 1958-60," Demography, Vol. 6, No. 3, August 1969.

Table C. Percent of Women Born Between 1900 and 1954 Who Had Ever Married by the Midpoint of Specified Years, by Year of Birth and Race: June 1971

Race and year of birth	Percent of women who had ever married by mid--									
	1971	1970	1965	1960	1955	1950	1945	1940	1935	1930
Total born in 1900 to 1954...	82.5	80.5	69.3	59.9	50.8	41.8	31.4	22.6	14.9	9.2
RACE										
White.....	83.4	81.4	70.3	60.8	51.8	42.7	32.2	23.2	15.3	9.3
Negro.....	75.5	73.5	62.4	53.2	44.1	35.6	26.5	19.1	12.7	8.2
Other.....	77.7	75.6	62.2	49.3	39.1	29.0	19.5	14.0	8.5	5.7
YEAR OF BIRTH										
1950 to 1954.....	25.0	16.6	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1945 to 1949.....	75.4	69.7	18.7	0.2	-	-	-	-	-	-
1940 to 1944.....	91.4	90.6	73.2	22.9	0.2	-	-	-	-	-
1935 to 1939.....	94.6	94.5	90.0	75.1	24.6	0.3	-	-	-	-
1930 to 1934.....	95.8	95.6	94.0	89.9	71.4	21.9	0.3	-	-	-
1925 to 1929.....	95.3	95.2	94.4	92.3	87.3	69.5	17.8	0.3	-	-
1920 to 1924.....	95.7	95.7	95.2	94.5	92.7	86.2	58.9	16.5	0.3	-
1915 to 1919.....	95.6	95.5	95.1	94.6	93.5	90.9	81.6	57.0	15.7	0.2
1910 to 1914.....	95.1	95.1	94.9	94.4	94.0	92.5	88.3	78.4	53.9	17.5
1905 to 1909.....	93.0	93.0	92.8	92.6	92.1	91.1	89.0	84.8	75.9	55.6
1900 to 1904.....	93.0	93.0	92.7	92.5	92.2	91.7	90.6	88.6	84.3	78.0

- Represents zero.

MEDIAN AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE AND AT SEPARATION

Women born in 1920 to 1924 who had married by 1971 had a median age at first marriage of 21.2 years (tables D and 2). However, corresponding figures varied substantially according to the marital history of these women. Thus, women who had never been divorced or widowed after their first marriage and who were not separated had a somewhat higher median age at first marriage (21.8 years) than those whose first marriage had ended in divorce (19.5 years). Among women born in 1920 to 1924 whose first marriage had ended in divorce, the median age at first marriage varied according to number of times the woman had married: 21.6 years for those married once, 19.3 for those married twice, and 18.6 for those married three or more times.

Women who were separated (but not divorced) in 1971 had a median age at time of separation of 30.4 years (table 14). Those who had been married only once and were separated had a median age at current separation of 28.7 years, as compared with 35.7 years for those married twice, and 43.9 years for those married three or more times. Women who had been under 40 years old at the time of separation had a median duration of current separation of 1.9 years, whereas those 40 to 71 years old at separation had a median duration of current separation of 3.5 years (table 15).

WOMEN WHOSE FIRST MARRIAGE ENDED IN DIVORCE

By 1971, 16.7 percent of the first marriages of women born in 1920 to 1924 had ended in divorce (tables E and 7). Most of these women were in their late forties at the time of the survey in 1971. However, a majority of their divorces after first marriage (10.5 percent) had occurred as long ago as 1955 or earlier, when most of them had not gone beyond their early thirties.

Table D. Median Age at First Marriage, for Women Born in 1900 to 1954 by Selected Stages of Marital History, Year of Birth, and Race: June 1971

Race and year of birth	Median age of woman at first marriage							
	Total ever married	Never divorced or widowed		First marriage ended in divorce				First marriage ended in widowhood
		Married, except separated	Separated	Total	Married-- Once	Twice	3 or more times	
Total born in 1900 to 1954.....	20.4	20.7	20.5	19.0	20.2	18.7	18.1	20.9
RACE								
White.....	20.5	20.7	20.2	19.0	20.3	18.7	18.1	21.6
Negro.....	20.0	20.5	20.1	18.9	19.4	18.6	18.3	19.9
Other.....	22.6	22.5	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
YEAR OF BIRTH								
1950 to 1954.....	18.0	18.1	17.5	16.7	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
1945 to 1949.....	19.8	20.0	19.3	18.2	18.7	17.9	(B)	(B)
1940 to 1944.....	20.0	20.4	19.7	18.4	19.2	18.0	(B)	18.4
1935 to 1939.....	19.9	20.2	20.0	18.5	20.3	18.3	17.5	18.8
1930 to 1934.....	20.3	20.6	21.1	19.0	20.4	18.7	17.5	19.2
1925 to 1929.....	20.7	21.1	21.5	19.1	20.6	18.9	17.9	19.5
1920 to 1924.....	21.2	21.8	21.6	19.5	21.6	19.3	18.6	20.3
1915 to 1919.....	21.8	22.4	22.8	19.9	21.2	19.9	18.3	21.4
1910 to 1914.....	22.0	22.6	(B)	19.9	23.7	19.4	17.4	21.4
1905 to 1909.....	21.7	22.6	(B)	19.3	21.9	19.0	(B)	21.3
1900 to 1904.....	21.5	22.3	(B)	19.6	(B)	19.4	(B)	21.2

B Base is too small to show derived figures.

Since the mid-1950's, the proportion of first marriages that have ended in divorce has increased sharply. This can be demonstrated by comparing the 1955 figure, 10.5 percent, for women born in 1920 to 1924 with the 1970 figure, 15.8 percent, for the comparable group of women born in 1935 to 1939 (now mostly in their early thirties) whose first marriages have been terminated by divorce.

Moreover, the figure 15.8 percent divorced in 1970 will climb higher by the time the women born in 1935 to 1939 approach 50 years of age. During the 16-year period, 1955 to 1971, the proportion of women divorced in the 1920 to 1924 cohort increased six-tenths, from 10.5 percent in 1955 to 16.7 percent in 1971. If the 16.8 percent divorced by 1971 among the younger cohort (those born in 1935 to 1939), likewise increased by six-tenths over the 16 years after 1971, approximately one-fourth of the women in this cohort will have ended their first marriages in divorce by the time they reach 50 years of age in the 1980's.

PERSONS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN DIVORCED

The proportion of women "known to have been divorced" is shown in tables F and 1 for women born in 1900 to 1954 who ever married. These women had been divorced after their first marriage, their latest marriage, or both. Among women born in 1920 to 1924, 17.9 percent were known to have been divorced. Of the 17.9 percent, 17.6 percent had been divorced after their first marriage, including 1.4 percent who had also been divorced after their latest marriage. Only 0.3 percent had been divorced after their latest marriage but not after their first marriage. In addition, 11 percent of the women born in 1920 to 1924 were known to have been widowed. A substantial majority (72.5 percent) of the women in that group, who had first married an average of more than 25 years ago, were still married to their first husband. That is, they were "never divorced or widowed" as of June 1971.

Table E. Percent of Women Born Between 1900 and 1954 Whose First Marriage Had Ended in Divorce by the Midpoint of Specified Years, by Year of Birth and Race: June 1971

Race and year of birth	Percent of women whose first marriages had ended in divorce by mid--									
	1971	1970	1965	1960	1955	1950	1945	1940	1935	1930
Total born in 1900 to 1954...	12.2	11.5	8.7	6.8	5.1	3.7	2.3	1.4	0.8	0.4
RACE										
White.....	11.8	11.2	8.4	6.5	4.8	3.5	2.1	1.2	0.7	-
Negro.....	15.8	15.0	11.8	9.6	7.4	5.7	3.7	2.5	1.6	-
Other.....	7.3	6.9	4.9	2.7	2.1	1.8	0.6	0.1	-	-
YEAR OF BIRTH										
1950 to 1954.....	1.4	0.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1945 to 1949.....	7.8	6.3	1.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1940 to 1944.....	13.6	12.2	5.5	1.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
1935 to 1939.....	16.8	15.8	10.5	5.1	0.9	-	-	-	-	-
1930 to 1934.....	16.0	15.3	11.6	8.0	3.9	0.9	-	-	-	-
1925 to 1929.....	16.5	16.1	13.6	11.2	7.6	4.2	0.5	-	-	-
1920 to 1924.....	16.7	16.4	14.7	12.7	10.5	7.5	3.1	0.5	(Z)	-
1915 to 1919.....	15.2	15.0	14.0	12.7	10.9	8.5	5.5	2.1	0.4	-
1910 to 1914.....	13.8	13.6	12.9	12.2	10.7	9.1	6.3	4.4	2.2	0.5
1905 to 1909.....	12.1	12.0	11.6	11.2	10.5	9.5	8.0	6.3	4.6	2.2
1900 to 1904.....	11.7	11.7	11.3	11.2	10.7	10.3	8.9	7.2	5.8	4.1

- Represents zero Z Less than 0.05 percent.

MEDIAN AGE AT DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

Among women born in 1920 to 1924 whose first marriage ended in divorce, the median age at divorce was 29.6 years (tables G, 3, 4, and 5). If the divorce occurred at a relatively young age, the chances are correspondingly greater that the woman had remarried. Thus, women in this cohort who had never remarried after divorce had an average age of 39.0 years at divorce. On the average, those who had remarried were under 30 years old at the time of their divorce after the first marriage.

Evidence of a trend toward earlier age at divorce after first marriage can be observed from a comparison of figures in the lower part of the first column of table G. For example, the median age at divorce for women born in 1920 to 1924 (29.6 years) is about three to four years younger than that for women born in 1910 to 1914 (33.3 years). Many of the former cohort were married during the depression of the 1930's. The data in table G for women born since 1935 cover the experience of women under 37 years of age at the survey date, whose experience with respect to divorce after first marriage was relatively incomplete by 1971, because many of these women had been subject to divorce only at relatively young ages.

The median age at remarriage of women born in 1920 to 1924 whose first marriage ended in divorce was 32.1 years. For those whose first marriage ended in widowhood the median age at remarriage was about six years older (38.2 years). Among women born in 1925 to 1929 whose first marriage ended in divorce, the median age at the time of that divorce was 28.8 years. Women in this cohort whose second marriage also ended in divorce had a median age of about 39.1 years at the time of that second divorce.

WOMEN WHO HAVE REMARRIED

By 1971, about 14.2 percent of the women born in 1920 to 1924 had been married twice (but not three or more times); this proportion is approximately double that (7.1 percent) for the same cohort 16 years earlier in 1955 (tables H and 9). Meantime, 11.1 percent of the women born

Table F. Percent Distribution of Women Ever-Married Born Between 1900 and 1954 by Whether Known to Have Been Divorced or Widowed, Year of Birth, and Race: June 1971

Race and year of birth	Women ever married (percent)	Never divorced or widowed by 1971	Known to have been divorced				Known to have been widowed
			Total	Divorced after--			
				First marriage only[1]	First and latest marriage	Latest marriage only[2]	
Total born in 1900 to 1954...	[3]100.0	73.9	14.9	13.7	1.0	0.2	12.3
RACE							
White.....	100.0	74.8	14.3	12.9	1.0	0.2	11.8
Negro.....	100.0	64.4	21.1	18.6	1.8	0.3	16.9
Other.....	100.0	81.2	9.4	8.8	0.6	-	9.5
YEAR OF BIRTH							
1950 to 1954.....	100.0	93.7	5.7	5.6	0.1	(Z)	0.6
1945 to 1949.....	100.0	88.9	10.4	10.0	0.3	0.1	0.7
1940 to 1944.....	100.0	83.7	14.8	14.0	0.8	(Z)	1.5
1935 to 1939.....	100.0	80.0	17.8	16.8	0.9	0.1	2.5
1930 to 1934.....	100.0	79.5	16.7	15.4	1.2	0.1	3.8
1925 to 1929.....	100.0	76.6	17.5	15.7	1.6	0.2	6.5
1920 to 1924.....	100.0	72.5	17.9	16.2	1.4	0.3	11.0
1915 to 1919.....	100.0	68.6	16.2	14.5	1.4	0.3	16.9
1910 to 1914.....	100.0	61.9	14.8	13.3	1.2	0.3	26.5
1905 to 1909.....	100.0	54.6	13.4	11.9	0.9	0.6	35.7
1900 to 1904.....	100.0	41.6	13.0	12.0	0.8	1.2	50.3

- Represents zero.
Z Less than 0.05 percent.
[1]Divorced after their first marriage but not after their latest marriage, if any.
[2]Divorced after their latest marriage but not after their first marriage.
[3]Total adds to more than 100.0 percent because some women are known to have been both divorced and widowed.

in 1935 to 1939 had been married twice by 1971. If this 15-year younger cohort likewise doubles its proportion married twice within the next 15 years, one-fifth of them will have remarried before the end of the 1980's.

Some of the women who had remarried had been divorced, and others had been widowed, after their first marriage. Thus, among women married twice, about three-fourths of those born in 1920 to 1924 had been divorced after their first marriage and about one-fourth had been widowed before they remarried. The corresponding proportions for women born in 1935 to 1939 who had married for the second time were nine-tenths divorced after first marriage and one-tenth widowed before they remarried (table 1).

RELATED REPORTS

The same "marital history" questions asked in the June 1971 survey were asked in the 1967 Survey of Economic Opportunity, and the findings were published in two Current Population Reports, Series P-23, No. 32, "Probabilities of Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage," and Series P-20, No. 223, "Social and Economic Variations in Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage: 1967."

Table G. Median Age at Divorce and Remarriage, for Women Born Between 1900 and 1954 by Number of Times Married, Year of Birth, and Race: June 1971

Race and year of birth	Median age of woman at divorce after first marriage				Women married twice		
	Total divorced after first marriage	Married--			Median age at remarriage after first marriage ended in--		Median age at second divorce
		Once	Twice	3 or more times	Divorce	Widowhood	
Total born in 1900 to 1954	27.1	31.6	25.8	25.0	29.6	40.6	38.1
RACE							
White	27.0	31.8	25.8	24.9	29.4	40.9	38.3
Negro	27.7	30.5	26.2	25.7	30.7	37.9	37.5
Other	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)	(B)
YEAR OF BIRTH[1]							
1940 to 1944	24.6	26.1	22.8	(B)	25.1	(B)	(B)
1935 to 1939	26.3	30.2	24.5	22.8	27.2	(B)	(B)
1930 to 1934	27.8	34.2	26.1	23.4	29.8	32.6	(B)
1925 to 1929	28.8	37.0	27.0	24.1	31.5	33.7	39.1
1920 to 1924	29.6	39.0	27.6	25.9	32.1	38.2	(B)
1915 to 1919	31.4	40.2	29.9	26.9	34.5	42.2	(B)
1910 to 1914	33.3	43.2	31.5	28.3	36.6	45.1	(B)
1905 to 1909	32.0	44.1	29.9	(B)	36.5	47.3	(B)
1900 to 1904	33.2	(B)	31.4	(B)	39.3	46.8	(B)

B Base is too small to show derived figures.
[1]Women born in 1945 to 1954 are included on the preceding lines but are omitted on the lines below because of their brief exposure to divorce and remarriage.

Table H. Percent of Women Born Between 1900 and 1954 Who Had Been Married Twice by the Midpoint of Specified Years, by Year of Birth and Race: June 1971

Race and year of birth	Percent of women who had been married twice by mid--									
	1971	1970	1965	1960	1955	1950	1945	1940	1935	1930
Total born in 1900 to 1954	10.4	9.8	7.2	5.4	4.0	2.7	1.5	0.8	0.4	0.1
RACE										
White	10.2	9.6	6.9	5.1	3.8	2.6	1.4	0.7	0.3	0.1
Negro	12.8	12.0	9.5	7.5	5.7	3.9	2.4	1.5	0.9	-
Other	5.3	4.1	3.2	2.5	2.2	1.7	0.1	-	-	-
YEAR OF BIRTH										
1950 to 1954	0.8	0.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1945 to 1949	4.7	3.5	0.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1940 to 1944	8.8	7.1	2.6	0.3	-	-	-	-	-	-
1935 to 1939	11.9	11.1	6.4	2.4	0.2	-	-	-	-	-
1930 to 1934	12.0	11.3	7.8	4.5	1.9	0.3	-	-	-	-
1925 to 1929	13.6	13.1	10.0	7.5	4.7	1.9	0.1	-	-	-
1920 to 1924	14.2	13.5	11.5	9.2	7.1	4.4	1.2	0.2	-	-
1915 to 1919	14.5	14.1	12.0	9.9	8.1	5.4	2.3	0.7	-	-
1910 to 1914	14.8	14.6	12.6	10.8	9.1	6.9	3.8	2.2	0.6	0.1
1905 to 1909	15.4	15.0	13.7	12.0	10.6	8.6	6.3	3.8	1.8	0.5
1900 to 1904	16.4	16.3	15.0	14.1	12.8	10.5	8.1	6.0	3.8	1.8

- Represents zero.

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Population coverage. The data from the June 1971 survey are for the civilian population of the United States excluding the relatively small number of inmates of institutions.

Year of birth. Tables 1 to 10 contain data on persons born in calendar years 1900 to 1954. Date of birth was obtained in terms of month and year.

For this and all other subjects covered in this report except family income, values were allocated to persons with nonresponses, through use in the electronic computer of the standard census procedure of substituting a value that was reported by a previously processed person of similar characteristics.

Age. The age classification in tables 11 to 16 is based on the age of the person at the last birthday. Age at first marriage was determined by subtracting the date of birth from the date of first marriage (all in months and years). Ages at other marital events were obtained by analogous procedures.

Race. The population is divided into three groups on the basis of race: white, Negro, and other races. The last category includes Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and all other races except white and Negro.

Marital status. The marital status classification refers to the status at the time of enumeration. "Separated" is regarded as a subdivision of the category "married" and includes persons with legal separations, those living apart with intentions of obtaining a divorce, and other persons permanently or temporarily separated because of marital discord.

Married couple. This term is used in tables 11 to 13 to refer to married men and their wives, where the husband is the head of the household. In about 1.6 percent of the married couples in March 1971, the husband was not the head of the household.

Marital history. In addition to their current marital status, persons 14 years old and over were asked how many times they had been married; when they had married for the first time; whether that marriage had ended in widowhood or divorce and when that marriage had ended (if it was no longer intact); and if they had remarried, they were asked when they had entered their latest marriage and when that marriage had ended (if it was no longer intact). All dates were recorded in terms of month and year, and this detail was used in deriving age at each event or interval between events.

Years of school completed. Data on years of school completed were derived from the combination of answers to questions concerning the highest grade of school attended by the person and whether or not that grade was completed. The questions on educational attainment apply only to progress in "regular" schools. Such schools include graded public, private, and parochial elementary and high schools (both junior and senior high), colleges, universities, and professional schools, whether day school or night school. Thus, regular schooling is that which may advance a person toward an elementary school certificate or high school diploma, or a college, university, or professional school degree. Education in schools other than regular schools was counted only if the credits obtained were regarded as transferable to a school in the regular school system. Years of school completed is as of the survey date in each tabulation, not necessarily as of the time of the marital event measured.

Family income. Family income represents the total income of all members of the family. Income, as defined in this report, represents total money income, or the sum of money from wages or salary before deductions for personal taxes and other purposes, net income from self-employment, and income from other sources received by all family members. For persons not in families, the amount recorded was their own income.

In the June 1971 survey, family income was obtained by transcription from "control card" information and relates to the 12-month period preceding the time the control card was prepared; on the average, the income data relate to the 12-month period ending in April 1971.

A family is defined as a group of two or more persons residing together who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption.

Median. The median is the value which divides a distribution into two equal parts; one-half of the cases falling below this value and one-half of the cases exceeding this value. The median age of first marriage figures cited from other P-20 reports is the age at which half of the young people of the given age who will ever get married had done so prior to the survey date.

SOURCE AND RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

Source of data. The estimates in this report for June, 1971 are based on data obtained in the Current Population Survey (CPS) of the Bureau of the Census. The sample was spread over 449 areas comprising 863 counties and independent cities, with coverage in each of the fifty states and the District of Columbia. Approximately 50,000 households are eligible for interview each month. Of this number 2,250 occupied units, on the average, are visited but interviews are not obtained because the occupants are not found at home after repeated calls or are unavailable for some other reason. In addition to the 50,000, there are also about 8,500 sample units in an average month which are visited but are found to be vacant or otherwise not to be interviewed.

The estimation procedure used in this survey involved the inflation of the weighted sample results to independent estimates of the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States by age, race, and sex. These independent estimates were based on statistics from the 1960 Census of Population; statistics of births, deaths, immigration and emigration; and statistics on the strength of the Armed Forces.

Reliability of the estimates. Since the estimates in this report are based on a sample, they may differ somewhat from the figures that would have been obtained from a complete census, using the same schedules, instructions and enumerators. As in any survey work, the results are subject to errors of response and of reporting as well as being subject to sampling variability. The schedule entries for marital history are based on the memory and knowledge of a household respondent. Usually this is the wife of the family head.

The standard error is primarily a measure of sampling variability; that is, of the variations that occur by chance because a sample rather than the whole of the population is surveyed. The chances are about 68 out of 100 that an estimate from the survey differs from a complete census figure by less than the standard error. The chances are about 90 out of 100 that this difference would be less than 1.6 times the standard error, and the chances are about 95 out of 100 that the difference would be less than twice the standard error.

All statements of comparison appearing in the text are significant at a 1.6 standard error level or better, and most are significant at a level of more than 2.0 standard errors. This means that for most differences cited in the text, the estimated difference is greater than twice the standard error of the difference. Statements of comparison qualified in some way (e.g., by the use of the phrase, "some evidence") have a level of significance between 1.6 and 2.0 standard errors.

The figures presented in tables I, J, K, and L are approximations to the standard errors of various estimates shown in this report. In order to derive standard errors that would be applicable to a wide variety of items and could be prepared at a moderate cost, a number of approximations were required. As a result, the tables of standard errors provided are an indication of the order of magnitude, rather than the precise standard error for any specific item. As calculated for this report the standard error also partially measures the effect of response and interviewer errors but does not measure any systematic biases in the data.

Table I contains the standard errors of estimates of the number of total or white persons in a given class. Table J should be used for items which typically can appear only once in a given household as, for example, "Number of Married Men" or "Number of Women Born 1920-1924." To obtain standard errors from tables I and J for Negroes and other races, multiply these standard errors by a factor of 1.15.

Table I. Standard Errors of Estimated Numbers of Persons

Total or White Population

(68 chances out of 100)

Size of estimate	Standard error	Size of estimate	Standard error
20,000.....	7,000	1,000,000..	50,000
30,000.....	8,300	2,500,000..	87,000
40,000.....	9,300	5,000,000..	116,000
50,000.....	10,200	10,000,000.	173,000
100,000.....	15,000	25,000,000.	228,000
250,000.....	23,000	50,000,000.	280,000
500,000.....	34,000		

Table J. Standard Errors of Estimated Numbers of Men Only, Women Only, or Couples

Total or White Population

(68 chances out of 100)

Size of estimate	Standard error	Size of estimate	Standard error
20,000.....	4,700	500,000.....	27,000
25,000.....	5,300	1,000,000...	40,000
30,000.....	5,900	2,500,000...	64,000
40,000.....	7,000	5,000,000...	91,000
50,000.....	7,900	10,000,000..	131,000
100,000.....	11,400	25,000,000..	157,000
250,000.....	18,400	50,000,000..	143,000

The reliability of an estimated percentage, computed by using sample data for both numerator and denominator, depends upon both the size of the percentage and the size of the total upon which this percentage is based. Estimated percentages are relatively more reliable than the corresponding estimates of the numerators of the percentages, particularly if the percentages are 50 percent or more.

Table K shows the standard errors of estimated percentages of total or white persons for different sizes of the bases of the percentages. Table L shows the standard errors of estimated percentages of total or white items which typically can appear only once in a given household. To obtain standard errors from tables K and L for Negroes and other races, multiply these standard errors by a factor of 1.15.

Note when using small estimates. Percentage distributions are shown in this report only when the base of the percentage is greater than 75,000. Because of the large standard errors involved, there is little chance that percentages would reveal real information when computed on a smaller base. Estimated totals are shown, however, even though the relative standard errors of these totals are larger than those for the corresponding percentages. These smaller estimates are provided primarily to permit such combinations of the categories as serve each user's needs.

Illustration of the use of tables of standard errors. Table 2 of this report shows there are about 653,000 women born in 1920 to 1954 who had remarried exactly once after their first marriage ended in divorce. Interpolation in table J shows the standard error of 653,000 to be approximately 31,000. The chances are 68 out of 100 that the estimate would differ from a complete census figure by less than 31,000. The chances are 95 out of 100 that the estimate would differ from a complete census figure by less than 62,000, i.e., this 95 percent confidence interval would be from 591,000 to 715,000.

Of these 653,000 women, 442,000 or 67.7 percent had first married by the age of 20.5. Interpolation in table L shows the standard error of 67.7 percent on a base of 653,000 to be approximately 2.2. Consequently, chances are 68 out of 100 that the 67.7 percent would be within 2.2 percentage points of a complete census figure, and chances are 95 out of 100 that the estimate would be within 4.4 percentage points

Table K. Standard Errors of Estimated Percentages of Persons

Total or White Population

(68 chances out of 100)

Estimated percentages	Base of estimated percentages (thousands)									
	100	250	500	1,000	2,500	5,000	10,000	25,000	50,000	100,000
1 or 99.....	1.6	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
2 or 98.....	2.2	1.4	1.0	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
5 or 95.....	3.5	2.2	1.5	1.0	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1
10 or 90.....	4.8	2.9	1.9	1.4	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.2
15 or 85.....	5.6	3.3	2.3	1.6	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.2
20 or 80.....	6.4	3.6	2.7	1.8	1.2	0.9	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.2
25 or 75.....	6.7	4.0	2.8	1.9	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.5	0.3	0.2
35 or 65.....	7.0	4.5	3.0	2.1	1.4	1.1	0.8	0.5	0.3	0.2
50.....	7.1	4.7	3.1	2.3	1.4	1.3	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.3

of a complete census figure, i.e., this 95 percent confidence interval would be from 63.3 to 72.1 percent.

Differences

The following procedure may be used to estimate confidence limits of a difference based on sample data: (1) From the appropriate standard error table or tables, determine the standard errors of the two estimated numbers of percents, (2) square both standard errors and add the two, (3) find the square root of the resulting sum. This is the standard error of the difference.

Illustration of the computation of the standard error of a difference. Table 2 also shows that 102,000 of the 248,000 women who had not remarried after their first marriage ended in divorce, were 20.5 or under when they married. This is about 41.1 percent. We will now compare this to the 67.7 percent we obtained for women who later remarried once. The apparent difference of percent married at age 20.5 between these women is 26.6 percent. Interpolation in table L shows the standard error of 41.1 percent on a base of 248,000 to be approximately 3.4 percent. The standard error of the estimated difference of 26.6 is about $4.0 = \sqrt{(3.4)^2 + (2.2)^2}$. This means the chances are 68 out of 100 that the estimated difference in percents based on the sample would vary from the difference derived using complete census figures by less than 4.0 percent. The 68 percent confidence interval around the 26.6 percent change is from 22.6 to 30.6. A conclusion that the average estimate of the difference derived from all possible samples lies within this range would be correct for roughly 68 percent of all possible samples. The 95 percent confidence interval is 18.6 to 34.6 percent. Thus, we can conclude with 95 percent confidence, that the proportion first married by age 20.5 is larger for women who later remarry once.

Medians

Tables in this report present estimates of medians and the corresponding distributions upon which they are based. The sampling variability of an estimated median depends upon the distribution as well as the size of the base.

The following procedure may be used to estimate confidence limits of a median based on sample data: (1) From table K or L determine the standard error of a 50 percent characteristic, using the appropriate base (2) add to and subtract from 50 percent the standard error determined in step (1), and (3) using the distribution of the characteristic, read off the confidence interval corresponding to the two points established in step (2).

A two standard error confidence interval may be determined by finding the values corresponding to 50 percent plus and minus twice the standard error determined in step (1).

Illustration of the computation of the standard error of a median.

The median age at first marriage for women born in 1920 to 1924 who had remarried once and only once after that marriage is about 19.3 years

Table L. Standard Errors of Estimated Percentages of Men Only, Women Only, or Couples

Total or White Population

(68 chances out of 100)

Estimated percentages	Base of estimated percentages (thousands)								
	100	250	500	1,000	2,500	5,000	10,000	25,000	50,000
1 or 99.....	1.0	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
2 or 98.....	1.4	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1
5 or 95.....	2.1	1.4	1.0	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.1
10 or 90.....	2.9	2.0	1.5	1.1	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.2
15 or 85.....	3.6	2.5	1.7	1.3	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.2
20 or 80.....	4.1	2.8	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.3
25 or 75.....	4.5	3.0	2.2	1.6	1.1	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.3
35 or 65.....	5.1	3.3	2.4	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.3
50.....	5.4	3.6	2.6	1.9	1.2	0.9	0.7	0.5	0.3

(table D). Table 2 shows there were an estimated 653,000 women in this category.

1. Table L shows that the standard error of 50 percent on a base of 653,000 is about 2.4 percent.

2. To obtain a two standard error confidence interval on the estimated median, initially add to and subtract from 50 percent twice the standard error found in step (1). This yields percentage limits of 45.2 and 54.8.

3. From table 2 it can be seen that 40.1 percent (262) were under 18.5 and 12.3 (80) were between 18.5 and 19.5. By linear interpolation the lower limit on the estimate is found to be about:

$$18.5 + (19.5-18.5)\ (\frac{45.2-40.1}{12.3}) = 18.9$$

Similarily, the upper limit may be found by linear interpolation to be:

$$19.5 + (20.5-19.5)\ (\frac{54.8-52.4}{15.3}) = 19.7$$

Thus, the 95 percent confidence interval ranges from 18.9 to 19.7 years.

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