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## FP-17-24 Divorce Rate in the U.S. Geographic Variation, 2016

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# Divorce Rate in the U.S.

## Geographic Variation, 2016



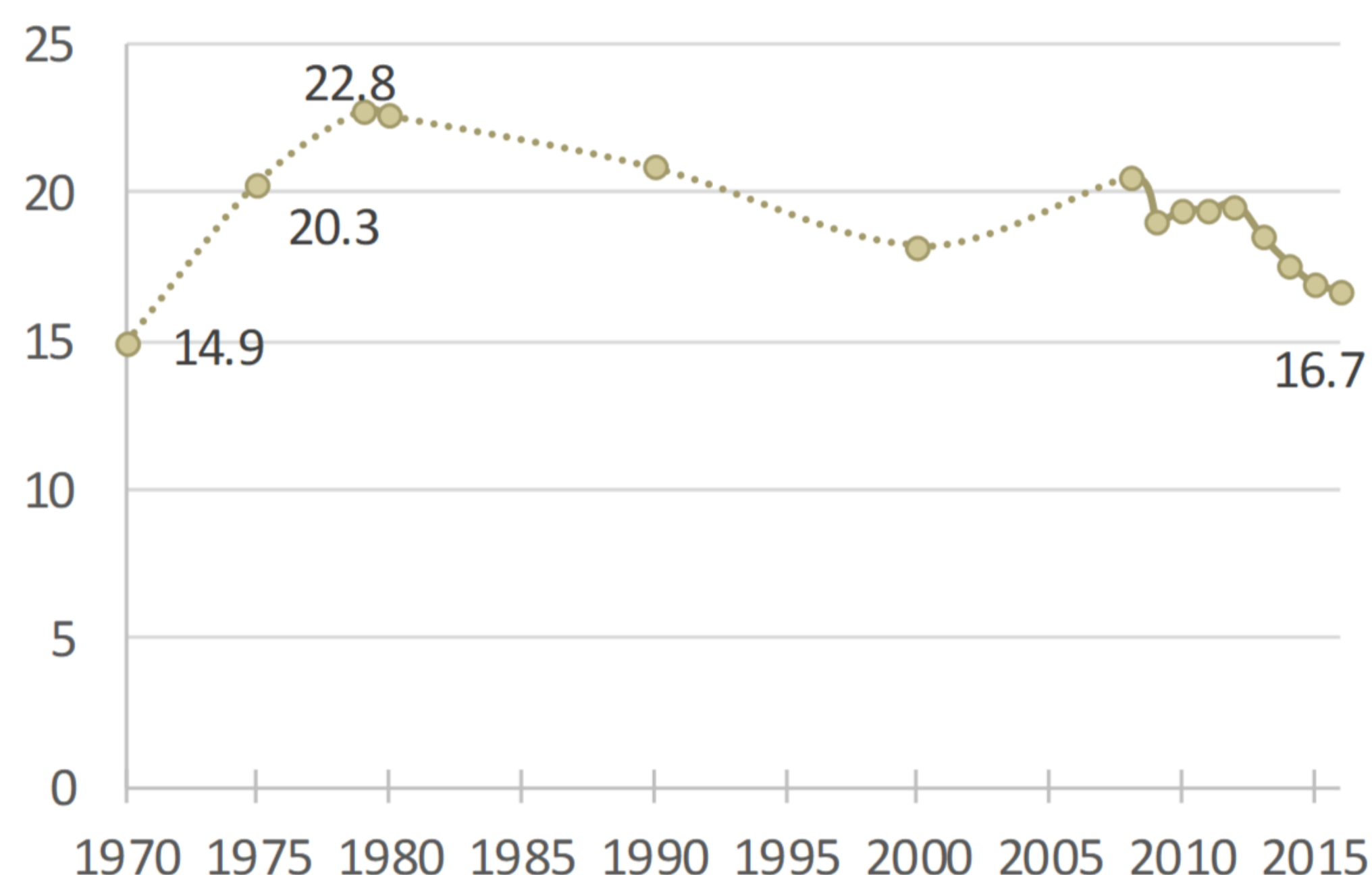
Paul Hemez

### The Divorce Rate, 2016 \*

- The divorce rate (represented as the number of divorces per 1,000 married women aged 15 and older) continued to decline in 2016, reaching a 40-year low.
- The divorce rate was 16.7 divorces per 1,000 married women in 2016, down from 20.5 in 2008 when the rate was at its highest in recent years.
- Just over one million women (1,098,805) divorced in 2016, a drop of over 210,000 since 2008 when 1.3 million women divorced.
- The divorce rate decreased by 26% from the apex in 1980 (22.6) to 2016.

\* The divorce rate = [(number of women divorced in the past 12 months) / (number of women divorced in the past 12 months + number of currently married women)] \* 1,000

Figure 1. Women's Divorce Rate, 1970 - 2016



Sources: 1970-2000, National Center for Health Statistics; 2008-2016, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-yr est.

### Five Highest and Lowest Divorce Rates, 2016

- Wyoming had the highest divorce rate in 2016, with over 26 marriages per 1,000 ending in divorce.
- Massachusetts had the lowest divorce rate, with about 12 marriages per 1,000 ending in divorce.
  - Massachusetts's divorce rate was less than half the rate of Wyoming's.

### Women's Highest and Lowest Divorce Rates

1. Wyoming	26.3
2. Arkansas	25.3
3. Louisiana	22.3
4. Oklahoma	20.7
5. Georgia	20.5
U.S.	16.7
47. New York	13.6
48. South Dakota	13.5
49. Minnesota	12.9
50. New Jersey	12.4
51. Massachusetts	12.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-yr est. 2016

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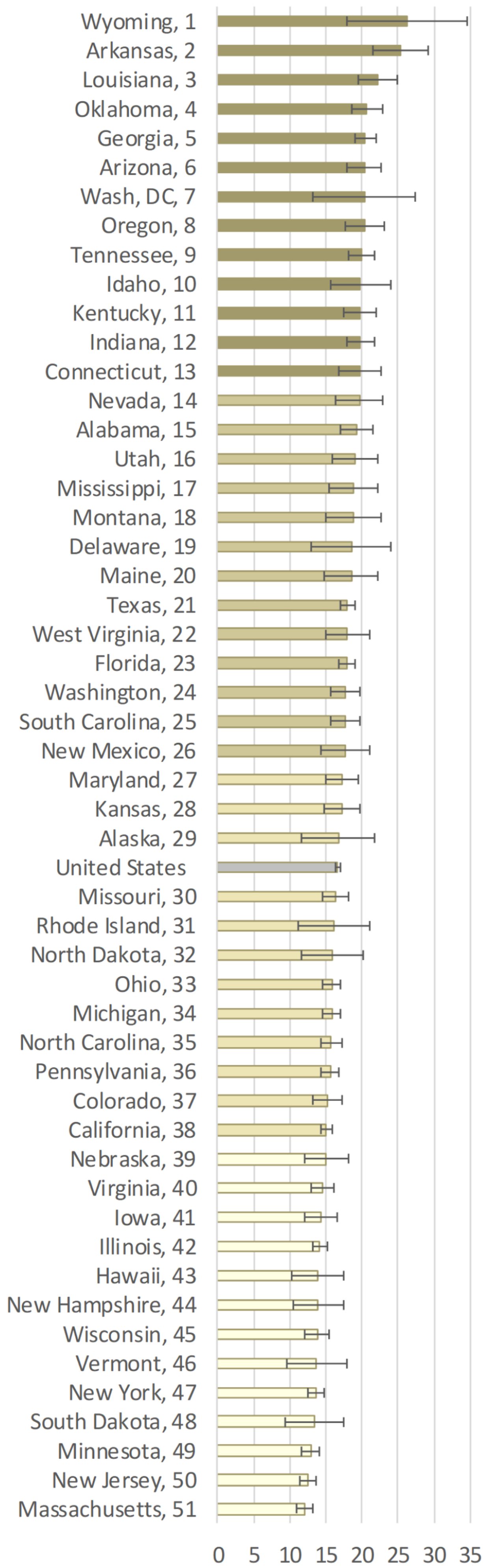
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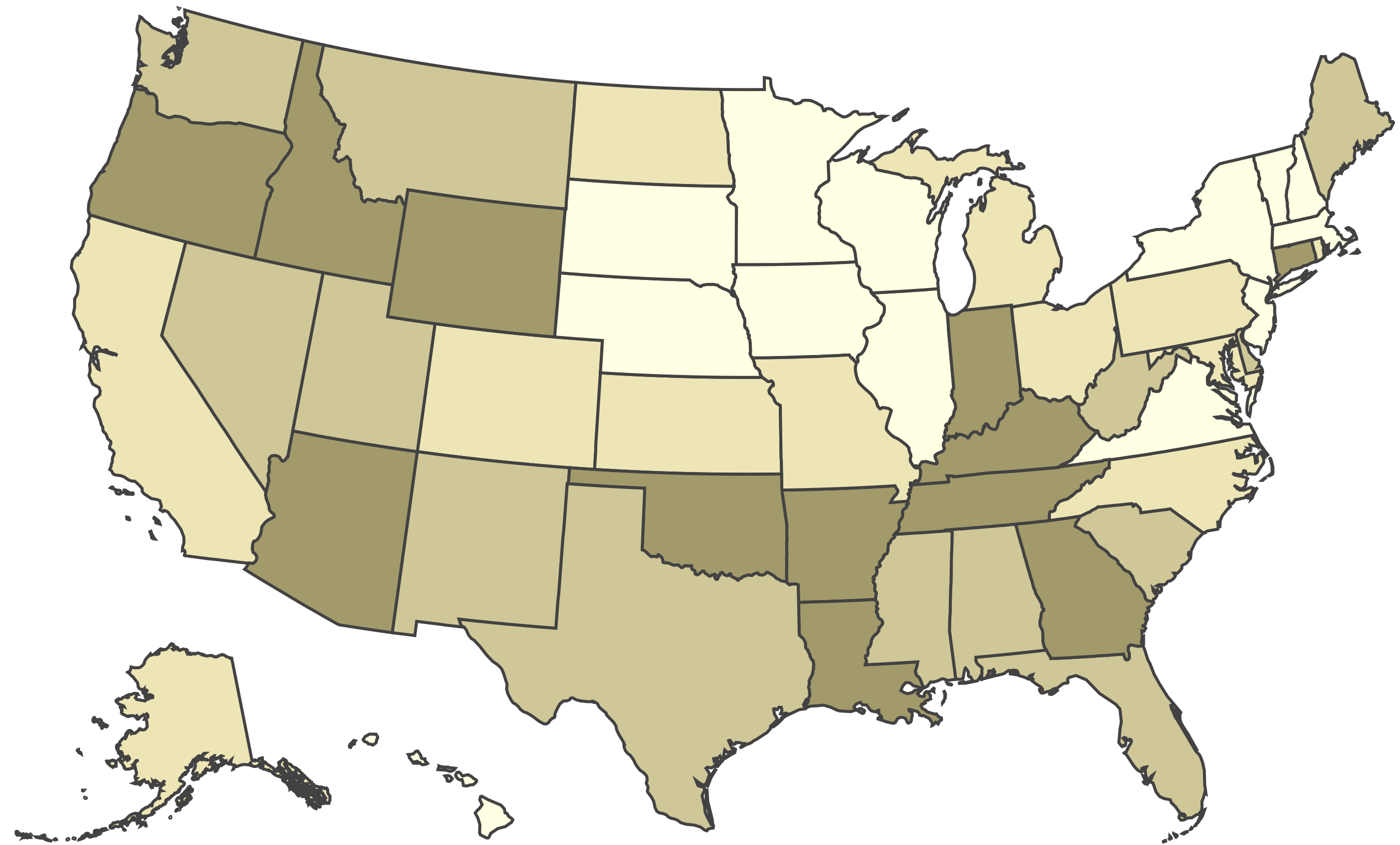
# State Rankings and Geographic Variation in Divorce Rates, 2016

Figure 2. State Variation in the Adjusted Divorce Rate per 1,000 Married Women Aged 15+ by Quartile, 2016



- The thirteen states with the highest divorce rates (making up the 1st quartile) had rates of at least 19.75 divorces per 1,000 married women in 2016.
- The thirteen states that experienced the lowest divorce rates (making up the 4th quartile) in 2016 had fewer than 15.05 divorces per 1,000 married women.

Figure 3. Geographic Variation of Women's Divorce Rate Among States, 2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-yr est. 2016

- States with the highest divorce rates (in the 1st or 2nd quartiles) were predominately found in the Southern and Western regions of the country.
  - Exceptions include Colorado, California, Maryland, North Carolina, and Virginia, which experienced divorce rates in the 3rd or 4th quartiles.
- States with the lowest divorce rates (in the 3rd or 4th quartiles) were located in the Midwest and Northeast regions of the United States.
  - Exceptions include Indiana, Connecticut, Delaware, and Maine, which were in the first two quartiles of divorce rates.

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