

Changing Places: Conjugal Careers and Women's Marital Mobility*

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Abstract

This paper investigates the relationship between the socioeconomic status of successive husbands for two national samples of women who married two or more times. Socioeconomic homogamy, as indicated by the educational attainment and occupational status of spouses, is quite similar in first and second marriages for both cohorts. On average, the socioeconomic standing of husbands in subsequent marriages is about equal to those in previous marriages, when one adjusts for the career trajectories of the men involved. Socioeconomic variables, timing, and the presence of children all influence the chances of finding an accomplished second husband. The implications of these findings for the welfare of children of disrupted families and for future trends in the socioeconomic homogamy are discussed.

The process of status attainment has become one of the central areas of empirical investigation in contemporary sociological research. The most notable research has focused exclusively on men, with the relationship between father's and son's status the central issue for analysis (Blau and Duncan; Featherman and Hauser,b; Jencks et al.). Research over the last decade has begun to examine the social mobility of women, with a number of studies analyzing women's occupational mobility (Featherman and Hauser,a; Marini; Roos; Rosenfeld; Sewell et al.; Treas and Tyree), and others focusing on the mobility women attain through marriage (Chase; DeJong et al.; Glenn et al.).

Marital mobility analysis to date, with one exception, has been limited to women's first marriage. More and more marriages end in divorce, and a high proportion of those who are divorced or widowed remarry. Close to half of all marriages contracted today will end in divorce (Cherlin;

Weed). However, about four-fifths of the men and three-fourths of the women who divorce will eventually remarry (Glick,b). We know far more about the demographic and social characteristics of first marriages than of second marriages, and virtually nothing has been written about the patterning of conjugal careers (Furstenberg and Spanier).

The present study investigates the marital mobility of women, that is, the socioeconomic changes experienced in the transition from one marriage to the next. We will focus on three related questions. First, how does the degree of homogamy compare for first and second marriages? Second, do women generally experience upward or downward social mobility in the move from their first marriage to their second marriage, as indicated by the SES of their respective husbands? And third, what are the factors which increase or reduce women's chances of finding socioeconomically successful second husbands?

Marital Homogamy

Marital homogamy, the tendency for individuals to marry others like themselves, is a well-established and extensively studied characteristic of American family life. Americans marry for love, but they tend to fall in love with others with similar backgrounds, with similar levels of educational attainment, and with the same ethnic and religious heritage. A host of studies have examined socioeconomic, educational, religious, and ethnic homogamy (Goode; Hout). The study of marital homogamy links the family with the stratification system.

To date, however, only one study has directly examined status homogamy in second marriages (Dean and Gurak), though several others have provided incidental information on the characteristics of couples in first and second marriages (Furstenberg and Spanier; Glick,a). Reporting on a sample of 429 women in their second marriage from the 1970 National Fertility Survey, Dean and Gurak find that women who remarry exhibit low homogamy with respect to age, education, and religion in their first as well as their second marriages, compared to stable first marriages. They conclude that certain women are divorce prone, because they enter relatively high risk marriages in both their first and second marriages.

One might expect marital homogamy to decrease in second marriages as a result of the limited pool of spouses available. Remarriers are older, and have access to fewer potential mates. Consequently, given a smaller pool from which to select, remarriages may be expected to match less similar individuals than do first marriages. Rather than attributing low homogamy to preference for risk, as Dean and Gurak suggest, low rates of homogamy may simply reflect the demographic constraints faced by re-

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marriers. We will examine homogamy in educational attainment, occupational status, and age.

Socioeconomic Success in Remarriage

One previous study explored the net change in status experienced by women in the transition to remarriage. Mueller and Pope examined a sample of white women from the 1970 National Fertility Study, comparing the status of first and second husbands for six major occupational categories. They reported the surprising finding that more women are upwardly mobile in the second marriages than are downwardly mobile. Half of their sample was upwardly mobile, one-fifth was downwardly mobile, and the balance were nonmobile. They suggested that this pattern can be explained by Farber's theory of "permanent availability" of spouses for remarriage. Farber maintained that the stigma associated with divorce has declined, and that adults increasingly tend to remain as potential spouses for each other.

Unfortunately, Mueller and Pope did not take into account the career mobility of husbands. Men generally tend to improve their occupational positions as their careers unfold. A proper comparison of the socioeconomic positions of second husbands with previous husbands requires that the two be compared at the same point in their careers, or that their SES be adjusted to account for career development.

Mueller and Pope note the problem of age differences, and partition their results to account for different ages at remarriage. They find less net upward mobility for the older women, a finding which suggests the importance of correcting for career differences. However, the mobility table approach they pursue makes adjusting for career trajectories difficult. Their conclusion that women are generally upwardly mobile in their second marriages is consequently suspect.

We will reexamine Mueller and Pope's question with more powerful statistical tools. Where Mueller and Pope employed extremely broad occupational grouping, we will rely on SES scores for detailed (census 3-digit) occupational categories. Consequently, we will be able to offer a more refined examination of the socioeconomic dimensions of remarriage, and will be able to adjust for the career trajectories of the first and second husbands.

While women who remarry may experience a decline in socioeconomic standing due to the limited pool of potential husbands and due to a residue of stigma against previously married women, other reasoning predicts no socioeconomic declines for women in second marriages. The remarriage market may be stacked against women, but women may feel no obligation to remarry unless they can improve their socioeconomic posi-

tion. It would follow then that women who remarry would be upwardly mobile only because those electing not to remarry have been unable to find husbands with sufficient socioeconomic credentials.

By focusing on husbands' occupational status we do not wish to imply that women's status is exclusively a function of the status of their husbands. We are merely examining one component of the complex process of transition between marriages. Nor do we wish to imply that SES is the principal motive in marriage or remarriage. While many traits one looks for in a spouse are undoubtedly correlated with SES, other traits may be unrelated. The importance of SES will persist, however, unless other motives are negatively related to SES and tend to cancel socioeconomic considerations.

The Determinants of Marital Mobility

A third issue explored in this paper is the conditions which explain the variation in marital mobility. We shall first look at how marital mobility is influenced by the socioeconomic characteristics of the women who remarry. A woman's education has been cited as an important, if not the most important, influence in securing a socioeconomically successful marriage (Rockwell). The woman's education may be an even more significant marker of SES for women looking for a second mate. A woman's educational attainment is likely to affect her lifestyle, network of acquaintances, and attractiveness to socioeconomically successful men.

A woman's occupational status may also be an important determinant of success in remarriage. The woman's occupation will help to provide the economic resources to endure the search process, as well as to facilitate desirable personal contacts.

Also potentially affecting mobility prospects is the timing of successive marriages. The duration of search in marriage in certain ways resembles the search for a job. Occupational prospects can be improved if one avoids taking the first available job. However, excessive delay in taking a job can also be costly. As the search process extends in time, the "reservation wage" of the job searcher declines: anxiety and even desperation overwhelm selectivity, and the criteria for an acceptable choice are broadened accordingly (Chirinko; Gera; Lippman and McCall).

The timing of remarriage may respond to similar constraints. Women who remarry very quickly are not likely to find the most successful husband. Second marriages that closely follow the first marriage are likely to be below par in socioeconomic terms. (The exception again follows the case of job search. Women who already had a particular second husband in mind when the first marriage terminated may avoid this pitfall, just as employees do well when they leave one job with another in

hand.) But lengthy delay is also likely to have its costs, and result in a less desirable choice. Having searched unsuccessfully for a long time, women may feel obliged to settle for a less successful mate. We will examine these timing effects controlling for age at second marriage.

The final factor we will examine is the effect of children on remarriage prospects. The presence of children from a previous marriage may be perceived as a liability by potential mates because children add emotional risk to the relationship (Cherlin; Koo and Suchindran). Children from a previous marriage may also constrain a couple's decision to have additional children, which may be regarded as a disadvantage to males who have not had children of their own. And finally, the children from a former marriage may be viewed as a cost in simple economic terms, as raising children can be quite expensive and time consuming. Thus we expect to find that women will fare less well in the remarriage market when they have limited educational backgrounds, are employed in relatively low status occupations, remarry quickly or delay a long time, and have children from their previous marriage.

Data

The data were obtained from the National Longitudinal Survey of Mature Women, aged 30-44 in 1967, and the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, aged 14-24 in 1967 (Center for Human Resource Research). A series of questions was asked, in 1977 for the older women and in 1978 for the younger women, regarding each woman's marital history. This set of retrospective questions constitutes the basic data examined here: 743 of the older women and 413 of the younger women were divorced or widowed and remarried by 1978. The two cohorts were analyzed separately.¹

The questions include information on the year each marriage began and ended, and whether the marriage ended in divorce or widowhood. The number of years of education and the detailed occupational level of each previous husband were also reported. Data on the woman's current occupation and years of education completed are available as well. The number of children a woman had from a given marriage was calculated by assigning children to particular marriages according to the marriage dates and the ages of the children. The number of children a husband brought with him from his previous marriage was calculated in a similar fashion.

The detailed occupations of husbands and wives were assigned SES scores, based on the widely used Duncan socioeconomic index (SEI). These scores were used in the analysis of occupational homogamy, and in the examination of women's marital mobility.² The occupation and education of former husbands were reported for the period of that marriage: the

problem of obtaining measures of education and occupation for the latest and previous husbands at the same point in their careers is discussed below.

An analysis of remarriages must correct for the problem of using censored data. The younger women's sample was truncated, excluding those who were not remarried by 1978. The oldest of the young women were 36 in 1978. This sample consequently excluded women whose first marriage was relatively late, those with a lengthy first marriage, and those who delayed a long time between marriages. The truncation of the older women's sample was less severe, since the age range of women was 40-54 in 1977. Yet this sample did not include some divorced women, particularly in their forties, who had not yet remarried.

This truncation problem will limit inferences which can be drawn about these samples, particularly those concerning the effects of the timing of marriage. We will assess the effect of the truncation bias by separating the sample into marriage and divorce cohorts. In this way we will be able to examine whether the most censored groups, those with the shortest time between divorce and the survey date, differ from those groups whose remarriage opportunities have been more extensive. In the regression analysis, we will also perform tests of interactions with divorce cohorts, to determine whether the effect of independent variables differs for recent, highly truncated divorce groups.

Results

HOMOGAMY IN FIRST AND SECOND MARRIAGES

Table 1 compares the level of homogamy for once married women with women who married more than once, and compares the most recent and former husbands of remarried women, using correlation coefficients as a measure of homogamy.

For both samples of women, educational, occupational and age homogamy are higher for once married women than for remarried women in either marriage. The differences are greatest for educational homogamy and are smallest for occupational homogamy. These findings parallel Dean and Gurak's finding that homogamy is lower for remarried women in both first and second marriages.

For remarried women, the patterns of homogamy for consecutive marriages are not as easily summarized. For the older sample, educational and occupational homogamy are the same for both marriages, while age homogamy declines. For the younger sample, educational and occupational homogamy increase, while age homogamy declines. As the differences between the cohorts may be the result of the truncation of the youn-

Table 1. HOMOLOGY IN EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, OCCUPATIONAL STATUS, AND AGE, FOR NLS MATURE AND YOUNGER WOMEN*

Wife	Once Married Women	Remarried Women	
	Husband r ²	Latest Husband r ²	Previous Husband r ²
A. NLS Mature Women Sample			
Education	.60 (2413)**	.47 (489)	.45 (489)
Occupational status	.45 (2413)	.40 (569)	.40 (569)
Age	.65 (2413)	.50 (502)	.58 (502)
B. NLS Young Women Sample			
Education	.58 (2346)	.47 (340)	.35 (340)
Occupational status	.38 (2346)	.33 (342)	.18 (342)
Age	.64 (2346)	.35 (372)	.49 (372)
C. NLS Mature Women Sample, Remarriage Cohort Prior to Age 36			
Education		.47 (288)	.41 (288)
Occupational status		.36 (335)	.27 (335)
Age		.52 (275)	.60 (275)

* All correlations are statistically significant, $p < .01$

** N of cases (in parentheses) varies due to missing data.

ger sample, we performed an analysis on an early remarriage cohort of the older sample: those who remarried by age 36, the age at which the younger sample was truncated. As reported in the third panel of Table 1, the early-remarriage cohort of the older sample more closely resembles the younger cohort in the pattern of homogamy. For this group, both educational and occupational homogamy increase while age homogamy declines. These findings suggest that the different patterns of homogamy for the younger women in part reflect the truncated nature of the younger sample. In the patterns of homogamy in first and second marriages, the younger cohort can be expected to increasingly resemble the older cohort (although the absolute level of age homogamy is greater for the older sample).³

COMPARING FIRST AND SECOND HUSBANDS

Turning to the issue of the socioeconomic consequences of remarriage, Table 2 compares the SES of current and former husbands. The SES of occupation is indicated for each sample separately by race. The SES scores of the most recent husbands are higher than those of the former husbands (average Duncan SEI score of 33.7 vs. 26.8). This pattern holds for whites as well as blacks. White women gain 7 SEI points in the remarriage process, while black women experience a 4.3 SEI point improvement during the marital transition.

Before reaching the conclusion that women attain socioeconomic advancement through marriage, however, we must take into consideration the age and career differences between these groups of men. Data on current husbands appraise the SES of men at the apex of their careers; data on previous husbands measure their SES at the time of divorce, much closer to the start of their careers. The relevant question is whether the current husbands surpassed the subsequent career advancement of the previous husbands.

The first marriages of the sample of older women ended in 1958, on average. There is consequently a 19-year gap between the time the first marriage ended and the 1977 survey date at which women reported on the status of their latest husbands. In 1977, the second husbands average 51 years of age. The question is how much men aged 51 advanced in their careers since they were 32.⁴

The second Occupational Change in a Generation data (OCG2), collected in 1973, provide a convenient baseline for comparison (Featherman and Hauser, b).⁵ In 1973, the sample of men were asked their occupation in 1962, 11 years earlier. While a 19-year retrospective question would be ideal, we can estimate the patterns of change by adding the advancements experienced during 11 years for two cohorts of men. Thus between 1962 and 1973, the 42-year old OCG2 white men gained 4 SEI points, on

Table 2. COMPARISON OF SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND EDUCATION FOR MOST RECENT AND FORMER HUSBANDS, BY RACE

	N	Current (or Most Recent) Husband Mean (SD)	Previous Husband Mean (SD)	Change
A. NLS Mature Women Sample				
<u>SES</u>				
All respondents	(582)	33.7 (23.2)	26.8 (20.3)	+6.9
Whites	(410)	38.7 (23.3)	31.7 (21.7)	+7.0
Blacks	(172)	22.1 (18.4)	17.8 (12.9)	+4.3
B. NLS Young Women Sample				
<u>SES</u>				
All respondents	(346)	34.6 (21.5)	30.4 (20.6)	+4.2
Whites	(294)	36.2 (21.8)	31.4 (20.9)	+4.8
Blacks	(52)	25.6 (17.0)	24.4 (18.2)	+1.2
A. NLS Mature Women Sample				
<u>Education</u>				
All respondents	(528)	10.5 (3.9)	10.6 (3.4)	-0.1
Whites	(389)	11.3 (3.3)	11.2 (3.0)	+0.1
Blacks	(139)	8.7 (4.4)	8.9 (4.0)	-0.2
B. NLS Young Women Sample				
<u>Education</u>				
All respondents	(365)	12.8 (2.5)	12.0 (2.5)	+0.8
Whites	(305)	12.9 (2.5)	12.0 (2.4)	+0.9
Blacks	(60)	11.9 (2.3)	11.6 (2.7)	+0.3

average. In the same period, the 51-year old white men gained an average of 2 SEI points. The expected gain for the interval between age 32 and age 51, then, is almost 6 SEI points. While this calculation is accurate only if there are no major cohort differences in career advancements, cohort analysis of the OCG data is consistent with such an assumption (Featherman and Hauser,b).

The difference between first and second husbands measured 19-years apart is about 7 SEI points, barely exceeding the 6 point SEI gain of OCG2 men over a comparable span. Thus we conclude that the older women experience on average neither major advancement nor major declines in the status of successive husbands, once the expected career advancements of the previous husbands are taken into account.

For blacks, the net effect is quite similar. Black men can expect to advance 2.6 SEI points between age 31 and 42, and another 2 SEI points by age 51. The total 4.6 SEI point advance is quite similar to the 4.3 SEI point advance experienced by black women who remarried. Thus, for blacks as well as whites, the apparent improvement experienced by women through remarriage is accounted for by differences in the career stage of current and previous husbands.

The data on the current and former husbands of NLS Younger Women suggest a similar story. The average SEI score of current husbands was 34.6, vs. 30.4 for previous husbands. The current husbands average 33 years of age, vs. 25 for previous husbands at the time their marriages ended. For the young women sample, then, an 8-year age adjustment is needed to accurately compare the status of first and second husbands.

Data for comparison was obtained from the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Men. Taking a sample of NLS Younger Men aged 25 and following them up 8 years later can provide the expected occupational advancement due to this age difference. White men can expect to advance 5.7 SEI points, slightly more than the 4.8 SEI point difference between NLS Young Women's current and previous husbands. Blacks can expect to advance 5.3 points, more than the 1.2 point difference between current and former husbands for black women. Black women's apparent disadvantage, however, is not statistically significant for this sample of 52.⁶

The age adjustment obtained with OCG2 data is slightly more conservative. White OCG2 men aged 35 gained 5 SEI points in the previous 11 years, while their black and Hispanic counterparts gained 4 points. These figures bolster the conclusion that the difference in occupational status for first and second husbands is accounted for by the measurement of their occupations at different points in their careers. The older women slightly improve in remarriage, while the younger women fare just slightly worse. For both groups, however, the adjustment for the career differences of the husbands accounts for the preponderance of the difference in status.

It is, of course, possible that some women left their first husbands

because they thought them unlikely to advance in their careers. If their expectations were accurate, this would mean that their former husbands might gain less than the national average. This possibility, however, may be offset by the tendency for some very successful men to leave their wives. Thus while some of the former husbands were no doubt under-achievers, an equal proportion may have been overachievers, leaving the overall picture unchanged. The definitive comparison between current and former husbands requires longitudinal data on both sets of men.

The educational data, reported on Table 2, suggest little overall change in the average position of women from one marriage to the next. The most recent husbands of the NLS Older Women have completed about the same amount of education as their previous husbands (10.5 years vs. 10.6 years). It is possible that some men obtained additional education after their first marriages, in which case one should adjust the education figures for age in much the same way that the socioeconomic figures were adjusted for age. However, the average amount of additional education obtained after marriage by men who began their careers in the early 1950s was probably slight. (Since the OCG2 data do not indicate when the men completed their schooling, it is not possible to estimate how much additional education was obtained after marriage.)

The former husbands of the NLS Younger Women are less well educated than their current husbands (12.0 vs. 12.8 years of schooling completed). Again using the NLS Younger Men as a baseline, we can expect a man to acquire on average an additional 0.8 years of schooling in the 10 years between ages 25 and 34, the average ages of previous and current husbands, respectively. Thus the entire difference in the educational attainment of current and former husbands appears to be due to additional education acquired in the intervening period. NLS women remarried men with about the same level of educational attainment as their previous husbands could be expected to have obtained.

Overall, the socioeconomic data suggest the need to revise Mueller and Pope's conclusion that women are typically upwardly mobile in their second marriage. While a direct occupational comparison of former and previous husbands leads to this conclusion, correcting for the career advancement of former husbands leads to a different view. Second husbands are not better off socioeconomically than former husbands when the inferred career advancement of former husbands is taken into account. In fact, both older and younger women remarry men with about the same occupational status as their previous husbands could be expected to attain.

THE PROCESS OF ATTAINMENT

The general conclusion regarding the average change in status for women who remarry can be supplemented with a more detailed examination of the mobility prospects of women when we take into account selected personal attributes and features of their marital careers. The analysis predicts the SES of second husbands as a function of a number of relevant demographic variables available in the NLS data.

Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations of the variables included in the regression analysis for both samples. The dependent variable is the occupational status of the latest husband. The occupational status of the wife, her previous husband's, and the wife's education and race are included. Previous husband's and wife's father's education and occupation, while substantively relevant, were not included because too many cases had missing data for these variables. Time-dependent variables include the wife's age in 1977, her age at the date of the latest marriage, the length of the interval between marriages (in years), and a dummy variable constructed to indicate if the woman remarried within one year. A dummy variable was also constructed to indicate the presence of children from a previous marriage, both for the wife and for the husband. In the regression analysis means were substituted for missing data to preserve the sample size.

Table 4 presents the results of regression analyses for the NLS Mature Women sample and for the NLS Young Women sample. The most powerful predictors of the SES of a woman's current husband are the woman's educational and occupational status, her race, and her previous husband's occupational status. A woman's current occupation and her educational attainment are consistently among the leading indicators of the status of her current husband. Not surprisingly, then, socioeconomic variables play a leading role in the process of a woman's marital mobility.

The timing of remarriage plays a role in establishing the socioeconomic position of women in their subsequent marriages. Remarrying within one year significantly lowers the SES of the second husband. As suggested earlier in the analogy to job search, too little search results in a suboptimal match. Lengthy delay was also hypothesized to have a negative effect on women's mobility prospects. The coefficient on duration between marriages is negative, as predicted, and is barely significant ($p < .10$). It is noteworthy that the effects of timing are independent of age. The coefficient for woman's age at second marriage is negative but is not significant. Women's age, of course, is known to affect the prospect of remarriage, but among women who remarry, age does not reduce their chances of remarrying high status males. The principal risk regarding the timing of remarriage for the Mature Women sample appears to be remarrying within one year.

Table 3. MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF VARIABLES

Variable	NLS Mature Women			NLS Young Women		
	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.	N
SEI score, most recent husband	31.07	20.79	653	35.28	21.81	397
SEI score, previous husband	25.85	17.70	582	30.40	19.28	346
SEI score, wife's current job	30.58	19.37	637	39.01	20.95	393
Education, years completed by wife	10.38	2.59	652	11.94	1.88	370
Race	.23	.47	653	.17	.38	397
Age of wife at latest marriage	33.17	8.71	645	26.00	3.55	397
Years between marriage	4.48	4.70	584	1.98	2.21	387
Remarried within 1 year	.46	.47	584	.68	.47	387
Presence of children under 10 from a previous marriage	.49	.50	653	.69	.50	397
Presence of husband's children from a previous marriage	.04	.19	653	.10	.30	397

The presence of children also plays a role in the process of marital mobility. Women are less likely to succeed (socioeconomically) in remarriage if they have children from a previous marriage. The coefficient for the presence of children under 10 is negative and is statistically significant. An interesting parallel finding for men is suggestive. If having children from a previous marriage is generally viewed as a cost, then men with children might be assumed to need to have higher SES to compensate for this fact. The coefficient for the presence of children from men's previous marriages is positive for the Mature Women sample (but not for the Young Women sample). These findings suggest that the cost associated with children may be experienced by both men and women facing the remarriage market.

The censoring problem for the older sample was addressed by including a series of 5-year divorce-cohort dummy variables in the equation. The effect of these variables was examined in concert. Interaction effects of these variables with each of the variables in the equation were examined serially, with a separate test of the interactions for each dummy variable. Neither the main effects nor the interaction effects were significant for this

Table 4. REGRESSION RESULTS, PREDICTING THE OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF LATEST HUSBAND, FOR NLS SAMPLES

Variable	Mature Women Sample (N=653)		Young Women Sample (N=397)	
	B	Beta	B	Beta
Education, years completed by wife	1.66**	.21	1.63**	.14
SEI score, wife's current job	.21**	.20	.27**	.26
Race	-7.05**	-.16	-8.56**	-.14
SEI score, previous husband	.13**	.11	.16**	.15
Presence of children under 10 from wife's previous marriage	-3.21**	-.08	-1.05*	-.01
Remarried within 1 year	-3.26*	-.07	.71	.02
Presence of husband's children from a previous marriage	5.69*	.05	-4.61	-.06
Interval between marriages	-.14*	-.03	-.18	-.02
Age of wife at second marriage	-.02	-.01	-.08	-.01
Constant	17.59		-4.32	
R ²	.26		.29	

* p < .10

** p < .01

sample, suggesting the robustness of the results presented despite the censoring problem. Caution is in order, however, since the small sample size makes statistical significance a rather difficult hurdle.

The second column of Table 4 presents the regression results for the NLS Young Women. For the younger cohort, the socioeconomic variables behave much as they did for the older cohort. For the younger women, the socioeconomic variables—wife's occupation, education, and race, and previous husband's occupation—are the most powerful predictors of the status of the second husband.

The parallels between the younger and older women are not complete for the other variables in the equation. The presence of children

retains a negative sign, but is not significant for this group. The effect of children from husbands' previous marriages has a negative sign for this group (opposite that found for the older women), but is not significant. The coefficient for remarriage within one year is positive for the younger sample (but not significant), contrary to the negative sign for the older sample. As noted earlier, the problem in accurately assessing the importance of the timing variables is the fact that the sample disproportionately includes those who remarried quickly.

The regression results for the prior-to-1973 divorce cohort were examined to determine if the differences were due to truncation effects. The results of these analyses indicate that the first divorce cohort of the younger women more closely resembles the sample of older women. The timing variables all display the same signs for this cohort of younger women as they do for the older women, although these variables fail to be statistically significant due to the small sample size.⁸

This evidence suggests strong similarities between cohorts in the process of women's marital mobility. The few apparent differences in fact reflect the truncation of the younger women's sample, and not important differences between the younger and older women. As was the case with homogamy patterns, the evidence is consistent with the hypothesis that the younger group in time will increasingly resemble the older group.

For both samples, the analysis was performed separately on divorced and widowed women, women who married twice and women who married three times, and black and white women. The small number of cases for many of these subgroups results in large numbers of insignificant coefficients. The signs of the coefficients are generally quite similar to those found for the entire sample. Differences arise for the time-dependent variables, which occasionally have different coefficients for these subgroups than for the entire sample. The small sample size precludes reaching firm conclusions about these group differences, but the data suggest that the timing of remarriage may have different consequences for particular subgroups of women who remarry.

Discussion

The data analyzed here provide evidence on the marital mobility patterns of women who remarry. Certain limitations of the data foreclose the pursuit of other related questions. The retrospective data analyzed here do not include detailed information on the resources available to the women during the interval between marriages. Thus, one cannot directly address the question of how resources of women influence the process of marital mobility.⁹ The data are collected exclusively from women's point of view. The sample of men is a sample of husbands of remarried women, not a

sample of remarried men. There may be interesting asymmetries in the remarriage experiences of men and women which this paper is unable to address.

The findings regarding homogamy do not suggest that increases in remarriage will reduce socioeconomic homogamy. For those who remarry, first and second marriages exhibit similar levels of educational and occupational homogamy. Thus remarriage by itself does not generate a decrease in socioeconomic homogamy. Remarriage is associated with a decrease in age homogamy, although it should be noted that the significance of age differences may be smaller at a later stage in the life cycle.

The homogamy results do suggest an interesting tradeoff between preference and constraint in remarriage. Those who remarry earlier have higher homogamy than those who remarry later in life. One interpretation of this result is that people who remarry wish to marry others like themselves, but are only able to achieve this preference when they remarry relatively quickly. Those who remarry after age 36 may meet fewer eligible people with similar backgrounds and consequently make less homogamous marriages. It is possible, though we think less likely, that the preferences of those who remarry early and late differ.

The overall socioeconomic consequences of remarriage seem to suggest an even trade. Women's second husbands are about as well off as the previous husbands have become in the intervening years. These results for younger women parallel the findings of Mott and Moore who looked at the family income of NLS Young Women after remarriage. They found that family income rebounds dramatically following remarriage, but remains slightly lower, adjusting for inflation, than it was two years before divorce. This decline occurs despite the fact that the women in the study are working more hours at a higher rate of pay. Thus second husbands appear to be not quite as well off socioeconomically. The data from the older women suggest that this decline may be due to the truncated sample of remarriers among the younger women. The older women experienced a slight net improvement in socioeconomic status with remarriage, compared to a slight net decline for the younger women. When the complete distribution of remarriers is available, the socioeconomic consequences of remarriage for younger women may appear more sanguine.

Socioeconomic factors are the leading determinants of the status of the second husband. The wife's education and occupation, her race, and her former husband's occupation are all strong predictors of the social standing of the second husband. The timing of remarriage and the presence of children from former marriages are also influential in this process.

While women who remarry on the whole remain about the same in status compared to the current status of their previous husbands, those who bring children with them into the second marriage are at a distinct disadvantage. The negative socioeconomic consequences of bringing chil-

dren into the second marriage are substantial. The "cost" to women of having children from a previous marriage is about one-quarter to one-half of the amount associated with race.

A more positive aspect of this statistic is that women without children from a former marriage can expect an increase in the status of their husbands in the transition to remarriage. As over half of the women who remarry have children from a former marriage, the minority without children can expect a notable improvement in this transition.

We have seen that, correcting for career trajectories of husbands, women on the average are about as well off in the second marriage as they were in the first. The social and economic hardships of women are substantially alleviated with the transition to remarriage. This pattern may be the result of women foregoing remarriage unless a socioeconomically acceptable mate is available. The selective processes which distinguish women who remarry from those who do not need further attention. Our data allow us only to speculate on the psychological decision-making process women undergo when they face the remarriage market. Further research in this area is needed as the social significance of remarriage continues to increase.

Notes

1. We considered the potential problem of retrospective data for the measurement of former husbands' status. The NLS Young Women sample includes both contemporaneous and retrospective data on husbands for those marriages which ended after the survey began. The differences between the retrospective and contemporaneous reports of husbands' status are quite small, which increases our confidence in this measure. For the Mature Women sample, most of the first marriages ended before the survey began.

It should be noted that the data include women whose second marriages are no longer intact. The problem of selecting only successful second marriages is thus avoided.

2. SEI scores have been criticized for bias in the measurement of the occupational status of women. The difficulty arises primarily in comparing the status of men and women, which is not an issue in this paper.

3. We also analyzed a truncated sample of the younger women, those who divorced before 1973. We found this group of younger women more closely resembled the older women, as was the case in the analysis reported on Table 1.

4. We could not simply compare the career trajectories of once-married and remarried NLS women. Most of the marriages of the NLS Mature Women occurred in the 1950s; the initial survey date was 1967. Data were not collected on the career histories of husbands of the NLS women prior to the initial survey date.

5. One might object to this analysis because it assumes the career trajectories of divorced men are the same as the average. However, one cannot simply examine divorced men's career trajectories in the OCG data: the relevant group is ever-divorced men. The OCG data do not indicate whether men were ever divorced.

6. We also examined the changes in education and occupation of husbands of once-married NLS Young Women. Over 8 years the occupational advances for this group were larger and the educational advances smaller than those reported here for the NLS Young Men sample. The results from the NLS Young Men sample are more reliable due to the much larger sample size. We also analyzed the early remarriage (before age 36) cohort of the older sample

and the early divorce (before 1973) cohort of the younger sample and found results which conform to the patterns reported here.

7. The listwise exclusion of missing data does not change the direction of the coefficients reported here, although the significance of the coefficients is reduced.

8. In another analysis the older sample was truncated at age 36. This analysis also resulted in very similar patterns for the older and younger cohorts.

9. These data are available for the younger women, but few cases have complete data through the transition process. The possibilities for multivariate analysis are consequently limited.

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