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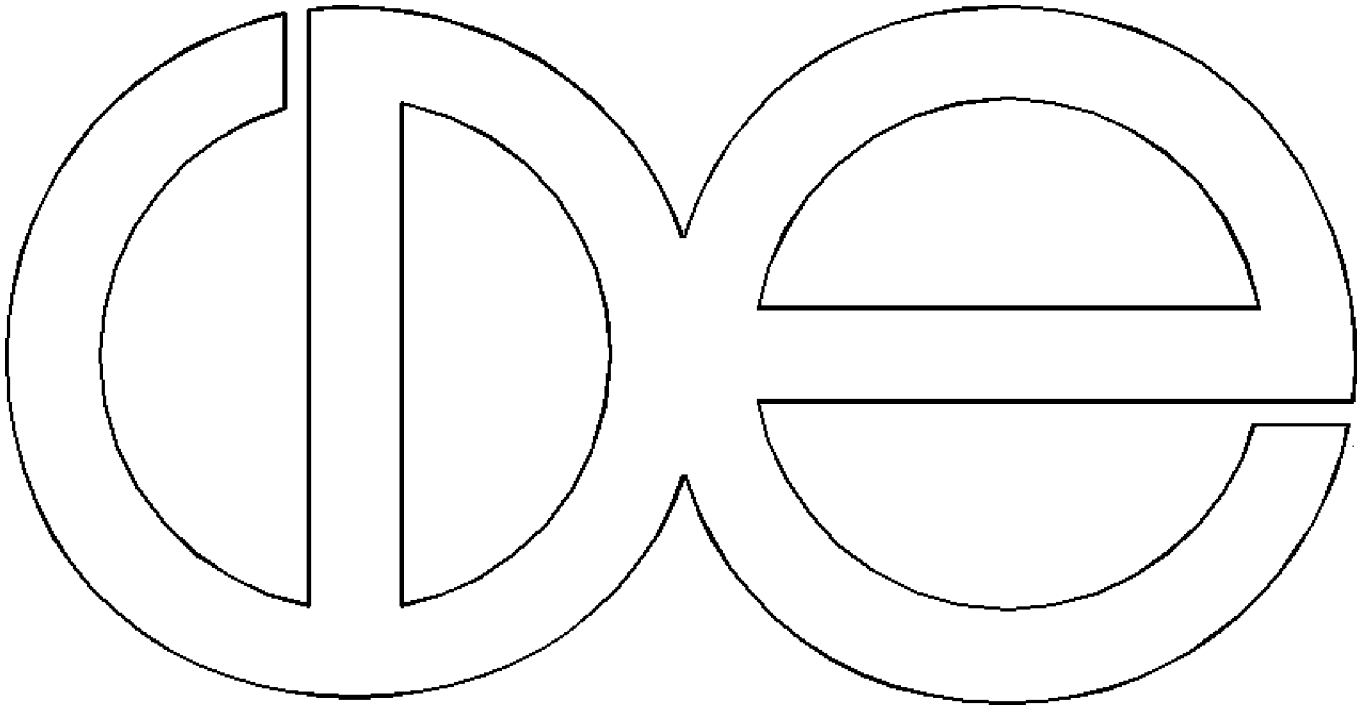
CDE Working Paper No. 95-08



Remarriage of Men and Women: The Role of Socioeconomic Prospects [1]

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November 1995

[1]Prepared for the Meetings of the Population Association of America, San Francisco, April 1995. Support for this research was provided the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (HD07014). The Center for Demography and Ecology receives core support for population research from the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (P30 HD05876). The Wisconsin Longitudinal Study data are available in the public domain through the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR). Thanks to Robert Hauser, Aimee Dechter, Elizabeth Thomson and Deborah Carr. The opinions expressed herein are those of the author.

Abstract

This analysis of the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study tests the ability of women's economic independence to explain the propensity to remarry. More broadly, it examines the effects of men's and women's socioeconomic prospects on remarriage following divorce. Theories emphasizing women's economic independence predict that women with the greatest alternatives to marriage will be least likely to remarry. The current analysis points to a more complicated scenario, finding the effect of occupational status on the remarriage of women to vary with women's age at separation. In contrast, few effects of men's socioeconomic prospects on remarriage are found.

In an era of high divorce rates and postponement of first marriage, remarriage has become an increasingly important event in American family life. For recent cohorts, one half of all marriages have involved at least one previously married partner (Sweet and Bumpass 1987). While remarriage fulfills needs for love and companionship, instrumental benefits of remarriage may also be high. Poverty rates are typically lowest in married couple households, and thus remarriage after divorce may represent an important route out of poverty for women and their children. This analysis of the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study's 1957 high school graduation cohort addresses the question: Are those with the poorest socioeconomic prospects most likely to remarry? More broadly, it examines the relative effects of men's and women's socioeconomic prospects on the propensity to remarry.

The conclusion of most research analyzing the economic consequences of divorce is that the economic status of women deteriorates following divorce, while men's financial position improves (Bianchi and Spain 1986). Duncan and Hoffman (1985) estimate that the family income of women who do not remarry is 70 percent of its pre-separation level within the first year after separation or divorce, and only 71 percent of its previous level five years after dissolution. Men are expected to see an immediate improvement in their economic situation following divorce or separation because personal income generally remains stable while the

number of dependents is reduced. It is also well established that few men pay large amounts in alimony and child-support following divorce or separation.[2]

Because of the relatively greater importance of economic pressures for women to remarry, resources may have a greater effect on women's than men's propensity to remarry. Past research investigates how men's resources affect their propensity to remarry, although the impact of resources held by women is relatively neglected. Previous research has frequently used educational attainment as a proxy measure of socioeconomic status and career commitment (e.g., Smock 1990; Mott and Moore 1983), but socioeconomic prospects clearly range beyond education.

In the current analysis, "socioeconomic prospects"[3] refers to the variety of alternatives to remarriage an individual may perceive. These alternatives represent the critical context in which instrumental decisions regarding remarriage are made. Socioeconomic prospects reflect accumulated human capital such as educational and occupational attainment, but also the more subjective notions of commitment to the labor force and occupational aspirations. High occupational status, educational attainment and school performance all reflect success in a role other than spouse and parent—and are related to improved prospects in the labor force. Similarly, high occupational aspiration and high commitment to the labor force reflect *desired* success in non-family roles. An individual who is motivated to work only by economic necessity is more likely to perceive instrumental benefits to remarriage. Children also affect the

[2] The U.S. Census Bureau reports that of women eligible for child support payments in 1989, only about half received the full amount due. Of the remaining women, roughly half received less than the full amount, and half received nothing at all (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1991).

[3] This term was used by Pamela Smock (1990) to describe the potential for women to support themselves and their children. Smock used educational attainment as a "loose proxy" for socioeconomic prospects.

socioeconomic prospects of their parents through constraints on resources and time. Both number and age of children may have important effects on the ability and desire to search for, and attract, a mate. The notion of socioeconomic prospects employed in the current analysis is multidimensional, and expands on those used by previous researchers to analyze the process of remarriage. Consideration of the many dimensions of socioeconomic prospects will contribute to our understanding of the propensity to remarry.

Background and Current Investigation

Whether we look at the rate of first marriage, median age at first marriage, or the rate of remarriage, the decades since the mid-1960s show a movement away from official unions. Between 1965 and 1988, the median age at first marriage increased from 22.8 to 25.9 years for men, and from 20.6 to 23.6 years for women (Saluter 1989). Between 1970 and 1988 the remarriage rate declined from 204.5 to 109.7 per thousand divorced men and 123.3 to 78.6 per thousand divorced women (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1994). Despite the decline in remarriage rates, remarriages constitute an increasing proportion of all marriages—both because of the increasing pool of divorced individuals at risk of remarrying, and the trend toward delayed first marriage.

Women's increasing economic independence during this period is a common explanation for the decline in first marriage rates. Women's rising income is translated into reduced economic dependence on a spouse, causing women to feel less economic incentive to marry. The economic independence argument is theoretically grounded in Gary Becker's (1981) "gains to trade" model of marriage. Becker views men and women as trading partners, and believes marriage occurs only if the perceived gains to marriage are positive, and if both partners believe they will be better off married than single. Men and women specialize in the labor market and

home, respectively, and trade on their comparative advantage in these tasks. Under Becker's framework, the gains from marriage will therefore be highest where men and women follow a traditional sex-based division of labor. The gain from marriage is reduced by higher earnings and labor force participation of women, as the sexual division of labor within the household becomes less advantageous and the opportunity cost of staying home rises for women. Becker's theory implies that women with more favorable socioeconomic prospects are both less likely to marry and less likely to remarry following divorce.

Oppenheimer's (1988) theory of marriage timing instead relates the search for a spouse to job search theory in economics. Oppenheimer believes that people want to marry others similar to themselves, and thus the difficulty they encounter in doing so affects marriage timing. Assortative mating is hindered by uncertainty about the characteristics by which people want to match—with the nature of adult economic roles being a major source of uncertainty in industrial society. As men and women attempt to find partners with similar levels of achievement in the labor market, women's future occupational prospects become increasingly important relative to personal attractiveness and homemaker skills. Such a pattern leads to a delay in marriage because of the greater difficulty in assessing future occupational achievement relative to the more traditional characteristics emphasized in Becker's model.

While Oppenheimer was largely interested in the impact of transition to a stable work role on the timing of first marriage, her theory has important implications for remarriage. Because jobs held in young adulthood may have little relation to later occupational success, early occupational status may be considered an uncertain predictor for first marriage. The search for a remarriage partner following separation or divorce occurs later in life, and thus we might expect occupation to be a more important factor—or a more important "badge" in the marriage market—the second time around (Kalmijn 1994).

What are the implications of an emphasis on economic independence to explain women's marriage behavior for the marriage behavior of men? Clearly under both Becker's and Oppenheimer's model, a man with greater occupational success will make a more desirable "trading partner", and thus men's socioeconomic prospects should be positively related to their ability to attract a mate.

Easterlin (1978) offers an additional theory of marriage in his "relative income hypothesis". In this model, couples delay marriage until they have reached some threshold of economic security. Easterlin unites economic and sociological approaches in asserting that the level of this threshold is determined by family income relative to that of the household of origin. While Easterlin assumes that men are the primary breadwinners, and believes women's labor supply to be determined by the ability of the man to meet the couple's economic needs, the general premise of the theory is applicable. If the resources of both men and women are seen to contribute to the total resources of the couple, then socioeconomic prospects will be positively related to the propensity to marry and remarry for both men and women.

Why is it important to study remarriage? The process of remarriage is theoretically distinct from first marriage for several important reasons. First, a divorced individual brings along the experience of first marriage. Evaluations of marriage as an institution may differ from those of the never married, and desired qualities of a potential spouse may change after this first unsatisfactory experience. Second, while first marriage is a near-universal phenomenon, remarriage is not. The decision not to remarry is of great practical and theoretical interest. Third, while first marriage is a clearly defined institution—often seen as a transition into adult society—remarriage has a less clear social meaning. Individuals may experience less social pressure to remarry than to marry for the first time, and may consider negotiating complicated families of step-kin a daunting prospect (Cherlin 1978). Finally, remarriage occurs later in the

life course than first marriage. People in their thirties will possess different types and levels of resources than younger individuals. They will have had more time to establish themselves in a career, and will be more likely to have children. If performance in the labor market is a desirable characteristic for both male and female spouses, socioeconomic prospects will be more important for remarriage than for first marriage. Data on remarriage is thus particularly appropriate for testing theories of the relationship between men's and women's resources and their marriage behavior.

The Role of Socioeconomic prospects:

As with first marriage, current thinking about remarriage is deeply rooted in the notion of economic independence (e.g., Bumpass, Sweet, and Castro-Martin 1990). Indeed, Oppenheimer (1994) criticizes the overwhelming attention paid by social scientists to women's economic independence in explaining recent demographic trends. The empirical support for economic-independence explanations of marriage behavior is mixed. Several empirical investigations of first marriage find that men with relatively high resources are more likely to be married than other men, while women with fewer resources are more likely to be married than other women (Carter and Glick 1976; Coleman and Ganong 1990; Glick and Lin 1987; Preston and Richards 1975; Wolf and MacDonald 1979). Coleman and Ganong (1990) suggest that the desire to improve financial security may be an important impetus for women to remarry.

Many studies, however, find employment to be positively associated with marriage of both men and women (Goldscheider and Waite 1986; Bennett, Bloom, and Craig 1989; Lichter, McLaughlin, Kephart, and Laudry 1992). Lichter et al. (1992) find that a woman's earnings in the previous year are positively related to her propensity to marry in the following year. Similarly, Oppenheimer and Lew (1994) find that women's employment in upper-level white

collar jobs is unrelated to marriage propensity, while employment in a blue-collar job sometimes reduces marriage. In their study of marital mobility among women in the National Longitudinal Study (mature and young women samples), Jacobs and Furstenberg (1986) find that the status of a woman's occupation is positively related to the status of her second husband's occupation. This suggests that people attempt to marry assortatively on occupational status, such that women and men with high status jobs highly value each other as (re)marriage partners. A woman's job may further facilitate contact with desirable marriage partners.

There are also significant practical difficulties in testing the economic independence hypothesis. White men are near-universally employed, and have more continuous work histories (on average) than do white women. These men can thus be more easily associated with a particular job or jobs, and measures of income and socioeconomic status are more easily obtained. Difficulties in doing the same for white women often leave researchers searching for proxy measures of these concepts.

A handful of studies have examined the effect of occupational status on the remarriage propensities of men and women, yet only men's jobs are used in such analyses. Haskey's (1987) examination of remarriage after divorce in England and Wales identified significant effects of social class. Male non-manual workers were more likely than men in the manual class to remarry, while the opposite trend held for women. This lends some support to an "economic independence" explanation of women's propensity to remarry, such that women with greater access to resources can afford to be more selective in the remarriage market, or choose to remain single. Unfortunately, social class of the couple was specified as that of the husband at time of divorce—a measure which ignores potential effects of a woman's own occupation.

Educational attainment is frequently relied upon as a proxy measure of socioeconomic prospects in studies of remarriage. Evidence of a relationship between educational attainment

and remarriage has provided mixed support for the economic independence hypothesis. While several studies identify a negative effect of education on women's propensity to remarry (Mott and Moore 1983; Teachman and Hechert 1985), most recent studies find no significant effect of educational attainment on this process (Chiswick and Lehrer 1990; Bumpass et al. 1990). Smock (1990), however, finds a *positive* effect of educational attainment on the remarriage of black women. With educational attainment as the only measure of socioeconomic prospects, there is no direct evidence that remarriage selects those least able to support themselves.

Children contribute to the socioeconomic prospects of their parents through constraints on resources and time, and may also detract from human capital accumulations relevant to a new marriage (Chiswick and Lehrer 1990; Becker, Landis and Michael 1977). Large surveys of recent divorces in Wisconsin and California show that the great majority of children live with their mothers following divorce (Seltzer 1990; Maccoby, Depner, and Mnookin 1988), and thus the potential negative effects of socioeconomic prospects are expected to be stronger for divorced women than for divorced men.

Empirical evidence regarding the impact of children is mixed. Many studies have found childless women to be more likely to remarry than other women, and to do so more quickly (Bumpass et al. 1990; Chiswick and Lehrer 1990). Thornton (1977) finds remarriage of divorced women in the 1970 National Fertility Study to be inversely related to parity. Several other researchers find that this negative effect only occurs for white women with three or more children (Smock 1990; Koo, Suchindran, and Griffith 1984). In contrast, Norton and Miller (1990) find a generally later pattern of marrying, divorcing, and remarrying among women without children. Duncan and Hoffman (1985) and Grady (1980) find no effect of parity on propensity to remarry.

While the cost of children to a prospective spouse and constraints on parents' time may vary with children's ages, this issue has been relatively neglected in the literature on remarriage.

Several researchers show a negative effect of children under age six on their mother's propensity to remarry (Martinson 1994; Duncan and Hoffman 1985; Koo et al. 1984). Jacobs and Furstenberg (1986) find that the presence of children under age ten is negatively related to the occupational status of a woman's second spouse. This suggests that women with young children may be less highly valued than other women in a remarriage market. Little research has investigated the effects of having older children.

The current analysis contributes to our understanding of men's and women's propensity to remarry in several important ways. First, it improves measures of socioeconomic prospects of divorced and separated individuals by including multiple indicators of this concept: effects of occupational status at separation, work commitment, occupational aspiration, educational attainment, school performance, and mental ability. Sufficiency of an "economic independence" explanation for women's behavior is examined. Second, it elaborates on previous analyses of the effect of children on their parents' propensity to remarry. While the possible effects of the number of children from the first marriage have been investigated (with inconclusive and often inconsistent findings), models tested in this paper include time-varying measures of youngest child's age. Third, socioeconomic correlates of remarriage are examined both for men and for women.

Hypotheses tested in the analysis:

Hypothesis 1: The independence hypothesis implies that women with high status occupations at separation and/or high educational attainment will be less likely to remarry. These women are better able to support themselves and their children outside of marriage. This perspective also predicts negative effects of work commitment and parental income on the propensity to remarry.

Hypothesis 1a: In opposition to H1, it is predicted that high occupational status and/or educational attainment are positively associated with the remarriage propensities of both men and women. These individuals will be more highly valued on the remarriage-market, and thus better able to attract a mate. Similarly, work commitment is expected to be positively related to remarriage. A woman's job may further facilitate contact with potential future partners.

Hypothesis 2: Children are expected to reduce the remarriage propensities of their parents through constraints on time and resources of their parents. Children represent capital specific to the first marriage, and thus reduced investment to capital transferable to a second marriage. Young children are expected to pose the greatest barrier, and thus have the strongest negative effect on remarriage. Because the majority of divorces result in women maintaining custody of their children, these effects are expected to be stronger for women than for men.

Data

The Wisconsin Longitudinal Study (WLS) is a long-term study of a random sample of approximately 10,000 men and women who graduated from Wisconsin high schools in 1957. Respondents have been followed from their senior year in high school up to the age of approximately 53 in 1992-93. The sample is large and representative of men and women of birth cohorts of the late 1930s and early 1940s who completed at least a high school education. The samples of separated and divorced individuals analyzed in this paper include 860 separated and divorced men and 915 separated and divorced women.

Important strengths of the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study lie both in its longitudinal design and detailed information on transitions in and out of jobs and marriages. The low attrition rate

of the WLS (approximately 85 percent of the original sample was recently re-interviewed) allows a relatively unbiased estimation of factors affecting the propensity to remarry over the life course. These issues are particularly relevant for the study of men, who have been shown to systematically misreport marriage histories in previous studies (McCarthy, Pendleton, and Cherlin 1990). While the remarriage behavior of both men and women is of interest, much recent analysis has investigated only the behavior of women—with authors often citing a lack of confidence in data from males (e.g., Bumpass et al. 1990; Smock 1990). Such concerns highlight the need for analysis of longitudinal data.

Variables and Methods

Life table analysis and Cox proportional hazard models are the tools used in this analysis. Unlike fully parametric approaches, Cox proportional hazard models do not require strong assumptions about the duration structure of the data (Cox 1972). The parameters of the model estimate the extent to which categories of the covariates raise or lower the hazard of an event occurring, without assuming a probability distribution for the underlying survival function. To calculate the risk of sub-groups as a ratio to the (unspecified) baseline hazard it is necessary to exponentiate the parameters of the model. Cox models reported in this paper were estimated by the PHREG module in the SAS statistical package.

For the current analysis, entry into the risk of remarriage is determined to be the date an individual stopped living with their first spouse—and thus the sample includes both separated and legally divorced people. This was considered appropriate because of established sub-population variation in the duration between separation and divorce, and the possibility that a legal divorce will not occur until one partner wishes to remarry (Thornton 1977; Sweet 1973). The process of searching for another partner may actually begin before an official separation from the first

marriage (South and Lloyd 1995), but date of separation is the most tractable measure of "entry into risk" available.[4]

Mean values of the independent variables are shown in Table 1. Independent variables include status of job held at separation (or last job prior to separation if not working at that time), educational attainment, school performance, mental ability, occupational aspiration, work commitment, number and age of children from the first marriage, income-to-needs ratio of family of origin, family structure in childhood, Catholic upbringing, age at separation and age at first marriage.

[Table 1 about here]

An important issue in considering the effects of women's occupational status on their propensity to remarry is determining which job should be measured. Because the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study identifies jobs at multiple points in the life course, it is possible to construct a measure of occupational status[5] at time of marital separation. If no job was held at this time, the status of the last job held prior to separation was selected. This is necessary to minimize problems of endogeneity of occupational attainment with the decision to remarry. Because the job selected for this variable will occur at different stages in an individual's life—based on their

[4] While cohabitation is generally recognized as an important factor in post-marital union formation, comparable cohorts in the National Survey of Families and Households show actual levels of cohabitation for this age group (born in the late 1930s) to be quite low.

[5] The Stevens-Featherman occupational status index TSEI2 was used to create this variable. This is preferred to the more usual Duncan Socioeconomic Index (SEI), which is based on education and income data from the 1950 census. Further, TSEI2 is based on both male and female standing. The Stevens-Featherman index takes into account changes in the occupational classification scheme, but also changes in the economic and educational characteristics of the American labor force (Stevens and Featherman, 1981). In addition, TSEI2 uses all detailed census codes rather then SEI's use of only 45 occupations in assigning a score.

age at separation—it is also necessary to include an interaction term for occupational status and age at separation.

Several measures of job aspiration are also included in the analysis. If the respondent reported in the 1975 questionnaire that he or she would definitely work even if he or she did not have to, the respondent is coded as having high work commitment. Occupational aspiration is measured as the continuous TSEI2 score of the job the respondent reports having desired while a senior in high school. This measure also reflects information collected in 1975.

Youngest child's age is a time-varying covariate in this analysis, and is divided into four age groups: under age six, six to twelve years, thirteen to seventeen years, and eighteen years or older. The reference group is women without children. Number of children in included as a continuous variable.

Educational attainment is grouped into three categories: exactly 12 years, 13 to 15 years, and 16 or more years of schooling.[6] Exactly 12 years was the omitted category. This measure of attainment reflects education completed by 1975, when the average age of this sample was 36 years. School performance is operationalized as the respondent's class rank (normalized) during the senior year of high school. Mental ability is the respondent's score on the Henmon-Nelson mental ability test, which in most cases was administered during the junior year of high school.

Several control variables are also included in the models: age at separation, age at first marriage (both in years), family structure, income/needs ratio for family of origin, and Catholic upbringing. Age at separation and age at first marriage are important because women's propensity to remarry on average declines as they grow older, and because individuals who marry

[6] The Wisconsin Longitudinal Study's main sample is restricted to high school graduates. The analysis was also conducted with the 16 or more category split into "exactly 16" and "more than 16 years" of schooling, but no significant effects were found. Further, the sample size for women in the highest category was small.

for the first time at relatively young ages may have a high taste for marriage, or alternatively have had less opportunity to invest in socioeconomic potential. Age at divorce and age at first marriage are included as continuous variables. Both are measured in years. It is not necessary to include an indicator of birth cohort, as the sample is a high school graduation cohort and is characterized by very little variation in birth year.

Family structure in childhood is frequently linked to patterns of marriage. Thornton (1991) suggests that children of divorced parents hold more negative attitudes toward marriage than do other children. Children from a single-parent family may also lack exposure to a successful marriage, which may contribute to a lower taste for marriage later in life. In the current analysis, individuals who report not having lived with both parents most of the time until their senior year in high school are coded as coming from a non-intact family.

Family resources is a continuous measure of average parental income-needs. Individuals from high resource families may have greater instrumental alternatives to remarriage, yet high family resources may also help attract a mate. Family "need" is determined from the 1992 poverty thresholds, which were retrojected back to family income in the period 1957-1960. The measure is thus constructed from data on income and number of children in the respondent's family of origin who were under age 18 in this period. This income data is obtained from the parents' 1957-60 tax returns. While this measure reflects the situation just after the respondent's senior year in high school, it is expected to serve as an indicator of the general level of family resources.

Finally, because of previous findings of a negative association between Catholic faith and remarriage (Chiswick and Lehrer 1990; Koo, Suchindran, and Griffith 1985; Wolf and MacDonald 1979), an indicator variable for Catholic upbringing is also included as a control variable. If the religious preference of the respondent's family was Catholic when he/she was a

high school senior, a one is given on this variable. This measure of Catholic family background is preferred to a measure of religion at a later point in time because of the potential for selection bias in the latter measure—which excludes defectors and includes converts (Sander 1993). Religion later in life may also be affected by marital history in some cases.

In cases where there was missing data on the independent variables, values were imputed using the sample means. Dummy variables for missing data were also included in the models.

Results

Life Table Analysis of Waiting Time to Remarriage.

To get a preliminary picture of the distribution of waiting times to remarriage, life tables of duration since separation (in months) are examined. As seen in Figure 1, hazard rates peak quickly at approximately the 2.5-year mark for both men and women—with a more pronounced peak for men—and generally display a steady decline thereafter. Figure 2 shows the cumulative proportion remarried by sex.

[Figures 1 and 2 about here.]

To analyze the remarriage data in the bivariate context, log-rank tests for equality in waiting times over strata of independent variables are next performed. These results are shown in Tables 2 (women) and 3 (men). The log-rank test compares observed survival curves to those expected under the null hypothesis that survival curves are identical across strata of the independent variable.

The log-rank tests provide some support for the hypothesis that remarriage selects those women least able to support themselves. Women with the highest status jobs are significantly less likely to remarry: only approximately 45 percent of women in the highest status quartile remarried by the interview date, as opposed to 64 percent of those in the lowest status quartile.

Similarly, only 48 percent of those women with 16 or more years of education were remarried by the interview date, contrasted with 60 percent of those women with exactly 12 years of schooling. Occupational aspiration also appears negatively associated with remarriage, although not at standard levels of significance. While socioeconomic prospects are related to the remarriage behavior of women, even in the bivariate context none showed consistent or significant effects for men. Effects of number of children are not significant for either sex.

[Tables 2 and 3 about here.]

Cox Proportional Hazards Models.

In both Tables 4 (women) and 5 (men), Model 1 reports the estimates of the restricted model, which does not control age of youngest child, while Model 2 adds this control. Controlling age of children significantly improves the fit of these models for women, but not for men. The chi-square goodness of fit test statistic with 4 degrees of freedom is 45.96 for women (chi-square probability <.005), and 7.4 for men (chi-square probability >.1).

The effects reported in the first column of each model are the exponentiated coefficients. For categorical variables, this effect represents that risk ratio relative to the omitted category. For continuous variables, it represents the change in risk ratio associated with a one unit change in the independent variable.

[Tables 4 and 5 about here.]

Model 2 presents the Cox proportional hazard estimates for the full model for women (see Table 4). The multivariate analysis includes a term for the interaction between age at separation and occupational status at the time of separation. We see that the effect of occupational status is sensitive to a woman's age at separation: the net effect of status is positive for older women, yet is negative for younger women. For a woman separating at age 25, a ten point increase in status above the mean is associated with a six percent *reduction* in the risk of remarriage. For

a woman separating at age 45, however, the same ten point increase in job status is associated with a 13 percent *increase* in the risk of remarriage. For women separating at the sample mean age of 36, the effect of job status is negligible: a 10 point increase raises the risk of remarriage by less than one percent.

The evidence with regards to other socioeconomic prospect variables is mixed. High work commitment is associated with a 14 percent reduction in the risk of remarriage. This suggests that for women who prefer not to work, remarriage may offer an attractive alternative. Class rank in high school, however, is positively related to the risk of remarriage: each 10 point increase in class rank is associated with a seven percent increase in the risk of remarriage. Both of these effects are only of marginal statistical significance.

While effects of number of children are insignificant regardless of whether age of children is controlled (Models 1 and 2, respectively), age of youngest child has significant explanatory power. Having a youngest child under age six is associated with a reduction in the risk of remarriage of approximately 35 percent, relative to those with no children. No significant effects are observed for a youngest child aged 7-12 or 13-17. A youngest child aged 18 years or over, however, is associated with a very large (88 percent) increase in the risk of remarriage, relative to women with no children. This is an effect which warrants further investigation.

It is informative to contrast these effects of socioeconomic prospects with the effect of Catholic background, which is generally thought to be important in determining the risk of remarriage following divorce. For women, a Catholic upbringing is associated with only a small (2 percent) and statistically insignificant increase in the risk of remarriage.

As expected, socioeconomic prospects have less explanatory power for the remarriage behavior of men than women. None of the socioeconomic prospect variables included in the proportional hazard model analysis are significantly related to men's risk of remarriage (see Table

5). Number of children is not significantly related to the propensity to remarry. As was previously mentioned, introducing age of youngest child does not significantly improve the fit of the model (compare Model 1 to Model 2 in Table 5), although a coefficient t-test shows a significant negative effect of having a youngest child over age 18. For men, having a youngest child in this age group is associated with a risk of remarriage 42 percent lower than that for childless men.

Unlike for women, the effect for men of a Catholic background is far stronger than that observed for any measured dimension of socioeconomic prospects. For men, a Catholic background is associated with a 29 percent reduction in the risk of remarriage. Not surprisingly, this difference between men and women in the effect of having a Catholic background is significant at the .05 level.

Discussion

This paper has confirmed some previous findings regarding effects of socio-demographic characteristics, examined the relationship between remarriage and multiple dimensions of socioeconomic prospects, and raised several questions for further research.

The independence hypothesis implies that women with high status occupations will be less likely to remarry. The current findings point to a more complicated scenario. While occupational status is negatively related to the remarriage of women divorcing at relatively young ages, this effect is positive among women who ended their first marriages later in life. While occupational status is not a direct measure of economic well being, it provides important information about a woman's labor market position. These findings further suggest that occupational status may be a desirable characteristic in remarriage markets, enhancing a woman's ability to attract a mate.

Some support was found for the notion that women with the lowest work commitment are most likely to remarry. The direction of this effect is itself interesting. As seen in Table 1, only slightly more than one quarter of women were classified in the analysis as having low work commitment. It is not surprising that women with the lowest taste for work would be more likely to choose remarriage as an alternative to work. The current analysis thus finds some limited support for remarriage selecting those with the least *desire* to support themselves. While not statistically significant, women with high occupational aspiration early in life were similarly less likely to remarry.

In combination, these findings provide empirical support for Oppenheimer's (1994) assertion that the causal relationship between women's employment and marriage formation is highly complex, and may include offsetting positive and negative effects. While occupational status reflects the personal resources a women may have, high status may also enhance ability to attract a mate. Thus high occupational status may have a positive effect on a woman's ability to remarry, while also negatively impacting her need for a second income. Low work commitment is expected to enhance a woman's desire to remarry, because she would prefer not to work. Perhaps the potential for offsetting effects in many variables related to socioeconomic prospects helps to explain the insignificant contribution of educational attainment to white women's propensity to remarry—both in this analysis and in previous research.

Interestingly, none of the socioeconomic prospect measures have significant or large effects for men in this sample. The most important factor in addition to age at separation and age at first marriage in determining men's propensity to remarry is Catholic background. In contrast to Wolf and MacDonald's (1979) finding that men with the highest permanent income have the highest propensity to remarry, the current analysis finds only a statistically insignificant effect of men's occupational status on their probability of remarriage. The effect is in the positive

direction, however. As observed for women, educational attainment is unrelated to remarriage. This finding opposes Easterlin's assertion that male resources are a key determinant of marriage behavior, and is inconsistent with Becker's theory that high resource men will be more highly valued as a marriage partner. It will be desirable in future analyses to directly measure the association between income and the propensity to remarry of both men and women.

With regard to children, it appears that researchers need to refocus their attention from number of children to the effects of children's age—particularly for analyses of women. In the current study, effects of parity are completely outweighed for women by a strong negative effect of having a child under age six. In addition, the finding that a youngest child aged 18 or over strongly increases the risk of remarriage for women, but decreases the risk for men (relative to individuals with no children), warrants further study. The general pattern observed in this analysis is that as children age, they become less of a barrier to the remarriage of women, yet more of one for the remarriage of men. Perhaps older children—especially college-age children—pose higher financial demands to their absent fathers than children in other age groups. A more thorough investigation into this finding will be necessary.

In conclusion, it is necessary to reflect on a central finding of this paper—that the association between occupational status and remarriage varies with a woman's age at separation from her first marriage. Because the sample analyzed here is a single cohort, it is not possible to distinguish effects of age from period. The current finding is thus also consistent with the explanation that, over time, women's occupational status has become an increasingly important factor in the formation of second marriages. Both age and period explanations would predict changes in the relationship between resources and marriage behavior over time. In future research, it will be necessary to further consider a possible change in the relative importance of women's socioeconomic prospects on marriage behavior.

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Table 1. Sample Means for Fixed Independent Variables

Variable	Women	Men
Status of job at separation	36.49	43.18
	(16.97)	(21.25)
Educational attainment		
12 years	0.67	0.55
13-15 years	0.15	0.17
16+ years	0.19	0.28
High work commitment	0.73	0.89
Status of desired job	49.32	56.36
	(17.31)	(18.20)
Class rank	10.44	9.76
	(1.40)	(1.42)
Mental ability	10.33	10.20
	(1.47)	(1.15)
Number of children	2.39	2.17
	(1.50)	(1.42)
Age at separation (years)	36.20	37.88
	(8.38)	(8.29)
Age at first marriage (years)	21.31	23.70
	(3.29)	(4.11)
Family income-to-needs	2.21	2.02
	(2.29)	(1.82)
Catholic background	0.36	0.35
Non-intact family	0.10	0.10
Sample size	915	860

Source: Wisconsin Longitudinal Study.
Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard deviations.

Table 2. Log-Rank Tests of Equality Over Strata of Socioeconomic Prospect Variables, Women

Variable	Percent Remarried	Median waiting time (in months)	Chi-Square probability
Status of job at separation			
Bottom quartile	64	91	
Second quartile	64	77	
Third quartile	59	92	
Top quartile	45	151	0.002
Educational attainment			
12 years	60	93	
13-15 years	57	91	
16+ years	48	145	0.015
Work commitment			
High	57	110	
Low	58	92	0.295
Status of desired job			
Bottom quartile	65	84	
Second quartile	61	97	
Third quartile	55	112	
Top quartile	52	104	0.118
Class rank			
Bottom quartile	62	92	
Second quartile	56	110	
Third quartile	57	93	
Top quartile	55	113	0.911
Mental ability			
Bottom quartile	62	84	
Second quartile	48	143	
Third quartile	60	96	
Top quartile	59	96	0.037
Number of children			
0	57	82	
1	64	77	
2	55	106	
3+	57	111	0.679

Source: Wisconsin Longitudinal Study.

Table 3. Log-Rank Tests of Equality Over Strata of Socioeconomic Prospect Variables, Men

Variable	Percent Remarried	Median waiting time (in months)	Chi-Square probability
Status of job at separation			
Bottom quartile	71	67	
Second quartile	62	68	
Third quartile	68	49	
Top quartile	66	64	0.459
Educational attainment			
12 years	67	55	
13-15 years	68	65	
16+ years	64	63	0.926
Work commitment			
High	67	58	
Low	63	64	0.411
Status of desired job			
Bottom quartile	66	51	
Second quartile	64	65	
Third quartile	72	57	
Top quartile	70	65	0.885
Class rank			
Bottom quartile	63	65	
Second quartile	71	57	
Third quartile	66	62	
Top quartile	67	57	0.474
Mental ability			
Bottom quartile	68	57	
Second quartile	64	65	
Third quartile	65	73	
Top quartile	71	52	0.101
Number of children			
0	77	54	
1	66	64	
2	66	66	
3+	63	56	0.317

Source: Wisconsin Longitudinal Study.

Table 4. Cox Proportional Hazards Models of Remarriage, Women (n=915)

	Model 1		Model 2	
Variable	Effect	Coeff./SE	Effect	Coeff./SE
Socioeconomic prospects				
Status of job at separation	0.967*	-2.050	0.968*	-2.001
Job status x age at separation	1.097*	2.136	1.097*	2.118
Educational attainment				
(12 years)	Omitted		Omitted	
13-15 years	1.034	0.238	1.071	0.484
16+ years	0.958	-0.241	0.994	-0.033
High work commitment	0.869	-1.392	0.859	-1.509
Status of desired job	0.997	-1.047	0.997	-1.183
Class rank	1.071	1.676	1.070	1.656
Mental ability	0.985	-0.401	0.979	-0.569
Number of children	0.982	-0.514	1.040	0.916
Age of youngest child				
(no children)	Omitted		Omitted	
<6 years	------		0.651*	-2.163
7-12 years	------		1.016	0.090
13-17 years	------		1.328	1.398
18+ years	------		1.881**	2.784
Control variables				
Age at separation	0.918***	-5.303	0.884***	-6.667
Age at first marriage	0.909***	-4.369	0.941**	-2.585
Family income/needs	0.981	-0.738	0.976	-0.884
Catholic (vs. not Catholic)	1.043	0.443	1.015	0.157
Non-intact family (vs. intact)	0.955	-0.291	0.969	-0.201
-2 Log likelihood	6444.89		6398.93	
(DF)	(18)		(22)	

Source: Wisconsin Longitudinal Study.
Note: Effects are expressed as the exponentiated coefficients. Models also include indicator variables for missing data, where necessary.
*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001.

Table 5. Cox Proportional Hazards Models of Remarriage, Men (n=860)

	Model 1		Model 2	
Variable	Effect	Coeff./SE	Effect	Coeff./SE
Socioeconomic prospects				
Status of job at separation	1.006	0.543	1.005	0.476
Job status x age at separation	0.998	-0.063	1.000	-0.002
Educational attainment				
(12 years)	Omitted		Omitted	
13-15 years	1.029	0.221	1.018	0.142
16+ years	0.894	-0.738	0.899	-0.705
High work commitment	1.206	1.340	1.195	1.267
Status of desired job	0.999	-0.255	0.999	-0.229
Class rank	0.984	-0.423	0.981	-0.492
Mental ability	1.045	1.209	1.043	1.150
Number of children	1.032	0.815	1.051	1.058
Age of youngest child				
(no children)	Omitted		Omitted	
<6 years	------		0.823	-1.083
7-12 years	------		0.820	-1.201
13-17 years	------		0.694	-1.948
18+ years	------		0.577**	-2.610
Control variables				
Age at separation	0.961**	-2.969	0.975	-1.629
Age at first marriage	0.968*	-2.203	0.951**	-3.058
Family income/needs	0.984	-0.669	0.981	-0.809
Catholic (vs. not Catholic)	0.720***	-3.535	0.715***	-3.606
Non-intact family (vs. intact)	0.858	-1.042	0.842	-1.169
-2 Log likelihood	6922.89		6915.49	
(DF)	(18)		(22)	

Source: Wisconsin Longitudinal Study.
Note: Effects are expressed as the exponentiated coefficients. Models also include indicator variables for missing data, where necessary.
*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001.

Figure 1. Hazard of Remarriage, by Sex

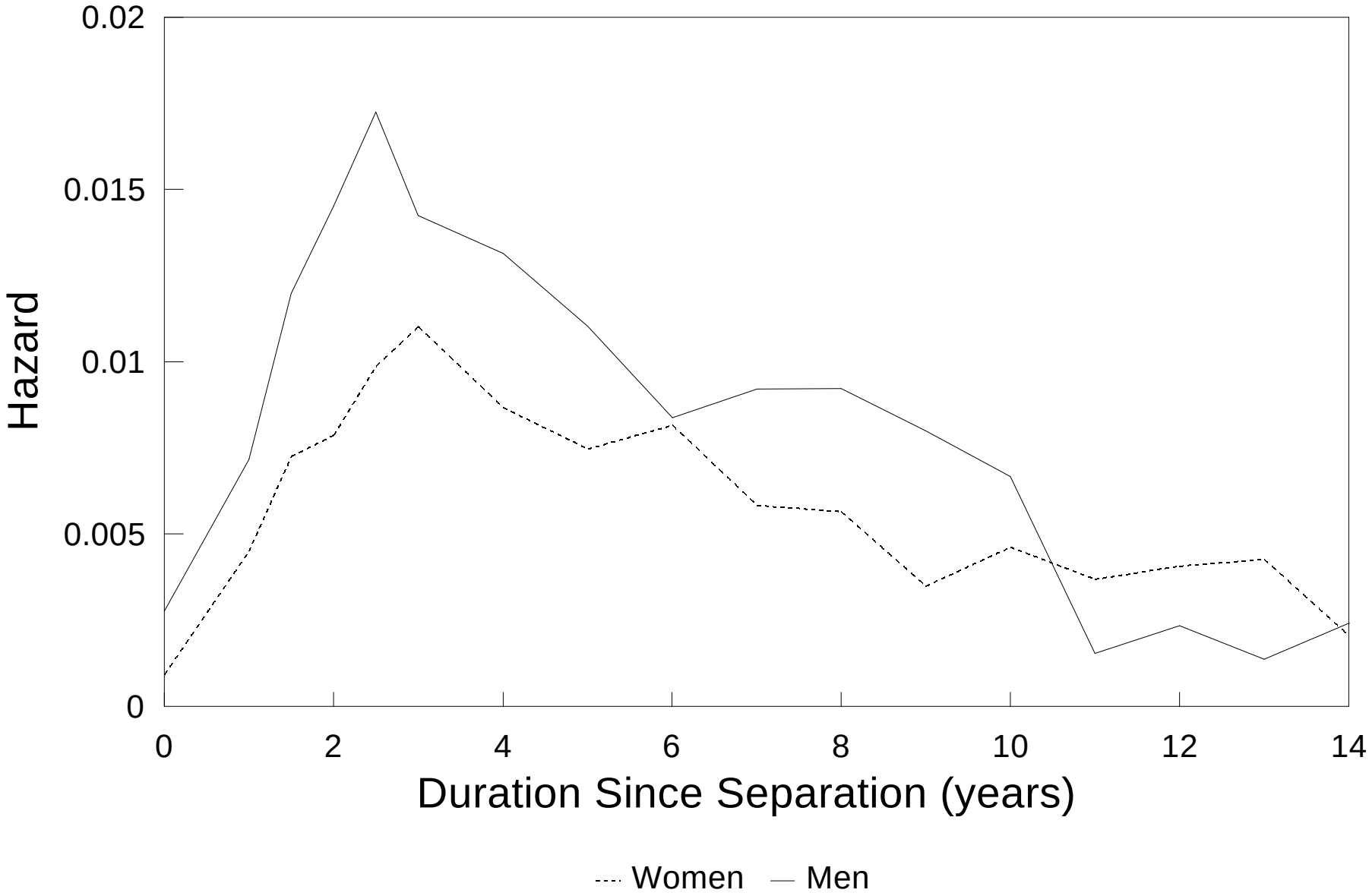
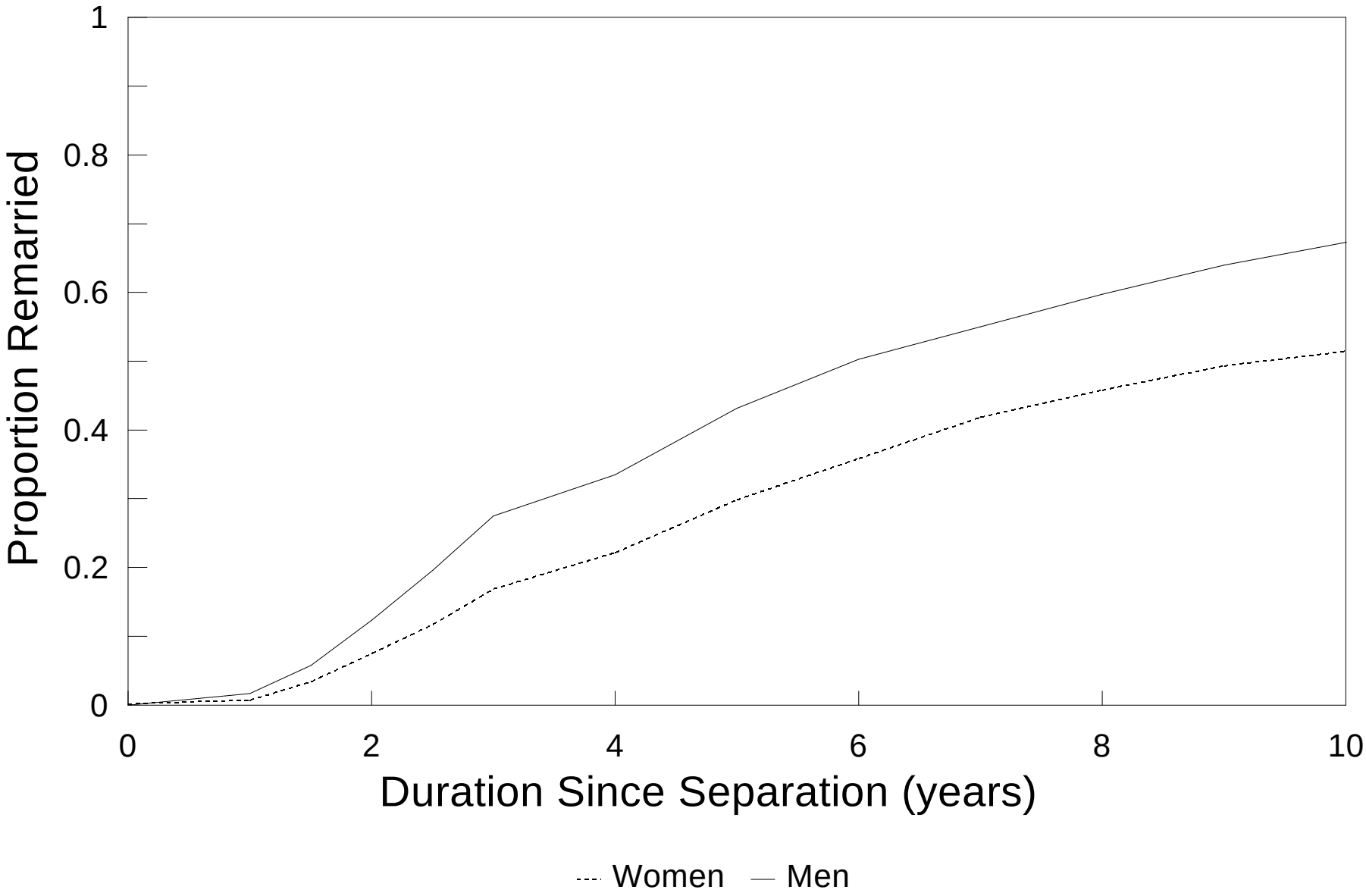


Figure 2. Cumulative Proportion Remarried, by Sex



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