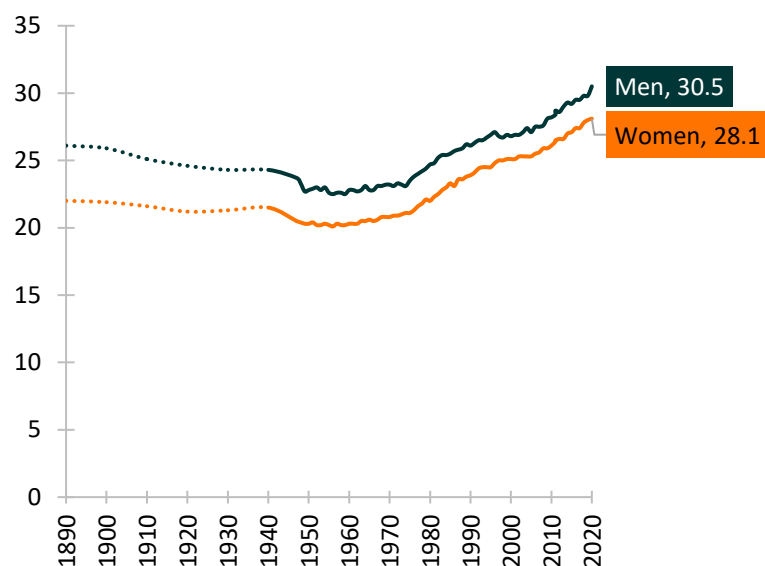


Median Age at First Marriage, 2019

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The median age at first marriage in the United States has increased steadily since the mid-20th century. In the mid-1950s, the median age was at a record low of just over 20 for women and 22 for men, but by 2020, the median age was 28 for women and 30 for men (see Figure 1). The median age at first marriage has increased similarly for both men and women. Consequently, the gender gap in the median age at first marriage has persisted, fluctuating between 1.6 and 2.7 years. This profile uses data from the 2019 American Community Survey (ACS), 1-year estimates to track the trends in women's and men's median ages at first marriage. The ACS is ideal because it provides the best annual data on marital status and demographic characteristics allowing for direct estimation of the median age at first marriage (Simmons & Dye, 2004). This is an update to our previous profiles on the topic for the years 2017 (FP-19-06), 2014 (FP-16-07), 2013 (FP-15-05), 2010 (FP-12-07), and 2008 (FP-09-03).

Figure 1. Median Age at First Marriage in the U.S., 1890-2020

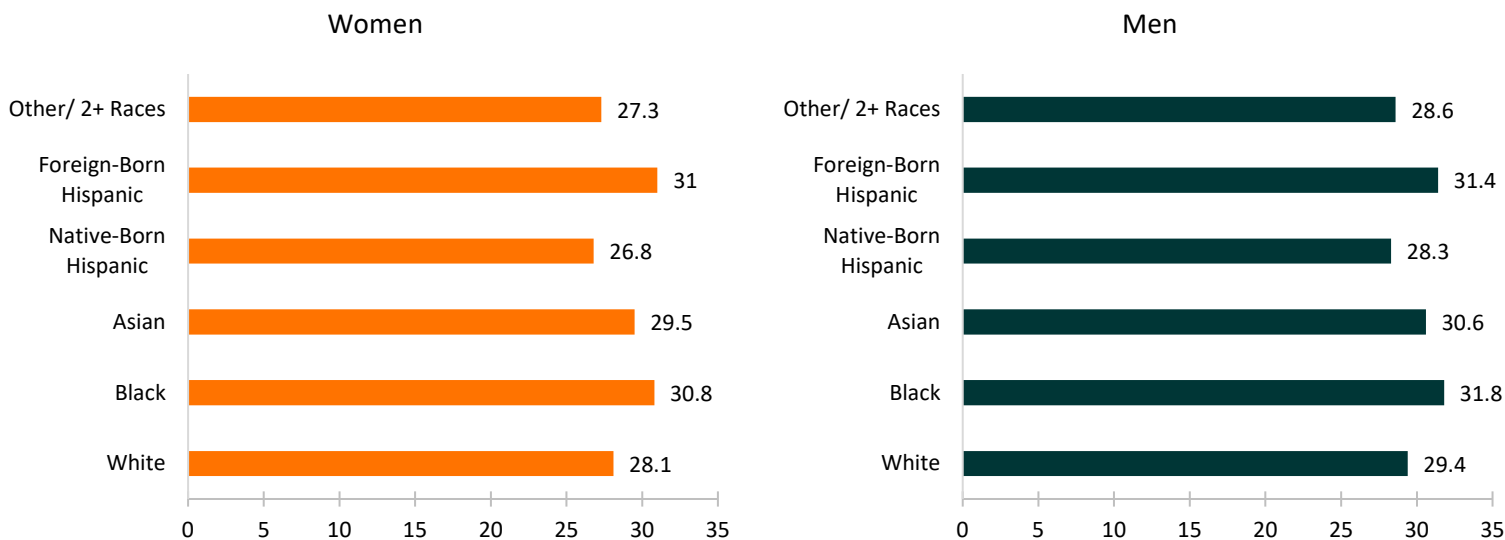


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March and Annual Social and Economic Supplements, published Table MS-2 Estimate Median Age at First Marriage, by Sex: 1890 to the Present. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/families/marital.html>

Median Age at First Marriage by Race and Ethnicity

- Among women, foreign-born Hispanic women had the oldest median age at first marriage at 31.0, and native-born Hispanic women had the youngest at 26.8.
- Among men, Black men had the oldest median age at first marriage (31.8). Native-born Hispanic men had the youngest age (28.3).
- Native-born Hispanic men and women have the largest gender gap at (1.5 years) with the narrowest gap between foreign-born Hispanic men and women (0.4 years).

Figure 2. Median Age at First Marriage by Race and Ethnicity, 2019

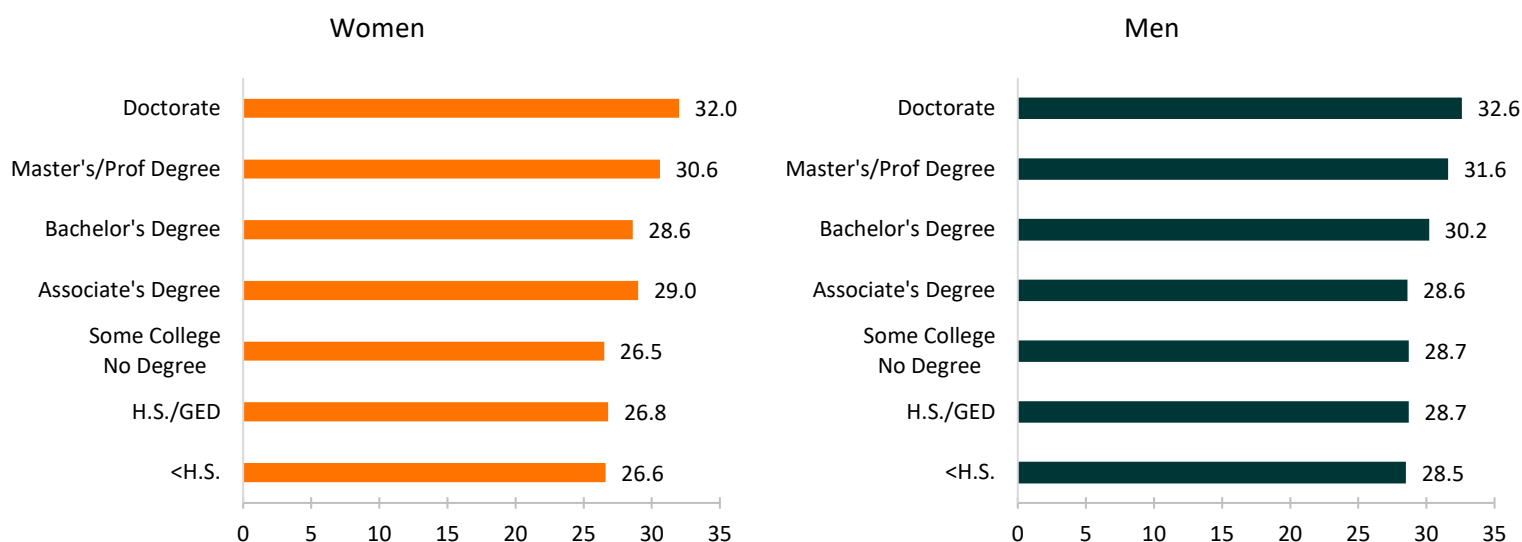


Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-yr est.

Median Age at First Marriage by Educational Attainment

- Among women who married last year, the relationship between educational attainment and age at first marriage was generally linear. Women with less than an associate's degree had the lowest median ages at first marriage, ranging from 26.5 through 26.8. Women with a doctorate degree had the highest age at first marriage at 32.0.
- Men showed a similar pattern. Those with less than a high school education had the lowest median age at first marriage at 28.5. Men with a doctorate degree had the highest at 32.6.
- The largest gender gap is between women and men with some college, but no degree. Those with an associate's degree had the smallest at 0.4; in fact, women with an associate's degree had an older age at first marriage (29.0) than men with the same level of education (28.6).

Figure 3. Median Age at First Marriage by Educational Attainment, 2019



Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-yr est.

Data Source

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample, 2019.

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