

# Alternative Routes in the Remarriage Market: Competing-Risk Analyses of Union Formation after Divorce\*

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## *Abstract*

*We examine the social, economic, and cultural determinants of “repartnering” after a divorce. Our analysis improves upon earlier research in three ways: (1) our study includes more direct measures of theoretical concepts; (2) we study both marriage and cohabitation after divorce and analyze them as competing risks; (3) we incorporate information about the meeting setting in our event-history models. Competing-risk models estimated on a large-scale sample of ever-divorced persons in the Netherlands offer limited support for economic theories of marriage. Stronger support is obtained for social theories of marriage, which emphasize the role of meeting and mating opportunities in the “remarriage market,” and for cultural theories of marriage, which stress the importance of individualistic orientations.*

Some people stay single after divorce, while others enter a new marital or cohabiting relationship. Knowing who enters a new union and who does not is important for several reasons. First, remarriage may be used as a strategy to

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overcome some of the negative consequences of divorce. After divorce, women often experience a decline in economic well-being, but the decline is often offset by marrying a new husband (Duncan & Hoffman 1985). Similarly, many men and women experience a loss of well-being and feelings of loneliness when their first marriage ends, but such effects can be reduced by remarriage (Amato 2000). Obviously, remarriage is not the only way to solve such problems, and remarriage may also introduce new problems, such as conflicts between the new partner and the children (Furstenberg & Cherlin 1991). Nevertheless, remarriage can limit the negative consequences of divorce and should therefore be an integral part of the divorce debate (Smock 1990; Sweeney 1997).

A second reason that remarriage is important lies on the macro level. Many Western observers have argued that declining marriage rates and rising rates of cohabitation and divorce signal a declining preference or "taste" for marriage (Bumpass 1990). In this cultural interpretation of demographic trends, doubts have risen as well about the viability of marriage as an institution. Remarriage plays an important role in this debate, because if remarriage rates are high, it would seem incorrect to regard divorce as a definite sign that the institution of marriage is fading (Cherlin 1992). The combination of frequent divorce and frequent remarriage points to other factors that may cause marital instability and suggests that a model of sequential marital monogamy fits the new era better. This reasoning also depends on how many people cohabit after divorce. If a low rate of remarriage is compensated by a high rate of cohabitation, the thesis of a weakening marriage institution is still a valid interpretation of demographic trends.

A third reason for studying the determinants of remarriage is theoretical. In the recent past, prevailing economic and sociological theories of marriage have often been applied to first marriage formation and to marital stability (Becker 1981; Oppenheimer 1988). In our view, applications to remarriage may provide a novel and stronger test of such theories than data on first marriage. Not all people remarry, whereas most people marry at least once. First marriage is primarily a matter of "when"; remarriage is also a matter of "if," in particular for people who divorce at later ages. Research on marriage formation has shown that many economic hypotheses are more applicable to the occurrence of marriage itself than to its timing (Oppenheimer 1997). Since the remarriage rate is smaller than the first marriage rate, remarriage data may offer a more obvious way to address these hypotheses.

The determinants of remarriage have been studied before (e.g., Lampard & Peggs 1999; Smock 1990; Spanier & Glick 1980; Sweeney 1997), but the number of studies is small and the research area is not growing. In this article, we try to enhance our understanding of the remarriage process by introducing three new elements to the literature. First, previous research has focused only on demographic or basic economic factors affecting remarriage, such as age at

divorce, gender, children, and education. We broaden this focus by considering a more elaborate set of economic characteristics and by adding social and cultural factors to the remarriage model. Social hypotheses emphasize opportunities people face in the second marriage market, while cultural hypotheses emphasize the preferences that people have about the institution of marriage. Second, we consider both marriage and cohabitation after divorce and analyze these events as competing risks. By comparing the two events, we gain more insight into the validity of cultural hypotheses about the decline of marriage. Third, we have information about the type of context in which people met their new spouse. By incorporating such meeting settings as competing risks in our event-history models, we are better able to separate interpretations in terms of marriage market opportunity from interpretations in terms of (economic) needs.

To examine the determinants of remarriage, we analyze life-history data on ever-divorced persons in the Netherlands. As in other Western European countries, divorce rates in the Netherlands have increased over the past decades. Life table estimates show that about 25% of all new marriages eventually end in divorce (Statistics Netherlands 1999). After divorce, 60% of the men and a little over 40% of the women will eventually remarry (Statistics Netherlands 1999). Even though these numbers are high, remarriage in the Netherlands is less common than it is in the U.S. The yearly Dutch remarriage rate in the 1980s is about 50 per 1,000 divorced women (Statistics Netherlands 1999), whereas the American remarriage rate is about 90 (Bumpass, Sweet & Martin 1990). Official statistics do not include persons who are cohabiting with a new partner, and so the “repartnering” rate will be higher than what the remarriage rate suggests (Uunk 1999). In the Netherlands, cohabitation is a widely used alternative to marriage (Manting 1994) and only a small minority of the population has negative opinions about cohabitation (Esveldt et al. 2001). American research has furthermore suggested that the trend toward increased cohabitation was led by the divorced, so that unmarried cohabitation seems to be a more important alternative for remarriage than it is for first marriage (Bumpass & Sweet 1989).

### Previous Studies on Remarriage Differentials

While many studies in the past have focused on the content and stability of second marriages, and in particular on the internal dynamics of stepfamilies (Cherlin 1978; Cherlin & Furstenberg 1994; Coleman, Ganong & Fine 2000), little is known about who finds a new spouse and who does not. In Table 1, we present an overview of the most important European and American studies on the timing and occurrence of remarriage after divorce. Our overview focuses

TABLE 1: Review of Methods and Results in Analyses of Remarriage Determinants: Principal Post-1980 Studies

Study <sup>a</sup>	Country	Y Variable	Design	Sample	Education	Children	Age Aspects	Religion	Occupational Status	Other X Variables
(1) Koo 1980	USA	Remarriage (after divorce)	Full marital history	Women	—	Negative effect (only for young divorced people, no age kid effect)	Negative effect (divorce age)	—	—	—
(2) Mott 1983	USA	Remarriage (after divorce)	First 5 years after divorce	Women	Negative effect	No effect	No effect	—	Negative effect (employment) No effect (work experience)	Change in finances, health, welfare receipts, broken home
(3) Koo 1984	USA	Remarriage (after divorce)	Full marital history	Women	Negative effect	Negative effect (no age effect)	Negative effect (divorce age)	Negative effect (Catholic)	—	Region, divorce cohort, intact family of origin
(4) Matthijs 1987	Belgium	Repartnering (after divorce)	Full marital history	Women Men	No effect	Negative effect	Negative effect (divorce age) No effect (divorce age)	—	—	Urbanization

TABLE 1: Review of Methods and Results in Analyses of Remarriage Determinants: Principal Post-1980 Studies (Continued)

Study <sup>a</sup>	Country	Y Variable	Design	Sample	Education	Children	Age Aspects	Religion	Occupational Status	Other X Variables
(5) Bumpass 1990	USA	Remarriage (after divorce)	First 5 years after divorce	Women	No effect	Negative effect	Negative effect (divorce age + marriage age)	—	—	Region, race
(6) Chiswick 1990	USA	Repartnering (after divorce + widowhood)	Full marital history	Women	No effect (whites)	Negative effect	Negative effect (divorce age)	No effect (Catholic)	—	Region
(7) Klein 1990	Germany	Remarriage (after divorce)	Full marital history	Women	Negative effect	Positive effect	Negative effect (divorce age)	—	Positive effect (occupational status)	Urbanization, migration
(8) Smock 1990	USA	Remarriage (after divorce)	Full marital history	Women	No effect (whites) Positive effect (blacks)	Negative effect	Negative effect (divorce age)	—	Positive effect (occupational status)	Urbanization, migration
(9) Spanier 1990	USA	Remarriage (after divorce)	First 5 years after divorce	Women	No effect (except college grads)	Negative effect	Negative effect (divorce age + marriage age)	—	—	Divorce cohort

(Continued on next page)

TABLE 1: Review of Methods and Results in Analyses of Remarriage Determinants: Principal Post-1980 Studies (Continued)

Study <sup>a</sup>	Country	Y Variable	Design	Sample	Education	Children	Age Aspects	Religion	Occupational Status	Other X Variables
(10) Wu 1994a	Canada	Recohabitation (after divorce)	Full marital history	Women	No effect	Negative effect	Negative effect (divorce age + marriage age)	No effect (Catholic, Protestant)	—	Region, divorce cohort
(11) Wu 1994b	Canada	Remarriage (after divorce + widowhood)	Full marital history	Women	No effect	Negative effect	Negative effect (divorce age + marriage age)	No effect (Catholic, Protestant)	—	Region, divorce cohort
(12) Sweeney 1997	USA	Remarriage (after divorce + widowhood)	Full marital history	Women	No effect	Negative effect	Negative effect (divorce age + marriage age)	No effect (Catholic)	No effect (experience during marriage)	Work aspiration, mental ability, broken home
				Men	Positive effect	No effect	Positive effect (divorce age; confounded)	Positive effect (Catholic, Protestant)	—	Region, marriage market variable
				Men	Positive effect	No effect	Positive effect (divorce age; confounded)	Positive effect (Catholic, Protestant)	—	Region, marriage market variable
				Women	No effect	Negative effect	Negative effect (divorce age + marriage age)	No effect (Catholic)	No effect (experience during marriage)	Work aspiration, mental ability, broken home
				Men	No effect	Negative effect	Negative effect (divorce age + marriage age)	Negative effect (Catholic)	No effect (occupational status)	Same

TABLE 1: Review of Methods and Results in Analyses of Remarriage Determinants: Principal Post-1980 Studies (Continued)

Study <sup>a</sup>	Country	Y Variable	Design	Sample	Education	Children	Age Aspects	Religion	Occupational Status	Other X Variables
(13) Uunk 1998	Netherlands	Repartnering (after divorce)	Full marital history	Women	No effect	Negative effect	Negative effect (divorce age)	—	Positive effect (of work, not of status)	—
(14) Lampard 1999	Great Britain	Repartnering (after divorce + widowhood)	Full marital history	Women	—	Negative effect	Negative effect (divorce age)	—	Positive effect (of work and of status)	—
				Men	—	—	Negative effect (divorce age + marriage age)	—	Positive effect (class; professionals exception)	Divorce cohort, cohabitation in first marriage
				Men	—	—	Negative effect (divorce age + marriage age)	—	Positive effect (class)	Divorce cohort, cohabitation in first marriage

<sup>a</sup> Only first authors listed.

on sociological, demographic, and economic studies that were published in professional journals in the 1980s and 1990s. The numbers in parentheses in the text refer to the studies in Table 1.

There are important differences in the designs of the studies. Most authors examine divorced people, although a few authors make comparisons with widows and widowers (6, 11, 12, 14). The type of new relationship differs among studies as well. Because of data limitations, most studies analyze remarriage only. A few studies have data on cohabitation after divorce, but those do not compare the two events with each other (6, 10, 13, 14). Finally, there are differences in the longitudinal nature of the data. Most studies in the 1980s and 1990s are based on retrospective life-history data, and they examine remarriage chances at several points in a person's postdivorce period. Other studies are based on panel data, which typically examine the chance of remarrying between subsequent panel waves (2, 5, 9), a design that is less ideal because of censoring. A final observation is that virtually all studies present separate analyses for men and women, in part because the rate of remarriage is much lower for women than for men and in part because hypotheses on the determinants of remarriage are often sex-specific.

Which independent variables have been used, and what effects do they have? The most consistent finding has to do with a person's life cycle. Virtually all studies find that older people and people with children are less likely to remarry. The age effect has been found for both men and women, although it appears to be stronger for women. Effects of children have been studied less often for men and are clearly more mixed for them, sometimes negative (12, 13), just as for women, but sometimes not significant (8, 10, 11). While demographic effects are generally strong and consistent, evidence on the influence of socioeconomic characteristics is more uncertain. Most studies find no effect of education on remarriage (4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12), whereas others find significant positive effects for men (7, 11, 13) and negative effects for women (2, 3, 7). One study finds a positive effect of education for black women (8). Work and occupational status have not often been studied, largely because work-history data are typically lacking or incomplete. Some authors find a positive effect of occupational status on the remarriage chances of both men and women (7, 13, 14), but another study finds no effect (12). Effects of woman's labor-force participation are mixed as well. One study finds no effect of women's labor-force experience on remarriage (12), one study finds a positive effect of being in the labor force (13), and another study finds a negative effect (2). The cultural determinants of remarriage have primarily been studied by examining religious denomination. The evidence seems to suggest that Catholics are less likely to remarry than others, but effects are small and not consistent across studies (3, 6, 10, 11, 12).



The most striking feature of Table 1 is that the number of independent variables taken together is small. Studies are limited to demographic and rudimentary economic determinants of remarriage. While demographic effects are consistent across studies, economic effects are inconsistent. Part of the reason, we think, is that the magnitude of these effects is small, which may, in turn, be caused by the fact that in many cases multiple and opposing interpretations are involved. In general, the literature has provided important descriptive information on the basic differentials in remarriage probabilities, but our knowledge of the remarriage process is still incomplete and our theoretical interpretations of these differentials remain to be examined empirically. In this contribution, we explore the role of economic influences in more detail, we test alternative interpretations of such influences, and we develop and test social and cultural hypotheses about remarriage.

## Theory and Hypotheses

To understand remarriage differentials, we start out with presenting three general arguments about why people enter (married or unmarried) cohabiting unions: needs, attractiveness, and opportunity (Becker 1981; Goldscheider & Waite 1986; Oppenheimer 1988). A first basic argument is that people enter a union because it enhances well-being in various ways, emotionally, financially, and socially. A partner may provide economic security, affection, and company, and the greater the need in these respects, the more likely it is that a person will cohabit. Another important reason is that people marry because they want to have children. Although arguments about individual needs apply to first as well as to second marriages, they have a special meaning for remarriage because the needs of divorced persons are often changed by the first marriage. More specifically, most women experience a financial deterioration after divorce, and both men and women may experience a loss in well-being when their marriage ends. The negative consequences of divorce may create needs that can be filled by a new marriage. Another difference between first and second marriages lies in the wish to have children. Children are an important reason for people to enter a union, and in the case of remarriage, many people already have children from a prior marriage. Hence, one of the main reasons to marry is much less relevant for divorced people, and this may make other reasons to marry more salient.

A second basic argument is that marriage prospects depend on how attractive a person is to the opposite sex. It has traditionally been argued that unattractiveness in the marriage market will lead to a lower probability of marrying (Goldscheider & Waite 1986). In the literature on first marriage, such

hypotheses are complicated by the fact that attractiveness changes the search process. For that reason, attractiveness not only affects the chance of ever marrying, but it also has complex and sometimes contradictory effects on the timing of marriage (England & Farkas 1986; Lichter et al. 1992; Oppenheimer 1988). In the study of remarriage, the problem may be smaller, since the proportion of the divorced who remarry is lower than the proportion of first-married people. Therefore, we think that for remarriage the simple version of the attractiveness hypothesis is more important than for first marriage. In other words, the more attractive a person is, the higher the chances of repartnering. Note that in the remarriage market, there are additional characteristics that determine who is attractive and who is not. Children from a prior relationship, for example, may make someone unattractive to a new partner, and potential partners may perceive the experience of divorce itself as a negative signal.

A third argument is that the probability of marrying depends on the opportunity to meet someone of the opposite sex. The better the opportunity, the greater the chance that a person will meet a suitable spouse and the higher the probability of marriage or cohabitation. In the case of remarriage, opportunities to find a new partner probably play a greater role than in the case of first marriage. Divorced people are older than never-married people, and, at their age, the marriage market may be less effective. This is not only because the number of single persons is smaller at later ages, but also because divorced people are less naturally involved in typical marriage markets such as schools, voluntary associations, and leisure locations (Kalmijn 1998).

Using the three arguments about needs, attractiveness, and meeting opportunities, we develop hypotheses about the influence of three groups of characteristics on remarriage: social, economic, and cultural. We not only differentiate groups of independent variables, but we also differentiate ways of finding a new spouse and ways of establishing a new relationship.

First, we distinguish ways of finding a new spouse. As we demonstrate later, there are three main contexts in the remarriage market: finding a spouse through work, finding a spouse through leisure activities, and finding a spouse through one's social network. By including this distinction in the event-history models, we are better able to assess the role of marriage-market opportunities and we are able to separate social and economic interpretations of the effects of economic variables. Women's occupations, for example, are generally believed to have both positive and negative effects on remarriage: a negative effect because work reduces the economic need for a new partner, and a positive effect because work enlarges opportunities to meet and mate. Our hypothesis is that if the work effect is based on reduced needs only, it should affect repartnering regardless of where the new partner is found. If the work effect is based on meeting opportunities, it should not affect repartnering through settings other

than the workplace. We introduce this logic as a way of testing hypotheses about the social and economic influences on remarriage.

Second, we distinguish ways of establishing a new relationship, that is, marriage versus cohabitation. By making this distinction, we are better able to test some of the underlying theoretical mechanisms. A well-known hypothesis, for example, is that progressive values about marriage and the family would reduce remarriage chances because people with progressive values have negative opinions about the importance of marriage. If this hypothesis is true, we should find that values affect only remarriage after divorce, not cohabitation. If the chances of cohabitation after divorce are also reduced, progressive values reflect a desire to live alone rather than a rejection of the marriage institution. This would still be a cultural effect, but its implications are different.

#### HYPOTHESES ABOUT SOCIAL INTEGRATION

When people want to have a new partner after divorce, they are faced with a marriage market that is more restricted than the market they faced when they were young. Given a certain desire for age similarity, it is clear that the remarriage market is smaller because the number of single people at later ages is limited. In addition, the remarriage market is more difficult for divorced women because men marry somewhat younger women and at later ages there are more women than men. It is not only in the numbers that the remarriage market is different. When married, people's networks become smaller and more connected to the network of the partner (Gerstel 1988). After divorce, people are standing in the world as single adults again, and many will find it difficult to develop a new pattern of recreation and social participation. Studies generally show less social participation after divorce and a shrinkage of the social network (Milardo 1987).

Some divorced persons will be more socially integrated than others. Such differences may arise for several reasons. Some divorced persons may already have been less socially dependent on the spouse when they were married, some will be in a better structural position to develop a new lifestyle after divorce, and some will have a more sociable personality that makes it easier for them to join clubs or seek out new activities (Gerstel 1988; Wallerstein & Blakeslee 1989). Whatever the reasons, we think that the degree to which a person is socially integrated has an important effect on repartnering, because the level of social integration is a fundamental prerequisite for meeting and mating with new partners. New partners are often found directly, through leisure activities such as those associated with bars, clubs, and voluntary associations, or they are found indirectly, through one's social network (Kalmijn & Flap 2001; Laumann et al. 1994). We therefore expect that persons who are active in their

leisure will be more likely to repartner than others and that persons who have large social networks will be more likely to repartner than others.

The role of social integration in the repartnering process can be examined more directly by considering the types of places where people met their new partner. We distinguish three contexts in the remarriage market: work, leisure activities, and social networks. Using this distinction, we can relate the type of social integration to the corresponding type of meeting context. More specifically, we expect that the effect of active leisure participation is stronger on the risk of finding a new partner through leisure activities and weaker on the risk of finding a new partner in other ways. Similarly, we expect that the effect of integration in social networks is stronger on the risk of finding a new partner through one's social network and weaker on the risk of finding a new partner in other ways. If these two additional hypotheses are confirmed, stronger evidence will be obtained for our interpretation of the effects of these variables on marriage market opportunities. If these hypotheses are not confirmed, and if effects of leisure activities and social integration are present for all meeting places, we could interpret such a result by arguing that these variables are indicators of sociability. People who are socially active apparently are more at ease in all social settings and will have better skills to interact with others. This sociability may help them to find a new partner in all kinds of meeting places.

Another important restriction on social integration is having children. Children are generally believed to reduce remarriage prospects. One reason is that people with children might go out less often, especially when the children are still young, which will reduce people's opportunities to meet and mate (Wallerstein & Blakeslee 1989). Children may also affect repartnering in other ways. Divorced persons without children often still want to have children and will therefore have a greater need for a new partner (Lampard & Peggs 1999). In addition, new potential partners may be less interested in marrying someone who already has children, either because prior children can serve as a source of conflict or friction in the new relationship or because such a person is less likely to want to have additional children. Thus, not only a lack of social integration but also needs and attractiveness play a role in the effect of children.

We have two ways of examining whether the argument about marriage market opportunities is involved in the effect of children. First, one would expect an effect of children on remarriage that is conditional on where the children are living. More specifically, we expect that children living at home reduce repartnering chances more than children living with the former spouse or elsewhere. This hypothesis applies to both men and women. Note that even though it is mostly women who gain custody after divorce, there are enough divorced men with children at home in the sample to assess whether the

hypothesis is valid for men. A second implication of the opportunity argument lies in the type of meeting context. Because children at home primarily restrict activities out of the home, children (at home) should have a stronger negative effect on the risk of finding a partner through work and leisure activities than on the risk of finding a partner through other channels, such as the neighborhood or one's social network. If the effects are similar for the various meeting contexts, the effect of children on repartnering will have more to do with reduced needs and attractiveness than with limited meeting opportunities.

#### HYPOTHESES ABOUT ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Our second group of hypotheses is inspired by economic theories of marriage. We first consider the economic characteristics of the marriage that was broken. We generally expect that sex-role specialization during marriage will lead to a higher probability of repartnering. Married women who have not invested time in paid labor during marriage will have a weaker position in the labor market after divorce. These women will be less independent financially and thus have a stronger financial need to repartner (Becker, Landes & Michael 1977; Mott & Moore 1983; Sweeney 1997). Repartnering rates will therefore be higher when women contributed less to the family income during marriage and when women worked a smaller portion of the time they were married. Sex-role specialization during marriage may also make men more dependent after divorce. In general, married men tend to specialize in market labor and often contribute little to household tasks and child-rearing. Because domestic labor also requires skills, these men may feel less autonomous after divorce and experience a greater need to repartner (Van Poppel 1995). We therefore expect repartnering rates to be higher when men contributed less to household tasks during marriage and when they need help in housekeeping when they live on their own.

After divorce, economic conditions will also play a role. One consideration is that women may enter or reenter the labor force when their marriages end. Note that the employment rates of married women are low (de Graaf & Vermeulen 1997). Less than 10% of married women with children have full-time jobs, and more than 50% of them are not employed at all. Most married women without children do have jobs, although even in the youngest cohorts only 60% of them have full-time jobs. Divorced women may begin to work again for several reasons. They may wish to improve their economic well-being, or they may regard employment as a new source of social integration and support after divorce. Whatever the reason, employment is likely to reduce a woman's financial needs, thereby weakening the desire to remarry (Becker, Landes & Michael 1977; Mott & Moore 1983). While work increases women's

economic independence, women who do not work generally have alternative sources of support, such as alimony payments, welfare, or several other kinds of public income transfers. Because women who work, and in particular women who work full-time, are generally doing better financially than other women, we expect that repartnering rates are lower for women who work.

An alternative mechanism may be involved in the work effect as well, because work organizations may function as a meeting place for new partners. When divorced women work for pay, they will be more likely to meet potential partners, and this may increase their repartnering chances. Hence, the economic argument implies a negative effect of work on repartnering (“less need”), while the social argument implies a positive effect (“more opportunity”). To separate these effects, we develop an additional hypothesis by looking at the place where women met their new partners. We expect that when the work effect is primarily a matter of meeting opportunity, the effect of work on repartnering should be positive when considering the risk of finding a new partner through work and zero when considering the risk of finding a new partner in other ways. The implication of this hypothesis is not so much that employment increases the odds of finding a partner at work, which would be trivial, but rather that employment has a stronger effect on finding a partner at work than on finding a partner elsewhere. If the effect of work on finding a new partner in other meeting places is also significant, this result would suggest that working women are more attractive on the remarriage market and that it is not the meeting opportunity argument that counts.

For men’s employment, the social and economic mechanisms work in similar directions. Given the traditional male breadwinner model that still exists to a large extent in the Netherlands (Van Berkel & de Graaf 1998), one would expect that men who work for pay and men with high socioeconomic status positions are more likely to repartner than other men. Such men are probably more attractive in the remarriage market, and the gains to specialization for them are higher than the benefits of living alone (Becker, Landes & Michael 1977; Sweeney 1997). Meeting opportunities are involved in the work effect as well, except that in this case, the implications of the two theoretical arguments are the same. To separate the effects, we again develop an additional hypothesis by looking at the meeting place. If the argument about meeting opportunity is true, we would expect the work effect on repartnering to be stronger when considering the risk of finding a new partner through work than when considering the risk of finding a new partner in other ways. If only the attractiveness argument is true, work effects should exist for all meeting channels.

In the reasoning above, we are able to distinguish between interpretations in terms of marriage market opportunities and interpretations in terms of economic needs. The latter sort of interpretation, however, may be confounded

by the fact that need and attractiveness are sometimes negatively correlated. Independent persons (financially or domestically) may have less need to repartner, but at the same time they may be more attractive than dependent persons. The needs argument implies a positive effect of dependency on repartnering, while the attractiveness argument implies a negative effect of dependency on repartnering. We can separate out the role of meeting opportunity, but we have to see empirically which of the remaining two mechanisms (needs and attractiveness) is stronger.

Another economic hypothesis has to do with the type of income women receive. Some divorced women receive welfare and alimony payments, and in the Netherlands such payments are generally not portable to a new marriage. Since women on welfare have fewer financial advantages from remarrying than otherwise comparable women who are not on welfare (England & Farkas 1986; Mott & Moore 1983), we expect that alimony and welfare reduce the chances of remarrying. For most of the period we consider, welfare regulations did not consider cohabitation as equivalent to marriage, and as a result, we also expect the effect to depend on whether we look at cohabitation or remarriage. More specifically, we expect that the effect of nonportable transfer payments is stronger on remarriage than on cohabitation after divorce. For men, we expect effects of alimony as well, but for different reasons. Because repartnering does not end men's obligation to pay alimony, men who are paying alimony may find it more difficult to financially support a new family. Hence, we expect that alimony payments on the part of men will reduce the chances of repartnering.

#### HYPOTHESES ABOUT CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Our last set of hypotheses addresses the influence of cultural factors. Several studies in the past have shown that late marriage, cohabitation, childlessness, and divorce are more common among couples with less traditional values (e.g., Barber & Axinn 1998; Clarkberg, Stolzenberg & Waite 1995; Lehrer & Chiswick 1993; Liefbroer & de Jong Gierveld 1993; Thornton, Axinn & Hill 1992). We distinguish between three important aspects of nontraditional values: (1) emancipatory values (an orientation to egalitarian sex roles and women's independence), (2) individualistic values (an emphasis on autonomy and self-actualization), and (3) religious values (involvement in church and religion). It is generally argued that people with emancipatory, individualistic, and nonreligious values are less supportive of the institution of marriage. Their preference or "taste" for marriage is supposed to be weaker, or they simply do not feel a moral obligation to marry.

In research on first marriage, values are generally considered to be relevant only for the choice between marriage and cohabitation, because most people eventually enter a relationship (Clarkberg, Stolzenberg & Waite 1995). When

analyzing what happens after divorce, we expect to find effects of values on the formation of new relationships themselves, not only on their legal form. Influences of values on repartnering are not easy to assess, because values may change over the life course, particularly in response to important life events such as a divorce. One example is that women may become more progressive or more radical in their attitudes toward sex roles and women's issues because they have had negative experiences in their former marriage (Ambert 1985). Below, we formulate hypotheses for the three aspects of values discussed above.

First, we expect that persons with emancipatory values will be less likely to repartner than others. We furthermore believe that this effect will be stronger for remarriage than for cohabitation because emancipatory attitudes will primarily reflect a rejection of the institution of marriage, and to a lesser extent a rejection of living with someone of the opposite sex. Note that this hypothesis applies especially to women, since married women do more work in the home than their husbands and thus may have developed a stronger dislike of marriage. Second, we expect that people with individualistic values are less likely to repartner than others. We expect that this effect applies equally to remarriage and cohabitation because individualistic values reflect a cautious attitude toward all forms of long-term commitment to a relationship.

Third, we expect no effect of religious attitudes on repartnering. The reason for this is that we think two opposing effects are operating. First, we believe that religious persons will be more likely to remarry (vs. staying single) than nonreligious persons, largely because for religious persons, marriage is the most appropriate way of having a new intimate (sexual) relationship. A caveat here is that in some denominations, especially in the Roman Catholic Church, remarriage has long been disapproved of. Historical evidence for religious effects on individuals' remarriage behavior is negative, however (Van Poppel 1995), and it is therefore unlikely that such prescriptions will have much leverage in modern times. Second, we think that religious persons are less likely to recohobit (vs. staying single) than nonreligious persons, largely because religious persons tend to reject unmarried cohabitation (Thornton, Axinn & Hill 1992). In other words, religious divorced persons would rather stay single than enter a new relationship when this would lead to unmarried cohabitation. We thus expect a positive effect of religiosity on remarriage and a negative effect on cohabitation, leading to a zero effect on repartnering in general.

### **Data, Models, and Findings**

To test our hypotheses, we use data from the 1998 survey on divorce in the Netherlands (Kalmijn, de Graaf & Uunk 2000). The sample for this survey was drawn from 19 municipalities that are representative of the Dutch population



TABLE 2: Repartnering after Divorce by the Number of Years since the Separation and the Year of the Separation

Cumulative % Repartnered <sup>a</sup>	Year of Separation									
	Women					Men				
	<1974	75-79	80-84	85-89	90-94	<1974	75-79	80-84	85-89	90-94
Year 5	38	32	36	31	38	55	50	49	50	48
Year 10	55	48	53	49		76	67	64	68	
Year 15	61	54	62			80	77	74		
Year 20	68	57				80	79			
Year 25	70					83				
Cohabiting <sup>b</sup>	33	49	37	41	47	33	42	44	43	54
N	134	119	195	212	259	76	82	142	138	178

<sup>a</sup> Percentages are based on the first relationship after divorce of the ever-divorced person.

<sup>b</sup> Based on the most recent observation for the relationship (the survey year or the year in which the partners in the [second] relationship divorced).

with respect to region, urbanization, and political party preference. From the population registers of these municipalities, three random samples were drawn: (1) first-married persons, (2) divorced persons who were not remarried, and (3) divorced persons who were remarried. Sample 2 includes persons who were cohabiting at the time of the survey. In total, 2,346 people participated in the survey. All respondents were interviewed at home using structured questionnaires. Interviews lasted an average of 90 minutes. The cooperation rate of the survey was 58%, and this rate was the same for the three marital status groups (Kalmijn, de Graaf & Uunk 2000). For our analyses, we focus on samples 2 and 3. We excluded people who remarried their former partner ( $N = 14$ ) and people with missing data on marriage and divorce dates ( $N = 5$ ), leaving 1,776 ever-divorced persons. The average person in the sample was in his or her late thirties at the time of divorce, and about two-thirds of them already had children. The divorces we analyze occurred between 1949 and 1997, with the average divorce occurring in the mid-1980s. Note that the year of divorce is defined as the year in which the couple stopped living together. The time between breaking up and the official divorce appears to be relatively short, ten months on average. Note that in the descriptive part of the analyses, we correct the oversample of 3 compared to 2 with weights based on data published by Statistics Netherlands.

TABLE 3: Meeting Places of Partners in the First and the Second Cohabiting Relationships of Repartnered Men and Women

	Women		Men	
	First Marriage	Second Marriage or Cohabitation <sup>a</sup>	First Marriage	Second Marriage or Cohabitation <sup>a</sup>
At or through work	11.9	19.5	14.9	27.2
At or through school	8.9	3.3	9.5	2.1
Voluntary associations, leisure activities	15.2	13.5	16.7	14.4
Public places (e.g., bars, theaters, restaurants)	35.2	23.9	33.9	26.9
Through friends, family, neighborhood	23.8	25.9	20.2	21.0
Personal ad, organized intermediaries	.5	7.6	.3	3.9
Other ways	4.6	6.3	4.5	4.5
Total	100	100	100	100
N	395	394	336	334

<sup>a</sup> Based on the current relationship of ever-divorced persons.

#### DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSES

Ever-divorced people were asked about all the married or cohabiting relationships they had after their divorces. In this study, we focus on the first union that people had after divorce, whether that union is still intact at the time of the survey or not. In Table 2, we focus on the extent to which divorced people repartner, married or not. We present the cumulative percentages of people who have repartnered at selected time intervals since the year of divorce (which is the year in which the couple split up, not the official divorce year). These figures are presented for five divorce cohorts and for men and women separately. In the first ten years after divorce, we observe that about 70% of the men and 50% of the women repartnered. After 20 years, the cumulative percentages have risen to 80% for men and over 60% for women. Of the repartnered group, we have calculated which percentage was (eventually) married. These figures show that in the oldest divorce cohort, about a third was not married to the new partner. In the youngest cohort, about half the repartnered group was not married, but this cohort has had less time to change from cohabitation to marriage. Men and women do not differ much in how often they cohabit after divorce. Our main conclusion from these results is that cohabitation after divorce is quite common.

An important consideration in our hypotheses about repartnering lies in the opportunities to find a new spouse. We have argued, as others have done, that the remarriage market is not only smaller but also less efficient than the market for people who are young and single. To give a first impression of how the remarriage market works, we present data on where the repartnered couples met. The distribution of the meeting places does not completely coincide with the opportunity structure of the second marriage market, but it gives an interesting impression, especially in the comparison between the meeting places of the repartnered couples and where the same respondents met their first partner (Table 3). Of the repartnered men, 27% met their new spouses at work, 27% met them in a public place (such as a bar, a restaurant, or a theater), 14% met them in a voluntary association or through leisure activities, and 21% through informal contacts with the social network (friends, family, the neighborhood). Figures for repartnered women are similar, although work is less important (20%). More important, however, is the comparison between first and second unions. We see a clear shift from school to work: schools are important contexts for first marriages but unimportant for second relationships, while workplaces are important contexts for second marriages but less for first. We also observe that public places are less important for second relationships, which is consistent with the notion that divorced persons are generally less actively integrated into society.

Perhaps the most telling (though not necessarily most convincing) evidence that the remarriage market is more difficult can be found in the use of personal ads and organized intermediaries. About 4% of the men and 8% of the women met their new spouses this way. The comparable figures for the first spouse are trifling. Because these numbers apply to relationships that were actually formed, we also asked divorced persons (remarried or not) whether they ever placed an ad or contacted an intermediary to find a spouse. About 13% of ever-divorced persons had done so after the divorce, and about 11% ever went to meetings specifically designed to meet other single men or women.

## MODELS

To examine the social, economic, and cultural determinants of repartnering, we use discrete-time event-history analysis (Yamaguchi 1991). Discrete-time models are good approximations of continuous time models as long as the time intervals are not too large. We use years as our interval. Duration dependency is assessed by using the natural logarithm of the number of years since the divorce. This takes into account that the remarriage rate rises particularly fast in the early years after divorce and slows down afterward.

We estimate three event-history models, for women and men separately. Model A is a discrete-time event-history model in which the dependent variable is the probability of repartnering in a given year, conditional on whether one is still single in the year before.

Model B is a competing-risk model that takes the legal form into account. The dependent variables are (1) the conditional probability of marrying after divorce versus staying single, and (2) the conditional probability of cohabiting after divorce versus staying single. For both dependent variables, the other type of repartnering is treated as a competing risk (Allison 1982). We abstain from analyzing transitions from cohabitation to marriage, but we include transitions to marriage that occurred within the first year. More specifically, if a person was married directly or if the person was married within the first year, we define the event as remarried; otherwise the event is defined as re-cohabitation. A similar approach was used earlier for first union formation by Liebroer (1991). Note that if the first union after divorce was already dissolved at the time of the interview and if that union was a marriage, we do not know whether that marriage was preceded by cohabitation. This is the case for 29 respondents. In these cases, we treated the person as married directly, which does not seem unreasonable.

Model C is a second competing-risk model that takes the meeting context into account. The dependent variables are (1) the conditional probability of finding a partner at or through work, versus staying single; (2) the conditional probability of finding a partner through leisure activities, voluntary associations, and public places (including school, but this is a small number), versus staying single; and (3) the conditional probability of finding a partner in other ways, mostly through one's own network, versus staying single.

To estimate the models, we construct a person-year file that contains records for each individual for each year, beginning in the year after the year in which the couple stopped living together and ending in the year in which the person first started living together with someone again or the year of the survey, in case the person had remained single the whole time. Model A is estimated with a logistic regression model for the probability of repartnering, conditional on still being single the year before. The competing-risk models B and C are estimated by applying multinomial logistic regression to the person-period file (Allison 1982). The contrast chosen in all cases is between the event and the nonevent, leaving out the competing event. To obtain a parsimonious presentation of these models, we used constraints across equations (using Stata). More specifically, if we did not formulate a risk-specific hypothesis for a certain variable, we constrained the effects of this variable to be equal across equations. We made an exception for the year of divorce and for duration because historical trends and duration dependency may be different for the different risks.

TABLE 4: Definition and Means of Independent Variables<sup>a</sup>

Variable and Definition	Time Period	Range	Mean Men	Mean Women
Control variables				
Year of separation	—	49-98	85	89
Duration of prior marriage	Prior marriage	0-46	12	13
Current age	Dynamic	17-84	37	36
Years of schooling completed	Prior marriage	8-20	14	13
Social-integration variables				
Index of leisure activity (3 items)	First year after divorce	0-3	2.06	1.85
Attending church	First year after divorce	0-1	.22	.23
Index of social contacts (4 items)	First year after divorce	0-4	1.84	2.05
One or more children at home	Dynamic	0-1	.16	.62
All children not at home	Dynamic	0-1	.50	.13
Economic variables				
Proportion of marriage wife was employed	Prior marriage	0-1	—	.52
Female contribution to household income	Prior marriage	1-5	—	2.01
Index of male contribution to housekeeping (3 items)	Prior marriage	0-3	1.20	—
Working full-time (30+ hours per week)	Dynamic	0-1	—	.36
Working part-time (1-29 hours per week)	Dynamic	0-1	—	.20
Working in the labor force	Dynamic	0-1	.89	—
Occupational prestige of current job	Dynamic	13-87	48	—
Receiving welfare payments	Dynamic	0-1	—	.19
Receiving alimony payments for personal expenses	Dynamic	0-1	—	.10
Paying alimony payments for wife or children	Dynamic	0-1	.18	—
Index of financial troubles (4 items)	First year after divorce	0-4	—	1.01
Index of dependency on housekeeping help (3 items)	First year after divorce	0-3	.83	—
Cultural variables				
Emancipatory activity	First year after divorce	0-1	.04	.08
Individualistic activity	First year after divorce	0-1	.08	.12
Member of church	Dynamic	0-1	.42	.42
Number of cases			614	968

<sup>a</sup> See text for details. For dynamic variables, the means refer to the first year after the separation year. In regression analyses, all dynamic independent variables are lagged one calendar year.

A complication in the study of remarriage is that in some cases a new partner may have been the cause of the divorce. In these cases the causal order is unclear and many of the characteristics we have suggested as determinants of remarriage will probably be less relevant. Although it is difficult to identify such persons, we think the following two conditions are a reasonable approximation: persons who divorced and repartnered in the same calendar year, and persons who repartnered in the calendar year after the divorce year and also reported that another relationship was a reason for their divorce. These persons were excluded, leaving a total of 1,582 ever-divorced persons for our event-history models.

#### INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

For some independent variables we have information for all points in time; for other characteristics we have information about only some periods, such as the first five years of the first marriage or the first year after the divorce. Some concepts are measured differently for men and for women. Means and standard deviations are presented in Table 4.

#### *Social Integration*

To measure leisure activities, we asked how often the respondent was involved in the following four types of activity in the first year after the divorce: (1) participation in sports, hobbies, and voluntary associations, (2) going out to a restaurant, bar, or theater, (3) participating in recreational activities, such as hiking or visiting a show or attraction, and (4) attending church. The index is the number of times the respondent reported being active "sometimes" or "often." Church attendance is kept as a separate item because we consider it in combination with church membership (see below). We also developed a measure of social contact in the first year after the divorce. This measure is a count of the following items: (1) weekly contact with good friends, (2) weekly contact with family members, (3) at least monthly contact with neighbors, and (4) at least monthly contact with colleagues outside the immediate work context. We amplify our social measures by considering information on children. We first make a distinction between couples who had children from the first marriage and couples who did not. For couples who had children, we subsequently made a distinction between a situation in which one or more children were living at home and a situation where all children were living elsewhere (either with the former spouse or on their own).

*Economic Variables for Women*

We consider economic characteristics of the prior marriage as well as economic conditions after divorce. Using a full work-history module, we construct a variable measuring the proportion of years of the marriage in which the wife was employed. In addition, we used a more subjective approach by asking to what extent the wife contributed to the family income in the first years of the marriage (using a five-point scale, ranging from 1 for “nothing at all” to 5 for “virtually everything”). Economic conditions after divorce were assessed by a set of time-varying covariates: (1) whether the woman was working part-time or full-time (we will test whether part-time work has a different effect from full-time work), (2) whether she was receiving welfare payments, and (3) whether she was receiving alimony payments (for her own expenses, not for the children). Note that all these variables are time-varying. To measure financial needs more directly, we asked questions about the financial situation in the first year after the divorce: (1) whether the respondent had ever had troubles making ends meet, (2) whether she has had difficulty replacing broken equipment, (3) whether she had ever been late with paying the rent or mortgage, and (4) whether she has ever had experience with bailiffs. The number of positive responses is used as an index of financial problems after divorce.

*Economic Variables for Men*

We use the following three variables to characterize men's economic situation after divorce: (1) whether the respondent was working in the labor force, (2) the occupational prestige of his job (Sixma & Ultee 1984), and (3) whether he was paying alimony in the given year. These variables are time-varying. For men who did not work in the given year, we assigned the mean prestige of all men in that year. This means that the work effect captures the difference between nonworking men and working men with an average occupational prestige in that year. Two scales indicate men's domestic dependency after divorce. We first asked how the following three household tasks were divided in the first years of the marriage: (1) cooking, (2) doing the laundry, and (3) cleaning. The number of tasks to which the husband contributed at least as much as the wife is used as a scale. Second, we asked to what extent the respondent was helped by family members, paid housekeepers, or acquaintances in doing the following three tasks during the first year after the divorce: (1) cooking, (2) doing the laundry, and (3) cleaning. The index is the number of times the husband reported being helped “sometimes” or “often.” Note that the list of potential helpers does not include the (possible) remarriage partner.

*Cultural Variables*

Attitudes are difficult to measure in a retrospective fashion because life-course experiences may change a person's perception of his or her earlier attitudes. Because our data are retrospective, we use measures of concrete activities in the past that reflect progressive attitudes among men and women. We believe that reports about activities in the past will not be biased as much as reports about prior attitudes. Such measures are an improvement over previous work in which cultural measurement is typically limited to a global distinction between Catholics and others (see Table 1). Emancipatory activities are measured by a question of whether the respondent attended meetings about women's liberation or the women's movement in the first year after the divorce ("sometimes" or "often"). Although the proportions of respondents who attended such meetings are rather low (4% of the men and 8% of the women), we expect that this measure will test the validity of our hypothesis that egalitarian values lead to a dislike of the marriage institution. Individualistic activities are measured by a question of whether the respondent attended meetings about self-actualization, meditation, or new age in the first year after the divorce ("sometimes" or "often"). Religiosity is measured by a question on church membership in the first year after the divorce. The effect of church membership is controlled for church attendance, measured for the same year, so that it primarily captures the normative or ideological aspect of religion and, to a lesser extent, the social aspect of religion. Similarly, church attendance controlling for church membership will capture the social aspect of religion more than the normative aspect. The two items have a positive correlation, but not prohibitively strong ( $r = .47$ ).

*Control Variables*

We include the following control variables in the analyses: the year in which the couple divorced, the time elapsed since the divorce (logged), the duration of the prior marriage, the respondent's current age, and the level of completed education (recoded to the number of formally required years of schooling). Note that education can in part be interpreted as an economic variable.

We have to keep in mind that our data are retrospective. It is sometimes argued that individual survey reports about the past are affected by subsequent life events. The experience of divorce, for example, could lead to a more negative view of the marriage; similarly, those who remain married may forget the bad things that happened during their marriage. There are several reasons why, in the present context, we think such biases are limited. For all concepts, we use questions about concrete behaviors rather than about feelings or attitudes, and for most concepts, we use multiple items. There will obviously still be measurement error, but the question is whether the error is systematic. To make



a claim of systematic error, one must show that remarried people are more negative or more positive about their past behaviors than people who did not remarry. We think such an effect is not very plausible, and we therefore believe that most of the error that does exist will be random. Random error mostly reduces the size and significance of regression coefficients, and so these problems will generally not lead to false positive conclusions.

#### REGRESSION RESULTS

The models are presented in Table 5 for women and in Table 6 for men. We begin by discussing the effects of the control variables. The number of years since the separation reveals a positive slope for men and for women, showing that the conditional remarriage chances tend to increase, particularly in the early years after divorce. The coefficient for the year of separation can be interpreted as the trend in remarriage, net of compositional changes in the divorce cohorts with respect to the other measured characteristics that affect remarriage. Table 6 shows that there is no significant change in repartnering for men. When we look at the competing-risk model, we see that the lack of change in repartnering in fact consists of underlying opposing trends in marriage and cohabitation after divorce. There has been a significant downward trend in remarriage over the years, while re-cohabitation has increased across cohorts. Apparently, the two trends cancel each other completely. For women, the pattern is different, as Table 5 shows. We see no downward trend in remarriage, but we do see an increase in cohabitation. Together, these effects lead to an overall increase in repartnering for women. When comparing changes for men and women, we may conclude that women, who traditionally have had a much lower repartnering rate, have been narrowing the gap.

The historical pattern just discussed is the same when we use a model that contains only the year of separation, duration, and (current) age — that is, without the other variables. Trends that were significant in the full model remain significant in the stripped model, although the coefficients tend to be somewhat larger.

Duration of marriage has a positive effect on repartnering, showing that people who have been married longer are more likely to repartner after divorce. This applies to both men and women. In addition, we use current age as a (dynamic) control variable. We think that current age is a more appropriate measure to assess age effects than the age at divorce, which is usually included in remarriage models (e.g., Smock 1990). However this may be, our conclusion is similar to what other studies find: a strong negative effect of age on repartnering. The effect is observed for both men and women, but it is stronger for women. Educational level is included as a control variable as well, although we note that education does have both economic and cultural interpretations.

**TABLE 5: Repartnering of Divorced Women: Event-History Analysis of Repartnering, Competing-Risk Analysis of Remarriage and Reconciliation, and Competing-Risk Analysis of Meeting Setting**

Women	Model A	Model B	
	Repartnering	Marriage	Cohabitation
Time variables			
Log of duration since separation	.934**	.927**	.942**
Year of separation	.020**	.005	.030**
Control variables			
Duration of marriage	.121**	.121**	#
Current age	-.180**	-.180**	#
Education	.004	.004	#
Social-integration factors			
Participation in leisure activities	.139**	.141**	#
Church attendance	.273*	.269*	#
Social contacts	.015	.015	#
Children at home	-.332**	-.330**	#
Children not at home	.059	.061	#
Economic characteristics			
Labor-force experience	.014	.010	#
Contribution to marriage income	.032	.033	#
Working part- or full-time	.172	.172	#
Financial troubles	-.023	-.022	#
Receives welfare	-.294*	-.615**	-.133
Receives alimony	-.380*	-.776*	-.224
Cultural characteristics			
Emancipatory activities	-.030	-.180	.043
Individualistic activities	-.417**	-1.230**	-.154
Church membership	-.133	.103	-.262*
Miscellaneous parameters			
Number of women	968		968
Number of person-years	9,051		9,051
Number of events	468	167	301
$\chi^2$ of all coefficients (df)	372 (19)		394 (26)

The effects of education are differentiated by sex. For women we find no effect, and for men we find a positive effect: the higher the level of education, the greater the chances that men find a new partner after divorce.

**TABLE 5: Repartnering of Divorced Women: Event-History Analysis of Repartnering, Competing-Risk Analysis of Remarriage and Recohabitation, and Competing-Risk Analysis of Meeting Setting (Continued)**

Women	Model C		
	Via Work	Via Leisure	In Other Ways
Time variables			
Log of duration since separation	.970**	.956**	.950**
Year of separation	.004	.044**	.011
Control variables			
Duration of marriage	.122**	#	#
Current age	-.181**	#	#
Education	.004	#	#
Social-integration factors			
Participation in leisure activities	.092	.202*	.113
Church attendance	-.093	.327*	.341*
Social contacts	-.093	.048	.027
Children at home	-.859**	-.387*	-.091
Children not at home	-.020	-.287	.345
Economic characteristics			
Labor-force experience	.012	#	#
Contribution to marriage income	.031	#	#
Working part- or full-time	.953**	.216	-.051
Financial troubles	-.022	#	#
Receives welfare	-.293*	#	#
Receives alimony	-.384*	#	#
Cultural characteristics			
Emancipatory activities	-.026	#	#
Individualistic activities	-.418**	#	#
Church membership	-.133	#	#
Miscellaneous parameters			
Number of women		968	
Number of person-years		9,051	
Number of events	77	160	231
$\chi^2$ of all coefficients (df)		410 (35)	

*Note:* In the equation of Model B for remarriage versus single, cohabitation is treated as a competing risk; in the equation for cohabitation versus single, remarriage is treated as a competing risk. Model C presents the odds of finding a spouse in the specified fashion versus staying single, with the other meeting channels as competing risks. All models are estimated in Stata.

# Coefficient constrained to be equal across equations within multinomial logit model.

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  (one-tailed tests)

**TABLE 6: Repartnering of Divorced Men: Event-History Analysis of Repartnering, Competing-Risk Analysis of Remarriage and Reconciliation, and Competing-Risk Analysis of Meeting Setting**

Men	Model A	Model B	
	Repartnering	Marriage	Cohabitation
Time variables			
Log of duration since separation	.669**	.484**	.785**
Year of separation	-.000	-.028**	.018*
Control variables			
Duration of marriage	.083**	.084**	#
Current age	-.126**	-.126**	#
Education	.051**	.051**	#
Social-integration factors			
Participation in leisure activities	-.133*	-.130*	#
Church attendance	.389**	.381*	#
Social contacts	.041	.042	#
Children at home	-.886**	-.885**	#
Children not at home	-.398**	-.399**	#
Economic characteristics			
Contribution to household labor	-.029	-.027	#
Need of household assistance	.140**	.138**	#
Working	.482**	.479**	#
Occupational prestige	.001	.001	#
Paying alimony	.033	.022	#
Cultural characteristics			
Emancipatory activities	-.138	-.135	-.135
Individualistic activities	-.387*	-.316	-.425
Church membership	-.282*	.160	-.526**
Miscellaneous parameters			
Number of men	614		614
Number of person-years	4,502		4,502
Number of events	374	130	244
$\chi^2$ all coefficients (df)	242 (18)		265 (23)

**FINDINGS FOR THE HYPOTHESES ABOUT SOCIAL-INTEGRATION CHARACTERISTICS**

Starting with the results for women in Table 5, we observe that the number of social contacts does not affect repartnering probabilities. We do, however, observe a strong and significant effect of participation in leisure activities. The more activities divorced women have outside the home, the larger their

**TABLE 6: Repartnering of Divorced Men: Event-History Analysis of Repartnering, Competing-Risk Analysis of Remarriage and Rehhabitation, and Competing-Risk Analysis of Meeting Setting (Continued)**

Men	Model C		
	Via Work	Via Leisure	In Other Ways
Time variables			
Log of duration since separation	.684**	.670**	.662**
Year of separation	-.009	.016	-.010
Control variables			
Duration of marriage	.083**	#	#
Current age	-.126**	#	#
Education	.051**	#	#
Social-integration factors			
Participation in leisure activities	-.107	-.035	-.239**
Church attendance	.150	.648**	.231
Social contacts	.040	.060	.020
Children at home	-.863*	-1.172**	-.595*
Children not at home	-.462*	-.540**	-.191
Economic characteristics			
Contribution to household labor	-.030	#	#
Need of household assistance	.141**	#	#
Working	.883**	.339	.411
Occupational prestige	.001	#	#
Paying alimony	.033	#	#
Cultural characteristics			
Emancipatory activities	-.140	#	#
Individualistic activities	-.382*	#	#
Church membership	-.283*	#	#
Miscellaneous parameters			
Number of men		614	
Number of person-years		4,502	
Number of events	91	145	138
$\chi^2$ of all coefficients (df)		258 (34)	

*Note:* In the equation of Model B for remarriage versus single, cohabitation is treated as a competing risk; in the equation for cohabitation versus single, remarriage is treated as a competing risk. Model C presents the odds of finding a spouse in the specified fashion versus staying single, with the other meeting channels as competing risks. All models are estimated in Stata.

# Coefficient constrained to be equal across equations within multinomial logit model.

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  (one-tailed tests)

repartnering probability. In addition, we find that divorced women who attend church more often are also significantly more likely to repartner. Note that the effect of church attendance is controlled for the effect of church membership, so that it is not plausible to interpret the effect of church attendance in terms of religiosity only. The effect of these two variables can also be modeled in a different way, by comparing three groups: church members who attend church regularly (active members), church members who do not attend church (passive members), and nonmembers. If we consider these dummy variables, we observe that the contrast between active and passive church members is statistically significant. This supports our interpretation in terms of social integration in a different way. Apparently, it is the social integration produced by church attendance that increases the likelihood to repartner and not so much the religious values.

The effects discussed above are positive evidence for our hypothesis about marriage market opportunities. Divorced women who are better integrated socially have better chances of meeting a new partner, which is why they are more likely to repartner. Further evidence is obtained from the competing-risk model in which the type of meeting setting is incorporated (model C). If the effect of leisure activities is equally strong in the three equations, the interpretation of the leisure effect would lie primarily in sociability or some other unmeasured individual trait. If the effect of leisure is strongest for the risk of repartnering via leisure, interpretations in terms of social integration are more plausible. The competing-risk model C shows that the effect of participation in leisure activities is significant for the risk of finding a new partner through activities outside the home and voluntary associations and not significant for the risk of finding a new partner via work or in other ways. This underscores our interpretation of this effect on repartnering in terms of meeting opportunities and appears to contradict interpretations in terms of sociability. For the effect of church attendance we also observe differential effects in the competing-risk model. Church attendance has no effect on repartnering via work and positive and significant effects on repartnering via leisure activities and on repartnering in other ways. Since finding a partner through church (or church-related institutions) is included in the leisure category, we should have found an effect only on repartnering through leisure. That there is also an effect on repartnering in other ways is less consistent with the social interpretation of the church effect.

For men (Table 6), again we find no effect of social contacts on repartnering. We do find an effect of church attendance, however. Divorced men who attend church more often are more likely to repartner. Inconsistent with our hypothesis, and in contrast to what we found for women, is the effect of leisure activities on repartnering. Divorced men who are active and often go to bars or restaurants in their spare time are significantly less likely to remarry than

other divorced men. It is not clear how to interpret this effect, but perhaps it is associated with a certain lifestyle that is incompatible with the stability that a new marriage often brings. The analysis of meeting contexts for men is consistent with our hypotheses. More specifically, we find that the effect of church attendance is significant for repartnering only via leisure activities. This is positive support for the social-integration hypothesis, since we expected an effect on repartnering through leisure activities only.

Another important aspect of marriage market opportunities has to do with children. We find that children affect repartnering, though in a differentiated fashion. For both men and women, we find strong negative effects of having children at home on repartnering. For men, however, we also find a negative effect of nonresident children, while for women, only resident children seem to affect repartnering. For both men and women, children at home have a larger effect than children who are living elsewhere. The chi-square test for the equality of these two effects is 6.2 for women ( $p \leq .01$ ) and 6.1 for men ( $p \leq .01$ ), which supports the hypothesis about marriage market opportunity. Note that the effect of resident children is more negative for men than for women, which may have to do with the fact that divorced men who have children living at home are a more select group than divorced women with children at home.

That the effect of children is a matter of meeting opportunities can also be seen in competing-risk model C. For women, we find that having children at home reduces the risk of finding a new partner at work as well as the risk of finding one through activities outside the home and voluntary associations. It does not, however, significantly reduce the risk of finding a partner in other ways, of which the neighborhood and one's own social network are the most important. This pattern of effects shows that preferences and attractiveness are not the main ways that children reduce women's repartnering chances. For men we find a similar pattern, but less convincing. The effect of children on meeting a spouse through other channels, although weaker, is still statistically significant.

#### FINDINGS FOR THE HYPOTHESES ABOUT WOMEN'S ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Hypotheses about sex-role specialization during the first marriage do not, in general, receive much support. We expected that men and women from traditional marriages — marriages in which husbands and wives develop different but complementary skills — would be less able to live on their own and would therefore repartner more often than others. The results in Table 5 show that women who contributed little to the family income during marriage and women who did not accumulate labor-market experience when married are not more likely to repartner than other women. These findings are

inconsistent with economic theories of marriage. After all, in a traditional remarriage market, economically dependent women have a greater need to repartner than others and there would be traditional men willing to provide them with economic support. If the remarriage market is less traditional, one could argue that a greater degree of economic dependency also makes women less attractive in the eyes of men. Under these conditions, need and attractiveness would work in opposite directions.

Women's socioeconomic conditions after divorce do affect repartnering probabilities, but not in the way economic theory predicts. First, we find no effect of our scale of financial problems after divorce on women's repartnering rate. Women who have more trouble making ends meet are not more likely to repartner, as would be expected from the needs argument. Here, too, there is the possibility that women with financial difficulties are less attractive, at least to nontraditional men.

Second, women's participation in the labor force has a moderate positive effect on repartnering rates, but the effect is statistically not significant ( $p = .08$ ). Additional testing shows that when we replace the work variable with two dummy variables for part-time and full-time work, their effects are not significantly different (the chi-square test for equality is 2.2;  $p = .14$ ). When we look at the competing-risk model for the different means of meeting a spouse (Table 5, model C), it becomes clear that the insignificant effect of labor-force participation is brought about by opposite effects in different settings. The effect of labor-force participation is strong and statistically significant on the risk of finding a partner at work, but it is not significant in the equation for meeting a spouse via leisure or in the equation for meeting a spouse in other ways. If the work effect has a financial interpretation, labor-force participation should also affect repartnering for these two nonwork settings. That the effect is absent in these two equations supports the social interpretation and contradicts the financial interpretation of labor-force participation.

The third socioeconomic hypothesis concerns income from welfare and alimony. The effects of welfare and alimony provide the only piece of evidence in favor of economic arguments. Women who receive alimony and women who receive welfare are significantly less likely to repartner than women who do not receive such payments. Note that the effect of work is in the model, too, and hence we are comparing women on welfare to women with other, nonwork income, like sickness or unemployment benefits. When looking at the effects of work and welfare in combination, we may conclude that working women have the highest repartnering rate and women on welfare the lowest, and women with other income sources are in between.

The competing-risk model of marriage and cohabitation provides further evidence for the hypothesis that nonportable income reduces the desire to repartner. The effects of welfare and alimony exist only in the remarriage



equation, not in the recohobitation equation. Women with welfare or alimony payments are less likely to remarry but not less likely to recohobit. In most of the period we consider, cohobitation was officially not recognized as marriage, so that welfare and alimony payments were portable to a new relationship only if one remained unmarried. Hence, welfare and alimony should affect remarriage but not recohobitation, which is the pattern we find.

#### FINDINGS FOR THE HYPOTHESES ABOUT MEN'S ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

The evidence for economic theories is not favorable in the case of men either (Table 6). When men work for pay, they are significantly more likely to repartner. That work has a positive effect on repartnering is consistent with economic hypotheses about men's attractiveness in a traditional marriage market, but it is also consistent with hypotheses about opportunities to meet and mate. To assess whether this effect has a social or economic interpretation, we again analyze the different meeting contexts. Competing-risk model C shows that the effect of work is statistically significant for the risk of finding a partner through work. The work effect is not significant for the risk of finding a partner via leisure or for the risk of finding a partner in other ways. In combination, these effects support the hypothesis that work increases repartnering primarily because work provides a setting that favors meeting and mating with potential new partners. That work does not increase repartnering outside the work context suggests that greater attractiveness on the part of working men is not the reason that working men repartner more often.

The finding for the other status indicator for men further contradicts the notion of attractiveness. The prestige of men's current job has no significant effect on repartnering. It is interesting that prestige has no effect while education had a positive effect. If favorable economic prospects make men attractive to new partners, we would expect repartnering to be dependent more on their current status position than on their education. That only education has an effect, and not occupational prestige, suggests that perhaps an interpretation in terms of social integration is more appropriate. Studies generally show that the better educated participate more often in a variety of leisure pursuits, they vote more often, and they more often are active members of voluntary associations (e.g., Curtis, Grabb & Baer 1992).

To test our economic hypothesis, we examine not only effects of paid labor, but also effects of household labor. Our hypothesis is that divorced men with poor domestic skills are more in need of a new partner than other, otherwise comparable, men. In Table 6, we find no effect of the degree to which husbands participated in household labor in the first marriage on their repartnering chances after divorce. We do find, however, that divorced men who receive household support in the first year after divorce are significantly more likely

to repartner. This latter finding is consistent with our hypothesis about male domestic dependency. Due to variations in domestic abilities, some men are more in need of a new spouse than others, and this translates into a higher rate of repartnering.

Finally, we find no effect of paying alimony. Men who have financial obligations to their former wives or their children are not less likely to repartner, in contrast to what economic hypotheses would argue. We also tested whether the amount of alimony payments had an effect, but this did not turn out to be the case either. This again shows that financial conditions do not affect repartnering.

#### FINDINGS FOR THE HYPOTHESES ABOUT CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

How do norms and values affect men and women's repartnering rates? We made a distinction between three types of values: emancipatory, individualistic, and religious. Because values are difficult to measure in a retrospective design, we instead focus on three types of activities in the past that are presumably highly correlated with such values: whether the respondent attended meetings about women's liberation and the women's movement (emancipatory activities), whether the respondent attended meetings about self-actualization, meditation, or new age (individualistic activities), and church membership. All three indicators are included in the event-history model, and we allowed them to have differential effects in competing-risk model B, where a distinction is made between marriage and cohabitation.

In contrast to what we expected, we find that an emancipatory orientation among women is not associated with a lower repartnering rate. The competing-risk analysis further shows that neither is there a significant effect when we look at remarriage only. For men, we come to the same conclusion, although we note that few divorced men were involved in emancipatory activities.

Individualistic activities in the past do have a negative effect on women's risk of repartnering, in line with what we hypothesized. The competing-risk model provides an important additional result. Individualistic values have a negative effect only on women's rate of remarriage, not on their rate of re-cohabitation. Hence, for divorced women, individualistic attitudes primarily reflect a rejection of marriage, not a wish to be single after divorce. It thus does not seem plausible that the effect of individualistic activities reflects a rejection of long-term relationship involvement. More likely, it reflects a negative attitude toward traditional institutions in general, of which marriage is considered an important example. The results for men are closer to the notion of individualism. Men who were involved in individualistic activities after divorce are significantly less likely to repartner, and this effect shows up in both the marriage and the cohabitation equation.

Effects of religiosity are partly consistent with our hypothesis. For men and for women, we find a negative effect of church membership on the rate of repartnering. These effects are weak, however, and not significant for women. The competing-risk analyses show that the negative effect is present only for cohabitation after divorce, not for remarriage. This negative effect is stronger for men than for women, but in both cases it is significant. While this is consistent with our expectations, we also hypothesized a positive effect of religion on remarriage, and this effect we do not find. Religious men and women are not more likely to remarry than others. Religiosity primarily leads to a rejection of (re)cohabitation and it is for that reason that they repartner less often.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Our study of repartnering has tried to improve upon previous research in a number of ways. We have developed more extensive and more direct measures of economic characteristics, we have introduced social and cultural hypotheses and measures to the model, we have distinguished remarriage and cohabitation after divorce, and we have incorporated the meeting settings in the model. With these improvements, we have tried to gain a better understanding of the causes of repartnering in Western society, using a newly conducted survey of ever-divorced persons in the Netherlands as a test case.

We tested three sorts of arguments about the causes of remarriage: economic theories, cultural theories, and social theories. Economic theories of marriage receive little support. Our analyses show that men and women from marriages characterized by high levels of sex-role specialization are not more likely to repartner. In addition, poor socioeconomic prospects on the part of divorced women do not lead to a higher repartnering rate. Women's labor-force participation does not have a negative effect on repartnering either, and women on welfare — usually women with the greatest financial needs — are even less likely to repartner. Although employed men are more likely to repartner than unemployed men, this effect shows up only for repartnering via work, suggesting that is not the financial dimension of employment that explains its effect on repartnering. The only positive evidence for economic notions of specialization is that men who are domestically dependent are more likely to repartner.

Cultural theories of remarriage are somewhat more important. Women with an individualistic orientation are less likely to repartner. Competing-risk models for the choice between marriage and cohabitation after divorce show that these attitudes primarily reflect a rejection of marriage after divorce, not a rejection of cohabitation. In addition, we find a differentiated effect of

religiosity: religious persons are not more or less likely to remarry, but they are clearly less likely to cohabit after divorce.

Stronger support is obtained for theories of remarriage that emphasize the role of meeting and mating opportunities in the remarriage market. Men and women who work and who are more actively integrated in society are more likely to repartner than others. Further confirmation of our interpretation of these effects in terms of marriage-market opportunities is obtained by comparing the competing risks of finding a partner in different contexts. Labor-force participation affects only the odds of finding a new spouse at work and not the odds of finding a partner in other ways. Similarly, leisure activities primarily affect the odds of finding a new spouse in leisure or in public places, not the odds of finding a spouse in other ways. Effects of children also point in the direction of marriage market opportunities, at least for women. We find that only resident children have the expected negative effect on repartnering, not children who already live on their own. In addition, we find that having children at home primarily affects the odds of finding a partner at work or in leisure contexts, and not the odds of finding a partner through one's network.

We originally proposed three reasons that the study of remarriage is important. In concluding, we assess for each of these reasons what our study has taught us. First, the study of remarriage is considered important because of the implied selection effects in the study of the consequences of divorce (Duncan & Hoffman 1985; Smock 1990). Our study shows that remarriage is indeed selective, though not so much in a socioeconomic sense. Our findings imply that estimates of the consequences of divorce will be too negative if one looks at single divorced people only. This implication, however, applies primarily when one studies the social consequences of divorce, not when one studies the economic consequences of divorce. The exception lies in men's labor-force participation, which has a strong positive effect on repartnering.

Second, we argued that the study of repartnering could make a contribution to the debate about the decline of the marriage institution (Bumpass 1990). Our study shows that repartnering occurs frequently after divorce, which does not suggest that divorce in some sense fosters a more individualistic orientation in society. Many of those who repartner, however, cohabit without being married. This seems to support the more pessimistic conclusions authors have drawn about marriage. We also find that remarriage rates for men have declined, and although this downward trend is fully compensated by a rise in cohabitation, it does signal a weakening institution of marriage.

Third, we argued that the study of remarriage provides better opportunities to test prevailing theories of marriage than the study of first marriage, which is often preoccupied with variations in marriage timing. After all, when analyzing remarriage, remaining single is a much more common outcome. If

this is the design one uses, we come to the following conclusions. Our competing-risk models for cohabitation and marriage after divorce have offered novel support for cultural theories of marriage, and our competing-risk models for finding a new spouse in alternative contexts have offered novel support for social theories of marriage formation. In our design, economic arguments about sex-role specialization and financial needs seem to be less relevant for marriage formation.

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