

## Data in Many Forms ...

Statistics Canada disseminates data in a variety of forms. In addition to publications, both standard and special tabulations are offered on computer print-outs, microfiche and microfilm, and magnetic tapes. Maps and other geographic reference materials are available for some types of data. Direct access to aggregated information is possible through CANSIM, Statistics Canada's machinereadable data base and retrieval system.

## How to Obtain More Information

Inquiries about this publication and related statistics or services should be directed to:

Housing, Family and Social Statistics
Division,
Statistics Canada, Ottawa, K1A OT6 (Telephone: 9909295) or to the Statistics Canada reference centre in:

St. John's (772-4073) Sturgeon Falls (753-4888)
Halifax (426-5331) Winnipeg (949-4020)
Montréal (283-5725) Regina (359-5405)
Ottawa (990-8116) Edmonton (420-3027)
Toronto (973-6586) Vancouver (666-3691)

Credit Card only (973-8018)
Toll-free access is provided in all provinces and territories, for users who reside outside the local dialing area of any of the regional reference centres.

Newfoundland and Labrador Zenith 0-7037
Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island

1-800-565-7192
Quebec 1-800-361-2831
Ontario 1-800-268-1151
Manitoba 1-800-282-8006
Saskatchewan 1(112)800-667-3524
Alberta 1-800-222-6400
British Columbia (South and Central)

112-800-663-1551
Yukon and Northern B.C.
(area served by
NorthwesTel Inc.)
Zenith 0-8913
Northwest Territories
(area served by
NorthwesTel Inc.)
Zenith 2-2015

## How to Order Publications

This and other Statistics Canada publications may be purchased from local authorized agents and other community bookstores, through the local Statistics Canada offices, or by mail order to Publication Sales and Services, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, K1A OT6.
1(613)990-8114
1(613)990-8115

# FAMIIY HISTORY SURVEY 

## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS


by Dr. THOMAS K. BURCH*

Housing, Family and
Social Statistics Division
*Dr. Thomas K. Burch is a professor in the
Department of Sociology, The University of Western Ontario.

Published under the authority of the
Minister of Supply and Services Canada
c Minister of Supply and Services
Canada 1985
August 1985
8-4500-517
Price: Canada, $\$ 20.00$
Other Countries, $\$ 21.00$

Payment to be made in Canadian funds or equivalent

Catalogue 99-955
ISBN 0-660-52865-7
Ottawa

## PREFACE

This publication reports initial findings from Statistics Canada's 1984 Family History Survey. These data provide new insights into the relationship between significant demographic events - such as marriages, divorces, births, deaths, labour force participation and work interruption - and movement through the family life cycle. New perspectives emerge on divorce, remarriage, common-law unions and the raising of natural, adopted and step children.

These data represent the first set of longitudinal data on family histories - not previously available because of operational and cost constraints. They add an important dimension to the crosssectional data on households and families, produced for many years by Statistics Canada from sources such as the Census and Labour Force Survey. Those cross-sectional data provide a family life profile at specific points in time, but have lacked the time-varying dimension despite being supplemented by projections of expected number of households and families.

I believe this report, and the new statistical information on which it is based, will contribute significantly to aiding public understanding and government policy development concerning Canadian families.

Martin B. Wilk,
Chief Statistician of Canada.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The concept, original proposal and preliminary specifications of the Family History Survey were initiated by Gordon E. Priest, Director of the Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division, Statistics Canada. Collection and processing operations were managed by Gary Catlin of the Special Surveys Division. Rita Nesich of Census and Household Survey Methods Division served as an advisor in all areas where methodological issues were involved. The following persons of the Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division contributed to the production of this manuscript: final specifications were the responsibility of Kathy Marshall; Boriss Mazikins managed the creation of the data base; tabulations used in this report were produced under Brian Hamm's direction; Maureen Moore verified the data and edited the final text; Lucie Lamadeleine typed the manuscript on the word processor, and Georgette Gaulin coordinated final phases of report production.

This manuscript was prepared by Dr. Thomas K. Burch of The University of Western Ontario. It was reviewed in early draft by Ian Poole of The University of Waikato (New Zealand), and in final version by Evelyne Lapierre-Adamcyk of the Université de Montréal.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page
Introduction ..... 9
I. Marriage, Common-law Partnerships and the Dissolution of Unions ..... 10
II. Parenthood: Raising Children, Step-children and Adopted Children ..... 17
III. Leaving the Parental Home ..... 22
IV. Work Interruptions and Their Relation to Marriage and Childrearing ..... 25
V. Subgroup Differentials ..... 27
VI. Summary ..... 31
List of Tables
Table

1. Distribution of Population Represented by FHS Respondents, by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 10
2. Per Cent Ever Married by Number of Marriages, Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 11
3A. Per Cent Ever Divorced by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 12
3B. Per Cent Ever Widowed by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 12
3C. Of Ever-married Persons Per Cent Who Have Ever Separated But Not Divorced by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 12
4A. Per Cent Ever in Common-law Partnerships by Number, Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 14
4B. Per Cent Ever in a Union (Marriage or Common-law) and Ever in Two or More Unions, by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 14
3. Per Cent Whose First Marriage Was to a Common-law Partner, and Per Cent of Those Ever in a Common-law Union Who Married a Common-law Partner by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 15
4. Average Age at Various Marital and Family Events by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 16
5. Per Cent Who Have Ever Raised Natural Children, Step-children or Adopted Children by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 17
6. Per Cent of Males Who Have Adopted One or More Children by Number of Own Children, Canada, 1984 ..... 18
7. For Respondents With Natural or Adopted Children, Average Age at First Birth or at First Adoption, by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 19
8. Per Cent With Step-children Who Have Legally Adopted Them, by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 19
9. Average Number of Children Ever Born to Ever-divorced and Never-divorced Persons by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 20
10. Reported Children by Type (Natural, Adopted, Step): Percentage Distribution Within Age Groups, by Sex of Respondent, Canada, 1984 ..... 21
11. Per Cent of Children Living in the Responding Parent's Household, by Age Group and Sex of Child, and Sex of Respondent, Canada, 1984 ..... 22
12. Per Cent of Children Living in the Responding Parent's Household, by Type and Age Group of Child, and Sex of Respondent, Canada, 1984 ..... 23
13. Average Age at Home-leaving for Children Living Outside Respondent's Home, by Type and Age Group (17+) of Child, and Sex of Respondent, Canada, 1984 ..... 24
14. Average Age at Home-leaving for Children Living Outside Respondent's Home by Age Group (20+) and Sex of Child, and Sex of Respondent, Canada, 1984 ..... 24
15. Per Cent Who Have Ever Worked, and Who Have Experienced Work Interruptions by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 26

## Table

18. Reasons for Work Interruption Among Respondents With One Interruption: Percentage Distribution Within Age Groups, by Sex, Canada, 1984 ..... 27
19. Various Indicators of Marriage and Family Life by Province or Region, Canada, 1984 ..... 28
20. Various Indicators of Marriage and Family Life by Educational Level, Canada, 1984 ..... 30
A-1. Frequency of Imputation or Manual Correction by Type of Event Record, Family History Survey, 1984 (Per cent of Records Affected) ..... 34
A-2. Persons in a Union (Marriage or Common-law) by Age Group, Comparison Between Population Estimates, Family History Survey and Labour Force Survey, Canada, 1984 ..... 37
A-3. Divorces by Year Showing Percentage Distribution, Comparison Between Family History Survey and Vital Statistics, Canada, 1960-1982 ..... 38
A-4. Per Cent of Women Currently and Ever in a Common-law Union By Age Group, Comparison Between Family History Survey and Canadian Fertility Survey, Canada, 1984 ..... 39

## Appendix

I. Study Design and Quality of Data ..... 33
II. Family History Survey Interview Schedule ..... 41
References ..... 49

## INTRODUCTION

We live in a period of great change in patterns of sexual behaviour, marriage and family formation. They are the subject of constant comment in the media and in daily conversation of Canadians. Recent reports from Statistics Canada have described current patterns of the delay and avoidance of formal or legal marriage, the rising incidence of divorce, and the drop in birth rates to levels below those needed for the very long-term replacement of the Canadian population from natural increase.

It is important, but not always easy, to keep these changes in family behaviour in perspective. For one thing, our perceptions of the Canadian family are distorted by news and television programs from the United States. Thus, although Canadian divorce rates have been rising sharply, they stood at very low levels until recently, and still are low in comparison with the United States. For another, our assessments of current behaviour often involve, if only implicitly, an idealized and romantic view of family life in the past. In Canada, we tend to compare the current situation unfavourably with the family of Victorian times, ignoring the frequency with which children were orphaned or were sent out of the family at a tender age, for service or boarding-school, the frequency with which marriage was disrupted by death or abandonment, or the frequency with which orphans had to adjust to step-parents.

Moreover, our perspective is hampered by a lack of relevant data. Ample statistics tell us how many divorces occur in a given year and how many people are currently divorced at the time of the census, but they are silent about how many Canadians have ever experienced divorce or remarriage. Similarly, these routine data sources do not allow us to study the interrelations among various events in a person's or a family's life. Do young adults leave home earlier if there is a large number of children in the family or if they are living with a step-parent? What are the relationships among marriage, childbearing and employment interruptions, and how do these relationships differ for men and women? The inability of routine data to answer these questions does not signal any defect in our census and vital statistics systems. Practical constraints limit the amount of detail they can pursue regarding any one topic. Only special-purpose surveys can provide the needed data, and only large surveys can provide reliable data for Canada as a whole and for specific subgroups of interest.

With these considerations in mind, Statistics Canada has sought to fill some of the factual gaps in our knowledge of Canadian family life by means of the first Family History Survey (FHS), conducted in February 1984. This survey involved personal interviews by telephone with some 14,000 respondents (approximately 6,750 males and 7,250 females between the ages 18 and 64 ). Eligible respondents were identified during the routine monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS), which is used among other things to estimate the amount of unemployment in Canada. (1) The respondents, who comprised only a fraction of the total LFS sample, were chosen to provide a representative sample of the Canadian population, exclusive of the Territories, Indian Reserves, and inmates of institutions. Table 1 gives the age and sex composition of the sample, using figures inflated to correspond to the total population, and indicates the approximate years of birth(2) of the various age groups.
(1) The FHS sample was chosen on the basis of age reported when the respondents first joined the Labour Force six month survey cycle: males in September 1983 and females in December 1983. Thus, persons who turned 18 in the months immediately preceding the FHS are not represented in the FHS sample. At the other end of the scale, those who just turned 65, are included in the sample. In tabulations the latter appear in the age group 60-64.
(2) Estimated on the basis of age reported in the Labour Force Survey.

TABLE 1. Distribution of Population Represented by FHS Respondents, by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984


* These numbers represent estimates of the numbers in each category in the total population of Canada (excluding residents of the Territories and Indian Reserves, inmates of institutions and Armed Forces personnel) as of the survey date, late February - early March 1984. They are derived from actual sample counts by means of a weighting scheme appropriate to the sample design.
** See Footnote (1), page 9, regarding composition of these two age groups.

Data collection went relatively smooth, with fewer problems than one might have expected given the personal character of some of the questions, and the need for the respondent to recall specific factual detail from the past, sometimes the distant past. Of all persons identified as eligible, 87.3\% agreed to be interviewed and were generally willing to answer all the questions. The accuracy of answers is difficult to assess, but indications are that it is high. The issue of data quality is discussed further in Appendix I.

This report is only a first look at some of the major findings of the Family History Survey, emphasizing points on which reliable national estimates are being provided for the first time, for example, the proportion who have ever divorced or remarried or ever lived together in a common-law union, or the age at which young adult children typically leave the parental home. Certain interesting questions which the data can answer, such as those of time trends in the various patterns of behaviour and interrelations among various life events and their timing, are not dealt with in detail or systematically, requiring as they do complex and time consuming statistical analyses and detailed presentation, which were not suitable to a preliminary overview. The full fruits of the Family History Survey will emerge in later reports, by Statistics Canada and by other researchers.

This report consists of five sections. Section I deals with marriage, cohabitation and the dissolution of unions. Section II deals with children raised by Canadian men and women: their own children, adopted children, and step-children. Section III describes the pattern of "home-leaving" among young adults. Section IV looks at the interrelations between family formation and work, particularly work interruptions. Section V looks at differences in behaviour by geographical region and by educational level. Throughout, attention is paid to differences between men and women, and to differences by age group, especially where these give clues to time trends in the behaviour in question.

## I. MARRIAGE, COMMON-LAW PARTNERSHIPS AND THE DISSOLUTION OF UNIONS

In all societies, adults normally marry. Canada is no exception, although in recent years patterns of marriage have been changing. Young adults tend to marry later. More marriages are being broken by divorce. And more people are living together as "man and wife" without the formality of legal marriage.

These patterns of change make it difficult to describe statistically or to interpret Canadian marital behaviour. In particular, registration data on legal marriages and census data on marital status can provide only a partial view of what is going on. As more people live in common-law partnerships before, between, and after legal inarriages, and as more people remarry after divorce or death of a former spouse, it becomes necessary to look at all more or less stable unions among adults, and to think in terms of an individual's movement from one type of union to another over a lifetime. The Family History Survey, with detailed histories of marriage and divorce and common-law partnerships and their dissolution, provides just the data needed. Some descriptive highlights of the data follow.

In view of the publicity given to high divorce and remarriage rates in recent years, it may come as something of a surprise to find that only a small minority of adult Canadians have ever been remarried, in fact only about 5\% or one in 20 (see Table 2). In relation to ever-married persons, the proportions are slightly larger, but still under $10 \%$. For example, $8.4 \%$ of females aged $40-49$ report having been married more than once (the highest proportion of any age-sex group), but still they constitute only $9 \%$ of ever-married persons in that age-sex group. To put it differently, the vast majority of ever-married Canadian adults, nine out of 10 roughly, have so far realized the traditional ideal of one marital partner.

TABLE 2. Per Cent Ever Married by Number of Marriages, Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984

| Sex and age group | Ever married | Number of marriages |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | One | Two | Three |
|  | per cent |  |  |  |
| Male |  |  |  |  |
| 18-29 | 33.9 | 33.2 | 0.7* | -** |
| 30-39 | 85.0 | 79.7 | 5.3 | - |
| 40-49 | 92.0 | 84.3 | 6.9 | 0.8* |
| 50-64 | 93.2 | 85.1 | 7.7 | 0.4* |
| All ages | 70.7 | 65.9 | 4.6 | 0.2* |
| Female |  |  |  |  |
| 18-29 | 45.3 | 44.2 | 1.2 | - |
| 30-39 | 88.0 | 81.5 | 6.3 | 0.2* |
| 40-49 | 93.4 | 84.9 | 8.1 | 0.3* |
| 50-64 | 94.1 | 86.1 | 7.5 | 0.5* |
| All ages | 75.8 | 70.5 | 5.1 | 0.2* |

[^0]Table 2 also shows that among those who have remarried, the number of remarriages is small. Less than $1 \%$ of any age-sex group has married three or more times; in fact, no fourth or higher order marriages were reported. The highest rate of third marriages occurs to males aged 40-49, a group young enough to have participated in the recent rise in divorce and experiencing the characteristically higher male remarriage rates after divorce or widowhood.

Remarriage can occur only after termination of a legal marriage by death or divorce. The first two panels of Table 3 show the proportions of Canadians who have ever experienced a divorce or who have ever been widowed. Again, the data show that divorce remains, for Canadian adults overall, a minority experience. Only about one in 10 of ever-married Canadian males and about one in eight of ever-married Canadian females have had a legal marriage end in divorce.

TABLE 3A. Per Cent Ever Divorced by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984

| Age group | Male |  | Female |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Of total | Of ever married | Of total | Of ever married |
|  | per cent |  |  |  |
| 18-29 | 1.4 | 4.1 | 3.7 | 8.2 |
| 30-39 | 9.9 | 11.7 | 13.8 | 15.7 |
| 40-49 | 12.8 | 13.9 | 15.0 | 16.1 |
| 50-64 | 8.1 | 8.6 | 9.1 | 9.7 |
| All ages | 7.1 | 10.1 | 9.4 | 12.4 |

TABLE 3B. Per Cent Ever Widowed by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984

| Age group | Male |  | Female |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Of total | Of ever married | Of total | Of ever married |
|  | per cent |  |  |  |
| 18-29 | - | - | 0.3* | 0.6* |
| 30-39 | 0.1* | 0.1* | 1.7 | 1.9 |
| 40-49 | 1.3* | 1.4* | 3.3 | 3.6 |
| 50-64 | 6.6 | 7.0 | 16.3 | 17.3 |
| All ages | 1.7 | 2.4 | 5.0 | 6.5 |

* These percentages represent very few cases and therefore may contain a high level of error.

TABLE 3C. of Ever-married Persons Per Cent Who Have Ever Separated But Not Divorced by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984

| Age group | Male | Female |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
|  | per cent |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  | 5.9 |
| $18-29$ | 5.0 | 5.3 |
| $30-39$ | 4.2 | 5.5 |
| $40-49$ | 3.4 | 3.4 |
| $50-64$ | 3.4 | 4.9 |

The differences by age group remind us that the situation is changing. A larger proportion of both males and females aged 30-49 have already experienced divorce than their counterparts aged 50-64, despite the fact that their narital histories are less nearly complete: some of these middle-aged persons will divorce some time in the future. Even among the youngest age group (18-29), ever-married females have a cumulative divorce rate nearly equal to that of males and females aged 50-64. In addition, about $6 \%$ of ever-married women aged 18-29 report that they are separated from a legal marriage, but not yet divorced (Table 3C). Some of these couples will be reconciled, but presumably many will proceed to a legal divorce -- the precise proportions are not known -- so that the effective rate of "marriage breakdown" is higher than that represented by the legal divorce rates given in Table 3A. Table 3C shows the proportion of ever-married persons in each age group reporting separation from legal marriage without divorce (as of the survey date).

These considerations help explain earlier figures reported by Statistics Canada suggesting a much higher incidence of divorce at some time in the future. In a 1983 report on divorce (McKie, Prentice and Reed) for example, a table based on rates of divorce by age for the years 1975-1977 suggests that the probability of ever divorcing for young married men and women is in the range 0.36 to 0.38 . More concretely, the tables show that if young married people were to experience over their lifetime the age-specific divorce rates observed in 1975-1977, close to two fifths of them would experience a divorce. A similar result is arrived at by means of an analysis of divorce rates by duration of marriage as observed in Canada through the year 1983 (Dumas, 1984).

What must be kept in mind about both these analyses is that, in effect, they make assumptions about the future behaviour (over the next 20 to 30 years) of young people and of those who have recently married. Specifically, they assume that people who are currently at young ages, say $25-29$ years of age, will experience when they reach ages 45-49 (20 years hence) the same rates of divorce experienced by persons aged 45-49 in the calendar years 1975-1977. Or, they assume that marriages currently at short durations, say three to five years, will experience, when they reach durations 13-15 (10 years hence), the same rates of divorce experienced by marriages of durations 13-15 in 1982. There is no way of knowing whether future divorce rates will be higher or lower than those experienced in recent years. There are arguments in favour of either view, but only the future can tell. The cumulative divorce rates reported above (for example, around $16 \%$ for women aged $30-49$ ) might best be viewed as lower bounds on estimates of eventual lifetime experience. These will certainly be higher, but no one knows how much higher.

Table 3B shows the lifetime experience of adult Canadians with widowhood. The proportion who have ever had a marriage dissolved by the death of a partner, as expected, rises steadily with age. It is highest by a considerable margin among older women, $17.3 \%$ among women aged $50-64$ compared to $7.0 \%$ among men of the same age. That women are more apt than men to have experienced widowhood is due to the combined operation of two facts: (1) women tend to marry men a few years older than themselves; (2) males experience higher death rates at every age than females.

Combining data from the three panels of Table 3 show once again that only a minority of Canadian adults (ever married) have experienced the end of a marriage. Among women of all ages, slightly fewer than one-quarter have had a marriage end by death, divorce or separation; among men, about one in six. For women aged 50-64, the combined proportion approaches one-third; among men of the same age group, about one-fifth. Above age 64, of course, the proportions would climb quickly along with the rising risk of death. But up until age 64, the majority of ever-married Canadians have experienced unbroken marriage.

Living together without benefit of marriage (in what the Family History Survey calls a common-law partnership) is not a new phenomenon, but that pattern of behaviour has increased markedly in recent years. Table 4A gives the percentage of adult Canadians who currently live in such a relationship, and the percentage who have ever done so, along with the number of such relationships.

Living "common-law" is far from the norm. At the time of the survey, only $5.2 \%$ of all male respondents and 6.5\% of all female respondents reported such a living arrangement. There is a clear relationship with age. Among men, the proportion for $18-29$ year olds ( $7.1 \%$ ) is two to three times that for those aged 50-64. Among women, the per cents for these two age groups differ by about a factor of four.

The age gradient in non-marital cohabitation(3) can be seen even more clearly by examining the proportions who have ever lived in such a relationship. Overall, about one sixth of both men and women have done so. Among younger males aged $18-29$ and $30-39$, the proportion is approximately $21 \%$, more than three times as high as for males aged $50-64$. To put it more concretely, more Canadian males under 40
(3) This term, or "cohabitation" alone, is used throughout this text to describe a common-law partnership.

TABLE 4A. Per Cent Ever in Common-law Partnerships by Number, Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984

... Due to a high standard error, these figures are not shown.

* These percentages represent very few cases and therefore may contain a high level of error.

TABLE 4B. Per Cent Ever in a Union (Marriage or Common-law) and Ever in Two or More Unions,* by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984

| Sex and <br> age group | Ever in at least <br> one union | Ever in two or <br> more unions |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
|  | per cent |  |

Male

| $18-29$ | 43.3 | 3.2 |
| :--- | ---: | ---: |
| $30-39$ | 89.4 | 12.4 |
| $40-49$ | 93.5 | 11.8 |
| $50-64$ | 94.4 | 11.3 |
| All ages | 75.6 | 8.9 |
|  |  |  |
| Female |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| $18-29$ | 58.8 | 13.6 |
| $30-39$ | 92.0 | 12.9 |
| $40-49$ | 94.3 | 11.1 |
| $50-64$ | 94.6 | 10.2 |

[^1]have already lived in a common-law partnership than have males over 50, despite their longer lifetimes. Such an age difference is an indicator of time trends in behaviour. Note that by the time men currently aged 18-29 have reached ages 50 and over, some 25 to 30 years from now, the proportion ever in common-law relationships will have increased, resulting in an even larger differential in comparison with cohorts currently aged 50-64.

A similar pattern can be observed for women, with an even larger age differential and higher percentages in the youngest age group, compared to males (just as women marry earlier, so they form common-law relationships earlier).

Common-law partnerships do not appear to be associated with a great deal of instability, much less promiscuity. Overall, less than $2 \%$ of all adult Canadians report two or more such partnerships; the highest percentage is among males aged $30-39$. Among those who have ever been in a common-law partnership, about 9\% overall report two or more; again, the highest percentage is for males aged 30-39, about 12\%. Virtually none of the respondents reported three or more common-law partnerships.

To the extent that common-law unions are becoming a partial substitute for marriage, it is of interest to know how many adult Canadians have experienced such a union or marriage, and the total number of unions of all types. These data are provided in Table 4B. They show the proportion who have ever been in either a legal marriage or a common-law union, counting unions that led to marriage as one union. The picture seen previously in Tables 2 and 4 A is not modified very much. After they reach their thirties, most Canadians (over 90\%) have experienced some sort of union, but only a minority report two or more. The highest percentage is for women between 30 and 50 years of age, but even here the proportion with two or more unions is small (less than one in seven), and almost none report three or more.

If it is recalled that the relationships discussed above include those that eventually led to legal marriage, the picture of disorganized and ephemeral sexual unions often associated with "living together" seems even less justified. Clearly, common-law partnerships are as much a prelude to marriage as a substitute for it. Table 5 gives some relevant details. About 7\% or $8 \%$ of ever-married respondents report that their first marriage was to a common-law partner. The proportion is higher among younger people. About one quarter of ever-married males aged 18-29 (26.6\%) and one fifth of females aged 18-29 (22.2\%) report a first marriage to a common-law partner.

TABLE 5. Per Cent Whose First Marriage Was to a Common-law Partner, and Per Cent of Those Ever in a Common-law Union Who Married a Common-law Partner by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984

|  | Of ever-married, per cent <br> whose first marriage was to a <br> common-law partner | Of those ever in a common- |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Sex and | law union, per cent who |  |
| married a common-law |  |  |
| partner |  |  |

per cent

## Male

| $18-29$ | 26.6 | 46.1 |
| :--- | ---: | ---: |
| $30-39$ | 10.2 | 52.4 |
| $40-49$ | 2.1 | 41.5 |
| $50-64$ | $\ldots .7$ | 26.3 |
| All ages | 8.1 | 46.0 |

Female

| $18-29$ | 22.2 | 40.5 |
| :--- | ---: | :--- |
| $30-39$ | 8.4 | 49.7 |
| $40-49$ | $\ldots$ | 43.3 |
| $50-64$ | $\ldots .4$ | 27.6 |
| All ages | 7.4 | 42.6 |

Looking at those who have ever been in a common-law partnership (Column 2 of Table 5), we find that for all ages $46.0 \%$ of males and $42.6 \%$ of females married a common-law partner. The proportions are even higher for persons aged 30-39, and almost as high for persons aged 18-29, despite the fact that many of their unions are still at very early durations. The proportion of older respondents who married a common-law partner is somewhat lower. It is not clear whether this reflects a different approach to common-law partnerships (whether occurring early or late in life), or simply that many of these partnerships may be of short durations, having occurred after divorce or widowhood.

The latter explanation is suggested by the first column of Table 6, which gives the average age at first common-law partnership and at other life-cycle events. Note that for males aged 50-64, the average age at first cohabitation is 44.7 years, and for females aged $50-64,39.9$ years. This suggests a "middle-age" pattern of cohabitation, closer to the time of divorce and widowhood (see Columns 3 and 4) for those previously married. Among younger persons, more are cohabiting, and apparently earlier in their lives, closer to the time of first marriage. Of course, as each of the cohorts represented by the age groups continues its lifetime experience, the average age at first cohabitation for the cohort as a whole must rise -- persons aged 40-49 cannot first cohabit at age 20 and thus drive the average down -- although it seems unlikely that males currently aged 18-29 will eventually reach an average age of first cohabitation of 44.7 , the figure calculated for $50-64$ year olds at the time of the survey.

In general, the data of Table 6 must be interpreted with caution, and give only a rough indication of the timing of various events associated with sexual unions. Indeed some of the figures appear impossible or contradictory. How, for instance, can females aged 40-49 have married for the second time at an average age of $35.5,0.6$ years before (on average) their first divorce, which doesn't occur until average age 36.1? The answer is that the two figures relate to different groups of females. Not all those who divorced remarried. Those who did remarry presumably divorced at an earlier age on average than those who, though divorced, had not remarried at the time of the survey. A full and accurate interpretation of the Family History Survey data on the timing of various life events will require detailed cohort and life-table analyses that are not presented here.

TABLE 6. Average Age* at Various Marital and Family Events by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984

| Sex and <br> age group | First <br> cohabitation | First <br> marriage | First <br> divorce | First <br> widowed | Second <br> marriage |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | | Second |
| :--- |
| divorce |

## Male

| 18-29 | 21.2 | 22.1 | 24.5 | - | 26.5 | - |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 30-39 | 25.9 | 23.6 | 29.5 | 29.7 | 30.3 | 31.8 |
| 40-49 | 33.4 | 24.6 | 35.5 | 36.7 | 36.3 | 39.9 |
| 50-64 | 44.7 | 26.2 | 42.9 | 46.8 | 43.1 | 48.2 |
| All ages | 26.4 | 24.4 | 34.4 | 45.2 | 36.7 | 41.0 |
| Female |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18-29 | 20.5 | 20.8 | 24.5 | 22.3 | 25.0 | - |
| 30-39 | 25.6 | 21.9 | 29.3 | 28.9 | 29.5 | 33.9 |
| 40-49 | 32.9 | 21.9 | 36.1 | 34.8 | 35.5 | 38.7 |
| 50-64 | 39.9 | 23.3 | 41.5 | 46.8 | 41.3 | 50.5 |
| All ages | 24.7 | 22.1 | 33.3 | 43.5 | 34.9 | 42.4 |

[^2]
## II. PARENTHOOD: RAISING CHILDREN, STEP-CHILDREN AND ADOPTED CHILDREN

Respondents to the Family History Survey were asked about children they had raised or are raising. Questions were asked about the respondents' own children, step-children and legally adopted children, with the wording different in each case. For own children, female respondents were asked "Have you ever given birth to a child?" Male respondents were asked "Have you ever raised any children of your own?" The question was asked differently for male respondents in order to avoid their reporting about children they may have fathered, but who were never under their care or never lived with them. Both male and female respondents were asked "Have you ever raised step-children? (...from the former union of a spouse or common-law partner)". And finally, all respondents were asked "Have you ever adopted children? (Exclude any children mentioned in the step-children section)". Instructions to interviewers were to make sure responses to this question referred to legally adopted children. Informal adoption, as when a child goes to live with a grandparent, aunt and uncle, or neighbour was not counted as "adoption".

Table 7 gives an overview of children reported in the survey, showing that, overwhelmingly, parenting in Canada involves one's own children. The number of respondents reporting that they have raised step-children or adopted children is small. Among males, $4.4 \%$ overall report having raised at least one step-child; 2.6\% report having raised one or more adopted children. The highest proportion reporting step-children ( $6.6 \%$ ) occurs among males aged 40-49 (the 1934-1944 birth cohort), an age group young enough to have participated in the post-1970 rise in divorce and remarriage.

TABLE 7. Per Cent Who Have Ever Raised Natural Children, Step-children or Adopted* Children by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984

| Sex and <br> age group | Natural <br> children | Step-children | Adopted <br> children |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |

per cent

## Male

| $18-29$ | 22.0 | 1.4 | $\ldots$ |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| $30-39$ | 74.6 | 5.6 | 2.4 |
| $40-49$ | 83.8 | 6.6 | 3.8 |
| $50-64$ | 83.4 | 5.8 | 5.0 |
| All ages | 60.3 | 4.4 | 2.6 |

## Female

| $18-29$ | 34.9 | $\ldots$. | $\ldots$ |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| $30-39$ | 79.8 | 2.8 | 2.5 |
| $40-49$ | 88.3 | 3.5 | 4.9 |
| $50-64$ | 86.4 | 2.4 | 4.3 |
| All ages | 67.5 | 2.1 | 2.5 |

* Not counting step-children who have been legally adopted.
... Due to a high standard error, these figures are not shown.

For women of all ages, 2.1\% report having raised step-children. This proportion is less than half that for men, and reflects the fact that typically women are awarded custody after divorce and are thus more apt to bring children to a new marriage. The proportion of women reporting adopted children is similar to that reported for men, as one would expect: traditionally (and still predominantly) adoption is done by a couple.

Again one is struck by the relative rarity of step-children and adopted children, given anecdotal evidence and media discussion. It is possible that the numbers are smaller than they should be due to reporting error. For example, respondents may have reported step-children or adopted children as their own. It is more likely that our expectations have been inflated by the recent sharp rise in divorce, and by media coverage based on U.S. data. As an example of the latter, a story appearing in the London Free Press for January 18, 1985 (with a Pittsburgh dateline) opens with the statement that "About seven million children are being transplanted into step-families every year". Such information about the U.S. can easily give false impressions about the magnitude of the situation in Canada.

Not only are families with adopted or step-children fairly rare; they also tend to be small. Among males with natural children, $78.8 \%$ have raised two or more compared to males with step-children, of which only $47.5 \%$ report two or more, and males with adopted children, of which only $33.8 \%$ report two or more. The relative numbers are broadly similar for female respondents, and among individual age groups for both sexes. The data on step-children are consistent with the view that divorced persons with large numbers of children have less chance of remarrying. The figures on adopted children are consistent with the view that many adopting parents want a family, but not a large one.

Having one's own children and adopting children are not mutually exclusive behaviours; some couples do both. Table 8 shows by way of illustration the proportion of males who have adopted children by the number of natural children they have raised. The proportion is highest, $3 \%$ or over, for men with no natural children or only one, and is lowest, less than $2 \%$, for those with two, or three or more natural children. These data are consistent with the view that adoption typically is by couples who want a family but may be having difficulty in having their own children. Couples who have achieved families of typical or normative size through the birth of natural children are only about half as likely to have adoped children. (4)
(4) When the data are tabulated separately for respondents with five or more natural children, they show a large proportion adopting. This may reflect another pattern of adoption by persons who have large families of their own and are pleased to add another (adopted) child and in any case can do so at little marginal cost. But the data on which this speculation is based involve small numbers, and do not satisfy requirements for statistical reliability.

## TABLE 8. Per Cent of Males Who Have Adopted One or More Children by Number of Own Children, Canada, 1984

| Male | Number of natural children |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 or more |
| per cent |  |  |  |  |
| Adopting | 3.2 | 3.5 | 1.7 | 1.8 |

The adoption of children tends to occur later in life than the initiation of childbearing. Table 9 compares the average age of respondents at the birth of their first own child and at the time of their first adoption. First adoption occurs about six years later than first birth for men, and about eight years later than first birth for women. This finding is consistent with the suggestion made above about the chief reasons for adoption. Those who adopt after having failed to have sufficient own children tend to wait to make certain of that fact. A likely implication is that children adopted as infants will tend to have somewhat older parents on average than other children.

TABLE 9. For Respondents With Natural or Adopted Children, Average Age at First Birth or at First Adoption,* by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984

| Sex and <br> age group | Average age at <br> first birth | Average age at <br> first adoption |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |

## Male

| $18-29$ | 23.3 | 26.7 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| $30-39$ | 25.9 | 29.9 |
| $40-49$ | 26.4 | 30.8 |
| $50-64$ | 27.4 | 35.6 |
| All ages | 26.1 |  |
|  |  |  |
| Female |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| $18-29$ | 21.7 | 25.8 |
| $30-39$ | 23.9 | 28.4 |
| $40-49$ | 23.3 | 30.0 |
| $50-64$ | 24.5 | 35.6 |
| All ages | 23.6 | 31.7 |

* Excluding those who adopted step-children.

The Family History Survey asked respondents who reported step-children "Did you adopt this child?" and enquired about the date of adoption as well as the date the child came under the respondent's care. The data show that only a small minority of persons with step-children tend to adopt them legally (Table 10). Among males of all ages, the figure is $15.7 \%$. Among females it is much smaller, $2.2 \%$, but both the number of women with step-children and the number adopting them are small, so the results may contain large random error.

TABLE 10. Per Cent With Step-children Who Have Legally Adopted Them, by Age Group and Sex, Canada,
1984

| Age group | Male | Female |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
|  | per cent |  |
|  |  | $\ldots$ |
| $18-29$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ |
| $30-39$ | $17.4^{*}$ | $\ldots$ |
| $40-49$ | $16.9 *$ | $\ldots$ |
| $50-64$ | 16.4 | $2.5^{*}$ |
| Ages 30-64 | 15.7 | $2.2^{*}$ |
| All ages |  |  |

... Due to a high standard error, these figures are not shown.

* These percentages represent very few cases and therefore may contain a high level of error.

Although the proportion of males who have adopted their step-children increases for ages after 30 taken as a whole, it remains low even for the oldest respondents. Among men aged 50-64 for instance, only about one-sixth have adopted one or more of their step-children, even though, by that age many years would have elapsed since the step-children first came under their care.

The reasons for this low rate of adoption of step-children are not entirely clear. Foremost among them must be that many step-children are such following divorce and remarriage of one parent, with the other still surviving, thus creating potential legal complications. But the Family History Survey contains no data on the former union from which the step-children resulted, whether it ended by widowhood or divorce. It is also possible that many stepfathers, even when they could legally adopt their step-child (children) because of the death of or lack of opposition by the natural father, are reluctant to assume full legal responsibility for their step-children in the face of residual responsibilities for an ex-spouse and children of their own from a previous marriage. (A more detailed analysis of the Family History Survey data may reveal whether the adoption of step-children is less likely for divorced and remarried males who report own children from their previous marriage.) It is also possible that generally, step-children are fully accepted and treated like own children (including in the matter of inheritance), with legal adoption seen as an unnecessary formality. A full understanding of the causes and implications of adoption as a factor in the life experience of step-children, whose numbers in Canada presumably are increasing, will require more intensive questioning of respondents than is possible in the context of a large, multi-purpose national survey such as the Family History Survey.

In view of the rising divorce rate and increasing public discussion of Canada's low birth rate, it is of interest to know how the experience of divorce has affected the fertility (children ever born) of respondents to the Family History Survey. Table 11 gives the average number of children ever born to never-divorced and ever-divorced persons, by sex and age group. For persons 30 years of age and older, those who have never had a divorce report slightly more children on average than those who have divorced, with the difference approaching one-half child on average at ages 50 and above, when childbearing is virtually complete. Among younger persons (under 30), the difference is apparently reversed, but this cannot be taken as representative of long-term performance of younger people, and probably reflects an earlier age at marriage and at the beginning of childbearing for those who have already had a divorce before age 30 .

Overall, the data are consistent with the view that increasing divorce may be one of the factors helping to keep Canada's birth rate at its current low level. Clearly that has been so in the past for older cohorts of Canadians. But patterns of marriage, divorce and childbearing are changing so rapidly that it is questionable whether the experience of the past is a sound guide to the future. Studies in other countries have shown that a pattern of early divorce followed by high rates of remarriage may result in fertility no lower than it would have been in the absence of high divorce rates.

TABLE 11. Average Number of Children Ever Born to Ever-divorced and Never-divorced Persons by Age
Group and Sex, Canada, 1984

Sex and age group

Average number of children ever born to

## Male

| $18-29$ | 1.1 | 1.0 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| $30-39$ | 1.7 | 1.9 |
| $40-49$ | 2.3 | 2.5 |
| $50-64$ | 2.6 | 3.0 |
| All ages | 2.1 | 2.2 |
|  |  |  |
| Female |  |  |
|  |  | 1.1 |
| $18-29$ | 1.4 | 2.0 |
| $30-39$ | 1.8 | 2.8 |
| $40-49$ | 2.6 | 3.2 |
| $50-64$ | 2.8 | 2.3 |

The data presented thus far in this section view things from the perspective of the parents. Table 12 gives an overview of the children themselves, with particular attention to their status as natural children, adopted children, or step-children.(5) For persons 21 years of age and over, of course, the terms child and children are used in the restricted sense of persons who are offspring of or were raised by the respondent. Some of these "children" are middle-aged; most have left the parental home; some have died.
(5) Readers should be cautioned that data for children in the FHS are not exactly representative of all children. This is because the reporting unit is the parent rather than the child. Thus, it is possible that children, who in their life time have been exposed to more than one parent-child relationship, could be represented in the sample more than once. Statistically, the correct way of interpreting data given in this table requires viewing them as distributions of KEY EVENTS associated with child histories: births, adoptions or becoming a step-child, classified by the nature of event and by the current age of the affected child. It is, however, reasonable to assume that the relationship associated with these key events approximate the experiences of children themselves and that both sets of distributions are reasonably close for the purposes of the general discussion offered here. This assumption must be kept in mind and due caution exercised in the interpretation of the offered remarks.

TABLE 12. Reported Children* by Type (Natural, Adopted, Step): Percentage Distribution Within Age Groups by Sex of Respondent, Canada, 1984

| Sex of respondent and type of child | Age of child |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | 0-16 | 17-20 | $21+$ | All ages |
| per cent |  |  |  |  |
| Children of male respondents |  |  |  |  |
| Natural | 93.6 | 91.0 | 93.3 | 93.2 |
| Adopted | 2.6 | 2.1 | 1.9 | 2.3 |
| Step | 3.8 | 6.8 | 4.7 | 4.5 |
| All children | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Children of female respondents |  |  |  |  |
| Natural | 96.4 | 93.9 | 96.1 | 96.0 |
| Adopted | 2.2 | 3.0 | 1.2 | 1.9 |
| Step | 1.4 | 3.1 | 2.6 | 2.2 |
| All children | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

* Comprises children still living with the parent as well as those who left.

Note: This table is based on data derived from the survey where the responding unit was the parent and not the child. Although some children, due to inter-family mobility, are represented in this table more than once, their numbers are not large enough to have a major impact on the distributions shown. However, a caution is advised in their interpretation.

The results confirm what was pointed out above from the standpoint of parental experience: all but a very small proportion of persons identified by adult Canadians as their children are their children by birth. For children of all ages of female respondents, roughly $2 \%$ are identified as adopted, and roughly $2 \%$ are identified as step-children. For male respondents, the percentage of adopted children is similar ( $2.3 \%$ ), but a higher proportion of children are described as step-children ( $4.5 \%$ ). But even for males, over $90 \%$ of the children they have raised are their own children by birth.

The results differ somewhat by age of the child. In particular, more children between the ages of 17 and 20 are identified as step-children than is the case for those 0 to 16 or 21 years of age and over. This result reflects partly the trend in divorce rates (parents of children 21 years of age and over belong to earlier marriage cohorts on average, when divorce rates were lower), and partly the timing of divorce and remarriage in the parent's and therefore the child's life cycle (parents of children 0-16 years of age are less apt to have reached the point where divorce and remarriage typically occur).

These findings remind us that the process of becoming a step-child and living with a step-parent is one experienced disproportionately by teenagers, a fact that perhaps makes it a more difficult experience than if it were to happen earlier, when the child is quite young, or later, when the child is an independent adult.

## III. LEAVING THE PARENTAL HOME

In Canadian society, the normal pattern (both the socially expected and statistically the most frequent) is for the child to leave the parental home at some point in the process of becoming an adult. In the past, this passage was frequently associated with marriage. In the present, it typically occurs well before marriage, as soon as the child has entered the labour force, and is more or less financially independent. Sometimes it occurs, with parental help, before financial independence is achieved. For children whose education extends beyond secondary school, departure from the parental home is associated with university life.

TABLE 13. Per Cent of Children Living in the Responding Parent's Household, by Age Group and Sex of Child, and Sex of Respondent, Canada, 1984

Sex of respondent and
Male children
Female children
age group of child
per cent

## Children of male respondents

| $0-4$ | 97.7 | 97.4 |
| :---: | :---: | ---: |
| $5-9$ | 94.8 | 91.9 |
| $10-14$ | 90.5 | 87.2 |
| $15-19$ | 83.7 | 79.5 |
| $20-24$ | 53.7 | 34.0 |
| 25 and over | 11.1 | 7.4 |
| All ages | 65.3 | 60.0 |

## Children of female respondents

| $0-4$ | 98.4 | 98.8 |
| :---: | ---: | ---: |
| $5-9$ | 95.5 | 98.0 |
| $10-14$ | 94.8 | 96.2 |
| $15-19$ | 87.0 | 83.8 |
| $20-24$ | 47.0 | 36.6 |
| 25 and over | 10.4 | 6.8 |
| All ages | 59.1 | 55.8 |

[^3]By the early twenties, about one-half to one third of children remain with the responding parent. By the ages of 25 and older, $10 \%$ or less are still in a parental household. In age groups over 15, a larger proportion of males remain with their parents than females. The most likely explanation is the earlier age at marriage of females.

The probability that a child is still living with the responding parent bears a strong relationship with the status of the child as natural, adopted or step (see Table 14). In particular, step-children appear to depart from the household of the step-parent appreciably earlier than is the case for natural or adopted children. Among children of female respondents, for example, at ages $15-19,87 \%$ of natural children and $72 \%$ of adopted children are still in the respondent's household, compared to 57\% of step-children. For male respondents, the corresponding figures for their 15-19 year old children are $82 \%$ of natural children, $80 \%$ of adopted children, but only $72 \%$ of step-children. Similar differences are found for children at higher ages, although the small numbers of adopted and step-children in the sample make firm statistical conclusions difficult.

TABLE 14. Per Cent of Children Living in the Responding Parent's Household, by Type and Age Group of Child, and Sex of Respondent, Canada, 1984

Sex of respondent and
age group of child

Type of child

Natural Adopted Step All
children
per cent

## Children of male respondents

| $0-14$ | 93.7 | 89.8 | 84.8 | 93.3 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| $15-19$ | 82.3 | 79.9 | 71.8 | 81.6 |
| 20 and over | 23.6 | 30.1 | 12.0 | 23.2 |
| All ages | 63.2 | 66.9 | 49.5 | 62.7 |

Children of female respondents

| $0-14$ | 97.1 | 93.0 | 89.3 | 96.9 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| $15-19$ | 87.0 | 71.9 | 56.8 | 85.5 |
| 20 and over | 19.7 | $19.8 *$ | $\ldots .9$ | 19.3 |
| All ages | 57.9 | 63.1 | 32.6 | 57.5 |

* This percentage represents very few cases and therefore may contain a high level of error.
... Due to a high standard error, this figure is not shown.

One possible explanation for the larger proportion of step-children leaving the reporting parent's home by a given age is that most of them have another natural parent whose household they may join. This explanation is supported by data showing that among children who have left the reporting parent's household, a larger proportion of step-children than of natural children are reported as living under someone else's care rather than on their own. For children of female respondents, approximately $24 \%$ of step-children were listed as under someone else's care, compared to $8 \%$ of natural children who had left home. For children of male respondents, the respective proportions were $32 \%$ and $17 \%$. In this regard at least, step-children apparently have more options.

Table 15 shows for children reported as living on their own and outside of the reporting parent's household, the average age at which they left that household for the last time. Such data are difficult to interpret insofar as they refer to the incomplete experience of any age group; the problem is particularly acute for the younger groups, since, for example, only a small proportion of 17-19 year olds have left home, and by definition all left home at 19 or younger. A much larger proportion of 20-24 year olds and those 25 and over have left home, many of them at older ages, driving up the average. A consequence is that comparisons between rows in this table are meaningless.

TABLE 15. Average Age at Home-leaving* for Children Living Outside Respondent's Home by Type and Age Group (17+) of Child, and Sex of Respondent, Canada, 1984

Age group of child $\quad$\begin{tabular}{l}
Average age at leaving to be on their own <br>
\hline Natural

 Adopted $\quad$ Step 

All <br>
children
\end{tabular}

Children of male respondents

| $17-19$ | 17.6 | 16.8 | 17.2 | 17.6 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| $20-24$ | 19.6 | 19.3 | 18.6 | 19.5 |
| 25 and over | 21.0 | 20.8 | 20.9 | 21.0 |
| All ages | 20.5 | 19.9 | 19.9 | 20.5 |

## Children of female respondents

| $17-19$ | 17.7 | 16.3 | 15.9 | 17.5 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| $20-24$ | 19.5 | 19.9 | 18.7 | 19.5 |
| 25 and over | 20.9 | 20.9 | 20.7 | 20.9 |
| All ages | 20.5 | 19.8 | 19.9 | 20.5 |

* Refers to children who left to be on their own.

The data show that for older persons, most of whom have left the parental home, the average age at leaving was approximately $20-21$ years of age. The data suggest a slightly earlier average age at home-leaving for adopted and step-children, especially in the youngest age group. Combining this result with that in Table 14, we can summarize the situation by saying that at any given age a larger proportion of step-children have left their step-parents' household (to a lesser extent this applies to adopted children also), and for those who have left, the average age of leaving is slightly lower than that of their natural counterparts.

TABLE 16. Average Age at Home-leaving* for Children Living Outside Respondent's Home by Age Group (20+) and Sex of Child, and Sex of Respondent, Canada, 1984
Sex of respondent and

age group of child $\quad$| Average age at home-leaving |
| :--- |

Children of male respondents

| $20-24$ | 19.5 | 19.5 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 25 and over | 21.6 | 20.4 |
| All ages | 20.9 | 20.0 |
|  |  |  |
| Children of female respondents |  | 19.4 |
| $20-24$ | 19.6 | 20.2 |
| 25 and over | 21.6 | 19.9 |
| All ages | 21.1 |  |

[^4]Women tend to leave the parental home earlier than men, at approximately 20 years of age on average for those over 25 compared to approximately 22 years for males, but the difference is not large, only one to two years on average (see Table 16). Presumably, this is associated, among other things, with the tendency of women to marry earlier than men, but the difference does not parallel that in average age at marriage. In the past, men tended to leave home around age 21, and marry for the first time around ages $24-25$; women tended to leave home around age 20 , and marry for the first time around ages 21-22. Thus young males tended to have a longer interlude of independent living between the parental home and marriage. These patterns may well be changing of course, as more young people of both sexes are entering non-legal cohabitations prior to or instead of marriage. Further analysis of the Family History Survey will shed some light on these issues.

It is of interest to return to the parents for a moment, and ask how old they are on average when their children leave home. As would be expected from data presented earlier on average age at marriage and average age of children at home-leaving, the ages of parents at which the first natural child leaves home are the mid-forties. Specifically, for persons 50 and over, who include the bulk of those with at least one child gone, the average age of males at the departure of the first natural child was 46.7 years; the corresponding figure for females was 44.9 years. Figures for younger age groups are not so meaningful, since so few of them have begun to experience the process of their children's home-leaving.

The average age at which all a couple's or person's children have left home obviously depends among other things on the number of children they have had. For persons over 50 at the time of the survey, for those with one child, their average age at the departure of that child was approximately 48 years for both men and women. For those with two to five children all of whom had left home, the average ages of parents at the departure of the last were 52.2 for women and 52.9 for men. For those with eight or more children, the figures are 56.7 for women and 58.0 for men. Other things equal, more children imply a shorter "empty nest" period for parents.

A final note on the home-leaving of adult children: the mother's work experience apparently has no bearing on the age at which young adults leave the parental home. The average age at leaving is approximately the same whether the young adult's mother has or has not had a job outside the home, and whether the mother had or had not interrrupted her work for childbearing or childcare.

## IV. WORK INTERRUPTIONS AND THEIR RELATION TO MARRIAGE AND CHILDREARING

Most Canadian adults have worked for pay at some point in their lives (see Column 1 of Table 17). Slightly more men than women have worked, but even among women aged $50-64$, over four-fifths ( $81.6 \%$ ) have done so. But these figures mask substantial differences between men and women in the intensity, duration and continuity of work outside the home, and they fail to reveal revolutionary changes that have taken place in recent decades.

The Family History Survey asked respondents who had ever worked about interruptions to their work of over one year, and collected detailed information on the number, timing and duration of such interruptions, and the reported reasons (layoff, illness, marriage, etc.). Table 17 shows clearly that women were much more apt than men to have experienced lengthy interruptions to their job and career. Overall, the proportion of women who reported one or more job interruptions was almost three times the corresponding proportion for men ( $49.9 \%$ compared to $18.2 \%$ ). For the distinct age groups above 30 years, the probability of work interruption for women ranged from almost three to over four times as great as for men. For the youngest age group (18-29 years), the difference between men and women was not so great, with the probability for women less than twice that for men. This smaller differential may be due partly to the shorter period of exposure to the risk of work interruption (a larger differential may appear later on), and partly to recent cultural trends in which women are giving greater emphasis to job and career as opposed to the wife/mother/homemaker role. More detailed analysis of the data, for example comparing different age cohorts at comparable stages in their lives, will shed some light on this question.

A look at the probability of experiencing two or more interruptions to one's work reveals even greater differences between men and women. Overall, $13.7 \%$ of women versus only $2.1 \%$ of men have experienced two or more interruptions. In the age groups over 30 years, the probability for women is more than five times as great as that for men. The difference is especially large between men and women ages 40-49; broadly speaking, this age cohort represents parents of the "baby boom" generation who would have entered the labour market in the late 1950's or early 1960's. It appears that the men of this age cohort benefited markedly from favourable educational experiences and the general prosperity of the post-World War II period, while women did almost as poorly as their older counterparts ages 50-64, despite favourable economic conditions.

TABLE 17. Per Cent Who Have Ever Worked, and Who Have Experienced Work Interruptions* by Age Group and Sex, Canada, 1984

| Sex and | Ever | One or more | Two or more <br> age group |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| worked | interruptions | interruptions |  |

per cent

## Male

| $18-29$ | 83.7 | 16.1 | 1.1 |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| $30-39$ | 98.9 | 16.8 | 2.9 |
| $40-49$ | 99.6 | 16.2 | $1.3^{* *}$ |
| $50-64$ | 97.3 | 24.6 | 3.3 |
| All ages | 93.5 | 18.2 | 2.1 |

Female

| $18-29$ | 82.3 | 26.3 | 4.2 |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| $30-39$ | 93.4 | 60.5 | 16.8 |
| $40-49$ | 90.0 | 63.6 | 19.2 |
| $50-64$ | 81.6 | 62.9 | 20.2 |
| All ages | 86.2 | 49.9 | 13.7 |

* Defined as an interruption of work for one year or longer.
** This percentage represents very few cases and therefore may contain a high level of error.

Data on work interruptions in the Family History Survey probably tend to underestimate the differences between men and women in the extent of these interruptions. Since they relate to work interruptions of one year or more, they tend to exclude many interruptions due to pregnancy and childbirth. Presumably many of these are of less than one year's duration, but long enough to constitute a major break in the continuity of a woman's job or career. At the other extreme, some women who reported only one work interruption have never returned to the labour force. The latter point can be clarified, of course, by a more detailed analysis of the timing and length of reported work interruptions.

The respondents to the Family History Survey were asked to identify the reason or reasons for each work interruption, marking all that applied from the following list: pregnancy or childcare; return to school; retirement; moving to be with partner; layoff or end of job; illness or disability; marriage; other. Table 18 summarizes the reasons given by men and women of different ages who had experienced only one such work interruption (about $88 \%$ of men and $73 \%$ of women who have experienced any work interruptions have had only one). Once again, the most striking feature of the table is the strong sex differential. Focussing on the cases where one reason was identified, we see that at all ages the major reasons for work interruption for men were layoff, school and illness in that order, while for women they were childcare, marriage and layoff in that order. To state it differently, almost no male respondents with a work interruption (less than $1 \%$ ) reported that it was due to marriage, pregnancy or childcare, or to move in order to be with a partner. Among female respondents, almost two-thirds ( $64 \%$ ) gave one of these reasons for their work interruption. The exigencies of marriage, pregnancy and childcare had a major impact on the continuity of work for a large majority of women, but almost no impact for men.

This general picture does not change much if one looks at specific age groups, although Table 18 gives some hints of the massive changes in women's labour force participation in recent decades. It is interesting to note, for example, that about twice as many women ages 30-39 give pregnancy and childcare as the reason for their work interruption as women 50-64, despite their apparently much shorter exposure time to the risk of work interruption. The greater risk may be more apparent than real. Among older women, work tended to be abandoned entirely with marriage or pregnancy and only resumed "after the children were grown, if ever". Among younger women, there has been a greater tendency to combine marriage, motherhood and work; jobs tend to be viewed more as careers than as work episodes; and more young wives and mothers try to continue full-time work. In this sense, younger women probably have been at greater risk of work interruptions of one year or more. Older women may have quit their early

TABLE 18. Reasons for Work Interruption Among Respondents With One Interruption: Percentage Distribution Within Age Groups, by Sex, Canada, 1984

| Sex and age group | Total | Marriage | Pregnancy or childcare | Move <br> to be <br> with <br> part- <br> ner | Illness <br> or <br> disa- <br> bility | Layoff | Retirement | Return to school | Other <br> and multiple reasons | Not stated |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | per cent |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18-29 | 100.0 | - | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | 54.4 | . | 28.5 | 10.5 | . |
| 30-39 | 100.0 | - | . | $\ldots$ | 14.1 | 37.9 | . . | 29.3 | 16.5 | ... |
| 40-49 | 100.0 | ... | - | - | 18.9 | 28.6 | $\ldots$ | 27.2 | 21.9 | $\cdots$ |
| 50-64 | 100.0 | - | - | $\cdots$ | 27.0 | 20.7 | 22.6 | 8.0 | 21.1 | $\cdots$ |
| All ages | 100.0 | 0.2* | 0.3* | $0.2 *$ | 15.6 | 36.5 | 7.0 | 22.4 | 16.9 | $0.9 *$ |
| Female |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18-29 | 100.0 | 4.0 | 38.0 | 7.8 | 6.0 | 18.4 | $\cdots$ | 10.1 | 14.8 | $\ldots$ |
| 30-39 | 100.0 | 8.4 | 54.8 | 7.9 | 3.2 | 9.1 | - | 4.5 | 11.6 | ... |
| 40-49 | 100.0 | 20.9 | 47.4 | 5.5 | 6.1 | 6.1 | $\cdots$ | . ${ }^{\text {. }}$ | 8.6 | $\ldots$ |
| 50-64 | 100.0 | 29.2 | 28.1 | 3.2 | 12.8 | 6.5 | 7.0 | $\cdots$ | 11.7 |  |
| All ages | 100.0 | 15.9 | 42.3 | 6.1 | 7.1 | 9.7 | 2.2 | 4.3 | 11.7 | 0.7* |

... Due to a high standard error, these figures are not shown.

* These percentages represent very few cases and therefore may contain a high level of error.
jobs voluntarily, and "interrupted" their working life for 10 or 20 years, but without viewing it as a "work interruption" as defined in the Family History Survey. Or, perhaps they entered the labour force only after their children were grown.

The detailed work, marriage and childbearing/childcare histories collected for each respondent in the Family History Survey, will allow for a much deeper analysis of these issues, but will require statistical analysis and reporting outside the scope of this brief overview. Detailed analyses of these histories can also provide a partial check on the accuracy of the reasons for work interruptions given by female and male respondents. It is possible that males are apt to understate the extent to which their work interuption was associated with marriage, childcare or moving to be with a partner. A detailed study of the timing of their work interruptions with respect to the timing of marriage and birth of children could shed some light on this issue.

## V. SUBGROUP DIFFERENTIALS

A national sample of approximately 14,000 respondents can provide only limited information on various subgroups of the Canadian population, including those in particular provinces. Larger sample surveys or complete count data from the census are needed to provide such information.

In the case of the Family History Survey, a few subgroup comparisons are possible, and yield interesting results. They are presented here briefly, and with due emphasis on their highly descriptive character.

## Provincial Differences

Table 19 gives several broad indicators of marriage and family life by provinces and groups of provinces. The first six rows pertain to marriage, widowhood, divorce and common-law unions.

The data show clear regional differences in the prevalence of divorce. The percentage of ever married persons who have ever had a legal divorce is notably lower than the national average for the Atlantic provinces and Quebec, and notably higher for British Columbia. The figures shown are for persons aged 30-39 and 50 years and over, but the pattern seems to exist for other age groups and for each sex taken separately. The difference between Quebec and Canada as a whole is greater for persons 50 years and over than for younger age groups, probably reflecting greater adherence in the past to traditional Catholic teaching on the matter. The higher prevalence of divorce in British Columbia

TABLE 19. Various Indicators of Marriage and Family Life by Province or Region, Canada, 1984

| Canada | At lantic <br> provinces | Quebec | Ontario | Prairie <br> provinces | British <br> Columbia |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |

[^5]reflects the dynamics of marriage in that province, but also the selective character of in-migration to the province. Divorced persons are more migratory than the stably married, other things equal, and areas attracting large numbers of in-migrants are apt to get relatively large numbers of the ever-divorced. Similar selective mechanisms may help explain the low proportions of ever-divorced persons in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces, to the extent that divorced persons, particularly if they wish to remarry, move to areas where the social acceptance of divorce may be higher. A similar mechanism explains the distinct high percentage of ever-married persons 50 years and over in British Columbia who report ever having been widowed. This does not reflect higher mortality rates in British Columbia, but rather the migration of older persons seeking milder climate and other amenities, and generally seeking a new life after the loss of a spouse or retirement. Some of these ever-widowed persons, of course, have remarried, but the Family History Survey sample is not large enough to pursue their complete life course in detail. Note, however, that the percentage of respondents of all ages reporting two or more marriages is almost twice the national average for British Columbia.

Divorce may be seen as one form of departure from traditional norms regarding marriage. Living together without legal marriage is another, but the data in Table 19 suggest that various regions are not completely consistent in these matters, that is, consistently more or less non-traditional. The most striking example is Quebec. While it ranked low in terms of the proportion ever divorcing, it is at or above the national average in terms of the proportion who have ever lived in a common-law union. Indeed, among persons aged 18-29, Quebec is virtually tied with British Columbia for first place, with $28 \%$ of such respondents reporting one or more common-law union. Younger respondents from the Atlantic provinces remain more traditional in this regard as well, with $17 \%$ reporting such unions, well below the national average.

The proportion of older persons reporting ever having lived in a common-law relationship is small (about 6\% overall), with slightly higher percentages in Ontario and British Columbia. It is not known at this point how much this reflects unions formed early in life, and how much this reflects unions formed in middle life or even later, in connection with divorce and widowhood.

As would be expected from the above discussion of divorce, the proportion of respondents reporting that they have raised step-children is highest in the provinces with the most divorce (Ontario and especially British Columbia), and lowest in those with the least divorce (especially Quebec). The differences among the provinces in the proportion who have adopted children are not large, but the data suggest somewhat lower rates of adoption in Quebec and British Columbia, and slightly higher rates in the Atlantic and Prairie provinces.

The data suggest more traditional roles for women in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces, where the proportion of women who have ever worked (outside the home) is below the national average. This is true not only for older women, but also for those aged 18-29. Among women who have worked, the proportion who have experienced one or more work interruptions of one year or longer is notably high in British Columbia, a fact which probably reflects discontinuities in the life course associated with divorce, widowhood and migration.

Among women who have experienced a work interruption, a distinctly low proportion in Quebec report having done so for reasons related to childbirth and childcare, and a distinctly high proportion report having done so for reasons associated with marriage. Again, it is difficult to generalize regarding the geographical patterning of traditional versus non-traditional behaviour.

## Differentials by Educational Achievement

Table 20 gives several indicators of marriage and family life by broad categories of educational achievement, that is, the amount of formal schooling the respondents have completed. The data suggest a bell-shaped relationship between education and divorce, with the lowest per cent of ever divorced among those with eight or fewer years of education and among post-secondary graduates. The proportion over 50 years of age ever widowed, by contrast, is highest for those with eight or fewer years of education, reflecting the less favourable mortality experience of those of lower socio-economic status.

The proportion ever in a common-law union shows little relationship to education for all age groups combined, but among persons aged 18-29, it is distinctly high (around 30\%) for those in the lower two education categories. Of those reporting high school graduation or higher educational achievement, by contrast, approximately $21 \%$ have ever been in a common-law union. For these younger cohorts, of course, both education and union formation are incomplete. It appears that low educational achievement and early union formation are interrelated, but it is not clear whether these young people have first left school, gotten a job, and then started living together, whether early union formation led to dropping out of school, or even whether increasing numbers of very young adults, say those aged 18-21 as opposed to those aged $25-29$, are combining education with non-legal unions.

TABLE 20. Various Indicators of Marriage and Family Life by Educational Level, Canada, 1984


Of ever-married persons, per cent ever divorced:
All ages
Ages 30-39
Of ever-married persons 50
years and over, per cent
years and over, per cent
ever widowed:
12.4
15.3
10.9
11.1
11.5

Of ever-married persons, per cent with two or more
marriages: 6.9
11.3
13.7
9.2
12.3
13.1
11.3
9.2

All ages
15.2
17.2
13.4
8.4

Of ever-married persons 50 ever widowed:
...

Of all persons, per cent
ever in a common-law union:
Ages 30-39
21.1
23.4
15.8
21.6
30.3
23.2
22.3
19.5

Ages 18-29
29.1
20.8
20.2
23.1

Of all persons, per cent who
have raised:
Step-children
Adopted children
3.2
2.6
3.7
3.6
2.9
3.2
3.1
2.1
3.1
2.4
2.0
2.4

Of all women, per cent who
have ever worked outside home:

```
All ages
```

Ages 30-39

```
Of women who have ever worked,
    per cent with one or more
```

    work interruptions:
    57.9
71.0
66.7
53.0
52.1
47.0

Of women with one work inter-
ruption, per cent reporting due to:

| Childcare | 42.3 | 28.4 | 36.9 | 49.4 | 48.6 | 50.4 |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Marriage | 15.9 | 24.5 | 19.6 | 14.4 | 9.2 | $\ldots$ |

... Due to a high standard error, these figures are not shown.

Data on step-children and on adopted children suggest a very slight tendency for both forms of parenting to be more common among the lower socio-economic strata, as defined by educational level.

The lower rows of Table 20 give an interesting picture of some relationships among work and family life for women of different educational levels. The data show a clear relationship between educational level and the probability that a woman has ever worked outside the home: the more education, the greater the likelihood of having worked. The differential is smaller for younger women aged 30-39 than for women of all ages, but it is still substantial if we compare the least educated with the most educated category.

There is also a consistent relationship between education and whether a woman has experienced a work interruption of one year or longer: the higher the level of education, the less likely she has had such an interruption. Similarly there are distinct relationships when we look at the reasons that women report these work interruptions. In particular, women with more education are more likely to have reported childbearing and childcare as a reason for interrupting work. Fifty per cent of postsecondary graduates report such a reason, compared to less than one third of women with eight or fewer years of education. By contrast, women with less education are more apt to report having interrupted work for marriage. The explanation of these patterns is not clear. They may reflect complicated interactions between age, education, and the timing of the family events in question. Or they may reflect different preferences and different options for women of different educational levels. Women with more education may have jobs that allow pregnancy leaves on more favourable terms; or their and their husbands' combined income may make it easier for them to sustain a relatively short period without income. Some of these questions can be resolved by a more detailed analysis of the Family History Survey.

## VI. SUMMARY

This report presents some of the major findings of the Family History Survey on marriage, commonlaw partnerships and their dissolution; the rearing and home-leaving of children; the cause and duration of work interruptions; and the relationship between family events and education. Some of the highlights of the report follow.

According to the survey, marriage has largely been a stable institution in the lives of most Canadian adults. Approximately $90 \%$ of all Canadians who had ever married had done so only once. Less than $1 \%$ of any age-sex group had been married three or more times. Only about one in 10 ever-married Canadian males and one in eight ever-married Canadian females had been divorced. Divorce was found to be more concentrated in younger populations, thus a higher proportion of the total population may experience divorce in the future.

Common-law unions have been more frequent among younger persons but are still a rarity among the population as a whole. In 1984, 5.2\% of adult males and $6.5 \%$ of females were in a common-law partnership, but rates were slightly higher among younger age groups. Only 5.5\% of females aged 50-64 reported ever being in a common-law partnership compared to $26.9 \%$ of those aged $18-29$ and $20.6 \%$ of those aged 30-39. Relatively few persons reported being in more than one common-law union and frequently these common-law unions led to marriage.

In Canada, parenting has overwhelmingly involved one's own children. For example, 67.5\% of all adult females had at some time raised their own natural children, but only $2.1 \%$ had raised step-children and only $2.5 \%$ adopted children. Relatively fewer males reported ever raising natural children ( $60.3 \%$ ) whereas, by contrast, relatively more ( $4.4 \%$ ) reported ever raising step-children. This reflects both the tendency of lone parents to be female and the tendency of the courts to award custody of children to their mothers after divorce. Thus women are more apt to bring children to a new marriage, their new husbands thereby acquiring the step-father role.

Families with step-children have tended to be small, which supports the theory that divorced persons with large numbers of children have less chance of remarrying. Families with adopted children were also typically small, indicating that a more common form of adoption is by childless couples who have been unable to have their own natural children.

The average age of females at first birth was 23.6 but at first adoption, 31.7. This indicates that childless couples wait until the possibility of having natural children has much diminished. The implication of course, is that adopted children would tend to have older parents than other children in their birth cohort. The rate of adopting step-children was very low but whether this reflects an attitude toward such adoption as unnecessary, the wish to avoid associated legal problems, or resistance from a natural parent is unknown.

The report provides new insights on the "contraction" and "empty nest" stages of the family life cycle. Female children tended to leave home earlier than males, probably due, in part, to the younger age of females at first marriage or common-law union. Step-children, both female and male, tended to leave home at an appreciably earlier age than natural children. This may be because of the probable availability of another natural parent, in a different household, with whom the child could live.

For respondents aged 50 and over, the average age at departure of the first natural child was 46.7 years for males and 44.9 years for females. Parents of an "only" child were on average 48 years old when that child left home, and parents with two to five children were on average 52 years when the last child left.

Most Canadian adults have worked at some point in their lives $(93.5 \%$ of all men and $86.2 \%$ of all women), but close to half of all women reported one or more work interruptions of one year or longer, compared to only $18.2 \%$ of all men. For women aged 30 and over, more than $60 \%$ reported at least one interruption. The major reasons in order of frequency were job layoff, return to school, and illness or disability for men; and pregnancy or childcare, marriage, and job layoff for women. The demands of marriage, pregnancy and childcare were apparently múch more disruptive to the working lives of women than men.

On regional differences in patterns of family life, the survey's findings support those from other data sources. For example, the percentage of ever-married persons who had ever divorced was lower in the Atlantic provinces and Quebec, and notably higher in British Columbia. The incidence of younger persons ever in a common-law union was above the national norm in both British Columbia and Quebec, but lower in the Atlantic provinces.

The proportion of ever-married persons who reported ever being divorced was the lowest among those with the least education (eight years or less) and those with a high level of education (postsecondary graduates). There was also a clear relationship between education and the probability that a woman had both worked outside the home or experienced a work interruption: the more education, the more likely she had been in the labour force and the less likely she had experienced work interruption.

These highlights demonstrate potential areas of investigation in the Family History Survey data. As noted throughout the report a full exploitation of the data base remains to be done. Hopefully, this report will be but the first of many to shed new light upon the dynamics of family life in Canada.

## APPENDIX I

## STUDY DESIGN AND QUALITY OF DATA

## Introduction

The Family History Survey (FHS) was conducted during February 1984 as a supplement to the Canadian Labour Force Survey. It was sponsored by the Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division of Statistics Canada and carried out by a project team from the Special Surveys Division. This documentation is a brief, non-technical record of the various survey activities.

The purpose of the FHS is to provide detailed information on family events occurring to the respondents and their children, information not routinely available from censuses and vital statistics. In particular, the FHS provides retrospective information on the respondents' family lives, allowing one to examine the occurrence and timing of particular events (marriage, childbearing, work interruption, etc.) as part of a process of interrelated events.

## Population and Sample

As a supplement to the Labour Force Survey (LFS), the target population in the FHS is the same as the LFS, and it shares the same sampling frame and procedures. These procedures exclude the following elements, representing approximately $2 \%$ of the Canadian population:

- residents of the Yukon and Northwest Territories;
- Armed Forces personnel;
- residents of Indian Reserves;
- inmates of institutions;
- foreign diplomats.

Further detail on the design of the LFS can be found in Statistics Canada, Methodology of the Canadian Labour Force Survey, Catalogue 71-526.

The LFS of February 1984 was used to identify eligible respondents for the FHS, defined as adult males and females between the ages 18 and 64 . Persons aged $15-17$ were excluded from the FHS (although included in the LFS) on the grounds that the events of interest would be infrequent in this age group, and that some of the questions (for example, on cohabitation and childbearing) would be too sensitive. Persons 65 years of age and over were excluded partly because of concerns about the accuracy of data based on recall of details of events from the distant past. (7)

The FHS respondents were a subsample chosen from all eligible respondents in the LFS. A total of 16,042 respondents were identified; 14,004 were successfully interviewed, for a response rate of 87.3\%. Since the FHS interviews were conducted by telephone, eligible respondents without telephones, or those who refused to give the LFS interviewer their telephone number were excluded at the outset. These comprised approximately $2 \%$ of the original sample.
(7) See Footnote (1), page 9.

TABLE A-1. Frequency of Imputation or Manual Correction by Type of Event Record, Family History
Survey, 1984 (Per Cent of Records Affected) Survey, 1984 (Per Cent of Records Affected)

Type of event
Manual correction
Imputation
per cent

| Marriage | 1.1 | 2.1 |
| :--- | :---: | ---: |
| Common-law partnership | 1.1 | 2.5 |
| Work history | 0.3 | $*$ |
| Natural child | 0.4 | 3.4 |
| Adopted child | 0.7 | 10.0 |
| Step-child | $17.6^{* *}$ | 12.9 |

* Imputation was not used for work history; non-response was entered as a valid code.
** Much of this manual correction was necessitated as a result of imputation of a month which turned out to be inconsistent.


## Data Collection Procedures

Recent survey experience in many countries, including Canada, has demonstrated that telephone interviews can be an effective and economical way to collect information on large, geographically dispersed samples, such as that needed for the FHS. The telephone interview was therefore chosen as the main data collection procedure for this survey. Each eligible respondent received an introductory letter explaining the purpose of the study, and emphasizing that he or she alone would be asked to provide information during a telephone interview, that no proxy respondent would do.

Telephone interviewing from a central location was chosen over use of the regular LFS interviewers for two reasons: (1) the length of the FHS interview schedule (see Appendix II) precluded its being done at the same time as the regular LFS survey; (2) the personal character of some of the questions (for example, divorce and cohabitation) suggested the advantage of distant, impersonal interviewers, rather than the regular LFS interviewers who, especially in rural areas or small towns, may be neighbours or even friends. The centralized location also gave greater field control over the data collection.

Overall, data collection proceeded without major problems. Most eligible respondents could be contacted. Most agreed to the interview. And most seemed to know the information required. It should be stressed again that, with a few exceptions, the questions dealt with important life events that had happened to the respondent him/herself. The avoidance of proxy respondents seems to have been an appropriate design choice.

## Editing and Imputing

All editing of the data was done after the reported information had been transmitted to Ottawa; that is, virtually no editing was done in the field. Editing was conducted in several stages, after data for a particular respondent had been arranged in a series of records pertaining to each event (marriage, birth, etc.). Checks were made on the consistency of information pertaining to a single record (e.g., the date of a divorce must be later than the date of the marriage it terminates); two records pertaining to similar events (e.g., one marriage has to end before another can begin); or records pertaining to several different kinds of events (e.g., the date for the end of a common-law partnership that led to marriage should be consistent with the date for the beginning of the subsequent marriage).

Records showing inconsistency were checked against the original questionnaire and corrected where possible. If correction was impossible, the records were dropped.

Records that passed the editing procedure might still be missing certain information, for example the month and year in which a certain event took place. These problems were dealt with using standard Statistics Canada imputation procedures, which assign information to an incomplete record from another record chosen randomly and matching in terms of age, sex, marital status and other characteristics of the respondents. Table A-1 gives the frequency of required manual correction and imputation for
records of various kinds. As is apparent, respondents provided fairly accurate and complete information for events with which they had close personal connections. Most of the problems involved step-children or adopted children, about whom some respondents were unable to provide detailed information, such as the exact date (by month and year) of events occurring to the child.

## Data Files

The master file from the survey consists of individual records for each event reported in the survey and a demographic record for each respondent. For example, a respondent with one marriage and two children would have four records on the master file: a demographic record, a marriage record and two child records. A file arranged in this hierarchical structure is difficult to analyze using many of the standard software and therefore two linear files were created.

The first, a Respondent File, contains demographic, marriage, common-law union and work interruption data from the master file; derived variables relating to the age of the respondent at various events and the duration of events; and derived variables relating to any children reported.

The second file, a Child File, contains demographic information for the respondent; data on adopted, step and natural children from the master file; and some derived variables. Readers are cautioned against using data from this file as representations of individual children; rather they represent the key parental events of birth, adoption and the raising of step-children. Since the reporting unit is the parent, children who have in their lifetimes been involved in more than one parent-child relationship would be represented more than once in these data.

## Sampling Variability

As with any sample survey, the results of the FHS are subject to sampling error or variability. That is, the results are affected to some extent by chance; different results might be obtained if another survey were taken using exactly the same design but a fresh sample. In interpreting the results of the FHS, we wish to be sure that apparent patterns in the data reflect reality, not just the operation of chance. There is no simple way of doing this, although modern sampling and statistical theory offer guidance.

The problem is apt to be greatest with small samples or with small categories in large samples. For example, in the FHS, although there were approximately 14,000 respondents, only 23 of them reported three or more marriages, and those 23 do not constitute a large enough sample to enable us to conclude anything about thrice-married Canadians. Our small sample may be highly atypical.

For these reasons, Statistics Canada has a number of policies and rules-of-thumb which prevent the publication of data that are not statistically significant, that is, that might be the result of chance. Although evolved primarily to deal with census and large sample survey data (for example, the LFS) and thus somewhat restricting when applied to medium-sized samples such as in the FHS, these policies have been followed, at least in spirit, in the text of this report. Where results are based on small numbers, the reader is so cautioned.

## FHS Data Compared to Other Sources

It is seldom possible to verify absolutely statistical data such as that from the FHS. The accuracy of the data can be increased by means of sound research design. And the data can be checked for internal consistency, as was described above in the discussion of editing, correction and imputation. Finally, data from the FHS can be correlated to comparable data from other sources. Agreement lends confidence in the data from both sources, although of course both could be wrong. Some illustrative comparisons of the FHS data follow.

Table A-2 presents the proportion of different age groups married or in a common-law partnership, as reported in the FHS and LFS, and as estimated by Statistics Canada for 1984. For the most part, the FHS finds a slightly larger proportion married or in a common-law union, probably because of more complete reporting of the latter. This would be expected in a survey whose main purpose is obtaining accurate information on marriage and family-related events.

FHS estimates of marriages and divorces by calendar year agree less well with annual registration data, as can be seen in Table A-3. In particular, the FHS gives consistently smaller numbers of divorces, especially in the most recent years. One does not expect figures from these two sources to agree perfectly since some of the registered events occurred to people who have died or emigrated, and thus cannot be represented in the FHS sample. Also, some of the divorces occurred to people who were over age 64 at the time of the FHS, and thus were not eligible for inclusion. Still the discrepancies, especially for divorces in the years 1980-1982, require further examination and explanation. This is especially important if the FHS data is to be used for estimating divorce and remarriage rates by period or cohort.

Table A-4 compares FHS data on common-law partnerships with some similar data collected in the recent Canadian Fertility Survey, carried out by The University of Western Ontario, l'Université de Montréal, and The University of Alberta, with grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. In their estimates of the proportion of women currently in common-law partnerships, the two sources agree quite closely, but the proportions ever in such partnerships are consistently smaller in the FHS.

The discrepancies are probably related to the different question wordings in the two surveys. The FHS asked "Have you ever been a partner in a common-law relationship? By this we mean, partners living together as husband and wife, without being legally married". The question seems to refer to fairly serious and perhaps stable relationships, marriages in all but legal fact. The Canadian Fertility Survey asked simply "Have you ever lived with a partner without being married?" It seems to refer to somewhat more casual episodes of cohabitation. These wording differences might also explain the discrepancy regarding current status among very young respondents, especially those aged 18 and 19. It seems likely that some young adults who report themselves as living together would not consider themselves as living together "as man and wife".

TABLE A-2. Persons in a Union (Marriage or Common-law) by Age Group, Comparison Between Population Estimates, Family History Survey and Labour Force Survey, Canada, 1984

| Age group | Family Hist | Survey | Population estimates |  | Labour Force | Survey |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { numbers in } \\ & 1,000 \text { 's } \end{aligned}$ | per cent | $\begin{aligned} & \text { numbers in } \\ & 1,000 \text { 's } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { per } \\ & \text { cent } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { numbers in } \\ & 1,000 \text { 's } \end{aligned}$ | per cent |
| 18-24 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All unions | 917.4 | (28.7)* | 746.2 | (22.6) | 825.1 | (25.8) |
| Marriage | 652.4 | (20.4) |  |  |  |  |
| Common-law | 265.0 | ( 8.3) |  |  |  |  |
| 25-29 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All unions | 1,537.6 | (70.9) | 1,540.2 | (66.6) | 1,491.5 | (68.7) |
| Marriage | 1,341.1 | (61.8) |  |  |  |  |
| Common-law | 196.5 | ( 9.1) |  |  |  |  |
| 30-34 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All unions | 1,761.6 | (81.5) | 1,685.6 | (79.9) | 1,722.0 | (79.7) |
| Marriage | 1,592.9 | (73.7) |  |  |  |  |
| Common-law | 168.7 | ( 7.8) |  |  |  |  |
| 35-39 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All unions | 1,620.0 | (85.3) | 1,604.9 | (84.1) | 1,603.9 | (84.4) |
| Marriage | 1,527.1 | (80.4) |  |  |  |  |
| Common-law | 92.9 | ( 4.9) |  |  |  |  |
| 40-44 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All unions | 1,222.4 | (86.5) | 1,281.3 | (85.2) | 1,202.7 | (85.1) |
| Marriage | 1,160.9 | (82.1) |  |  |  |  |
| Common-law | 61.5 | ( 4.4) |  |  |  |  |
| 45-49 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All unions | 1,078.7 | (83.6) | 1,082.5 | (85.1) | 1,065.2 | (82.5) |
| Marriage | 1,047.5 | (81.1) |  |  |  |  |
| Common-law | 31.2 | ( 2.4) |  |  |  |  |
| 50-54 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All unions | 1,036.1 | (84.7) | 1,047.7 | (83.7) | 1,005.8 | (82.2) |
| Marriage | 987.7 | (80.7) |  |  |  |  |
| Common-law | 48.4 | ( 4.0) |  |  |  |  |
| 55-59 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All unions | 968.7 | (83.9) | 969.2 | (81.0) | 957.3 | (82.8) |
| Marriage | 945.0 | (81.8) |  |  |  |  |
| Common-law | 23.7 | ( 2.1) |  |  |  |  |
| 60-64 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All unions | 811.4 | (77.5) | 849.7 | (77.0) | 801.7 | (76.6) |
| Marriage | 793.2 | (75.8) |  |  |  |  |
| Common-law | 18.2 | ( 1.7) |  |  |  |  |
| 18-64 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All unions | 10,954.0 | (70.4) | 10,807.4 | (67.7) | 10,675.2 | (68.6) |
| Marriage | 10,047.9 | (64.6) |  |  |  |  |
| Common-law | 906.1 | ( 5.8) |  |  |  |  |

* Figures in brackets refer to the percentage within the total sample.

TABLE A-3. Divorces by Year Showing Percentage Distribution, Comparison Between Family History Survey and Vital Statistics,* Canada, 1960-1982

| Year of divorce | Total divorces |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Family History Survey |  | Vital Statistics |  |
|  |  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { per } \\ & \text { cent } \end{aligned}$ |  | per cent |
| All years | 577,728 | 100.0 | 754,949 | 100.0 |
| 1960 | 6,210 | 1.1 | 6,980 | 0.9 |
| 1961 | 6,178 | 1.1 | 6,563 | 0.9 |
| 1962 | 3,270 | 0.6 | 6,768 | 0.9 |
| 1963 | 10,926 | 1.9 | 7,686 | 1.0 |
|  | $9,207$ |  | 8,623 | 1.1 |
| Subtotal, 1960-1964 | 35,790 | 6.2 | 36,620 | 4.9 |
| 1965 | 3,474 | 0.6 | 8,974 | 1.2 |
| 1966 | 5,133 | 0.9 | 10,239 | 1.4 |
| 1967 | 9,325 | 1.6 | 11,165 | 1.5 |
| 1968 | 14,395 | 2.5 | 11,343 | 1.5 |
| 1969 | 16,269 | 2.8 | 26,093 | 3.5 |
| Subtotal, 1965-1969 | 48,595 | 8.4 | 67,814 | 9.0 |
| 1970 | 23,972 | 4.1 | 29,775 | 3.9 |
| 1971 | 31,143 | 5.4 | 29,685 | 3.9 |
| 1972 | 26,084 | 4.5 | 32,389 | 4.3 |
| 1973 | 33,257 | 5.8 | 36,704 | 4.9 |
| 1974 | 40,543 | 7.0 | 45,019 | 6.0 |
| Subtotal, 1970-1974 | 154,998 | 26.8 | 173,572 | 23.0 |
| 1975 | 37,499 | 6.5 | 50,611 | 6.7 |
| 1976 | 34,996 | 6.1 | 54,207 | 7.2 |
| 1977 | 34,741 | 6.0 | 55,370 | 7.3 |
| 1978 | 46,849 | 8.1 | 57,155 | 7.6 |
| 1979 | 51,201 | 8.9 | 59,474 | 7.9 |
| Subtotal, 1975-1979 | 205,285 | 35.5 | 276,817 | 36.7 |
| 1980 | 37,796 | 6.5 | 62,019 | 8.2 |
| 1981 | 46,511 | 8.1 | 67,671 | 9.0 |
| 1982 | 48,755 | 8.4 | 70,436 | 9.3 |

[^6]TABLE A-4. Per Cent of Women Currently and Ever in a Common-law Union by Age Group, Comparison Between Family History Survey and Canadian Fertility Survey,* Canada, 1984

| Age group | Currently in union |  | Ever in union |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | FHS | CFS | FHS | CFS |
| Per cent |  |  |  |  |
| 18-19 | 5.7 | 11.4 | 12.2 | 20.8 |
| 20-24 | 11.9 | 13.1 | 26.2 | 36.8 |
| 25-29 | 10.2 | 10.9 | 33.0 | 43.5 |
| 30-34 | 8.3 | 8.0 | 25.5 | 35.0 |
| 35-39 | 5.2 | 5.0 | 15.1 | 23.1 |
| 40-44 | 5.5 | 5.3 | 11.8 | 17.0 |
| 45-49 | 2.3 | 3.9 | 7.4 | 11.8 |

APPENDIX II. Family History Survey Interview Schedule

| SECTION A: This is a study of how family life has changed over time and how it is likely to change in the future. <br> Step-children First, I'm going to ask you about children. |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| 1. Have you ever raised step-children? (By step-children we mean children from the former union of a spouse or common-law partner.) Yes No $\rightarrow$ Go to Section B | SECOND STEP.CHILD |
| 2. What was the date of birth of your first step-child? | 17. What was the date of birth of your second step-child? |
| 3. When did your first step-child come under your care? | 18. When did your second step-child come under your care? |
| 4. Did you adopt this child? Yes No $\rightarrow$ Go to Q6 | 19. Did you adopt this child? Yes No $\rightarrow$ Go to Q 21 |
| 5. What was the date of adoption? | 20. What was the date of adoption? |
| 6. Was this child a girl or a boy? Girl Boy | 21. Was this child a girl or a boy? Girl Boy |
| 7. Does this child live in this household or somewhere else? In this household $\rightarrow$ Go to Q10 Somewhere else $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q14 Deceased $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q8 | 22. Does this child live in this household or somewhere else? In this household $\rightarrow$ Go to Q 25 Somewhere else $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q29 Deceased $\rightarrow$ Go to Q23 |
| 8. What was the date this child died? | 23. What was the date this child died? |
| 9. At that time, was this child.... On his/her own? In someone else's custody or care? Still at home? $\qquad$ Go to Q16 | 24. At that time, was this child.... On his/her own? In someone else's custody Go to Q30 or care? Still at home? $\qquad$ - Go to Q31 |
| 10. Interviewer check item: If Question 2 is before $\square$ $0,26,8$ $\rightarrow$ Go to Q11 Otherwise $\qquad$ - Go to Q16 | 25. Interviewer check item: If Question 17 is before $\square$ 0,2 6, 8 Go to Q26 Otherwise $\qquad$ - Go to Q31 |
| 11. Has this child ever left home to live on his/her own? Yes No $\rightarrow$ Go to Q16 | 26. Has this child ever left home to live on his/her own? Yes No $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q31 |
| 12. When did this child last leave home? | 27. When did this child last leave home? |
| 13. When did you start residing together again? | 28. When did you start residing together again? |
| 14. When this child stopped residing with you, was it to live on his/her own or in someone else's custody or care? On his/her own In someone else's custody or care | 29. When this child stopped residing with you, was it to live on his/her own or in someone else's custody or care? On his/her own In someone else's custody or care |
| 15. When did this child stop residing with you? | 30. When did this child stop residing with you? |
| 16. Have you raised a second step-child? Yes $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q17 No $\longrightarrow$ Go to Section B | 31. Have you raised a third step-child? Yes $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q32 No $\longrightarrow$ Go to Section B |



For Male Respondents:

| SECTION C: Natural Children |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| 1. Have you ever raised any children of your own? Yes No $\qquad$ Go to Section D | SECOND NATURAL CHILD |
| 2. What was the date of birth of your first child? | 14. What was the date of birth of your second child? |
| 3. Was this child a girl or a boy? Girl Boy | 15. Was this child a girl or a boy? Girl Boy |
| 4. Does this child live in this household or somewhere else? In this household $\rightarrow$ Go to Q7 Somewhere else $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q11 Deceased $\qquad$ $\qquad$ - Go to Q5 | 16. Does this child live in this household or somewhere else? In this household $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q19 Somewhere else Go to Q23 Deceased $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q17 |
| 5. What was the date this child died? | 17. What was the date this child died? |
| 6. At that time, was this child... On his/her own? <br> ${ }^{7} \mathrm{O}$ <br> In someone else's custody or care? Stifl at home? $\qquad$ Go to Q13 | 18. At that time, was this child... On his/her own? In someone else's custody or care? Still at home? $\qquad$ Go to Q25 |
| 7. Interviewer check item: If Question 2 is before $\begin{array}{ll} 0,2 & 6,8 \end{array} \rightarrow \text { Go to Q8 }$ Otherwise $\qquad$ - Go to Q13 | 19. Interviewer check item: If Question 14 is before $\begin{array}{\|l\|l\|} \hline 0,2 & 6,8 \end{array} \rightarrow \text { Go to Q20 }$ Otherwise $\qquad$ - Go to Q25 |
| 8. Has this child ever left home to live on his/her own? Yes No $\rightarrow$ Go to Q13 | 20. Has this child ever left home to live on his/her own? Yes No Go to Q25 |
| 9. When did this child last leave home? | 21. When did this child last leave home? |
| 10. When did you start residing together again? | 22. When did you start residing together again? |
| 11. When this child stopped residing with you, was it to live on his/her own or in someone else's custody or care? On his/her own In someone else's custody or care Never resided together $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q13 | 23. When this child stopped residing with you, was it to live on his/her own or in someone else's custody or care? On his/her own In someone else's custody or care Never resided together $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q25 |
| 12. When did this child stop residing with you? | 24. When did this child stop residing with you? |
| 13. Have you raised a second child of your own? Yes $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q14 No $\rightarrow$ Go to Section D | 25. Have you raised a third child of your own? $\mathrm{Yes} \longrightarrow \mathrm{Go}$ to Q26 No $\qquad$ - Go to Section D |


| SECTION C: Natural Children |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| 1. Have you ever given birth to a child? (Do not count stillbirths.) Yes No $\rightarrow$ Go to Section D | SECOND NATURAL CHILD |
| 2. What was the date of birth of your first child? | 14. What was the date of birth of your second child? |
| 3. Was this child a girl or a boy? Girl Boy | 15. Was this child a girl or a boy? Girl Boy |
| 4. Does this child live in this household or somewhere else? In this household $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q7 Somewhere else $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q11 Deceased $\qquad$ Go to Q5 | 16. Does this child live in this household or somewhere else? In this household $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q19 Somewhere else $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q23 Deceased $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q17 |
| 5. What was the date this child died? | 17. What was the date this child died? |
| 6. At that time, was this child... On his/her own? In someone else's custody or care? $\qquad$ Still at home? $\qquad$ Go to Q13 | 18. At that time, was this child... On his/her own? In someone else's custody or care? $\qquad$ Still at home? $\qquad$ Go to Q25 |
| 7. Interviewer check item: If Question 2 is before <br> $0,26,8$ $\rightarrow$ Go to Q8 Otherwise $\qquad$ Go to Q13 | 19. Interviewer check item: If Question 14 is before <br> $0,26,8$ $\qquad$ Go to Q20 Otherwise $\qquad$ Go to Q25 |
| 8. Has this child ever left home to live on his/her own? Yes No $\rightarrow$ Go to Q13 | 20. Has this child ever left home to live on his/her own? Yes No $\rightarrow$ Go to Q25 |
| 9. When did this child last leave home? | 21. When did this child last leave home? |
| 10. When did you start residing together again? | 22. When did you start residing together again? |
| 11. When this child stopped residing with you, was it to live on his/her own or in someone else's custody or care? On his/her own In someone else's custody or care Never resided together $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q13 | 23. When this child stopped residing with you, was it to live on his/her own or in someone else's custody or care? On his/her own In someone else's custody or care Never resided together $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q25 |
| 12. When did this child stop residing with you? | 24. When did this child stop residing with you? |
| 13. Did you give birth to a second child? Yes Go to Q14 No $\qquad$ Go to Section D | 25. Did you give birth to a third child? Yes $\longrightarrow$ Go to Q26 No Go to Section D |

[^7]

| The next questions are about common-law partnerships, including those that led to marriage. |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| 1. Have you ever been a partner in a common-law relationship? By this we mean, partners live together as husband and wife, without being legally married. Yes No Go to Section F | SECOND PARTNERSHIP |
| 2. Approximately when did you and your first common-law partner begin to live together? | 8. Approximately when did you and your second common-law partner begin to live together? |
| 3. Are you still living together as common-law partners? Yes $\quad$ Go to Section $F$ No | 9. Are you still living together as common-law partners? Yes Go to Section F No |
| 4. Did you ever marry this partner? Yes No $\quad$ Go to Q6 | 10. Did you ever marry this partner? Yes No Go to Q12 |
| 5. Can you please tell me again the date of that marriage? | 11. Can you please tell me again the date of that marriage? |
| 6. Did this partnership end by separation or by the death of your partner? (Record dates) Separation $\qquad$ Death $\qquad$ | 12. Did this partnership end by separation or by the death of your partner? (Record dates) Separation Death $\qquad$ |
| 7. Have you been a partner in a second common-law relationship? Yes $\quad$ Go to Q8 No $\qquad$ Go to Section F | 13. Have you been a partner in a third common-law relationship? Yes $\rightarrow$ Go to Q14 No $\rightarrow$ Go to Section F |

8-5400-107.1

| SECTION F:Work History $\quad$ These last few questions are about your employment history. |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| 1. Have you ever worked at a job or business on a regular basis? or longer. Yes No $\longrightarrow$ END | By this I mean a full or part-time job which lasted six months |
| 2. In what year did you first start working on a regular basis? full-time. $\square$ <br> 1.9 year Only part-time work while full-time student $\qquad$ -END | clude part-time employment while you were attending school |
| Yes No $\qquad$ END <br> I am going to ask you some questions about each time you stopped regular work for one year or longer. Interviewer Instruction: Please complete one column of questions for each work interruption. We are collecting information for the first four interruptions only. |  |
| FIRST INTERRUPTION | SECOND INTERRUPTION |
| 4. In what year did your first work interruption begin? | 10. In what year did your second work interruption begin? |
| 5. At that time were you working full-time or part-time? Full-time Part-time | 11. At that time were you working full-time or part-time? Full-time Part-time |
| 6. What were the reasons you stopped working? (mark all that apply) Child Care Returned to school Retired Moved to be with partner Laid offljob ended Own illness/disability Marriage Other | 12. What were the reasons you stopped working? (mark all that apply) Child Care Returned to school Retired Moved to be with partner Laid off/job ended Own illness/disability Marriage Other |
| 7. For how long did you stop working before you returned to work on a regular basis, either full or part-time? Years Never worked since $\rightarrow$ END | 13. For how long did you stop working before you returned to work on a regular basis, either full or part-time? Years Never worked since $\rightarrow$ END |
| 8. When you returned was it to work full-time or part-time? Full-time Part-time | 14. When you returned was it to work full-time or part-time? Full-time Part-time |
| 9. Have you taken any other breaks of one year or longer from regular employment? Yes $\qquad$ Go to Q10 No END | 15. Have you taken any other breaks of one year or longer from regular employment? Yes $\rightarrow$ Go to Q16 No $\rightarrow$ END |

[^8]
## REFERENCES

Dumas, J., Report on the Demographic Situation in Canada 1983, Statistics Canada, Current Demographic Analyses, Catalogue 91-209E, Ottawa, 1984.

The Free Press, London, Ontario, January 18, 1985.

McKie, D.C., B. Prentice and P. Reed, Divorce: Law and Family in Canada, Statistics Canada, Catalogue 89-502E, Ottawa, 1983.

Statistics Canada, Marriages and Divorces: Vital Statistics Volume II, Catalogue 84-205, Ottawa.

Statistics Canada, Methodology of the Canadian Labour Force Survey, Catalogue 71-526, Ottawa, 1976.


[^0]:    * These percentages represent very few cases and therefore may contain a high level of error.
    ** The single dash (-) in this and all other tables indicates no observation.

[^1]:    * Common-law unions that resulted in marriage are counted as one union.

[^2]:    * Average ages are shown only for the groups to which the events apply; that is, those who have ever married, ever divorced, ever remarried and so on. Some respondents may belong to more than one group; and others, to only one. That explains why some of the average ages do not fall in expected sequence. (For example, the average age at first divorce of females now aged 40-49 is 36.1 and at second marriage only 35.5. )

[^3]:    As shown in Table 13, the vast majority of Canadian children remain in the parental household (at least one parent) through the secondary school ages.(6) Among children ages 15-19 of female respondents, $84 \%$ of the females and $87 \%$ of the males are reported as living in the respondent's household. For the children of male respondents, the percentages are slightly lower: 80\% for female children, $84 \%$ for male children. The slightly lower percentages for the children of male respondents presumably reflect the greater tendency of males to leave their own children behind in forming new households after divorce and remarriage.
    (6) As noted earlier, the FHS sample is not exactly representative of all children and this also affects estimates presented in Table 13.

[^4]:    * Refers to children who left to be on their own.

[^5]:    * This percentage represents very few cases and therefore may contain a high level of error. ... Due to a high standard error, this figure is not shown.

[^6]:    * Figures compiled from the annual Marriages and Divorces: Vital Statistics Volume II, Catalogue 84-205.

[^7]:    $8-5400-108.1$

[^8]:    8-5400-107. 1

