

On Valentine's Day, 141 million cards are exchanged annually, making Valentine's Day the second-most popular greeting-card-giving occasion. Over 50 percent of all Valentine's Day cards are purchased in the six days prior to the observance, making Valentine's Day a procrastinator's delight.

Research reveals that more than half of the U.S. population celebrates Valentine's Day by purchasing a greeting card.

(Source: Hallmark research)

There are 119 single men (i.e., never married, widowed or divorced) who are in their 20s for every 100 single women of the same ages. Corresponding numbers for the following race and ethnic groups are:

- Hispanics: 153 men per 100 women
- Asians (single race): 132 men per 100 women (This ratio is not significantly different from that for Hispanics or non-Hispanic whites.)
- Caucasian (single race): 120 men per 100 women
- Blacks (single race): 92 men per 100 women (The numbers of black men and women in this age group are not significantly different from one another.)

There are 34 single men (i.e., never married, widowed or divorced) age 65 or older for every 100 single women of the same ages. Corresponding numbers for the following race and ethnic groups are:

- Hispanics: 38 men per 100 women
- Caucasian (single race): 33 men per 100 women
- Blacks (single race): 33 men per 100 women
- Asians (single race): 28 men per 100 women

(Note: None of the ratios for the individual groups differ significantly from one another nor from the ratio for all people age 65 or older.)

As of 2002, there are 904 dating service establishments nationwide. These establishments, which include Internet dating services, employed nearly 4,300 people and pulled in \$489 million in revenues.

Be Mine

In the United States, 2.2 million marriages take place annually. That breaks down to more than 6,000 a day.

During 2008 there were 112,185 marriages performed in Nevada. So many couples "tie the knot" in the Silver State that it ranked fourth nationally in marriages, even though its total population that year among states was 35th.

The estimated U.S. median ages at first marriage for women and men are 25.9 and 27.6 respectively, in 2008. The age for women rose 4.2 years in the last three decades. The age for men at first marriage is up 3.6 years.

Men and women in northeastern states generally have a higher median age at first marriage than the national average. In Massachusetts, for example, women were a median of 27.4 years old and men 29.1 years of age at first marriage. States where people typically marry young include Utah, where women were a median of 21.9 years and men, 23.9 years.

Fifty-seven percent and 60 percent of American women and men, respectively, are 15 or older and currently married (includes those who are separated).

The percentage of men and women ages 30 to 34 in 2008 who had been married at some point in their lives, either currently or formerly, was 70 percent.

In 2005, 4.9 million opposite-sex cohabitating couples maintained households. These couples comprised 4.3 percent of all households.

Candy is Dandy

The number of locations producing chocolate and cocoa products in 2004 was 1,241. These employed 43,322 people. California led the nation in the number of such establishments with 136, followed by Pennsylvania with 122.

In 2004, 515 locations produced nonchocolate confectionary products. These establishments employed 22,234 people.

The total value of shipments in 2004 for firms producing chocolate and cocoa products was \$13.9 billion. Nonchocolate confectionery product manufacturing, meanwhile, was a \$5.7 billion industry.

There were 3,467 confectionery and nut stores in the United States in 2004. Often referred to as candy stores, they are among the best sources of sweets for Valentine's Day.

The per capita consumption of candy by Americans in 2005 was 25.7 pounds. Candy consumption has actually declined over the last few years. In 1997, each American gobbled or savored more than 27 pounds of candy a year.

Flowers

The combined wholesale value of domestically produced cut flowers in 2005 for all flower-producing operations with \$100,000 or more in sales was \$397 million. Among states, California was the leading producer, alone accounting for nearly three-quarters of this amount (\$289 million).

The combined wholesale value of domestically produced cut roses in 2005 for all operations with \$100,000 or more in sales was \$39 million. Among all types of cut flowers, roses were third in receipts (\$39 million) to lilies (\$76.9 million) and tulips (\$39.1 million).

Jewelry

There were 28,772 jewelry stores in the United States in 2004. Jewelry stores offer engagement, wedding and other rings to lovers of all ages.

In February 2006, these stores sold \$2.6 billion worth of merchandise. (This figure has not been adjusted for seasonal variation, holiday or trading day differences or price changes).

The merchandise at these locations could well have been produced at one of the nation's 1,864 jewelry manufacturing establishments.

The manufacture of jewelry was an \$9 billion industry in 2004.