

# Marriage

Counting Couples, Counting Families

# Marital Status Question

- American Community Survey
  - What is this person's marital status?
    - Now married
    - Widowed
    - Divorced
    - Separated
    - Never married

- National Survey of Family Growth
  - What is your current marital status?
    - Married
    - Not married but living together with a partner of opposite sex
    - Separated because you and your spouse are not getting along
    - Divorced
    - Widowed
    - Never married

# Limitations

- Cohabitation data for ACS or CPS
- No information on duration or order of marriage
- Lack of partner data for NSFG unless partner data are gathered.

# ACS (2008-)

- In the past month, did this person get

Yes      No

Married

Widowed

Divorced

How many times has this person been married?

Once

Two times

Three or more times

- In what year did this person last get married
- \_\_\_\_\_

- What is this person's sex?
- How is this person related to Person 1 (person 2, 3, 4, etc)?
  - Husband or wife
  - ...
  - Unmarried partner

# Advantages of ACS

- New information on marriages formed in the previous year.
- Large sample sizes
  - National
  - State
  - Local levels
- Special populations (racial/ethnic minorities, immigrants, same sex relationships)
- Link marital or cohabiting couples into couple records



# Suggestions to Modify Marriage-Related Questions

- What is this person's marital status?
  - Married
  - Cohabiting
  - Separated
  - Divorced
  - Widowed
  - Never Married

- When did this person last get –

–	Year
– Married?	– – – –
– Cohabited?	– – – –
– Separated?	– – – –
– Divorced?	– – – –
– Widowed?	– – – –

- How many times has this person been married?
  - Once
  - Two times
  - Three or more times

# Marital History

- Longitudinal surveys
  - NLSY
  - SIPP
- Detailed marital history of the spouse?