

Divorce and Divorce Reform: A reconciliation of results at odds

Malcolm C. Gold*

Department of Economics,
University of Wisconsin
Madison, WI

Job Market Paper
(November 2008)

Abstract: I use an independent examination of divorce laws to estimate the effects of divorce reforms on state divorce rates and to reconcile contradicting empirical results. Previous studies have often focused on one specific divorce reform, but an independent examination of state divorce laws indicates that divorce reform cannot accurately be captured by any single variable. This paper provides a detailed classification of reforms based on state level divorce laws, revealing the complexity and problems of analyzing a single divorce reform variable. I use state level divorce rates from 1940-2005 to estimate the effects of various divorce reform variables. Previous studies using state divorce rates have failed to account for an appropriate error structure in their analysis. Once an appropriate estimator is used, I find that none of the divorce reforms estimates has a statistically significant constant effect on divorce rates. After I include a flexible specification, I find weak statistical evidence of a large long-term effect on divorce rates.

Keywords: divorce liberalization; no-fault divorce; unilateral divorce; divorce

* I would like to thank; Justin Wolfers for generously sharing data and programming code to replicate his results, Maurizio Mazzocco and James Walker for numerous helpful discussions, comments, and insight, and Meta Brown, Brad Caruth, John Kennan, Nathan Tefft, Barbara Wolfe and UW Labor Workshop participants for helpful comments. Any errors remain my own.

1. Introduction

“My administration will give unprecedented support to strengthening marriages. Many good programs help couples who want to get married and stay married.” (President Bush, 2002)

Recent presidential political pressure and funding has been directed toward increasing the quality and stability of married life. (President Bush, 2003 and 2005) Simultaneously states have introduced bills which attempt to restrict the divorce laws (Americans for Divorce Reform, 2008; Lyman, 2005),¹ and there is a growing trend that divorce should be harder to obtain (GSS, 1974-1998).² Marriage and divorce decisions affect everyone, and recent movements towards strengthening the family are contrary to the trend of the 1970s and the “no-fault revolution”. During the “no-fault revolution” many states liberalized their divorce laws by changing how to obtain a divorce as well as changing property rights upon divorce. States replaced fault grounds with no-fault grounds and included unilateral divorce while prohibiting fault to be considered in property settlements. Unilateral divorce allows one spouse to file for divorce regardless of their spouse’s consent, while no-fault grounds allow a couple to split regardless of marital misconduct or fault. Using state level divorce rate data, research has found that divorce liberalization has effectively increased the divorce rate. The political pressure and proposed bills are based on the assumption that easier divorce laws have increased the prevalence of divorce. I reexamine that supposition and find little evidence supporting earlier research; rather I find that divorce liberalization has no constant effect or immediate effect on the divorce rate and only affects the long-term divorce rate.

This paper uses an independent examination of state divorce laws to discern the effect of divorce reforms. Previous studies have often focused on one specific divorce reform, either the means of which to obtain a divorce or property settlement. My independent examination of state divorce laws indicates that divorce reform cannot accurately be captured by either of these measures separately or by any single variable. This paper provides a detailed classification of reforms based on state level divorce laws, revealing the complexity and problems of analyzing a

¹ Advocates of strengthening the divorce law argue that reverting to stricter divorce laws will decrease the divorce rate by increasing the quality of marriage.

² Similarly there is a trend in the percent of GSS respondents who believe divorce law should not get any easier.

single divorce reform variable. Using this broader divorce reform classification, a reconciliation of contradicting prior empirical results is possible. I use state level divorce rates from 1940-2005 to estimate the effects of various divorce reform variables. Previous studies using state divorce rates failed to account for the data's error structure in their analysis, and came to incorrect conclusions. When an appropriate estimator is used, I find that none of the divorce reforms estimates has a statistically significant constant effect on divorce rates. Using a flexible specification, there is weak statistical evidence that divorce reform altered the marriage market in such a way to greatly increase the long-term divorce rate.

I use a model to examine how each divorce reform affects individuals' marriage decisions, which is important given the complexity of divorce law liberalizations. Mazzocco (2007) models household decisions without commitment or with ex-ante full efficiency. I build on this framework to predict the effects of divorce reform on the probability of divorce. This model not only motivates an empirical examination of my broader divorce reform classification, but also allows for economic insight into a rational individual's choice and how divorce law reform affects those decisions.³

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. The next section is a brief literature review of relevant studies. The third section details the liberalization of divorce laws in the United States and the divorce reform classifications used in this analysis. I explain the model in the fourth section and data in the fifth. The sixth section contains the empirical methodology and replications of other studies. The results section includes estimates from the general divorce reform classification and a robustness check of the results with respect to specific no-fault divorce classifications and with respect to model specification.

2. Literature Review

There remains an ever growing literature investigating the effects of unilateral and no-fault divorce laws analyzing the liberalization of divorce laws that swept through the U.S. nearly four decades ago. Contrary to the stated goals of divorce liberalization advocates (Wardle, 1991),

³ Fella et.al. (2004) and Chiappori et.al. (2007) theoretically examine the effects of divorce law reform on divorce. Chiappori et.al. (2007) conclude that divorce law will affect divorce even in the presence of transferrable utility, but with ambiguous predictions due to changing marginal rates of substitution between public and private goods. Fella et.al. (2004) argue that divorce decisions may be inefficient when transferrable utility is present only at separation, arguing that social norms and not divorce law increased divorce. I use a model with transferrable utility at separation and within marriage.

empirical studies have generally concluded that divorce liberalization has either had no effect (Peters, 1986; Gray, 1998; Ellman and Lohr, 1998) or has effectively increased divorces (Friedberg, 1998; Allen, 1992; Kidd, 1995). The magnitude and duration of any effects on divorces is still debatable, and the long-term implications of such changes may be negative rather than positive (Wolfers, 2006).

An early visual examination of state-level divorces between 1943 and 1979 by Sepler (1981) indicated that a specific form of no-fault divorce, that of irreconcilable differences, had no effect on divorce rates in 87% of the reformed states.⁴ Sepler also concludes that there were no spillover effects from adopting no-fault divorce upon neighboring states. Peters (1986) uses 1975-1978 marital information from a 1979 Current Population Survey to investigate the impact of divorce reform on divorce. Her analysis concludes that unilateral irreconcilable differences divorce grounds has no effect on the probability of divorce but did lower the average financial settlement received by women upon divorce.⁵ Allen (1992) points out that separation period is another form of no-fault divorce and should be included in the analysis.⁶ When this distinction is accounted for, a positive effect of unilateral no-fault divorce was found on the probability of divorce when no regional control variables were included. Peters (1992) questions the use of regional controls and finds no effect of divorce reform on 1970 and 1980 state-level divorce rates.

Friedberg (1998) uses state level divorce rates and panel techniques to separate out the confounding regional effects of Peters and Allen. Friedberg classified both forms of no-fault grounds as mentioned by Peters and Allen but concentrated the analysis to divorce reform which simultaneously allowed unilateral divorce and no-fault property division.⁷ Her results indicate

⁴ Irreconcilable differences is defined and explained later in the data section. For now it suffices to know irreconcilable differences is a no-fault divorce ground. In the divorce classification section that follows I create a divorce variable *Irreconcilable Differences* which is comparable to Sepler's divorce law of interest, but differs due to state law coding differences which are noted in the Appendix.

⁵ Unilateral irreconcilable differences divorce law is the combination of the specific no-fault divorce, irreconcilable differences and unilateral divorce. Later, I explain that unilateral divorce can only be allowed under no-fault divorce, and as such create a divorce law variable *Irreconcilable Differences* \times *Unilateral* which is comparable to Peters' divorce law of interest. Once again my variable is not completely similar to Peters' law of interest as my annual coding of state laws vary, noted in the Appendix.

⁶ Separation period is the other specific form of no-fault divorce besides irreconcilable differences. Included in my analysis is a *Separation Period* divorce variable. Like the other divorce classifications my coding differs slightly from those found in the literatures due to discrepancies in the annual coding of state laws.

⁷ Friedberg examines the total effects of unilateral divorce, allowing for different no-fault grounds and no-fault property settlements. The main effect of no-fault divorce is ignored in this specification, rather only the distinction between *Separation Period* and *Irreconcilable Differences* is identified. Although not complete in the divorce reform classification, Friedberg provides the best analysis to date on the complexity of divorce reform to the

that divorce reform statistically significantly increased the divorce rate, and that the change to unilateral divorce laws accounted for 16% of the rise in the divorce rates since the 1960s.

Wolfers (2006) reexamines Friedberg's results, finding the estimates very sensitive to the inclusion of state specific trends. Friedberg argues that inclusion of a state specific trend better captures pre-existing divorce propensities as well as changing state level demographics. Wolfers includes prior years of state divorce rates to the panel dataset to better estimate the state specific divorce propensities prior to divorce reform. Using a flexible form specification that allows for immediate and long-term effects to be parsed, there is an immediate statistically significant increase in divorce rates as a result of adopting no-fault unilateral property division. However, this increase is short-lived and after a decade the statistically significant effect is no longer present. After 15 years Wolfers finds evidence of a long-term decrease in the divorce rate due to the divorce reform.

The results across studies differ due to different divorce reform definitions and different data sources.⁸ There are generally two avenues which have been used to classify divorce reform, either along the grounds for divorce (Allen 1992; Peters 1986; Peters 1992; Sepler 1981) or along property division (Friedberg 1998; Brinig and Buckley 1998; Wolfers 2006). Even within studies classifying divorce reform by available grounds, there is disagreement on the correct classification (Peters 1986; Allen 1992). Unlike previous studies, my divorce liberalization classification takes into account the complex structure of divorce law reform. To this extent I attempt to disentangle the effects of no-fault, unilateral, and property settlements which have previously been lumped together. This broad classification of divorce reform variables helps to clarify the mixed results existing in the literature.

Different data sources have yielded contradicting estimates with positive and no effect estimates from cross sectional state data and individual data and positive and negative long-term effects from a panel of state data. Peters (1986), Allen (1992), and Sepler (1981) use cross sectional individual divorce data. This data structure allows researchers to account for individual specific characteristics, but location effects are hard to control for due to smaller sample sizes and time effects are not identified with a single cross-section of data. Friedberg (1998) and

best of my knowledge. My paper differs not only in the divorce classification, but also examines the immediate and long-term impacts of divorce reform.

⁸ This is based largely on the estimates provided later in the paper.

Wolfers (2006) use a panel of state divorce rates to examine the effects of divorce law changes. Ideally a panel with individual specific characteristics could be used to answer this question, but the use of such a dataset has its limitations in this application.⁹ I examine an extended panel of state level divorce rates in this paper, using aggregate data rather than individual data. Since I use similar data as Friedberg and Wolfers I replicate their studies and highlight the source of disagreement in our estimates. I discuss the limitations of the dataset in section five. I find that divorce reform has no overall statistically significant constant effect on the divorce rate but increases the divorce rate in the long-term once an appropriate estimator that correctly captures the autocorrelation in the error terms is used.

3. Divorce Law Liberalization

Divorce law liberalization and reform has been a political hotbed of interest and as such a plethora of studies exist examining the impact of divorce reform on divorce. Yet the definition of divorce reform varies from study to study. To discern the muddled classifications, I conducted independent divorce liberalization research by examining the historical divorce statutes and session law changes for all fifty states and the District of Columbia.¹⁰ From this research and prior classifications, three general changes in divorce law happened: a change in the available grounds under which to file, a change in the spousal consent required for filing, and whether a court can consider fault in property dissolution.

Dichotomous divorce reform variables are created for each state-year in the sample based on these changes in divorce law. The divorce reforms are coded annually according to effective date of the laws. If the effective date of the divorce law proceeded July 1st then that year is the

⁹ Both the PSID and NLSY would be candidate individual level datasets; however many states reformed their divorce laws prior to 1968. The PSID and NLSY have data available from 1968; however 19 of 51 states had already adopted no-fault grounds for divorce in or before 1968. By using state divorce rates rather than individuals' marital histories, I gain additional divorce reform information and identification from 12 additional states as seen in Figure 1. If I am to use these data sets I would not be able to identify the effects of divorce reform for individuals residing in these states. In addition, 22 more states adopted no-fault grounds for divorce by 1974, providing few years to observe individuals prior to divorce reform.

¹⁰ I use the classifications found in Allen (1992), Ellman and Lohr (1998), Friedberg (1998), Gruber (2004), Peters (1986), Rasul (2004), and Wolfers (2006) as starting points for my research. I then verified and cross-checked their classifications with the historical divorce statutes. Discrepancies were found across the classifications even after accounting for naming conventions and different meanings. Most of these differences were due to the exact timing of the law changes. The above mentioned classifications are contained in Appendix along with my classification for cross reference and as evidence of the variation in divorce reform classifications. Wolfers finds that the divorce reform coding variations have little effect on the robustness of his estimates. However, this is using a single divorce reform variable which I show is an inappropriate specification.

first year of that divorce reform. However, if the effective date of the divorce law occurred after July 1st my coding of the divorce law is represented by the following year.¹¹

3.1. Divorce Reform Classification

The first change in divorce law is a change in the available grounds under which a couple may file for divorce, from fault to no-fault grounds. With no-fault divorce grounds couples may be granted a divorce even when no traditional fault has been committed in the marriage. Traditional fault grounds for divorce include adultery, cruelty, desertion, habitual drug addiction, incarceration, or insanity. No-fault grounds of “irreconcilable differences,” “irretrievably broken,” or “incompatibility” are often the grounds thought of and associated with the “No-Fault Revolution”. These grounds only require that the marriage be perceived finished by the couple. Another no-fault ground for divorce is one requiring a separation period; in which the couple may file for divorce if spouses have been “living separate and apart” or have had a “voluntary separation” for a specified time period. The general no-fault divorce reform variable that will be used later in the paper is defined as follows.

No-Fault: Grounds for divorce include some form of no-fault divorce. This classification takes a value of unity when no-fault divorce is present and zero if all grounds for divorce are fault based.

To check the robustness of my estimates on the general *No-Fault* variable and to reconcile with previous papers, I split *No-Fault* into two specific forms of no-fault divorce which have been delineated in the past literature.¹²

Irreconcilable Differences: Takes a value of unity if “irreconcilable differences,” “irretrievably broken,” or “incompatibility” no-fault grounds for divorce are available and zero otherwise.

Separation Period: Grounds for divorce include “living separate and apart” or “voluntary separation” for a specified time period, and takes a value of unity if true and zero otherwise.

¹¹ When the effective date was not available the approval date was used. Lastly, if the approval date was also not available the consensus divorce reform date among other papers was used.

¹² These distinctions were made by Peters (1992) and Allen (1992) and are generally accepted as two different grounds for divorce which possibly have different effects on individuals. Separation period may require additional time once the decision to divorce has been made, where as irreconcilable differences can be instantaneous. This delineation of specific no-fault grounds is different from Ellman and Lohr, who split the specific grounds into those with a separation period or incompatibility and those with irreconcilable differences or irretrievably broken.

These two specific no-fault classifications are not mutually exclusive, as the presence of one does not imply the absence of the other.¹³

Peters (1986, 1992) and Allen (1992) disagreed on what constituted no-fault divorce based on the above specific classification. Their results were sensitive to this specification. Rather than ignoring this distinction which has been done by previous studies, this delineation of the general no-fault divorce into these two specific no-fault divorce classifications serves to check the robustness of the general no-fault divorce classification. In addition, I can examine whether the specific no-fault classifications affect individuals' divorce decisions differently and test if the estimated effects are similar.

The second general change in divorce law is a change in the spousal consent required for filing, from mutual consent to unilateral. Establishment of unilateral divorce allows for a spouse to seek divorce regardless of their spouses' desire to remain married. This is quite opposite of the historical requirement of mutual consent.¹⁴ I define unilateral as follows.

Unilateral: Divorce may be initiated on no-fault grounds by either spouse regardless of consent. It takes a value of unity in state-years in which divorce can be unilaterally initiated and zero otherwise.

By definition, unilateral divorce can only exist with no-fault grounds. In order for divorce to occur under fault based divorce one spouse must have allegedly committed fault, then and only then could the "innocent" spouse file for divorce. Under fault divorce, divorce is only achievable under the actions of both spouses and requires mutual consent. The action of one spouse can prevent divorce.¹⁵ The introduction of *No-Fault* allowed *Unilateral* to exist, and divorce is no longer preventable by any one spouse. A state which has *Unilateral* divorce is predicated by having *No-Fault* divorce, but not vice versa. As such, *Unilateral* effects are in addition to *No-*

¹³ For example, the Nevada statute states, "Divorce from the bonds of matrimony may be obtained for any of the following causes: ... (2) When the husband and wife have lived separate and apart for 1 year without cohabitation the court may, in its discretion, grant an absolute decree of divorce at the suit of either party. (3) Incompatibility." Nev. Rev. Stat. § 125.100 (2001).

¹⁴ I define mutual consent as the alternative to unilateral divorce. Mutual consent is sometimes explicitly required in the divorce law, but sometimes implicit consent exists if fault grounds are the only method of divorce.

¹⁵ For example, the Texas statute states "The court may grant a divorce in favor of one spouse if the other spouse has committed adultery." Tex. Fam. Code Ann. § 6.003 (2005).

Fault effects. Studies which examine only unilateral divorce are treating fault and no-fault grounds similar.¹⁶

States adopted *Unilateral* divorce in addition to a specific no-fault ground, but not necessarily to all no-fault grounds.¹⁷ In order to examine the additional effects of unilateral, if any, to the specific no-fault grounds, I also classify the availability of unilateral divorce under each of the specific no-fault grounds. If unilateral divorce is available under either specific no-fault ground, then *Unilateral* is equal to one. However the opposite does not hold, as *Unilateral* does not inform whether divorce can be obtained unilaterally under *Irreconcilable Differences*, *Separation Period*, or both.¹⁸

In the event that an amicable divorce property division could not be achieved, the court must divide the marital property. Historically fault was considered by the court in this property division decision. The third general change in divorce law pertains to the division of property, specifically that courts may not take into consideration fault with respect to the division of property. Even though the property division may be reached outside of the court, knowing that fault cannot be considered by the court if so needed affects the bargaining process. I define this change in divorce law as follows.

Property: If courts are asked to divide marital property, fault is not to be considered. It takes a value of unity in state-years in which the above statement is true and zero otherwise.

States which adopted *Property* did so after first adopting *No-Fault*. In this manner, *Property* is similar to *Unilateral* in that any effects are in addition to the effects of *No-Fault*.¹⁹

Studies which examine only the effects of *Property* or *Unilateral* ignore the effects of *No-fault* and also ignore the other divorce classification. Other studies fail to address this divorce liberalization complexity and are likely biased due to omitted variables. If all three of these divorce reforms were perfectly collinear, the choice of which variable to examine would be

¹⁶ As will be seen in the results section, a population weighted OLS estimate for no-fault is positive and statistically significant. Thus many of the previous studies have biased results due to omitted variables. In addition, the interpretation of the unilateral divorce reform variable in these studies is not with respect to mutual consent fault based divorce.

¹⁷ This distinction will be discussed in the next section.

¹⁸ The specific grounds of *No-Fault* interacted with unilateral are not mutually exclusive.

¹⁹ All states which adopted *Property* actually adopted *Unilateral* at the same time as *No-Fault* with the exception of South Dakota. This distinction in the data is important for the interpretation of the *Property* effects in the results section, as they will be explained as the additional effects on top of *No-Fault Unilateral* rather than only *No-Fault*.

trivial as only the joint effect is identifiable. However, the next section describes the adoption of state divorce law reforms which do not perfectly coincide. Thus the timing allows the individual divorce reform effects to be identified.

3.2. State Level Divorce Reforms

All fifty states and the District of Columbia have adopted *No-Fault* divorce.²⁰ Forty states adopted *Irreconcilable Differences* and twenty-seven adopted *Separation Period*.²¹ Graph 1 shows a historical perspective of when *No-Fault* divorce was adopted across states. Rhode Island first introduced *No-Fault* divorce with *Separation Period* grounds in 1896 and was the only state until 1931 when Nevada and North Carolina added *Separation Period* grounds for divorce. New Mexico was the first to add *Irreconcilable Differences* divorce grounds in 1933. Gradually more states adopted *No-Fault* divorce, with six total changes in the thirties, two in the forties, five in the fifties, nine in the sixties, twenty-five in the seventies, and the remaining three in the eighties. In 1986 South Dakota became the last to adopt *No-Fault* divorce. The large number of states that changed divorce laws in the seventies is referred to as the “no-fault” revolution even though it is clear that the change to no-fault grounds started well before then.

Forty-six states adopted *Unilateral* divorce. Although all states have adopted *No-Fault* divorce and most adopted *Unilateral* divorce, there are states which adopted these divorce reforms in different years or have failed to adopt *Unilateral* divorce at all. It is important to note these differences in years of divorce reform adoption and whether *Unilateral* was adopted, as these differences provide the statistical identification integral to my analysis. If all states were to have simultaneously adopted *No-Fault* and *Unilateral* I would not be able to separately identify these effects and instead only be able to find the joint effect of *No-Fault* and *Unilateral*.

Thirty-one states also adopted *Property*. As noted above the adoption of *Property* is precluded by having no-fault grounds, and thus presence of *Property* is in addition to *No-Fault*. Of the states with *Property*, thirty adopted it in addition to *No-Fault* and *Unilateral* divorce. Only South Dakota adopted *Property* in addition to *No-Fault* but yet maintained a mutual

²⁰ Once no-fault grounds were added to state statutes they were not later removed. The lone caveat is Minnesota which switched specific no-fault grounds; *Separation Period* was removed in 1974 and *Irreconcilable Differences* was added in the same year.

²¹ Fifteen states permit both types of no-fault divorce, they are Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia and Wisconsin. Minnesota is the only state that had both types of no-fault divorce but not simultaneously.

consent requirement for divorce. As was the case with *No-Fault* and *Unilateral* the variation across states in all three divorce reform variables is paramount for statistical identification.

Table 1 provides a frequency of state level changes in my divorce reform classifications. Forty-two states changed their divorce law from fault to *No-Fault* while simultaneously changing from mutual consent to *Unilateral*. The remaining nine states changed from fault to *No-Fault* while leaving their mutual consent requirement intact.²² Of these nine states four later adopted *Unilateral* divorce.²³ With regards to the specific no-fault grounds; twenty-two states simultaneously adopted *Irreconcilable Differences* and *Unilateral*, seventeen adopted *Separation Period* and *Unilateral* together, and three states allowed *Unilateral* with both *Irreconcilable Differences* and *Separation Period* simultaneously.

4. Model

In this section I explain a model capturing how the three general divorce law reforms affect individuals' decisions to divorce. I do not estimate the model in the empirical section, yet this model provides motivation for an examination of each divorce reform and provides insight into how divorce law changes affect individual's decisions. This model is based on Mazzocco's (2007) household commitment models.²⁴

Assume that there is a continuum of risk adverse individuals, who have finite life and meet a potential spouse at an exogenous rate each period if single. Individuals behave rationally, have full information and have transferrable utilities. After each period's marriage decision individuals receive a wage shock, thus marriage decisions will take into consideration wage uncertainty.²⁵ Individuals will marry if and only if the expected value of getting married exceeds that of remaining single. The decision to obtain a divorce depends on the value of each spouse's outside option relative to that within marriage.²⁶ Household's decisions are assumed to be

²² Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Mississippi, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Texas are the nine states which adopted no-fault divorce independent of unilateral divorce.

²³ Hawaii, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Texas are the four states which later adopted unilateral divorce after already having no-fault divorce for at least one year.

²⁴ Mazzocco models the household with either ex-ante full efficiency or no commitment. Ex-ante full efficiency is not required to model *Unilateral* divorce law change. Ex-ante full efficiency is too strong of commitment level, as it possibly has spouses ex-ante committing to stay married even if both spouses want a divorce ex-post.

²⁵ Shocks in wages are assumed to be mean zero and identical for everyone.

²⁶ Mazzocco, Ruiz, and Yamaguchi (2007) describe the outside option as being the expected value of future marriages over the remainder of one's life.

governed by partial commitment or by no commitment. With partial commitment, the couple can obtain a divorce if and only if both spouses desire to do so. With no commitment either couple can initiate a divorce. With partial commitment spouses cannot change their bargaining position during the duration of the marriage. Rather the bargaining process occurs at the time of marriage, and since divorce is only available with both spouses consent neither spouse has the ability to change the bargaining position. On the other hand, if households are governed by no commitment, spouses' bargaining positions within the household can vary across periods and during the length of the marriage. The bargaining position within marriage depends on the current situation rather than that which existed at the time of marriage. After laying out the model mathematically, I will describe how the reforms affect spouse's outside options, the value of marriage and ultimately the decision to divorce using this model.

First examine the household's problem governed by partial commitment for husband (H) and wife (W). Both individuals are assumed to be utility maximizers over a general consumption good (c), leisure (l), savings (s) and a marriage specific public good (Q). Each individual has a time endowment each period T . The price of the consumption good is normalized to one, the price of the public good (p), the gross return on savings (R), and the labor market wage (w) are exogenously determined. For each time period t the household maximization problem can be written as follows.²⁷

$$\begin{aligned}
& \max_{\{c_{H,t}, c_{W,t}, l_{H,t}, l_{W,t}, s_t, Q_t\}_{t \in T}} \mu_W u_W(c_{W,t}, l_{W,t}, Q_t) + \mu_H u_H(c_{H,t}, l_{H,t}, Q_t) \\
& \text{s.t.} \quad c_{W,t} + c_{H,t} + p_t Q_t + s_t \leq (T - l_{W,t})w_{W,t} + (T - l_{H,t})w_{H,t} + R_t s_{t-1} \quad \forall t \quad 1 \\
& \quad \quad \quad s_N \geq 0 \\
& \quad \quad \quad E_t^W [u_W(c_{W,t}, l_{W,t}, Q_t)] + E_t^H [u_H(c_{H,t}, l_{H,t}, Q_t)] \geq M_{W,t} + M_{H,t}
\end{aligned}$$

The above social planner problem is an equivalent household maximization problem arising from each spouse's individual utility maximization problem. The Pareto weights, μ_W and μ_H are determined at the time of marriage and are the result of some bargaining process. This household's decision is governed by partial commitment and there is no renegotiation of the Pareto weights as long as one individual wishes to remain married. The last constraint is the divorce decision for the household. The couple will obtain a divorce if and only if the outside

²⁷ The problem assumes that neither individual is in last period N . In the event of divorce the savings is split equally among the spouses.

option for each individual, M , is greater than the expected value of marriage. This is equivalent to the sum of the outside options being less than the value of marriage to each member.²⁸

Once partial commitment is relaxed the household decision process is modeled with no commitment. This model is similar to that above with two differences. First, individual marriage constraints exist rather than the joint household constraint. For each spouse the expected value of remaining married must be at least as large as the outside option.²⁹ Second, the Pareto weights can vary during the marriage. If one spouse wants a divorce there must be a renegotiation of the relative bargaining power in the household for the marriage to survive. It is optimal for a change in the Pareto weights to occur if marital surplus exists to divide. However it is possible that even with new Pareto weights that the value of marriage is less than the outside option for both individuals and the household will obtain a divorce. As individuals are risk adverse, knowing the Pareto weights and marital division for the duration of the marriage is a good thing. Knowing the household division allows each individual from guarding against a change in the bargaining position within the marriage. With changing bargaining positions, individuals will consume less and save more once the bargaining position within the household is allowed to vary with no commitment. As such the gains from marriage are greater with partial commitment than with no commitment.

The divorce decision depends on the value of marriage relative to the joint value of the outside options. These values depend on the current and predicted marriage market, household characteristics, divorce law, and possibly many other factors. Rather than estimating the model, I assume the state divorce rate is linear with respect to observables. Even without a complete estimation of the model, this model motivates the empirical examination of each divorce reform and provides a framework with which to understand the effects of the divorce reforms.³⁰

To predict the effects of divorce reform, consider the case of two married individuals that in subsequent periods must make a decision to remain married or to obtain a divorce. In addition assume at the time of marriage that divorce is only available under fault grounds. This model

²⁸ I assume that there is transferrable utility among spouses. If one spouse desires a divorce and the other does not, the marriage will remain if there exists a transfer from the spouse desiring to remain married which makes both spouses happier within marriage than single. Thus the joint outside option is the relevant comparison for being single rather than within marriage.

²⁹ The assumption of transferrable utility within marriage and at separation allows for efficient marriage/divorce decisions both with the partial commitment and no commitment models.

³⁰ Second-order effects are and the effect due to Property are ambiguous as a result of not estimating the entire marriage market model.

predicts that divorce reforms including both no-fault grounds and unilateral divorce will increase divorce, while the effect of the change in property dissolution is ambiguous. This is quite a different prediction for unilateral divorce than that of the Coase argument which has been applied in previous studies. As argued by Becker et al (1977), Peters (1986) and undoubtedly others, if bargaining amongst spouses is efficient then the right to petition for divorce is useless and the Coase Theorem predicts no change in divorce when states reform their divorce laws from mutual consent to unilateral.³¹

4.1. Model predictions of *No-Fault*

When individuals obtain a divorce they not only need to pay the nominal court costs, they also incur a social cost.³² In order to petition for divorce under fault grounds at least one individual in the marriage “allegedly” committed the deed worthy of divorce. The traditional fault grounds for divorce included adultery, cruelty, desertion, habitual drug addiction, incarceration, or insanity. Each of these grounds for divorce are thought of as wrong or bad offenses, and divorcees incur a cost from being ‘branded’ or ‘labeled’ with such actions. With no-fault divorce grounds, neither spouse is required to be branded with such allegations and the social cost of divorce decreases.³³ Under no-fault divorce individuals can avoid a fault ground, thus avoiding the social costs associated with it. No-fault divorce requires nothing more than both spouses wanting to be single, which was already a requirement under fault divorce. This does not necessarily remove all social costs associated with divorce, as there may still remain a stigma with divorce. Society may now give probabilities to the potential divorce ground, even though no-fault divorce is cited. However, as the household has full information, they know if the imposed social cost caused by the ambiguity of no-fault divorce exceeds the costs of citing fault or not. If it is efficient to do so, the couple will cite either the no-fault grounds or the fault grounds. Similarly, if it is efficient for one individual to bear the majority of the social burden and cost of divorce themselves (as would likely happen under fault divorce), with full information the couple will create a contract that reflects this efficiency gain when it is time for

³¹ By that same argument, the Coase Theorem would predict no change in divorce as a result of the *Property* reform either. Chiappori et.al. (2007) reexamine the validity of the Coase theorem within this specific application, finding that in general it does not apply to the effects of divorce reform.

³² Weitzman (1985) argues that there is a high level of social cost under fault divorce.

³³ Even with no-fault grounds, fault may be alleged as the reason for divorce but is not necessary.

divorce. An example of this is to obtain a no-fault divorce, but have the one individual claim to be the source of marital problems.

The household decisions are still governed by partial commitment even after the advent of no-fault grounds. The reduction in divorce costs has two effects on the outside option values for each spouse. The first-order effect is an immediate increase in the outside option value for at least one spouse, as now there is no social cost to bear from divorce. With locally non-satiated utility functions, the outside option under no-fault divorce will be strictly larger than the outside option under fault divorce. The increase in at least one individual's outside option increase the likelihood for divorce as it reduces the preexisting surplus to marriage under the old divorce law, and as such this model predicts an increase in divorce due to no-fault divorce laws. A second-order effect changes the outside options by affecting the value of all potential future marriages. Although it is plausible for the divorce reform from fault to no-fault to have no effect on the value of being single, it is possible that the value of being single in that period would differ slightly due to an increase in marital gains associated with the meeting of any future potential spouse.³⁴ Based on the first-order effect no-fault divorce grounds will increase the probability of divorce for any couple as a result of the reduction of divorce costs.

4.2. Model predictions of *Unilateral*

Under mutual consent the household decision is modeled by partial commitment, but the introduction of unilateral divorce removes any commitment as either spouse may now obtain a divorce. In addition to making decisions without commitment, with unilateral divorce the household bargaining power can vary each time period. The marital surplus allowing for an ever changing bargaining power is lower than that under partial commitment. Under no commitment individuals face more risk than under partial commitment. In addition to the normal risk of divorce and wage uncertainty faced by the couple, with no commitment each spouse also faces the possibility of a renegotiation of bargaining power and marital income. As such, risk-averse individuals will choose to save more in the no commitment model than in with partial commitment. This will decrease the gains from marriage for the current marriage as well as all future marriages.

³⁴ This paper does not provide a complete model of the marriage market, and as such is a simplifying assumption that the second-order effect is negligible and left for future research. This is likely to hold true, as each single individual in expectation only has a probabilistic chance of meeting a potential spouse that they would marry.

First consider how the change in marital gains for the current marriage impacts the divorce decision. The differences between the marital surplus of these two models can be seen graphically in Figure 2. The household's no commitment Pareto frontier is dominated by that of the partial commitment model. As the Pareto frontiers that of the no commitment (unilateral divorce) is less than that under partial commitment (mutual consent divorce); divorce is more likely to occur with unilateral divorce. Consider the hypothetical combinations of outside option on the graph, the couple will remain married under partial commitment for all combinations, but under no commitment the combination of M_W^2 and M_H^2 will obtain a divorce.³⁵ As the lack of commitment shifts in the Pareto frontier for the household, the surplus of marriage is reduced holding the outside option constant.

By changing from mutual consent to unilateral divorce, the marital gains for all future marriages also change and have a second-order effect on the outside options. If the gains from future marriages decrease, it is likely that the outside options will decrease.³⁶ As the outside options decrease the probability of divorce falls. Thus, the two effects of changing to unilateral divorce from mutual consent move in opposing directions. Change in future marital gains is only has a probabilistic effect on outside options where as the change in the current marital gains is deterministic. The decrease in outside options will be a second-order effect on the probability of divorce. Thus the change from mutual consent to unilateral divorce will increase the probability of divorce.

4.3. Model predictions of *Property*

The model predictions on the previous two divorce reforms are fairly well defined because of changes in the cost of divorce and in commitment. The reduction in divorce cost attributable to no-fault divorce grounds increases both spouses' outside option values, and leads to an increase in the probability of divorce. With unilateral divorce the household decision process is changes from partial to no commitment, reducing the value within current marriages and also increasing the probability of divorce. Unfortunately, the model does not have a clear prediction on the probability of divorce due to changes in property rights attributed to *Property*.

³⁵ For simplicity this figure expresses the current value reservation values and Pareto frontiers.

³⁶ The outside option depends on the probability of meeting an individual, the probability of meeting an individual that is of marriage quality, and the complete marriage market both under the old and new divorce regimes.

This model is useful to think about such a problem, but without additional assumptions on the outside options and the value of the property transfer to each individual the model offers no clear prediction. The change in property rights will immediately effect the outside options for each individual. An increase in one spouse's outside option is at the expense of the other spouse's outside option resulting from the change in marital property rights. The change in marital property rights does not leave the joint outside option unchanged, as the reallocation of marital property will have differing effects on the utility levels of the spouses. Even with transferrable utility, the joint outside option value will change from *Property*. Without a complete modeling of the outside options and the marriage market, the effects of *Property* are ambiguous.

5. Data

I use state level divorce rates (DR) expressed in per annum thousand populations as the dependent variable in this analysis. I use divorce rates for all 50 states and the District of Columbia for the years of 1940 through 2005. The National Center for Health Statistics and state agencies gather the divorce rate data, which are reported in the Vital Statistics of the United States. The Vital Statistics Division of the Census first collected divorce statistics in 1940. This was quickly shut down due to WWII. In 1944 the collection of these statistics resumed, and in 1946 duties were transferred to the Public Health Service. In 1958 divorce registration areas were established to promote regular, timely, and accurate reporting. Prior to the creation of these areas, divorce rate data is only available from some states.³⁷

I include the available divorce rate data prior to 1958, as I believe the benefit outweighs the cost. Between 1940 and 1958 there are 299 state year combinations with missing divorce rate data, and as such nearly one third of all state year combinations during that time period are missing. The frequency of missing data is much higher between 1940 and 1958 than the rest of the sample. Even after the creation of the divorce registration areas, the panel data remains unbalanced due to reporting inconsistencies though.³⁸ I verified the robustness of the estimates to

³⁷ Due to this reason Wolfers (2006) use 1956 state divorce rates as the first year of data rather than 1958. In 1956 and 1957 there were only 6 and 7 missing observations respectively, prior to which time at least 12 states were missing data in each year. Friedberg (1998) uses 1968 as the first year of data.

³⁸ There are 410 missing state year observations over the entire time frame, with 111 occurring in or after 1958. After 1958 the missing data is concentrated mostly in a few states, with California (15), Indiana (21), Louisiana (40), New Mexico (9) and Oklahoma (5) being the only states with more than 3 years of missing data each.

the inclusion of the 1940-1958 data by performing a similar analysis once those years were omitted.³⁹ By including the available divorce rate data prior to 1958, pre-reform divorce rate observations exist for Delaware (1957), New Hampshire (1957), Oklahoma (1953), Texas (1953), Utah (1943) and Vermont (1941).⁴⁰ I include state effects in my analysis. As such the statistical identification of the divorce reform variables is only possible in states with pre-reform observations.⁴¹ The inclusion of the extended dataset even with a high frequency of missing data is important for the additional identification.

As noted earlier in the divorce classification section, identification of the effects of each divorce law reform is possible only because some states adopted *No-Fault* and *Unilateral* in different years. In order to split the effect of *No-Fault* from *Unilateral*, states in which the fault to no-fault and mutual consent to unilateral divorce reforms occur simultaneously are grouped differently from states in which the reforms occurred separately. Only the joint effect of *No-Fault* and *Unilateral* is identified in states which adopted no-fault divorce grounds at the same time as unilateral divorce, and as such this combined effect is accounted for in the *No-Fault Unilateral (NFU)* variable. States which adopted *No-Fault* and *Unilateral* in different years allow me to identify these effects separately. In these states *No-Fault Only (NFO)* and *Unilateral Only (UO)* are the two divorce reform variables. These variables are constructed from my divorce classification and allow me to attribute the effects, if any, to the specific divorce reform or only to the combination.⁴² *Property* is the last divorce reform variable included in the analysis.

I use state level demographic characteristics as additional controls to capture differences in general demographic divorce propensities, variation in marriage market conditions as well as levels of conservatism. Census state level data include racial composition (Percentage White,

However, missing data is spread more evenly across the years as 1991-1992 and 1994-2005 are the only years with more than 3 states missing data.

³⁹ A complete detailing of the robustness analysis is included in the results section.

⁴⁰ Of the six states in which pre-divorce reform observations could exist after 1940 but before 1958, only Oklahoma (4 of 14 exist) and Texas (10 of 14 exist) are missing any of these pre-reform divorce rate observations. Without pre-reform observations, identification of the divorce reform variables is not possible in these states once a state effect is included. As such, this is evidence that use of the extended sample does add to the identification.

⁴¹ If there were no pre-reform observations, the constant effect of the divorce reform variable and the state effects would be perfectly collinear.

⁴² These variables are constructed for identification purposes. If I instead put *No-Fault* and *Unilateral* classifications in the model, my estimates of *No-Fault* would pick up the average of *No-Fault Only* states and *No-Fault Unilateral States*, while *Unilateral* would pick up the marginal effect of *No-Fault Unilateral* states and *Unilateral Only* states. Because most of the states fall under the *No-Fault Unilateral* category, I would incorrectly be attributing the entire effect to *No-Fault*. This is a not an issue if only the overall effect was of interest, however the marginal contributions of each divorce reform is important and should be examined.

Black, Indian, and Asian), percent living in an urban area, the male to female ratio, percent with a high school education, and age composition (Percent under 18 and over 65). State level unemployment rates and female labor force participation rates are available from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.⁴³ Popular votes by state are available online for each Presidential election. *Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections* (Leip 2008) provides state level popular votes and percent voting democrat. In addition, I measure the percent voting democrat relative to the US average.⁴⁴ Summary statistics are contained in Table 2.

6. Estimation

6.1. Replication of Friedberg

Friedberg uses a panel of state level divorce rates from 1968-1988 to estimate the effects of unilateral divorce reform. Friedberg estimates the following statistical equation.

$$Divorce\ Rate_{s,t} = \beta + \beta_U Unilateral + \beta_s S_s + \beta_t T_t + \beta_s S_s trend + u_{s,t} \quad 2$$

Friedberg's estimates indicate that unilateral increases the divorce rate by 16% using a linear population weighted OLS estimator. The state linear and quadratic trends are included to capture trends in state-level characteristics that influence divorce.⁴⁵

In addition to the broader divorce reform classification that I utilize in this paper, my analysis differs from Friedberg by using data from 1940-2005, the use of additional state level control variables rather than state trends, and that I account for the error structure in the data. The first column of table 3 contains Friedberg's unilateral estimates.⁴⁶ I replicate Friedberg's specification on the extended dataset, with additional controls, and on the extended dataset with additional controls in columns 2, 3, and 4 respectively. All of the unilateral estimates contained

⁴³ I use census estimates when available, from either online or through the Statistical Abstracts to the United States. When no reported estimates were available, I use a linear interpolation.

⁴⁴ I use linear interpolations for both percent voting democrat and restrict it to be between 0 and 1, which is binding for Washington DC extrapolations. The percent voting democrat relative to the US average between each four year presidential election is then based on US total popular and democratic votes. I extrapolate for Alaska and Hawaii even though they were not states at the beginning of my sample. The results are robust to this extrapolation.

⁴⁵ Friedberg also included dichotomous coding break variables to capture changes in state coding practices. My replication indicated that the estimates are robust to the inclusion or exclusion of these additional variables, although the inclusion of these coding break variables does increase the coefficient estimate.

⁴⁶ My replication of Friedberg's specification yielded a unilateral estimate of 0.431 and a standard error of 0.05. This estimate is indistinguishable from Friedberg's reported estimate contained in the top row first column. I use Friedberg's unilateral classification in the table, which is a combination of *Unilateral* and *No-Fault* as I have defined the divorce reform variables.

in table 3 are similar to Friedberg’s estimate. The use of additional data and additional covariates do not change Friedberg’s results.

6.2. Replication of Wolfers

Wolfers (2006) broadens Friedberg’s panel dataset to 1956-1988, adding an additional twelve years of data. Rather than estimating a constant effect of divorce reform, Wolfers allows for a flexible form specification which allows the effects of divorce reform to vary depending on time.⁴⁷ Wolfers preferred specification is as follows.

$$Divorce\ Rate_{s,t} = \sum_{k \geq 1} \beta_k Unilateral\ divorce\ has\ been\ in\ effect\ for\ k\ periods_{s,t} + \beta + \beta_s S_s + \beta_t T_t + \beta_s S_s trend + u_{s,t} \quad 3$$

Wolfers results are quite interesting for two reasons. First, the estimated positive effect of divorce reform is statistically significant but only exists for the first eight years, and second the long-term effect of divorce reform is found to be negative and significant. The long-term effects are fragile however, and the estimates are not robust to changes in the specification.⁴⁸ Similar to Friedberg, Wolfers uses a linear population weighted OLS estimator.

I utilize a broader divorce reform classification in this paper. In addition my analysis differs from Wolfers by using data from 1940-2005, including state level characteristics rather than state trends, and account for the error structure in the data. Wolfers’s unilateral estimates allow for a flexible divorce reform effect and are included in the first column of table 4.⁴⁹ I estimate Wolfers’s specification with the longer dataset, with additional controls, and on the longer dataset with additional controls in columns 2, 3, and 4 respectively. With the flexible specification the immediate effects are robust to the longer sample and additional covariates, having increased the divorce rate for at least the first eight years after adoption. However, inclusion of additional covariates or extending the sample attenuates the long-term estimates.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Wolfers replicates Friedberg’s constant effect divorce reform estimates. The extended dataset from 1940-2005 and Wolfers extension do not affect Friedberg’s estimates. The replication of Friedberg in the previous section closely replicates the constant divorce reform effects reported by Wolfers.

⁴⁸ The inclusion of state trends changed the long-term estimates greatly. I do a sensitivity analysis with regards to state trends later, finding that linear and quadratic trends do not affect my estimates.

⁴⁹ An exact replication of Wolfers’s results is possible as a result of Justin’s generosity in sharing his code and data. I use Wolfers’s unilateral classification in table 4, which is the combination of *Unilateral*, *No-Fault*, and *Property* as I have defined the divorce reform variables.

⁵⁰ Accounting for robust standard errors in the initial specification also yields estimates that are not statistically significant.

Wolfers finds that his estimates are robust to ten additional years of data from 1988-1998, yet I find that the estimates are not robust to including more data prior to 1956.⁵¹ Using the above specification I find positive ‘unilateral’ estimates for all 2 year intervals and a statistically significant long term effect once the extended sample and additional covariates are included.⁵²

6.3. Empirical Methodology

The statistical equation utilizes the panel structure of the data and estimates the overall effect of each divorce reform variable on the state level divorce rate (DR) using a random effects GLS estimator. Since identification of the two general divorce reforms comes from states adopting *No-Fault* and *Unilateral* separately, I include the three possible general divorce reforms *No-Fault Unilateral (NFU)*, *No-Fault Only (NFO)* and *Unilateral Only (UO)* to disentangle the effects of these reforms. *Property (P)* is included and represents the effect of not allowing fault to be considered in separation of property in addition to the effect of no-fault grounds and unilateral divorce. State level control variables, X , are included to capture differences attributable to changes in state demographics, marriage market conditions, the economy, and conservatism over time. Along with the divorce reform variables and state specific time varying controls, time (t) fixed effects T and state (s) random effects.

$$DR_{s,t} = \beta_{NFU} NFU + \beta_{NFO} NFO + \beta_{UO} UO + \beta_P P + \beta_X X_{s,t} + \beta_T T_t + e_{s,t} \quad 4$$

I test for autocorrelation using a Cochrane-Orcutt Test on the OLS residuals from the above specification. The data violates the assumption that the error term in equation 4 is independent and identically distributed across states and time. The estimate for first order autocorrelation is equal to 0.89, implying existence of serial correlation.⁵³ I also test and find no evidence of higher levels of autocorrelation. Using the test procedure described by Burke, Godfrey, and Tremayne (1990) I fail to reject the null hypothesis of an AR(1) process compared to the alternative of a MA(1) process. In addition to allowing for autocorrelation, I model the

⁵¹ The additional years not only provide more data with which to fit state trends and controls, adding more years of data allows more states to add information toward the identification of the divorce reform variables. This point is elaborated more in the robustness analysis subsection.

⁵² I find the long-term estimates are highly sensitive using Wolfer’s specification, consistent with Wolfers robustness checks. This is a concern to the long-term implications of those estimates. Once I account for the error structure and a richer divorce reform classification I find the estimates are not sensitive to these issues, and instead are very robust to the sample period, covariates, and even state trends.

⁵³ There was no evidence of cointegration across states using the Kao (1999) Dickey-Fuller test. The standard error on the autocorrelation term is equal to 0.02.

error term to include a random state effect. I avoid the bias found by Nickell (1981) associated with the use of fixed effects and an AR(1) processes by using random effects.⁵⁴ Thus the error term for the GLS estimator has the following structure, where θ is a state random error component assumed to be independent of other error components and ε is i.i.d. across states and time.

$$e_{s,t} = \theta_s + \rho e_{s,t-1} + \varepsilon_{s,t} \quad 5$$

Failing to account for autocorrelation usually yields smaller than appropriate standard errors, often resulting in statistically significant results even when they may not exist.⁵⁵ The autocorrelation in the error term not only has important statistical features, but also has an economic interpretation. Once all observables have been accounted for, an idiosyncratic shock affecting the divorce rate may not only have effects in that year but also persist in future years. This persistence can be thought of as an informational time delay due associated with a shift in the social norm, often slow to take place and takes time.

Divorce reform may not have a constant effect over time, as divorce reform will affect already married couples differently than those which marry after the reform. To allow for any generic shaped effect of the divorce reform variables, I separate the divorce reform variables (*NFU*, *NFO*, *UO*, and *P*) into 2-year increments. This combines the effects of each divorce reform over the first and second years into one estimate, the third and fourth years into another and so forth until 15 years or more.⁵⁶ Divorce reforms affect the immediate utility from marriage as well as the outside options. Divorce reform estimates for the first two-year interval is the effect of divorce reform on the stock of married individuals. The stock of married individuals prior to divorce reform was the group of interest in the model predictions. Interpretation of longer time period estimates must take into account changes in the marriage process as well.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ The Breusch and Pagan (1979) LM test and Hausman specification tests reject the use of fixed effects compared to random effects in the basic specification without an AR(1) error component at 0.000 level. The Hausman specification test fails to reject that the covariance structure is similar with state random effects or state fixed effects with an AR(1) component.

⁵⁵ Autocorrelation is often an indication of omitted variables. I test for this by including state specific trends. Even with state specific trends, autocorrelation exists. Even though Friedberg and Wolfers argue for state trends to capture omitted variables, the presence of autocorrelation persists even with their inclusion.

⁵⁶ I ran specifications allowing for different year groupings of the divorce reform variables, including one, two, three, and four year groups as well as different number of periods. The results were robust to these model specifications and as such the model specification was chosen to be consistent with the existing literature.

⁵⁷ This paper does not estimate a complete marriage market and that task remains as future research.

The same error structure is used in the flexible specification as described for the constant effect equation.

$$DR_{s,t} = \sum_{i=1}^7 \beta_{NFU,i} NFU_{i,s,t} + \sum_{i=1}^7 \beta_{NFO,i} NFO_{i,s,t} + \sum_{i=1}^7 \beta_{UO,i} UO_{i,s,t} + \sum_{i=1}^7 \beta_{P,i} P_{i,s,t} + \beta_x X_{s,t} + \beta_t T_t + e_{s,t} \quad 6$$

7. Results

Divorce reform estimates from equations 4 and 6 are contained in table 5. The constant effect estimates using equation 4 are in the top row of table 5, while the flexible form estimates from equation 6 are below. The constant reform estimates, contrary to common belief and previously reported results, indicate that divorce reform has no statistically significant effect on state level divorce rates. These estimates are consistent with the predictions of the model and have the expected sign even though they are not statistically significant. *No-Fault Unilateral* increased the divorce rate by 0.48 in states which adopted no-fault grounds and unilateral divorce at the same time. This estimate represents about a 15% increase in the divorce rate, which is nearly identical to Friedberg's point estimate but without the statistical significance. *No-Fault Only* and *Unilateral Only* estimates are positive in states which adopted these divorce reforms separately, but these estimates are not statistically significant. The constant effect of *Property*, which is in addition to the effect of *No-Fault* and most often in addition to *Unilateral* as well is negative but not statistically significant. The total divorce reform estimated effect for a state which changed to *No-fault Unilateral Property* from mutual consent fault based divorce is 0.149 (a 3.4% increase), but is not statistically significant.

The magnitudes and sign of *No-Fault* and *Unilateral* constant effect estimates are consistent with previous findings but there is no evidence that any of these constant effects are statistically significant. In addition, even though the estimates are not statistically significant, using the broader divorce reform classification indicates that the marginal impact of *Property* is likely negative. This is completely contrary to estimates from studies examining the impact of divorce reform as defined by no-fault property settlement.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Studies examining only the effects of no-fault unilateral property have positive estimates or lack statistical significance. Wolfers is the only paper which finds a negative effect. These studies cannot avoid omitted variable bias without using the broader divorce reform classification estimates.

The flexible form divorce reform estimates from statistical equation 6 are contained in the second row of table 5. Using the flexible specification I find similar findings to the constant effects as most two-year interval estimates are the same sign as the constant effect estimates but not statistically significant. The majority of *No-Fault Only*, *Unilateral Only* and *No-Fault Unilateral* estimates are positive and not statistically significant. There are no immediate effects of *No-Fault* or *Unilateral* on the divorce rate, evidenced by both the small point estimates and lack of statistical significance in the first two-year interval point estimates. Similarly, there is no immediate effect of *Property* on the divorce rate.

Contrary to the immediate effects and the first two-year interval estimates, the last two-year interval divorce reforms estimates are large and statistically significant. These statistically significant estimates indicate that divorce reform has impacted the marriage market and not only the stock of married people at the time of reform, changing the frequency of divorce in the long-term. The *No-Fault Unilateral* point estimate indicates a 75% increase in the divorce rate after 15 years as a result of the simultaneous adoption of no-fault and unilateral divorce.⁵⁹ *No-Fault Only* and *Unilateral Only* estimates for states which adopted no-fault and unilateral divorce in different years are similar to the combined *No-Fault Unilateral* estimates for states which adopted the two divorce reforms simultaneously.⁶⁰ The long-term estimates for no-fault and unilateral divorce reform are large in magnitude even though the estimates are not statistically significant. The additional effect of *Property* is negative and statistically significant. Compared to no-fault unilateral divorce, a state which later adopts no-fault property settlement would experience nearly a 50% decrease in the divorce rate after 15 years.⁶¹ Compared to fault divorce, the effect of changing to no-fault unilateral divorce with no-fault property settlement after 15 years is the combination of *No-Fault Unilateral* and *Property*. The combined estimate is 1.464 with a standard error of 0.844, a statistically significant increase of 34% in the divorce rate.⁶² From this specification I am unable to distinguish whether no-fault divorce grounds or unilateral divorce is driving the overall increase. The estimates are imprecisely measured, and it is

⁵⁹ The point estimate is evaluated at the mean of the data for predictive power.

⁶⁰ I fail to reject that each two year interval combinations of *No-Fault Only* and *Unilateral Only* is equal to *No-Fault Unilateral* using a joint Wald. The test statistic with a $\chi^2_{(8)}$ is 0.50.

⁶¹ Only South Dakota allows for no-fault property settlement without unilateral divorce. All other states which allow for no-fault property settlement also have unilateral divorce.

⁶² The combined effect of *No-Fault Unilateral* and *Property* for 15+ years is statistically significant at the 10% level.

impossible to gain any useful information about the relative importance of the two general divorce reforms in states which adopted them separately.⁶³

Each divorce reform has a long-term effect on the divorce rate, even though there is no constant effect or immediate effects.⁶⁴ It is likely that the divorce reforms not only affected the long-term divorce rate but also the marriage rate and stability within new marriages. Rasul (2006) discusses how divorce reform may affect not only the married stock but also the newly married couples and have differing effects in the short run versus the long run. I do not address estimation of a long-term marriage market nor use this model to predict such outcomes.

7.1. Specific divorce reform

I find no evidence of a constant effect of either the *No-fault* or the *Unilateral* divorce reform. Nonetheless, I check if there are any constant effects of the specific no-fault divorce reforms.⁶⁵ This analysis will serve two purposes. First, past literature has differed on the definition of ‘no-fault’ and as a result found conflicting evidence to the effects of ‘no-fault’ on the probability of divorce. Peters (1986) and Allen (1992) differ in their classification of their ‘no-fault’ divorce reform variable. Allen argued that separation period is another form of no-fault divorce, and should be included in the definition of one single dichotomous variable. This is the first study to test whether the types of no-fault divorce differ, specifically whether *Separation Period* differs from *Irreconcilable Differences*. Second, examining *Separation Period* and *Irreconcilable Differences* separately will ensure that the general divorce reform estimates are not subject to misspecification and omitted variable bias.

In order to differentiate the specific no-fault divorce reform effects from the interaction of the specific no-fault reform and unilateral I create variables similar to that for the general divorce reform. Thus, I create a variable to capture the effects of changing to that specific no-fault ground separate from *Unilateral*, the effect of *Unilateral* in addition to the specific no-fault ground, and the joint effect of the specific no-fault divorce ground and *Unilateral*. When the

⁶³ I fail to reject the joint null hypothesis of all *Unilateral* estimates being zero across all time periods, which is consistent with a 100% relative importance on the *No-Fault* divorce reform. Similarly, I fail to reject a joint Wald test of all *No-Fault* variables across all time periods indicating a 100% relative importance due to *Unilateral* divorce reform is consistent.

⁶⁴ In the robustness analysis I found statistically significant long-term estimates for *No-Fault Only* and *Unilateral Only* in addition to *No-Fault Unilateral* and *Property*.

⁶⁵ Ideally, I would be able to test the flexible form specification for the specific no-fault divorce grounds. However, due to extremely small sample sizes for *Irreconcilable Differences*, *Separation Period*, and the combination this is not possible using state level data.

specific no-fault grounds are used *No-Fault Only* is decomposed into *Irreconcilable Differences Only*, *Separation Period Only*, and *Irreconcilable Differences / Separation Period*. *Unilateral Only* is separated into the effects in addition to each specific no-fault ground.⁶⁶ Similarly *No-Fault Unilateral* is divided into *Irreconcilable Differences Unilateral*, *Separation Period Unilateral*, and *Irreconcilable Differences / Separation Period Unilateral*.

Specific no-fault divorce reform estimates can be found in Table 6, where I used the specification of equation 4 with the general no-fault variables being replaced with the specific no-fault divorce variables. None of these specific no-fault grounds estimates are statistically significant.⁶⁷ There is no evidence that the different forms of no-fault divorce have different effects on divorce rates. Peter's 'no-fault' variable is most similar to the *Irreconcilable Differences Unilateral* variable in this study, where as Allen's argues for the inclusion of *Separation Period Unilateral* into one dichotomous 'no-fault' variable. The estimates in table 6 support Peters' positive estimates which are not statistically significant but contradict Allen's estimates which were larger and statistically significant compared to Peters.⁶⁸

7.2. Robustness Analysis

Replicating Friedberg and Wolfers highlights the concern for estimate robustness.⁶⁹ All of the statistically significant constant effect estimates of earlier studies disappear once a general divorce classification and the error structure of the data are accounted for. The robustness of these estimates which lack statistical significance and of the statistically significant long-term estimates remains in question. In order to check that my estimates reported in table 5 are robust, I vary the specification to include state year trends, to omit the additional control variables, and the years in the sample.

⁶⁶ There are no states that adopted *Unilateral* divorce in addition to both *Separation Period* and *Irreconcilable Differences* grounds.

⁶⁷ I conducted a robustness analysis on the specific no-fault grounds to ensure that this result was not only attributable to the specification choice. None of the specific divorce reform estimates were significant from specifications that included; state trends but no control variables, state trends and control variables, or neither state trends nor control variables.

⁶⁸ Friedberg finds that *Unilateral* defined as *Separation Period* no-fault grounds has a smaller effect than *Unilateral* defined by other no-fault grounds. Friedberg finds that both of these classifications are positive and statistically significant using a population weight OLS estimator. I did not further explore Allen's results, as the major difference between this study and Peters/Allen is the data. Peters/Allen use individual CPS data while I use state divorce rates.

⁶⁹ I find Wolfers' estimates highly sensitive to the sample period as well as the inclusion of additional covariates. Wolfers admits the sensitivity of his own estimates as well as Friedberg's.

Table 7 contains constant effect estimates for the general divorce reform variables once I allow for different state level trends with and without additional control variables. I allow for a state specific linear trend, quadratic trend, and cubic trends. Each column has different levels of state trends included. To ensure that the estimates are not only robust to the inclusion of additional state control variables, they are omitted and estimates are included in the second row of the table while still allowing for the different levels of state specific trends.⁷⁰ None of the constant effect estimates are statistically significant.⁷¹ Past studies have found a positive and statistically significant effect from a variety of dichotomous divorce reform variables. I do not find any evidence of divorce reform having a constant effect on divorce rates; furthermore these estimates are not sensitive to the inclusion of state controls or trends.

Varying the years of data used in the analysis changes the source of identification for the divorce reform variables. To illustrate this, consider the general divorce specification in equation 4 and the impact of New Mexico's change to *No-Fault Unilateral* divorce in 1933. A state effect is perfectly collinear with the divorce reform variables over the entire sample, and as such both are not identified within New Mexico alone. Consider Vermont, which changed to *No-Fault Unilateral* divorce in 1941. Because there is one pre-divorce reform observation, the state effect and the divorce reform effect are statistically identifiable, but the state effect is based on only one observation. In addition, the marginal contribution of Vermont to the divorce reform effect is based on this one observation. These two states illustrate the problems of not using all the available data, in that pre-divorce reform observations are needed in order for that state to contribute to the divorce reform estimates and the more pre-reform observations available the better the average for the state prior to divorce reform.⁷² If I ignore a decade's worth of information and only include data from 1950-2005, Utah and Vermont will not contribute any to

⁷⁰ Year fixed effects and state random effects were included in all specification allowing for an AR(1) process error term. All 2,956 observations were used from all years, 1940-2005.

⁷¹ I also test the robustness of the flexible divorce reform estimates, allowing for the varying state trends with and without additional controls similar to table 7. Similar estimates exist with and without additional controls and also allowing for state linear trends. The two-year interval point estimates for *Property* are positive and statistically significant from 3 years until 10 years after the reform if quadratic or cubic year trends are included, and the long-term effects are attenuated for *Property*.

⁷² This argument is valid once the effects due to the other controls have been eliminated, thus state effect is the average of the unexplained portion remaining for the state.

the identification of the divorce reform variables and other states will have fewer pre-reform observations.⁷³

To check the robustness of the results in table 5, I marginally reduced the sample by incrementally eliminating a decade's worth of data. Table 8 contains the flexible divorce reform estimates⁷⁴ once the sample has been reduced to the years 1960-1985.⁷⁵ More of the flexible form estimates from the smaller sample are statistically significant. In addition to *No-Fault Unilateral* and *Property*, *No-Fault Only* and *No-Fault Unilateral* each have statistically significant long-term estimates. These estimates are statistically significant after 7 years. The additional estimated effects of *Property* are negative and statistically significant for each two year period seven years after divorce. None of the divorce reform estimates are statistically significant in the first years after the reform, reaffirming that the effects of the divorce reform are not immediately felt on the stock of already married individuals. Rather divorce reform affects the marriage market and long-term divorce propensity. Estimates from the smaller sample indicate that the additional effects of *Property* completely negate the increase in divorce associated with *No-Fault Unilateral*. The estimates from the short sample reaffirm the findings in table 5, but the magnitudes of the long-term effects depend on the years of data used in the analysis.⁷⁶

8. Conclusion

I use a broader classification of divorce law reform based on statutory divorce law changes. Examining divorce liberalization effects without first addressing the complexity of the divorce laws reform yields problems with the estimates. This misclassification of divorce reform led to a variety of contradicting results in past literature. Without controlling for a complete

⁷³ Utah and Vermont are the only two states that changed their divorce laws between 1940 and 1950.

⁷⁴ I also tested the robustness for different years of data for the constant effect specification. None of the estimates without state trends or with linear trends were statistically significant for sub samples including only the years 1950-1995 or 1960-1985. Property was statistically significant and positive with quadratic and cubic trends for the smaller samples. While state trends may capture changes in unobserved state characteristics, the interpretation and predictive value of such trends is weak. Thus I do not put any credence in these results with quadratic or cubic trends.

⁷⁵ Although the estimates did not vary much, the results were most sensitive to the removal of the first twenty years of data irregardless of the ending point. 1960-1985 was arbitrarily chosen, as the estimates from this sample closely resembled those from the 1960-1995 and 1960-2005 samples.

⁷⁶ There is no reason to believe that states which adopted No-Fault, Unilateral, or Property in later years would experience a different effect from those states which reformed their divorce laws earlier. As such there is no reason to omit information from the analysis and use the smaller sample.

divorce reform classification the estimates are biased and interpretation of these estimates must be modified. In particular, ‘unilateral’ estimates which do not control for *Property* and *No-Fault* will incorrectly attribute the additional affect of no-fault property settlement to unilateral divorce. In addition, the ‘unilateral’ estimates are compared to any divorce ground.⁷⁷ Due to the high correlation of *No-Fault* and *Unilateral*, the *Unilateral* estimate will be bias upwards due to additional uncontrolled *No-Fault* effect.

Unlike earlier studies which categorized and grouped divorce reform into only one variable of interest, I model and estimate the effects of no-fault grounds, unilateral divorce, and unilateral no-fault property division. My analysis suggests that these divorce law liberalizations have no immediate effect on the divorce rate but have long-term effects. My constant effect estimates contradict earlier studies using the same data which found a statistically significant increase in the divorce rate as a result of divorce reform. I replicate those studies and find that not only did they suffer from a complete divorce reform classification, they also failed to use of an appropriate estimator which takes into consideration the autocorrelation in the error term structure.

My flexible form estimates build on Wolfers (2006) results. I find there is evidence that divorce reform affects the long-term divorce rate, but find no evidence of an immediate impact. Estimates reveal there is a long-term increase in divorces even when unilateral no-fault property settlement is considered. The flexible divorce reform estimates reveal the long-term implications for different combinations of divorce reform. Even though the short-term and immediate effect estimates are not statistically significant, the model provides insight into how rational individuals are affected by divorce reform.

⁷⁷ When ‘unilateral’ divorce reform is thought of the status quo comparison is almost implicitly or explicitly fault based divorce. As this paper has shown, that is not accurate without accounting for each divorce reform.

9. References

- Allen, Douglas (1992), "Marriage and Divorce: Comment", *American Economic Review* 82, no. 3: 679-685.
- Americans for Divorce Reform (2008), "Americans for Divorce Reform, Inc" *online* www.divorcereform.org, accessed October 2008.
- Becker, Gary S, Elisabeth M. Landes and Robert T. Michael (1977), "An Economic Analysis of Marital Instability", *Journal of Political Economy* 85, no. 6: 1141-88.
- Burke, S. P., Godfrey, L. G., and A.R. Tremayne (1990), "Testing AR(1) against MA(1) disturbances in the linear regression models: an alternative procedure", *Review of Economic Studies* 57, no. 1: 135-145.
- Breusch, Trevor and Adrian Pagan (1979), "A simple test of heteroskedasticity and random coefficient variation", *Econometrica* 47, no. 5: 1287-1294.
- Brinig, Margaret F. and F.H. Buckley (1998), "No-Fault Laws and At-Fault People", *International Journal of Law and Economics* 18, 325-340.
- Chiappori, Pierre-Andre, Iyigun, Murat and Yoram Weiss (2007) "Public Goods, Transferable Utility and Divorce Laws," Working Paper, IZA discussion paper 2646.
- Ellman, Ira Mark and Sharon L. Lohr (1998), "Dissolving the Relationship between Divorce Laws and Divorce Rates", *International Review of Law and Economics* 18, no. 3: 341-59.
- Fella, Giulio, Mariotti, Marco and Paola Manzini (2004), "Does Divorce Law Matter?," *Journal of the European Economic Association* 2, no.4: 607-633.
- Friedberg, Laura (1998), "Did Unilateral Divorce Raise Divorce Rates: Evidence From Panel Data", *American Economic Review* 88, no. 3: 608-627.
- General Social Survey, online, <http://www.norc.org/GSS+Website/>, accessed October 2008.
- Gray, Jeffrey S. (1998), "Divorce-Law Changes, Household Bargaining, and Married Women's Labor Supply", *American Economic Review* 88, no. 3: 628-42.
- Gruber, Jonathan (2004), "Is making divorce easier bad for children? The long-run implications of unilateral divorce", *Journal of Labor Economics* 22, no 4: 799-833.
- Kao, Chihwa (1999), "Spurious regression and residual-based tests for cointegration in panel data", *Journal of Econometrics* 28: 193-203.
- Kidd, Michael P. (1995), "The impact of legislation on divorce: a hazard function approach." *Applied Economics* 27: 125-30.

- Leip, David, (2008) “*Dave Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections*,” www.uselectionatlas.org, accessed October 2008.
- Lundberg, Shelly and Robert Pollak (1993), “Separate spheres bargaining and the marriage market”, *Journal of Political Economy* 101, no. 6: 988-1011.
- Lyman, Rick (2005), “Trying to Strengthen an 'I Do' With a More Binding Legal Tie” *NY Times: Late Edition*, February 15, 2005, Section A, Page 1, Column 5.
- Mazzocco, Maurizio (2007), “Household Intertemporal Behavior: a Collective Characterization and a Test of Commitment,” *Review of Economic Studies* 74, no. 3: 857-895.
- Mazzocco, Maurizio, Claudia Ruiz and Shintaro Yamaguchi (2007), “Labor Supply, Saving, and Marital Decisions” University of California LA Working Paper.
- Nevada, Nevada Revised Statutes, Legislative Counsel Bureau, vol. 7 2001.
- Nickell, Stephen (1981), “Biases in dynamic models with fixed effects.,” *Econometrica* 49, no. 6: 1417-1426.
- Peters, Elizabeth (1986), “Marriage and Divorce: Informational Constraints and Private Contracting.” *American Economic Review* 76, no. 3: 437-54.
- Peters, Elizabeth (1992), “Marriage and Divorce: Reply,” *American Economic Review* 82, no. 3: 686-93.
- President Bush (2002), “President Announces Welfare Reform Agenda” *online* www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/02/20020226-11.html, accessed October 2008.
- President Bush (2003), “Marriage Protection Week, 2003” *online* www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/10/20031003-12.html, accessed October 2008.
- President Bush (2005), “Record of Achievement - Protecting Children, Strengthening Families”, *online* www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/achievement/chap14.html, accessed August 2005.
- Rasul, Imran (2006), “Marriage Markets and Divorce Laws”, *Journal of Law, Economics and Organization*, 22: 30-69.
- Sepler, Harvey J. (1981), “Measuring the Effects of No-fault Divorce Laws Across Fifty States: Quantifying a Zeitgeist”, *Family Law Quarterly* 15: 65-102.
- Texas, Texas Statutes Family Codes, Vernon’s, 2005.
- Wardle, Lynn D. (1991), “No-Fault Divorce and the Divorce Conundrum.” *BYU Law Review* 79: 79-142.

Weitzman (1985) "The divorce revolution : the unexpected social and economic consequences for women and children in America," New York : Free Press ; London : Collier Macmillan.

Wolfers, Justin (2006), "Did Unilateral Divorce Laws Raise Divorce Rates? A Reconciliation and New Results", *American Economic Review* 96, no. 5: 1802-1820.

10. Appendix

The following list includes the divorce reform classification for each state as well as the District of Columbia. The source contains a year and chapter number, house bill number, or other alternative equivalent. The approval date and effective date are listed for the source bill, as these were the basis and often source of differences in coding. If there are multiple changes with different references, the sources, approval dates, and effective dates are in the order of *Irreconcilable Differences* and then *Separation Period*. For space purposes including *Unilateral* indicates the interaction with the previously mentioned no-fault variable. The second column contains the classifications found in Ellman and Lohr (1998), Friedberg 1998), Gruber (2004), Peters (1986), Rasul (2006), and Wolfers (2006).

Alabama

Source:	1971 No.2272	<i>Property:</i>	1963
Approval Date:	10/1/1971	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	10/1/1971	Ellman and Lohr:	1971
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1972	Friedberg:	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1971
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1972	Rasul	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Wolfers	1971

Alaska

Source:	1962 No.101	<i>Property:</i>	1963
Approval Date:	4/12/1962	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	1/1/1963	Ellman and Lohr:	1974
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1963	Friedberg:	pre-1968
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1963	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1935
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1963	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1935
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1963	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1968
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1935

Arizona

Source:	1973 No.132	<i>Property:</i>	1974
Approval Date:	5/145/1973	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	8/8/1973	Ellman and Lohr:	1973
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1974	Friedberg:	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1974	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1931
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1974	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1974	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1973

Arkansas

Source:	1937 No.167	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	5/1/1937	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	5/1/1937	Ellman and Lohr:	1979
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1937	Friedberg:	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1937	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1937
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	none	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1937	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1937	Wolfers	none

California

Source:	1969 No.1608	<i>Property:</i>	1970
Approval Date:	9/4/1969	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	1/1/1970	Ellman and Lohr:	1969
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1970	Friedberg:	1970
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1970	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1970
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1970	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1970
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1970	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1970
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1970

Colorado

Source:	1971 No.130	<i>Property:</i>	1972
Approval Date:	6/2/1971	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	1/1/1972	Ellman and Lohr:	1971
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1972	Friedberg:	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1972
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1971

Connecticut

Source:	1973 No.73-373	<i>Property:</i>	1973
Approval Date:	5/29/1973	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1973	Ellman and Lohr:	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973	Friedberg:	1973
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1973	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1973	Peters:	pre-1978
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973	Rasul	1973
		Wolfers	1973

Delaware

Source:	1974 No.350; 1952 No.27	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	6/4/1974, 4/3/1957	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	7/3/1974; unknown	Ellman and Lohr:	1974
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1957	Friedberg:	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1957
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1975	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1968
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1957	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	none

District of Columbia

Source:	1965 No.89-217	<i>Property:</i>	none
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1966	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Ellman and Lohr:	none
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	none	Friedberg:	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1966
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1966	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
		Rasul	none
		Wolfers	none

Florida

Source:	1971 No.71	<i>Property:</i>	1972
Approval Date:	6/22/1971	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	7/1/1971	Ellman and Lohr:	1971
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1972	Friedberg:	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1971
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1971

Georgia

Source:	1973 No.276	<i>Property:</i>	1973
Approval Date:	4/13/1973	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1973	Ellman and Lohr:	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973	Friedberg:	1973
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1973	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Peters:	pre-1978
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Rasul	1973
		Wolfers	1973

Hawaii

Source:	1973 No.211; 1965 No.52	<i>Property:</i>	1974
Approval Date:	5/31/1973; 5/8/1965	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	7/1/1973; 5/8/1965	Ellman and Lohr:	1932
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1965	Friedberg:	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1974	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1965
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1974	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1974	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1965	Rasul	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1973

Idaho

Source:	1971 No.20	<i>Property:</i>	1971
Approval Date:	2/13/1971	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1971	Ellman and Lohr:	1931
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1971	Friedberg:	1971
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1971	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1945
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1971	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1971
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Peters:	pre-1978
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Rasul	1971
		Wolfers	1971

Illinois

Source:	1983 No.83-954	<i>Property:</i>	none
Effective Date:	7/1/1984	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1984	Ellman and Lohr:	1983
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1984	Friedberg:	1984
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	none	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1984
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1984	Peters:	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1984	Rasul	none
		Wolfers	none

Indiana

Source:	1973 No.297	<i>Property:</i>	1974
Approval Date:	9/1/1973	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1974	Ellman and Lohr:	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1974	Friedberg:	1973
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1974	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1974	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Peters:	pre-1978
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Rasul	1973
		Wolfers	1973

Iowa

Source:	1970 No.1266	<i>Property:</i>	1971
Approval Date:	3/20/1970	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	7/1/1970	Ellman and Lohr:	1970
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1971	Friedberg:	1970
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1971	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1970
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1971	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1970
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1971	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1970
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1970

Kansas

Source:	1969 No.286	<i>Property:</i>	1970
Approval Date:	4/18/1969	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	7/1/1969	Ellman and Lohr:	1969
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1970	Friedberg:	1969
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1970	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1969
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1970	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1969
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1970	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1969
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1969

Kentucky

Source:	1972 No.182	<i>Property:</i>	1972
Approval Date:	3/25/1972	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	6/16/1972	Ellman and Lohr:	1972
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1972	Friedberg:	1972
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1962
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1972
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1972

Louisiana

Source:	1960 No.31	<i>Property:</i>	none
Effective Date:	1/1/1961	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1961	Ellman and Lohr:	1965
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1961	Friedberg:	pre-1968
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	none	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1916
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1961	Peters:	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1961	Rasul	none
		Wolfers	none

Maine

Source:	1973 No.532	<i>Property:</i>	1974
Approval Date:	10/3/1973	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	10/3/1973	Ellman and Lohr:	1973
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1974	Friedberg:	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1974	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1973
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1974	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1974	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1973

Maryland

Source:	1937 No.396	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	4/26/1937	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	6/1/1937	Ellman and Lohr:	1937
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1937	Friedberg:	pre-1968
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1937	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1969
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	none	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1937	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1937	Wolfers	none

Massachusetts

Source:	1975 No.698	<i>Property:</i>	1976
Approval Date:	11/19/1975	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	11/19/1975	Ellman and Lohr:	1975
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1976	Friedberg:	1975
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1976	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1975
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1976	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1975
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1976	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1975
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1975

Michigan

Source:	1971 No.75	<i>Property:</i>	1972
Approval Date:	7/29/1971	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	1/1/1972	Ellman and Lohr:	1971
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1972	Friedberg:	1972
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1972
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1972
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1972

Minnesota ^φ

Source:	1974 No.107; 1935 No.295	<i>Property:</i>	1974
Approval Date:	3/14/1974; 4/25/1935	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	3/30/1974; unknown	Ellman and Lohr:	1974
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1935	Friedberg:	1974
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1935	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1933
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1974	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1974
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1974	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1935	Rasul	1974
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1935	Wolfers	1974

^φ *Irreconcilable Differences* replaced *Separation Period* grounds for divorce.

Mississippi

Source:	1976 No.451	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	5/20/1976	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	7/1/1976	Ellman and Lohr:	1976
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1977	Friedberg:	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1978
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1977	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	none

Missouri

Source:	1973 No.315	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	8/6/1973	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	1/1/1974	Ellman and Lohr:	1973
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1974	Friedberg:	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1974	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1974
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1974	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1974	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	none

Montana

Source:	1975 No.536	<i>Property:</i>	1976
Approval Date:	5/6/1975	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	1/1/1976	Ellman and Lohr:	1975
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1976	Friedberg:	1975
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1976	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1973
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1976	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1976	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1976	Rasul	1975
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1976	Wolfers	1975

Nebraska

Source:	1972 No.820	<i>Property:</i>	1972
Approval Date:	4/8/1972	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1972	Ellman and Lohr:	1972
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Friedberg:	1972
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1972
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Peters:	pre-1978
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Rasul	1972
		Wolfers	1972

Nevada

Source:	1967 No.278; 1931 No.111	<i>Property:</i>	1967
Approval Date:	4/15/1967; 3/23/1931	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	Unknown; 3/23/1931	Ellman and Lohr:	1931
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1931	Friedberg:	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1931	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1931
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1967	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1967
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1967	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1931	Rasul	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1931	Wolfers	1973

New Hampshire

Source:	1971 No.445; 1957 No.67	<i>Property:</i>	1972
Approval Date:	6/30/1971; unknown	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	8/29/1971; unknown	Ellman and Lohr:	1971
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1957	Friedberg:	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1957	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1971
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1957	Rasul	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1957	Wolfers	1971

New Jersey

Source:	1971 No.212	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	6/14/1971	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	9/13/1971	Ellman and Lohr:	1971
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1972	Friedberg:	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1971
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	none

New Mexico

Source:	1933 No.54	<i>Property:</i>	1933
Approval Date:	3/3/1933	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1933	Ellman and Lohr:	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1933	Friedberg:	1973
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1933	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1933
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1933	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1933
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Peters:	pre-1978
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Rasul	1973
		Wolfers	1973

New York

Source:	1966 No.254	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	4/27/1966	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	9/1/1967	Ellman and Lohr:	1966
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1968	Friedberg:	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1967
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	none	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1968	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	none

North Carolina

Source:	1931 No.72	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	4/4/1931	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	4/4/1931	Ellman and Lohr:	1931
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1931	Friedberg:	pre-1968
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1931	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1910
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	none	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1931	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1931	Wolfers	none

North Dakota

Source:	1971 No.149	<i>Property:</i>	1971
Approval Date:	4/8/1971	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1971	Ellman and Lohr:	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1971	Friedberg:	1971
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1971	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1971	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1971
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Peters:	pre-1978
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Rasul	1971
		Wolfers	1971

Ohio

Source:	1989 No.129; 1974 No.233	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	5/26/1989; 6/24/1974	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	8/25/1989; 9/23/1974	Ellman and Lohr:	1974
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1975	Friedberg:	1974
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1975	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1974
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1990	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1975	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1975	Wolfers	none

Oklahoma

Source:	1953 No.22	<i>Property:</i>	1953
Approval Date:	5/25/1953	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	6/6/1953	Ellman and Lohr:	1953
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1953	Friedberg:	pre-1968
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1953	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1953
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1953	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1953
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1953	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1968
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1953

Oregon

Source:	1971 No.280	<i>Property:</i>	1972
Approval Date:	7/4/1971	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	10/11/1971	Ellman and Lohr:	1971
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1972	Friedberg:	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1971
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1972	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1971
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1972	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1973

Pennsylvania

Source:	1980 No.26; 1988 No.26	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	4/2/1980; 2/12/1988	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	7/1/1980; 2/12/1988	Ellman and Lohr:	1980
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1981	Friedberg:	1980
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1988	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1980
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1981	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1988	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1988	Wolfers	none

Rhode Island

Source:	1975 No.287; G.L. 1896 No.195	<i>Property:</i>	1975
Effective Date:	5/22/1975; Unknown	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1896	Ellman and Lohr:	1975
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1975	Friedberg:	1976
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1975	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1910
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1975	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1975
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1896	Peters:	pre-1978
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Rasul	1976
		Wolfers	1976

South Carolina

Source:	1969 No.170	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	5/2/1969	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	5/2/1969	Ellman and Lohr:	1969
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1969	Friedberg:	1969
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1969	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1969
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	none	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1969	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1969	Wolfers	none

South Dakota

Source:	1985 No.207	<i>Property:</i>	1985
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1985	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Ellman and Lohr:	1985
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1985	Friedberg:	1985
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1985
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1985
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
		Rasul	1985
		Wolfers	1985

Tennessee

Source:	1977 No.107	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	4/28/1977	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	4/28/1977	Ellman and Lohr:	1977
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1977	Friedberg:	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1977	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1963
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1977	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1977	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1977	Wolfers	none

Texas

Source:	1969 No.888; 1953 No.91	<i>Property:</i>	1970
Approval Date:	5/14/1969; unknown	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	1/1/1970; 5/1/1953	Ellman and Lohr:	1969
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1953	Friedberg:	1974
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1970	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1910
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1970	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1970
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1970	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1953	Rasul	1974
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1974

Utah

Source:	1987 No.106; 1943 No.46	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	3/16/ 1987; 2/24/1943	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	4/27/1987; 5/11/1943	Ellman and Lohr:	1987
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1943	Friedberg:	pre-1968
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1943	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1943
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1987	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1987
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1987	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1943	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1943	Wolfers	none

Vermont

Source:	1941 No.43	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	3/20/1941	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1941	Ellman and Lohr:	1941
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1941	Friedberg:	pre-1968
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	none	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1969
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1941	Peters:	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1941	Rasul	none
		Wolfers	none

Virginia

Source:	1960 No.108	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	2/29/1960	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1960	Ellman and Lohr:	1960
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1960	Friedberg:	pre-1968
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	none	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1960
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1960	Peters:	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1960	Rasul	none
		Wolfers	none

Washington

Source:	1973 No.157	<i>Property:</i>	1973
Approval Date:	5/24/1973	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	5/25/1973	Ellman and Lohr:	1973
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1973	Friedberg:	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1921
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1973	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1973	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1973
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1973

West Virginia

Source:	1977 No.84; 1969 No.49	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	4/9/1977; 3/6/1969	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	7/7/1977; 4/1/1969	Ellman and Lohr:	1977
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1969	Friedberg:	pre-1968
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1969	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1969
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1978	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1978	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1969	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1969	Wolfers	none

Wisconsin

Source:	1977 No.105	<i>Property:</i>	none
Approval Date:	10/21/1977	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	2/1/1978	Ellman and Lohr:	1977
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1978	Friedberg:	1977
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1978	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1977
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1978	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1978
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Peters:	none
<i>Separation Period:</i>	1978	Rasul	none
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1978	Wolfers	none

Wyoming

Source:	1977 No.152	<i>Property:</i>	1977
Approval Date:	3/4/1977	<u>Other Classifications</u>	
Effective Date:	3/4/1977	Ellman and Lohr:	1977
<i>No-Fault:</i>	1977	Friedberg:	1977
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1977	Gruber <i>No-Fault:</i>	1910
<i>Irreconcilable Differences:</i>	1977	Gruber <i>Unilateral:</i>	1977
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	1977	Peters:	pre-1978
<i>Separation Period:</i>	none	Rasul	1977
including <i>Unilateral:</i>	none	Wolfers	1977

Table 1: Frequencies of Divorce Reforms across States

<u>General Divorce Reform</u>	Count
fault-based / mutual consent to <i>No-Fault / Unilateral</i>	42
- <i>Property</i> added simultaneously	27
fault-based / mutual consent to <i>No-Fault / mutual consent</i>	9
<i>No-Fault / mutual consent to No-Fault / Unilateral</i>	4
<u>Specific Divorce Reform</u>	
fault-based / mutual consent to <i>Irreconcilable Differences / Unilateral</i>	25
- added simultaneously as <i>Separation Period / Unilateral</i>	3
fault-based / mutual consent to <i>Separation Period / Unilateral</i>	20
- added simultaneously as <i>Irreconcilable Differences / mutual consent</i>	1
- added simultaneously as <i>Irreconcilable Differences / Unilateral</i>	3
fault-based / mutual consent to <i>Irreconcilable Differences / mutual consent</i>	3
fault-based / mutual consent to <i>Separation Period / mutual consent</i>	6
<i>Irreconcilable Differences / Unilateral</i> added to <i>Separation Period / mutual consent</i>	3
<i>Separation Period / Unilateral</i> added to <i>Irreconcilable Differences / mutual consent</i>	1
<u>Other Divorce Reforms</u>	
<i>Irreconcilable Differences / mutual consent</i> added to <i>Separation Period / mutual consent</i>	1
<i>Irreconcilable Differences / mutual consent</i> added to <i>Separation Period / Unilateral</i>	1
<i>Irreconcilable Differences / Unilateral</i> added to <i>Separation Period / Unilateral</i>	4
- <i>Property</i> added simultaneously	3
<i>Irreconcilable Differences / Unilateral</i> replaces <i>Separation Period / Unilateral</i>	1
- <i>Property</i> added simultaneously	1

Note: Changes represent state level divorce law changes. As such, states are capable of being included in more than one category and the total does not need to add up to 51.

Table 2: Summary Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
<i>No-Fault Only</i>	0.12	0.32	0.00	1.00
<i>Unilateral Only</i>	0.04	0.19	0.00	1.00
<i>No-Fault Unilateral</i>	0.53	0.50	0.00	1.00
<i>Property</i>	0.34	0.47	0.00	1.00
Divorce Rate (<i>DR</i>) per thousand	4.34	5.46	0.40	^ψ 136.40
State Population (millions)	4.01	4.30	0.11	30.00
Male to Female Ratio	0.98	0.05	0.86	1.44
Percent Urban	0.65	0.17	0.09	1.00
Percent with High School Education	0.59	0.20	0.15	0.93
Percent White	0.85	0.14	0.06	1.00
Percent Black	0.10	0.12	0.00	0.71
Percent Asian	0.02	0.06	0.00	0.62
Percent Indian	0.01	0.03	0.00	0.38
Percent Under 18	0.31	0.05	0.03	0.46
Percent Over 65	0.10	0.03	0.02	0.28
Female Labor Force Participation Rate	0.47	0.13	0.17	0.71
Unemployment Rate	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.18
Percent voting Democrat	0.46	0.11	0.00	1.00
Percent voting Democrat relative to US	-0.00	0.10	-0.61	0.52
Year	1974.32	18.21	1940.00	2005.00

Note: There are 2,956 observations. ^ψ The only state-year combinations with a divorce rate higher than 12 are each year prior to 1988 in Nevada.

Table 3: Replication of Friedberg

Specification	Friedberg	Extended Sample	Friedberg w/covariates	Extended Sample w/covariates
Unilateral	0.447*** (0.050)	0.493*** (0.089)	0.388*** (0.079)	0.542*** (0.091)
Years	1968-1988	1940-2005	1968-1988	1940-2005
Additional State Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes
N	1043	2956	1043	2956

Notes: Estimated using state population weights and Friedberg’s ‘unilateral’ classification. Standard errors are in parenthesis. *, **, and *** indicate that the estimate is significant at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level respectively. Huber-White robust standard errors are included in the last three columns.

Table 4: Replication of Wolfers

Specification	Wolfers	Extended Sample	Wolfers w/covariates	Extended Sample w/covariates
<u>Years after divorce reform</u>				
First 2 years	0.3424*** (0.062)	0.4345*** (0.157)	0.3072** (0.129)	0.4587*** (0.159)
3-4	0.3193*** (0.070)	0.4378*** (0.106)	0.2903*** (0.081)	0.4817*** (0.106)
5-6	0.3005*** (0.077)	0.4458*** (0.103)	0.2886*** (0.083)	0.4881*** (0.101)
7-8	0.3220*** (0.084)	0.4948*** (0.107)	0.3301*** (0.091)	0.5418*** (0.106)
9-10	0.0812 (0.092)	0.2728*** (0.098)	0.1084 (0.090)	0.3392*** (0.098)
11-12	-0.1025 (0.099)	0.1326 (0.105)	-0.0543 (0.109)	0.2163** (0.109)
13-14	-0.2021* (0.107)	0.056 (0.109)	-0.1178 (0.110)	0.162 (0.113)
Year 15 onwards	-0.2103* (0.119)	0.096 (0.122)	-0.0127 (0.132)	0.2087* (0.117)
Years	1956-1988	1940-2005	1956-1988	1940-2005
Additional State Controls	No	No	Yes	Yes
N	1631	2956	1631	2956

Notes: Estimated using state population weights and Wolfers ‘unilateral’ classification. Standard errors are in parenthesis. *, **, and *** indicate that the estimate is significant at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level respectively. Huber-White robust standard errors are included in the last three columns.

Table 5: Divorce Reform Estimates for 1940-2005 Sample

	<i>No-Fault Only</i>	<i>Unilateral Only</i>	<i>No-Fault Unilateral</i>	<i>Property</i>
Constant Effect	0.2313 (0.583)	0.3924 (0.854)	0.4834 (0.398)	-0.3341 (0.444)
<u>Years after divorce reform</u>				
First 2 years	0.156 (0.619)	-0.011 (0.896)	0.171 (0.414)	0.109 (0.468)
3-4	0.317 (0.815)	0.149 (1.198)	0.123 (0.553)	0.324 (0.624)
5-6	0.439 (0.935)	0.421 (1.394)	0.458 (0.635)	0.181 (0.717)
7-8	0.920 (1.019)	0.535 (1.527)	0.741 (0.694)	-0.178 (0.778)
9-10	1.155 (1.081)	1.046 (1.624)	1.197 (0.740)	-0.623 (0.817)
11-12	1.163 (1.121)	1.383 (1.695)	1.4606* (0.778)	-0.814 (0.842)
13-14	1.558 (1.147)	2.125 (1.742)	2.6936*** (0.806)	-1.6974** (0.851)
Year 15 onwards	1.794 (1.155)	2.741 (1.764)	3.6017*** (0.825)	-2.1375** (0.849)
R ² within	0.182			
R ² between	0.185			
R ² overall	0.184			
σ_s (state specific variation)	2.504			
σ_e (unobserved variation)	1.613			
ρ	0.902			
N	2956			

Notes: Standard errors are in parenthesis. Each regression also included demographic controls, state and year effects. *, **, and *** indicate that the estimate is significant at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level respectively. Measures of residuals are from the flexible form regression. The residual measures were very similar for the constant effect specification.

Table 6: Specific Divorce Reform Estimates

Divorce reform variable	
<i>No-Fault Only</i>	
<i>Irreconcilable Differences</i>	0.393 (1.176)
<i>Separation Period</i>	0.261 (1.113)
<i>Irreconcilable Differences / Separation Period</i>	0.637 (1.541)
<i>Unilateral Only</i>	
<i>In addition to Irreconcilable Differences</i>	-0.076 (1.959)
<i>In addition to Separation Period</i>	-0.772 (2.204)
<i>No-Fault Unilateral</i>	
<i>Irreconcilable Differences Unilateral</i>	0.455 (0.853)
<i>Separation Period Unilateral</i>	0.032 (0.536)
<i>Irreconcilable Differences / Separation Period Unilateral</i>	-0.045 (0.771)
<i>Property</i>	-0.309 (0.822)

Notes: There are 2,956 observations used in the regression. State level controls, year fixed effects, and state effects were included in the regression.

Table 7: General Divorce Reform Estimates including State Specific Trends

Divorce reform variable	No State Trends	Linear State Trends	Quadratic State Trends	Cubic State Trends
<u>State Control Variables Included</u>				
<i>No-Fault Only</i>	0.2313 (0.583)	0.0153 (0.577)	-0.4237 (0.518)	-0.6073 (0.540)
<i>Unilateral Only</i>	0.3924 (0.854)	0.1664 (0.867)	-0.1359 (0.841)	-0.3386 (0.905)
<i>No-Fault Unilateral</i>	0.4834 (0.398)	0.2009 (0.393)	0.1551 (0.354)	0.1301 (0.368)
<i>Property</i>	-0.3341 (0.444)	-0.0839 (0.449)	0.3073 (0.407)	0.3482 (0.435)
<u>State Control Variables Omitted</u>				
<i>No-Fault Only</i>	0.1373 (0.585)	0.0346 (0.578)	-0.3779 (0.508)	-0.449 (0.529)
<i>Unilateral Only</i>	0.1509 (0.856)	-0.0583 (0.863)	-0.4085 (0.826)	-0.541 (0.902)
<i>No-Fault Unilateral</i>	0.4716 (0.401)	0.1655 (0.395)	0.0693 (0.355)	0.0603 (0.372)
<i>Property</i>	-0.2872 (0.447)	-0.032 (0.451)	0.5543 (0.404)	0.6802 (0.434)

Notes: Standard errors are in parenthesis. *, **, and *** indicate that the estimate is significant at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level respectively. There are 2,956 observations used in the regression. Year and state effects are included in each regression.

Table 8: Flexible Divorce Reform Estimates for 1960-1985 Sample

Years after divorce reform	<i>No-Fault Only</i>	<i>Unilateral Only</i>	<i>No-Fault Unilateral</i>	<i>Property</i>
First 2 years	0.0289 (0.190)	-0.0715 (0.304)	0.1026 (0.137)	0.0627 (0.148)
3-4	0.0799 (0.266)	0.0352 (0.408)	0.0209 (0.186)	0.1638 (0.201)
5-6	0.0923 (0.306)	0.2679 (0.476)	0.2027 (0.216)	0.0369 (0.235)
7-8	0.5777* (0.345)	0.5402 (0.523)	0.6011** (0.239)	-0.5489** (0.258)
9-10	0.6342* (0.373)	1.2693** (0.565)	1.0219*** (0.261)	-1.1124*** (0.278)
11-12	0.5435 (0.403)	1.6317*** (0.604)	1.1598*** (0.281)	-1.3387*** (0.298)
13-14	0.7584* (0.427)	1.4923** (0.740)	1.3190*** (0.314)	-1.4817*** (0.331)
Year 15 onwards	0.9188** (0.447)	1.4880* (0.846)	1.4987*** (0.347)	-1.4190*** (0.381)

Notes: Standard errors are in parenthesis. *, **, and *** indicate that the estimate is significant at the 10%, 5%, and 1% level respectively. 1,296 observations are used. State level demographic controls, state and year effects are included.

Figure 1: Total Number of States with *No-Fault* Divorce

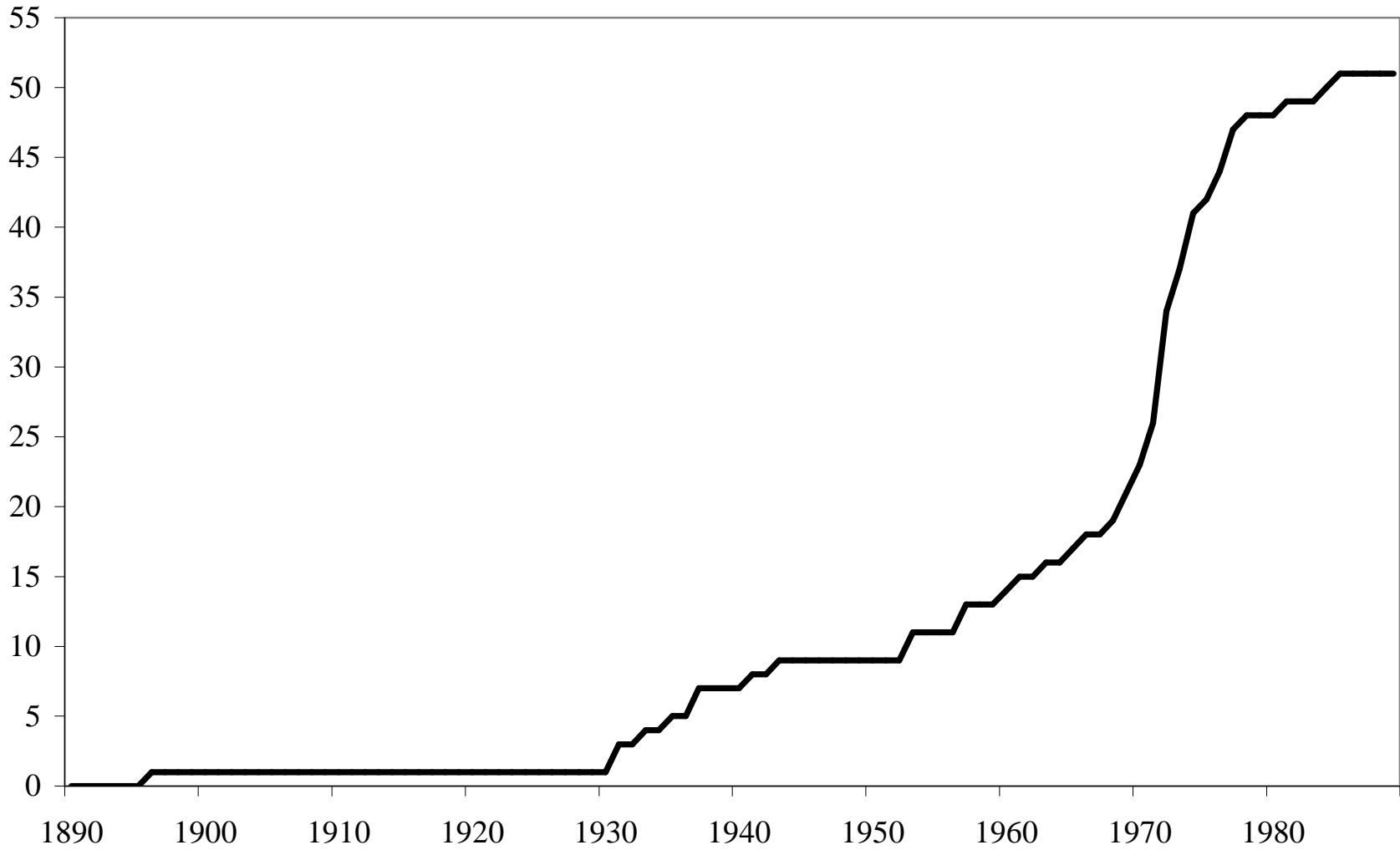


Figure 2: Household Models Pareto Frontiers

