

# Marriage License Filings Johnson County Clerk's Office January 1, to December 31, 2007

Report prepared by  
Marriage Investors, Inc.  
April, 2008

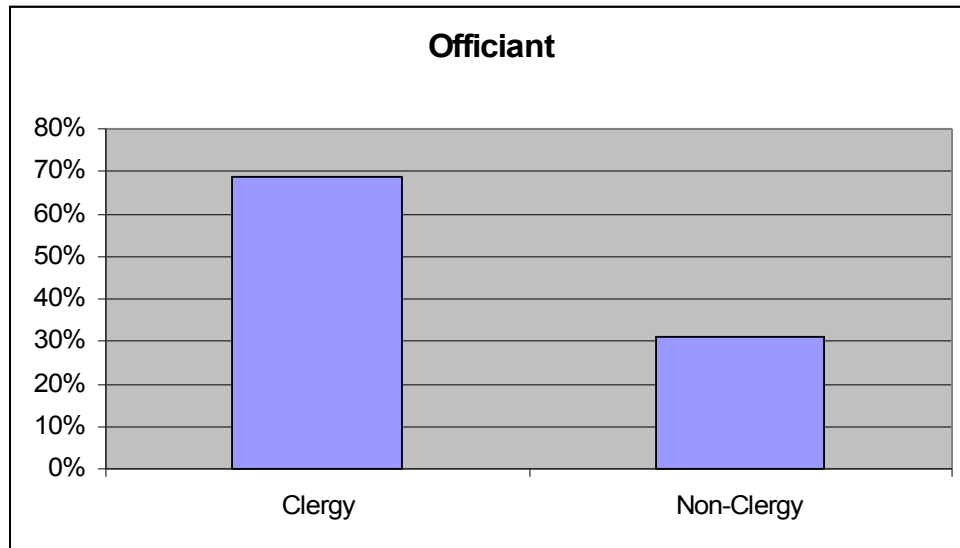
**Number of Licenses Filed 1,048**

**Number of Marriages 1,006**

Of the 1,048 licenses filed during the year, 42 (4%) were not completed. This report deals only with the 1,006 licenses which resulted in a marriage ceremony. Data was compiled during February and March, 2008.

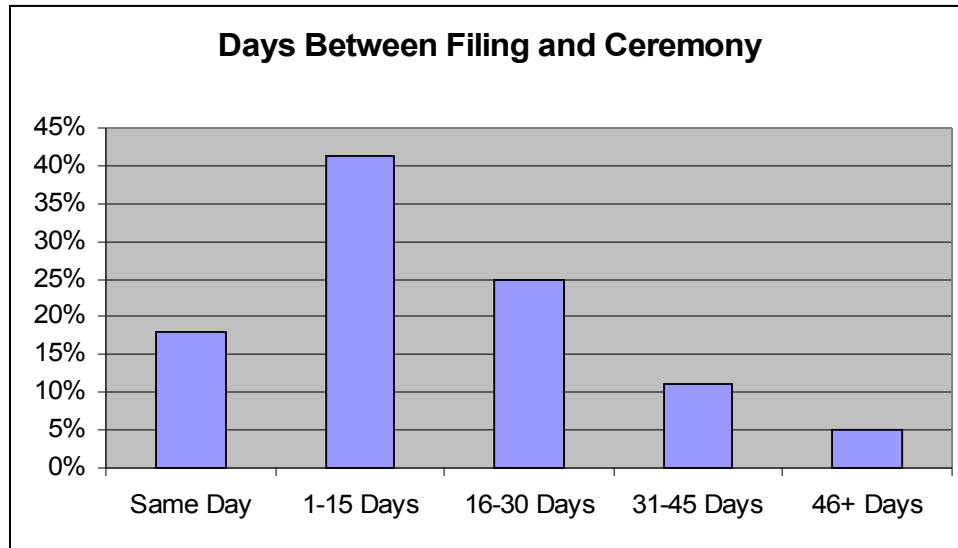
## Officiant

The majority (69%) of marriages in Johnson County in 2007 were performed by ministers, including Army Chaplains. The 31% of marriages officiated by non-ministers were conducted by a County Clerk (27%), Judge/Magistrate (3%) and Mayor (.6%) Four completed marriage licenses were simply marked "officiant" and are therefore, unknown.

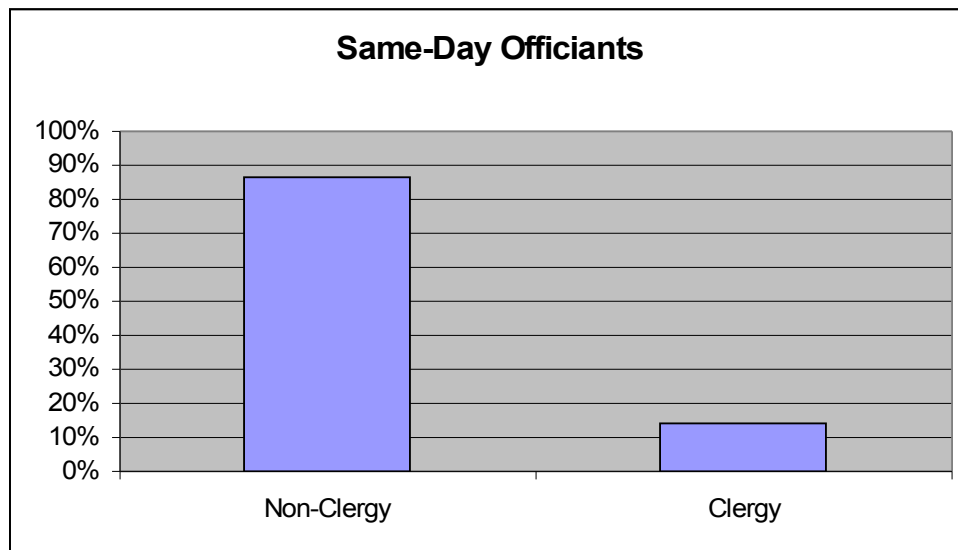


## Number of Days Between Filing and Marriage

One-hundred eighty marriage ceremonies (18%) took place on the same day as the license filing. The average number of days between marriage license filing and the marriage was 15.1. The median number of days between filing and ceremony was 11. The least number of days was 1 and the most was 92.



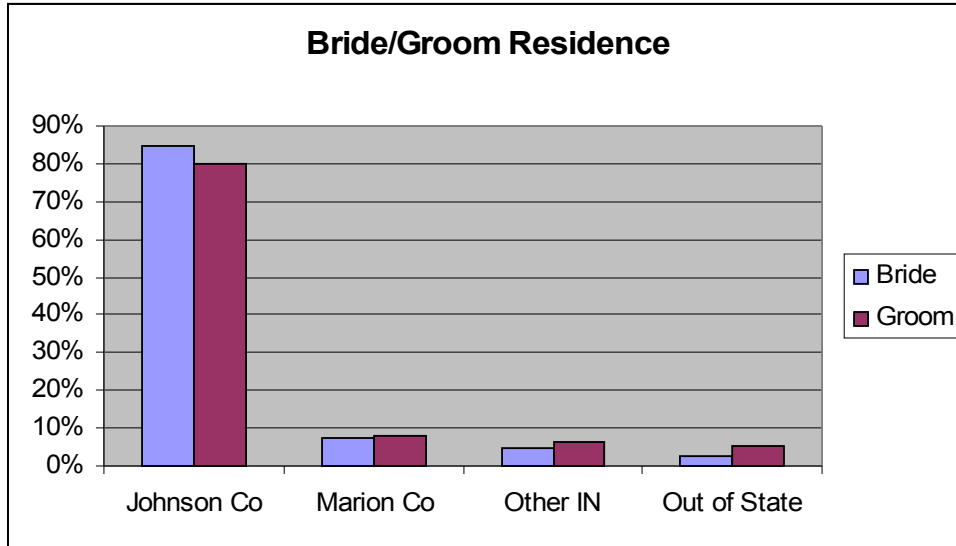
Of the marriages conducted on the same day as the filing, 86% were officiated by the County Clerk, a Judge/Magistrate or Mayor. The remaining 14% were officiated by clergy. Judge/Magistrate and Mayor accounted for 2.3% of all same-day ceremonies.



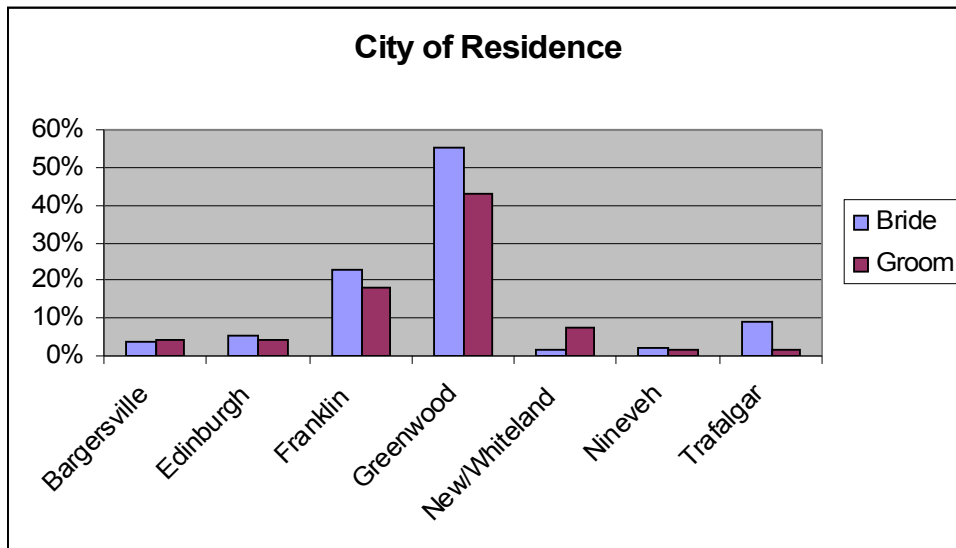
One might expect the only ceremonies performed by the clerk’s office would be same-day ceremonies, but this is not true. The Clerk performed 125 ceremonies (12%) anywhere from 1 to 92 days after the filing. Other non-clergy officiants performed an additional 32 ceremonies (3%) anywhere from 1 to 51 days after the filing.

### Residence of Bride and Groom

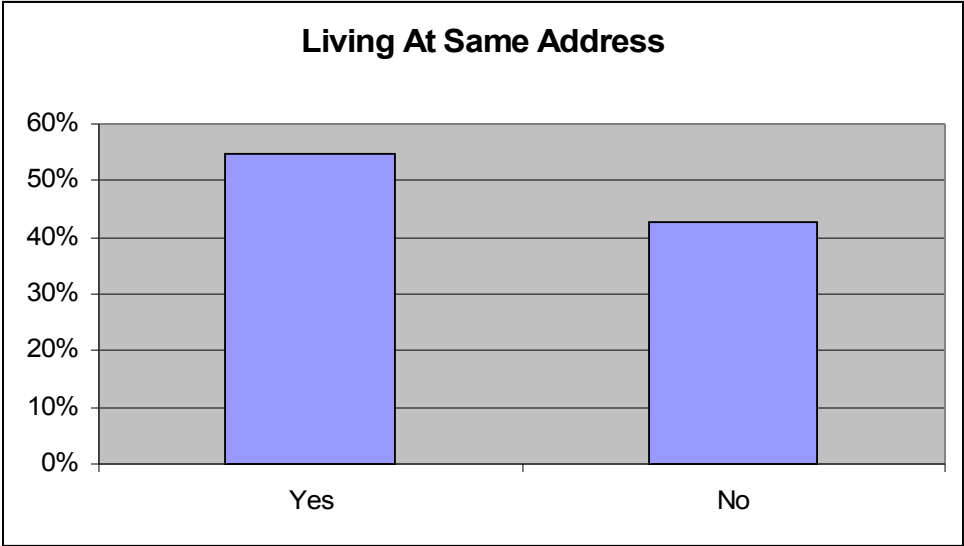
As would be expected, the majority of brides (84%) and grooms (80%) are residents of Johnson County. The higher percentage of brides can be attributed to the tradition of weddings taking place in the bride’s home community. There were 6 brides/grooms whose residence was outside of the US and an additional 12 brides/grooms who did not provide residence information on the application.



Of Johnson County residents, the majority resided in Greenwood and Franklin. This is consistent with census data as these two cities make up the majority of county residents. A comparison of residency and census data shows a strong correlation between a city’s census population and the percentage of marriages of city residents.



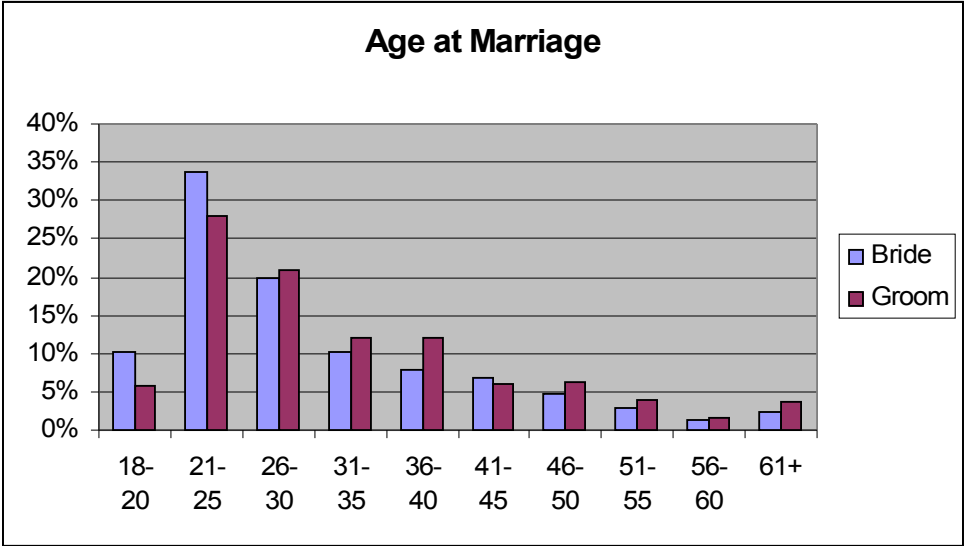
A slight majority (55%) of brides and grooms reported living at the same address on their license application. According to the Clerk’s office, brides and grooms are asked to list the address on their driver’s license, so this primarily indicates residence at the time of the marriage, not future/intended residence. Information was not available from 28 brides/grooms (3%).



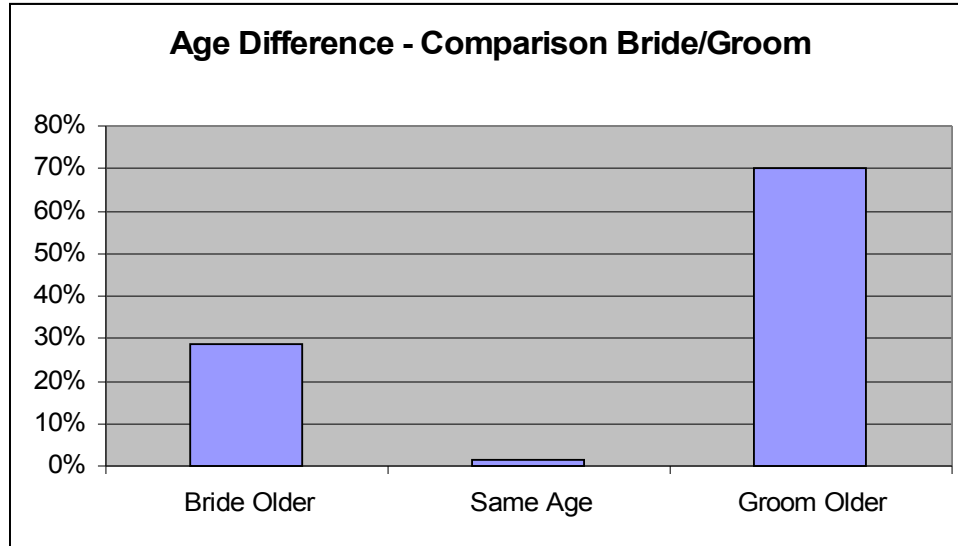
**Age at Marriage**

The average age for brides was 31.1 years, while grooms were slightly older at 33.3 years. The median age for brides was 27.3 years, with grooms, again being slightly older at 29.2 years. The youngest bride was 17 and the youngest groom was 18. There were three brides (0.3%) who were 17 years old. The oldest bride was 86.7 years old and the oldest groom was 86.9 years old. There were 6 brides (2.3%) and 16 grooms (3.6%) over age 70.

One third of all grooms are age 25 or younger and more than 54% are age 30 or younger. Forty-four percent of brides are age 25 or young and 64% are age 30 or younger

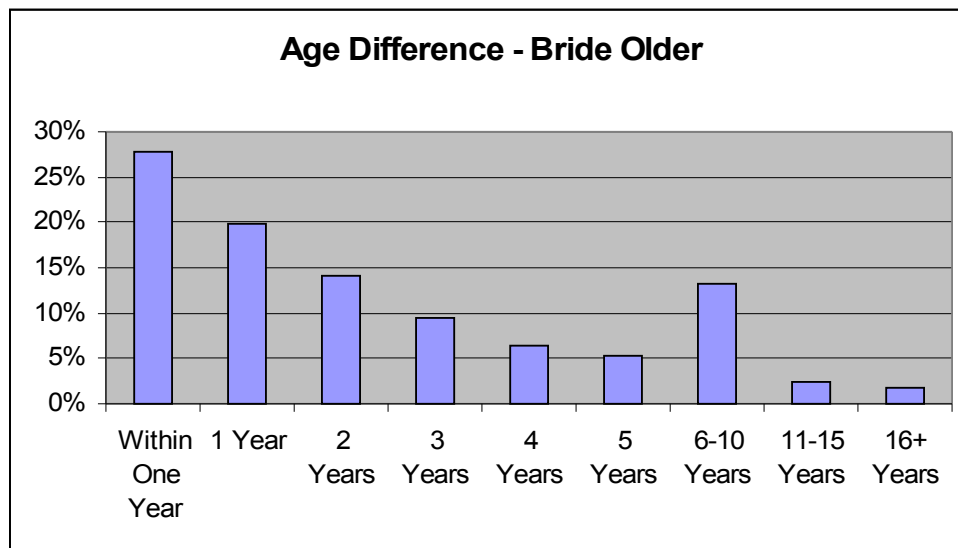


In the majority of cases (70%) the groom was older than the bride. However, there were a significant number (29%) of marriages in which the bride was older than the groom. The remaining brides and grooms were the same age.

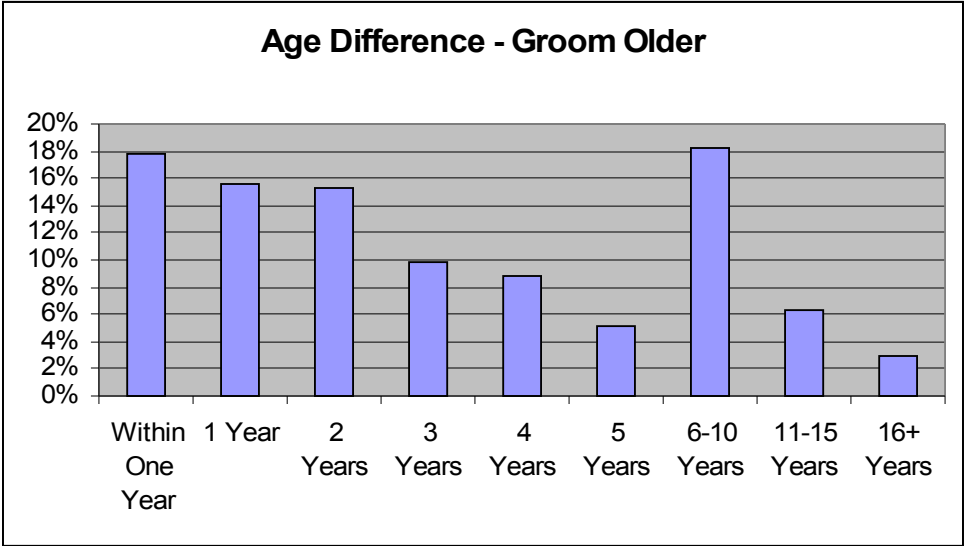


The average age difference was 2.3 years, with the groom being older. The median age difference was 1.7 years, also with the groom being older.

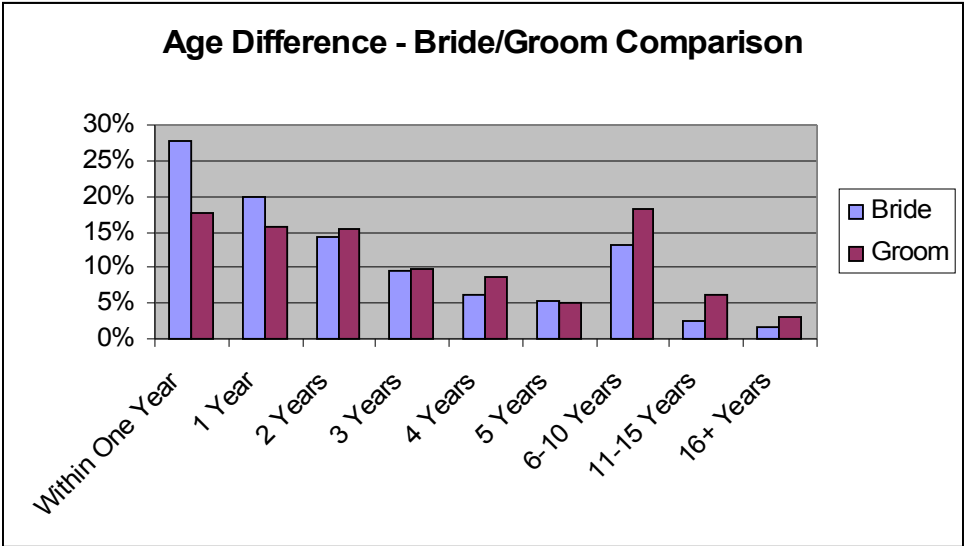
In cases where the bride was older than the groom, the difference ranged from 1 to 27.5 years, with the median being 2.1 years and average being 3.4 years. In the case of the couple with the greatest age difference, the bride was 49.1 years old at the time of the ceremony and the groom was 21.6 years old.



In cases where the groom was older than the bride, the difference ranged from 1 to 38.1 years, with the median being 3.1 years and average being 4.6 years. In the case of the couple with the greatest age difference, the groom was 60.5 years old at the time of the ceremony and the bride was 22.4 years old.

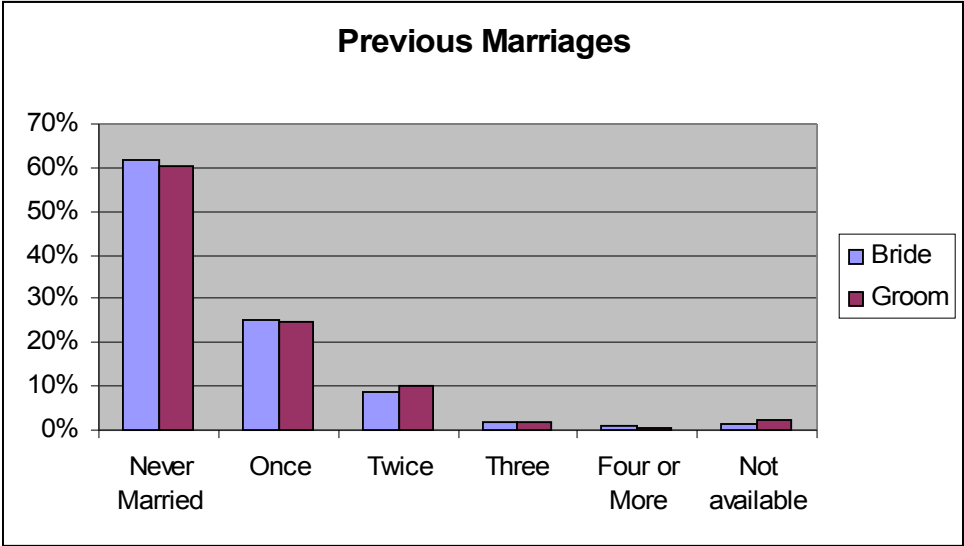


Of couples who are within one year of each other's age, brides are more likely to be slightly older than their grooms. There is an interesting spike at the 6-10 year age difference for both brides and grooms.



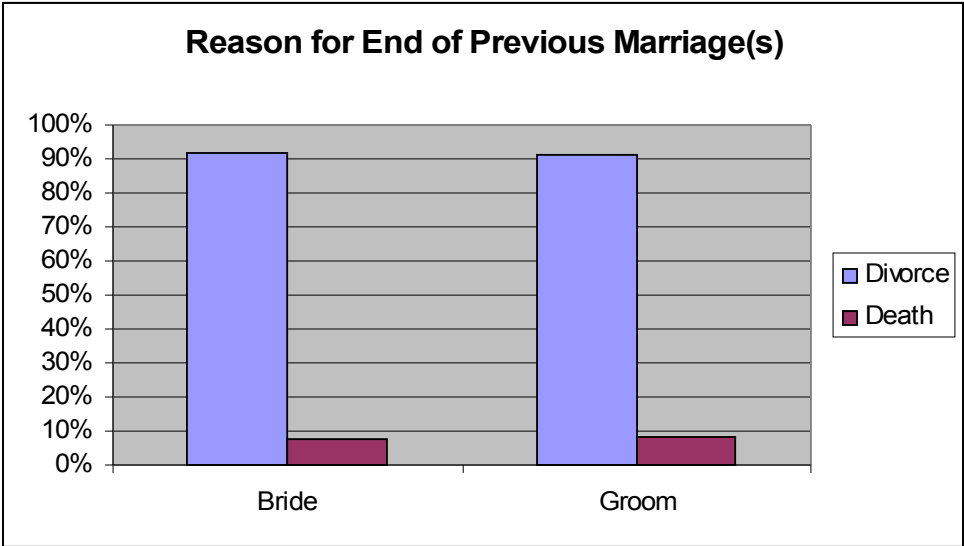
**Previous Marriages**

The majority of both brides (62%) and grooms (60%) had never been married before. Of the remaining couples, most had been married once, although 11 brides had been married four or more times, including one who had been married eight times; six grooms had been married four or five times. Information on the number of previous marriages was not available for 40 brides/grooms.



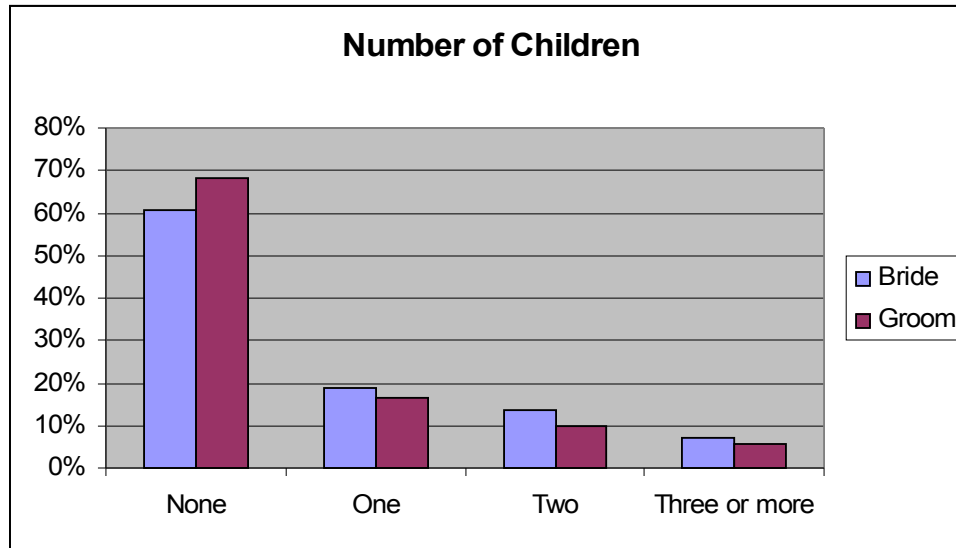
**Reason for Previous Marriage Ending**

Divorce accounted for 91% of all marriage dissolutions for both previously married brides and grooms. Death accounted for 8% and annulment accounted for 0.2%. Information was not available for one bride and one groom.



**Number of Children**

The majority of brides (61%) and grooms (68%) did not have dependent children under the age of 18 at the time of the marriage ceremony. More brides than grooms bring children into a marriage. And in most cases, the bride and groom were not the parents of all the children being brought into the marriage.



There were 320 grooms (32%) and 396 brides (39%) with dependent children under the age of 18. The majority of these children were not shared by the newly wed couples. This data does not lend itself easily to graphs, so some significant points are presented here:

- There were 150 couples in which the bride had one to four children, but the groom did not have any children.
- There were 74 couples in which the groom had one child, but the bride did not have any children.
- There were 161 couples in which both the bride and groom had one child. Of these, 97 were not shared; 64 were shared.
- Of the 545 couples who brought at least one dependent child to the marriage, 77% were not shared by the couple.

#### **What this means for Johnson County and Marriage Investors**

- Close to 70% of marriages are conducted by clergy. This is a significant opportunity for ministers to help couples prepare for their marriage through premarital counseling.
  - Marriage Investors should promote the Marriage Covenant and encourage ministers throughout the county to sign it
  - Marriage Investors should provide ministers with the tools they need and want to help them with their counseling efforts
- 30% of marriages are conducted by non-clergy
  - Couples married by non-clergy are as much in need of information to prepare for their marriage as those married by clergy
  - Marriage Investors needs to develop a non-threatening, non-judgmental educational program on marriage preparation for the general public
- Programs conducted by Marriage Investors (especially for the general public) need to be accessible to all county residents, but need to be mindful of the concentration of population in Greenwood and Franklin
- A significant percentage of couples are living together prior to marriage
  - Education for both clergy and the general public needs to address the dynamics of this situation and how marriage is different than living together

- Approximately 40% of both brides and grooms have been married before.
  - Education for both clergy and the general public should address this issue and educate couples on the issues which arise in second, third, etc. marriages
- There is a significant number of children who are becoming members of blended families
  - This presents a significant opportunity/need to educate engaged and newly wed couples on the dynamics of step-parenting and its effects on marriage.