

Problem:

- The average total cost of divorce in the United States is \$15,000.
- Families with children that were not poor before the divorce see their income drop as much as 50 percent.
- One researcher determined that a single divorce costs state and federal governments about \$30,000, based on such things as the higher use of food stamps and public housing as well as increased bankruptcies and juvenile delinquency.
- A new study entitled “Divorce and Death” shows that broken marriages can kill at the same rate as smoking cigarettes. Indications that the risk of dying is a full 23 percent higher among divorcees than married people.
- If a close friend gets divorced, you are 147% more likely to become divorced and 33% more likely if a friend of a friend is divorced.
- [Wilkinson & Finkbeiner Family Law Attorneys]
(<https://www.wf-lawyers.com/divorce-statistics-and-facts/>)

Divorce is a stressful and costly process that takes a toll on individuals, families, and their friends. Barring a situation where staying married would do more harm than good, divorces are better to be avoided and a marriage mended.

Context:

- 60 percent of cohabiting couples will eventually marry. However, living together prior to marriage can increase the chance of getting divorced by as much as 40 percent.
- High School dropouts are 13 percent more likely to get divorced.
- Political affiliation and its impact on divorce: Conservatives are the least likely to be divorced: **Conservative 28 percent, Liberal 37 percent, Moderate 33 percent.**
[Wilkinson & Finkbeiner Family Law Attorneys]
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Survey data from Pew Research asks 167 questions relating to participants' attitudes and experience with cohabitation, engagement, marriage, and child rearing along with their demographics (education, political affiliation, age, race, etc)

Using this data I want to predict if an individual is divorced or married and identify which factors are strongly predictive of divorce.

Criteria for success:

Predicting Minority Class (Divorced) with an F1- score of 50% or greater.

Predicting Majority Class (Married) with an F1-Score of 85% or greater.

Constraints:

- Observations are of individuals and not of couples so I cannot identify inter-relationship dynamics.
- Divorced couple do not answer many questions on their motivations, cohabitation, satisfaction, or trust in their partner as it relate to their previous marriage(s)
- Attitudes toward cohabitation, marriage, etc could have been formed BY a divorce and a married individual's attitude that CAUSED divorce.
- Individuals married at the time of the survey could divorce after the survey, so their attitudes could be misattributed to those of 'successful' married couples.

Data Sources:

<https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2019/11/06/marriage-and-cohabitation-in-the-u-s/>

<https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/dataset/american-trends-panel-wave-50/>