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The American Family in 1990: Growing Diversity and Inequality

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Luxembourg Income Study Working Paper Series

Working Paper No. 115

**The American Family in 1990:
Growing Diversity and Inequality**

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The American Family in 1990: Growing Diversity and Inequality

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INTRODUCTION

Dramatic changes have occurred in the American family over the last four decades. Throughout this time period, television shows have evolved to reflect these changes. In the 1950s the typical family portrayed in most situation comedies consisted of a breadwinner-husband, a homemaker-wife, and two or more children. This "ideal" American family was depicted in shows such as Father Knows Best, Leave it To Beaver, and Ozzie and Harriet. The Nelson family, consisting of Ozzie and Harriet and their children David and Rickie, has recently received renewed fame in the press and has come to symbolize the typical American family of the 1950s. It now serves as a baseline against which to compare current family arrangements. While the Nelson family was more of an ideal than a reality for many people, even in the 1950s, the fact that Americans shared a common image of what a family should look like and how parents and children should behave reinforced the importance of the family and strengthened the institution of marriage. No such common understanding exists today, for better or for worse.

Since the 1950s, families like the Nelsons have become increasingly rare, as young men and women have delayed marriage and childbearing, as wives and mothers have entered the labor force in greater numbers, and as divorce rates have soared. This does not mean that families are becoming extinct, but rather that they are taking on different forms. Along with the decline of families like Ozzie and Harriet, new types of families and living arrangements have become more dominant, including childless families with two working parents, one-parent families, and cohabiting couples. Nonfamily households — defined as households containing a single individual or people unrelated by blood or marriage — have also become more prominent. Today, hit television shows, such as Thirty Something, LA Law, and Murphy Brown, feature divorced and never married characters, employed mothers, and single mothers, reflecting the diversity of families that is characteristic of the 1990s. These "new families" show that Americans have more choices today than they did in the past about how to organize their private lives and intimate relationships.¹

At the same time, greater diversity has meant greater economic inequality across households. Some of the new, nontraditional families, such as dual-earner couples, are doing very well; others, such as single mother families, are doing poorly. In 1991, the typical dual-earner couple with children had an annual income of \$46,629.² In contrast, the typical mother-only family had an income of only \$13,012. Families like Ozzie and Harriet Nelson (working husband, homemaker wife, children) had an annual income of \$33,961. The increase in single mother families and dual-earner families during the 1970s and 1980s has led to increased inequality across households and to a feminization of poverty, with more and more of the poor being concentrated in families headed by unmarried mothers.³ In 1960, 24 percent of poor families were headed by unmarried mothers; in 1990, the number was 53 percent. The diversity of families has also exacerbated racial and ethnic differences in economic well-being. Whereas the fastest growing white families are dual-earner families, a relatively advantaged group, the

fastest growing black families are mother-only families, a relatively disadvantaged group.

Many people are concerned about what these changes mean for children. And many want to know what government can (and should) do to help families and children adjust to these changes. The fact that women are spending more of their time working outside the home means that children have less time with their mothers. It also means that mothers are increasingly faced with conflicting demands from the workplace and family. Despite the problems encountered by working mothers, today very few people believe that mothers' employment per se is harmful to children, except perhaps during the first year of life. And yet we used to think so, forty years ago. Today, the policy debate about mothers' employment is primarily a debate over what constitutes quality child care, how to make quality care accessible and affordable to families, and how to design parental leave policies to suit the needs of parents as well as employers.⁴

The public is much less sanguine about the future implications of marital disruption and single motherhood. When mothers work outside the home, children may spend less time with their parents, but the family also gains income. In contrast, when parents live in separate households, children experience a loss of parental time (typically the father's time) as well as a loss of income. Because the total loss of resources is substantial for children who live with single mothers, many people fear that this type of arrangement may be harmful to children. And indeed the empirical evidence supports their fears. Children who grow up with only one of their parents are less successful in adulthood, on average, than children who grow up with both parents. They are more likely to dropout of high school, to become teen mothers and single mothers, and to have trouble finding and keeping a steady job in young adulthood, even after adjusting for differences in parents' socio-economic background.⁵ About half of the disadvantage associated with single parenthood is due to lower income. Most of the rest is due to too little parental involvement and supervision and too much residential mobility. Given the public concern about the growth as well as the consequences of single motherhood, the policy debate in this area is not just about how to help children adapt to family change, it is about how to reverse change.

The idea that government should try to prevent single mother families from forming is a hotly contested issue that arouses intense feelings from parties on both sides of the debate. It also raises questions about the causes underlying the decline in marriage. In order to know whether government should try to reverse the trend in single motherhood, we need to know what caused it in the first place. Those who want government to try to limit the growth of single mother families often claim that government is responsible for the growth.⁶ They argue that the rise in welfare benefits during the sixties and early seventies sent a message to young men and women that if they had a child and did not marry, the government would take care of the mother and child. Thus fewer couples married and more young women became single mothers. Charles Murray, a leading proponent of this view, argues that the only way to save families is to eliminate welfare entirely, forcing poor young women either to stop having children or to place their newborns with adoption agencies.

At the other end of the political spectrum are those who believe that the decline in marriage is due to the decline in job opportunities for poor young men — jobs that would enable men to support a family.⁷ They argue that young men with the least education and the fewest skills were the hardest hit by the loss of jobs from central cities and the restructuring of the work place that occurred during the 1970s and 1980s. With no visible means of support and with bleak prospects for the future, these young men are not seen as potential marriage partners by the young women they are dating, even when a young woman becomes pregnant. Nor are the parents of the girl likely to try to arrange a "shot gun marriage" as they might have done in the 1950s when the likelihood of finding steady work was much greater for low-skilled men. In short, marriage has declined because the pool of "marriageable men" has declined.

These two theories tell us something about why marriage might have declined among women from disadvantaged backgrounds during the past few decades, but they do not explain why the trend also occurred among young women from more advantaged backgrounds. To fully understand what has happened to American families, we must look farther than welfare benefits and the loss of jobs for low-skilled men.

Another theory with considerable merit is the notion that marriage declined because women became more economically independent. According to this idea, increases in women's education, job opportunities, and hourly wages during the past three decades reduced the gains to marriage and gave women an alternative source of income outside marriage.⁸ This allowed them to be more selective in choosing a mate, and it encouraged them to leave a bad marriage if necessary. The women's independence theory incorporates the two previous arguments. Welfare benefits, like earnings, provide less educated women with an alternative source of income outside marriage. Similarly, the decline in good jobs for low-skilled men makes marriage less attractive for these women, especially if the level of welfare benefits remains constant.

Finally, some people blame the decline in marriage and increase in single motherhood on changes in American culture.⁹ The cultural argument has many different facets. Some people see the sexual revolution in the 1960s as the principal engine of change. Changes in attitudes about pre-marital sex made it easier for young men and women to live together without being married and de-stigmatized single motherhood. Along with changes in attitudes, birth control improved and abortion became more widely available, making it easier to have intimate relationships without the responsibilities and commitments they once entailed.

Other analysts focus on the shift in values that has taken place throughout the 20th century but especially after 1960. The shift in values from those favoring family commitment and self sacrifice to those favoring individual growth and personal freedom has given rise to what is often called the "me generation." Many of the characters in recent television shows such as Northern Exposure, Seinfeld, and Thirty Something show young people struggling with the tension between making a permanent commitment to another person and remaining true to their own ideals and personal growth.

The final part of the chapter directly addresses the question of why marriage has declined during the past two decades. Here we present new evidence based on our own empirical analysis of marriage market characteristics in different metropolitan areas of the United States. We find that marriage is more common in areas where women's employment opportunities and earnings are low, where welfare benefits are low, and where men's employment opportunities and earnings are high. We also find that increases in women's employment opportunities can account for a good deal of the decline in marriage between 1970 and 1990 among white women but not among blacks. Our results do not support the argument that increases in welfare benefits or declines in men's employment opportunities have led to large declines in marriage.

FOUR DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Four demographic changes have profoundly affected the American family in the past forty years: the decline in marriage, the increase in marital instability, the change in marital and nonmarital fertility, and the increase in mothers' labor force participation. In order to understand what has happened to the family, we must understand what has happened in each of these domains.¹⁰

The Delay in Marriage

Throughout the 1950s, the typical young woman married when she was about 20 years old, and the typical young man married when he was about 23. This situation prevailed throughout the 1950s. By 1990, however, the median age at first marriage — the age at which half of the population has married for the first time — was 24 for women and 26 for men. In just three decades, the median age at first marriage increased by four years among women and by three years among men.

Figure 1.1
Age at First Marriage

The postponement of marriage that took place after 1960 led to a substantial increase in the percentage of never married young adults. In 1970, about 6 percent of women and 9 percent of men in the 30 to 34 age group had never married. By 1990, the figures were 16 percent and 27 percent respectively.¹¹ In one sense, the rise in the age at first marriage was not as unusual as it might at first appear. Marital patterns in the 1950s and early 1960s were unique.¹² Never before in this century had so many people married, and never before had they married so young. Thus, using 1950 or 1960 as a benchmark against which to evaluate recent behavior makes the

The debate over the causes of family change has important policy implications. If welfare benefits are the major reason for the decline in marriage and increase in single motherhood, reducing benefits or redesigning welfare incentives to be more marriage-neutral may make sense. If the decline in men's opportunities, the increase in women's employment opportunities, or value changes are the problem, eliminating welfare is not likely to have much effect on marriage and is very likely to make poor children worse off. Ironically, if the increase in women's economic independence is a major cause of single motherhood, than encouraging welfare mothers to enter the labor force, which is a principal thrust of recent efforts to reform welfare, may actually exacerbate the trend in single motherhood since it will increase the economic independence of women in the long run.

In this chapter we examine the changes that have made the Ozzie and Harriet Family increasingly rare in the latter half of the twentieth century. We begin by focusing on four major demographic trends: the decline in marriage, the rise in marital disruption, the changes in marital and nonmarital childbearing, and the increase in mothers' labor force participation. Certain of these trends, such as the rising divorce rate, are extensions of long term patterns that have been reshaping family life since the turn of the century. Others, such as the employment of mothers with young children, are more recent and represent a break with the past.

We also examine demographic changes in other western, industrialized countries in order to place the U.S. experience in the broadest possible context. The cross-national comparisons help us think about the causes underlying the changes in the American family and how we might minimize the cost of change for children. Too often, commentators and political pundits in the United States speak as though the changes affecting the American family were unique to this country. As noted above, the growth of single mother families is often attributed to the increase in welfare benefits during the 1960s and early 1970s. As we shall see, however, the U.S. is not unique with respect to divorce, nonmarital childbearing, and women's employment. Nor is there a simple one-to-one relationship between the prevalence of single parenthood and the level of welfare benefits across different countries. Many European countries, such as France, Great Britain, and Sweden, are much more generous toward single mothers than the U.S., and yet they have less single motherhood than we do.

In the second part of the chapter, we examine family diversity and its implications for the economic well-being of American women. Census data allow us to compare the characteristics of several different types of "new families," including single mother families, single father families, and cohabiting couples. They also allow us to examine the prevalence of different work and family roles among American women and the standard of living commiserate with these statuses. As in the previous section, we compare the U.S. case with other industrialized countries. We find that married couple families in which the wife is employed have the lowest poverty rates in nearly all the countries examined, whereas families headed by nonemployed single mother have the highest poverty rates. We also find that single mothers are much worse off in the United States, relative to other families with children, than in most other countries.

current situation appear much more striking. Had we used 1900 as our baseline, for example, we would have found a much smaller increase in the median age at first marriage — no change among men and only a two year increase among women.

Yet certain aspects of the relatively high age at first marriage today are different from what they were at the turn of the century. In 1900, most young adults lived with their parents or other relatives until they married. Today they are much more likely to leave home and establish independent households. Thus, the increase in the age at first marriage after 1960s led to a substantial increase in nonfamily households — households containing a single person or several unrelated adults. This further undermined the institution of marriage since it provided young people with an alternative way of establishing their independence from their families of origin.

Living away from home prior to marriage was especially pronounced throughout the 1960s and 1970s as the baby boom generation came of age, as contraception techniques improved, and as young men and women became active in the Civil Rights and Women's Liberation movements. During the 1980s, the trend reversed somewhat as economic conditions worsened and as young people found it harder to find jobs and support themselves on their own. Even so, the proportion of unmarried adults living on their own or with unrelated adults was substantially higher in 1990 than it was in 1970.

The increasing median age at first marriage and the rising percentage of never married adults has gone arm in arm with an increase in cohabitation — two persons of the opposite sex living together in a "marriage-like" relationship. In 1960 and 1970, the earliest years for which cohabitation data are available, about 2 percent of unmarried adults were cohabiting (Table 1.1).¹³ Since 1970, the percentage has skyrocketed. Between 1980 and 1990, it grew from 5.3 percent to 7.9 percent among unmarried men and from 4.3 to 6.6 percent among unmarried women. The increase in cohabitation occurred among all age groups (except people over 65) but was greatest among men and women in their late twenties and early thirties.

Table 1.1
Percent of Men and Women Cohabiting

While some analysts argue that cohabitation reenforces the institution of marriage by allowing people to "try out" potential marriage partners and choose their mates more carefully, there are several reasons for believing otherwise.¹⁴ First, cohabiting unions are less stable than legal marriages and of much shorter duration.¹⁵ Second, a sizeable proportion of cohabitators (10 percent) intend to continue living together but do not intend to marry their current partner.¹⁶ For these couples, cohabitation is clearly an alternative rather than a precursor to marriage. There is another subset of cohabitators (7 percent) who plan to marry eventually but who do not

plan to marry the person they are currently living with.¹⁷ And finally, regardless of how people view their relationship, the rights and obligations that go with legal marriage are much more difficult to enforce among cohabiting couples than among married couples. To take just one example, an unmarried woman who becomes a mother has a much weaker claim on the resources of the child's father than a woman who is married to the father. Only about 30 percent of children born outside marriage have a legally designated father.¹⁸ While the courts have been moving in the direction of extending "marital rights and obligations" to cohabiting couples, there continues to be a large disparity between these two types of partnerships.

The Increase in Marital Instability

A second major factor affecting families is the increase in divorce. Whereas in 1950, most people married once and remained married until they (or their spouse) died, like Ozzie and Harriet presumably did, today over half of all couples end their marriages voluntarily. The divorce rate — the number of divorces each year per 1000 married women — rose steadily during the first half of the twentieth century and increased dramatically after 1960. Over half of all marriages contracted in the mid 1980s were projected to end in divorce.¹⁹ While the divorce rate levelled off during the 1980s, this was not necessarily a sign of greater marital stability. We would have expected such a levelling off, given the increase in cohabitation (which means that the couples who do marry are likely to be the most committed), given the increase in the average age at first marriage, and given the fact that the large baby boom cohorts have reached middle age and passed through the period of their lives when they were most likely to divorce.²⁰

The increase in divorce and the delay/decline in marriage have led to a rise in the ratio of divorced to married people (Figure 1.2). In 1960, there were 35 divorced men and women for every 1000 married adults; by 1990, there were 140. The ratio of divorced to married people is nearly twice as large for blacks as for whites, and this was true throughout the period from 1960 to 1990. In just three decades, the ratio of divorced to married adults grew over four-fold! Although the ratio was higher for blacks than for whites, the percentage increase over time was the same for both races. The increase in the divorce ratio is likely to have a feedback effect on marriage. By increasing the chance that married and single people will interact with people who have ended their marriages through divorce, a high divorce ratio makes divorce more acceptable and marriage more uncertain. In addition, legal changes since the 1950s have made divorce easier and more acceptable. For example, until the 1960s, divorce was permissible in New York State only if one partner proved the other had committed adultery.

Figure 1.2
Ratio of Divorced to married Persons

The Shift in Marital and Nonmarital Fertility

A third change affecting the American family is the shift in marital and nonmarital fertility rates. Between 1960 and 1990, marital fertility rates — births to married women between the ages of 15 and 44 — declined sharply, while nonmarital fertility rates — births to unmarried women of the same age — increased gradually. Together these two trends led to a reduction in overall fertility, and at the same time, to an increase in the proportion of children born outside of marriage.

The rapid rise in the illegitimacy ratio — the proportion of all births each year occurring to unmarried women — has recently attracted considerable attention, as the public has become increasingly concerned about the economic and social costs of nonmarital childbearing for children, mothers and the country at large.²¹ What is often missing from such discussions, however, is the recognition that marital fertility has a significant effect on the trend in the illegitimacy ratio. Since married women account for a much larger proportion of all births than unmarried women, a change in the fertility behavior of married women can have a large impact on this measure. In addition, an increase in the proportion of women who are single can also have a large effect on the proportion of children born outside marriage.²² To understand why the illegitimacy ratio has gone up so fast in recent years, we must understand what is happening to both the marital and nonmarital birth rates as well as to the changing marital status composition of women, that is, the proportion of women who are married and unmarried.

Figure 1.3
Birth Rates for Married and Unmarried Women

As noted in the previous section, the 1950s were an unusual decade. Not only did men and women marry at relatively young ages, they also became parents when they were quite young, and they gave birth to more children. This increase in marital fertility caused what demographers called a "baby boom" from the late 1940s to the early 1960s and provided the foundation for the Ozzie and Harriet Family that was so familiar to Americans during the 1950s.

In the early 1960s, however, married women began to change their behavior. Marital fertility rates declined by more than 40 percent between 1960 and 1975, from 157 births per 1000 married women to 92 births per 1000 women. During this same period, nonmarital fertility remained constant, at 23 births per 1000 unmarried women. Thus the increase in the illegitimacy ratio between 1960 and 1975 was due to two factors: the decline in the fertility of married women, and the delay in marriage, which increased the number of women at risk of having a nonmarital birth.

Beginning in the mid 1970s, marital fertility rates stopped declining, nonmarital fertility

rates begin to rise, and the age at first marriage continued to rise. After 1975, the rise in the illegitimacy ratio was due to increases in nonmarital fertility as well as increases in the number of women at risk of having a nonmarital birth.

The distinctions between the different forces underlying the rise in the illegitimacy ratio are crucial for understanding the recent debate over the causes of out-of-wedlock childbearing. In this debate, policy makers and political pundits often point to the rise in the illegitimacy ratio as evidence that increases in welfare benefits were responsible for the increases in nonmarital childbearing. But their explanation does not fit the data. During the period when welfare benefits were going up — from 1960 to 1975 — the rise in the illegitimacy ratio was driven primarily by the *decline* in marital birth rates and *delays* in marriage. Birth rates of unmarried women did not go up during this period. Not until the late 1970s and 1980s was the rise in the illegitimacy ratio driven by an actual increase in nonmarital fertility, and by that time, welfare benefits had started to decline in value. This does not mean that welfare has no impact on unmarried childbearing, but it does suggest that the relationship is much weaker and more complex than many people think. Clearly the rise in the percent of births occurring to unmarried women is not the simple consequence of more welfare benefits.

Changes in marital and nonmarital fertility altered family life in two major ways: they reduced the prevalence of parenthood overall, and they increased the proportion of families headed by single mothers. In 1960, 44 percent of American households contained a married couple with a minor child. An additional 4 percent contained a child and either a single parent or neither parent.²³ Thus, nearly half of all households included children, and nearly ninety percent of the households with children contained two parents. By 1990, the picture was very different. Only about 35 percent of all households contained children and an increasing proportion of children were not living with two parents. Between 1960 and 1990, the proportion of children living in single parent families grew from 9 percent to 25 percent.²⁴ And this number understates the proportion of children that will ever experience single parenthood. Demographers estimate that over half of all children born in the late 1970s will live in a single-parent family at some point before reaching age 18.²⁵

The growth of single-parent families is covered in more detail in the next section. (It is also treated in the chapter by Dennis Hogan and Daniel Lichter.) For now, we simply note that single parent families are very different from two parent families in terms of their economic status, and this difference has important implications for the future well-being of children.

The Increase in Mothers' Employment

The final, and perhaps most fundamental, change affecting the American family is the increase in mothers' employment. Women's labor force participation — the percent of women who are working or looking for work — has been going up since the beginning of the twentieth century. In the early part of the century the increase occurred primarily among young unmarried women. After 1940, married women began entering the labor force in greater numbers, and after 1960, married mothers with children at home followed suit. (See the Chapter by Bianchi for a more thorough description of these trends.)

Figure 1.4
Trends in Mothers' Employment

In the early 1950s, when Harriet Nelson was held up as the ideal model of the American wife and mother, only about 30 percent of married mothers with school-aged children were working outside the home.²⁶ By 1990, this number had risen to over 73 percent. In just four short decades, a behavior that once described only a minority of mothers now fit a large majority of mothers, and this was true of mothers of all marital statuses. The figures for mothers with pre-school children are even more dramatic. In 1960 only 19 percent of married mothers with pre-school (under age 6) children were in the labor force, whereas by 1990 59 percent were employed. By 1990, married mothers were nearly as likely to be in the labor force as formerly married single mothers (64 percent), and they were more likely to be employed than never married mothers (49 percent.)²⁷

Race Differences

Racial and ethnic groups differed considerably in 1990 with respect to the prevalence of marriage, parenthood, and employment among mothers. The trends, however, were consistent for all of the groups we looked at. White women were the most likely to be married in 1990, and black women were the least likely. Hispanics fell in between. All three groups experienced a decline in the prevalence of marriage between 1980 and 1990.

Table 1.2
The Percentage of Women Who were Married,
Employed and Raising Children Alone, 1980 and 1990

The pattern for single parenthood was just the opposite. Black women were four times

as likely as white women to be single mothers — 28 percent versus 7 percent — and hispanic women, again, were in the middle. The prevalence of single motherhood, as a percentage of all women, did not increase among white women during the 1980s, and increased by only 2 and 1 percentage points among blacks and hispanics respectively. (Single motherhood grew much more rapidly in the 1960s and 1970s than in the 1980s). With respect to mothers' employment, all three racial and ethnic groups experienced an increase in mothers' labor force participation (mothers' working at least 20 hours per week) between 1980 and 1990. White mothers were the most likely to be working outside the home in 1990, and hispanic mothers were least likely to be in the labor force.

Cross-National Comparisons

The U.S. is not the only country to have experienced significant demographic changes during the past three decades. Declines in marriage, increases in divorce, growth in the proportion of children born outside marriage, and increases in the labor force participation of women have affected family life in most European countries as well as in Canada and the United States. The average age at marriage has risen since the beginning of the 1970s in most western countries as it has in the United States. Europeans who were born in the 1950s and who came of age during the "free-love generation" of the 1960s initiated the retreat from marriage characterized by both later and less frequent marriage.²⁸ Indeed, the age at first marriage is actually lower in the United States than in most of the European countries.

Table 1.3
International Comparisons: Divorce Rates, Illegitimacy Ratios,
Single Parents, and Employment Women

Divorce rates have also increased throughout the western world. While the U.S. had by far the highest rate of divorce in 1990, the increase over the past several decades was dramatic in nearly all of the western countries. In Canada and the United Kingdom, the divorce rate grew from about 2 divorces per 1000 married women in 1960 to 12 per 1000 in 1990. In France it grew from 3 to 14 per 1000 married women, and in the Netherlands from 2 to 8 per 1000. Italy was the only European country that did not experience a sharp rise in divorce between 1960 and the mid 1980s.

The illegitimacy ratio also rose dramatically in nearly all of the western countries. Sweden and Denmark experienced the largest percentage point increases, (from 11 to 47 percent and from 8 to 46 percent for these two countries respectively). While some countries had much higher illegitimacy ratios than the United States, they did not have a higher percentage of single mother families. Nearly 23 percent of all families in the U.S. were headed by a single mother

in the late 1980s, whereas the percentages were 20 and 13 percent in Denmark and Sweden respectively. The higher prevalence of single motherhood in the U.S. is due in part to the fact that divorce is more common in the U.S. than in other countries and in part to the fact that children born outside of marriage are more likely to be born into single mother families in the U.S. than in other countries. In the U.S. about 25 percent of nonmarital births during the 1970s and 1980s were to cohabiting couples, whereas in Denmark and Sweden nearly all nonmarital births were to cohabiting couples.²⁹

Finally, women's labor force participation rates have been going up in nearly all the countries. In the late 1980s, Denmark and Sweden had the highest percentage of employed women, followed by Canada, France and the U.S.. The increase in employment was greatest among women in the Netherlands. The labor force participation rates of Dutch women more than doubled, increasing from 24 percent to 55 percent! Canadian women also experienced relatively large increases in employment, from 41 percent in 1970 to 75 percent in 1988.

While the labor force participation rate of mothers was lower than the rate of all women in the late 1980s, a majority of mothers were working outside the home in most countries. France and Italy were the only countries in which less than half of mothers were in the labor force in the mid 1980s. Comparable numbers for the Netherlands are not available, but our own estimates indicate that Holland has one of the lowest labor force participation rates for women of all the western european countries.³⁰

DIVERSITY AND INEQUALITY

The trends described in the previous section have led to dramatic changes in American families and households, most notably, to a decline in traditional families like Ozzie and Harriet and to an increase in non-traditional families such as dual earner couples and single parent families. In 1960, over 50 percent of all families contained a breadwinner husband and homemaker wife, whereas by the end of the 1980s, only 20 percent of all families fit this description. During this same period, dual earner families grew from under 25 percent to nearly 40 percent of all families, while families headed by single mothers increased from about 9 percent to around 23 percent.³¹

Diversity In Women's Work and Family Status

To illustrate how these demographic forces have altered, and are continuing to alter, the lives of Americans, we examined changes in women's family status between 1980 and 1990. We focus on women because the trends described above had their most dramatic effects on women's behavior and family status. Focusing just on men would have obscured the growth of single parent families, and focusing just on children would have obscured the growth of childless couples and adults in nonfamily statuses.

We identified eight different family statuses, based on women's marital, employment, and parental roles. A woman was coded as employed if she worked 20 hours or more a week. We choose the 20 hour per week cutoff because we believe it accurately distinguishes between women who have a major commitment to the labor force and those who do not. A she was classified as a mother if she was living with an "own child" under 19. We restricted our sample to women between the ages of 18 to 55 because this is the age range during which women are most likely to be raising children.

Women who were married and not employed were classified as occupying "traditional" family statuses. Employed married women and unmarried women raising children were classified as occupying "nontraditional" family statuses. We recognize that dual earner couples and single parent families are "nontraditional" in very different ways. In the first case, the traditional family form is violated by the fact that the wife is working outside the home. In the second, it is violated by the fact that one parent is not living in the household.

Women who were neither married nor raising children were classified as occupying "nonfamily" statuses, even though some of these women were living with parents or related adults. They occupy nonfamily statuses in the sense that they have not yet started their own families, either by marrying or having a child. Given their high levels of labor force participation, we expect most of these women to move into nontraditional family statuses once they marry or have children.

In 1980, 29 percent of white women of child rearing age were married homemakers (Table 1.4). By 1990, the figure was only 18 percent. (We assumed that most homemakers without children were either anticipating an "Ozzie and Harriet Family" or had experienced such a family in the past.) In just one decade, the percentage of white women in traditional family statuses declined by 11 percentage points.

Table 1.4
Women's Work and Family Status, by Race, 1980 and 1990

Along with the decline of women in traditional family statuses came an increase in nontraditional statuses. By 1990, over half of all white women occupied nontraditional family roles, and recent trends suggest that this percentage will continue to grow in the future. For whites, the increase of women in nontraditional statuses was due entirely to increases in working wives.³² There was no increase in single motherhood among white women during the 1980s.

Some readers may be surprised to find that such a small percentage of white women (of childrearing age) were single mothers in 1990, given the considerable press coverage these women attract. The apparent contradiction between the public perception and the reality can be explained in part by the fact that the numbers in Table 1.4 refer to all women, whereas the numbers most frequently quoted in the press refer to all mothers or all children. The percentage of all white **mothers** who were single (unmarried) in 1990 was 16 percent whereas the percentage of white **women** who were single mothers was only 7 percent.

The difference between the two figures illustrates a very important point: the prevalence of single mother families (and the growth of such families) looks much more dramatic when the base is all mothers as opposed to all women. If we are concerned about the conditions under which children are being raised, mothers (or children) are the correct population to focus on. If we are concerned about the condition of women, however, or if we are trying to understand the reasons behind the changes in women's behavior, we should focus on all women rather than mothers.

Focusing only on women with children can be misleading, since it ignores the fact that women are less likely to be mothers today than they were in the past. In 1980, 49 percent of white women were living with a minor child as compared to 45 percent in 1990. (Add rows 1, 3, 5 and 6 from Table 1.4). If motherhood declines among married women and remains the same among single women, the proportion of children being raised by single mothers will necessarily increase, even though the proportion of single women who are mothers does not.

Another reason why the percentage of single mothers appears to be low is that the Census provides us with only a snapshot of the population in 1990. It does not count women who have been single mothers in the past, but are no longer in this status, either because their children moved away or because they got married or remarried. Nor does it identify women who will be single mothers at some point in the future. The snapshot only tells us how widespread the phenomenon is at a point in time.

A final indicator of the decline of the traditional Ozzie and Harriet Family is the increase in women who were neither married nor raising children — women in nonfamily statuses. Nearly 30 percent of white women between the age of 18 and 55 occupied this status in 1990. The percentage grew by 2 percentage points (net) between 1980 and 1990. These increases reflect the delays in marriage and increases in employment among recent cohorts of women.

Black women were less likely than white women to occupy traditional family roles in both 1980 and 1990. Like their white counterparts, black women also experienced a decline in traditional statuses and an increase in nontraditional statuses during the 1980s. Black and white women differed primarily in terms of the **type** of nontraditional family roles they occupied: whereas white women were predominantly in dual-earner families, black women were predominantly in single mother families. This difference increased during the 1980s.

Perhaps the most striking contrast between black and white women was the difference in the prevalence of marriage: Nearly two thirds (64 percent) of white women were married in 1990 as compared to only a third (34 percent) of black women (percentages calculated from Table 1.4). Furthermore, the marriage gap between whites and blacks was just as striking among women without children (47 percent versus 24 percent) as it was among women with children (84 percent versus 43 percent). Regardless of parental status, white women were twice as likely as black women to be married.

The fact that the marriage differential between white and black women was the same for mothers as for non-mothers means that whatever is causing black women to forego marriage is affecting all women, not just mothers. This finding contradicts the argument that welfare benefits are a major cause of the racial difference in marriage. While welfare may explain why women with children might forego marriage, it does not explain why childless women are behaving in a similar fashion.

Hispanic women were the most traditional of all women. They were the most likely to be married homemakers and the least likely to occupy nontraditional family statuses in 1990, and they experienced the smallest decline (in relative terms) in traditional roles during the 1980s. What is most striking about hispanic women is their relatively low levels of labor force participation. Regardless of whether they were married or single, and regardless of whether they were raising children, hispanic women were more likely to be homemakers than black or white women. The contrast between hispanic and white women was especially striking in 1990. Whereas the ratio of employed women to homemakers was three to one among whites, it was only 1.6 to one among hispanic women.

The only area in which Hispanic women were less traditional than white women was in the prevalence of single motherhood. Fourteen percent of hispanic women were single mothers in 1990 as compared with only 7 percent of white women. While the prevalence of single motherhood among hispanics did not increase significantly as a percentage of all women between 1980 and 1990, it did increase as a percent of all mothers. In 1990 over 27 percent of hispanic mothers were raising a child alone, up from 23 percent in 1980.

Diversity and Inequality

Growing diversity in family roles has given Americans more freedom about how they organize their personal lives, and, at the same time, has created greater disparity in standards of living. In 1990, there were large differences in the economic status and poverty rates associated with the different work and family statuses.³³ Women who were married and employed had relatively high household incomes and low poverty rates in 1990. In contrast, single mothers were in very bad shape, especially mother who were not employed. Single women without children were doing about the same as women in traditional families. We do not report poverty rates for the last category of women — single, childless, and not working — since we do not believe the poverty rates of these women accurately reflect their standard of living (some were students and others were living with roommates).

Table 1.5
Total Household Income, Income/Need ratios, and
Poverty Rates of Women in different Types of Families, 1990

Regardless of race or ethnicity, marriage and employment were clearly associated with a higher standard of living for women in 1990, whereas motherhood was associated with a lower standard of living. Holding other factors constant, women who were living with children had higher poverty rates than women who were not living with children, employed women were better off than homemakers, and married women were better off than single women (holding motherhood constant).

A notable difference between white and minority women was the income gap between traditional homemakers (with children) and employed single mothers. Among whites, the former were much better off than the latter, whereas among blacks and hispanics, the two statuses were very similar. The total household income of married homemakers was slightly higher than the income of employed, single mothers, but the poverty rates were virtually the same. This underscores that fact that black and hispanic women have less to gain from marriage than white women.

It is tempting to conclude from these comparisons that if all women were married and employed, poverty rates would be quite low in the United States: 2 to 3 percent for whites, 3 to 6 percent for blacks, and 6 to 13 percent for hispanics. Such a conclusion would be misleading, however, since people sort themselves into different types of families, depending on what they earn or expect to earn and what their potential partners earn or expect to earn. As we noted above, women are less likely to marry if their potential partners have low earnings capacity, and they are less likely to be in the labor force if their own earnings capacity is low. Thus, if all single women were married and employed, the average household income of all

women would not be as high as the income of the women who are currently married and employed (and the poverty rates would not be as low.)

At the same time, it would be wrong to conclude that marriage and employment have no effect on a person's economic status. Regardless of initial earnings capacity, on-the-job experience usually increases skills and earnings, and therefore women who are employed are more likely to experience increases in their earnings capacity over time than women who are not in the labor force. Similarly, pooling resources with another adult usually leads to a higher standard of living simply because of economies of scale.

Consider the case of a two-parent family with two children. If the parents share a household and pool resources, the income required for the family to live above the poverty line was approximately \$14,000 in 1991, according to the official U.S. poverty thresholds.³⁴ If the parents live apart and both children live with the mother (or father), the same family members need approximately \$18,000 to live above the poverty line, \$11,000 for the mother and two children and \$7,000 for the father living alone. Thus the parents' decision to live together reduces the amount of money required to keep the family above the poverty line.

Without making any assumptions about causality, it is clear that the diversification in women's roles and family statuses that occurred during the 1980s was associated with an growing polarization of women into high and low income statuses (and children, since they almost always live with their mothers). If we look at the poverty rates associated with each of the work and family statuses, we see that white women in traditional statuses have moderate poverty rates (relative to other white women), white women in dual earner families have low poverty rates, and white single mothers have high poverty rates. Employed women in nonfamily statuses fall in the middle range.³⁵

Assuming that the poverty rates for different statuses were similar in 1980 and 1990, we can see that the changes in the composition of white women's family roles resulted in more women concentrated in high income statuses and fewer women concentrated in middle income statuses. The 11 percentage point decline in traditional homemakers — a moderate income group — was offset by a 9 percentage point increase in employed wives — a high income group — and a 2 percentage point (net) increase in women not living in families — a moderate income group. Since the proportion of women in the low income category remained constant, the overall effect of the reconfiguration of white women's roles during the 1980s was toward more concentration in high and low income statuses.

The story is somewhat different for black and hispanic women, although here too changes in composition resulted in more women in high income statuses. Among black women, the decline of women in the role of traditional homemaker was offset by an increase in employed single mothers — a group with a moderate economic status — and employed single women with no children — a group with a high economic status. Among hispanic women, the decline of

traditional homemakers was offset primarily by an increase in employed, single women with no children. What is especially noteworthy about the different racial patterns in Tables 1.4 and 1.5 is that white women improved their standard of living by moving into dual earner families, including families with children, whereas black and hispanic women improved their position by moving into nonfamily statuses. This means that black and hispanic children did not benefit from the gain in status experienced by black and hispanic women since the latter occurred mostly to women without children.

Not only did the shifts in family roles lead to greater inequality among women of the same race and ethnic background, they also led to greater disparity in economic status among white, black, and hispanic women. In 1990, the poverty rate of women (aged 18 to 55) was 7.3 percent among whites, 19.7 percent among blacks, and 20.3 percent among hispanics. If black and hispanic women had occupied the same family statuses as white women (and the poverty rate associated with each status had remained the same), black women's poverty rate would have been about 12.5 percent and hispanic women's rate would have been 15.9 percent. The difference in women's family statuses accounts for about 58 percent of the poverty gap between black and white women and for about 34 percent of the gap between hispanic and white women. The most important family status difference between white and black women is single motherhood, whereas the most difference between white and hispanic women is women's employment.

A Closer Look At Three Nontraditional Families

Before concluding our discussion of the growing diversity in American families, we examine three specific types of nontraditional families. Because of its large sample size, the Census allows us to examine relatively uncommon family arrangements in some detail, and we took advantage of this opportunity to compare the characteristics of different types of single parent families in 1980 and 1990 (including families headed by single mothers and single fathers). We also compare cohabiting couples with married couples in 1990.

Single Mothers

In 1990, single mothers, as a whole, did not appear to be particularly disadvantaged, in terms of their human capital characteristics — education and work experience. (Table 1.6) The typical white single mother was in her early thirties, she had some college education, and she was employed. Only 2 percent of white single mothers were less than twenty years old, only 19 percent had failed to complete high school, and only 23 percent were neither working nor looking for work. The typical black single mother was also in her early thirties, a high school graduate, and in the labor force. Only 4 percent of black single mothers were teenagers, less than a third were high school dropouts, and only 37 percent were not in the labor force. Hispanic single mothers were similar to black and white mothers with respect to age. They were different, however, with respect to education and employment status. Hispanic mothers were much less educated — over half had not finished high school — and much less likely to be employed than

white or black single mothers.

Despite the rather positive profile of the typical single mother in 1990, there was considerable diversity within this population. Some mothers, such as divorced and separated mothers, had a considerable amount of education and work experience, whereas others, such as never-married mothers, were much more vulnerable — younger, less educated, and less likely to be employed.

In 1990, only 21 percent of white single mothers were never-married which means that only a fifth of white mothers were in the "most vulnerable" category. The percentages were much higher among blacks and hispanics — 56 and 37 percent respectively. The high percentage of black never-married mothers accounted for a good deal of the education and employment differences between black and white single mothers. If we compare black and white single mothers *within* marital status categories, the differences in education and employment are much smaller. In contrast, hispanic single mothers have much less education and work experience than white and black mothers regardless of their marital status.

Table 1.6
Diversity Among Single Mothers, 1980 and 1990

Between 1980 and 1990, the education and employment status of single mothers increased. This occurred for whites, blacks, and hispanics, and it occurred despite the fact that the proportion of single mothers who were never married increased between 1980 and 1990. In 1990, 13 percent of white never-married mothers had a college degree and 68 percent were in the labor force, up from 6 percent and 59 percent respectively in 1980. The fact that more single mothers had college degrees in 1990 than in 1980 does not necessarily mean that college educated women were more likely to become single mothers in 1990 than in 1980. The level of education increased among all women during the 1980s, and the increase in education among single mothers reflects this more general trend. (See chapter by Robert Mare.) In fact, the percentage of white women with a college degree who were single mothers actually declined during the 1980s (numbers not reported in Table 1.6). But since education levels increased very rapidly, more single mothers had college degrees in 1990 than in 1980. The picture for blacks was different. Black women with a college degree were *more* likely to be single mothers in 1990 than in 1980, and the increase (in percentage terms) in single motherhood was greater among women with a college degree than among women with less education (numbers not reported in Table 1.6).³⁶

Perhaps the most unexpected change affecting single mothers during the 1980s was the shift in living arrangements. After World War II and up until 1980, single mothers had increasingly established their own households as opposed to living as subfamilies, defined as

living in the household of another family.³⁷ By 1980, only a small percentage of single mothers were living in subfamilies. After 1980, however, the trend reversed, and by the end of the decade the percentage in subfamilies was almost twice as high as it had been in 1980. Much of the reversal was due to the fact that the proportion of never-married mothers increased, and never-married mothers have always been more likely to live in subfamilies than other single mothers. Even so, the trend toward subfamilies appears among single mothers who were formerly married as well as those who were never married.

We suspect that this reversal was a response to the worsening economic condition during the 1980s for those at the bottom end of the income distribution. As Susanni Bianchi and Frank Levy point out in their chapters, men and women with only a high school education experienced a decline in earning during the 1980s, as jobs for low-skilled workers disappeared or were shipped overseas. Single mothers, like other low-skilled workers, were strongly affected by these economic dislocations. Thus, it makes sense that single mothers would have moved in with their parents or other relatives as a way of coping with economic insecurity.

Despite the tendency to "double-up" with relatives during the 1980s, and despite the increase in cohabitation among young adults, single mothers still had relatively low levels of cohabitation in 1990, as compared with single mothers in other countries. In 1990, only 7 percent of white and hispanic single mothers and only 5 percent of black mothers were cohabiting. As we noted at the beginning of this chapter, a substantial percentage of unmarried mothers in other western countries, particularly the Scandinavian countries, live with the fathers of their children even though they are not legally married.³⁸

Single Fathers

Single fathers — defined as unmarried men living with their own or adopted minor child — are much less common than single mothers. In 1990, only about 13 percent of children in single parent families were living with single fathers.³⁹ The percentage was somewhat higher among whites (16 percent) and lower among hispanics (10 percent) and blacks (6 percent). The number of children living in single father families grew from 748,000 in 1970 to nearly 2 million in 1990, and the proportion of children in one parent families who were living with their fathers increased from 9 percent to nearly 13 percent over this 20 year period.

Table 1.7
Characteristics of Single Fathers, 1980 and 1990

In 1990, the typical single father was somewhat older and less educated than the typical single mother. He was also more likely to be in the labor force. The most striking difference between single mothers and single fathers was their living arrangements. A much larger

percentage of single fathers than single mothers were cohabiting or living with relatives. Thirty percent of white single fathers were cohabiting and another 21 percent were living in a subfamily or with a related adult such as a brother or sister. The numbers for black and hispanic fathers were even higher — approximately 80 percent. In short, most single fathers were sharing their child rearing responsibilities with another adult.

Cohabiting Couples

In our previous discussion of women's roles and statuses (Table 1.4), cohabiting women were treated as occupying a nonfamily status, unless they were single mothers. Many people argue, however, that cohabitation represents another legitimate form of family to be treated on an equal basis with marriage.⁴⁰ Indeed, in producing their family statistics, France, Denmark, Sweden and Canada sometimes treat cohabiting unions and legal marriages the same.⁴¹ In the U.S. there is considerable debate over whether cohabitation is a precursor of marriage, a substitute for marriage, or simply a more serious boyfriend-girlfriend type of relationship. Sweet and Bumpass have shown that in the U.S., adults who have cohabited in the past are more likely to have egalitarian sex role attitudes than adults who have not cohabited. They are also more likely to approve of mothers of pre-school age children working full time.

Table 1.8
Comparison of Married and Cohabiting Couples, 1990

Given the differences in attitudes, we were not surprised to find that cohabiting couples had less traditional relationships than married couples. Among whites, cohabitators were more likely to report that the woman was the head of the household, suggesting a more egalitarian organization of roles within the household. They were also less likely to mimic the traditional gender roles of breadwinner-husband and homemaker-wife. In cohabiting couples, the woman was more likely to be the primary breadwinner in the family — defined as the partner who works more hours outside the home — and she was more likely to be more educated than her partner, as compared with the woman in a married-couple family. Women in cohabiting relationships also were more likely to be older than their partners. All together these findings indicate that relative to their partners, women in cohabiting couples have more human capital and are more economically independent than women in married-couple families.

The same pattern exists among black and hispanic couples. As was true of whites, minority women in cohabiting relationships were more likely than married women to be more educated than their partners, and they were more likely to be the primary breadwinners and "household heads."

Minority cohabiting couples were more likely to have children than white cohabiting

couples. The parenting differential between married and cohabiting couples was also much smaller among minority couples which is consistent with the high percentage of never-married black and hispanic single fathers and the high levels of cohabitation among single fathers of these racial groups. The fact that parenthood is nearly as common among cohabiting couples suggests that cohabitation has become more of a substitute for marriage in minority communities than in the white community.

Cross-National Comparisons

The trends affecting American families have touched families in nearly all the western, industrialized countries. And the changes in families and living arrangements have also occurred in nearly all countries. As shown in an earlier section of the paper (Table 1.3), divorce rates, illegitimacy ratios, single motherhood, and women's employment increased in nearly all western industrialized countries between 1960 and 1990, although some countries started from a much smaller base than others, and some countries experienced much faster growth rates than others.

We used information from the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) to examine the work and family statuses of women in seven different industrialized countries, including the U.S.⁴² Sweden, had the lowest prevalence of women occupying traditional family roles, which is what we would expect, given the high labor force participation rates of women in that country. In contrast, Italy, The Netherlands and Germany had the highest percentage of women in traditional statuses — similar to American women in the 1950s. Again, this was not surprising, given that divorce rates, illegitimacy ratios, and labor force participation rates were below average in these countries. Women in Canada and Great Britain, two English-speaking countries, were similar to women in the U.S.⁴³

Table 1.9
International Comparisons of Women's Work and Family Status

In the 1980s, women in the United States were more likely to be single mothers than women in the other countries we studied. Even in Sweden, which had a low percentage of women in traditional work and family roles, and a high percentage of women in nontraditional roles, women were much less likely to be single mothers than they were in the U.S.. As noted earlier, in Sweden, a woman with children was counted as living in a married-couple family if she was cohabiting, whereas in the U.S. she was classified as a single mother. Since only a small proportion of single mothers are cohabiting in the United States (see Table 1.6), this practice does not have much effect on the prevalence of single mothers in the U.S.. In contrast, if we counted cohabiting mothers in Sweden as "single mothers," the prevalence of this status would have been much higher in the mid 1980s, about as high as the prevalence in the U.S. It would be inappropriate to count cohabiting women in Sweden as single mothers, however, since

most of these women were living with the fathers of their children.

Except in Italy, between 20 and 30 percent of women in other western countries were occupying nonfamily statuses. The low percentage of Italian women in this category underscores once again the continuing importance of traditional family roles in that country.

What about the relationship between family diversity and economic status in other countries? Are single mothers just as disadvantaged elsewhere as they are in the United States? The answer to this question is "yes" and "no". It is "yes" in the sense that single mother families (especially families with a nonemployed mother) have the highest poverty rates of all families in every country. It is "no" in the sense that the disparity between single mother families and other families with children is much larger in the U.S. than in most other countries. (Canada is an exception). In the Netherlands, for example, the difference in poverty rates between nonemployed single mothers and married homemakers with children was only 6 percentage points in the mid 1980s (Table 1.10). In Sweden, the difference between the "worst off" (nonemployed single mothers) and "best off" (employed married mothers) families was 18 percentage points, and in the U.S. it was a striking 60 percentage points! Thus, while single mother families have the highest poverty rates in all countries, they are much worse off, relatively speaking, in the U.S. than in the European countries.

Table 1.10
International Comparisons of Poverty Rates
of different Types of Families and Households

The cross-national variation in the economic position of single mothers is partly due to differences in women's demographic characteristics and partly due to different social welfare policies (and to the economic, political and cultural differences that gave rise to these policies).⁴⁴ Some countries, such as Holland and Sweden, have highly developed welfare states with very generous income-transfer programs (and high tax rates). Poverty rates are relatively low among single mothers in these countries, as they are among all citizens. Other nations, such as the United States and Canada, have a more "free-market" approach to income redistribution, and single mothers receive rather meager benefits which are income tested. Poverty rates are high in these countries because the government does not provide much of a safety net for adults who are not employed or for children living with nonemployed parents.

The cross-national contrast is instructive for several reasons. Not only does it show that most other countries (except Canada) do a better job than the U.S. in lowering poverty rates among single mother families, it also shows that other countries reduce poverty without creating a high prevalence of single mothers and, in some instances, without creating a class of welfare-dependent mothers. In the United States, the debate over how best to help single-mother families

is often posed as a dilemma over whether to provide generous benefits, thereby minimizing the poverty of single mothers, or meager benefits, hopefully minimizing the prevalence and welfare dependence of single mothers.⁴⁵

The Swedish and Dutch examples suggest that there are ways around these apparent tradeoffs. Both countries do much more to reduce poverty among single-mother families, and yet the prevalence of single parent families in these countries is half of what it is in the U.S. This alone should tell us that reducing poverty through generous income transfers and social policies does not automatically lead to a high prevalence of single parent families. Even more intriguing, Sweden has found a way to reduce poverty without encouraging welfare dependence. Single mothers in Sweden are more likely to be employed than single mothers in the U.S. which means that they are not dependent on government for most of their income. Sweden minimizes both poverty and dependence by providing assistance in a way that promotes mothers' employment. The Swedish welfare state provides women with low cost childcare, flexible work schedules, and well-paying jobs. While these policies are very expensive, they keep poverty rates low and they keep welfare dependence low.

Holland's and Great Britain's approach is different. These countries provide generous benefits but they do not expect single mothers to work outside the home, just as married mothers are not expected to work. Consequently, single mothers in Holland and the U.K. are not poor, but they are more dependent on government transfers than they are in Sweden.

WHY HAS MARRIAGE DECLINED?

Many explanations have been given for the decline in marriage over the past four decades. One of the major arguments focuses on women's growing economic independence.⁴⁶ According to this view, the rise in women's employment opportunities and earning power have reduced the benefits of marriage and made divorce and single life more attractive. While marriage still offers women the benefits associated with sharing income and household costs with a spouse, for some women these benefits do not outweigh other costs, whatever these may be.

There is no doubt that women's earnings have increased since the 1950s. For a while, much of the gain was due to increases in the number of hours women worked. During the last two decades, however, women's wages have increased relative to men's. Suzanne Bianchi discusses this in more detail elsewhere in this volume (see Bianchi). A large body of evidence suggests that women's economic independence — measured as increases in wages as well as increases in labor force participation — is related to declines in marriage and increases in marital disruption.⁴⁷

Another component of women's economic independence is the welfare benefit that is available to poor women raising children. Along with the increase in women's earnings, the value of the welfare benefit (AFDC plus Food Stamps) rose during the 1960s and early 1970s, which further contributed to the economic independence of women, especially poorly educated women whose earning prospects were not so good. Since the mid 1970s, however, the value of welfare benefits has declined. Between 1970 and 1980, the average maximum annual welfare benefit across all states for a family of four went from \$9595 (in 1990 dollars) to \$7723. Between 1980 and 1990, it dropped to \$7142.⁴⁸ In other words, the average maximum welfare benefit for a mother with two children fell by 26 percent in twenty years.

Much has been written about the role of welfare in undermining marriage and encouraging single motherhood in the United States, and many of the proposals for "welfare reform" that are currently being proposed at the state and federal levels are aimed at correcting the so-called marriage disincentives in the existing welfare system. Indeed, conservatives such as Charles Murray often blame welfare for all of the growth of single mother families during this period.⁴⁹ While welfare obviously makes women at the very bottom end of the income distribution more economically independent of the men they might marry, it is less obvious that the growth of welfare benefits can account for very much of the decline in marriage during the past two decades. We say this for several reasons. First, as noted above, welfare benefits actually declined between 1970 and 1990. Second, the decline in marriage has occurred throughout the population and extends far beyond the group of women potentially eligible for welfare. It is hard to argue that middle-class and upper-middle class women are influenced by the prospect of receiving welfare. Finally, empirical research indicates that welfare is only weakly related to marriage.⁵⁰

A second set of explanations for the decline in marriage focuses on the availability, or lack of availability, of potential marriage partners for women. Availability is defined both in terms of the quantity and quality of potential mate.⁵¹ The quantity problem is believed to have originated with the baby boom which created a surplus of young women (relative to young men two or three years older) in the late sixties and early seventies. Many more women were born in 1947 than men in 1945, so when these women reached marriageable ages they found a small pool of "appropriately" aged men. This phenomenon, which demographers call the "marriage squeeze," may have contributed to the delay in marriage during the late 1960s and early 1970s, but it cannot account for the continuing declines during the 1980s. Indeed, if cohort size were all that mattered, we would have seen a decline in age at first marriage beginning in the late 1970s, when there was a surplus of young men. The quantity of available males is also affected by the fact that young men have higher mortality rates than young women, due to homicide and accidents rates, and by the fact that young men are much more likely to be incarcerated than young women. Incarceration rates increased during the 1980s, especially among young black men. While not very many men are in jail at any point in time, a jail record may affect a man's chances of marriage by making it harder for him to find a steady job later on.

The quality of potential marriage partners is a function of men's job opportunities. William Julius Wilson and Katherine Neckerman define the "Marriageable Male Pool Index" (MMPI) as the number of employed men per 100 women in the population.⁵² They argue that de-industrialization and economic restructuring, which occurred during the 1970s and 1980s, led to a loss of jobs in the central cities of the midwest and northeast regions of the country which, in turn, reduced the employment prospects for men, especially black men. In addition, economists have recently shown that during the 1980s there was a shift in the demand from unskilled to skilled workers which further undermined the economic position of low-skilled men. The bulk of the jobs created during the 1980s were jobs for men with a college education. Men with only a high school degree did not benefit from the expansion during the 1980s which means that the pool of "marriageable males" did not improve despite the improvement in the economy overall. (Frank Levy discusses this "mis-match" between skill and jobs in his chapter in this volume.) The major problem with the "lack of marriageable males" argument is that it does not account for the decline in marriage among men with a college education. Presumably, these men would be seen as very attractive marriage partners and yet they too have experienced a decline in marriage.

The hypothesis about the decline in marriageable males is really an extension of the women's economic independence argument, since women's independence is a function of women's earning power *relative* to men's earning power. Women's independence can increase either because women's earning power goes up faster than men's or because it goes down more slowly than men's. Similarly, increases in welfare benefits only make women more independent if the earning power of their potential mates does not increase as fast as welfare. Welfare also can make women more independent if men's earnings are declining faster than welfare benefits.

When we look at the data on men's and women's earning power together, we see that since 1970 women have become more economically independent relative to men. For educated women, this has occurred because women have done better both absolutely and relative to men. For poor women, it has occurred because women have not done as poorly as low-skilled men. Thus, while the source of independence is different for women with different educational backgrounds, the trend in independence is the same for all women. In principle the independence argument can account for declines in marriage among men and women at all points in the income distribution.

A final set of explanations for why marriage has become less common emphasizes changes in culture, norms and attitudes.⁵³ According to this view, a "revolution" in social norms occurred during the 1960s, transforming people's ideas about the importance of marriage and families. The new ideology encouraged people to put personal freedom and self-fulfillment above family commitments. It also encouraged people to expect more from their marriages and to leave "bad" marriages if their expectations were not fulfilled. One example of the change in attitudes about family responsibility is reflected in the response to the statement, "When there are children in the family, parents should stay together even if they don't get along." In the early

1960s, over half of all women agreed with this statement; by the 1980s, only 20 percent agreed.⁵⁴

Revolutions in sexual behavior and methods of contraception also occurred during the 1960s, reducing the stigma associated with nonmarital sexual intercourse and childbearing and making cohabitation an attractive option to marriage. The increase in cohabitation that occurred during the 1970s and 1980s, among both never-married and among formerly married adults, would not have been possible in a time when sex outside marriage was seen as sinful and deviant.

While many analysts who have studied these questions conclude that changes in social norms and values followed rather than preceded increases in divorce and delays in marriage, cultural phenomenon are likely to have important feedback effects once they get started. Moreover, once women have achieved a certain level of independence — once they can support themselves outside marriage — norms and values may become increasingly important in determining their choices about marriage and childbearing.

To see if differences in women's and men's employment opportunities were related to differences in the prevalence of marriage in the United States in 1990, we selected the 100 largest metropolitan areas (metropolitan areas) and created indices of men's and women's characteristics in each of the areas. We looked at the characteristics of blacks and whites separately since the two races appear to have more or less separate marriage markets. To measure the level of marriage in a particular area, we used the percentage of women in their late twenties (aged 25 and 29) who were married. Ideally, we would have liked to have counted only women who had married during the past year — this would be the best indicator of current marriage rates — but the 1990 Census does not provide information on date of marriage, and so we used women in their late twenties as a proxy for recent marriages.

We measured women's employment opportunities by the percent of women in each area with a college degree and the percent of women who worked full-time, year round. We also looked at the median earnings of full-time women workers. All of these measures were based on women in their late twenties. To measure the quantity of potential male marriage partners, we took the percent of men working full-time year round, the percent unemployed, and the median income of all men. We included men with zero income in our measure of men's economic status so that we could measure the status of all men as opposed to only men with jobs.

Each metropolitan area was assigned the maximum AFDC-Food Stamp guarantee for the family of four in that state. In the few cases where a metropolitan area included two states, we used the higher of the two state benefits. We also created measures of the sex ratio — number of men aged 28 to 33 over number of women aged 25 to 29, population size, and the percent of the population that was black in each metropolitan area. We included population size in order

to measure urbanization, and we included "percent black" to measure racial concentration. The latter variable also measures regional differences. (The marriage market characteristics for the 100 largest metropolitan area are reported in Appendices A1 and A2.)

In 1990, the Tulsa, Oklahoma and Mobile, Alabama metropolitan areas had the highest marriage levels (percentage of women married) among white women. Over 75 percent of young white women living in these areas were married in 1990.⁵⁵ The Boston and San Francisco areas had the lowest marriage levels: less than 45 percent of white women in these areas were married.

The metropolitan areas encompassing New Brunswick-Perth Amboy, New Jersey, San Antonio, Texas, and San Diego, California had the highest marriage rates for black women. Nearly 50 percent of the young women in these three areas were married. New Haven, Connecticut had the lowest marriage level: only 9 percent. After New Haven, which appears to be an outlier, Rochester and Buffalo, New York and Milwaukee, Wisconsin had the lowest rate of marriage — around 15 percent. Once again we are confronted with the huge disparity in marriage between white and black women.

There was considerable variation across the different metropolitan areas with respect to women's full-time employment and education in 1990 (See Appendix B). In contrast, the range in the median earnings of full-time women workers was not very wide: \$14,000 to \$26,000 among whites and \$12,000 to \$21,522 among blacks. Welfare benefits ranged from a low of \$4621 to a high of \$9513. The availability of quality male marriage partners also differed dramatically across metropolitan areas. Median earnings for all males, including those not in the labor force, ranged from \$13,888 to \$32,000 among whites and from \$2,200 to \$22,000 among black men.

In 1990, the employment picture was much worse for black men than for white men, especially at the low end of the range. In at least one metropolitan area, the median earnings of all black men — \$2200 — was lower than the minimum welfare benefit in the worst area — \$4600. This was not the case for whites. The median income of men in the lowest income area — \$13,888 — was over \$4,000 higher than the maximum welfare benefit.

Accounting for Area-Wide Differences in Marriage, 1990

To determine which of the marriage market characteristics were important predictors of marriage, we estimated multiple regression equations, using the metropolitan areas as our units of analysis.⁵⁶ Starting with the 100 largest metropolitan areas in 1990, we created variables for each characteristic in each area in 1990, 1980 and 1970. For information on the means and coefficients from these regressions, see Appendices B and C. We estimated separate equations for whites and blacks.

We found that all of the indicators of women's earning potential — high education, full-time employment, and high median earnings — were strongly (and negatively) associated with the level of marriage among white women. Marriage was less common in areas where women were well-educated and where women's employment opportunities were good. Similarly, all of the indicators of men's earning power — full-time employment, low unemployment, and high median earnings — were positively associated with marriage. A high sex ratio (more men than women) and a low AFDC-food stamp benefit also increased marriage.

The results for blacks were similar to those for whites with one important exception: none of the indicators of women's earning power were significantly related to marriage, although the signs of the coefficients were in the right direction. Otherwise, marriage markets appear to operate the same for blacks and whites.

To get an idea of the relative importance of the different characteristics, we asked — what if all the metropolitan areas had the same women's characteristics as the area with the most independent women? What if all the areas had the same characteristics as the area with the least independent women? What if all the areas had the same characteristics as the area with the least and most marriageable men?

By taking the maximum and minimum values for women's education, full-time employment, and median earnings, and multiplying these values by the coefficients from our multiple regression equation, we came up with predicted marriage levels ranging from 44 percent to 86 percent among white women and ranging from 37 to 44 percent among black women. In short, differences in women's independence had a lot to do with differences in marriage among white women in 1990 and very little to do with differences in marriage among black women. The latter is not surprising, given that women's characteristics were not good predictors of marriage to begin with.

Using the maximum and minimum values for men's earning power, we came up with predicted marriage levels ranging from 52 percent to 80 percent among whites and from 25 percent to 55 percent among blacks. Differences in men's earning power have a lot to do with differences in marriage for both blacks and whites. Finally, substituting the low and high values of the AFDC-Food Stamp benefit yielded marriage levels ranging from 65 percent to 71 percent

among whites and from 33 percent to 44 percent among blacks. In general welfare is less important in determining marriage levels than men's and women's earning power, and it is more important in determining marriage levels among blacks than among whites.⁵⁷

To see how much of the race differences in marriage levels in 1990 could be "accounted for" by differences in marriage market characteristics, we substituted the means of the black marriage market characteristics into the white equation and calculated predicted marriage rates for whites. We performed a similar exercise using the white means and the black equation. This resulted in a 10 percentage point decline in marriage levels for whites and a 10 percentage point increase in marriage levels for blacks. About 35 percent of the race difference in marriage in 1990 was due to differences in marriage market characteristics, principally differences in men's employment opportunities.

Accounting for the Trend in Marriage, 1970 to 1990

In addition to the cross-sectional comparison, we looked at whether changes in marriage market characteristics between 1970 and 1990 could "account for" the decline in marriage over this period of time. We used the same equation as we used for the cross-sectional model, only this time we substituted the means for women's and men's characteristics in 1970, 1980, and 1990 and calculated predicted marriage rates for each of the three years. Neither changes in AFDC nor changes in the sex ratio could have accounted for declines in marriage between 1970 and 1990 since these two variables changed in ways that should have increased marriage. AFDC benefits declined during the 1970s and 1980s, and the ratio of men to women increased.

As shown in Figure 1.5, increases in women's earning power can "account for" over 70 percent of the decline in marriage among white women between 1970 and 1990, whereas the decreases in men's earning power can account for only about 8 percent of the decline. We should point out that most of this effect is due to changes in women's employment rather than changes in earnings or education. Since employment may be a *consequence* of the decline in marriage as well as a cause, we must be cautious about how we interpret this relationship. Nevertheless, the fact that women's employment is strongly related to the decline in marriage for whites between 1970 and 1990 is noteworthy and merits further investigation.

For blacks, the story is different. As shown in Figure 1.6, neither changes in women's nor men's earning power account for the substantial drop in marriage rates among blacks during the 1970s and 1980s. The decline in men's employment explains about 10 percent of the decline in marriage whereas the increase in women's earning power has no effect. This is very different from the cross-sectional results which showed that differences in men's employment opportunities accounted for a substantial portion of the difference in marriage across metropolitan areas. The reason for the disparity is that the decline in men's employment opportunities between 1970 and 1990 was much smaller than the cross-state differences in 1990.

Figures 1.5 and 1.6
The Effects of Changes in Marriage Market
Characteristics on Percent of Women Married

Our analysis of marriage markets is very crude, but it gives the reader an idea of how the census data can be used to test some of the different hypotheses about the decline in marriage. Based on preliminary findings, we believe it would be useful to construct several marriage markets within each metropolitan areas: one for men and women with low skills and education, another for men and women with a high school degree, and a third for men and women with some college education. Given the increasing inequality that has occurred during the past two decades, we suspect that a more disaggregated look at marriage opportunities would produce a clearer picture of the relationships among men's earning potential, women's earning potential, welfare, and marriage.

CONCLUSIONS

Four demographic trends underlie the changes in the American family during the past four decades: the delay (and decline) in marriage, the increase in marital instability, the change in marital and nonmarital birth rates, and increase in mothers' labor force participation. In the 1950s, the typical family consisted of a breadwinner-husband, homemaker-wife, and two children. Today, there is a much more diverse set of living arrangements, including dual-earner couples, single parent families, childless couples, cohabiting couples and non-family households. The good news is that family diversity reflects the fact that many people have more freedom and more choice about how to organize their personal lives. The bad news is that greater diversity has led to greater income inequality. While dual-earner couples enjoy a high and apparently increasing standard of living, single mother families are under great economic stress. Diversity has also led to a wider gap in the standard of living between blacks and whites, especially in families with children. Whereas white children are increasingly being raised in dual-earner families, black children are concentrated in single parent families.

The high poverty rates of single parent families are not inevitable, as can be seen from the experiences of other western countries. While marital instability and nonmarital childbearing have risen in all parts of the industrialized world, the economic consequences of single motherhood are much greater in the U.S. than elsewhere. Other countries are much more generous than the U.S. in terms of providing income and other kinds of economic support for single mothers (housing, childcare, health care). And surprisingly, their generosity has not led to high levels of single motherhood. Sweden has been especially creative in dealing with the dilemma of how to help single mothers without increasing prevalence and without encouraging

dependence on government. This nation provides generous benefits to single mothers in a way that reduces poverty while promoting self sufficiency. The U.S. has much to learn from the Swedish example.

Finally, we found that increases in women's economic independence accounts for a substantial part of the recent decline in marriage among whites. The independence hypothesis does not account for trends in marriage among black men and women, however. Two other economic explanations for the decline in marriage — lack of marriageable males and welfare benefits — do not account for recent trends in marriage, not because these factors are unrelated to marriage but because they have not changed in ways that would discourage marriage. Men's employment and earnings, in the aggregate, have remained fairly constant over the past twenty years, and welfare benefits have declined. What the census data do not tell us is whether changes in attitudes and values are related to declines in marriage. To the extent that such changes are important, they are likely to be more important among blacks than whites.

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1990

Appendix C Effects of Marriage Market Characteristics on Proportion Married

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54. Arland Thornton, 1985. "Changing attitudes toward separation and divorce: causes and consequences." American Journal of Sociology 90:856-872.

55. We based the prevalence of marriage on women aged 25 to 29 in order to represent recent marriages.

56. After combining three MSAs in 1990, we ended up with 97 observations. Information from 1970 and 1980 was not available on all 97 of these areas, since some of them were newly created in 1980 and 1990, and therefore our final count of MSAs were 287. In addition, we were forced to drop some areas because our sample of blacks was too small to provide stable estimates of the marriage prevalence. For the analysis of white marriage markets, our final sample consisted of 252 MSAs, and for the analysis of black marriage markets, our final sample consisted of 173 observations. Missing information on the independent variables was recoded to the mean or median, and dummy variables were used to indicate that a variable had missing information.

57. Our model does not try to adjust for unobserved cross-state differences which means that welfare may be picking up some of these unobserved effects.

Table 1.1
Percent of Unmarried Males and Females Cohabiting in 1980 and 1990¹

	Males		Females	
	1980	1990	1980	1990
15-24	2.3	3.4	4.0	5.6
25-34	11.4	13.1	11.9	16.2
35-44	10.9	13.9	5.1	10.1
45-64	7.8	9.7	3.2	4.8
65 and over	4.6	4.5	1.4	0.8
Total	5.3	7.9	4.3	6.6

NOTE: ¹The term cohabiting refers to adults living in unmarried-couple households.

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports. "Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1990." Series P-20, No. 450. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991. U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports. "Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1980." Series P-20, No. 365. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981. U.S. Census Bureau, unpublished tabulations.

Table 1.2
 Percentage of Women (age 18-55) Who Are Married, Single Parents¹, and Employed Mothers, 1980 and 1990, by Race

	% married			% single mothers			% all mothers who are employed ²		
	1980	1990	%Δ	1980	1990	%Δ	1980	1990	%Δ
Whites	66	64	-2	7	7	0	53	69	+16
Blacks	38	33	-5	26	28	+2	60	68	+8
Hispanics	61	55	-6	13	14	+1	51	58	+7

NOTES: ¹Single; includes divorced, widowed and never married mothers.
²Usually worked 20 or more hours per week last year.

SOURCE: Public-Use Microdata Sample, 1980 and 1990.

Table 1.3
International Comparisons: Divorce Rates, Illegitimacy Ratios, and Women's Employment

	Divorce Rate ¹		Illegitimacy Ratio ²		Single Parents ³		Employed Women ⁴	
	1960 ⁵	1990 ⁶	1960	1990	1960	1988	1970 ⁷	1988
United States	9	21	5	28	9	23	45	73
Canada	2	12	4	24	9	15	41	75
Denmark	6	13	8	46	17	20	NA	90
France	3	14	6	30	9	12	52	75
Germany ⁸	4	8	6	11	8	14	48	62
Italy	1	2	2	6	NA	NA	44	61
Netherlands	2	8	1	11	9	15	24	55
Sweden	5	12	11	47	9	13	61	89
United Kingdom	2	12	5	28	6	13	43	66

NOTES:

NA = Not available.

¹Divorce rate per 1,000 married women.

²Percent of all births born to unmarried women.

³Percent of all family households that are single-parent. 1971 and 1986 for Canada. 1976 and 1988 for Denmark. 1968 and 1988 for France. 1972 and 1988 for Germany. 1961 and 1985 for Netherlands. 1960 and 1985 for Sweden. 1961 and 1987 for the United Kingdom. Age restrictions for children differ by country.

⁴Percent of women aged 25 to 34 (25-39 in Italy) in the labor force.

⁵1970 for Italy.

⁶1989 for France.

⁷1977 for Italy.

⁸For former West Germany.

SOURCES:

U.S. Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1993; Constance Sorrentino, "The Changing Family in International Perspective," Monthly Labor Review, March 1990: 41-58.

Table 1.4
 Women's Work and Family Status, 1980 and 1990, by Race.

	% in 1980	% in 1990	Percentage point change
WHITES:			
<u>Traditional Family</u>			
Married, child, homemaker	21	12	-9
Married, no child, homemaker	8	6	-2
<u>Nontraditional Family</u>			
Married, child, employed	21	26	+5
Married, no child, employed	16	20	+4
Single, child, employed	5	5	0
Single, child, homemaker	2	2	0
<u>Non-Family</u>			
Single, no child, employed	21	24	+3
Single, no child, not employed	6	5	-1
BLACKS:			
<u>Traditional Family</u>			
Married, child, homemaker	9	5	-4
Married, no child, homemaker	4	3	-1
<u>Nontraditional Family</u>			
Married, child, employed	17	17	0
Married, no child, employed	8	9	+1
Single, child, employed	14	17	+3
Single, child, homemaker	12	11	-1
<u>Non-Family</u>			
Single, no child, employed	21	25	+4
Single, no child, not employed	15	13	-2
HISPANICS:			
<u>Traditional Family</u>			
Married, child, homemaker	22	16	-6
Married, no child, homemaker	6	6	0
<u>Nontraditional Family</u>			
Married, child, employed	22	22	0
Married, no child, employed	10	11	+1
Single, child, employed	7	8	+1
Single, child, homemaker	6	6	0
<u>Non-Family</u>			
Single, no child, employed	17	21	+4
Single, no child, not employed	10	10	0

SOURCE: Public-Use Microdata Sample, 1980 and 1990.

Table 1.5
 Total Household Income, Per Capita Income, and Poverty Rate of
 Women by Work and Family Status, 1990¹

	Household Income (\$) ²	Poverty Rate (%) ³
<u>WHITE WOMEN</u>		
married, child, homemaker	45,900	10
married, no child, homemaker	50,000	8
married, child, employed	52,100	3
married, no child, employed	57,500	2
single, child, employed	29,100	16
single, child, homemaker	16,500	63
single, no child, employed	43,800	8
single, no child, not employed	41,000	NA
<u>BLACK WOMEN</u>		
married, child, homemaker	31,400	26
married, no child, homemaker	29,900	23
married, child, employed	44,300	6
married, no child, employed	49,000	3
single, child, employed	26,000	27
single, child, homemaker	13,000	73
single, no child, employed	36,000	10
single, no child, not employed	25,500	NA
<u>HISPANIC WOMEN</u>		
married, child, homemaker	29,600	27
married, no child, homemaker	36,000	22
married, child, employed	42,600	13
married, no child, employed	48,800	6
single, child, employed	26,700	26
single, child, homemaker	15,400	71
single, no child, employed	41,300	15
single, no child, not employed	30,800	NA

NOTES: ¹Family types defined by the woman's status.
²Incomes rounded to nearest hundred dollars.
³Poverty rate is based on family income adjusted for size.

SOURCE: Public-Use Microdata Sample, 1990.

Table 1.6
 Characteristics of Single Mothers¹ by Marital Status and Race, 1980 and 1990

	<u>all single mothers</u>		<u>1990</u>		
	1980	1990	never married mothers	divorced/separated mothers	widowed mothers
WHITES					
<u>Education</u>					
% high school dropout	25	19	25	17	25
% high school grad	43	33	39	33	22
% at least some college	32	47	36	50	53
<u>Employment</u>					
% employed	68	67	52	72	68
% looking for job	6	10	16	8	10
<u>Living Arrangements</u>					
% related adult	19	11	3	12	29
% subfamily	11	18	40	12	13
% cohabiting ²	N/A	7	6	7	2
<u>Age</u>					
% under 25 years	14	14	35	9	0
BLACKS					
<u>Education</u>					
% high school dropout	41	32	38	24	43
% high school grad	36	33	33	33	32
% at least some college	23	35	38	43	25
<u>Employment</u>					
% employed	49	52	42	66	44
% looking for job	9	12	14	8	13
<u>Living Arrangements</u>					
% related adult	26	17	11	23	46
% subfamily	14	23	32	12	5
% cohabiting	N/A	5	6	4	5
<u>Age</u>					
% under 25 years	22	21	33	5	1
HISPANICS					
<u>Education</u>					
% high school dropout	60	51	59	44	69
% high school grad	24	25	23	27	20
% at least some college	16	24	18	30	11
<u>Employment</u>					
% employed	46	48	38	56	34
% looking for job	6	10	11	10	6
<u>Living Arrangements</u>					
% related adult	22	20	13	23	36
% subfamily	11	24	41	15	14
% cohabiting	N/A	7	8	7	7
<u>Age</u>					
% under 25 years	18	21	41	10	0

NOTE: ¹Unmarried mothers living with natural, adopted or stepchildren under age 18.
²The response "unmarried partner" was not added as a valid relationship code until the 1990 Census. Comparisons based on different definitions would be misleading; these estimates are not included in this table.

SOURCE: Public-Use Microdata Sample, 1990.

Table 1.7
 Characteristics of Single Father¹ Families, by Race, 1980 and 1990

	1980	1990
WHITES		
<u>Marital Status²</u>		
% never married	14	19
% divorced/separated	70	72
% widowed	17	9
<u>Education</u>		
% high school dropout	29	28
% high school grad	39	36
% at least some college	31	37
<u>Employment</u>		
% employed	84	84
% looking for job	9	7
<u>Living Arrangements</u>		
% related adult	19	11
% subfamily	7	10
% cohabiting ³	N/A	30
<u>Age</u>		
% under 25 years	17	8
BLACKS		
<u>Marital Status</u>		
% never married	36	52
% divorced/separated	50	42
% widowed	14	6
<u>Education</u>		
% high school dropout	43	33
% high school grad	31	37
% at least some college	26	31
<u>Employment</u>		
% employed	65	65
% looking for job	11	12
<u>Living Arrangements</u>		
% related adult	21	11
% subfamily	13	40
% cohabiting	N/A	29
<u>Age</u>		
% under 25 years	15	12
HISPANICS		
<u>Marital Status</u>		
% never married	34	52
% divorced/separated	55	43
% widowed	11	5
<u>Education</u>		
% high school dropout	53	54
% high school grad	22	24
% at least some college	25	22
<u>Employment</u>		
% employed	72	75
% looking for job	10	12
<u>Living Arrangements</u>		
% related adult	21	15
% subfamily	7	19
% cohabiting	N/A	45
<u>Age</u>		
% under 25 years	15	18

NOTES: ¹Unmarried fathers living with natural adopted or step children under 18.
²A more detailed table by marital status (see table 1.8) is not possible due to the small sample size.
³The response "unmarried partner" was not added as a valid relationship code until the 1990 Census. Comparisons based on different definitions would be misleading; these estimates are not included in this table.

SOURCE: Public-Use Microdata Sample, 1990.

Table 1.8
Comparison of Married and Cohabiting Couples in 1990, by Race¹ (aged 30-34)

	<i>White</i>		<i>Black</i>		<i>Hispanic</i>	
	<i>Married</i>	<i>Cohabiting</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Cohabiting</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Cohabiting</i>
<u>% With Children²</u>	79.9	34.8	85.1	66.9	87.8	70.0
<u>% Female Head³</u>	8.1	41.3	14.4	54.6	8.4	37.2
<u>Education⁴</u>						
% Male Higher	29.0	27.8	23.1	25.1	23.5	23.0
% Same	46.9	42.5	46.4	42.0	54.8	48.2
% Female Higher	24.1	29.7	30.5	32.9	21.7	28.8
<u>Number of hours usually worked⁵</u>						
% Male Higher	45.5	23.2	27.2	24.0	44.8	32.5
% Same	51.1	67.6	66.3	64.5	50.5	59.1
% Female Higher	3.4	9.2	6.5	11.5	4.7	8.4
<u>Age⁶</u>						
% Male Higher	36.4	49.0	36.1	49.1	41.2	45.4
% Same	52.4	28.0	49.7	28.9	46.1	31.2
% Female Higher	11.2	23.0	14.2	22.0	12.7	23.4

- NOTES:
- ¹The race of the couple is defined by the race of the household head.
 - ²Children are natural, adopted, or step children of the household head.
 - ³The Census form allows couples to report who they consider to be the household head. % Female Head is the percentage of couples who reported the woman as the household head.
 - ⁴Educational attainment is divided into five groups: less than high school, high school degree, completed some college, B.A. or B.S. degree, and advanced degree. Couples who have completed the same level of education according to this classification are in the "same" category.
 - ⁵Labor force participation is divided into four groups: not in labor force, low part-time (less than 19 hours per week); high part-time (20-34 hours per week) and full time (35+ hours per week). Couples who worked the same amount of time according to the classification are in the "same" category.
 - ⁶Couples whose ages are both between 30-34 years are categorized as having the same age.

SOURCE: Public-Use Microdata Sample, 1990.

Table 1.9
International Comparisons of Women's Work and Family Status (aged 18 to 57)¹

	SWE 1987	NET 1987	GER 1984	ITL 1986	CAN 1987	UK 1986	US ² 1985
<u>Traditional Family</u>							
% married, child, homemaker	4	29	21	26	15	18	16
% married, no child, homemaker	3	10	12	30	7	7	7
<u>Nontraditional Family</u>							
% married, child, employed	35	13	17	19	25	24	21
% married, no child, employed	24	10	16	14	17	20	14
% single, child, employed	6	2	3	2	4	4	8
% single, child, homemaker	1	5	2	1	3	5	6
<u>Non-family</u>							
% single, no child, employed	22	18	20	5	21	16	21
% single, no child, not employed	5	11	9	4	8	4	7

NOTES: ¹The family types do not sum to 100% for all countries because of missing labor force data and rounding.

²Tabulations are for all races.

SOURCE: Sara McLanahan, Lynne Casper and Annemette Sorensen, "Women's Roles and Women's Status in Eight Industrialized Countries" (forthcoming in Mason and Jensen). Data from the Luxembourg Income Study.

Table 1.10
International Comparisons of Rates of Different Family Statuses: Mid-1980s

	Poverty Rates (%) ¹			
	Married Couple Family		Single-Mother Family	
	(employed mother)	(nonemployed mother)	(employed mother)	(nonemployed mother)
Netherlands	6	4	7	10
Germany	2	6	13	44
Sweden	2	8	3	20
Canada	6	19	21	63
Italy	4	17	9	41
United States ²	10	19	30	69
United Kingdom	8	17	15	21

NOTES: ¹Predicted poverty rates controlling for age and education. Poverty is defined as having a total family income less than 50% of the median income for this country (adjusted for family size).

²Predicted rates for all races.

SOURCE: Sara McLanahan, Lynne Casper and Annemette Sorensen, "Women's Roles and Women's Status in Eight Industrialized Countries" (forthcoming in Mason and Jensen). Data from the Luxembourg Income Study.

Appendix A1 (cont.)
 Marriage Market Characteristics for Whites by MSA: 1990

	Women's Characteristics			Men's Characteristics			Sex Ratio	AFDC	Percent Black	Pop Size
	Percent Married	Percent Employed Full time	Median Full time Earnings	Percent College Graduate	Percent Employed Full time	Median Full time Earnings				
Lansing-E. Lansing, MI	56	42	17000	30	64	19000	10	7230	8	143032
Las Vegas, NV-AZ	63	42	18426	8	70	22000	5	6577	9	256672
Little Rock-North Little Rock, AR	69	61	15594	18	80	20000	2	5543	20	176886
Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	50	40	22000	27	60	24000	5	9513	11	3095534
Louisville, KY-IN	64	44	16320	21	70	20000	6	5845	12	314730
Melbourne-Titusville-Palm Bay, FL	68	47	15000	17	70	24349	2	6286	8	129384
Memphis, TN-AR-MS	68	49	17347	22	78	24000	2	5323	39	333276
Miami, FL	51	46	18595	25	62	18000	6	6286	21	605976
Middlesex-Somerset-Hunterdon, NJ	55	65	25750	36	80	31000	5	7421	7	170305
Milwaukee-Waukesha, WI	54	53	17000	28	76	24006	3	8085	12	465408
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI	55	54	20000	33	74	25000	4	8206	3	903426
Mobile, AL	77	26	14750	20	76	25500	3	4621	27	149824
Monmouth-Ocean, NJ	67	49	23000	30	77	30000	3	7421	6	305812
Nashville, TN	59	51	18925	32	76	22000	3	5323	14	344625
New Haven-Meriden, CT	49	57	17000	44	75	26832	4	9400	12	175476
New Orleans, LA	58	43	23000	25	70	22000	4	5382	32	398610
New York-Nassau-Suffolk, NY	49	48	26000	39	69	30000	5	8752	21	3714998
Newark, NJ	51	55	24986	35	76	31000	3	7421	23	613587
Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News, VA-NC	68	50	16326	26	81	24000	2	6770	12	387960
Oklahoma City, OK	69	43	17350	20	76	21595	3	6714	11	319107
Orlando, FL	56	54	18000	25	76	22450	3	6286	12	485805
Oxnard-Ventura, CA	58	42	20000	17	67	28500	3	9513	3	227942
Philadelphia, PA-NJ	56	51	21000	30	77	27550	3	7338	18	1568122
Phoenix-Mesa, AZ	58	45	19000	25	71	24000	3	6609	3	713921
Pittsburgh, PA	55	45	19000	25	66	20318	5	7311	8	645174
Portland-Vancouver, OR-WA	54	42	18411	27	69	21340	2	8033	3	432384
Providence-Fall River-Warwick, RI-MA	48	49	20000	26	69	23908	2	8442	5	158678
Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC	54	58	20400	51	74	24000	3	6108	24	277635
Richmond-Petersburg, VA	61	56	18962	38	80	25000	1	6770	29	306750
Riverside-San Bernardino, CA	65	32	20000	10	66	26000	6	9513	7	861120
Rochester, NY	54	53	18000	30	75	24168	4	8752	9	329350
Sacramento, CA	54	43	19569	24	62	22000	5	9513	6	514657
St. Louis, MO-IL	63	54	18000	25	73	25000	3	6423	16	776874
Salt Lake City-Ogden, UT	65	36	16415	17	68	21256	3	7157	1	327352
San Antonio, TX	57	43	17200	25	63	18000	5	5313	7	421890
San Diego, CA	51	41	20000	24	68	24000	6	9513	7	874627
San Francisco-Oakland, CA	43	45	25000	40	64	28000	5	9513	11	1373138
San Jose, CA	51	50	26000	33	73	32000	2	9513	4	571337
Scranton-Wilkes-Barre-Hazleton, PA	62	42	16000	23	66	20000	5	7311	1	207558
Seattle-Bellevue-Everett, WA	58	46	20000	32	67	25000	4	8392	4	755805
Springfield, MA	57	46	20000	21	68	23319	6	8262	6	163280
Syracuse, NY	61	46	17000	22	66	22000	6	8752	5	209678

(cont.)

Appendix A1
Marriage Market Characteristics for Whites by MSA: 1990

	Women's Characteristics				Men's Characteristics				AFDC	Percent Black	Pop Size
	Percent Married	Percent Employed	Median Full time Earnings	Percent College Graduate	Percent Employed	Median Full time Earnings	Percent Unemploy	Sex Ratio			
Akron, OH	58	43	17000	26	68	23000	5	.98	6609	9	206656
Albany-Schenectady-Troy, NY	58	47	19366	26	77	24074	5	1.19	8752	4	262998
Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, PA	59	50	18878	19	79	24750	4	1.22	7311	2	217317
Anaheim-Santa Ana-Orange County, CA	56	46	22024	23	68	28000	4	1.19	9513	2	867945
Atlanta, GA	60	52	21000	34	74	26000	3	.94	6174	26	1081710
Austin-San Marcos, TX	58	54	18971	40	69	20600	5	1.28	5313	8	301112
Baltimore, MD	57	40	21000	33	81	28000	2	.99	7394	27	754432
Baton Rouge, LA	71	40	18100	27	68	23500	2	1.07	5382	27	172635
Bergen-Passaic, NJ	49	56	24800	38	74	30000	5	.96	7421	8	416663
Birmingham, AL	68	47	15000	26	71	20000	2	1.04	4621	27	290528
Boston, MA-NH	42	56	25000	48	71	27000	7	.98	8262	7	970593
Bridgeport, CT	54	56	24000	27	76	29286	6	1.22	9400	10	140770
Buffalo-Niagara Falls, NY	59	49	16100	28	70	22500	7	1.10	8752	12	304780
Charleston-North Charleston, SC	71	43	17250	26	75	23000	4	1.10	5608	27	180135
Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC	66	51	19000	23	79	23000	2	1.08	6057	19	395955
Chattanooga, TN-GA	64	50	15350	21	71	20000	2	1.18	5539	13	136358
Chicago, IL	53	33	22000	37	74	29000	4	1.04	6937	20	2035740
Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN	63	49	18000	26	75	23323	3	.90	6412	12	483248
Cleveland-Lorain-Elyria, OH	57	53	18000	30	74	24358	5	.93	6609	20	528640
Columbia, SC	59	49	18000	42	73	19750	3	.98	5608	30	157470
Columbus, OH	61	54	20800	28	74	23000	4	1.09	6609	12	479936
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	64	51	19828	29	72	24874	4	1.14	5313	13	1438206
Dayton-Springfield, OH	67	44	17800	23	76	23000	3	.98	6609	12	289872
Denver, CO	54	54	17800	27	71	24000	3	1.05	6787	5	611865
Detroit, MI	60	44	19624	24	70	28500	6	1.07	7230	20	1435450
El Paso, TX	62	32	14000	19	60	13888	9	1.01	5313	4	180292
Fort Lauderdale, FL	54	53	21000	23	74	24000	6	1.10	6286	17	399086
Fresno, CA	59	34	15000	21	54	20000	6	1.00	9513	5	215501
Gary, IN	62	37	16500	16	65	25000	8	.95	6238	19	186888
Grand Rapids-Muskegon-Holland, MI	60	46	18750	23	76	25000	3	.97	7230	6	224846
Greensboro-Winston-Salem--High Point, NC	65	57	16465	26	76	21000	1	1.04	6108	19	306390
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC	70	52	17250	28	79	22586	3	1.01	5608	19	175065
Harrisburg-Lebanon-Carlisle, PA	57	50	16650	17	74	21000	2	1.07	7311	7	187704
Hartford, CT	60	57	25000	37	76	28000	3	1.26	9400	10	260792
Houston, TX	62	44	20000	27	74	25000	2	1.14	5313	18	1215648
Indianapolis, IN	65	55	18000	33	76	24000	4	1.00	6238	13	408864
Jacksonville, FL	64	48	18500	22	71	20651	3	1.12	6286	22	235512
Jersey City, NJ	48	49	25000	34	71	25000	8	1.02	7421	15	199654
Joliet, IL	75	41	18000	17	75	30000	6	1.04	6937	10	134190
Kansas City, MO-KS	61	46	19000	26	75	24000	6	1.01	6721	12	494894
Knoxville, TN	66	45	14985	20	67	17000	6	1.02	5323	6	194520
Lake County, IL	67	47	23132	33	75	30901	1	1.20	6937	5	178605

(cont.)

Appendix A2
Marriage Market Characteristics for Blacks by MSA: 1990

	Women's Characteristics				Men's Characteristics				AFDC	Percent Black	Pop Size
	Percent Married	Percent Employed	Median Full time Earnings	Percent Graduate	Percent Employed	Median Full time Earnings	Percent Unemploy	Sex Ratio			
Akron, OH	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Albany-Schenectady-Troy, NY	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, PA	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Anaheim-Santa Ana-Orange County, CA	47	48	na	12	58	18500	14	.98	9513	na	867945
Atlanta, GA	33	46	17428	17	57	16000	10	.89	6174	26	1081710
Austin-San Marcos, TX	27	39	na	18	61	14500	11	1.20	5313	8	301112
Baltimore, MD	27	41	17000	17	45	15000	6	1.00	7394	27	754432
Baton Rouge, LA	30	31	na	20	34	10500	9	.81	5382	27	172635
Bergen-Passaic, NJ	23	33	na	8	49	12366	20	.90	7421	8	416663
Birmingham, AL	41	38	12000	9	47	11000	5	1.00	4621	27	290528
Boston, MA-NH	17	44	20595	20	51	17000	3	.79	8262	7	970593
Bridgeport, CT	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Buffalo-Niagara Falls, NY	16	23	na	18	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Charleston-North Charleston, SC	44	28	na	14	69	13500	5	.68	5608	12	304780
Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC	28	47	13000	13	58	13000	10	.85	6057	19	180135
Chattanooga, TN-GA	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	395955
Chicago, IL	23	34	18000	15	41	12000	16	.81	6937	na	2035740
Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN	25	31	na	9	66	12200	6	.64	6412	12	483248
Cleveland-Lorain-Elyria, OH	25	22	17000	6	40	10000	23	.73	6609	20	528640
Columbia, SC	38	38	na	20	66	14000	3	1.14	5608	30	157470
Columbus, OH	28	54	15400	17	42	14000	2	.74	6609	12	479936
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	31	42	16050	13	50	16000	13	.69	5313	13	1438206
Dayton-Springfield, OH	26	34	na	5	32	13250	37	.57	6609	12	289872
Denver, CO	29	37	na	21	49	11285	21	1.17	6787	5	611865
Detroit, MI	17	30	15341	9	38	10000	20	.76	7230	20	1435450
El Paso, TX	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Fort Lauderdale, FL	34	35	17950	6	48	11500	23	1.03	6286	17	399096
Fresno, CA	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Gary, IN	22	14	na	7	42	7800	14	.81	6238	19	188688
Grands Rapids-Muskegon-Holland, MI	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Greensboro--Winston-Salem--High Point, NC	31	33	14500	21	63	15000	10	.78	6108	19	306390
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC	33	47	13000	10	64	16000	2	.73	5608	19	175065
Harrisburg-Lebanon-Carlisle, PA	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Hartford, CT	26	44	na	11	na	na	na	na	na	na	260792
Houston, TX	32	35	15000	10	47	12000	17	.94	5313	18	1215648
Indianapolis, IN	38	30	na	3	48	9500	14	.83	6238	13	408864
Jacksonville, FL	42	49	17000	11	59	14712	6	.76	6286	22	235512
Jersey City, NJ	31	29	na	21	33	13500	16	1.10	7421	15	199654
Joliet, IL	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Kansas City, MO-KS	23	34	17000	10	47	11020	13	.74	6721	12	494894
Knoxville, TN	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Lake County, IL	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na

(cont.)

Appendix A1 (cont.)
 Marriage Market Characteristics for Whites by MSA: 1990

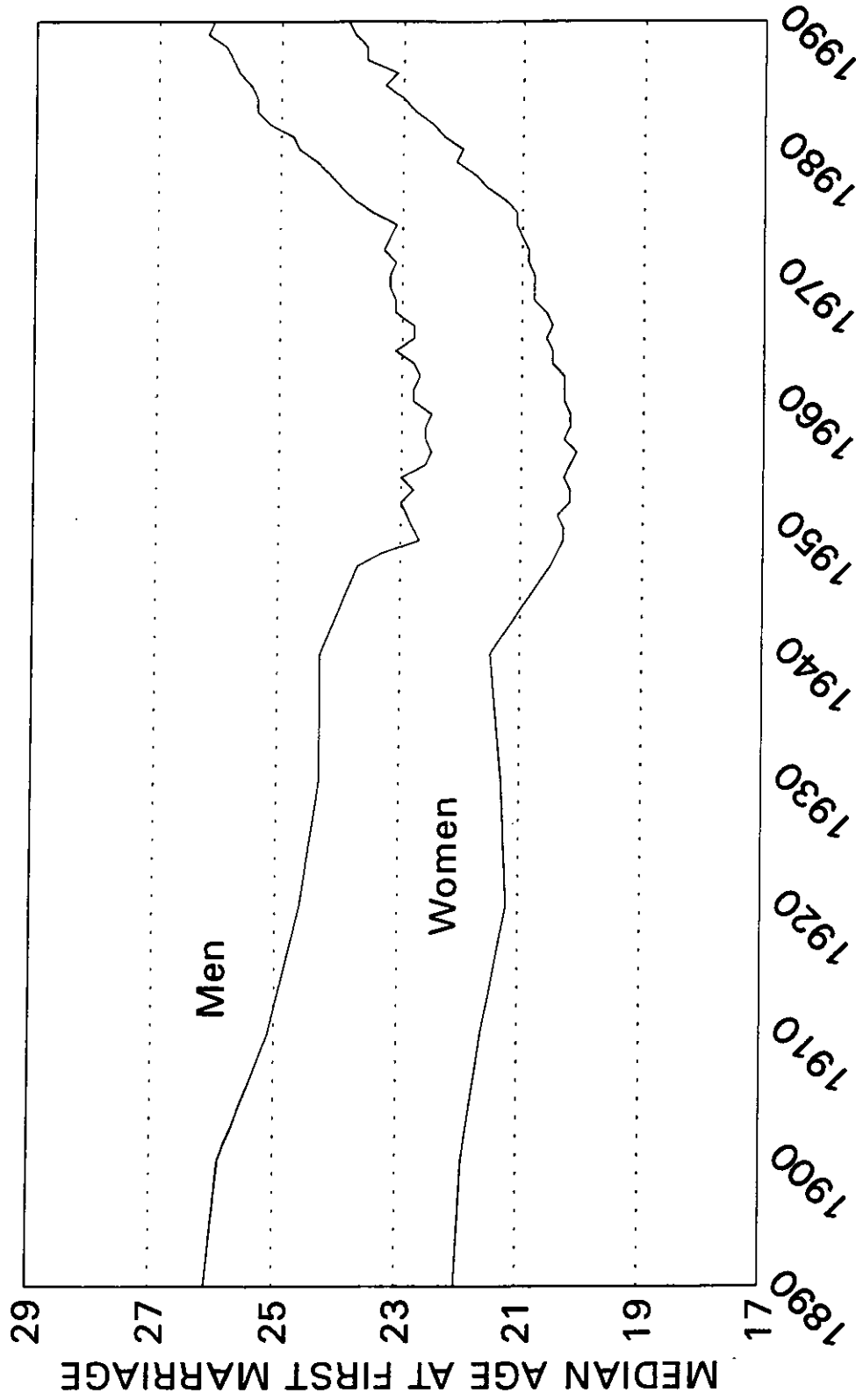
	Women's Characteristics				Men's Characteristics				AFDC	Percent Black	Pop Size
	Percent Married	Percent Employed Full time	Median Full time Earnings	Percent College Graduate	Percent Employed Full time	Median Full time Earnings	Percent Unemploy	Sex Ratio			
Tacoma, WA	64	35	18284	18	64	22150	2	1.15	8392	8	197880
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	60	47	16800	21	70	21000	5	.99	6286	9	608364
Toledo, OH	65	46	18000	18	76	25000	4	1.01	6609	12	187360
Tucson, AZ	51	38	15000	25	61	17600	5	1.12	6609	4	216879
Tulsa, OK	76	47	17000	23	76	21000	6	1.01	6714	8	227239
Utica-Rome, NY	61	40	15266	19	68	19000	9	.94	8752	5	94794
Vallejo-Fairfield-NAPA, CA	59	37	18000	19	69	25214	4	1.23	9513	10	160043
Washington, DC-MD-VA-WV	50	62	24521	53	77	29500	2	1.04	7126	27	1407952
West Palm Beach-Boca Raton, FL	53	50	20000	33	72	25000	1	1.13	6286	14	261300
Wichita, KS	72	51	16000	30	78	24000	3	1.25	7495	7	159678
Worcester, MA-CT	54	48	23000	31	74	28000	5	1.02	8262	2	146055
York, PA	63	50	16000	19	81	24900	4	1.08	7311	3	137880
Youngstown-Warren, OH	58	38	15000	13	62	18000	10	.98	6609	11	146320

Appendix A2 (cont.)
Marriage Market Characteristics for Blacks by MSA: 1990

	Women's Characteristics				Men's Characteristics				AFDC	Percent Black	Pop Size
	Percent Married	Percent Employed	Median Full time Earnings	Percent College Graduate	Percent Employed	Median Full time Earnings	Percent Unemploy	Sex Ratio			
Lansing-E. Lansing, MI	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Las Vegas, NV-AZ	32	53	na	18	55	13000	5	.98	6577	9	256672
Little Rock-North Little Rock, AR	35	35	na	15	52	10000	8	.71	5543	20	176886
Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	27	36	21522	15	43	15000	14	.82	9513	11	3095534
Louisville, KY-IN	26	22	na	9	47	9000	17	.84	5845	12	314730
Melbourne-Titusville-Palm Bay, FL	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Memphis, TN-AR-MS	26	39	15000	11	48	12000	10	.89	5323	39	333276
Miami, FL	33	37	15000	6	46	10000	9	.94	6286	21	605976
Middlesex-Somerset-Hunterdon, NJ	49	53	na	30	62	21000	10	1.02	7421	7	370305
Milwaukee-Waukesha, WI	16	30	na	7	58	11460	18	.60	8085	12	465408
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Mobile, AL	34	28	na	10	56	13772	12	.67	4621	27	149824
Monmouth-Ocean, NJ	18	62	na	20	na	na	na	.71	7421	6	305812
Nashville, TN	36	47	15000	24	57	12000	9	.73	5323	14	344625
New Haven-Meriden, CT	9	38	na	12	na	na	na	.23	9400	12	175476
New Orleans, LA	33	34	12000	10	41	8581	17	.96	5382	32	398610
New York-Nassau-Suffolk, NY	28	38	21000	16	43	14532	13	.80	8752	21	3714998
Newark, NJ	28	42	19000	15	50	17000	13	.95	7421	23	613587
Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News, VA-N	38	39	13000	10	62	14656	5	.94	6770	26	485805
Oklahoma City, OK	29	46	na	12	64	13000	18	.78	6714	11	319107
Orlando, FL	28	34	na	12	55	12000	7	.88	6286	12	387960
Oxnard-Ventura, CA	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Philadelphia, PA-NJ	29	37	17000	16	47	14000	11	.96	7338	18	1568122
Phoenix-Mesa, AZ	45	50	na	13	71	16346	0	.85	6609	3	713921
Pittsburgh, PA	20	23	na	7	24	2200	27	.90	7311	8	645174
Portland-Vancouver, OR-WA	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Providence-Fall River-Warwick, RI-MA	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC	36	56	15000	25	62	15000	4	.92	6108	24	277635
Richmond-Petersburg, VA	31	50	15000	13	55	16000	3	.81	6770	29	306750
Riverside-San Bernardino, CA	40	44	na	18	65	17000	11	1.53	9513	7	861120
Rochester, NY	14	23	na	13	24	10000	14	.72	8752	9	329350
Sacramento, CA	37	43	na	8	54	13500	10	1.15	9513	6	514657
St. Louis, MO-IL	26	41	15779	14	50	10200	7	.77	6423	16	776874
Salt Lake City-Ogden, UT	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
San Antonio, TX	49	41	na	11	54	13600	4	.90	5313	7	421890
San Diego, CA	52	39	19000	9	56	15820	4	1.29	9513	7	874627
San Francisco-Oakland, CA	28	41	20000	16	39	14000	12	1.17	9513	11	1373138
San Jose, CA	24	49	na	23	65	22000	7	1.10	9513	4	571337
Scranton--Wilkes-Barre--Hazleton, PA	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Seattle-Bellevue--Everett, WA	26	46	na	21	48	15000	13	1.08	8392	4	755805
Springfield, MA	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Syracuse, NY	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na

(cont.)

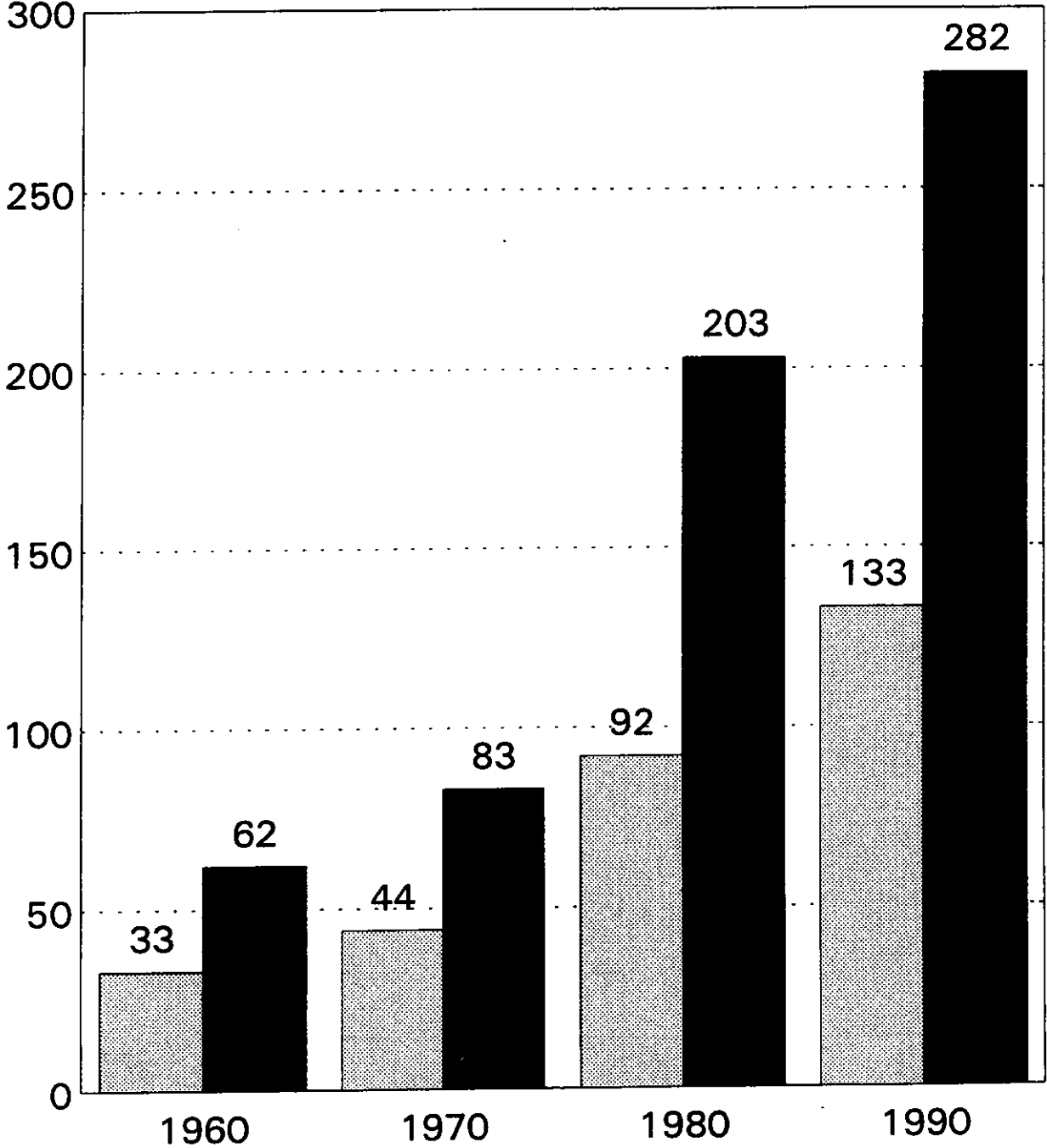
Figure 1.1
Median Age at First Marriage, by Sex and Year



NOTE: Data points after 1947 are plotted for single years.

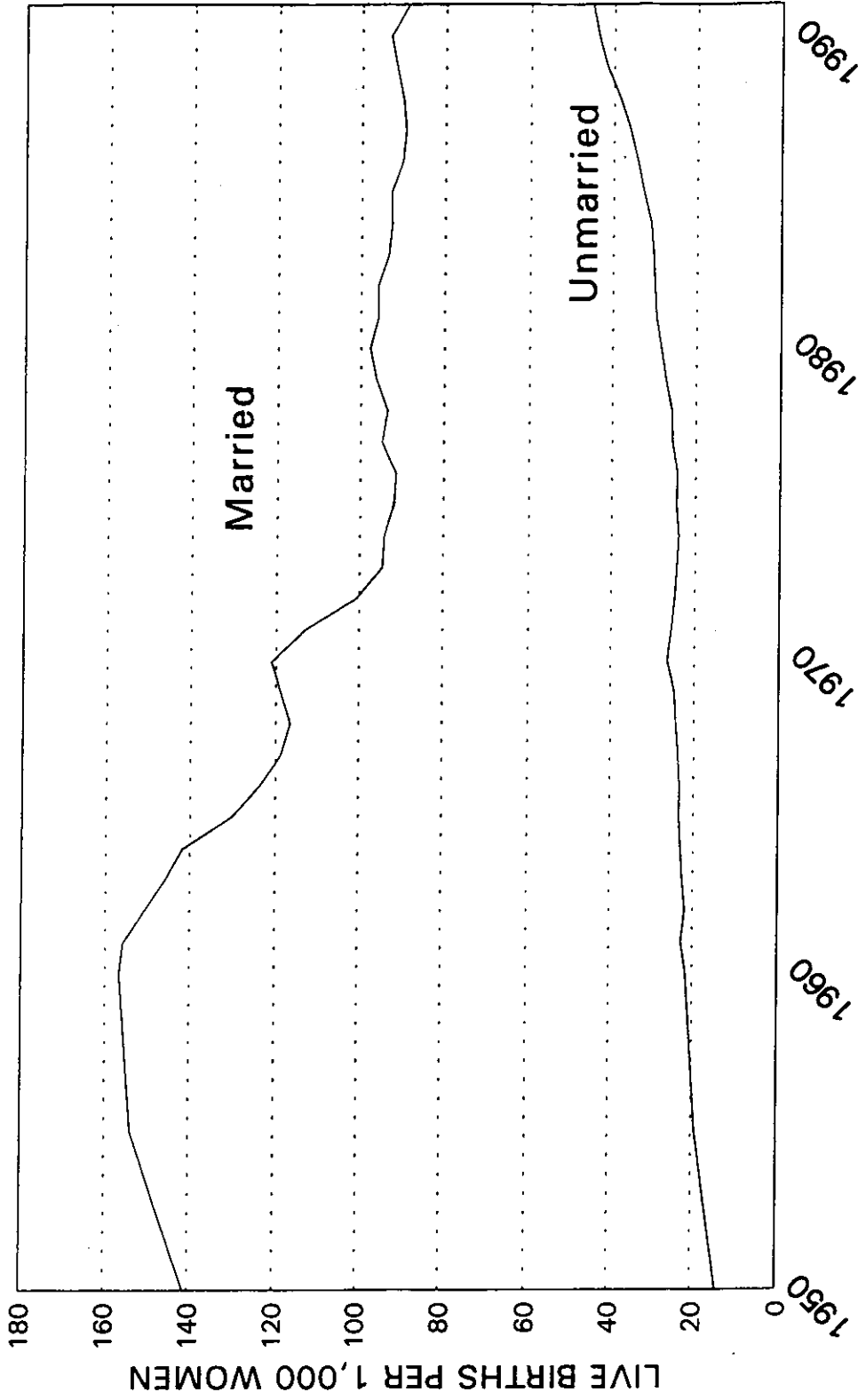
SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports. "Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1990." Series P-20, No. 450. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991.

Figure 1.2
Ratio of Divorced Persons per 1,000 Married Persons, by Race and Year



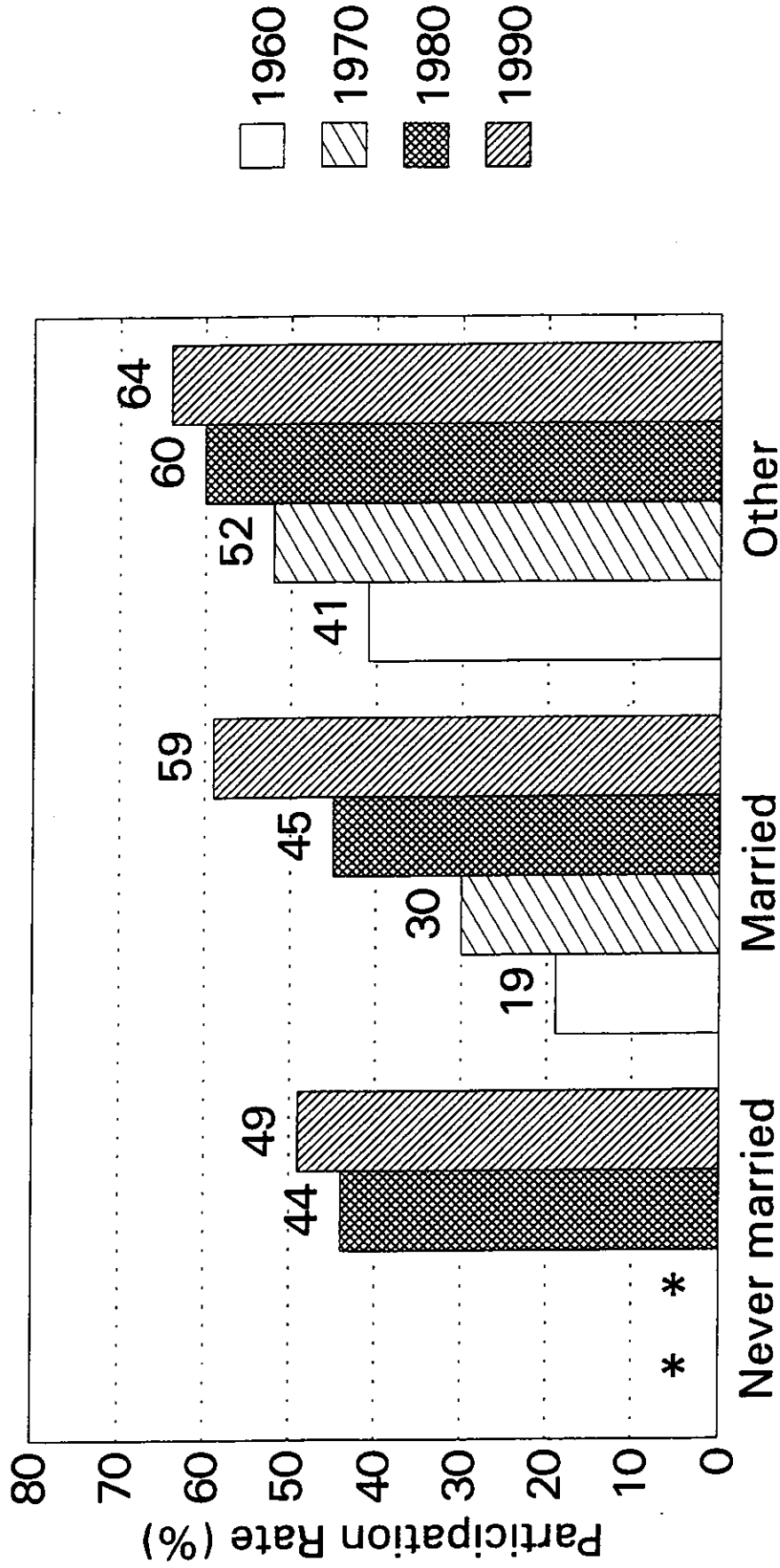
SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports. "Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1990." Series P-20, No. 450. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991.

Figure 1.3
Birth Rates for Women Aged 15-44, by Marital Status: 1950-1991



SOURCES: National Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics of the US 1988, Vol. 1, Natality. National Center for Health Statistics Advance Report of Natality Statistics, 1993, Vol. 41, No. 9. Data for 1991 were obtained over the phone from the NCHS.

Figure 1.4
Labor Force Participation Rates
for Mothers with Children Under 6

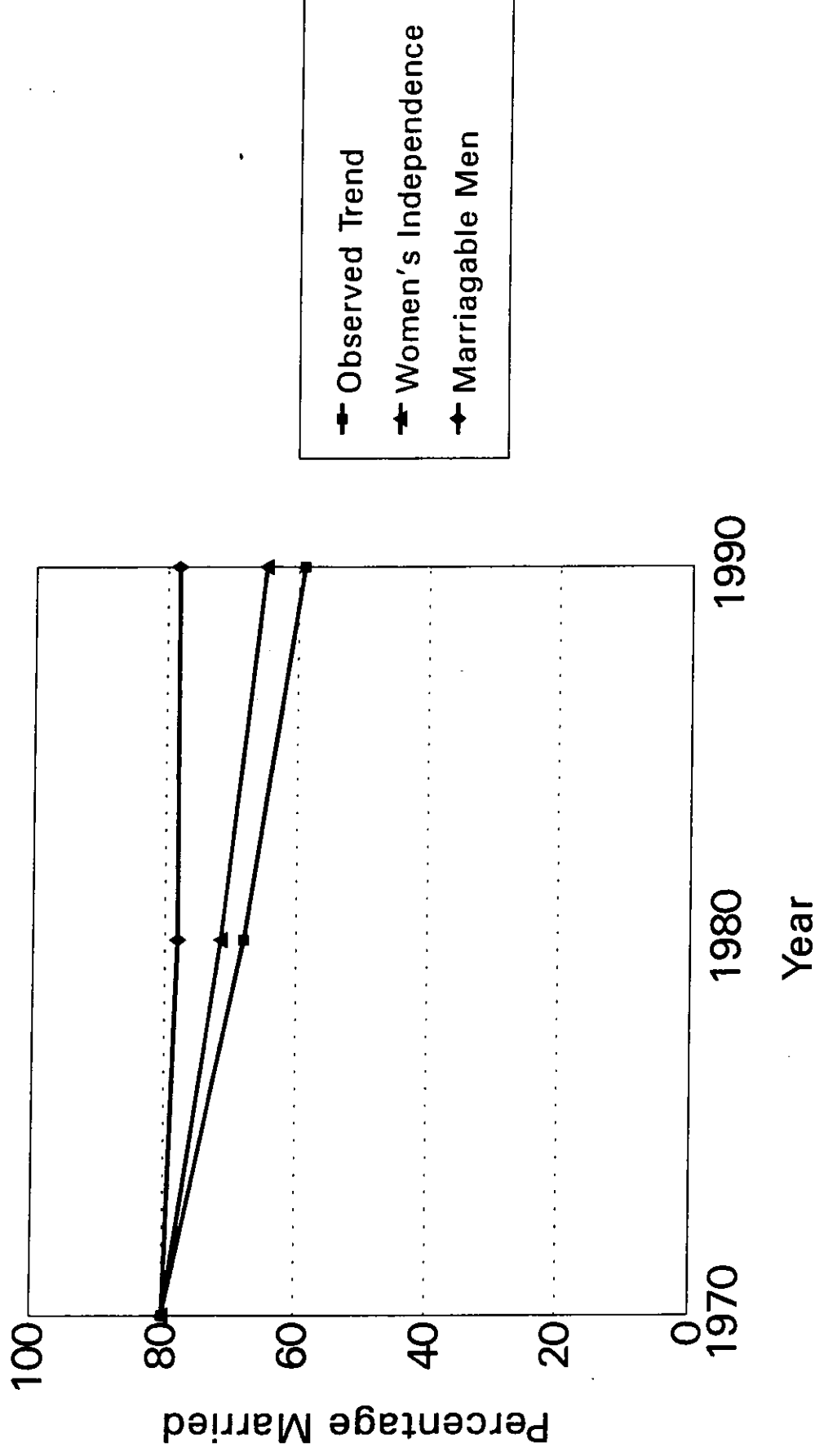


Notes: * Not available for 1960 and 1970.

Other includes widowed, divorced and separated mothers.

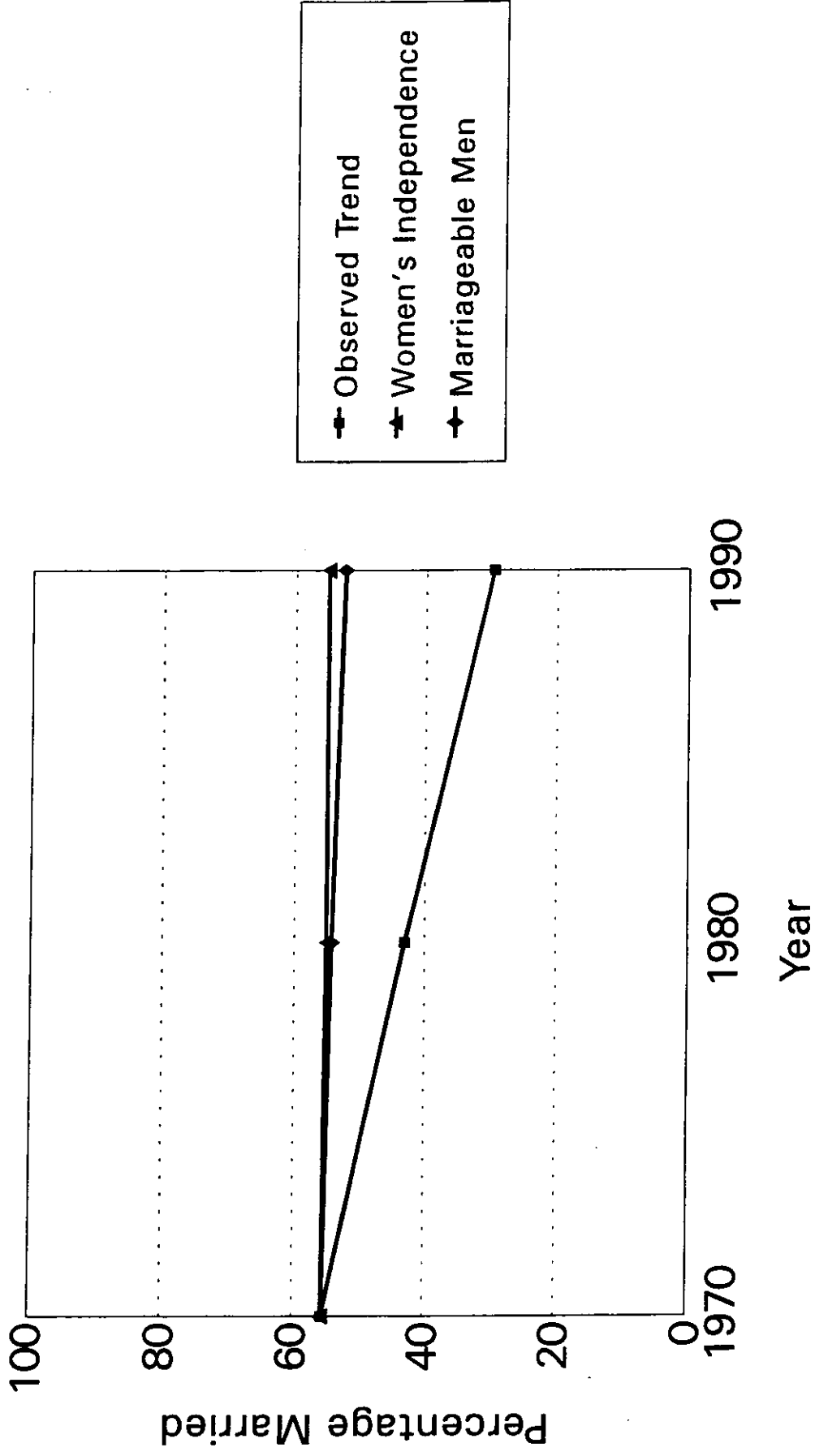
Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1993.

Figure 1.5: Effects of Changes in Marriage Market Characteristics on Proportion of White Women Married (Age 25 to 29)



Source: Public-Use Microdata Samples, 1970, 1980, and 1990.

Figure 1.6: Effects of Changes in Marriage Market Characteristics on Proportion of Black Women Married (Age 25 to 29)



Source: Public-Use Microdata Samples, 1970, 1980, and 1990.