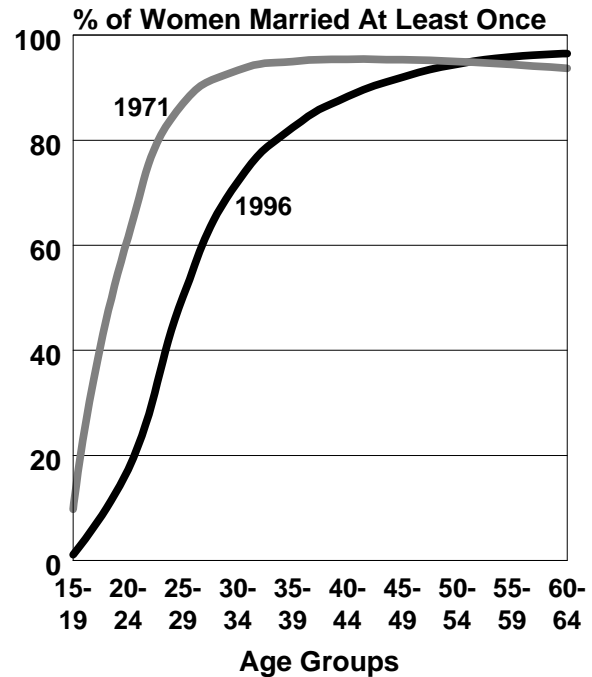
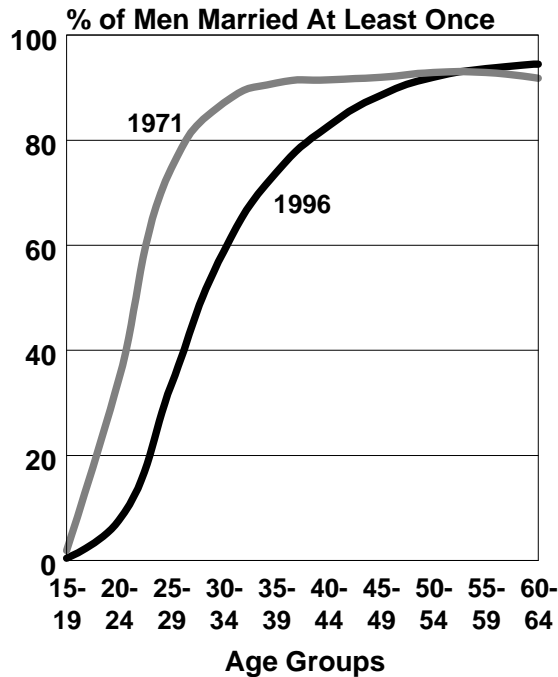


Focus on BC Families: *Marital Status*

To Marry or Not To Marry?
A Dramatic Change Has Occurred in Just One Generation.



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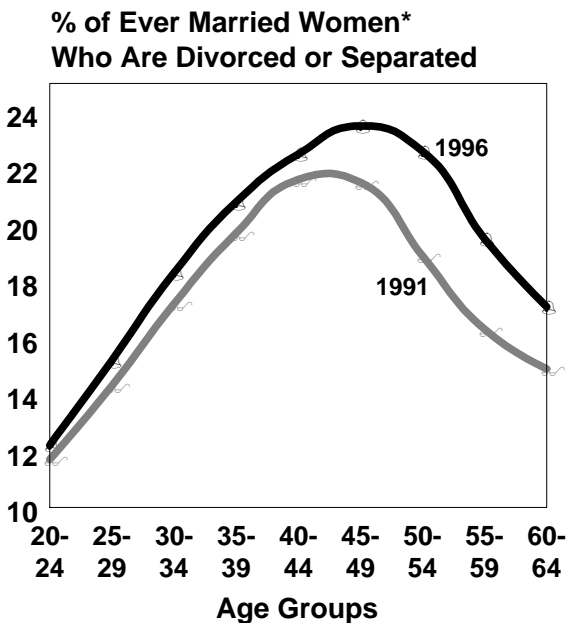
Choosing Not To Marry

Both men and women are marrying much later in life. When the patterns of the previous generation are compared to the patterns of today (those of the same age groups 25 years previously), the difference in attitude towards marriage is significant. In 1971, 87 per cent of 25-29 year old women had been married at least once, while amongst their daughters, only 50 per cent have been married by that age. The father/son differences are even more pronounced. Today, the probability that a young man between the age of 25 to 29 would have married is only 33 per cent while the probability that his father would have been married by that age was 75 per cent.

From the graph above, it appears as though the inter-generation difference is entirely the result of the current generation delaying marriage longer than their parents. (By the age of 60, differences in the marriage profiles seem to disappear.) However, by comparing 1991 and 1996 Census data, there is evidence that other social changes have been happening. For those currently under 50, it is likely there will be a higher proportion remaining single for life than was the case for the previous generation. Amongst 40 to 50 year olds, there would have to be a very high marriage rate in the next 10 years -- three times what it was between 1991 and 1996 -- to raise their lifetime "ever married rate" close to that of their parents.

Marriage Breakdown

The separated/divorced rate continues to rise for both men and women. The chart below shows women's separation/divorce profile. The profile for men is similar in pattern, although at slightly lower levels because men are more inclined to remarry after marriage breakdown.



*Excludes Widows

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From the graph it becomes apparent that significant changes have been occurring amongst those over age 45. In just five years, the proportion of 50 to 60 year olds who are no longer living with their spouse (or ex-spouse) has climbed by approximately 3 percentage points. This bulge of separated/divorced persons will be moving into the retirement age categories in the next ten years. Assuming the remarriage rate remains low amongst this age group, the future could see a significant increase in the proportion of seniors living alone. This, in turn, may increase demand for publicly funded home support programs.

Widowhood

Among all persons over the age of 64, widowhood (widow(er)s as a percent of married and widowed) has decreased. This is particularly true for women. The probable reason for this is that life expectancy continues to increase, faster for men than for women, resulting in the life expectancy for men catching up to that for women. In 1996, the probability of a 70-74 year old ever-married woman being a widow was 54 per cent, a decrease of 3 percentage points from 1991.

**BRITISH COLUMBIA - 1996
LEGAL MARITAL STATUS BY LIVING ARRANGEMENTS
MALE BY 5 YEAR AGE GROUPS**

Male Population 15+		Never Married			Married					Widowed			Divorced		
					Separated										
		Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Living With Spouse	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law
All Ages	1462770	501685	439715	61970	824675	778640	46035	37930	8105	33365	30985	2380	103025	72600	30425
15-19	124645	124100	123235	865	410	345	65	65	0	10	10	0	120	110	10
20-24	119950	110845	100870	9975	8675	8115	560	515	45	25	25	0	400	330	70
25-29	134905	89790	72635	17155	42380	39650	2730	2360	370	95	85	10	2645	1865	780
30-34	154255	63600	49715	13885	82530	77105	5425	4525	900	215	165	50	7910	5275	2635
35-39	160830	42180	32900	9280	104505	97280	7225	5895	1330	370	290	80	13770	9190	4580
40-44	152175	26280	21050	5230	108390	100895	7495	5990	1505	600	460	140	16900	11425	5475
45-49	141665	16215	13310	2905	106265	99435	6830	5465	1365	945	770	175	18240	12310	5930
50-54	105285	8470	7255	1215	81780	77010	4770	3805	965	1185	985	200	13850	9415	4435
55-59	84290	5365	4800	565	67480	64355	3125	2505	620	1570	1325	245	9870	7025	2845
60-64	76865	4250	3870	380	62660	60175	2485	2040	445	2545	2260	285	7410	5585	1825
65+	207905	10590	10075	515	159605	154270	5335	4785	550	25805	24610	1195	11910	10075	1835

% Distribution

Male Population 15+		Never Married			Married					Widowed			Divorced		
					Separated										
		Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Living With Spouse	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law
All Ages	100.0	34.3	30.1	4.2	56.4	53.2	3.1	2.6	0.6	2.3	2.1	0.2	7.0	5.0	2.1
15-19	100.0	99.6	98.9	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
20-24	100.0	92.4	84.1	8.3	7.2	6.8	0.5	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.1
25-29	100.0	66.6	53.8	12.7	31.4	29.4	2.0	1.7	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	2.0	1.4	0.6
30-34	100.0	41.2	32.2	9.0	53.5	50.0	3.5	2.9	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.0	5.1	3.4	1.7
35-39	100.0	26.2	20.5	5.8	65.0	60.5	4.5	3.7	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.0	8.6	5.7	2.8
40-44	100.0	17.3	13.8	3.4	71.2	66.3	4.9	3.9	1.0	0.4	0.3	0.1	11.1	7.5	3.6
45-49	100.0	11.4	9.4	2.1	75.0	70.2	4.8	3.9	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.1	12.9	8.7	4.2
50-54	100.0	8.0	6.9	1.2	77.7	73.1	4.5	3.6	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.2	13.2	8.9	4.2
55-59	100.0	6.4	5.7	0.7	80.1	76.3	3.7	3.0	0.7	1.9	1.6	0.3	11.7	8.3	3.4
60-64	100.0	5.5	5.0	0.5	81.5	78.3	3.2	2.7	0.6	3.3	2.9	0.4	9.6	7.3	2.4
65+	100.0	5.1	4.8	0.2	76.8	74.2	2.6	2.3	0.3	12.4	11.8	0.6	5.7	4.8	0.9

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census of Canada

Prepared By: BC STATS

**BRITISH COLUMBIA - 1991
LEGAL MARITAL STATUS BY LIVING ARRANGEMENTS
MALE BY 5 YEAR AGE GROUPS**

Male Population 15+		Never Married			Married					Widowed			Divorced		
					Separated										
		Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Living With Spouse	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	
All Ages	1286555	417900	367955	49945	759420	718640	40780	32475	8305	29845	27685	2160	79410	54200	25210
15-19	108175	107540	106720	820	565	505	60	55	5	35	35	0	35	30	5
20-24	112795	101655	91100	10555	10725	10025	700	635	65	35	30	5	385	280	105
25-29	133450	79470	63875	15595	50985	47845	3140	2565	575	55	35	20	2945	1915	1030
30-34	145575	49575	38770	10805	87755	82110	5645	4470	1175	180	140	40	8070	4975	3095
35-39	139520	28620	22600	6020	98675	92040	6635	5070	1565	320	235	85	11905	7515	4390
40-44	132425	17035	13950	3085	100385	93700	6685	5060	1625	550	395	155	14460	9200	5260
45-49	101765	8980	7705	1275	80315	75405	4910	3785	1125	705	570	135	11765	7595	4170
50-54	81935	5615	5030	585	66435	62960	3475	2705	770	970	780	190	8910	6090	2820
55-59	75685	4635	4195	440	62465	59680	2785	2235	550	1605	1380	225	6980	5090	1890
60-64	72875	4705	4395	310	59675	57450	2225	1870	355	2730	2415	315	5770	4525	1245
65+	182355	10070	9615	455	141445	136920	4525	4040	485	22640	21635	1005	8195	7000	1195

% Distribution

Male Population 15+		Never Married			Married					Widowed			Divorced		
					Separated										
		Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Living With Spouse	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	
All Ages	100.0	32.5	28.6	3.9	59.0	55.9	3.2	2.5	0.6	2.3	2.2	0.2	6.2	4.2	2.0
15-19	100.0	99.4	98.7	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
20-24	100.0	90.1	80.8	9.4	9.5	8.9	0.6	0.6	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.2	0.1
25-29	100.0	59.6	47.9	11.7	38.2	35.9	2.4	1.9	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	1.4	0.8
30-34	100.0	34.1	26.6	7.4	60.3	56.4	3.9	3.1	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.0	5.5	3.4	2.1
35-39	100.0	20.5	16.2	4.3	70.7	66.0	4.8	3.6	1.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	8.5	5.4	3.1
40-44	100.0	12.9	10.5	2.3	75.8	70.8	5.0	3.8	1.2	0.4	0.3	0.1	10.9	6.9	4.0
45-49	100.0	8.8	7.6	1.3	78.9	74.1	4.8	3.7	1.1	0.7	0.6	0.1	11.6	7.5	4.1
50-54	100.0	6.9	6.1	0.7	81.1	76.8	4.2	3.3	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.2	10.9	7.4	3.4
55-59	100.0	6.1	5.5	0.6	82.5	78.9	3.7	3.0	0.7	2.1	1.8	0.3	9.2	6.7	2.5
60-64	100.0	6.5	6.0	0.4	81.9	78.8	3.1	2.6	0.5	3.7	3.3	0.4	7.9	6.2	1.7
65+	100.0	5.5	5.3	0.2	77.6	75.1	2.5	2.2	0.3	12.4	11.9	0.6	4.5	3.8	0.7

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 Census of Canada

Prepared By: BC STATS

**BRITISH COLUMBIA - 1996
LEGAL MARITAL STATUS BY LIVING ARRANGEMENTS
FEMALE BY 5 YEAR AGE GROUPS**

Female Population 15+		Never Married			Married					Widowed			Divorced		
					Separated										
		Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Living With Spouse	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law
All Ages	1526580	410650	349995	60650	835225	778825	56400	49110	7290	147635	143395	4240	133070	102370	30700
15-19	118290	117010	114055	2955	1150	1030	120	115	5	20	20	0	110	100	10
20-24	120895	100040	84865	15175	19855	18220	1635	1445	190	100	95	5	900	645	255
25-29	136345	67870	51250	16620	63100	57795	5305	4555	750	310	255	55	5060	3400	1660
30-34	157770	43965	32600	11365	101030	92445	8585	7235	1350	700	530	170	12080	8040	4040
35-39	165765	29145	21900	7245	117090	107135	9955	8410	1545	1415	1180	235	18110	12500	5610
40-44	156025	18230	14245	3985	114085	105035	9050	7660	1390	2210	1815	395	21500	15245	6255
45-49	140550	11265	9390	1875	103315	96135	7180	6185	995	3540	3020	520	22425	16595	5830
50-54	103105	5715	4980	735	76350	71710	4640	4100	540	4705	4175	530	16330	12820	3510
55-59	84125	3475	3170	305	62290	59385	2905	2620	285	6900	6365	535	11460	9620	1840
60-64	75765	2650	2505	145	53960	51765	2195	2070	125	10685	10210	475	8465	7560	905
65+	267945	11285	11035	250	122975	118150	4825	4700	125	117060	115730	1330	16635	15860	775

% Distribution

Female Population 15+		Never Married			Married					Widowed			Divorced		
					Separated										
		Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Living With Spouse	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law
All Ages	100.0	26.9	22.9	4.0	54.7	51.0	3.7	3.2	0.5	9.7	9.4	0.3	8.7	6.7	2.0
15-19	100.0	98.9	96.4	2.5	1.0	0.9	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
20-24	100.0	82.7	70.2	12.6	16.4	15.1	1.4	1.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.7	0.5	0.2
25-29	100.0	49.8	37.6	12.2	46.3	42.4	3.9	3.3	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.0	3.7	2.5	1.2
30-34	100.0	27.9	20.7	7.2	64.0	58.6	5.4	4.6	0.9	0.4	0.3	0.1	7.7	5.1	2.6
35-39	100.0	17.6	13.2	4.4	70.6	64.6	6.0	5.1	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.1	10.9	7.5	3.4
40-44	100.0	11.7	9.1	2.6	73.1	67.3	5.8	4.9	0.9	1.4	1.2	0.3	13.8	9.8	4.0
45-49	100.0	8.0	6.7	1.3	73.5	68.4	5.1	4.4	0.7	2.5	2.1	0.4	16.0	11.8	4.1
50-54	100.0	5.5	4.8	0.7	74.1	69.6	4.5	4.0	0.5	4.6	4.0	0.5	15.8	12.4	3.4
55-59	100.0	4.1	3.8	0.4	74.0	70.6	3.5	3.1	0.3	8.2	7.6	0.6	13.6	11.4	2.2
60-64	100.0	3.5	3.3	0.2	71.2	68.3	2.9	2.7	0.2	14.1	13.5	0.6	11.2	10.0	1.2
65+	100.0	4.2	4.1	0.1	45.9	44.1	1.8	1.8	0.0	43.7	43.2	0.5	6.2	5.9	0.3

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census of Canada

Prepared By: BC STATS

BRITISH COLUMBIA - 1991
LEGAL MARITAL STATUS BY LIVING ARRANGEMENTS
FEMALE BY 5 YEAR AGE GROUPS

Female Population 15+		Never Married			Married					Widowed			Divorced		
					Separated										
		Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Living With Spouse	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law
All Ages	1333250	332825	283570	49265	761230	713100	48130	40830	7300	135880	131815	4065	103320	78315	25005
15-19	103545	101805	98515	3290	1620	1485	135	120	15	50	50	0	65	45	20
20-24	111590	86080	70585	15495	24415	22435	1980	1650	330	110	100	10	980	650	330
25-29	134485	55555	41385	14170	73050	67355	5695	4595	1100	315	240	75	5575	3440	2135
30-34	148560	33350	24915	8435	102790	94805	7985	6410	1575	745	565	180	11675	7335	4340
35-39	141490	18820	14535	4285	105745	97530	8215	6630	1585	1275	1005	270	15650	10395	5255
40-44	130555	11350	9370	1980	98910	91760	7150	5950	1200	2135	1740	395	18155	12880	5275
45-49	98185	5765	4995	770	75220	70285	4935	4235	700	2930	2500	430	14275	10805	3470
50-54	79555	3525	3215	310	61465	58285	3180	2835	345	4170	3695	475	10395	8420	1975
55-59	72295	2610	2445	165	55285	52830	2455	2250	205	6590	6160	430	7810	6780	1030
60-64	73330	2760	2620	140	52410	50320	2090	1975	115	11445	10950	495	6715	6095	620
65+	239660	11205	10990	215	110325	106005	4320	4195	125	106110	104805	1305	12030	11475	555

% Distribution

Female Population 15+		Never Married			Married					Widowed			Divorced		
					Separated										
		Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Living With Spouse	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law	Total	Not Living Common-Law	Living Common-Law
All Ages	100.0	25.0	21.3	3.7	57.1	53.5	3.6	3.1	0.5	10.2	9.9	0.3	7.7	5.9	1.9
15-19	100.0	98.3	95.1	3.2	1.6	1.4	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
20-24	100.0	77.1	63.3	13.9	21.9	20.1	1.8	1.5	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.9	0.6	0.3
25-29	100.0	41.3	30.8	10.5	54.3	50.1	4.2	3.4	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.1	4.1	2.6	1.6
30-34	100.0	22.4	16.8	5.7	69.2	63.8	5.4	4.3	1.1	0.5	0.4	0.1	7.9	4.9	2.9
35-39	100.0	13.3	10.3	3.0	74.7	68.9	5.8	4.7	1.1	0.9	0.7	0.2	11.1	7.3	3.7
40-44	100.0	8.7	7.2	1.5	75.8	70.3	5.5	4.6	0.9	1.6	1.3	0.3	13.9	9.9	4.0
45-49	100.0	5.9	5.1	0.8	76.6	71.6	5.0	4.3	0.7	3.0	2.5	0.4	14.5	11.0	3.5
50-54	100.0	4.4	4.0	0.4	77.3	73.3	4.0	3.6	0.4	5.2	4.6	0.6	13.1	10.6	2.5
55-59	100.0	3.6	3.4	0.2	76.5	73.1	3.4	3.1	0.3	9.1	8.5	0.6	10.8	9.4	1.4
60-64	100.0	3.8	3.6	0.2	71.5	68.6	2.9	2.7	0.2	15.6	14.9	0.7	9.2	8.3	0.8
65+	100.0	4.7	4.6	0.1	46.0	44.2	1.8	1.8	0.1	44.3	43.7	0.5	5.0	4.8	0.2

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 Census of Canada

Prepared By: BC STATS