

Advance Report of Final Marriage Statistics, 1983

In 1983 the number of marriages declined very slightly from the record number occurring in 1982. A total of 2,445,604 couples married in the United States during 1983, only 10,674 fewer than during the previous year. The annual total was still greater than in any year before 1982.

Marriage rates also declined between 1982 and 1983 (table 1). The 1983 marriage rate was 10.5 per 1,000 total population, 1 percent below the 1982 rate of 10.6. The rate per 1,000 unmarried women 15 years and over was 59.9 in 1983, 2 percent lower than the rate in 1982 (61.4) and lower than it has been since it was first recorded in 1940. The rate computed per 1,000 unmarried women in the age range of 15–44 years was also at a record low, having dropped below 100.0 for the first time since it has been reported. This rate, 99.3 per 1,000 unmarried women 15–44 years of age, means that less than 10 percent of American women in the most marriageable ages were wed in 1983.

Figure 1 shows the effect of changing age and marital status composition on the trend in two of these rates during the period 1940–83. Both rates use the total number of marriages, but that number is related to different populations. One rate is per 1,000 total population, and the other is per 1,000 unmarried women 15 years of age and over. The rates reached an all-time high level in 1946 and then dropped. They followed the same general pattern of ups and downs during the 1950's and 1960's. After 1970, however, the rates diverged. In 1980 the rate per 1,000 population was the same as it had been in 1970 (10.6) after dipping mid-decade. The rate for unmarried women in 1980 was 20 percent lower than in 1970. The pool of people eligible for marriage had continued to expand and was keeping the number of marriages high, but more and more women eligible to marry were not doing so.

Seasonal variation

There is a consistent pattern in the monthly occurrence of marriages in the United States (table 2). In June, the peak

month, marriages were more than twice as frequent as in January. Every month from May through October had more than 200,000 marriages and above-average marriage rates.

Geographic variation

The traditional pattern of geographic variation in marriage rates continued in 1983 (table 3). The rate was highest in the West (12.0 per 1,000 population), 38 percent higher than in the Northeast (8.7). A decade earlier in 1973 the geographical variation was sharper when both the West and South had rates 45 percent higher (12.3) than the rate in the Northeast (8.5).

Variation among States is even greater than among regions. The five States with highest marriage rates were Nevada (120.5), South Carolina (16.5), Hawaii (13.8), Alaska, and Idaho (both 13.6). The five States with lowest rates were Pennsylvania (7.7), West Virginia (8.1), New Jersey (8.3), Rhode Island (8.4), and Massachusetts (8.5).

Nevada exemplifies the situation that arises when rates are calculated by place of occurrence. Many of the brides and grooms who marry in Nevada actually are residents of other States. Although data on residence of bride and groom are not available every year from Nevada, a special sample in 1980 indicated that only 13 percent of Nevada brides and grooms were both residents of the State. This proportion is much higher in most other States. For example, in 1983, the proportion of marriages in which both bride and groom were residents ranged from 57 percent in South Carolina to 95 percent in Alaska and California. In the District of Columbia 48 percent of brides and grooms were residents.

Between 1982 and 1983 marriage rates dropped in most States. Among the 47 States and the District of Columbia where data were complete, 33 States and the District of Columbia reported declines, 2 States as much as 10 percent (Oklahoma and Wyoming). Rates increased in eight States and were unchanged from their 1982 levels in six States. While marriage rates declined in only 1 of the 9 States in the Northeast Region

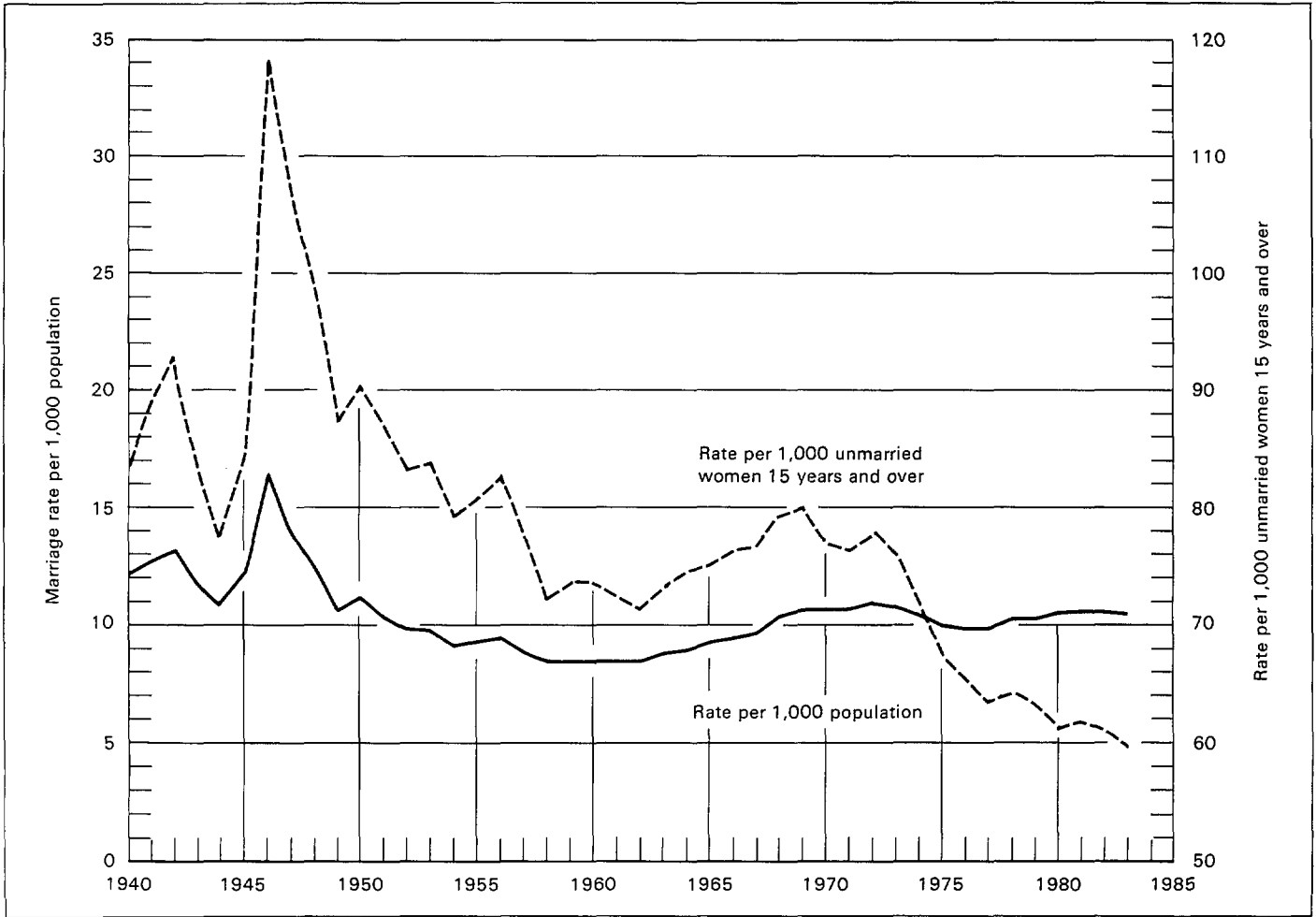


Figure 1. Marriage rates: United States, 1940-83

(Pennsylvania), all 12 of the States in the Midwest Region experienced declines between 1982 and 1983.

Numbers of marriages are obtained annually from all States and the District of Columbia and are shown in tables 1-3. Detailed information about characteristics of brides and grooms that is shown in tables 4-8 is reported by the 42 States and the District of Columbia that constitute the marriage-registration area (MRA). Eighty percent of U.S. marriages took place in the MRA in 1983. It is for these States that age, previous marital history, and other characteristics can be studied.

Total marriage rate

The total marriage rate indicates the number of marriages that 1,000 men or women would have if they experienced throughout their lives the set of age-specific marriage rates observed in a given calendar year. It is a hypothetical measure that shows the implications of current levels of marriage for the lifetime marital experience of the group. The total marriage rates for 1972-83 are shown in table 4.

In 1983 the total marriage rate for women was 1,131.9. That is, there would be 1,132 marriages for every 1,000 women in the MRA in the course of their lives. The total first marriage

rate for 1983 was 703.0, meaning that 703 out of every 1,000 women, or 70 percent, would marry at least once. This is 19 percent lower than in 1972 when the total first marriage rate was 866.9. The total first marriage rate reflects the trend toward postponement of marriage that has characterized recent history in the United States.

The total marriage rate and total first marriage rate for men are also shown in table 4. In 1972 the total marriage rate for men was 1,401.9, 12 percent higher than the rate for women. The total first marriage rate for men in 1972, 960.8, also higher than that for women, indicates that 96 percent of American men would marry at some time during their lives if the age-specific rates observed in that year were to remain unchanged. This rate for men exceeded that for women until 1982 when the rates crossed. Again in 1983 the total first marriage rate for women, 703.0, was greater than that for men, 697.4. The total marriage rate for men (1,189.4), however, still exceeded that for women.

Previous marital status

The number of marriages and marriage rates by previous marital status for the MRA are shown in table 5. The rate for

unmarried women 15 years of age and over in the MRA (52.5 per 1,000) was 12 percent lower than the corresponding rate for the United States (59.9) shown in table 1. This is a result of the fact that most of the eight States that do not participate in the MRA are in the South or West, and have marriage rates that exceed the rate for the United States (table 3). Presumably, age-specific rates for the United States, if they were available, would be somewhat higher than those for the MRA shown in table 5 and discussed in the following text.

Several general relationships emerge from an analysis of the rates for all ages combined (table 5). First, divorced people have higher marriage rates than single people, and both divorced and single people have higher rates than widowed people. Second, the first marriage rate is higher for women than for men but remarriage rates for men, both widowed and divorced, are higher than those for women. Finally, marriage rates declined between 1982 and 1983 for men of all marital statuses and for single and divorced women. The remarriage rate for widows increased slightly between 1982 and 1983.

The first marriage rate for all never-married women 15 years and over in the MRA in 1983 was 63.8 per 1,000, down 3 percent from the 1982 rate (66.0). The age-specific first marriage rates for women declined in all age groups except those 35-39, 40-44, 55-59, and 65 years and over. For men the first marriage rate in 1983 was 51.8 per 1,000, 2 percent less than the rate in 1982 (53.1). The age-specific first marriage rates for men declined for all 5-year age groups except 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, and 60-64 years.

While the remarriage rate for divorced women declined 3 percent between 1982 and 1983 (94.4 to 91.6), not every age group experienced the decline. Rates increased for divorced women in age groups 30-34, 35-39, 50-54, and 60-64 years. For divorced men the marriage rate was 142.1 per 1,000 in 1983, 3 percent below the rate for 1982 (146.9). As with the women, rates dropped for most, but not all, age groups; rates rose for divorced men 35-39, 45-49, and 65 years and over.

The population of widowed women was the only group for which the marriage rate rose between 1982 and 1983, but the change was very slight (6.1 to 6.2). Marriage rates for widowed men of all ages dropped from 32.1 to 30.7 per 1,000.

Table 6 shows the proportion of marriages that are first marriages of both spouses, or remarriages of one or both spouses. Between 1970 and 1981 there was a steady decline (from 69 to 55 percent) in the proportion of marriages in the MRA that were first marriages of both bride and groom (primary marriages). Conversely, remarriages of one or both spouses increased from 31 to 45 percent. Since 1981 there has been little change in the percents for any of the three specific remarriage categories.

Age at marriage

The trend in median ages at marriage for brides and grooms who married in the MRA is shown in table 7. The median age at marriage has been increasing since the mid to late 1970's for

single and previously divorced men and women, following a period of stable or decreasing ages. The median age at first marriage for both brides and grooms rose almost 2 years between 1974 and 1983, to 22.5 for brides and 24.4 for grooms. Median age at marriage for previously divorced men and women also rose nearly 2 years, but the increase did not begin until after 1977; in 1983 the median ages were 32.0 years for brides and 35.3 for grooms. Age at remarriage of widows and widowers, however, increased over the last 20 years, to 54.0 years for widows and 62.0 years for widowers in 1983.

Table 8 shows another summary measure of age at marriage, average or mean age, as well as the age difference between brides and grooms in the MRA. These measures are shown for the different combinations of previous marital status because age at marriage and age difference between spouses vary with the marital status of both bride and groom.

In 1983 the average age of brides in first marriages of both spouses, primary marriages, was 22.8 years. Never-married brides who were marrying previously married men were almost 4 years older than brides in primary marriages (26.7 years), and previously married women who were marrying never-married men were still older (30.1 years). Previously married women who were marrying previously married men were oldest (38.1 years), about 15 years older than brides in primary marriages.

The mean age of brides rose 2.5 years from 1970 to 1983, from 25.1 to 27.6 years. This 2.5-year increase combines the effects of both the increasing proportion of previously married brides and increasing age of brides at first marriage and at remarriage. The average age of brides in primary marriages was quite stable in the early 1970's and started to increase in 1975. For all the categories involving a remarriage of one spouse, average age of brides at marriage declined between 1970 and the mid to late 1970's, then they increased through 1983. Therefore, the overall increase in age at marriage of brides in the early 1970's was due to increasing proportions of remarriages. In the late 1970's and early 1980's the increasing age of brides in all categories gave additional impetus to the upward trend in the average age of brides.

Unlike the age at marriage, age difference between spouses has been quite stable. The vast majority of husbands are older than their wives and the pattern of age difference is very consistent. In 1983 the average age difference was 2.7 years. This measure ranged only from 2.6 to 2.8 during the entire 1970-83 period. In primary marriages the age difference was 2.0 in 1983, as it had been in 12 of the previous 13 years. For marriages of never-married women to previously married men, the age difference was much greater, 7.0 years, and ranged only from 6.8 to 7.0 during the 14-year period. For remarriages of both spouses the age difference was 4.0 years, which represents a slight narrowing from 4.4 in 1970. The only category for which brides are generally older than their grooms are marriages of previously married women to never-married men. This is also the only category that showed a distinct trend during the 1970-83 period. The age difference was 0.2 year in 1970,

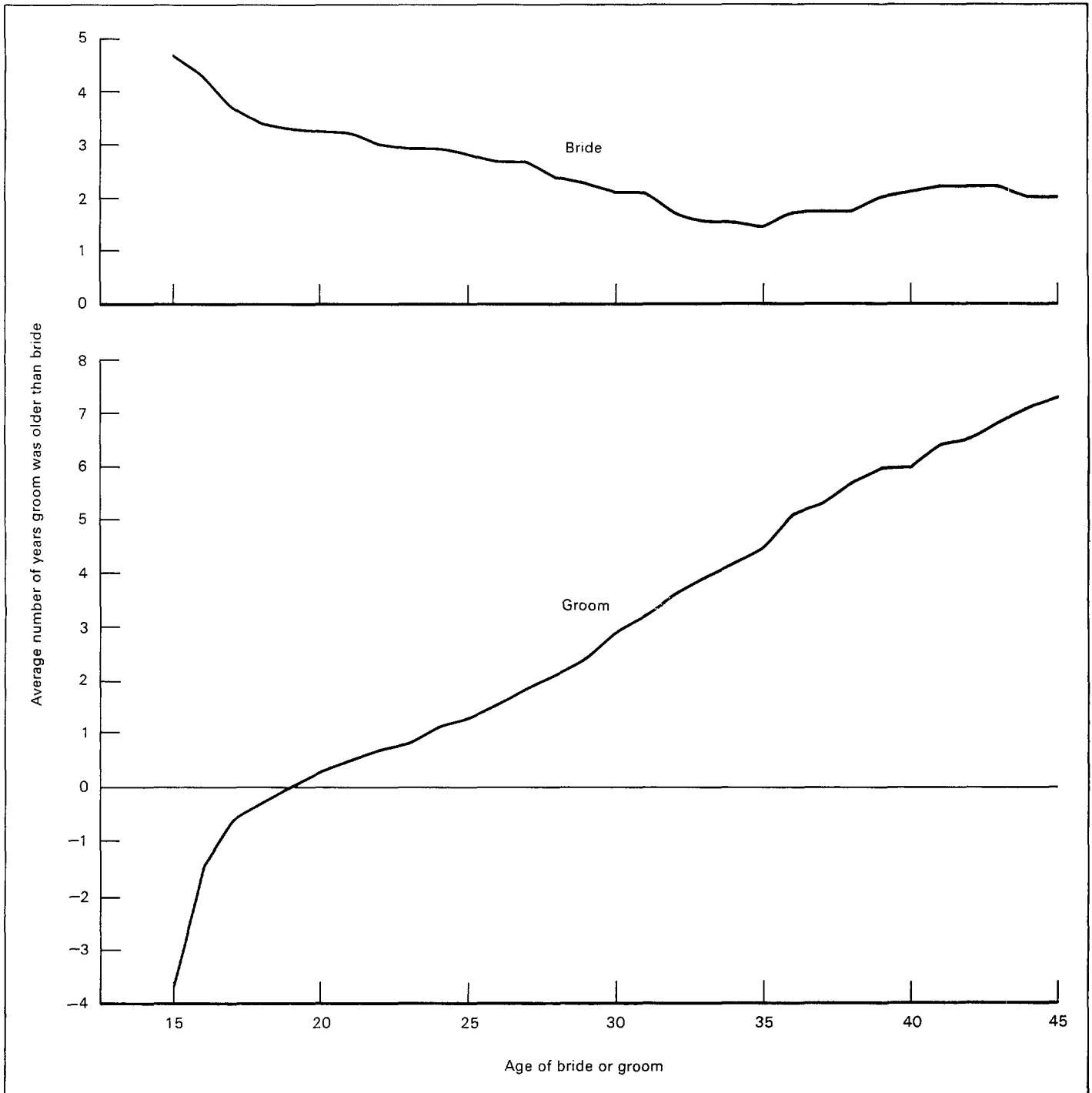


Figure 2. Average number of years groom was older than bride by age for brides and grooms: Marriage-registration area, 1983

meaning the husband was just slightly older than his bride. During the decade the direction of the difference changed and by 1983 remarried wives were 1.0 year older than their never-married grooms.

Age difference traditionally varies with the age of the bride or groom at marriage (figure 2). The age difference increased from 0.3 year for grooms 20 years of age to 7.3 years for grooms

45 years of age. In contrast, the age difference dropped with increased age of brides at marriage, but the change was considerably smaller. Brides aged 20 years were 3.2 years younger than their husbands. The difference shrank to 1.4 years younger for brides aged 35 years and then increased to 2.0 years by age 45 years.

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Symbols

- - - Data not available
 - ... Category not applicable
 - Quantity zero
 - 0.0 Quantity more than zero but less than 0.05
 - Z Quantity more than zero but less than 500 where numbers are rounded to thousands
 - * Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision
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Table 1. Marriages and marriage rates: United States, 1940-83

[Data refer only to events occurring within the United States. Alaska included beginning 1959 and Hawaii beginning 1960. Beginning with 1978, data include nonlicensed marriages registered in California; see Technical notes. Rates per 1,000 population enumerated as of April 1 for census years and estimated as of July 1 for all other years]

Year	Number	Rate per 1,000—		
		Total population	Unmarried women 15 years and over	Unmarried women 15-44 years
1983	2,445,604	10.5	59.9	99.3
1982	2,456,278	10.6	61.4	101.9
1981	2,422,145	10.6	61.7	103.1
1980	2,390,252	10.6	61.4	102.6
1979	2,331,337	10.4	63.6	107.9
1978	2,282,272	10.3	64.1	109.1
1977	2,178,367	9.9	63.6	109.8
1976	2,154,807	9.9	65.2	113.4
1975	2,152,662	10.0	66.9	118.5
1974	2,229,667	10.5	72.0	128.4
1973	2,284,108	10.8	76.0	137.3
1972	2,282,154	10.9	77.9	141.3
1971	2,190,481	10.6	76.2	138.9
1970	2,158,802	10.6	76.5	140.2
1969	2,145,000	10.6	80.0	149.1
1968	2,069,000	10.4	79.1	147.2
1967	1,927,000	9.7	76.4	145.2
1966	1,857,000	9.5	75.6	145.1
1965	1,800,000	9.3	75.0	144.3
1964	1,725,000	9.0	74.6	146.2
1963	1,654,000	8.8	73.4	143.3
1962	1,577,000	8.5	71.2	138.4
1961	1,548,000	8.5	72.2	145.4
1960	1,523,000	8.5	73.5	148.0
1959	1,494,000	8.5	73.6	149.8
1958	1,451,000	8.4	72.0	146.3
1957	1,518,000	8.9	78.0	157.4
1956	1,585,000	9.5	82.4	165.6
1955	1,531,000	9.3	80.9	161.1
1954	1,490,000	9.2	79.8	154.3
1953	1,546,000	9.8	83.7	163.3
1952	1,539,318	9.9	83.2	159.9
1951	1,594,694	10.4	86.6	164.9
1950	1,667,231	11.1	90.2	166.4
1949	1,579,798	10.6	86.7	158.0
1948	1,811,155	12.4	98.5	174.7
1947	1,991,878	13.9	106.2	182.7
1946	2,291,045	16.4	118.1	199.0
1945	1,612,992	12.2	83.6	138.2
1944	1,452,394	10.9	76.5	124.5
1943	1,577,050	11.7	83.0	133.5
1942	1,772,132	13.2	93.0	147.6
1941	1,695,999	12.7	88.5	138.4
1940	1,595,879	12.1	82.8	122.4

Table 2. Marriages and marriage rates, by month: United States, 1973, 1982, and 1983

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

<i>Month</i>	<i>Number</i>			<i>Rate</i>		
	<i>1983</i>	<i>1982</i>	<i>1973</i>	<i>1983</i>	<i>1982</i>	<i>1973</i>
Total	2,445,604	2,456,278	2,284,108	10.5	10.6	10.8
January	129,922	136,175	125,311	6.6	7.0	7.0
February	139,964	145,044	139,630	7.8	8.2	8.6
March	160,597	160,941	166,098	8.1	8.2	9.3
April	197,729	184,918	163,571	10.3	9.7	9.4
May	224,825	247,358	194,450	11.3	12.6	10.8
June	278,566	279,177	287,744	14.5	14.7	16.6
July	246,131	253,286	212,360	12.4	12.9	11.8
August	249,673	244,535	249,755	12.6	12.4	13.9
September	232,159	224,341	204,241	12.1	11.8	11.7
October	213,827	220,611	173,250	10.7	11.2	9.6
November	176,756	175,369	173,006	9.2	9.2	9.9
December	195,455	184,523	194,692	9.8	9.3	10.8

Table 3. Marriages and marriage rates: United States, each region, division, and State, 1973, 1982, and 1983

[By place of occurrence. Data are counts of marriages performed, except as noted. Rates per 1,000 population estimated as of July 1]

Region, division, and State	Number			Rate		
	1983	1982	1973	1983	1982	1973
United States	2,445,604	2,456,278	2,284,108	10.5	10.6	10.8
Regions:						
Northeast	429,023	421,944	422,885	8.7	8.6	8.5
Midwest ¹	547,255	564,613	581,544	9.3	9.6	10.1
South	919,240	916,857	823,947	11.5	11.7	12.3
West	550,086	552,864	455,732	12.0	12.2	12.3
Northeast:						
New England	112,732	111,925	106,426	9.0	9.0	8.8
Middle Atlantic	316,291	310,019	316,459	8.5	8.4	8.5
Midwest:						
East North Central	² 377,400	² 390,631	412,324	² 9.1	² 9.4	10.1
West North Central	169,855	173,982	169,220	9.8	10.0	10.2
South:						
South Atlantic	434,638	429,808	398,544	11.2	11.2	12.0
East South Central	² 168,279	² 167,120	167,174	² 11.3	² 11.2	12.4
West South Central	316,323	319,929	258,229	12.2	12.7	12.6
West:						
Mountain	239,066	240,493	211,738	19.4	19.9	22.7
Pacific	311,020	312,371	243,994	9.2	9.4	8.8
New England:						
Maine	12,480	12,388	11,925	10.9	10.9	11.4
New Hampshire	10,971	10,584	9,557	11.5	11.2	11.9
Vermont	5,595	5,568	5,072	10.7	10.7	10.8
Massachusetts	48,789	48,654	46,640	8.5	8.5	8.1
Rhode Island	8,053	7,885	7,715	8.4	8.3	7.9
Connecticut	26,844	26,846	25,517	8.6	8.6	8.3
Middle Atlantic:						
New York	162,398	156,720	155,660	9.2	8.9	8.6
New Jersey	61,798	59,949	59,723	8.3	8.1	8.1
Pennsylvania	92,095	93,350	101,076	7.7	7.9	8.5
East North Central:						
Ohio	² 99,956	² 102,905	99,524	² 9.3	² 9.6	9.2
Indiana	53,982	55,924	58,428	9.9	10.2	11.0
Illinois	103,800	107,023	119,843	9.0	9.3	10.6
Michigan	78,910	82,633	94,486	8.7	9.1	10.4
Wisconsin	40,752	42,146	40,043	8.6	8.9	8.9
West North Central:						
Minnesota	36,259	37,409	32,971	8.7	9.1	8.5
Iowa	26,769	27,188	27,544	9.2	9.4	9.6
Missouri	53,258	53,836	51,990	10.7	10.9	10.9
North Dakota	5,976	6,176	5,875	8.8	9.2	9.3
South Dakota	8,013	8,353	12,291	11.5	12.0	18.1
Nebraska	13,703	14,350	13,957	8.6	9.0	9.1
Kansas	25,877	26,670	24,592	10.7	11.1	10.9
South Atlantic:						
Delaware	5,569	4,827	4,298	9.2	8.0	7.4
Maryland	47,619	47,867	48,168	11.1	11.2	11.7
District of Columbia	5,436	5,571	5,661	8.7	8.9	7.7
Virginia	61,858	62,099	58,431	11.1	11.3	11.9
West Virginia	15,930	16,467	18,199	8.1	8.4	10.1
North Carolina	52,128	51,058	46,951	8.6	8.5	8.7
South Carolina	53,691	53,496	56,876	16.5	16.6	20.5
Georgia	73,442	72,603	70,373	12.8	12.9	14.3
Florida	118,965	115,820	89,587	11.1	11.1	11.3
East South Central:						
Kentucky	² 37,422	² 34,238	34,379	² 10.1	² 9.3	10.2
Tennessee	56,467	57,867	56,285	12.1	12.4	13.6
Alabama	47,469	47,431	47,997	12.0	12.0	13.4
Mississippi	26,921	27,584	28,513	10.4	10.7	12.1

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Marriages and marriage rates: United States, each region, division, and State, 1973, 1982, and 1983—Con.

[By place of occurrence. Data are counts of marriages performed, except as noted. Rates per 1,000 population estimated as of July 1]

Region, division, and State	Number			Rate		
	1983	1982	1973	1983	1982	1973
West South Central:						
Arkansas	30,066	28,041	25,202	12.9	12.2	12.2
Louisiana	43,177	45,581	39,498	9.7	10.4	10.4
Oklahoma	44,043	47,660	41,367	13.3	14.8	15.4
Texas	199,037	198,647	152,162	12.6	13.0	12.7
Mountain:						
Montana	8,092	8,185	7,751	9.9	10.2	10.7
Idaho	13,421	14,065	12,236	13.6	14.4	15.6
Wyoming	6,201	6,799	5,506	12.0	13.4	15.6
Colorado	36,114	37,739	27,991	11.5	12.3	11.2
New Mexico	³ 17,872	⁴ 17,614	15,178	³ 12.8	⁴ 12.9	13.7
Arizona	30,809	31,408	26,180	10.4	10.9	12.3
Utah	18,437	18,427	14,818	11.4	11.7	12.7
Nevada	108,120	106,256	102,078	120.5	121.3	179.4
Pacific:						
Washington	46,294	48,228	41,365	10.8	11.3	11.9
Oregon	23,346	24,186	19,661	8.8	9.1	8.8
California	220,760	220,064	169,320	8.8	8.9	8.1
Alaska	6,558	6,410	3,872	13.6	14.4	11.6
Hawaii	14,062	13,483	9,776	13.8	13.5	11.5

¹Formerly North Central Region.

²Data are incomplete.

³Data are premarital health examination forms issued.

⁴Data include marriage licenses issued for some counties.

Table 4. Total marriage rates and total first marriage rates: Marriage-registration area, 1972-83

[Based on sample data. Marriages per 1,000 women or men if age-sex specific rates for a given year were constant throughout their lives. Figures for marriage order not stated have been distributed. Beginning in 1977, figures exclude data for Iowa. For a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes]

Year	Total marriage rate		Total first marriage rate	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
1983	1,131.9	1,189.4	703.0	697.4
1982	1,143.6	1,206.4	710.9	703.4
1981	1,113.9	1,218.0	687.2	711.4
1980	1,128.4	1,207.5	706.2	714.4
1979	1,130.0	1,243.2	704.4	739.4
1978	1,112.4	1,227.3	696.5	733.7
1977	1,098.4	1,213.9	687.6	727.7
1976	1,100.7	1,218.0	695.5	737.5
1975	1,125.7	1,246.2	720.8	774.4
1974	1,191.5	1,317.1	789.8	852.7
1973	1,249.1	1,382.3	843.4	920.0
1972	1,254.8	1,401.9	866.9	960.8

Table 5. Marriages and marriage rates, by age and previous marital status of women and men: Marriage-registration area, 1982 and 1983

[Based on sample data. For sampling errors of estimates and a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes. Marriages of persons under 15 years of age are included in the youngest age groups; rates are based on populations that exclude persons under 15 years of age. Rates for all marriages are based on the unmarried population; for first marriages, on the never-married population; and for remarriages, on the widowed and divorced populations. Rates per 1,000 population in specified age group estimated as of July 1]

Age and previous marital status	Women				Men			
	Number ¹		Rate ²		Number ¹		Rate ²	
	1983	1982	1983	1982	1983	1982	1983	1982
All marriages								
Total.....	1,890,791	1,912,684	52.5	54.1	1,890,791	1,912,684	64.1	65.8
15-19 years.....	310,282	340,197	40.1	43.0	119,734	132,470	14.4	15.7
15-17 years.....	74,432	84,943	16.3	17.9	10,868	12,818	2.2	2.6
18-19 years.....	235,850	255,254	75.2	81.0	108,866	119,652	31.4	33.7
20-24 years.....	664,038	685,773	115.9	121.7	601,968	632,089	83.9	88.0
25-29 years.....	402,681	395,910	126.8	130.5	480,007	477,761	117.1	120.8
30-34 years.....	210,987	201,921	98.1	99.7	263,207	258,802	109.4	117.9
35-39 years.....	117,298	110,978	74.1	74.7	152,716	145,522	106.0	104.2
40-44 years.....	67,921	60,906	52.8	52.4	89,476	83,409	92.7	91.5
45-49 years.....	40,358	40,366	38.9	38.3	57,151	55,208	78.8	73.7
50-54 years.....	25,912	25,469	22.7	22.1	40,473	40,576	51.3	56.1
55-59 years.....	17,546	18,197	12.8	13.5	29,723	30,085	45.9	47.1
60-64 years.....	15,323	14,674	8.8	8.5	21,690	22,898	34.8	36.8
65 years and over.....	18,445	18,293	2.0	2.1	34,646	33,864	15.1	15.9
First marriages								
Total.....	1,217,755	1,239,819	63.8	66.0	1,197,906	1,215,640	51.8	53.1
15-19 years.....	294,473	323,342	38.8	41.7	115,952	127,778	14.1	15.1
15-17 years.....	71,856	82,407	15.9	17.6	10,482	12,498	2.2	2.5
18-19 years.....	222,617	240,935	72.6	78.5	105,470	115,280	30.9	33.1
20-24 years.....	568,784	584,726	106.9	111.9	548,755	576,082	79.5	83.1
25-29 years.....	247,751	234,954	105.2	106.5	356,340	345,374	100.6	102.4
30-34 years.....	70,359	63,373	61.2	62.1	116,320	110,274	69.0	74.0
35-39 years.....	20,433	18,419	38.3	38.1	34,755	31,431	45.4	43.7
40-44 years.....	7,176	6,325	21.8	21.7	11,298	10,299	27.0	24.8
45-49 years.....	3,477	3,473	13.9	14.4	5,457	5,250	18.5	18.2
50-54 years.....	2,102	2,031	9.0	9.6	3,253	3,490	10.7	12.9
55-59 years.....	1,498	1,468	7.5	6.9	2,474	2,518	10.4	10.9
60-64 years.....	901	931	3.3	3.6	1,737	1,516	8.0	6.8
65 years and over.....	801	777	0.9	0.9	1,565	1,628	2.9	3.3
Remarriages								
Total.....	629,427	628,832	38.4	39.2	650,290	654,428	109.1	113.2
15-19 years.....	7,451	7,888	*	*	1,081	1,329	*	*
20-24 years.....	76,746	82,339	244.4	260.6	35,783	38,653	241.8	292.8
25-29 years.....	146,428	152,519	186.8	192.8	112,422	121,566	223.1	229.8
30-34 years.....	137,207	135,267	140.0	137.5	141,947	143,791	206.0	212.4
35-39 years.....	94,832	90,756	92.3	92.1	115,700	111,901	175.8	168.5
40-44 years.....	59,654	53,770	63.3	62.6	77,021	71,778	143.4	148.3
45-49 years.....	36,409	36,152	46.9	45.2	50,875	49,183	120.8	108.7
50-54 years.....	23,365	23,027	26.1	24.8	36,493	36,473	77.0	82.1
55-59 years.....	15,820	16,447	13.7	14.6	26,802	27,116	66.3	67.6
60-64 years.....	14,219	13,483	9.7	9.4	19,650	21,015	49.1	53.5
65 years and over.....	17,296	17,184	2.2	2.2	32,516	31,623	18.9	19.8
Previously widowed³								
15-24 years.....	1,687	1,607	51.3	49.0	410	257	149.3	138.6
25-44 years.....	15,859	15,248			7,204	7,364		
45-64 years.....	26,253	25,951	12.2	12.0	23,135	23,806	59.5	58.9
65 years and over.....	12,677	12,234	1.9	1.9	20,855	20,362	16.8	17.6

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 5. Marriages and marriage rates, by age and previous marital status of women and men: Marriage-registration area, 1982 and 1983—Con.

[Based on sample data. For sampling errors of estimates and a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes. Marriages of persons under 15 years of age are included in the youngest age groups; rates are based on populations that exclude persons under 15 years of age. Rates for all marriages are based on the unmarried population; for first marriages, on the never-married population; and for remarriages, on the widowed and divorced populations. Rates per 1,000 population in specified age group estimated as of July 1]

Age and previous marital status	Women				Men			
	Number ¹		Rate ²		Number ¹		Rate ²	
	1983	1982	1983	1982	1983	1982	1983	1982
Previously divorced ³	485,362	487,089	91.6	94.4	510,107	513,266	142.1	146.9
15-19 years	6,115	6,215	*	*	825	1,068	*	*
20-24 years	64,665	69,327	240.4	263.6	30,182	32,268	239.5	275.8
25-29 years	122,831	127,690	204.4	205.0	96,038	103,482	214.4	220.2
30-34 years	113,156	114,105	145.3	144.4	120,620	122,209	202.0	208.9
35-39 years	78,645	74,594	99.3	98.0	97,881	95,692	172.6	166.7
40-44 years	46,624	42,046	67.0	71.0	64,163	60,065	137.7	148.3
45-49 years	25,767	25,306	50.8	51.8	40,879	39,205	126.6	113.6
50-54 years	13,827	13,821	32.4	31.1	26,855	26,622	77.2	85.3
55-59 years	7,127	7,400	18.9	20.6	16,301	16,066	67.1	70.5
60-64 years	4,041	3,934	12.9	12.3	8,818	9,538	49.3	53.3
65 years and over	2,564	2,651	4.9	5.3	7,514	7,051	26.2	26.0
Not stated if widowed or divorced	87,589	86,703	...	...	88,579	89,373	...	...
Not stated if previously married								
Total	43,609	44,033	...	...	42,595	42,616	...	...

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

²All rates exclude data for Iowa.

³Data exclude remarriages in Michigan, Ohio, and South Carolina. These data are included in "Not stated if widowed or divorced."

Table 6. Percent distribution of marriages by marriage order of both bride and groom: Marriage-registration area, 1970-83

[Based on sample data. Beginning in 1977, figures exclude data for Iowa. Computed from totals excluding marriage order not stated. For a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes]

Year	Marriage order of bride and groom				
	All marriages	First marriage of bride and groom	First marriage of bride, remarriage of groom	Remarriage of bride, first marriage of groom	Remarriage of bride and groom
1983	100.0	54.4	11.6	10.5	23.5
1982	100.0	54.8	11.6	10.3	23.3
1981	100.0	54.7	11.8	10.1	23.4
1980	100.0	56.2	11.3	9.8	22.7
1979	100.0	56.4	11.2	9.5	22.9
1978	100.0	57.1	11.1	9.3	22.5
1977	100.0	57.5	10.8	9.0	22.6
1976	100.0	58.5	10.7	8.8	22.0
1975	100.0	60.1	9.9	8.6	21.3
1974	100.0	62.9	9.2	8.1	19.8
1973	100.0	64.6	8.7	7.9	18.9
1972	100.0	66.7	8.2	7.4	17.6
1971	100.0	67.7	8.0	7.3	17.0
1970	100.0	68.6	7.6	7.3	16.5

Table 7. Median age of bride and groom by previous marital status: Marriage-registration area, 1963-83

[Based on sample data. Figures by previous marital status exclude data for Iowa beginning with 1977. Figures for previously divorced and previously widowed exclude data for Michigan and Ohio for all years, for South Carolina beginning with 1972, and for the District of Columbia for 1970. For a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes]

Year	Median age of bride					Median age of groom				
	Total	First marriage	Remarriage			Total	First marriage	Remarriage		
			Total	Previously divorced	Previously widowed			Total	Previously divorced	Previously widowed
1983	24.8	22.5	32.9	32.0	54.0	27.0	24.4	36.2	35.3	62.0
1982	24.4	22.3	32.5	31.6	54.1	26.7	24.1	35.7	34.9	61.7
1981	24.1	22.0	32.1	31.2	53.6	26.3	23.9	35.3	34.4	61.0
1980	23.7	21.8	32.0	31.0	53.6	25.9	23.6	35.2	34.0	61.2
1979	23.4	21.6	31.9	30.8	55.2	25.8	23.4	35.3	33.9	61.7
1978	23.2	21.4	31.5	30.5	52.6	25.5	23.2	35.1	33.8	59.7
1977	22.9	21.1	31.4	30.2	53.1	25.2	23.0	34.9	33.6	60.1
1976	22.7	21.0	31.7	30.1	53.0	25.0	22.9	35.1	33.7	60.0
1975	22.4	20.8	32.0	30.2	52.4	24.7	22.7	35.5	33.6	59.4
1974	22.0	20.6	32.1	30.0	51.9	24.2	22.5	35.7	33.6	59.2
1973	21.9	20.6	32.3	30.2	52.1	24.1	22.5	36.3	33.9	59.3
1972	21.7	20.5	32.8	30.3	51.4	23.8	22.4	36.5	34.0	59.1
1971	21.7	20.5	32.9	30.2	51.8	23.7	22.5	36.9	34.1	59.1
1970	21.7	20.6	33.3	30.1	51.2	23.6	22.5	37.5	34.5	58.7
1969	21.6	20.6	33.8	30.4	51.3	23.5	22.4	38.2	34.7	59.0
1968	21.5	20.6	33.8	30.7	50.6	23.6	22.4	38.3	35.1	57.9
1967	21.4	20.5	35.0	31.3	50.0	23.8	22.6	39.1	35.5	57.7
1966	21.5	20.3	35.2	31.4	50.2	23.8	22.6	39.2	35.8	57.9
1965	21.4	20.4	35.5	31.7	50.1	23.6	22.5	39.6	36.0	57.8
1964	21.4	20.4	35.6	31.7	50.3	23.6	22.4	39.7	36.4	58.0
1963	21.3	20.3	35.6	31.8	49.7	23.7	22.5	39.8	36.3	58.0

Table 8. Mean age at marriage of bride and groom and age difference between spouses by marriage order of both: Marriage-registration area, 1970-83

[Based on sample data. Beginning in 1977, figures exclude data for Iowa. For a description of the marriage-registration area, see Technical notes]

Year	Marriage order of bride and groom				
	All marriages	First marriage of bride and groom	First marriage of bride, remarriage of groom	Remarriage of bride, first marriage of groom	Remarriage of bride and groom
Mean age of bride in years					
1983	27.6	22.8	26.7	30.1	38.1
1982	27.3	22.6	26.2	29.8	37.8
1981	27.0	22.4	26.0	29.4	37.5
1980	26.7	22.1	25.8	29.3	37.4
1979	26.7	21.9	25.6	29.3	38.0
1978	26.3	21.7	25.4	29.1	37.3
1977	26.2	21.6	25.3	28.8	37.5
1976	26.1	21.4	25.4	28.9	37.8
1975	25.9	21.3	25.3	29.0	38.1
1974	25.6	21.1	25.5	29.2	38.4
1973	25.5	21.1	25.6	29.2	38.8
1972	25.2	21.1	25.5	29.4	39.1
1971	25.1	21.1	25.8	29.4	39.5
1970	25.1	21.1	26.0	29.5	39.8
Mean age of groom in years					
1983	30.3	24.8	33.7	29.0	42.1
1982	30.0	24.6	33.2	28.9	42.0
1981	29.8	24.3	32.9	28.6	41.7
1980	29.4	24.1	32.6	28.5	41.7
1979	29.5	23.9	32.5	28.7	42.1
1978	29.1	23.7	32.4	28.5	41.6
1977	29.0	23.6	32.2	28.5	41.7
1976	28.9	23.4	32.3	28.6	42.0
1975	28.7	23.3	32.2	28.8	42.4
1974	28.3	23.1	32.4	29.0	42.6
1973	28.1	23.1	32.4	29.2	43.0
1972	27.9	23.1	32.5	29.4	43.3
1971	27.8	23.1	32.8	29.4	43.8
1970	27.8	23.1	32.9	29.6	44.2
Age difference in years ¹					
1983	2.7	2.0	7.0	-1.0	4.0
1982	2.8	2.0	7.0	-0.9	4.2
1981	2.8	2.0	6.9	-0.8	4.2
1980	2.8	2.0	6.9	-0.8	4.2
1979	2.8	2.0	6.9	-0.6	4.1
1978	2.8	2.0	6.9	-0.5	4.2
1977	2.8	2.0	6.9	-0.3	4.2
1976	2.8	2.0	6.9	-0.2	4.2
1975	2.8	2.0	6.8	-0.3	4.3
1974	2.7	2.0	6.9	-0.2	4.2
1973	2.7	2.0	6.8	-0.0	4.2
1972	2.7	2.0	7.0	-0.0	4.2
1971	2.7	2.1	7.0	0.0	4.3
1970	2.6	2.0	6.9	0.2	4.4

¹Age of groom minus age of bride. Average ages and age differences were calculated and rounded separately. Therefore, age difference may differ slightly from the figure that would be obtained by direct subtraction. Negative numbers indicate that brides were older than grooms, on average.

Technical notes

Place and time of occurrence

Marriages and marriage rates for States and other areas are by place of occurrence. Marriages are those performed during the calendar year.

Sources of data

Figures in tables 1–3 and figure 1 are based on totals reported by States and counties. Figures in tables 4–8 and figure 2 are based on data tabulated from State-coded data tapes and from probability samples of records selected and coded in the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) from copies of the records sent by States participating in the marriage-registration area (MRA). In 1983 the MRA consisted of the District of Columbia and all States except eight—Arizona, Arkansas, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, and Washington. In 1973 it consisted of the District of Columbia and all States except nine; Colorado joined in 1979. Marriages performed in the MRA included 81 percent of the marriages registered in the United States in 1973 and 80 percent in 1983.

Nonlicensed (confidential) marriages for California

Section 4213 of the California Civil Code allows unmarried couples who have been living together to be married confidentially without obtaining a marriage license or health certificate. In March 1972 this section was amended to require county clerks to keep sealed records of these marriages and periodically to report the total number to the California State Department of Health Services. Since reporting began, nonlicensed marriages have increased rapidly, from 2,857 in 1973 to 68,260 in 1983. NCHS has not included the nonlicensed California marriages in totals or rates for years prior to 1978. However, beginning with final statistics for 1978, nonlicensed marriages, which totaled 37,462 in that year, are included in the national and geographic totals and rates.

Marriage sample

Twelve States—Florida, Illinois, Maine, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York (except New York City), Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia—supplied State-coded data tapes of all their marriage records through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program, and 100 percent of these records were used by the National Center for Health Statistics. For all other States in the MRA, records were sampled at rates designed to give a sample of at least 2,500 for each State. All records were included in the sample

for Alaska, Delaware, and the District of Columbia, where totals of less than 5,000 marriages had been anticipated, and for New York City. All other States were sampled at 5, 10, 20, or 50 percent, depending on the number of marriages in the State. The total sample size, including records supplied through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program, was 743,754 marriages. Sampling errors shown in table I are for frequencies that equal a specified percent of the total MRA marriages.

Nonlicensed marriages registered in California are not available for inclusion in the MRA marriage sample. The 5-percent sample of California marriages for 1983 was drawn only from licensed marriages. The corresponding weights for sample records were based on these totals. Because no information is available on the characteristics of persons obtaining nonlicensed marriages, no accurate estimate is available for the bias introduced in sample estimates by the omission of these marriages.

Sampling errors

All statistics for the MRA are estimates based on the systematic sample of marriages described above; therefore, these statistics are subject to sampling errors. The sampling error is a measure of variation that occurs by chance between sample estimates and the actual quantity being estimated. Chances are about 68 out of 100 that an estimate would differ from the true value by less than the sampling error, and about 95 out of 100 that the difference would be less than twice the sampling error.

Table I. Approximate sampling errors of estimated number of marriages shown in table 5: Marriage-registration area, 1982 and 1983

Percent of total MRA marriages in subclass	1983 sampling error	1982 sampling error
1 or 99	413	418
2 or 98	581	588
3 or 97	709	716
4 or 96	814	823
5 or 95	905	915
7 or 93	1,060	1,071
10 or 90	1,246	1,259
15 or 85	1,483	1,499
20 or 80	1,661	1,679
25 or 75	1,798	1,818
50	2,077	2,099

HOW TO USE THE SAMPLING ERROR TABLE: The total numbers of MRA marriages in 1982 and 1983 (excluding nonlicensed California marriages) were 1,912,684 and 1,890,791, respectively. For any estimate of marriages shown in table 5, determine its percent of the total MRA marriages for the corresponding year. Then look in the table of sampling errors for the row containing the computed percent to determine the sampling error for the estimated number of marriages for that year. For example, in 1982 there were an estimated 628,832 remarriages of women, or 32.9 percent of all 1982 MRA marriages. Because 32.9 is between 25 and 50 percent, the sampling error is between 1,818 and 2,099, or, by interpolation, about 1,907 marriages. The chances are about 68 out of 100 that the actual number of 1982 remarriages is between 626,925 and 630,739 (628,832 ± 1,907).

Population denominators

Marriage rates for the MRA by age, sex, and previous marital status for 1982 and 1983 are based on unpublished population estimates as of July 1 prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. National and State rates for 1983 are based on population estimates as of July 1 published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.^{1,2}

Computation of percent distributions, medians, and means

Figures for marriage order and previous marital status not stated were subtracted from figures for marriages used as de-

nominators before percent distributions and medians were computed. Computations of median and mean age at marriage were based on tabulations of ungrouped data.

Nonreporting bias

Age was more than 99 percent complete on marriage records, but in 1982, 15 percent of marriage records from Minnesota and 7 percent of records from Louisiana were not completed for marriage order of bride (information on whether the marriage was a first marriage or remarriage). For all other States, missing data were negligible. In 1983 marriage order of bride was not stated for 22 percent of Minnesota's records, 4 percent of Louisiana's and Missouri's, and 3 percent of Pennsylvania's. No allocation of missing data was done before rates were calculated. The percent not stated for grooms was similar.

¹U.S. Bureau of the Census: Estimates of the population of the United States, by age, sex, and race: 1980 to 1984. *Current Population Reports*. Series P-25, No. 965. Washington. U.S. Government Printing Office, Mar. 1985.

²U.S. Bureau of the Census: Estimates of the population of States, by age: July 1, 1981 to 1983. *Current Population Reports*. Series P-25, No. 951. Washington. U.S. Government Printing Office, May 1984.

This report represents summary tabulations from the final marriage statistics for 1983. More detailed tabulations for 1983 will be published in *Vital Statistics of the United States, Volume III—Marriage and Divorce*. Prior to the publication of that volume, the National Center for Health Statistics will respond to requests for unpublished data whenever possible.

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