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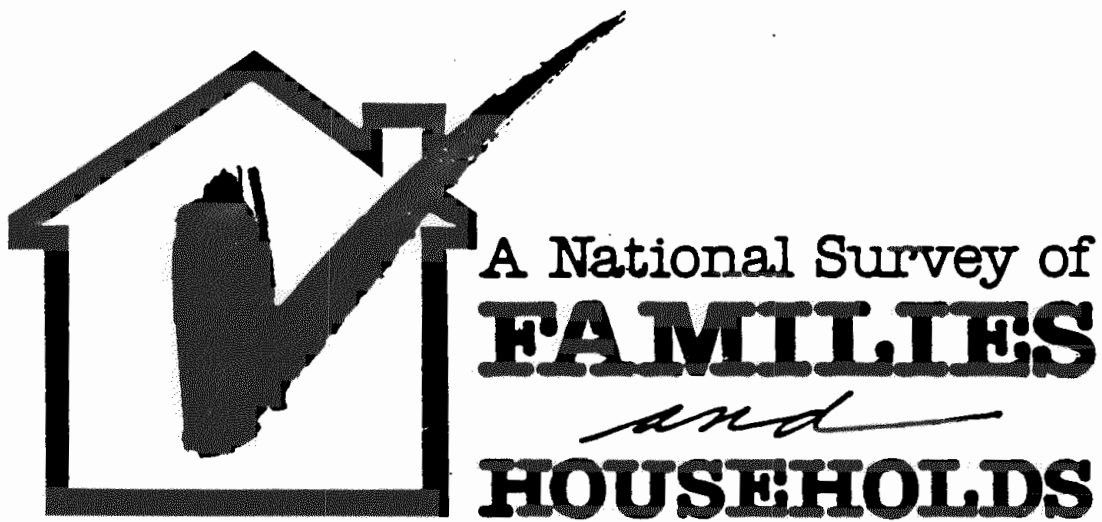
**THE TIMING OF MARRIAGE AND EDUCATION**

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## The Timing of Marriage and Education

The relationship between the completion of formal education and entry into marriage has been the object of considerable debate. While there is general consensus that enrollment in postsecondary education is associated with increased age at first marriage, there is disagreement on the effects of marriage on subsequent educational and occupational attainment (Clarridge, 1985; Lowe and Witt, 1984; Marini, 1984a, 1978; Alexander and Reilly, 1981; Kerckhoff and Parrow, 1979; Call and Otto, 1977, 1979; Waite and Moore, 1978; Voss, 1975).

It has been argued that it is normative that education should be completed before marriage, and that socioeconomic attainment is less when this norm is violated (Featherman and Carter, 1976; Hogan, 1978, 1980; Marini et al., 1989). Nonetheless, the life-course unfolds in a disorderly sequence for many (Rindfuss et al., 1987); education is likely to be discontinuous (Featherman and Carter, 1976; Karweit, 1977); and enrollment is often resumed after entry into the labor market or after marriage (Davis and Bumpass, 1976). Using the education and marriage histories in the National Survey of Families and Households, we examine the nature and extent of educational discontinuities, with particular attention to the timing, sequencing, and duration of postsecondary education after marriage.

Since half of all young people terminate their education at the end of high school (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1988), and since few young people marry just after high school, it is not surprising that the most common life-course pathway is completion of education, obtaining a job, and then marriage (Call and Teachman, 1988; Marini,

1984a; Hogan, 1978).

The other half of high school students enter some type of postsecondary education. Postsecondary educational choices impact life-course pathways depending on the kind of institution chosen and degree sought. Duration requirements for certification vary from a few months to four or more years. In addition, many students interrupt their schooling or take longer than normal to complete their educational programs (Featherman and Carter, 1976).

Of 1980 high school seniors, 45 percent were enrolled full-time in college in the Fall of 1980. Three years later, 32 percent were enrolled full-time. By the Spring of 1986, 19 percent had completed a Bachelor's or advanced degree (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1988). The reasons for the substantial decrease are varied. Some completed license or two-year programs. Some converted to part-time status or left school and delayed college completion. Many dropped out of college.

Although marriage is often linked to schooling interruptions or termination, particularly for females (Marini, 1978), the causal relationships are poorly understood. While marriage may constitute a new set of role obligations that truncate education, the most common reasons for dropping out of college are academic or financial problems (Pantages and Creedon, 1978), as well as associated institutional factors that impact on integration into the college environment (Anderson, 1981; Velez, 1985). For some, marriage may actually raise the likelihood of eventual graduation through increased resources. In any event, marriage clearly does not necessarily mark the end of educational careers. Many persons continue or return to their schooling after marriage (Davis and Bumpass, 1976). In 1970, about 20 percent of married women

had attended school after marriage and there was a trend toward postmarital enrollment.

The National Survey of Families and Households data offer a unique opportunity to explore type of educational institution, enrollment status, and certification status as aspects of postsecondary educational experience in relation to first marriage. We will deal with causal issues more directly in subsequent work. The present paper has the more modest objective of providing a clearer picture of the patterns involved.

### **The Data and Variables**

Our analyses are based on the recently completed National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH). The NSFH consists of interviews in 1987-88 with a national probability sample of 13,017 respondents. The sample design includes a main sample of 9,643 males and females aged 19 and over and a double sampling of some smaller populations of interest. The data also include information collected from the respondent's spouse or cohabiting partner. Seventy-five percent of the eligible respondents completed the interview.

The NSFH provides detailed information on many aspects of family life in order to permit analyses of relationships among various family domains. The data also contain a considerable amount of retrospective life-history information covering major marital, military, educational, and employment events. A detailed explanation of the content and design of the NSFH is reported in Sweet, Bumpass, and Call (1988).

In addition to highest grade attended for those not completing high school, we have the date of high school graduation, or GED completion, and spells of

postsecondary enrollment which involved two or more courses that lasted at least six weeks. We included vocational, technical, business, secretarial, and nursing schools as well as two-year, four-year, and graduate colleges, universities and professional schools. Each degree is recorded by type and date received. Summer school and correspondence courses are excluded.

These educational history data closely match census measures of completed education. When we aggregate our sequences to approximate the level of completed education, we get the same percentage distributions as the census for those with 13-15 years, with 16 years, and with 17 or more years of education.

Unless otherwise specified, the following analysis is based on 5,502 respondents between the ages of 30 and 49 at the time of survey. Forty-four percent of this cohort had enrolled full-time in a college or university, 7 percent had enrolled part-time, 14 percent only attended a vocational/technical school, and 33 percent never enrolled in a college or school. Ninety percent of the cohort had married at least once.

We recognize that the enrollment and marriage experiences are truncated somewhat for the youngest of these respondents. However, the basic levels and patterns observed for this twenty-year cohort are unlikely to be altered much by future experience. For most of our analysis, differences by age permit evaluation of the potential extent of this truncation, and in the following section we also use life-table procedures to more adequately deal with truncation.

### **Enrollment Patterns**

Contrary to the common image of educational attainment as continuous enrollment after high school, over a third of those who enrolled in college delayed entry into college for more than six months. Over half of the delayed entries enrolled in college part-time.<sup>1</sup> Further, about half of those who enrolled in college had more than one spell of enrollment (Table 1). As we would expect, multiple spells are found more often among those who obtained higher degrees. Nonetheless, it is striking that about half of all persons who obtained a BA degree had two or more spells of enrollment. Although males in this cohort are more likely to have attended college than females, there is little difference by sex with respect to patterns of discontinuity.

Any definition of leaving college is somewhat arbitrary. For example, some students may take off a semester or a year to travel in the midst of what they view as a continuous educational career. For our present purposes, however, we define the date of first school leaving as the first time the respondent left full-time college enrollment for at least six months. (Alternative definitions using longer durations do not substantially alter our results.) Using this definition and life table procedures, we examined the rate of return among those who "left school."

Of those who left college for at least six months without having obtained a

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<sup>1</sup> Krebs (1986) reports similar results for the high school class of 1972. One-quarter of those who enrolled in college delayed entry at least a year after high school, and 52 percent of those who delayed attended part-time. (The younger cohort and the specification of one academic year rather than one semester after high school account for the higher percentages in Krebs' study.)

bachelors degree, half of the males and two-fifths of the females eventually returned to full-time college enrollment. Such returns occur more rapidly in the three years after leaving, but a steady rate of re-enrollment occurs over subsequent years as well. Of these "college dropouts," about one-third of the males and one-fifth of the females went on to eventually complete a bachelors degree. Figure 1 graphs the cumulative proportions of males and females returning to full-time enrollment. Re-enrollment is substantial for both sexes, although males return to college at a faster rate than females and a higher proportion of males return to college. Some of the differences by sex may be the result of Vietnam war and veteran educational benefits on enrollment patterns of males in this cohort.

We defined spells of enrollment on the basis of either a six-month gap between period of enrollment or a change in type of institution. For persons with more than one spell of enrollment, Table 2 indicates the distribution of enrollment types separately for those who changed school types without a gap in enrollment (column 1) and for those who had a gap of at least 6 months (column 2).

About two-thirds of those with multiple spells had a gap in enrollment. Of those who changed college type with no gap in their enrollment, 32 percent of these college changes involved a transfer from full-time enrollment at a two-year college to full-time enrollment at a four-year college. Over a third (39%) changed four-year colleges or continued their education in graduate or professional school. Only 13 percent transferred from full-time enrollment at a two or four-year college to mostly part-time enrollment.

The pattern is quite different for those with a substantial gap in their enrollment.



About two-fifths (38%) left a four-year college and eventually returned on a full-time basis to a four-year college or professional school. Unlike those who transferred directly to another college, a third of those who had a six-month or more gap in their education prior to returning to college re-entered college on a part-time basis. Only a few (7%) transferred from a two-year to a four-year college on a full-time basis. It is clear that those who maintain continuity in their enrollment are also much more likely to make the transition from a two-year college to a four-year college and to maintain full-time enrollment status. About 40 percent of those enrolled full-time in a two-year college who quit and later re-enrolled, eventually transferred to a four-year college on a full-time basis. Of those who were enrolled full-time in a four-year college and then left college for 6 months or more before returning to college, over half later re-enrolled as a full-time student in a four-year college.

There are significant gaps between enrollment periods when a disruption in enrollment occurs. Only 13 percent of the gaps between enrollments were less than one year, 41 percent lasted one to three years, and 46 percent lasted three years or more. Such gaps could have substantial impact on subsequent educational attainments, though as we will discuss briefly in our final section, there are a number of puzzles in how we should best conceptualize that question. But first, we turn to the overlap of educational and marriage histories.

### **School-Leaving and Marriage**

While this paper does not address the reciprocal causal links between education and marriage, Table 3 illustrates the extent to which first school leaving and marriage

tend to occur jointly. This table is restricted to ever-married persons. Since women marry at younger ages than men, marriage and school are more likely to overlap.

Females are more likely than males to have married before the date they left school for the first time (18 vs 11 percent). This is particularly true of those who marry without a high school diploma.

A rough indicator of the jointness of marriage and educational completion is the proportion who marry within a year before or after leaving school. Many persons may plan marriage in this period in anticipation of completing or terminating schooling, while others may find that they are unable to continue schooling because of their marriage. Relatively few males (14%) married within a year before or after leaving school, although the proportion rises to a quarter among those completing college. On the other hand, there is a greater concentration of marriage around the time of first school leaving for females: irrespective of education levels, about 30 percent married in the period 11 months before or after leaving school. Nonetheless, most males (80%) and females (63%) who marry do so a year or more after leaving school the first time.

### **Education after Marriage**

Education after marriage includes different types of discontinuity. Normative sequencing can be violated by marrying while in school, but without any break in enrollment. The enrollment in these cases may be merely the final weeks or months of the last semester, or it may continue for several years. In other cases, however, education may have been left either at marriage, or many years before. In these

cases, postmarital education may be a return to schooling five or ten years after marriage.

In Table 4, we document the levels of postmarital education for a number of measures. Eighteen percent of our ever-married respondents attended a two or four year college (or graduate education) full-time after marriage. An additional 7 percent attended on a part-time basis, so 25 percent had some college experience after marriage. Thirteen percent only enrolled in a vocational/technical, business, secretarial, or nursing school after marriage, and 3 percent completed high school only.

As we would expect, the nature of postmarital education varies greatly with educational level at the time of marriage. Very few who marry prior to completing high school ever attend college on either a full-time (5%) or part-time basis (3%). A fifth of those with a high school education at marriage eventually attend college. Those who marry after attending college but before completing a BA degree are most likely to be enrolled sometime after marriage (two-fifths full-time and half when part-time enrollment is included). At the same time, a fourth of those who had already graduated from college before marriage report subsequent college or graduate education.

Regular postsecondary education after marriage is somewhat more common among whites than among blacks (27 vs 21 percent). Overall, blacks are as likely as whites to have enrollment after marriage, but the type of school enrolled in differs. This difference, which is even more evident for Mexican Americans, may reflect emphasis on vocational, technical, business, and nursing training programs for the

economically disadvantaged.

The difference in college attendance after marriage between males and females, already seen in Figure 1, occurs despite the later age of marriage of males than females, and hence the greater opportunity to finish schooling before marriage. The difference may result from the greater household task load of most married women compared to married men, or a tendency to give priority to the husband's education.

In logit regressions not shown here, the seemingly highly irregular pattern by age at marriage becomes strongly and consistently negative when the effects of the other variables are controlled. As we would expect, all else being equal, the later the age at marriage, the more likely it is that education will have been completed. At the same time, it is precisely because those who marry in their twenties are likely to have had some college that we observe higher levels of education after marriage among those who married at these ages.<sup>2</sup>

The age differences in Table 4 capture the end of a secular increase in the experience of postmarital education. We would, of course, expect there to have been such an increase with the postwar expansion of higher education. The oldest cohort in this table reached age 20 in the late 1950s. If we take the series back a bit further, and compare the persons ages 55-59 with those ages 35-39 (those who turned age 25 in the mid-1950s with those who turned 25 in the mid-1970s), we find a doubling over this period among both men and women. The slight decline for the most recent cohort (ages 30-34) may well reflect the truncation of experience by interview,

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<sup>2</sup>Age at marriage is the only variable for which effects change substantially in the logit regression. All the variables considered have significant effects on this measure of full-time enrollment after marriage in 2 or 4 year colleges.

although life-table estimates also show a modest downturn among recent marriage cohorts. One explanation may be the decreasing overlap between educational completion and marriage that results from later ages at marriage. Even so, this decreasing overlap may be largely an artifact of the substitution of cohabitation for marriage in the early years of coresidence (Bumpass and Sweet, 1989).

People living in the West are most likely to continue education after marriage. Those living in the Northeast are least likely to do so. We might expect this to reflect the older age at marriage distribution of the Northeast, but the effect persists net of age at marriage. There may well be some regional differences in orientation toward returning to education later in the life-course, perhaps associated with the differences in industrial composition.

Table 5 examines the distribution of educational attainment at interview by categories of education at marriage. Postmarital enrollment is clearly an important component of ultimate attainment. Whereas 17 percent of the sample had at least a BA degree at marriage, 25 percent are at least college graduates by the date of interview. Very few high school graduates who had not started college before marriage managed to complete a college degree (4 percent), but about a third of the males and a quarter of the females with some college experience (but not a degree) before marriage at least completed a BA degree. Nearly half of those who married with a BA degree went on after marriage to obtain some kind of graduate degree.

### **Timing of College Attendance After Marriage**

Table 6 examines full-time college attendance after marriage in more detail for the

18 percent of the cohort who were either enrolled in college at the time of their marriage or entered college on a full-time basis sometime after their marriage. Reading across the first row of the table we see that half of these people were enrolled full-time at marriage and that two-fifths had a period of full-time enrollment that began after marriage (including those enrolled full-time at marriage who left college and later re-enrolled). These were not brief periods of enrollment. Sixty-nine percent were enrolled for 12 months or more after marriage (the average is 26 months), and 52 percent received a degree. As we would expect, some postmarital education is the completion of a semester in process. Nevertheless, this is only a small component: only a fifth of those who were enrolled at the time of marriage continued full-time enrollment for less than 6 months. Postmarital education clearly is substantial enough to be important both for marital roles and investments in human capital.

Most of the measures in Table 6 have similar relationships with the social and economic variables to those observed for the aggregate measure of any enrollment after marriage. A few details, however, warrant noting.<sup>3</sup> The longer duration until completion of a degree faced by those who start college after marriage significantly reduces the chances of obtaining a degree. Even so, about a quarter of this group obtained a BA. Three-quarters of those with some college at the time of marriage were enrolled at marriage and three-fifths went on to obtain a degree, even though they are as likely to be enrolled 12+ months.

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<sup>3</sup> Little attention should be paid to the row for those with less than a high-school education at marriage since full-time college enrollment after marriage is rare for this group.

Blacks with postmarital education are less likely than whites to have enrolled while in marriage and more likely to have spells begun after marriage. They are substantially less likely to obtain a degree.

Men with postmarital education are more likely than women to have married while in school, but less likely to have begun new spells of enrollment after marriage. Men are more likely to have at least 12 months of postmarital enrollment and are more likely to have obtained a degree after marriage.

Finally, the differences by age suggest that these processes continue even after age 30. While the proportion enrolled at marriage actually increases for more recent cohorts, the older cohorts are more likely to have begun a new spell after marriage, to have received a degree after marriage, and to have been enrolled for at least 12 months.

## **Discussion**

The patterns we have been examining have implications from at least four perspectives. The first is the obvious point that conceptual and statistical models that treat marriage as prior to completed education or reciprocally linked to education do so at some considerable peril. Our analytical life is made much more complicated by the disorderly educational sequences and the overlap of these processes, but we best not assume that disorder or overlap away. While the overlap may seem to call for reciprocal models in which marriage and education decisions occur jointly, such models do not seem appropriate for the almost three-quarters of this cohort which married a year or more after first leaving school. Second, for both analytic and

policy perspectives we must recognize that college cohorts are much more diverse than the progressive aging of high school graduation cohorts. Third, we need to rethink how we conceptualize the impact of educational discontinuity on subsequent achievement. Whether such discontinuity in the life course is seen as a detriment or benefit may depend on the perspective from which it is viewed. Research evaluating the consequences of discontinuity has implicitly treated others of similar final educational attainments as the reference group. Thus among persons of like educational credentials (i.e., holding attained education constant), those with "nonnormative" sequences are likely to have lower earnings (Featherman and Carter, 1976; Hogan, 1980). Taking time out en route to an educational goal reduces the payoff from a given level of attainment.

Discontinuity, however, may arise from a number of different processes. Some who subsequently returned to school may have been uncertain about future education when they left, and many others may have had no intention of ever returning to school. Thus, re-enrollment may frequently be a response to intervening events, ranging from job dissatisfaction to changed economic circumstances (as in response to marital disruption among women). This calls attention to the obvious point that reduced educational payoff associated with discontinuity does not mean that returning to school yields no benefits. Persons who have been out of school can maintain continuous histories by not returning, or they can adopt discontinuous histories by enrolling. In this choice set, there is an unquestionable gain from discontinuity. Nonetheless, discontinuity remains an elusive concept to model. Part of the difficulty is related to the extent to which discontinuous histories represent "time out" on the



way to a pre-established goal, as contrasted with renewed educational aspirations among persons who thought they were through with school.

Fourth, the levels of overlap between student and marital roles as documented here question the strength of social norms about proper ordering of education and marriage in the life cycle. To the extent such norms exist, they would seem to be weak: since substantial nonoverlap would be expected by chance given the different distributions of marriage ages and ages of exiting school (see also Marini, 1984a; Marini et al., 1989). Perhaps norms about the proper ordering of education and marriage are specific to marrying while in school, but indifferent to enrollment after marriage. If so, then the "non-normative" pattern is not well represented by discontinuous educational histories.

In conclusion, these descriptive findings point to a diverse and complicated relationship between marriage and education. In most instances, previous research ignores the complexity. New efforts to understand these processes must take this diversity into account if we are to develop a better understanding of these important early life-course events.

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Table 1. Postsecondary Degree and Attendance Patterns for Males and Females Born Between 1938 and 1957 (ages 30 to 49)

Number of Enrollment Spells in Two or Four-year Colleges	Highest Degree Obtained					Percent with Spells
	None	AA	BA	MA	PHD	
<b>Total</b>						
None	73	-	-	-	-	50
One	20	57	51	7	9	26
Two or more	7	43	49	93	19	24
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of cases	3921	294	829	355	107	5506
<b>Males</b>						
None	70	-	-	-	-	45
One	22	55	47	6	9	27
Two or more	8	45	53	94	91	28
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of cases	1498	117	407	162	77	2261
<b>Females</b>						
None	75	-	-	-	-	54
One	18	59	56	8	10	25
Two or more	6	41	44	92	90	21
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of cases	2423	177	422	193	30	3245

Table 2. Enrollment Patterns For Persons Who Left College<sup>a</sup> Without Receiving A Degree And Had At Least Two Spells of College Enrollment: Persons 30-49, NSFH

College Type and Enrollment Status of College:		Amount of Gap Between The First and Second Enrollment Spell (Full- and Part-time Enrollment)	
		No Gap, But Changed Type	Six Months or More
LEFT	ENTERED		
2 or 4-yr (Part)	2 or 4-yr (Part)	2%	9%
2 or 4-yr (Part)	2 of 4-yr (Full)	3	1
2-yr (Full)	2 or 4-yr (Part)	5	6
2-yr (Full)	2-yr (Full)	2	4
2-yr (Full)	4-yr (Full)	32	7
4-yr (Full)	2 or 4-yr (Part)	8	31
4-yr (Full)	2-yr (Full)	9	4
4-yr (Full)	4-yr <sup>b</sup> (Full)	39	38
		100 (N=390)	100 (N=829)

<sup>a</sup> or changed college type

<sup>b</sup> or professional school

Table 3. Months Between First School Leaving and First Marriage, by Education at Marriage, Ever-Married Persons 30-49, NSFH

	Months Married Before Leaving School				Months After Leaving School Before Marriage				%	%
	36+	24-35	12-23	0-11	1-11	12-23	24-35	36+		
<b>Education at Marriage</b>										
0-11 yrs	6%	2%	7%	17%	6%	5%	7%	50%	100%	17%
12 yrs	1	0	0	2	18	15	14	50	100	43
13-15 yrs	6	3	5	14	9	10	8	45	100	23
16+ yrs	2	1	1	8	18	12	9	49	100	17
Total	3	1	2	8	14	12	11	49	100 (N = 4748)	100
<b>MALES</b>										
0-11 yrs	5	2	2	6	2	3	8	72	100	14
12 yrs	1	0	0	1	9	14	12	63	100	41
13-15 yrs	6	5	3	9	6	8	7	56	100	25
16+ yrs	3	1	1	8	16	9	10	52	100	20
Total	3	2	1	5	9	10	10	60	100 (N = 1915)	100
<b>FEMALES</b>										
0-11 yrs	6	2	10	24	8	6	7	36	100	20
12 yrs	0	0	0	3	25	17	16	39	100	44
13-15 yrs	6	2	6	19	13	11	9	34	100	21
16+ yrs	1	0	1	8	21	15	8	46	100	15
Total	3	1	3	11	19	13	12	38	100 (N = 2833)	100

Table 4. Enrollment After First Marriage, Ever-Married Persons, 30-49, NSFH

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1+2) Any Full or Part- Time College	(1+2+3+4) Any Schooling After Marriage	Number of Cases
<b>TOTAL</b>	18%	7%	13%	3%	25%	41%	4835
<b>Education at Marriage</b>							
0-11 yrs	5	3	13	17	8	38	930
HS graduate	11	9	26	0	20	46	2068
Some college	38	12	0	0	50	50	1031
4+ yrs college	22	2	0	0	24	24	741
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>							
Black	14	7	17	4	21	42	789
White	19	8	13	3	27	43	3561
Mexican-American	8	3	14	1	11	26	264
<b>Sex</b>							
Male	21	7	12	1	28	41	1952
Female	15	8	15	5	23	43	2883
<b>Age at First Marriage</b>							
Under 18	11	8	18	24	19	61	550
18-19	17	7	16	2	24	42	1043
20-21	26	8	16	0	34	50	990
22-24	21	8	11	0	29	40	1071
25-29	13	6	10	0	19	29	844
30+	5	5	9	0	10	19	291
<b>Age</b>							
30-34	15	8	15	3	23	41	1553
35-39	20	6	13	3	26	42	1409
40-44	20	7	12	2	27	41	1061
45-49	16	9	13	4	25	42	712
<b>Region</b>							
Northeast	13	6	11	2	19	32	911
Northcentral	18	7	14	3	25	42	1280
South	17	6	15	3	23	41	1729
West	24	10	12	3	34	49	915

Table 5. Education at Marriage and Subsequent Educational Attainment

	0-11th Grade	HS Diploma or GED	Some College or AA Degree	B.A. Degree	Graduate Work or Degree	Total
<b>Education at Marriage</b>						
0-11 yrs	73%	19%	6%	1%	1%	100%
HS graduate		80	16	2	2	100
Some college			71	16	13	100
B.A.				54	46	100
Postgraduate						100
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100%</b> <b>(N = 4770)</b>
<b>Males</b>						
0-11 yrs	86	9	3	0	2	100
HS graduate		78	18	2	2	100
Some college			67	20	13	100
B.A.				51	49	100
Postgraduate						100
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100%</b> <b>(N = 1925)</b>
<b>Females</b>						
0-11 yrs	65	26	8	1	0	100
HS graduate		81	15	2	2	100
Some college			76	12	12	100
B.A.				57	43	100
Postgraduate						100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100%</b> <b>(N = 2845)</b>



Table 6. Timing, Degrees, and Duration of Full-Time Enrollment After First Marriage Among Persons Enrolled After Marriage

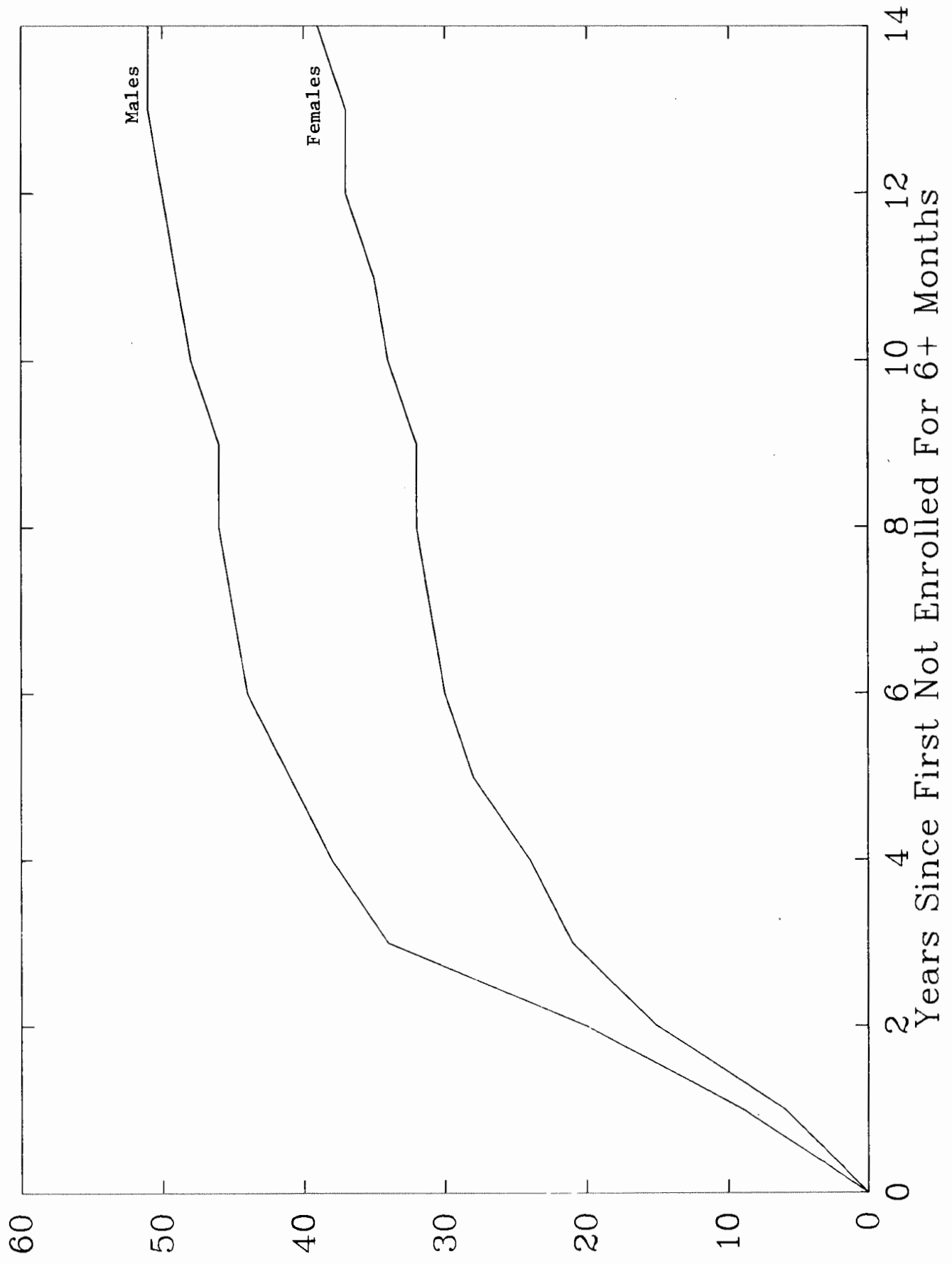
	Enrolled at Marriage	Began after Marriage <sup>a</sup>	Enrolled 12+ Months	Degree after Marriage	Number of Cases
<b>Total</b>	51%	59%	69%	52%	811
<b>Education at Marriage</b>					
0-11 yrs	47	57	72	31	52
HS graduate	8 <sup>b</sup>	95	76	28	236
Some college	77	39	67	59	379
B.A.+	48	59	65	70	144
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>					
Black	44	70	72	35	114
White	53	58	69	54	647
<b>Sex</b>					
Male	56	52	72	56	380
Female	45	67	65	47	431
<b>Age at First Marriage</b>					
Under 18	37	67	71	32	71
18-19	47	69	65	43	175
20-21	63	49	65	56	247
22-24	49	61	73	66	208
25+	45	58	74	55	110
<b>Age</b>					
30-34	52	56	66	47	233
35-39	52	60	66	51	257
40-44	52	58	72	54	203
45-49	51	62	75	62	104
<b>Region</b>					
Northeast	41	64	73	59	119
Northcentral	56	52	67	55	224
South	53	59	69	43	250
West	51	61	69	56	218

<sup>a</sup> includes those who were enrolled at marriage but who began another sequence later

<sup>b</sup> enrolled within 6 months of HS graduation

FIGURE 1.

Cumulative Percent Returning to Full-time Post-Secondary Enrollment



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