

OHIO POPULATION NEWS: Marriage in U.S. and Ohio

Over the past thirty years, some of the most dramatic changes in American society have been related to marriage and the family. These changes include delays in first marriage and higher rates of divorce and nonmarital cohabitation. Regardless of these changes most adults eventually marry. In fact, researchers find that 91 percent of women ages 45 to 54 had been married at least once and estimate that at least 7 out of 8 women who were born in the 1960s will marry eventually. This report addresses some of these issues for the State of Ohio and the Nation overall.

INCREASING AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE

Men and women are marrying later in life than they did **thirty years ago**—in 1970, the median age a first marriage for men 23.2 for men and 20.8 for women. In 2000, the median age at first marriage had increased to 26.8 for men and women 25.1 for women. (Figure 1) While the gap between the age of first marriage for men and women has declined it still persists. Men are still on average 1.7 years older than the women they marry.

Increasing ages at marriage are reflected in the composition of the population (Figure 2). In Ohio, the proportion of the population aged 15 and older that were never married increased from 23 percent in 1970 to 26 percent in 2000. The proportion of the population is declining somewhat (from 59 percent in 1970 to 55 percent in 2000) the majority of adult men and women are married. (See table at right).

Figure 1: Median Age at First Marriage: 1900 – 2000 United States

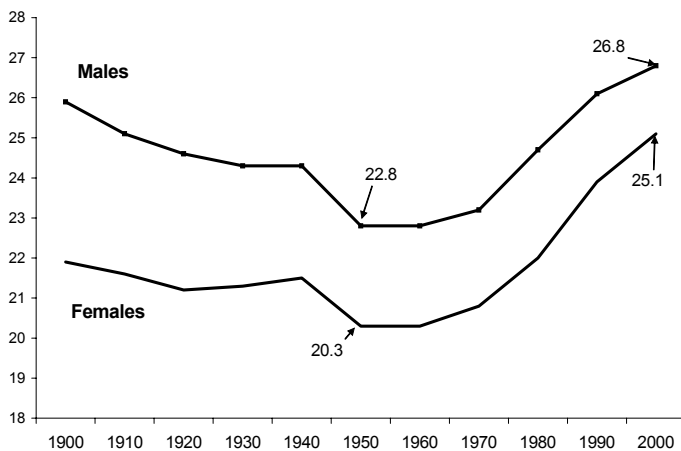
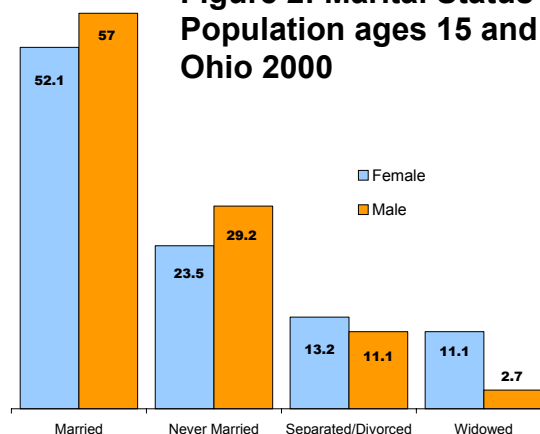


Figure 2: Marital Status of the Population ages 15 and older: Ohio 2000



	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Female					
Married	66.7	61.3	55.9	53.4	52.1
Never Married	16.6	20.7	22.4	22.3	23.5
Sep/Divorced	4.9	5.9	9.4	11.9	13.2
Widowed	11.8	12.1	12.3	11.4	11.1
Male					
Married	71.8	67.8	62.0	60.0	57.0
Never Married	20.9	25.0	28.3	28.1	29.2
Sep/Divorced	3.6	4.0	7.0	9.2	11.1
Widowed	3.6	3.1	2.6	2.7	2.7

Source: US Census Bureau

MARITAL DURATION

Duration of marriage is associated with women's age at first marriage: 59 percent of marriages to brides under age 18 end in separation or divorce within 15 years, compared with 36 percent of those married at age 20 or older. In addition, early marriage is more likely for women living in communities with higher male unemployment, lower median income, higher poverty and higher welfare receipt.

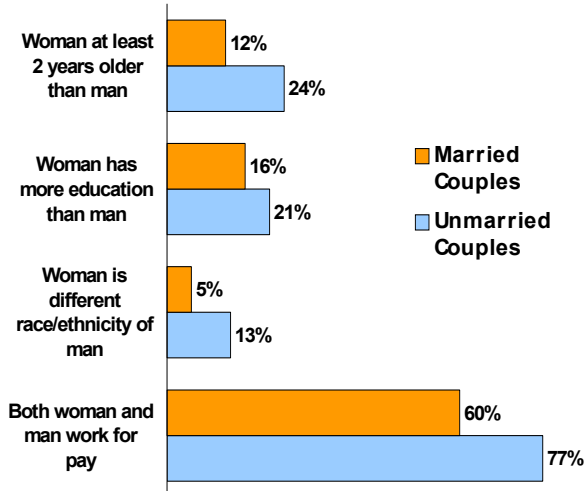
Cohabitations and marriages tend to last longer if the woman was older at the time the cohabitation or marriage began, if her income is higher, if she has any religious affiliation, and if she was raised through childhood in a two-parent home

Community prosperity is related to successful marriages and cohabitations—**poverty increases the likelihood that cohabitations and marriages will fail.**

IN OHIO:

The marriage rate in Ohio has fallen from 8.5 per 1,000 in 1970 to 4.3 per 1,000 in 2000 while the divorce rate has increased in the same time period from 3.7 to 7.8 per 1,000.

HOW DO MARRIED COUPLES AND UNMARRIED COUPLES DIFFER?



DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

While the divorce rate has declined slightly in recent years, its impact has not diminished. In 2000 the US divorce rate was measured as 4.1 per 1,000 population—increasing from 3.5 per 1,000 in 1970. The US marriage rate declined in the same time period from 10.6 in 1970 to 7.6 in 2000. In other words, the divorce rate was only one third the marriage rate in 1970 but it was well over half the marriage rate in 2000. **Regardless of these changes, most adults have married only once and most people who have ever divorced are currently married.**

Research using survey data shows that **first marriages that end in divorce last on average almost 8 years.** For those who remarry after a first marriage, the time to remarriage is roughly three years. The median duration of second marriages was slightly less than for first marriages: 7.3 years for men and 6.8 years for women. Research also shows that **younger women who divorce are more likely to remarry:** 81 percent of those divorced before age 25 remarry within 10 years, compared with 68 percent of those divorced at age 25 or over.

One in three first marriages end within 10 years and one in five end within 5 years.

Prepared by the Center for Family and Demographic Research at Bowling Green State University. Please visit our website at <http://www.bgsu.edu/organizations/cfdr/main.html>
Coming in November...FERTILITY IN OHIO

COHABITATION

A significant change which occurred in the last half of the 20th century was the increase in couples living together without marrying—in 1970 unmarried couple households made up only 1-percent of the US households increasing to almost 5-percent in 1998. Unlike marriages, which require a license, there is not an official recording system for cohabiting couples.

Cohabiting households are increasingly likely to include children as well—in 1978 under 30 percent of unmarried households included children, increasing to 43 percent by 1998.

Most first marriages are preceded by cohabitation. In addition, by 1995 half of all women in their thirties had cohabited outside of marriage.

Cohabiting couples display more equal labor force participation and share similar income levels. Of couples in which both are employed, women contribute 41% of the couples income compare to 37% for married women.

In general, cohabitation is associated with lower education levels and fewer economic resources. Sixty-percent of those in cohabiting unions are divorced.

Cohabiting unions are short in duration—over half lasting a year or less, a sixth lasting three years and a tenth lasting five years or longer. The probability that cohabitation will result in marriage is 70 percent after 5 years—this varies across women's race, age and education.

IN OHIO:

There were 229,089 unmarried partner(cohabiting) households counted in the 2000 Census, of these 210,152 or 93-percent were male-female couples, seven percent were male-male households or female-female households.

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