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Religion and remarriage among American women: evidence from the National Survey of Family Growth

Susannah Mercedes Brown

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RELIGION AND REMARRIAGE AMONG AMERICAN WOMEN: EVIDENCE
FROM THE NATIONAL SURVEY OF FAMILY GROWTH

By

Susannah Mercedes Brown

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RELIGION AND REMARRIAGE AMONG AMERICAN WOMEN: EVIDENCE
FROM THE NATIONAL SURVEY OF FAMILY GROWTH

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Divorce has been and remains a prevalent occurrence in the United States and, while rates are not increasing as they once were, it still remains an extremely common phenomenon. As of the most recent U.S. Census Bureau report on divorce and remarriage, 56% of men and 59% of women ever married have been divorced. Despite these statistics, the vast majority of Americans still value marriage as an institution. This study aims to examine the role religion plays in the propensity and timing of remarriage. Using logistic and OLS regressions, and data pooled from the 1995 and 2002 National Survey of Family Growth, multifaceted effects of denominational subcultures are examined concerning the propensity and timing of remarriage among divorced women. In addition, the linkages between religious salience, religious attendance, and the propensity and timing of remarriage are explored.

Key Words: remarriage, religion, divorce

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this research to my parents, James and Cynthia Brown, my brother Nathan and my sister Meredith without whom I would not be where I am today.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. LITERATURE REVIEW	6
Theoretical Framework	6
Religion and Marriage	10
Religion, Divorce and Remarriage	15
Fertility	26
Education	31
Employment	37
Rural versus Urban Residence	43
Hypotheses	46
III. METHODOLOGY	48
Data.....	48
Dependent Variables	49
Independent Variables	50
Control Variables	51
Analysis	53
IV. RESULTS	56
Descriptive Analysis	56
Bivariate Analysis	58
Multivariate Analysis	60
V. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION	67

REFERENCES 78

LIST OF TABLES

1	Descriptive Statistics of Full and Sub samples	84
2	Cross-tabulation of Denomination by Remarriage Status	85
3	Two Samples T-test for Religious Salience and Worship Service Attendance by Remarriage Status	85
4	Mean Difference of Remarriage Timing by Denomination	86
5	Correlation between Remarriage Timing and Religious Salience and Correlation between Remarriage Timing and Worship Service Attendance	86
6	Unstandardized Coefficients of Logistic Regressions to Predict Propensity of Remarriage (American Women)	87
7	Unstandardized Coefficients of OLS Regressions to Predict Timing of Remarriage (American Women)	88

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Divorce has been and remains a prevalent occurrence in the United States and, while rates are not increasing as they once were, it still remains an extremely common phenomenon. As of the most recent U.S. Census Bureau report on divorce and remarriage, 56% of men and 59% of women ever married have been divorced. Additionally, 12.5% of men and 13.6% of women ever married have divorced and remarried once (Census 2001). The Census also reports that the average age of first divorce for men is 31.5 and 29.4 for women, and the duration of time between divorce and first remarriage is 3.3 years for men and 3.5 years for women. In fact, trends suggest that remarriage has become as common as first marriage in America (Bumpass, Sweet and Martin 1990). Unfortunately, to date, remarriage receives much less scholarly attention than first marriage and little, if any, research effort has been made to investigate the religious subcultural variations in the propensity and timing of remarriage. This research paucity is regrettable because prior research has shown consistent and significant denominational variations in the propensity and timing of first marriage. Using survey data from a nationally representative sample, Xu, Hudspeth and Bartkowski (2005) reported that while Catholics, moderate Protestants, conservative Protestants and Mormons are more likely to marry and marry significantly earlier than those who are

unaffiliated, Jews tend to marry later than Catholics, conservative Protestants and Mormons.

In light of these research findings, which support the denominational subcultural paradigm in the case of propensity and timing of first marriage, there is an urgent need for similar research to be conducted on remarriage. This study is designed to fill this research void. In addition to denominational subcultural variations, religious salience and worship service attendance will also be considered given that past research typically excluded them. Thus, the goal of this study is to further understand how religion and remarriage – two important social institutions – are interrelated and how the interlocking linkages manifest themselves in the propensity and timing of remarriage.

Using two waves of the National Survey of Family Growth, this study will attempt to answer the following research questions. Does religion influence the propensity and timing of remarriage? If so, are there denominational variations as previously reported concerning first marriage? Are these denominational variations, if they exist, robust after religious salience and worship service attendance are taken into consideration? Irrespective of denominational affiliation and their respective subcultural variations, does religious salience promote remarriage? And, what role, if any, does worship service attendance play in remarriage?

This research is important for several reasons. First, given the primacy and centrality various religious groups or subgroups have placed on marriage (Lehrer 2004a, 2004b; Xu, Hudspeth and Bartkowski 2005), it is imperative to understand how these groups have responded to persistently high divorce rates. More importantly, it is essential to learn how these religious groups have accommodated themselves to new life

course transitions, such as remarriage, which may have been frequently encountered by their adherents. Though previous research has documented large denominational subcultural variations in divorce rates, we know almost nothing about denominational subcultural views and behaviors with regard to remarriage.

Secondly, this research can shed illuminating light on divergent/convergent pathways to re-partnering among various religious groups in terms of the propensity and timing of second union. These critical issues have moved to the forefront of social science research in recent years not only in North America but also in Europe (Wu 2005; DeGraaf and Kalmijn 2003). However, to the best of my knowledge, no scholarly attention has been given to the role of religion in this increasingly important life course transition, namely, remarriage.

Last but not least, this study can deepen our understanding of the recent “family wars” and “marriage debate” stemming from the increased concerns about the wellbeing of marriage and family life in the United States. Since the 1960’s, there has been considerable debate regarding whether or not the United States has been experiencing a decline in the institution of marriage or the deinstitutionalization of American marriage (Cherlin 2004; Popenoe 1993). According to Popenoe, the nuclear family, as a social institution, is witnessing a dramatic decline. The most notable change, Popenoe suggests, has been the change in marital roles associated with the “traditional nuclear family.” There are more women in the workplace, delaying marriage and decreasing the birthrate. He argues that, “Traditionally marriage has been understood as a social obligation – an institution designed mainly for economic security and procreation”, whereas “marriage today is a voluntary relationship that individuals can make and break at will,” depending

upon their own “self fulfillment” (Popenoe 1993:533). In other words, according to Cherlin and Popenoe, marriage is increasingly becoming deinstitutionalized.

However, it is argued by other social scientists that the institutions of marriage and the family are not declining but merely changing. Stacey (1993), for example, claims that the family is not an institution, but an “ideological, symbolic construct that has a history and politics” (p. 545). Instead of arguing that the “Ozzie and Harriet” form of the family (heterosexual, conjugal, nuclear domestic unit, ideally one with a male primary breadwinner, a female primary homemaker and their dependent offspring) has dissolved, she calls for an appreciation of the new and more diverse domestic ideology (“the postmodern family condition.”). Stacey acknowledges that the woman’s ability to maintain herself outside of marriage has contributed to increased divorced rates and more single parent families. However, she believes that the increased autonomy of women is important and that the family as a social construct is not disappearing as Popenoe would have us believe (also see Stacey 1998).

In response to Popenoe and Stacey, Norval D. Glenn (1993) makes a more “objective assessment of the notion of family decline” (p. 542). He explains that Popenoe’s account of family decline is correct and empirically supported to receive consideration. He insists that the criticism it has received from social scientists or feminists is merely liberals responding to an issue associated with conservatism. Religious conservatives are seen as being unsupportive of women working outside the home. They feel that the woman’s place is in the home taking care of her husband and children, which discourages women from pursuing careers and encourages them to marry early and begin having children. Therefore, social scientists and feminists criticize

conservatives suggesting that they are trying to hold women back. Glenn asserts that there is no evidence of a causal link between the status of women and recent family changes. He contends that while increased labor force participation among women has increased the “independence effect,” their working outside the home is only one of several reasons for the increase in divorce. “Therefore, it is unlikely that married women must retreat from the labor force in order for marriages to become more stable and for the probability of marital success to increase.” (Glenn 1993:544). Divorce rates and the number of single parent families continue to rise, and this debate wages on. With these diverse views in mind, the current research can shed further light on this continued debate on marriage and family life in contemporary American society.

To examine the previously developed research questions, two analytical techniques will be used. First, logistic regression will be used to examine the propensity of remarriage among different religious groups including those who are unaffiliated. Secondly, ordinary least squares (OLS) regression will be used to examine the waiting time following divorce before remarrying by religious groups. In addition, regression models will be estimated to examine how religious salience and worship service attendance are related to the propensity and timing of remarriage, while controlling for denominational affiliation and the selected demographic variables.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

This study utilizes Christian Smith's (1998) subcultural identity theory of religious strength as a guiding framework. Smith developed this theory of religious strength in response to rapid social changes in the modern world, and highlighted the profound cultural complexities that have emerged within conservative Protestantism. This theoretical framework suggests that in a pluralistic society, such as the U.S., various religious organizations can survive and thrive by the coupling of distinction (i.e., separating themselves from other groups) and engagement (i.e., adapting to the changing sociocultural environment). This means that, according to Smith, various religious organizations can obtain their respective subcultural identities by distinguishing themselves from others and by strengthening their intra-group solidarity, resource mobilization, and membership retention. As a result, religious subcultural uniqueness and identity have become cornerstones that underlie and promote the remarkable growth of religious pluralism.

Smith contends that confronted with enormous and rapid social changes, religious organizations are capable of making adaptations and accommodations. However, he forcefully argues that

“Many accommodation interpretations tend to assume, wrongly, that religion and modernity are playing a zero-sum game: that religious groups have a fixed number of orthodox ‘goods’ to try to protect, which are gradually depleted through accommodation. The truth is, religious actors are quite capable of reclaiming and reinvigorating lost and dormant sacred themes, traditions and practices; of generating new religious goods while relinquishing others; and of using quintessentially modern tools to strengthen and promote their traditional worldviews and ways of life. In assessing contemporary religious change, then, we need not choose between a static view of historical orthodoxy and a vacuous religious relativism. The alternative and preferred choice is that which reflects the way most traditional religious groups actually operate in history in the real world: they work fairly successfully to sustain relatively stable distinctive religious identity while ever reformulating it to engage the conditions of the times” (Smith 1998: 100).

Consequently, while engaging in the ever-changing society, some Protestant organizations have become less or more accommodating than others. For example, traditional (fundamentalist) Protestantism is particularly distinctive because of its unwavering biblical literalism, which is less tolerant of new lifestyles and life course transitions characteristic of modern society, such as divorce and remarriage. On the other hand, in an attempt to retain membership, some Protestant organizations have made appropriate accommodations to such changes. By applying this argument to the long-standing linkages between religion and family life, it is argued that there ought to be striking religious subcultural variations in such important social and family issues as marriage, divorce, remarriage, fertility, and gender ideologies.

Smith traces evangelicalism throughout history, from the height of its dominance in the 19th century to its decline at the hands of several factors, including “the rise of liberal theology, the secularization of academic institutions and the urbanization of rural America” (Magee 1999: 1). According to Smith, mainstream evangelicals responded to this decline in a few different ways. Some joined the liberal movement, others chose to

“ride out the storm,” but a large portion “became the fundamentalist backlash within the American church” (Magee 1999: 1). By the early to mid 20th century, a group of young fundamentalists, led by Billy Graham, chose to revive evangelicalism, which emphasized unity, reflecting the times and mirroring the ecumenical movements of moderate and liberal Christian groups. Most significantly, however, the new group began a movement that could be distinguished as evangelical and that was separate from conservative fundamentalism (Magee 1999: 1).

Formulated from a series of propositions, Smith derives what he terms a “subcultural identity theory of religious strength.” Smith believes that humans have a drive to belong and it is only by being located within social groups that humans satisfy this drive and come to develop an identity. These social groups, then, separate themselves from other groups by creating distinctions between themselves and others, which must constantly be renegotiated to accommodate the changing sociocultural environment. Consequently, individuals define themselves and their norms and values in relation to other dissimilar groups that “may serve as negative reference groups” (Smith 1998: 104). Modernization, according to Smith, promotes the formation of these strong subcultures and “potentially ‘deviant’ identities, including religious subcultures and identities” (Smith 1998: 107). Smith asserts that if conflict arises between these groups, it only serves to strengthen in-group solidarity. Therefore, “Modernity can actually increase religion’s appeal, by creating social conditions, which intensify the kinds of felt needs and desires that religion is especially well-positioned to satisfy” (Smith 1998: 116). From these propositions, Smith derives his subcultural identity theory of religion in which he states that, instead of religion being hindered by a pluralistic modern society, it

“survives and thrives” by religious groups’ ability to distinguish themselves from other groups and provide “meaning and belonging” to its members (Smith 1998: 118-119). Also from these propositions, he derives his subcultural theory of religious strength, which suggests that those religious groups that are most distinctive will be the strongest and most dominant.

Based on Smith’s theory of religious subcultures, engagement and accommodation, this study explores religious subcultural variations in remarriage. As Smith contends, in a pluralistic society, religious groups can distinguish themselves by creating distinctive norms and values that fit into their belief system. These norms and values, in turn, affect many of the day-to-day activities of the individuals belonging to these religious subcultures, including their beliefs regarding marriage, divorce and, more pointedly for this study, remarriage. Indeed, research has shown that “with regard to pro-family attitudes, religious groups can be arrayed on a continuum from conservative (e.g., Southern Baptist, other evangelical or fundamentalist), to moderate (e.g., Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist), to liberal (e.g., Episcopal, Reformed Jewish faith tradition), with non-affiliates reporting the most liberal attitudes of all.” (Gay 1996:4). In support of this religious subcultural variation thesis, Gay et al. reported that more conservative religious groups do hold more traditional views regarding family and gender related issues, whereas more liberal religious groups exhibit less traditional values regarding these same issues (Gay et al. 1996). However, it should be noted that there is considerable intra-group diversity within each of these religious subcultures. Guided by this theoretical framework and empirical evidence, I examine the multifaceted linkages between various

religious groups, religious salience, worship service attendance and remarriage in contemporary U.S. society.

Religion and Marriage

“Despite social scientists’ predictions of a decline in the importance of religion and its role in U.S. society, interest in issues related to spirituality and religion has grown significantly in recent years” (Wallace, Forman, Caldwell and Willis 2003:98). This is evident from the fact that about 60% of Americans report being affiliated with a religious organization and about 45% report that they regularly attend religious services at least monthly (Waite and Lehrer 2003). Belief in religious teachings and personal spirituality are also important factors in a person’s religious experience (Call and Heaton 1997). Similarly, most adult Americans are married or will marry at some point in their lives (Waite and Lehrer 2003). Clearly, both religion and marriage are important social institutions in the United States and it is not surprising that they have a significant impact on one another. Marriage also remains an important social institution, despite evidence to the contrary.

According to Huston and Melz (2004), the context of the family has shifted in recent decades in four very important ways: (1) increased nonmarital cohabitation; (2) increased out-of-wedlock births; (3) delayed marriage and (4) increased divorce rates. Therefore, in comparison to the 1950s, adults in the United States spend a much smaller proportion of their lives being married, and those adults not married are much more likely to enter into non-traditional family relationships. However, Americans still report that they want to be married and believe that being married is an indicator of a “good life”.

Similarly, according to Waite and Leher (2003), most adult Americans are married or will marry at some point in their lives. Huston and Melz argue that this is because marriage is no longer required for “reproduction and the gendered division of labor,” as it was in previous decades. Marriage, then, is still highly valued but there has been a “fundamental transformation” in the meaning that is placed on marriage. Clearly, both religion and marriage are important social institutions in the United States and it is not surprising that they have a significant impact on one another.

In the following review, I examine the views and behaviors concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage and how they vary across religious groups. For the purpose of this discussion, I have combined the different religious groups under the headings of conservative Protestants (Baptist/ Southern Baptist, and Fundamentalist Protestant), mainline Protestants (Methodists, Lutheran and Episcopal), other Protestants (Mormon and other unspecified Protestant denominations), other faith traditions (Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist), Catholics and nonaffiliates (see Steensland et al. 2000). I also review empirical research that has investigated the relationship between religious salience, worship service attendance, and marriage, divorce, and remarriage. In addition, I pay special attention to several important sociodemographic variables to understand what effects, if any, they may have on the relationship between religion and the propensity and timing of remarriage (e.g., confounding or moderating effects).

For centuries, marriage has been intricately interwoven with the ethics of Christian churches. While there have been recent changes in the family doctrines of many religious groups, most Christian churches continue to value marriage and family life (Thornton, Axinn and Hill 1992). “The Creator made them male and female, and

said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh... so they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no man separate’” (Mat 19:4, KJV). According to Call and Heaton (1997), religious affiliation is important because different denominational teachings regarding marriage, divorce and remarriage can influence one’s attitudes and subsequent marital behaviors. Others suggest that religious affiliation could also reflect common worldviews of a particular religious culture rather than specific doctrinal beliefs (Call and Heaton 1997). This observation is supported by research on denominational variations in marriage timing. For example, after controlling for a large number of sociodemographic variables, Xu et al. (2005) found that men and women who are affiliated with Mormon, conservative and moderate Protestant denominations show a greater propensity to marry and marry at much younger ages than those who are not affiliated with a faith tradition. And both men and women of the Mormon faith tradition married significantly earlier than conservative Protestants. They noted that both of these faith traditions tend to place a greater emphasis on the importance of marriage.

In addition to religious affiliation, religious salience and worship service attendance are essential to understanding the effect of religion on marriage propensity and timing. Previous literature suggests that the “doctrines of a particular religion influence union formation because they have an impact on the perceived costs and benefits of various decisions. The effects should, therefore, be stronger for those individuals who adhere more closely to the teachings of their faith.” (Lehrer 2004:168).

Carroll, Linford, Holman and Busby (2000) conducted a research to investigate the effect religious beliefs had on marital and family orientations. Among Catholic,

Protestant and Latter-day Saint (Mormon) groups, they selected the most highly religious respondents based on four questions and compared them on three categories of marriage and family variables: (1) premarital values and marital role expectations, (2) beliefs about marriage and the family, and (3) personal relationship characteristics. They found that highly religious Mormons and highly religious Catholics and Protestants were similar on some issues and different in a number of values, beliefs and behaviors regarding marriage and family life. According to their research, all of the religious groups were similar in their strong commitment to marriage, low acceptance of premarital sex, high levels of relationship satisfaction and good relationship stability. Carroll et al. explained that this could be the result of being highly committed to the spiritual lifestyle, meaning that religion was important in their daily lives, viewed themselves as religious, frequently attended religious services, and felt that attending religious services was important. Their findings were “consistent with past research that found that highly religious marriages and families are happier, more successful, and more likely to avoid divorce, substance abuse and sexual promiscuity, than families not committed to a religiously-oriented way of life” (p. 202). Some differences between these groups surfaced as well. Highly religious Mormons were less likely to engage in premarital sex and more likely to support a traditional division of labor in marriage, more likely to desire a large family and perceive themselves as being more ready for marriage. “These differences likely reflect particularistic Mormon theology, which stresses the eternal nature of marriage and family relationships, includes strong beliefs of saving sexual intimacy for marriage, and holds the separation of gender roles is divinely decreed” (Carroll et al. 2000: 202).

Carroll et al. also found evidence supporting their assumption that Mormons would be more similar to Catholics and Protestants than they would be to those claiming no religious affiliation. “It appears that being a highly religious person is associated with more stability and satisfaction with close relationships. This may be associated with living according to a spiritually-oriented code, being together as a family in religious worship, sharing a common purpose and hearing weekly reminders of Christian values” (Carroll et. al. 2000: 203).

In a 1997 study of mainline Protestants, conservative Protestants and Catholics, researchers found that, in regard to the role of religion in union formation, the individuals who attended church most frequently had the most traditional stance regarding union formation (Lehrer 2004b). This was true for all groups. In other words, those who attended church more frequently were less likely to cohabit and more likely to marry. This consistence across denominational affiliations reinforces findings that religious groups are traditionally family oriented and tend to promote the marriage state over other union alternatives. Likewise, Lehrer found that among Protestants and Catholics, those who attended religious services frequently had a relatively lower probability of cohabiting than their less religious counterparts. He found that the effect of religiosity was most pronounced for conservative Protestants.

Thornton et al. (1992) concluded that the importance of religion (salience) and attendance (e.g., worship service attendance) were more powerful determinants of marriage and cohabitation than religious (denominational) affiliation. They found that the marital behavior of young people was influenced by their religious commitment and participation more so than religious affiliation. Low levels of religious importance and

participation were related to high rates of cohabitation and low rates of marriage, in that, less religious young people were much more likely than their more religious peers to cohabit than to marry. However, they also found that people without a religious affiliation were more likely to cohabit and less likely to marry than those who identified with a religious group.

Religion, Divorce and Remarriage

Not only does religion affect marriage, it affects divorce and remarriage as well. A greater stigmatization of divorce can be associated with higher values being placed on marriage and subsequent remarriage in the wake of a divorce. Numerous studies have reported different rates of divorce for different religious groups, and the evidence suggests that overall the rates are lower among Jews, Catholics and more conservative groups, such as Mormons, who place a strong emphasis on marital stability. However, the rates are higher among Protestants (taking into account the variations across Protestant groups) and those with no religious preference (Heaton, Albrecht and Martin 1985). For example, Coombs and Zumeta (1970) found lower divorce rates among Catholics and those listing “other” as their religious preference than among Fundamentalists and Baptists. Previous studies also report that Jewish couples have the lowest rates of divorce, while Protestant couples have the highest rates and Catholics are intermediate. These reports are further sustained by subsequent studies reporting the lowest rates of divorce among Catholics, followed by Jews and Mormons and those with the highest rates among Protestants and those with no religious affiliation (Heaton et al. 1985).

Today, most religious denominations, while not condoning divorce, have developed coping mechanisms to deal with this unfortunate event. Despite the teachings of the Bible, divorce has permeated American society, including the Christian community (House and Laney 1973). As a result, pastors, religious luminaries, and the laity of different religious groups have had to work around the original teachings of the Bible. Obviously, there are conservative and liberal adaptations, along with those that fall somewhere in the middle. For instance,

“Divorce is evidence that some people, Christians as well as non-Christians, do not realize a permanent marriage, and that in this, as in other relationships, we do not measure up to the absolute commandments of God. Yet, while divorce is evidence of our sinfulness and cannot be condoned, it may be forgiven. The Apostle Paul recognized this fact and tried to bring health and wholeness into humanity's broken existence (1 Corinthians 7:10-16).”

<http://www.covchurch.org/cov/resources/divorce.html>).

According to the Catholic tradition, marriage is considered a sacrament and permanent. Hornik (2001) explains that despite common misperceptions, the Catholic Church does not excommunicate divorced parishioners, but it does, however, prohibit second marriages without an annulment. The church also forbids remarried Catholics without annulments from receiving Communion (Hornik 2001). That is, remarriage without an annulment results in an inability to receive sacraments. Previous studies show that Catholics have tended to marry at a later age and have been more likely to have never married (Sander 1993 and 1995).

Studies also show that Catholics have been less likely to divorce. Sander argues that this could “first be due to the fact that Catholics search more intensively for a mate because of the higher ‘cost’ of making a wrong choice.” Second, Sander argues that “if

Catholics were less likely to practice birth control once married, they might postpone marriage to reach a higher socioeconomic level before entering marriage. Third, Catholics might postpone marriage because of parental opposition to marrying a non-Catholic or because of non-Catholics' norms regarding intermarriage. Finally, the Catholic Church discourages divorce, thus increasing the 'cost' of divorce" (Sander 1993:374). However, though it has been reported that Catholic divorce is lower than some other religious affiliations, similar to people of other faiths, 25% of today's 51 million Catholics have divorced and at least half of all divorced Catholics will eventually remarry (Hornik 2001). It is true that in comparison to some other religious traditions, Catholics have historically had stricter teachings regarding divorce. Therefore, in the case of divorce, those of the Catholic tradition may be wary of rushing into another marriage. This, then, would lead to decreased incidence of remarriage and later timing of remarriage following divorce.

Despite the fact that different faith traditions have divergent views toward divorce, it has been suggested that Protestants, on the whole, tend to believe that...

"Jesus' teaching on marriage and divorce in the New Testament shows the ideal way to which all Christians should aspire. They accept that humans fall short of this ideal because we live in a fallen world where humans have rejected God. Many Protestants accept divorce, though it would never be encouraged. Most Protestants allow divorced people to remarry within the church, but they may first wish to talk things through with the couple. Anglicans share the view of Protestants. Since 1987, vicars have been allowed to decide if they are prepared to marry people who have previously been divorced. Most Anglican priests offer people a "blessing" after a service in a registry office. This means that they do not actually get married in church, but they do ask God to bless their marriage"

(<http://www.request.org.uk/issues/topics/divorce/divorce04.htm>).

However, even among evangelical or conservative Protestants, views toward remarriage differ markedly. A scrupulous review of the contemporary religious discourse reveals diverse attitudes and worldviews. The key demarcation that sets them apart is the varying degree of biblical literalism. In other words, how literally the adherents interpret the Bible regarding remarriage will determine the extent to which they tolerate or accept remarriage, albeit remarriage has become a common life course transition in today's American society. Many religious groups, for example, do advocate that it is necessary to adapt to social changes in order to retain membership. One way in which some Protestant groups accommodate increasing numbers of divorced members is to accept divorce and allow divorcees to redeem themselves from the stigmatization of divorce through remarriage. At the risk of oversimplification, remarriage among Protestants can be classified into two broad but distinctive categories: one that deems remarriage "adulterous" representing biblical literalism and the other that views remarriage as "redemptive" signifying an adaptive and accommodating approach.

The position of "adulterous remarriage" is highly likely to be taken by Protestant affiliations that adhere very closely to the teachings of the Bible. According to certain religious traditions,

"The Bible forbids divorce and remarriage under all circumstances. This is a common viewpoint of Fundamentalist and other Evangelical Christian denominations. Some terminate the memberships of members when they divorce. Other congregations limit the positions that divorced persons can hold in the church" (http://www.religioustolerance.org/div_noway.htm).

As such, divorce and remarriage can be viewed negatively: "divorce is always an act of sin and, based on Matthew 19:9, is the equivalent of committing adultery. According to a leading spokesperson of conservative Protestantism, anyone who remarries is living in a

continual state of adultery.” (Dobson 1980: 42). This is so because “God’s will is one man for one woman, for one lifetime.” (Dobson 1980:24). The Bible states...

“And he answered and said unto them, have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder (Matthew 19:4-6)” (Dobson 1980: 24).

Similarly, the Bible further states,

“Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously (Malachi 2:14-16 KJV)” (http://www.religioustolerance.org/div_noway.htm).

Here, “Malachi is condemning Hebrew men for abandoning their wives after many years of marriage and marrying a different woman. Here, marriage is referred to as a covenant between God, the husband and wife. One property of a covenant is that it is permanent. The contract between God and the ancient Hebrews at Sinai is one example of a covenant” (http://www.religioustolerance.org/div_noway.htm).

Another version of “adulterous” remarriage suggests that the Bible allows divorce but forbids divorced people to remarry. According to this view,

“Although divorce is permitted, neither party is free to remarry. Only if one dies may the other ex-spouse marry. As far as this view of the Bible is concerned, a married couple can separate. They can even obtain a divorce from the courts. But God considers that the bonds of the original marriage

contract continue. Thus, any remarriage would be illicit. A divorced person is expected to remain celibate and without a partner for the rest of their life, or until their former spouse dies -- whichever occurs first” (http://www.religioustolerance.org/div_ok1.htm).

However, less biblical Protestant groups, such as Mainline Protestants, take a different approach, which can be summarized into two more forgiving views: (1) the conditional view that accepts remarriage in the incidence of adultery or desertion, and (2) the unconditional view that allows remarriage under any circumstance.

“The Bible allows marital separation and divorce. But unless the divorce was on the grounds of adultery or desertion, remarriage involves adultery. This is sometimes referred to as the ‘Protestant View,’ although it is by no means accepted by all Protestants. It is found most often among mainline Protestant denominations. Various denominations allow remarriage only to the ‘innocent’ spouse” (http://www.religioustolerance.org/div_ok2.htm).

Jay Adams (1980), a Christian pastor and writer, suggests that “the concept of divorce is biblical... certain provisions are made for it... and divorce, for some persons, under some circumstances is altogether proper and not the object of God’s hatred” (p. 23). For this reason, Adams states that it is important to develop a balanced, biblical attitude toward divorce. Even those that obtain an “unbiblical divorce” shall not be treated as if they have committed an “unpardonable sin,” according to Adams. “Let us make it clear, then, those who wrongfully (sinfully) obtain a divorce must not be excused for what they have done; it is a sin. But precisely because it is a sin, it is forgivable” (Adams 1980: 24). Remarriage following divorce is also a complicated and emotionally charged issue for Christians. Contrary to the belief of some conservative Christians,

“remarriage, in itself, was well thought of in the New Testament church” (Adams 1980: 24). I Corinthians 7:27, 28a reads:

“Are you bound to a wife? Don’t seek to be released. Have you been released from a wife? Don’t seek a wife. But if you marry, there is not sin in doing so” (Adams 1980: 84).

Therefore, according to Adams, “It is important to understand that the position of those who hold that under no circumstances whatever may a divorced person remarry is totally unwarranted” (Adams 1980: 84-5).

There are still other Christians that not only accept remarriage but also encourage it. Some Protestant groups, while still holding very strong pro-family attitudes, accept that divorce has become a common part of family life in America today, thus having made adjustments in their teachings to accommodate those that may find themselves in this unfortunate situation. “As the fortunes of the family/household type [two parents with children] rise and fall, so will the fortunes of mainstream organized Protestants” (Wilcox 2002; 288).

Another view, held only by the most liberal Protestant groups, is that divorce and remarriage are accepted.

“This view has been well argued by author Larry Richards who states, ‘those prohibiting all divorces, and those which allow divorces but not remarriage -- are based on the invalid belief that marriage is indissoluble, except after the death of one spouse. The Bible does not teach this. Divorces and subsequent remarriage are acceptable responses to a failed marriage, on grounds of adultery, desertion and many other behaviors.’” (http://www.religioustolerance.org/div_ok3.htm).

Despite the increased acceptance of divorce among some Christians, such as mainline and other more liberal Protestants, strong pro-family attitudes remain intact. As

a result, remarriage is seen as a redemptive path through which to overcome the stigmatization of divorce. This approach, “redemptive remarriage,” taken by some Protestants and other Christians, may lead to increased propensity of remarriage following divorce.

“To believe that God damns people for a failed relationship is to avoid the redemptive flow of God’s relationship with people. God’s approach to divorced people is redemption. On some rare occasions, divorced people remarry the people they divorced and the second time around goes pretty well. This is a very special kind of redemption, but not the only kind. Other divorced people find someone else to marry and it goes well. They have learned a great deal from the past and apply those lessons in the new relationship” (<http://smartstepfamilies.blogspot.com/2006/08/redemption-after-divorce.html>).

Indeed, in terms of remarriage, research has shown that Protestant denominations, in general, have the highest rates of remarriage of all religious groups (Wu and Schimmele 2005). Liberal faith traditions tend to have lower rates of remarriage due to the fact that their adherents are more likely to cohabit. On the other hand, because of their pro-nuptial theologies, conservative Protestants and Mormons place the greatest emphasis on the marriage state and childbearing within the institution of marriage. As a result, the likelihood of remarriage for these religious groups is higher than their liberal counterparts.

As can be seen, there are identifiable differences across religious affiliations regarding divorce and remarriage. However, while attitudes toward divorce and remarriage may vary across religious groups, they are only part of the religious experience (Call and Heaton 1997). As noted in the previous literature, some research has suggested that religious salience and attendance are also factors affecting the

probability of obtaining a divorce (Booth, Johnson, Branaman and Sica 1995; Call and Heaton 2001; Lehrer 2004). Instead of examining religious belief and attendance separately, much of the literature explored here, lumps other factors together with religious belief and attendance, thus forming the religiosity variable to measure the total effect that religion may have on divorce.

According to Lehrer (2004), religiosity encompasses commitment to the religion, the strength of religious beliefs, and participation in religious activities. Lehrer suggests, “religiosity influences demographic outcomes such as entry into marriage, and divorce because it accentuates the effects of affiliation, and partly because it’s generally positive influence on health and well-being, can have repercussions for such outcomes” (p. 707). Previous studies have shown that an increase in religiosity has been negatively related to probability of divorce. Those who are more religious in their beliefs (salience) tend to be slightly less likely to divorce (Booth et al. 1995). Booth, et al. suggest that because many religious groups discourage divorce and promote marriage and family, marital difficulties may lead couples to increase their religious participation in order to strengthen their relationship. “The church is a family-centered institution and an appropriate vehicle to extend the couple’s relations with each other. Attending church services, taking part in church socials and praying together may enhance couple interaction in a supportive environment” (Booth et al. 1995:663). Booth et al. also suggest that, for the same reason (because religious groups tend to discourage divorce), couples that have marital difficulties may opt to refrain from religious activities “in order to distance themselves from their spouse and to avoid reminders that divorce is immoral or not encouraged” (p. 663). In the final analysis, their research findings show that increases in religiosity

(measured by a combination of five factors: reading religious materials, prayer, religious attendance, participation in religious social events and religious influence) did not necessarily improve marital relations but slightly decreased the probability of considering divorce.

The most important religious factor affecting divorce, however, is worship service attendance. “Attendance at religious services and activities indicates the amount of time spent at church and the level of involvement in religious social networks” (Call and Heaton 1997:383), which in turn influences the strength of the tie a person has with a specific religious theology. For instance, Thornton et al. (1992) found that the marital behavior of young people was influenced by their religious commitment and participation more so than religious affiliation. Previous research also suggests that participation in religious activities “affects the amount of indoctrination a person receives in a particular theology.” (Call and Heaton 2001:383). This assertion is supported by a qualitative study conducted by Gonzalez (1999). To understand how the Protestant church affects individuals who are going through the marriage, divorce, remarriage process, Gonzalez interviewed what he termed Protestant prophetic (conservative) and priestly (liberal) pastors. He found that one common factor among the prophetic pastors was their acceptance of a literal interpretation of the Bible, which states, “God hates divorce regardless of circumstance” (p. 149). Thus, while they understand that divorce is inevitable in some circumstances, it should be avoided if at all possible. But they also feel that there is someone at fault when divorce occurs. Among prophetic pastors, personal positions on remarriage, however, were much more diverse than the positions they took on divorce. Gonzalez found that all of the pastors would remarry an individual

if they were declared “innocent” in a divorce based on adultery or abandonment. The guilty party, however, was not eligible for remarriage within the church. The majority of the pastors interviewed said that they would grant remarriage to a person “if the person demonstrates that they have had a ‘true’ conversion experience since the divorce, and he/she could no longer return to his/her ex-spouse because of legal constraints or because of the refusal of the other party to reconcile” (p. 150). Gonzalez found that only “half of the pastors indicated that they would consider remarrying a divorced person if the former spouse was already remarried and the person entered into some form of repentance counseling in the church” (p. 150).

On the other hand, while priestly pastors still spoke negatively of divorce, they were generally positive about those who were divorced and they were accepting of situations in which problems within the marriage outweighed the negative effects of divorce, and were willing to perform remarriage in these situations. There were some circumstances under which priestly pastors would not participate in a remarriage ceremony, which were different from the situations cited by the prophetic pastors. The pastors’ most common reason for not officiating a remarriage ceremony was if there was concern for the success of the new marriage. Overall, the researcher found that church members, especially those who identify strongly with their religion are heavily influenced by their religious doctrines and make decisions reflective of these doctrines.

Thus far, this body of literature has suggested that religious belief and attendance can strengthen the influence that a particular doctrine has on individuals’ marital and re-marital behaviors. But as reported by Lehrer (2004), effects of religiosity (i.e., religious belief and attendance) were not uniform across various faith traditions. Conservative

Protestants, for example, attended church more frequently, thus “if analyses do not consider differences in religious involvement, some of the estimated ‘conservative Protestant’ effect may actually be a religiosity effect” (p. 721).

The relationship between religion and marriage, divorce and remarriage is multi-dimensional and can be affected or confounded by a host of other variables, including but not limited to, education, employment, fertility and rural-urban residence. In what follows, I will review some of these variables. In doing so, I explore the relationship each of these variables has to denominational affiliation, religious salience, worship service attendance and remarriage.

Fertility

“Despite changes in the nature of the American family life, social norms continue to support childbearing.” (Heaton, Jacobson and Fu 1992:244). Not surprisingly, one of the biggest supporters of pronatalist values is religion. Previous literature shows that the most striking differences in childlessness are between the non-religious and the religious. Likewise, research suggests that those without children demonstrate the lowest levels of religiosity (Heaton et al. 1992). Heaton et al suggest that “the relationship between religion and childlessness emerges through a complex process wherein religious institutions emphasize teaching aimed at families, provide communities of association which support family life and perform rituals to recognize and legitimate family transitions, while parents with children turn to religion for assistance in socializing children” (Heaton et al. 1992:245). However, there are diverse fertility patterns that

emerge within and among religious groups. Research has shown that these fertility patterns vary by religious affiliation, belief and attendance.

Mosher, Williams and Johnson (1992) conducted a study of religion and fertility patterns in the United States and found that the patterns had changed somewhat since the babyboom era. In the 1950s and 1960s, there were high rates of fertility among Catholics and lower rates among Protestants. Mosher et al.'s more recent analysis shows that this Protestant-Catholic difference in fertility is reversed in that, now Catholics report lower fertility than Protestants. But the largest fertility differences by religious affiliation among white women were between Protestants and those with no affiliation. The fertility of married women with no religious affiliation was the lowest of any group of married women (Heaton et al. 1992). Protestants reported 37 percent more children than those with no religious affiliation. This finding was further confirmed in a study conducted by Heaton et al. (1992) who also found that, among white women, Catholics, Jews and those with no affiliation have significantly fewer children than Protestants. This is especially surprising for Catholics because of the negative views they have historically held concerning birth control. Although the amount of "children ever born" was lower for Catholics than Protestants, a measure of "total births expected" yielded higher averages for Catholics than that of Protestants as well as that of other religious groups. Despite the differences in empirical measures, the overall findings lend further support to the pro-family and pronatalist views shared by most faith traditions. Unlike their Protestant and Catholic counterparts, Mosher et al. report that fertility rates among Jewish women is lower than that of both Protestants and Catholics, and this pattern has remained stable over the past 20 years. Not surprisingly, this finding is consistent with previous literature

suggesting that Jewish couples tend to be non-traditional and less committed to childbearing (Goldscheider 1967).

In their exploration of the previous literature, Keysar and Kosmin (1995) argue that the relationship between religion and fertility in the United States shows that marriage patterns differ by religion and this could be a result of the variations in gender ideologies across the different denominations. This position is further explicated by Lehrer (2004) who reports that women who marry early will be more likely to begin having children, which would take away from time that could be devoted to their educational endeavors. According to many conservative Christian authors, “Women who work outside the home while their children are young are seen as the root cause of divorce, infidelity, juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy, pornography, homosexuality, and male unemployment. Further, conservative Christian writers characterize working mothers as unhappy, unfulfilled, libertines destined for loneliness and failure” (Sherkat 2000: 346). As a result, the most important thing for many conservative Christian women is to become a wife and mother, and when young children are present, they believe that their place is, without a doubt, in the home. Sherkat examined the roles of conservative Christian women and hypothesized that women who closely follow the Bible will be more likely to become housewives, become housewives earlier in life and be more likely to remain housewives. His results supported his assumptions. Indeed, “fundamentalist [conservative] women are significantly more likely to choose the home as their career in their early life course (Sherkat 2000: 354). This supports previous and subsequent literature suggesting that conservative Christian women will be more likely to become wives and mothers and do so earlier than their more liberal counterparts. In

general, the above-reviewed literature suggests that religious affiliations that support more traditional gender ideologies may discourage higher education and work outside the home for women, which in turn leads to earlier childbearing and higher fertility. In other words, because conservative women frequently opt against education and career in favor of marriage and children, this leaves fewer options for women in the incidence of divorce. Without an education and career to support themselves and their children, women may be more likely to remarry than their less conservative counterparts.

Not only are there variations in fertility by religious affiliation, research has also shown that there are variations by degree of religious belief and religious attendance. Heaton et al. (1992) found that, “Those with no religious preference, who never attend church, disagree with traditional Bible beliefs and have civil rather than religious wedding ceremonies are more likely than others to be childless.” (Heaton et al. 1992:252-3). Moreover, they found that frequency of attendance, over religious affiliation and belief in the Bible, had the strongest relationship with childlessness. Heaton et al. stated that the strongest predictor among all of the religion variables (religious affiliation, religious belief, religious attendance and religious ritualism) was church attendance and it remained statistically significant for women when other religious variables were included. Similarly, Mosher et al. (1992) state that there is a direct relationship between religious participation and fertility, and although it varied in significance, this relationship was consistent across different faith traditions.

According to the traditional ideology historically synonymous with conservative religious groups, a woman’s focus should be on taking care of her husband and children, not education and career. For example, the Mormon and conservative Protestant faiths

make a clear distinction between the roles of males and females, encouraging the traditional division of labor within the household. “Consistent with the view that such religious affiliations provide institutionalized moral support and psychic rewards to mothers who stay home with their children, previous research documents a lower level of female employment among members of these faiths when young children are present” (Lehrer 2004:165). Conversely, while many evangelicals support separate spheres for husbands to be a provider and wives to be a homemaker, a growing population of “egalitarian evangelicals” support “domestic task sharing and co-parenting” (Bartkowski 2001). According to this emerging view,

“The couple who wants an equal-partnership marriage must... strive to avoid falling into the stifling trap of gender-role stereotyping, which stresses differences and separate spheres, driving men and women apart rather than drawing them together. Christian marriage should be the kind of relationship that encourages both spouses to grow in Christ to exhibit the fruit of Spirit.”

Indeed, Gay, Ellison and Powers (1996), report that in regard to pro-family orientation and other social attitudes and behaviors, conservative denominations exhibit less within group homogeneity than their less conservative counterparts.

For women belonging to conservative religious groups advocating separate spheres, the “psychic rewards” associated with the marriage state and motherhood may encourage them to adhere to these traditional gender ideologies. Therefore, as previously mentioned, these women are less likely to pursue education and a career, leaving them with fewer alternatives to the marriage state. As a result, they will be more likely to remarry in the case of divorce, and will remarry sooner. Similarly, they will be more likely than their less conservative counterparts to feel pressured to remarry for the

purposes of childbearing. The average time between first marriage and divorce in the United States for women is close to eight years (Census 2001), but some marriages end even earlier. Thus, it is possible that some religious women who have not had children or have not had as many as they wish to have at the time of divorce may see remarriage as a pathway to achieve their childbearing goals for higher fertility. For this reason, fertility history must be statistically controlled when modeling the relationship between religion and propensity and timing of remarriage.

Education

Many socioeconomic variables have been linked to an increase in liberal attitudes and tolerance in regard to numerous social issues including family and gender ideologies. One such variable that has been researched extensively is how liberal attitudes, especially gender role attitudes, vary by education. It has been consistently reported that education and liberal attitudes are positively correlated (Gay et al. 1996). Those with higher degrees of education are less likely to support gender traditionalism. Women who pursue higher education are more likely to develop careers outside the home and less likely to adhere to the more traditional domestic roles of housewife and mother. Research has also shown that gender role attitudes and degree of education vary across religious denominations. Those who belong to conservative denominations are likely to be less educated and endorse more traditional family roles, whereas those who belong to liberal denominations are typically better educated and less traditional (Keysar and Kosmin 1995; Sherkat and Darnell 1999). “The sociological literature dealing with gender has treated the socioeconomic dependence of women upon marriage... as one of the

hallmarks of traditionalism. Religion is widely recognized as important in creating cultural communities, which in turn directly influence their adherent's attitudes and behavior toward gender ideologies in society" (Keysar and Kosmin 1995:49).

Traditional gender ideologies support the gendered division of labor that assigns the role of caregiver to women and provider responsibilities to men. And many faith traditions do adhere to these traditional ideologies, thus perpetuating the economic dependency of women. According to Keysar and Kosmin, a greater emphasis on domestic roles (marriage and childbearing) discourages women from pursuing education and a career. Therefore, "Religious prescriptions about the importance of family, and particularly about women's primary role in childbearing and rearing may explain much of the variation between religious groups" (Keysar and Kosmin 1995:51). To assess the impact that religion has on the educational attainment of American women, Keysar and Kosmin found that differences in educational attainment for women across religious denominations were attributable to their religion for both younger and older cohorts. The highest levels of education were found in the most liberal affiliations. Jewish faiths are classified as being at the most liberal end of the spectrum and exhibited the strongest tendency toward higher education (Hartman and Hartman 1996). This research also endorses the liberal-conservative hierarchy of religious groups suggested by previous literature, supporting the link between education, liberal attitudes and religious affiliation. Similarly, a study conducted by Lehrer (2004) on white American women found that educational attainment was the highest for Jewish women, lowest for conservative Protestants, with Catholics and mainline Protestants at the center of the distribution. Within a human capital framework, researchers have found that "religious affiliation is

viewed as reflecting distinctive features of the home environment that affect both the returns and costs of additional investments in education.” (Lehrer 2004:164). Lehrer’s research further supports the hypothesis that women who pursue education will be more likely to delay marriage because it is difficult to combine the role of student and spouse. “Religious groups that promote high levels of investment in secular human capital thus also encourage, indirectly, a late transition to marriage. This channel of causality implies that Jews would delay entry into marriage, while conservative Protestants would tend to marry early.” (Lehrer 2004:164). It logically follows, then, that this would continue to hold true for remarriage as well.

As noted earlier, fundamentalist religious affiliations tend to be one of the most conservative and “subscribe to a vividly otherworldly belief system that is often antagonistic toward secular education because of the beliefs and values it is viewed to promote.” (Sherkat and Darnell 1999:24). These ideologies may also be passed onto children of fundamentalist parents. Sherkat and Darnell examined “how religiously motivated social constraints (fundamental Christianity) influence educational choices” (p. 24). They explain that a lack of parental support for higher education undermines a child’s preference for educational attainment. In other words, if children decide not to follow the faith of their parents, parents may punish the child by not supporting their educational endeavors. “Parents’ fundamentalism may create anti-intellectual preferences in children who do not follow their parents’ faith.” (p. 24). According to Sherkat and Darnell, conservative Christians also tend to have very patriarchal gender role ideologies, advocating domestic careers for women, and arguing that higher education may be contrary to God’s plan for most women.

Other research has corroborated the findings of Sherkat and Darnell. In general, the finding has been that being a conservative Protestant hinders educational attainment (Beyerlein 2004). However, Beyerlein suggests that there may be evidence of a more complex relationship between conservative Protestantism and educational attainment. Some researchers, instead of grouping all conservative Protestants together, have conceptualized them as three separate entities: fundamentalists, Pentecostals and evangelicals (Beyerlein 2004). “Although the cultural traditions of fundamentalist Protestantism and Pentecostal Protestantism advocate withdrawing from the broader culture, the cultural tradition of evangelical Protestantism generally stresses engaging the broader culture. These differing strategies of action are likely to have differing effects on the educational pursuits of fundamentalists” (Beyerlein 2004: 506). Indeed, Beyerlein purports fundamentalist and Pentecostal Protestants are less likely to obtain a college degree than evangelical Protestants or other non-conservative Protestants. Therefore, while some Protestants, especially conservative Protestants, will be less likely to support post secondary education, others may not be so opposed to such endeavors.

Previous studies have shown that educational attainment does delay marriage. Studies of marital timing and fertility consistently show conservative Protestants have earlier ages of first marriage and higher rates of fertility, with 43% of female fundamentalists and 18% of male fundamentalists being married by age 19. Indeed, Sherkat and Darnell’s research found that “parental support is important for educational attainment, and when parents are opposed to education for cultural reasons they will hinder their children’s opportunities for attainment” (p. 32). Not surprisingly, because conservative Christians tend to support traditional gender ideologies, opposition to

educational attainment from parents was clearly stronger for females than males. Their results show “(1) that the educational attainment of nonfundamentalist women is significantly hampered by fundamentalist parents; (2) that fundamentalist parents do not differ significantly from nonfundamentalist parents in their support of nonfundamentalist males or Bible-believing females; (3) and male inerrantist children receive a significant boost in their educational attainment from fundamentalist parents.” (p. 33).

As we have seen, a consistent finding in the literature is that education delays marriage, and lack of support for education leads to earlier marriage, especially among conservative Protestant women (Teachman, Polonko, Leigh 1987; Sherkat and Darnell 1999; Keysar and Kosmin 1995). Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that finishing one’s education is important in the timing of marriage. While this is the case in first marriage, it may not be true in the timing of remarriage, since most people entering into remarriage may have most likely finished their education (Teachman et al. 1987:243). Mott and Moore (1983) tested the significance of varying factors on the propensity and timing of remarriage and found that education was one of the most significant predictors. According to Mott and Moore, a woman with a higher degree of education is more likely to be employed and more likely to have a job in which she can earn a wage to maintain herself economically. Both of these factors provide women with an alternative to the marriage state. Mott and Moore found that this holds true for women in the first year following divorce and, with few exceptions, continues for the first five years following divorce as well. However, research has shown that for each additional year of age at divorce, the greater the time between divorce and remarriage and the smaller the chance of remarriage. Consequently, women who delay marriage to pursue education will be

older at the time of divorce, which may prolong remarriage and decrease the chances of remarriage.

In terms of religiosity (includes measures of commitment to religion, strength of religious salience or belief and participation in religious activities), the more closely one adheres to a specific doctrine, or the more important their religious faith is to them, the more likely they are to apply the values associated with those doctrines to their everyday lives (Lehrer 2004). For example, more conservative religions have been associated with more conservative attitudes, which are highly correlated with more traditional gender ideologies. It can be assumed then, that conservatives who have the strongest religious salience would likely have the strongest traditional values. Likewise, because it has been shown that more traditional beliefs translate into lower educational levels among women, the preceding argument also holds true when examining education level in relation to religious salience. “If religious affiliation influences economic and demographic behavior because it has an impact on the perceived costs and benefits of various decisions made by individuals and families over the life cycle, then the effects should therefore be stronger for those individuals who participate more frequently in religious observances and adhere more closely to the teachings of their faith” (Lehrer 2004:719).

Like religious salience or belief, worship service attendance can have effects on one’s attitudes regarding a number of issues including education. As stated above, if conservative religions, most notably conservative Protestants, tend to have lower levels of educational attainment and religiosity heightens the effects of affiliation, we should expect that higher degrees of religious participation among conservative Protestants would translate into lower levels of educational attainment among males and females.

According to Lehrer, however, the opposite is true. He states that “those who attended church at least once a month during adolescence attain more schooling than their counterparts raised in less observant homes” (Lehrer, 2004:720). According to Lehrer, this finding demonstrates that it should no longer be assumed that increased religiosity accentuates the differences across religious groups. Since education is systematically correlated with religion and marriage timing, it should be statistically controlled in investigating how religion affects the propensity and timing of remarriage.

Employment

According to Kulik (2002), employed women tend to have more liberal gender ideologies than those women who do not work. The same is true of their children. In fact, the children of mothers who work are less likely to hold traditional gender ideologies than those whose mothers do not work. As with education, Kulik found that the more the mother worked, the more liberal the gender ideologies were of her and her children. Religious faiths that encourage traditional gender ideologies also discourage education and formal employment for women, which will be perpetuated from generation to generation. Additionally, a stronger religious belief and a higher degree of religious participation may increase the effect of these traditional teachings.

It is evident from the previous literature, that conservative religious groups have traditionally supported a woman’s place being in the home. However, Sherkat (2000) found little evidence to suggest that, among these conservative groups, these women were considered incapable of or prohibited from holding careers. “Indeed, Christian women are encouraged to seek careers if they desire, once their children are grown” (Sherkat

2000: 347). Therefore, Sherkat hypothesized that despite their commitment to being a wife and mother, Christian women would be no less likely to reenter the paid workforce once their children were past the “tender years”. Sherkat’s results supported his assumptions. “While fundamentalist [conservative] women are significantly more likely to choose the home as their career in their early life course... conservative Christian women are likely to reenter the workforce when their children are older” (Sherkat 2000: 354).

Religion can indirectly affect a woman’s decision to pursue family over career or employment by enforcing more traditional gender ideologies. Typically, religions that enforce more traditional gender ideologies for men and women will be less likely to support women’s employment outside the home. Early studies of the Catholic faith found that they made a clear distinction between male and female roles. However, as stated by Lehrer (2004), more recent studies suggest that Catholics are less traditional in these roles than conservative or mainline Protestants. Lehrer further points out that the commitment of Jewish women to the labor market is much stronger than women of other religious denominations (also see Hartman and Hartman 1996). Jewish women delay entry into marriage for several interrelated reasons: 1) their high educational attainment, 2) their low desired level of fertility and 3) their strong commitment to the labor market (Lehrer 2004). On the other hand, women who are brought up as conservative Protestants and as Mormons have incentives to marry early, because their faith encourages an orientation to home activities and also encourages very high fertility in the case of Mormons (Lehrer 2004). In general, women who are less involved in the labor

market are more likely to form marital unions and do so sooner, which is particularly pronounced for women who are affiliated with conservative religious denominations.

In a study of Arab American women in the United States, Read (2004) contends that religious traditions can restrict women's achievements by prioritizing their home and family obligations above everything else. According to Read, Arab American women are an ethnic group consisting of both Muslims and Christians. "Muslims, however, make up only one-third of the estimated three million Arabs in America, with Christians comprising the rest of the population" (Read 2004: 1043). Because this group is comprised of two very different groups, their participation in the public sphere varies significantly by ethnicity, religiosity (includes measures for religious attendance, reading of religious material and belief in scripture), family structure and social class. Lower employment and higher fertility were found among the women with the strongest religious connections. Also like studies on other American women, Arab American women with higher levels of education typically had higher employment rates and earnings and were more likely to be part of a more egalitarian household. Read's research suggested that it was religiosity, as opposed to religious affiliation, that appeared to have the most significant effect on women's labor force participation. She concluded that, "High religiosity over the life cycle and belief in scriptural inerrancy are related to a lower likelihood of employment among these women" (Read 2004:1047).

Significant support has been given to the hypothesis that religiosity (religious salience or belief, private prayer and scripture study and religious attendance) is related to lower labor force participation among women. "Religious values support wife and mother roles, which influence religious women to remain in the home." (Chadwick and

Garrett 1995:278). Also of importance is that women's employment outside the home has an effect on religiosity. Some social scientists have argued that the demands of a full-time job leave less time for religious activities (Chadwick and Garrett 1995). They also suggest that support systems that may have once been formed in church have now been transferred to the workplace. Therefore, women no longer need to attend church to develop friendships. For example, Chadwick and Garrett's study shows that since the Mormon doctrine supports pro-family values and encourages married women to focus on family responsibilities instead of a career, the Mormon adherent's stronger religious beliefs (measures included religious values and private religious behaviors) were found to be closely associated with lower labor force participation, including current employment status, long-term employment experience and intentions to remain in the labor force. Thus, "religiosity emerged as a significant correlate of, and perhaps a cause affecting labor force participation" (Chadwick and Garrett 1995:291). Significantly, they also found that the relationship between religiosity and employment was not affected by education, and that even among highly educated LDS women, religiosity and employment were significantly related.

Like education, various studies have suggested that more liberal gender ideologies are associated with women working outside the home. It has been suggested that this may reduce religious involvement. Becker and Hofmeister (2001) explain that while many researchers link full time employment with increased religious participation, other researchers found that, for married women, "full-time employment reduces both their own and their spouses' religious involvement and... depending on life- stage, full time labor force participation in an advanced industrial economy may increase women's

individualism and decrease their willingness to assume traditionally gendered roles historically associated with religious institutions” (Becker and Hofmeister 2001:708). The attitudes, values and beliefs of a woman with full-time employment, as we have seen, are more likely to be liberal in gender ideologies, which may lead to affiliations with liberal religious groups or decreased religious participation than if they are associated with a more conservative religious group.

Following the same line of reasoning, it has been proposed that like education and employment, income and occupational status appear to also vary across religious affiliation and can be linked to a delay in marriage and remarriage among women. “American religion has from the beginning of its history been stratified by education, income and occupational status... and religious differences have played a role in constructing social differentiations that sustained socioeconomic inequalities.” (Smith and Farris 2005:95). According to Smith and Farris, studies find that white conservative Protestants and white mainline Protestants are significantly separated by social class and status differences. They measured socioeconomic status by percent of adherents who had earned college degrees, and their results show that, overall, the highest level of formal education appears associated with the more liberal traditions, and the lowest among the most conservative traditions. Religious influences on income and SES are the same as those of education and employment for women. Those affiliations that support more traditional gender ideologies support domesticity in women, and therefore, the women will not pursue educations or careers and, consequently, have lower incomes and lower SES. Therefore, women belonging to these affiliations may be more likely to remarry and remarry sooner following divorce.

According to Wimberly (1984), the issue of religiosity (religious belief, devotionalism – private worship, and religious experience – contact with the deity) being related to one’s place in the social hierarchy has been an issue explored by social scientists since Karl Marx, and many have suggested that socioeconomic deprivation “leads people to place more emphasis on religion in certain ways... and the related perspectives of exchange theory and cognitive behaviorism imply that such deprivation also leads people to place more importance on religion.” (p. 223). Wimberly and others suggest that religion does not change the conditions of deprivation, it merely provides compensation. “Deprived persons tend to immerse themselves in religion, finding that it relieves their suffering.” (p. 223). According to Wimberly, relief comes through the use of “compensators” (e.g. religion can furnish status not available to many individuals in the socioeconomic sphere). Wimberly quotes Weber who explains...

“What the [disprivileged classes] cannot claim to be they replace by the worth of that which they will one day become, to which they will be called in some future life here or hereafter; or replace by their sense of what they signify and achieve in the world as seen from the point of view of providence. Their hunger for a worthiness that has not fallen to their lot, they and the world being what it is, produces this conception [of]... significance in the eyes of some divine authority possessing a scale of values different from the one operating in the world of man” (P. 224).

Wimberly’s findings suggest that “economic deprivation per se does not lead to an increase in the importance attached to religion; religious salience – how important religion is to an individual – may instead be a response to social deprivation. One’s relative social standing in the eyes of others may produce a form of deprivation for which religion can compensate and thus become salient for the adherent.” (p. 234). The literature has shown that women of higher socioeconomic status have greater economic

independence. As a result, they are less dependent on marriage and remarriage for their livelihood. Previous literature has also shown that women associated with more conservative religious groups are less likely to work outside the home and more likely to support traditional gender ideologies. Socioeconomic status, then, can be related to the propensity and timing of remarriage. Women belonging to more conservative religious groups are less likely to work outside the home and, therefore, less capable of supporting themselves leading to more frequent and earlier remarriage. Because socioeconomic status is correlated with religion and marriage timing, it should be statistically controlled in investigating how religion affects the propensity and timing of remarriage.

Thus far, I have found religious subcultural variations exhibited in educational attainment, employment status, and income, all of which are intimately related to the propensity and timing of marriage and remarriage. Another area in which we can find religious subcultural differences in the propensity and timing of remarriage is in the analysis of rural and urban communities.

Rural versus Urban Residence

Religious differences can also be found between rural and urban residents of the United States. Rural and urban differences have been topics of sociological interest for many decades, and the findings concerning conservative-liberal attitudes have remained relatively unchanged. It has been commonly assumed that people in rural areas are poorer and less educated than their urban counterparts. It has also been commonly assumed that rural areas tend to be more conservative and more religious than urban areas. Both current and early literature appear to support these assumptions. Burchinal's

1961 study on the religious differences between farm and non-farm areas confirmed these beliefs. He found that, in spite of cultural changes that were occurring in those areas at that time, these beliefs still remained in the rural areas.

“It is believed that farm families hold more traditional religious beliefs and are more active in church and home religious activities than non-farm families... and since religious beliefs and practices are rooted in value systems which are not subject to major changes in a short time span, it is probable that the traditionally assumed farm-nonfarm differences in religious beliefs and practices still exist” (Burchinal 1961:414).

Indeed, his research found that the data supported the hypothesis that farm parents held more conservative religious views, participated more frequently in church activities and more frequently had some religious practices than non-farm parents. If we assume that those in rural areas are more likely to be affiliated with more conservative, traditional religious sects, we can then expect that the women in rural areas will adhere to more traditional gender ideologies leading to earlier marriage and remarriage and higher rates of fertility.

In a study on adolescent girls, Harriet Light (1970) found that family and religion were more likely to influence the attitudes of rural than urban girls. She also found that rural girls continue to accept the conventional ethical standards while urban girls were more open to new morality (less traditional morals). Likewise, Wallace et al. (2003) found that young people living in rural areas reported higher levels of religious importance, more frequent attendance and lower levels of nonaffiliation than their urban and non-Southern counterparts.

Scanzoni and Arnett (1987) found that rural residents were more religiously devout than their urban counterparts. However, while taking religious devoutness into

account, they found that while there were differences in religious devoutness (rural were more devout than urban), those differences did not seem to matter as greatly as education and degree of gender traditionalism in distinguishing between rural and urban residents. They found that years of education were a major distinguishing factor between rural and urban residents. In rural areas, church is the social center, whereas in urban areas, church tends to take a backseat to education as the social center. Indeed, according to Scanzoni and Arnett, urban residents were better educated than rural residents. This was even more substantial for the women in rural areas. “Not only do rural people ‘lag behind their urban counterparts in virtually all areas of educational attainment... rural women are more educationally disadvantaged than their urban counterparts.” (p. 433). The educational lag of rural women, according to Scanzoni and Arnett, contributes to their lack of participation in the paid labor force, and their increased likelihood of working lower status, lower paying jobs than urban women. Closely related and of equal power and significance were the differences in gender traditionalism between the rural and urban residents. Scanzoni and Arnett found that rural residents had more traditional gender ideologies than their urban counterparts. It is not clear whether lower education and more traditional gender ideologies leads to increased religious participation or vice versa, but it is clear that the two appear to be correlated among the people of rural areas of the United States.

If it is assumed that more conservative religious affiliations support more traditional gender ideologies, and it is also assumed that those in rural areas have a tendency to associate with more conservative religious groups and practice greater gender traditionalism, then it can also be assumed that women in rural areas will be more likely

to remarry and remarry sooner than those in urban areas. Indeed research has shown that there are rural and urban differences in relation to the timing and propensity of remarriage. Mott and Moore (1983) provide information regarding the significance of rural versus urban residence in relation to the propensity and timing of remarriage among women. According to their findings, the ruralness of women's residence significantly predicted remarriage as the number of years following divorce increased. They also found that women living outside metropolitan areas were more likely to remarry than their more urban counterparts as time goes by. This could possibly be linked to more traditional gender ideologies and a different remarriage market that is characterized by close-knit religious networks and widely shared religious cultural values and norms.

Hypotheses

My hypotheses for this research are as follows:

- H1: Net of statistical controls, there will be multidimensional, significant, and persistent effects of religion on the propensity and timing of remarriage. This general hypothesis can be partitioned into the following more refined hypotheses.
- H2: There will be significant subcultural variations regarding propensity and timing of remarriage among different religious groups.
- H2a: Women belonging to conservative religious groups will be more or less likely to remarry and remarry sooner or later following divorce than their unaffiliated counterparts, depending upon their views toward remarriage (i.e., adulterous vs. redemptive).

- H2b: Women belonging to less conservative religious groups (Mainline Protestants, Jewish, etc.) will be less likely to remarry and remarry later following divorce than their more conservative counterparts but more likely to remarry and marry sooner than the unaffiliated.
- H2c: Catholic women will be less likely to remarry and remarry later following divorce than women belonging to various Protestant groups and there will be no significant difference between Catholics and the unaffiliated in the propensity and timing of remarriage.
- H2d: Those with no religious affiliation will be less likely to remarry and remarry later than their Protestant counterparts.
- H3: Religious subcultural variations regarding propensity and timing of remarriage will remain after other religious and sociodemographic factors are statistically controlled.
- H4: Net of denominational affiliation and sociodemographics, increased religious salience will be positively associated with the propensity and timing of remarriage.
- H5: Net of denominational affiliation and sociodemographics, frequency of worship service attendance will be positively associated with the propensity and timing of remarriage.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Data

Data for this study are drawn from two waves of the National Survey of Family Growth (the 1995 and 2002 cycles). The 1995 wave of the survey was obtained from the Inter-consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) and the 2002 wave was obtained from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). While both waves of the NSFG are nationally representative, the 1995 wave interviewed women only (n = 10,847). To broaden the scope of the survey, the 2002 wave interviewed both women (n = 7,643) and men (n = 4,928). Unfortunately, the small sample size for divorced men in the 2002 wave does not warrant reliable statistical analysis across religious groups, thus they were omitted from this study.

Surveys for the NSFG were based on personal interviews conducted in the homes of a national sample of women 15-44 years of age in the civilian, non-institutionalized population of the United States. Interviewing for the 1995 NSFG was conducted in January through October of 1995 by Research Triangle Institute, Inc., and interviewing for the 2002 NSFG was conducted from January 2002 to March 2003 by the Institute for Social Research (ISR). Both were under contract to the National Center for Health Statistics.

The main purpose of the surveys was to provide reliable national data on marriage, divorce, contraception, infertility and the health of women and infants in the United States. These two waves of the NSFG contain excellent and detailed questions concerning respondents' demographic information, pregnancy history, adoption-related information, fertility, family formation, contraceptive use, marital (remarital) and cohabitation history, making them ideal for this study. To ensure an adequate sample size for each faith tradition, this study used a pooled two-wave subsample of ever-divorced women. There are, however, limitations to the data because the 2002 wave public use data set does not contain detailed denominational groupings. Therefore, the analysis cannot be performed for distinctive groups such as the Jewish and Mormon faith traditions.

Dependent Variables

For this study, the dependent variables are (1) the *propensity of remarriage* including those who have remarried versus those who have not remarried following divorce and (2) *remarriage timing* or the waiting time to second marriage for those who divorced (including only individuals who are remarried). Remarriage timing was measured by the respondent's waiting time to remarry in century months (calculated as year of divorce * 12 + month).

Independent Variables

There are two denominational affiliation variables available in the two waves of the public use National Survey of Family Growth data. However, only current denominational affiliation was used, and recoded into six groups:

- I. Catholic
- II. Conservative Protestant (Baptist/Southern Baptist and fundamentalist Protestant)
- III. Mainline Protestant (Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopal and Church of Christ¹)
- IV. Other Protestant (Mormon and other unspecified Protestants)
- V. Other Faith Traditions (e.g., Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist)
- VI. Not Affiliated (religious nones)

This variable was further dummy-coded with unaffiliated as the reference category to delineate denominational variations in the propensity and timing of remarriage.

In addition to the above denominational affiliation variable, the respondent's religious salience and worship service attendance were also included. Religious salience was measured by the question: "Currently, how important is religion in your daily life? Would you say it is very important, somewhat important, or not important?" Worship service attendance was measured by the question: "About how often do you attend religious services?" Responses to both questions were reverse-coded on Likert scales

¹ Church of Christ, viewed as a conservative Protestant denomination (Steensland et al. 2000), was placed under the heading of mainline Protestant because the data obtained from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) classified them as such.

with values for the first question ranging from 1 = not important to 3 = very important and values for the second question ranging from 1 = never to 5 = more than once a week.

Control Variables

To eliminate potential confounding effects and spuriousness, several statistical controls were included in this study. Previous research on remarriage timing had routinely investigated such marital history measures as age at first marriage, the duration of first marriage, and age at divorce or separation (Bumpass and Sweet 1990; Coleman, Ganong and Fine 2000; Sweeny 1997; Wilson and Clark 1992). Age at first marriage in this study was simply measured by respondent's actual age at the time of first marriage. Likewise, age at divorce was measured by respondents' actual age at the time of divorce. Duration of first marriage was originally included in the statistical analysis, but removed due to issues of multicollinearity.

Furthermore, based on previous studies, a number of sociodemographic characteristics such as respondents' sex, race, resident children or prior fertility, employment status, total family income and educational attainment were statistically controlled (Bumpass and Sweet 1990; Coleman and Ganong 1990; Coleman, Ganong and Fine 2000; Sweeney 1997; Wilson and Clark 1992). Since this study analyzed divorced women only, sex is controlled by default. Respondents' race and ethnicity were combined and dummy coded into African American, Hispanic and Other racial/ethnic group with white as the reference category. Respondents' prior fertility was approximated by the number of residential children at the time of study. Since the age of women in the study ranges from 15 to 44, having adult children at home is unlikely.

Respondents' educational attainment measured as highest grade completed, total family income and employment status (dummy coded with unemployed as the reference) were all included as the respondent's SES measures. Two additional measures that are pertinent to the remarriage market were controlled. First, a metro and non-metro variable was dummy coded (with non-metro as the reference category) to gauge a possible remarriage market difference due to geographical variations. Second, a dummy coded variable indicating the data source was included to control for differential remarriage rates across the two time periods (the two waves).

Two additional control variables are gender ideology and cohabitation status. An index variable was created for gender ideology by combining two questionnaire items, "WARM" and "ACHIEVE." These items were worded slightly differently cross the two waves with different response categories, thus they were standardized before being combined. The 1995 WARM variable was measured by the question: "A working mother can establish just as warm and secure relationship with her children as a mother who does not work." The ACHIEVE variable was measured by the question: "It is much better for everyone involved if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and family." Response categories were coded on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly agree to 4 = strongly disagree. While the 2002 WARM variable was consistent with that of the 1995 cycle, the ACHIEVE variable, however, was changed slightly in wording, and was measured by the question: "It is much better for everyone if the man earns the main living and the woman takes care of the home and family." Responses were coded on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree. After the ACHIEVE variable was reverse-coded in both

waves, they were standardized and combined with the WARM variable into a new composite variable with higher mean scores indicating higher gender traditionalism ($\alpha = .55$). The cohabitation variable came from several survey items asking respondents' premarital and post-divorce cohabitation status. These items were recoded into a new variable with three categories: 1 = cohabitation before 1st marriage, 2 = cohabitation following divorce, and 3 = no cohabitation. This variable was further dummy-coded with no cohabitation as the reference category (Xu, Hudspeth and Bartkowski 2006).

Analysis

This study adopted a two-phase analysis approach. In the first phase, bivariate analysis was conducted to compare remarriage status with a number of independent variables, including denominational affiliation, religious salience and worship service attendance. The statistical methods for the bivariate analysis included a cross-tabulation of denominational affiliation by remarriage status, mean differences of remarriage timing across denominations, correlation between remarriage timing and religious salience and attendance, and a two-sample T-test for salience and attendance by remarriage status. These bivariate analyses yielded exploratory results allowing for a preliminary examination of remarriage differences across denominations and correlations between remarriage timing and religious salience and attendance.

The second phase of the analytical approach involved multivariate statistical analysis, namely, multivariate regression analysis. In order to examine the role of religion in the propensity and timing of remarriage among divorced women, two statistical techniques were implemented. First, logistic regression was used to examine

the likelihood of remarriage among different religious groups along with religious salience and worship service attendance. In this case, the dependent variable was remarriage status based on whether or not the divorced woman has remarried following divorce. Second, ordinary least squares (OLS) regression was used to examine the length of waiting time of remarrying following divorce by denominational affiliation, religious salience and worship service attendance. In both analyses, nested models were developed and estimated to explore the net effects of denominational affiliation, religious salience, and worship service attendance on the propensity and timing of remarriage with all sociodemographic variables controlled for.

Logistic regression is appropriate for the examination of the propensity of remarriage because the dependent variable (whether the respondent remarried) was dichotomously coded as 0 for not remarried and 1 for remarried. This technique is frequently used to model the relationship between a dichotomous dependent variable and a set of independent variables (Kutner, Nachtsheim and Neter 2004; Powers and Xie 2000). OLS regression is appropriate for the examination of the timing of remarriage following divorce because the dependent variable (waiting time to remarry following divorce in century months) satisfies the specific assumptions of this technique. For example, the dependent variable is continuous and normally distributed (Menard 2001).

Both techniques resulted in a total of five nested models in testing the proposed research hypotheses. Model 1 was the baseline model that simply enlisted all sociodemographic control variables, including age at first marriage, age at divorce, race, number of residential children, education, employment status, total family income, urban/rural residence and wave of survey (1995 or 2002) to test the effects of these

variables on the propensity and timing of remarriage. Model 2 featured all sociodemographic variables included in Model 1 plus denominational affiliation to test for denominational subcultural variations in the propensity and timing of remarriage among different faith traditions as well as unaffiliated while controlling for sociodemographics. With denominational affiliation removed from, Model 3 added religious salience to test for its independent influence on the propensity and timing of remarriage controlling for sociodemographics. Similarly, Model 4 removed religious salience and added worship service attendance to test for its independent effects on the propensity and timing of remarriage, again with sociodemographics controlled for. Models 3 and 4 were designed to test the role of religious salience and worship service attendance as opposed to denominational affiliation. Finally, Model 5, which is the full model, included all variables allowing for the examination of the propensity and timing of remarriage across religious denominations while controlling for the religious salience and worship service attendance variables as listed in Models 3 and 4 and all sociodemographic variables. This nested and rotating modeling strategy is advantageous because 1) it tests the independent effects of religious variables individually, and 2) it tests the non-spurious effects of religious variables collectively and holistically.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Once again, data for this study came from two waves of the National Survey of Family Growth (the 1995 and 2002 cycles). Surveys for the NSFG were based on personal interviews conducted in the homes of a national sample of women 15-44 years of age in the civilian, non-institutionalized population of the United States. As documented previously, two subsamples were tailored for this study. The first subsample, which is a full sample for this study containing a total of 3,291 divorced women, was used to explore the propensity of remarriage. The second subsample, encompassing 1,915 divorced women who were remarried at the time of study, was employed to examine the timing of remarriage. The results derived from various statistical analyses are highlighted and reported below.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics for all variables in the study are featured in Table 1. The analysis of the full sample containing both remarried (58.2%) and unremarried (41.8%) respondents show that the average age of first marriage among American women is 20.4 years and the average age of divorce is 25.6 years. Blacks represent 17% of the full sample, Hispanics represent 13.6%, whereas other races and ethnicities represent only

2.8%, with the rest of the sample being white. The average number of resident children is 1.3. The average educational attainment of the sampled respondents is one year of college or less. Other socioeconomic status variables reveal that 74% of the respondents are employed with an average income between \$20,000 and \$25,000 (from the untransformed income variable). Moreover, descriptive analysis of denominational affiliation shows that, of the 3,291 remarried and unremarried respondents, 24.7% are Catholic, 30.7% are conservative Protestant, and 16.2% are Mainline Protestants. In addition, 10.7% of the respondents reportedly belong to other unspecified Protestant affiliations, 5.1% belong to other faith traditions, and 12.6% are not affiliated with any organized religion. Finally the mean values (2.4 and 2.7 respectively) displayed in the table suggest that the respondents, on average, deem their religion important in their life and attend worship service quite regularly.

Descriptive analysis was also conducted for the remarried subsample. Results show that the average waiting time to remarriage following divorce for this subsample is 73.8 century months (more than 6 years), which appears to be longer than the duration reported by the Census Bureau. Results further show that the average age of first marriage for remarried respondents is 19.7 years and the average age of divorce is 24.1 years, both of which are somewhat younger than that of the full sample. Consistent with the full sample, blacks represent 11.5% of the subsample, Hispanics represent 13.2% and other races and ethnicities represent 2.2%, with the majority of the subsample being white. Corresponding to the full sample, the average number of resident children for remarried respondents is 1.4. Educational attainment statistics show that most remarried respondents have received a high school diploma. The other two socioeconomic status

variables reveal that 71.5% of the respondents are employed with an average income between \$25,000 and \$30,000. The analysis further shows that among the 1,915 remarried respondents, 24.2% are Catholic, 30.9% are conservative Protestant, 18.2% are Mainline Protestants, 11.1% belong to other unspecified Protestant affiliations, 4.5% belong to other religions, and 11.1% do not belong to any organized religion. Similar to the full sample, the respondents included in this subsample, on average, deem their religion important in their life and attend worship service quite regularly (2.4 and 2.7 respectively).

Bivariate Analysis

Table 2 features bivariate analysis, which contains a cross-tabulation of denominational affiliation by remarriage status. Results show that 51% of non-affiliates have remarried. By comparison, 57% of Catholics, 58% of conservative Protestants, 65% of mainline Protestants, 60% of other Protestants and 52% of the respondents in the other religious faith traditions have remarried. The chi-squared statistic is statistically significant at the .000 level, suggesting that women who are affiliated with Christian denominations are more likely to remarry following divorce than their unaffiliated counterparts.

Table 3 depicts two-sample T-tests for religious salience and worship service attendance by remarriage status. Results of religious salience show that the mean values for unremarried and remarried respondents are 2.38 and 2.43, respectively. Results of worship service attendance show that the mean frequencies for unremarried and remarried respondents are 2.62 and 2.69, respectively. While the former mean difference

is statistically significant, the latter is statistically insignificant. The implications are twofold. On the one hand, women who deem their religion important in their life on a continuum are more likely to remarry following divorce than their counterparts who view religion less important; on the other hand, the frequency of worship service attendance does not seem to matter, statistically speaking, in the propensity of remarriage.

Table 4 displays the mean differences of remarriage timing across religious denominations through the analysis of variance. Recall that remarriage timing is measured in century months (year of divorce * 12 + month). As such, a higher mean indicates a longer waiting time until remarriage following divorce. Results show that non-affiliates and Catholics have the highest means of 78.2 and 79.2, respectively. Conservative Protestants, mainline Protestants and other Protestants, on the other hand, have the means of 71.98, 67.38 and 75.02, respectively. Additionally, those in the other faith traditions have a mean of 68.74. Taken together, the analysis of variance suggests that women who are mainline Protestant, belong to other faith traditions, and are affiliated with conservative Protestant and other Protestant denominations remarry sooner than their non-affiliated and Catholic counterparts (the analysis is statistically significant at least at the .001 level).

Turning to Table 5, which contains correlations between remarriage timing and religious salience and worship service attendance, it can be noted that there are negative correlations between both remarriage timing and religious salience and remarriage timing and worship service attendance. However, both negative correlations are statistically insignificant.

Multivariate Analysis

The second phase involves two types of regression analyses. First, logistic regression was used to examine the propensity of remarriage among different religious groups, controlling for all sociodemographic variables. Additionally, the dichotomous remarriage status variable (1 = remarried, 0 = unremarried) was regressed on religious salience and worship service attendance separately, again controlling for all sociodemographic variables. A total of five models were estimated and shown in Table 6. Model 1 is the baseline model with all sociodemographic variables included. Denominational affiliation, religious salience and worship service attendance were added sequentially and separately into the baseline model, which gave rise to Models 2-4. Model 5 is the full model containing all variables.

Regression results displayed in Model 1 show that for each additional year of age at first marriage, the odds of remarrying for the respondent decrease by 2.7%, and for each additional year of age at divorce, the odds of remarrying decrease by 11.2%. On the other hand, for each additional resident child, the odds of being remarried increase by 19%. Race variables show that the odds for black and Hispanic respondents to be remarried are 55.4% and 34.5% lower than that for whites, respectively. The odds for other races and ethnicities are 42% lower than for whites. Results also show that if the respondent is employed, the odds of being remarried are 52.6% lower as compared to those who are unemployed. The regression coefficient for the income variable shows that for each unit increase in total family income, the odds of being remarried increase by 22.8%. Conversely, for each unit increase in education, the odds of being remarried decrease by 4.9%. The gender ideology index indicates that for each unit increase in

gender traditionalism, the odds of remarrying increase by 28.7%. In terms of cohabitation, the result shows that if the respondent cohabited following divorce, the odds of remarrying are 137.8% higher than those who have never cohabited.

While the same control variables remain statistically significant as shown in Model 1 of Table 6, excluding age at first marriage, Model 2 contains the five dummy-coded denominational affiliation variables, with non-affiliates as the reference category. The regression coefficient shows that holding all other variables constant, when compared to those respondents who are unaffiliated, being a Catholic increases the odds of remarrying by 43.8%. Again, holding all other variables constant, being a conservative Protestant increases the odds of remarrying by 123% as compared to being an unaffiliate. Likewise, the odds of remarrying for mainline Protestants and other Protestants are 102.2% and 73.8% higher, respectively, than that for non-affiliates, net of the control variables. Similarly, the odds of remarrying for women who belong to other faith traditions are 61.8% higher than that of those who are unaffiliated. Given the findings that closely correspond to the bivariate results shown in Table 2, Hypotheses 2a-d and 3 are partially supported.

With the same significant control variables as shown in Model 1, Model 3 contains a religious salience variable to test the effect of the importance of religion on propensity of remarriage. The result shows that, holding all other variables constant, for each unit increase in religious salience, the odds of remarrying increase by 43%. This finding is consistent with the result stemming from the bivariate analysis reported in Table 3. Thus, Hypothesis 4 is partially supported.

Model 4 contains the same significant control variables as shown in Models 1 and 3. As featured in Model 4, with regard to worship service attendance, the regression result shows that for each unit increase in worship service attendance, the odds of remarrying increase by 24.1%, holding all other variables constant. It turns out that this multivariate finding is inconsistent with that of the bivariate analysis reported in Table 3 where the result is not statistically significant. Nevertheless, given this regression result, it can be stated with a high level of confidence that Hypothesis 5 is partially supported.

Model 5 features all variables. With the same significant control variables as shown in Model 2, Model 5 contains the five dummy-coded religious affiliation variables. With the exception of other Protestants and Catholics, the results are comparable to those reported in Model 1 of Table 6. That is, holding all other variables constant, the odds of remarrying are significantly greater for conservative and mainline Protestants, and those of other religious faiths. This finding clearly lends credence to Hypotheses 1 and 3, which predicted that religious subcultural variations are non-spurious and robust after all other religious variables and sociodemographic variables are controlled for with reference to remarriage propensity.

An auxiliary post-estimation test² (results not shown) further supports this denominational subcultural variation thesis in the propensity of remarriage. For example,

² The parameter estimates for denominational affiliation variables were tested in STATA in order to examine significant differences among all possible denominational groups, including those who are unaffiliated. To consider the robustness of the regression coefficients, the tests were conducted for the full regression model only, namely, Model 5.

as surmised, results show that Catholics are significantly less likely than both conservative and mainline Protestants to remarry.

Additionally, Model 5 included both religious salience and worship service attendance. Results show that holding all other variables constant, for each unit increase in religious salience, the odds of remarrying increase by 15.3%. In a similar fashion, for each unit increase in worship service attendance, the odds of remarrying increase by 15.3%. As a result, all of the research hypotheses articulated previously regarding the propensity of remarriage are partially supported³.

Second, ordinary least squares (OLS) regression was undertaken to examine the timing of remarriage following divorce among different religious groups, controlling for all sociodemographic variables. Additionally, as with propensity, the timing of remarriage was regressed on religious salience and worship service attendance, again controlling for all sociodemographic variables. It must be noted that the dependent variable in the second set of regression analyses is waiting time to remarriage (measured in century months) for remarried respondents only. Once again, a total of five models were estimated and the results are reported in Table 6. Within the table, Model 1 is the baseline mode containing all sociodemographic variables. Denominational affiliation, religious salience and worship service attendance were added sequentially and separately

³An estimation for the propensity of remarriage was done with an alternative model that included denomination with religious salience and worship service attendance respectively, including all sociodemographic variables. The results were consistent with those from Model 5, which included all variables.

to the baseline model, which resulted in Models 2-4. Model 5 is the full model containing all variables.

Model 1 generated an R-squared statistic of .285, indicating that 28.5% of the observed variance in remarriage timing is explained by all the sociodemographic variables. Results show that net of other control variables, for each additional year in age at divorce, the estimated length of waiting time between divorce and remarriage increases by 2.173 century months. On the other hand, for each additional year in age at first marriage, the estimated length of waiting time between divorce and remarriage decreases by 3.797 century months, controlling for other variables. The results for race variables indicate that the mean waiting time to remarriage for blacks and Hispanics is 21.343 and 13.451 century months longer, respectively, than that of whites. Results also indicate that for each additional child in the home, the estimated waiting time to remarriage decreases by 5.86 century months. In terms of cohabitation, results show that if the respondent cohabited before first marriage, the estimated waiting time to remarriage is 5.423 century months longer than that of those respondents who have not cohabited. Likewise, respondents who have cohabited following divorce wait, on average, 8.309 century months longer to remarry than those who have not cohabited.

The R-squared statistic of .291 in Model 2 suggests that 29.1% of the observed variance in remarriage timing is explained by the model, slightly higher than Model 1. While all of the same control variables remain statistically significant as shown in Model 1, with the exception of premarital cohabitation, Model 2 contains five dummy-coded denominational affiliation variables, with non-affiliate as the reference category. Holding all other variables constant, results show that conservative and other Protestants are

negatively and significantly different from non-affiliates regarding remarriage timing.

More specifically, the estimated waiting time to remarriage for conservative Protestants is 7.942 century months less than that of non-affiliates. Likewise, the mean waiting time to remarriage for other Protestants is 7.582 century months less than that of non-affiliates.

Thus, Hypotheses 2a-d are partially supported with regard to remarriage timing.

The R-squared value of .285 in Model 3 suggests that 28.5% of the observed variance in remarriage timing is explained by the independent variables. In addition to the same set of significant control variables shown in Model 1, Model 3 contains a religious salience variable to test the effect of the importance of religion on the timing of remarriage. Results show that, holding all other variables constant, religious salience did not significantly predict remarriage timing. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 is partially rejected.

Comparable to Model 3, the R-squared value of .286 in Model 4 suggests that 28.6% of the observed variance in remarriage timing is explained by the model. Once again, with the same set of control variables that are statistically significant as shown in Model 1, Model 4 contains a worship service attendance variable to test its effect on remarriage timing. As can be seen, holding all other variables constant, worship service attendance did not significantly predict remarriage timing. Thus, Hypothesis 5 is partially rejected.

Finally, Model 5 features all variables. The R-squared statistic of .291 suggests that 29.1% of the observed variance in remarriage timing is explained by the model, which is slightly better than Model 1. With the same significant controls variables, Model 5 also contains the five dummy-coded denominational affiliation variables, with non-affiliate as the reference category. The parameter estimates suggest that holding all

other variables constant, conservative Protestants remain significantly different from non-affiliates regarding remarriage timing. That is, the estimated waiting time to remarriage for conservative Protestants is 7.898 century months less than that of non-affiliates. An auxiliary post-estimation test (results not shown) shows additional denominational subcultural variations in the timing of remarriage following divorce. More specifically, the post-estimation test demonstrates that on average Catholics wait significantly longer than conservative, mainline and other Protestants to remarry. As a result, Hypotheses 2a-d are partially supported.

In addition to denominational affiliation, Model 5 included both religious salience and worship service attendance variables to test their effects on remarriage timing. Results show that, holding all other variables constant, neither religious salience nor worship service attendance has a significant effect on remarriage timing. Hence, Hypotheses 4 and 5 are partially rejected⁴.

⁴An estimation for the timing of remarriage was done with an alternative model that included denomination with religious salience and worship service attendance respectively, including all sociodemographic variables. The results were consistent with those from Model 5, which included all variables.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Denominational subcultural variations in the propensity and timing of remarriage have been, by and large, overlooked in the sociological literature to date. This is surprising for two important reasons. First, religion remains an important and dominant force in this country, and its impact on the attitudes and behaviors of people is paramount. Second, of equal importance is the continual rise of divorce and remarriage rates in America over the last several decades. Given the prevalence of both phenomena, it is imperative that scholars recognize and adequately measure their impact on one another. This study is first and systematic attempt to understand the role of religion in the propensity and timing of remarriage. It is also an attempt to better understand what has recently been an openly debated topic in the sociological literature, namely, the current state of the marriage and family in the United States.

The results from this study show that, as hypothesized, there are significant denominational subcultural variations in the propensity of remarriage among divorce women in the U.S. Not only are there significant and persistent religious subcultural variations when all sociodemographic variables are taken into account, there are also significant relationships between the propensity of remarriage and religious salience and

worship service attendance. These variations and relationships are remarkably robust and non-spurious.

More specifically, the results reveal that each of the religion categories including Catholics, conservative Protestants, mainline Protestants, other Protestants and other faith traditions, differ in significant ways in their likelihood to remarry following divorce when they are compared to their non-affiliate counterparts. As hypothesized, each of these groups is significantly more likely to remarry than those who are unaffiliated with organized religion. Interestingly, the auxiliary tests provided further support for my hypotheses regarding denominational subcultural variations in the propensity of remarriage. These ancillary analyses indicate that Catholics are significantly less likely to remarry than conservative and mainline Protestants. This is most likely due to the high cost of divorce and remarriage among the Catholic tradition. The Catholic Church prohibits second marriages without an annulment. The church also forbids remarried Catholics without annulments from receiving Communion or sacraments (Hornik 2001). Taken together, the findings uncovered in this part of analysis suggest that not only are there differences between religious and non-religious respondents, there are also variations among women who have diverse religious backgrounds.

With reference to religious salience and worship service attendance, the significant findings are also worthy of discussion. In general, it can be unequivocally concluded that as American women's religious salience and worship service attendance increase, so does their propensity of remarrying following divorce. This finding is not surprising because women who deem their religion important and who actively cultivate their religious networks by frequently partaking in religious services that are likely to

reinforce their pro-family and pro-nuptial ideologies will adhere most closely to their theological beliefs, religious values and norms. Consequently, they will not only consider remarrying after divorce but also do so to put their faith in practice.

In short, results concerning the propensity of remarriage from this study are consistent with the previous literature suggesting that denominations that place a greater emphasis on the marriage state are likely to exhibit higher propensity of remarriage. This statement is further supported by the evidence of the increased propensity of remarriage among American women who feel that religion is important in their life and who attend religious services frequently. Thus, it can be concluded without doubt that denominational subcultural variations in remarriage propensity are supportive of Christian Smith's religious subcultural identity theory. Indeed, it seems that, as Smith contends, the distinctive norms and values associated with various religious groups affect day-to-day activities and behaviors of their adherents. What makes these results more remarkable is the mounting evidence that supports the Protestant's notion of "redemptive remarriage" rather than the rhetoric of "adulterous remarriage." In this sense, the findings derived from this portion of analysis also endorse and underscore Christian Smith's thesis of religious engagement, meaning that religious organizations actively engage their adherents in and negotiate with the modern world by providing meanings and adaptations to rapid social changes for their members. Thus, remarriage as part of the life course revolution has been recognized and even encouraged by various Protestant denominations, particularly, conservative and mainline Protestant denominations. However, it is important to mention that most of the variations within the Protestant

denominations are due to the extensive variations within the conservative Protestant groups (Smith 1998).

Contrary to my hypotheses, however, the results for remarriage timing yielded unsystematic findings. For example, though there are significant differences in the timing of remarriage between conservative Protestants and religious nones controlling for all sociodemographic variables, no additional denominational subcultural variations, as surmised, surfaced among the remaining groups. Only through auxiliary tests, however, do we find some support for the denominational subcultural variation thesis. That is, as hypothesized, conservative, mainline and other Protestants tend to remarry significantly earlier than Catholics. Nonetheless, these differences can be attributed to increased acceptance of remarriage among some Protestant denominations and the high cost of divorce associated with the Catholic faith tradition. Consistent with prior literature, divorced Catholics appear to be hesitant in remarrying, thus taking longer to choose a remarriage partner in effort to avoid another divorce. Again, this is not surprising given the high cost of divorce and remarriage characteristic of the Catholic doctrine.

Religious salience and worship service attendance were analyzed as well to test their effects on remarriage timing. Surprisingly, with all sociodemographic factors taken into account, religious salience (measured by how important religion is to the respondent) and worship service attendance (measured by how frequently the respondent attends religious services) did not appear to have any significant effects on the timing of remarriage. As a result, my hypotheses regarding remarriage timing and religious salience and worship service attendance must be uniformly rejected.

In sum, as seen above, (1) conservative Protestants remarried significantly earlier than non-affiliates, and (2) conservative, mainline and other Protestants remarried significantly earlier than Catholics. Though these limited denominational subcultural variations in remarriage timing are in concert with those found in remarriage propensity, they are not as robust and pervasive. Also, in contrast with remarriage propensity, religious salience and worship service attendance did not significantly predict remarriage timing. While these findings in remarriage timing partially support the denominational subcultural variation thesis (e.g., on average, conservative and other Protestants remarry sooner than various groups), they beg two critical questions. First, why is the relationship between religious salience and attendance and remarriage timing non-existent (statistically), whereas it is exceptionally strong and persistent in the case of remarriage propensity? One speculation is that irrespective of women's self appraisal of the importance of religion and their frequency of worship service attendance, they are equally cautious about entering the second marital union to avoid both religious and social sanctions against another divorce. Secondly, why are denominational subcultural variations in remarriage timing substantially less permissible and pronounced than that of the timing of first marriage? It seems plausible to argue that since the timing of first marriage is more intimately related to childbearing schedule than is the timing of remarriage and, since many religious groups are highly pro-prenatal, it is therefore more essential for women, especially religious women, to consider the timing of first marriage as compared to remarriage.

Once again, it can be reiterated that while the findings regarding the propensity of remarriage overwhelmingly support all of the research hypotheses, the findings with

regard to remarriage timing do so only to a limited extent, suggesting that the denominational subcultural variations in the timing of first marriage, as found in previous research (Xu, Hudspeth and Bartkowski 2005), are not as pronounced as we first surmised in the timing of remarriage. Additionally, whereas the effects of religious salience and worship service attendance on the propensity of remarriage were exceptionally robust, thus supporting the research hypotheses, they failed to achieve the acceptable significance levels in predicting the timing of remarriage. Consequently, the hypotheses concerning remarriage timing are rejected.

Of the control variables included in the study of remarriage propensity, age at divorce, race, number of resident children, employment, income, gender ideology, and cohabitation status were found to be significant predictors. Though education was not significant in the full model, it is not unexpected for remarriage. Since most women might have finished their education by the time of divorce and remarriage, educational attainment will exert its influence on first marriage (i.e., to delay first marriage) but not on remarriage. In terms of gender ideology, it has been shown that women with more conservative or traditional gender ideologies tend to place a greater emphasis on the marriage state and childbearing, which would increase the propensity of remarriage in the wake of divorce. The findings uncovered here are consistent with this argument. Prior research suggests that gender traditionalism is most likely to be associated with the teachings of more conservative religious denominations. As far as cohabitation status is concerned, the results show that if a woman cohabits before first marriage, the odds for her to remarry will increase (in the full model). This finding is puzzling because it is the post-divorce cohabitation (in all models except the full model), not premarital

cohabitation that can serve as a steppingstone leading to remarriage. Obviously, future research is needed to unravel this unexpected relationship.

Results were somewhat mixed for the second part of the analysis. Many of the variables thought to be the most influential, based on previous literature, failed to exhibit the expected significant effects. Variables such as education, employment status, total family income, rural/urban residence, and gender ideology were not predictive of remarriage timing for the subsample of remarried American women. However, age at first marriage, age at divorce, race, and number of resident children did show significant effects on the timing of remarriage. Consonant with the literature on the timing of first marriage, post-divorce cohabitation does delay remarriage, despite the fact that post-divorce cohabitation fosters the likelihood of remarriage.

As noted, conservative Protestants are significantly more likely to remarry and remarry significantly earlier than other religious groups. Several mechanisms may be at work here. One explanation may be that these groups tend to have more conservative theologies than other groups. Therefore, their beliefs, values and norms regarding divorce and remarriage as well as other issues tend to be more traditional. The data used for this study, however, did not include a measure of theological belief. These traditional ideologies, as previous research has suggested, also reach over into other areas, which may affect the propensity and timing of remarriage. Research has shown that women within conservative Protestant groups are less likely to pursue education and careers, which may discourage or delay remarriage. Women within conservative Protestant denominations begin having children earlier and have more children than women within some other religious groups. Therefore, women may feel pressure to remarry if they are

faced with the responsibility of raising small children alone. Additionally, if these women divorce before they have children, they may pursue remarriage in order to do so.

Several limitations to this study should be acknowledged. First, the two cycles of the NSFG used in this study do not allow for the examination of the reciprocal relationship between religion and remarriage as noted by previous research (Thornton et al. 1992). Therefore, future research should consider using panel design to collect longitudinal data from respondents to tease out possible causal relationships between religion and remarriage.

Second, the tailored subsamples of the NSFG utilized in this study contained only female respondents, thus restricting the generalization of the research findings. Furthermore, since previous research has shown that females tend to be more religious than males (Peek, Lowe, and Williams 1991), future research should consider analyzing the relationship between religion and remarriage for American men. This, however, may be an advantage and not a limitation if we consider statistics that indicate that women are more likely than men to initiate divorce. The National Center for Health Statistics reports that from 1975 to 1988, in families with children present, wives file for divorce in approximately two-thirds of the cases each year. In 1975, 71.4% of the cases were filed by women, and in 1988, 65% were filed by women. Likewise, according to Sayer, England and Allison (2005), NSFH as well as other data, whether qualitative interviews or fixed response survey questions, indicate that women initiate the majority of divorces. Evidence shows, “60-70% of U.S. filings have been by women throughout the last century. There is variation by state, but women predominate in every state” (Sayer et al. 2005: 5).

Third, as noted previously, the diversity of denominational affiliation is limited. Despite the fact that the effort was made to use the pooled NSFG data to augment the sample size, the tailored subsamples are still modest in size. As a result, several distinct denominations are either underrepresented or not included at all in the data. Future research should make use of more refined and separate denominational categories, such as Mormon and Jewish faith traditions, as well as African American Protestants. Additionally, as discussed in previous literature, variations within conservative Protestantism may exist. As such, it might be useful and insightful to further break down the broad conservative and mainline Protestant groups.

Fourth, it is important to include measures of biblical inerrancy or literalism in future studies. Although this study has documented that some Christian denominations take a more literal interpretation of the Bible than others, no direct measures of biblical literalism are available in the data. To remedy this limitation, the current study used denominational affiliation to approximate distinct values and norms associated with various religious groups.

Another limitation is possible selection bias due to the age truncation problem derived from the National Survey of Family Growth. This limitation has two different connotations. First, the subsamples of divorced women aged 15-44 included in this study could bias the regression parameter estimates (also known as selection bias). It is so because older divorced women who were excluded from the study may have different religious backgrounds and characteristics, such as being more religious and/or more traditional. If this is indeed the case, then the parameter estimates for the religious variables will be underestimated.

Second, the presence of adult children may exert important influences on the propensity and timing of remarriage. However, the role of adult children in the propensity and timing of remarriage is not entirely clear. It is possible that they may interfere with women's decision to remarry and it is also possible that they may serve as an incentive to remarriage. Past discussions of remarriage trends have primarily focused on how a parent's remarriage affects young children and does not consider what effects this transition may have on adult children.

According to some researchers, it is possible that adult children serve as a barrier to remarriage. "Adults can also have trouble coping when a parent takes a new partner, whether it's following death or divorce. 'The impact of a parent's remarriage on adult children tends to be overlooked.' The parent-child bond is intensely strong and a parent's remarriage causes a shift in that relationship, which many adult children find unnerving" (<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,441200,00.html?iid=chix-sphere>).

Other evidence suggests that adult children may serve as an incentive to remarriage. Estimates suggest that about 11% of women will have their first marriages end in divorce some time after their 40th birthday (<http://www.stepfamilies.info/research/finding7.php>). It has been suggested that older women may not feel the same pressure, financially or otherwise, to remarry when they do not have young children in the home. More recently, however, it has been suggested that this trend is not relegated to only those women with young children. College has become a very common event in the lives of young adults and research suggests that many older women may lack the "education, skills, and employment experiences" that would allow them to assist their young adult children with college expenses. Evidence suggests that

parents continue to contribute financially to their adult children in other ways as well (e.g. the down payment for a home)

(<http://www.stepfamilies.info/research/finding7.php>). As a result, the financial burdens associated with having adult children may increase the pressure to remarry. Therefore, because of the possible influences adult children may exert on a parent's decision to remarry, future study should encompass respondents with a fuller age range.

Finally, when exploring denominational subcultural variations in remarriage timing, it is desirable to consider the effects of religious homogamy in denominational affiliation, religious salience, and worship service attendance between the respondent and the respondent's spouse. This approach has been fruitful in previous research on the relationship between religion and early childhood development, and the association between religion and domestic violence, just name a few (Bartkowski, Xu, and Levin forthcoming; Ellison, Bartkoski, Anderson 1999). Unfortunately, relevant information is unavailable in the NSFG but future research should make efforts to collect such information from the respondent. However, until new research is undertaken, the present study will remain a catalyst for investigating the relationship between religion and remarriage in contemporary American society.

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Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Full and Subsamples

	Full Sample				Remarried Subsample			
	%	n	Mean	SD	%	n	Mean	SD
Remarried	58.2	1,915	--	--	--	--	--	--
Unremarried	41.8	1,376	--	--	--	--	--	--
Length of Waiting Time (Remarried)	--	--	--	--	--	--	73.784	55.200
Age at 1st Marriage	--	--	20.430	3.670	--	--	19.650	3.127
Age at 1st Divorce	--	--	25.550	5.471	--	--	24.050	4.730
Black	17.1	564	--	--	11.5	220	--	--
Hispanic	13.6	447	--	--	13.2	252	--	--
Other Race	2.8	92	--	--	2.2	43	--	--
White	66.50	2,188	--	--	73.1	1,400	--	--
Number of Resident Children	--	--	1.300	1.165	--	--	1.390	1.180
Unemployed	25.6	842	--	--	28.5	546	--	--
Employed	74.4	2,449	--	--	71.5	1,369	--	--
Total Family Income	--	--	9.660	4.134	--	--	10.623	3.929
Education	--	--	13.060	2.491	--	--	12.890	2.396
Non Metro Residence	61.9	2,036	--	--	64	1,226	--	--
Metro Residence	38.1	1,255	--	--	36	689	--	--
Gender Ideology	--	--	0.033	0.848	--	--	0.088	0.850
Premarital Cohabitation	40.7	1,338	--	--	35.4	677	--	--
Post-divorce Cohabitation	33.8	1,111	--	--	44.3	849	--	--
No Cohabitation	25.5	842	--	--	20.3	389	--	--
1995 wave	62.7	2,063	--	--	64.9	1,243	--	--
2002 wave	37.3	1,228	--	--	35.1	672	--	--
Catholic	24.7	812	--	--	24.2	463	--	--
Conservative Protestant	30.7	1,010	--	--	30.9	592	--	--
Mainline Protestant	16.2	534	--	--	18.2	348	--	--
Other Protestant (Unspecified)	10.7	353	--	--	11.1	213	--	--
Other Faith Traditions	5.1	167	--	--	4.5	87	--	--
No Religious Affiliation	12.6	415	--	--	11.1	212	--	--
Religious Salience	--	--	2.409	0.709	--	--	2.430	0.685
Religious Attendance	--	--	2.666	1.332	--	--	2.699	1.339
N	--	3,291	--	--	--	1,915	--	--

Table 2. Cross-tabulation of Denomination by Remarriage Status

	Current Denomination						Total
	None	Catholic	Other Faith Tradition	Conservative Protestant	Mainline Protestant	Other Protestant	
Unremarried	203	349	80	418	186	140	1,376
	48.9%	43.0%	47.9%	41.4%	34.8%	39.7%	41.8%
Remarried	212	463	87	592	348	213	1,915
	51.1%	57.0%	52.1%	58.6%	65.2%	60.3%	58.2%
Total	415	812	167	1,010	534	353	3,291
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi Square = 23.053
Sig. 000

Table 3. Two Samples T-test for Religious Salience and Worship Service Attendance by Remarriage Status

	Marriage Status	N	Mean	F	Sig.
Religious Salience	Unremarried	1,376	2.3801	18.90900	0.00000
	Remarried	1,915	2.4298		
Worship Service Attendance	Unremarried	1,376	2.6199	0.85300	0.35600
	Remarried	1,915	2.6987		

Table 4. Mean Difference of Remarriage Timing by Denomination

Current Denomination	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
No Affiliation	78.2311	212	56.92873
Catholic	79.2397	463	56.41303
Other Faith Tradition	68.7356	87	45.83678
Conservative Protestant	71.9882	592	58.66950
Mainline Protestant	67.3764	348	48.54315
Other Protestant	75.0235	213	53.57427
Total	73.7843	1,915	55.19967

$F=4.350$

Sig. .001

Table 5. Correlation between Remarriage Timing and Religious Salience and Correlation Between Remarriage Timing and Worship Service Attendance

		Remarriage Timing	Religious Salience	Worship Service Attendance
Remarriage Timing	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.018	-0.018
	Sig. (2-tailed)	--	0.433	0.443
	N	1,915	1,915	1,915
Religious Salience	Pearson Correlation	-0.018	1	.570(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.433	--	0.000
	N	1,915	1,915	1,915
Worship Service Attendance	Pearson Correlation	-0.018	.570(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.443	0.000	--
	N	1,915	1,915	1,915

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6. Unstandardized Coefficients of Logistic Regressions to Predict Propensity of Remarriage (American Women)

<u>Independent Variable</u>	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>	<u>Model 4</u>	<u>Model 5</u>
Age at 1st Marriage	-.027 †	-.025	-.029 †	-.030 *	-.027
Age at 1st Divorce	-.119 ***	-.122 ***	-.122 ***	-.123 ***	-.124 ***
Black (Reference White)	-.807 ***	-.975 ***	-.967 ***	-.987 ***	-1.105 ***
Hispanic	-.408 **	-.305 *	-.462 ***	-.487 ***	-.381 †
Other Race	-.545 *	-.529 *	-.612 *	-.612 *	-.591
Number of Resident Children	.174 ***	.167 ***	.166 ***	.147 ***	.150 ***
Employment Status (Reference Unemployed)	-.746 ***	-.767 ***	-.750 ***	-.763 ***	-.774 ***
Total Family Income	.206 ***	.208 ***	.208 ***	.209 ***	.210 ***
Education	-.050 **	-.048 *	-.051 **	-.063 **	-.058
Urbanicity (Reference Rural)	-.113	-.082	-.094	-.116	-.086
Gender Ideology	.252 ***	.231 ***	.218 ***	.216 ***	.203 ***
Premarital Cohabitation (Reference No Cohab)	.045	.117	.129	.172	.197 ***
Post-divorce Cohabitation	.866 ***	.952 ***	.934 ***	.962 ***	.991
Year of Study (Reference 1995)	.187 *	.201 *	.220 *	.197 *	.220 *
Catholic (Reference None)	--	.363 *	--	--	.063
Conservative Protestant	--	.802 ***	--	--	.433 *
Mainline Protestant	--	.704 ***	--	--	.395 *
Other Protestant (Unspecified)	--	.553 **	--	--	.196
Other Faith Traditions	--	.481 *	--	--	.217 **
Religious Salience	--	--	.358 ***	--	.143 †
Religious Attendance	--	--	--	.216 ***	.143 **
Constant	2.904 ***	2.310 ***	2.116 ***	2.644 ***	2.101 ***
-2Loglikelihood Statistic	3485.607	3449.731	3451.904	3445.657	3424.246
Chi-Squared	988.012 ***	1023.88	7 ***	1021.714 ***	1027.961 ***
df	14	19	15	15	21
N	3,291	3,291	3,291	3,291	3,291

† $p < .10$

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Table 7. Unstandardized Coefficients of OLS Regressions to Predict Timing of Remarriage (American Women)

<u>Independent Variable</u>	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>	<u>Model 4</u>	<u>Model 5</u>
Age at 1st Marriage	-3.797 ***	-3.924 ***	-3.795 ***	-3.781 ***	-3.916 ***
Age at 1st Divorce	2.173 ***	2.191 ***	2.176 ***	2.182 ***	2.193 ***
Black (Reference White)	21.343 ***	23.909 ***	21.896 ***	22.072 ***	24.027 ***
Hispanic	13.451 ***	9.719 **	13.618 ***	13.727 ***	9.782 **
Other Race	9.657	8.584	9.900	9.862	8.592
Number of Resident Children	-5.860 ***	-5.901 ***	-5.857 ***	-5.738 ***	-5.848 ***
Employment Status (Reference Unemployed)	-0.928	-0.522	-1.034	-0.940	-0.492
Total Family Income	0.492	0.456	0.493	0.499	0.459
Education	-0.161	-0.292	-0.159	-0.117	-0.272
Urbanicity (Reference Rural)	3.684	3.516	3.639	3.756	3.562
Gender Ideology	1.083	1.419	1.200	1.243	1.448
Premarital Cohabitation (Reference No Cohab)	5.423 †	4.484	5.061 †	4.790	4.338
Post-divorce Cohabitation	8.309 **	7.385 **	7.990 **	7.832 **	7.286 **
Year of Study (Reference 1995)	53.697 ***	54.086 ***	53.633 ***	53.678 ***	54.095 ***
Catholic (Reference None)	--	3.170	--	--	3.187
Conservative Protestant	--	-7.942 *	--	--	-7.898 †
Mainline Protestant	--	-4.881	--	--	-4.882
Other Protestant (Unspecified)	--	-7.582 †	--	--	-7.532
Other Faith Traditions	--	.516	--	--	.425
Religious Salience	--	--	-1.352	--	0.455
Religious Attendance	--	--	--	-0.850	-0.369
Constant	71.482 ***	79.637 ***	74.904 ***	72.717 ***	78.973 ***
R Squared	0.285 ***	0.291 ***	0.285 ***	0.286 ***	0.291 ***
N	1,915	1,915	1,915	1,915	1,915

† $p < .10$
 * $p < .05$
 ** $p < .01$
 *** $p < .001$