

# Unmarried America

A Report on Importance and  
Status of Unmarried Women

 **Women's Voices.  
Women Vote**

 **Lake  
Research  
Partners**

# Summary of Key Findings

- **Unmarried women make up nearly a quarter of adult citizens in this country, and that share grows every year. Since 2008, the cohort has grown by over 6 million women.**
- **More and more unmarried women are showing up at the ballot box, increasing their impact on and their connection to the electoral process and changing the face of the voters in this country. In 2000, turnout among unmarried women was only 52%, but in 2008 that number increased to 60%.**
- **However, their participation rates often fall off in midterm elections. Based on past drop-off, there could be as many as 9.4 million fewer unmarried women voting in 2010, a drop-off of 31%. That drop-off is higher than expected for any other gender/marital status group.**
- **Unmarried women, despite increases in participation, are still under-represented in terms of registration and actual turnout.**

# Summary of Key Findings (cont.)

- **The economy is the top issue for unmarried women because, even in good economic times, their financial situation is more precarious than other gender/marital status groups. They have been among the hardest hit during this economic downturn. And, as shown in the 2007 report, they began feeling the impact before others.**
- **Unmarried women make just 57 cents to every dollar a married man makes. In order to make what a married man makes in a year, an unmarried woman would have to work 21 months (until September of the following year).**
- **Unmarried women are also more likely than married men and women to be unemployed. The unemployment rate among unmarried women is 12.2%, more than double the rate among their married counterparts (5.7%) and much higher than the national rate (9.5%).**
- **Health care coverage is another part of unmarried women's economic woes, with 15.6% of unmarried women living without health insurance of any kind.**

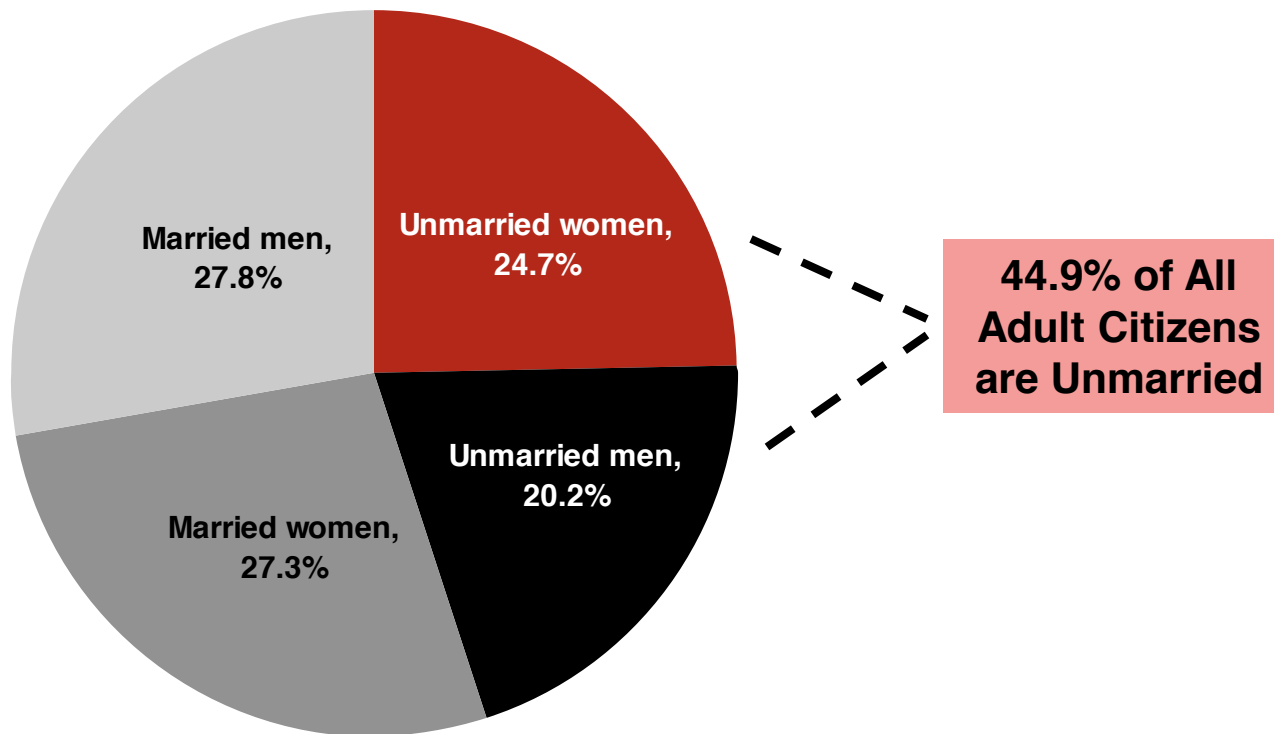
# Unmarried Women by the Numbers



Unmarried women make up nearly a quarter of the adult citizen population, and that share grows every year.

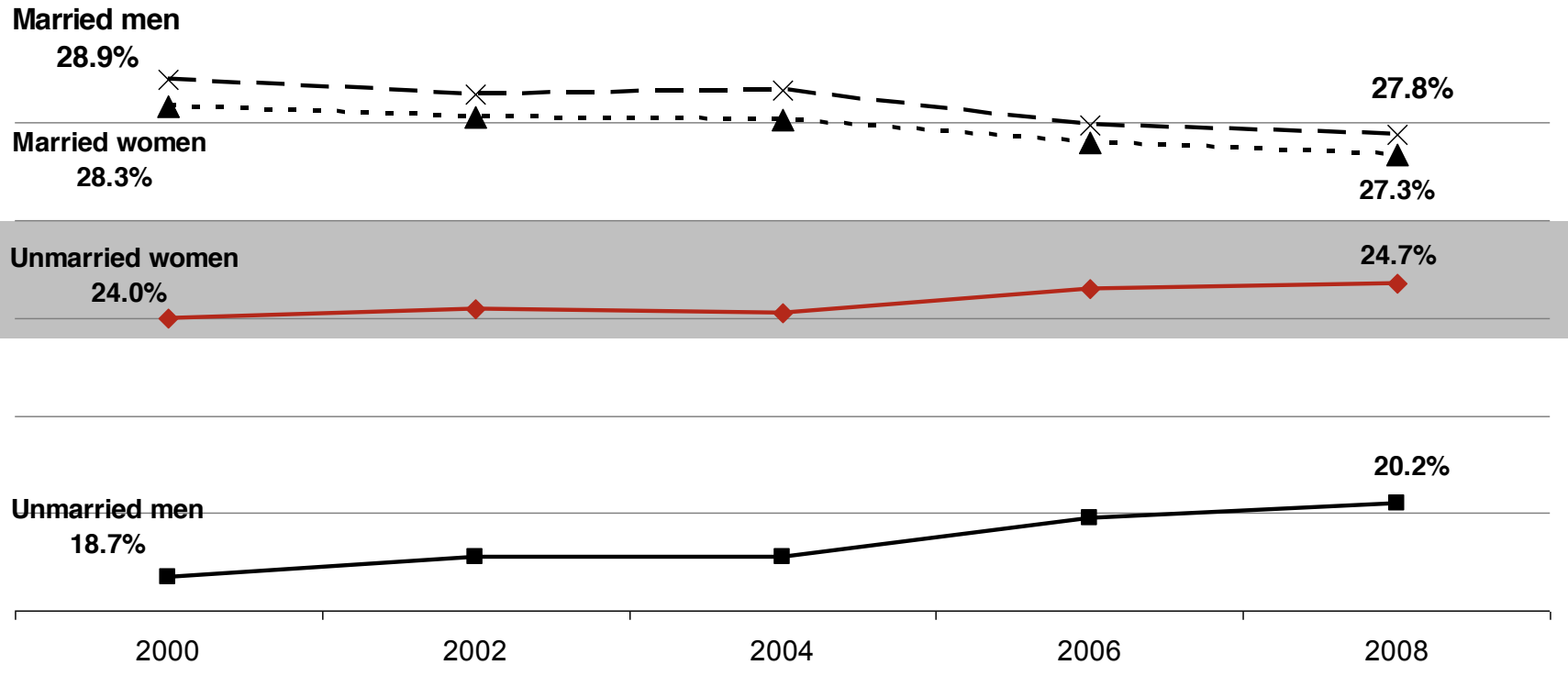
Unmarried women make up a quarter of the adult citizens in the United States, and more than four in ten American adult citizens are unmarried.

### Population Distribution by Gender/Marital Status



Unmarried women are on the rise. Each year, unmarried women make up a larger and larger percentage of the population, increasing their impact on and importance to the socioeconomic structure of our country.

### Population Distribution by Gender/Marital Status



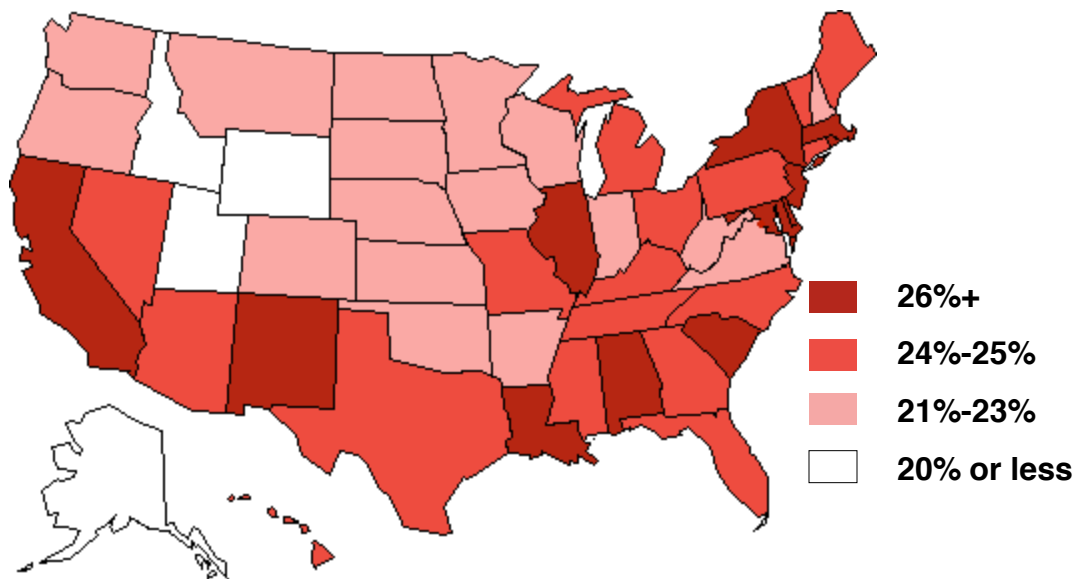
**Unmarried Women** 44,782,087 **+6.1 million, 14% increase** 50,920,092

Current Population Survey-November Supplements



Unmarried women are everywhere; they make up at least a quarter of the adult population in more than half of the states.

## Unmarried Women Population by State



### States with Highest % Unmarried Women in Adult Citizen Population

Washington, DC	41%
Louisiana	28%
Maryland	27%
New York	27%
Massachusetts	27%

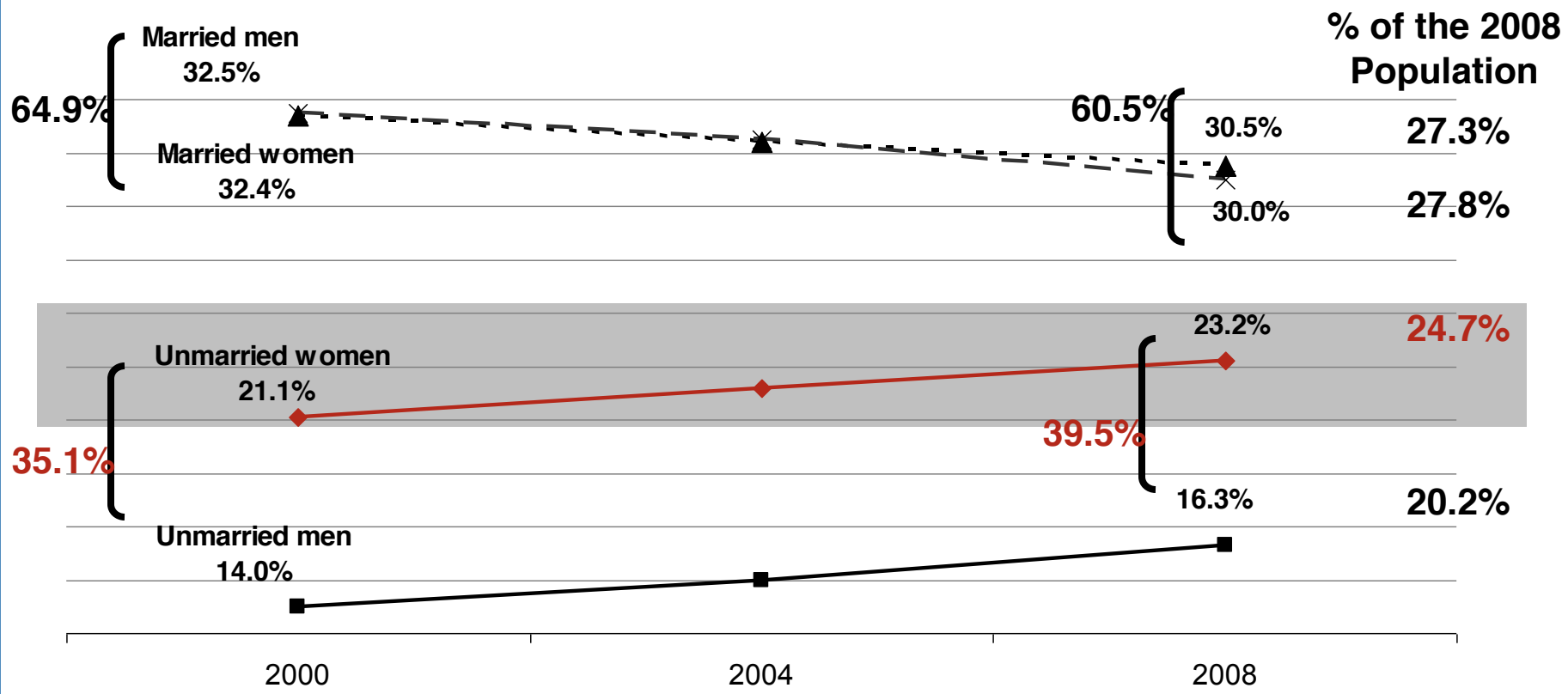
# Why are Unmarried Women Important?



More and more unmarried women are showing up at the ballot box, increasing their impact on and their connection to the electoral process and changing the face of the voters in this country.

Unmarried women have dramatically increased their share of the electorate over the past several presidential cycles, as have unmarried men. Conversely, married Americans have declined as a percentage of the electorate.

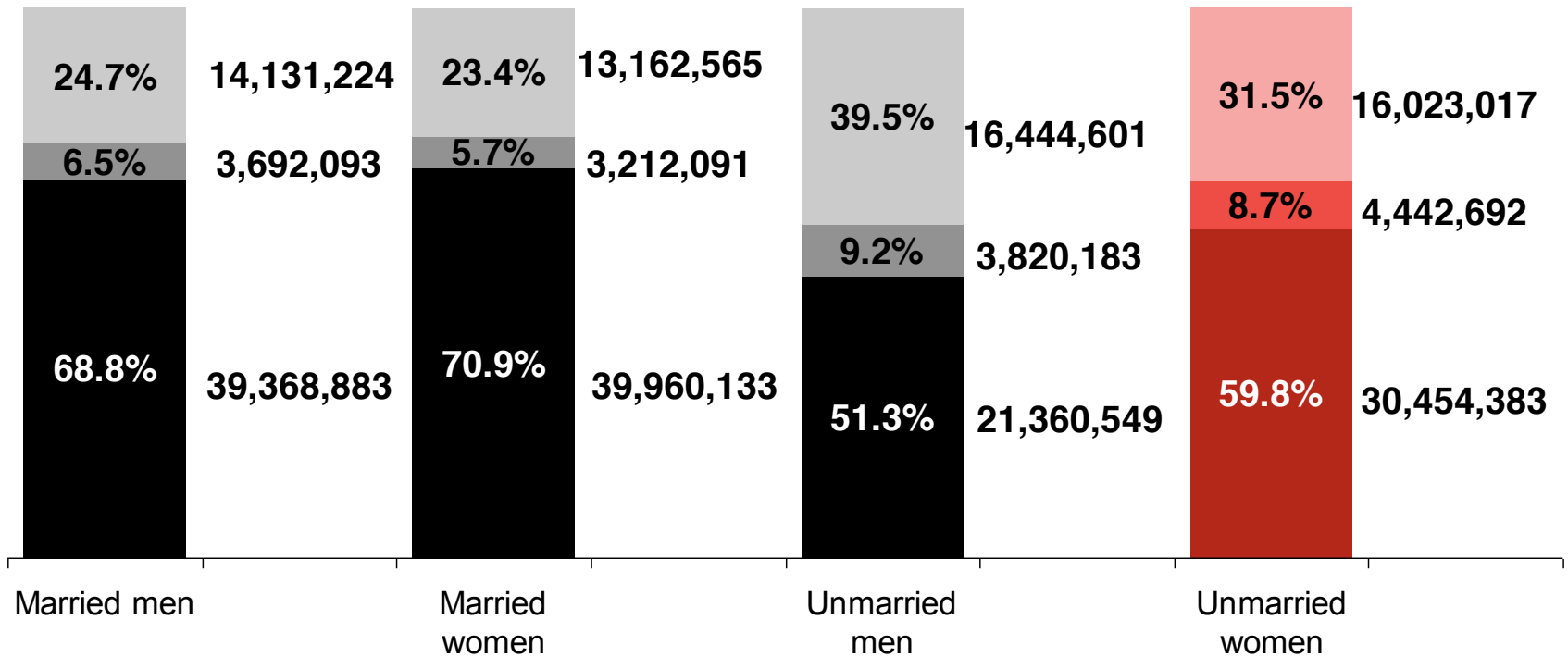
### Distribution of Voters by Gender/Marital Status



Unmarried Americans are less likely to be registered to vote than married Americans, but unmarried *women* are more likely to vote and be registered than unmarried *men*.

### Voting and Registration by Gender/Marital Status

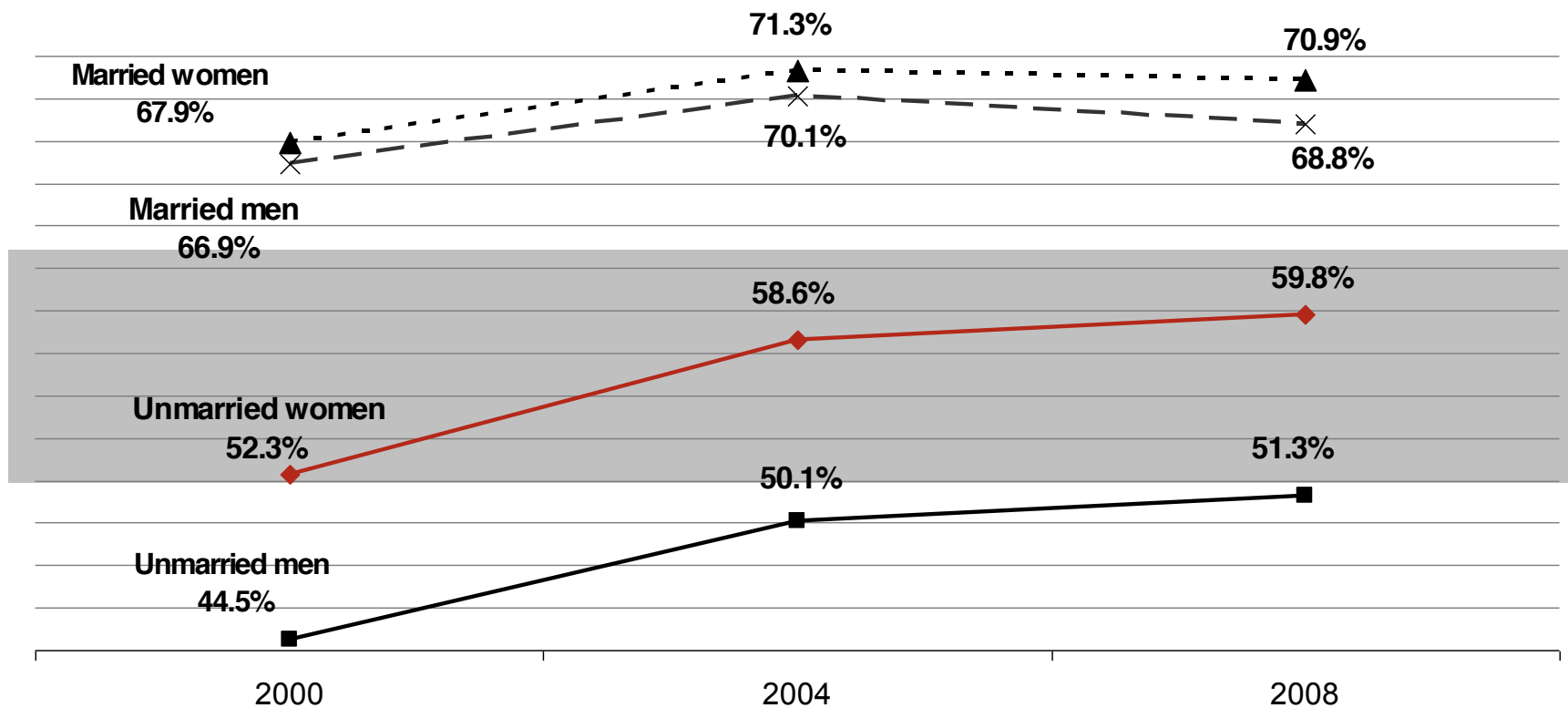
■ Voted ■ Registered but Didn't Vote ■ Not Registered



Current Population Survey-November 2008

Voter turnout among unmarried women has steadily increased, while in 2008 there was a slight drop-off from 2004 among married Americans.

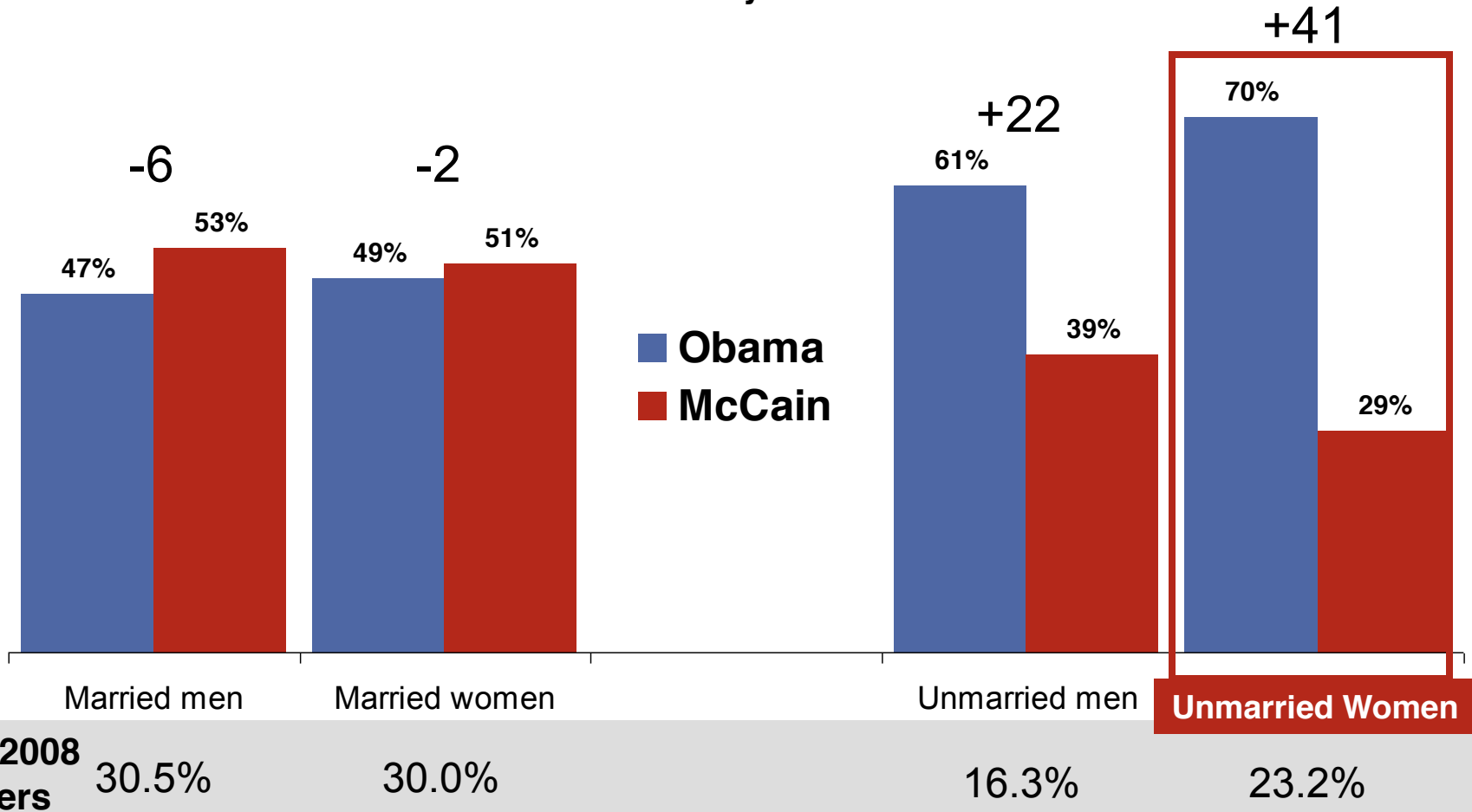
### Percent Turnout by Gender/Marital Status



Current Population Survey-November Supplements

If only married voters had participated in the 2008 election, the outcome would have been very different. Married voters preferred McCain by small margins, while unmarried Americans, especially unmarried women, voted for Obama by wider margins.

2008 Presidential Vote by Gender/Marital Status



% of 2008 Voters



National Election Pool Exit Poll, 2008

Unmarried America 2009



# Looking Ahead to 2010

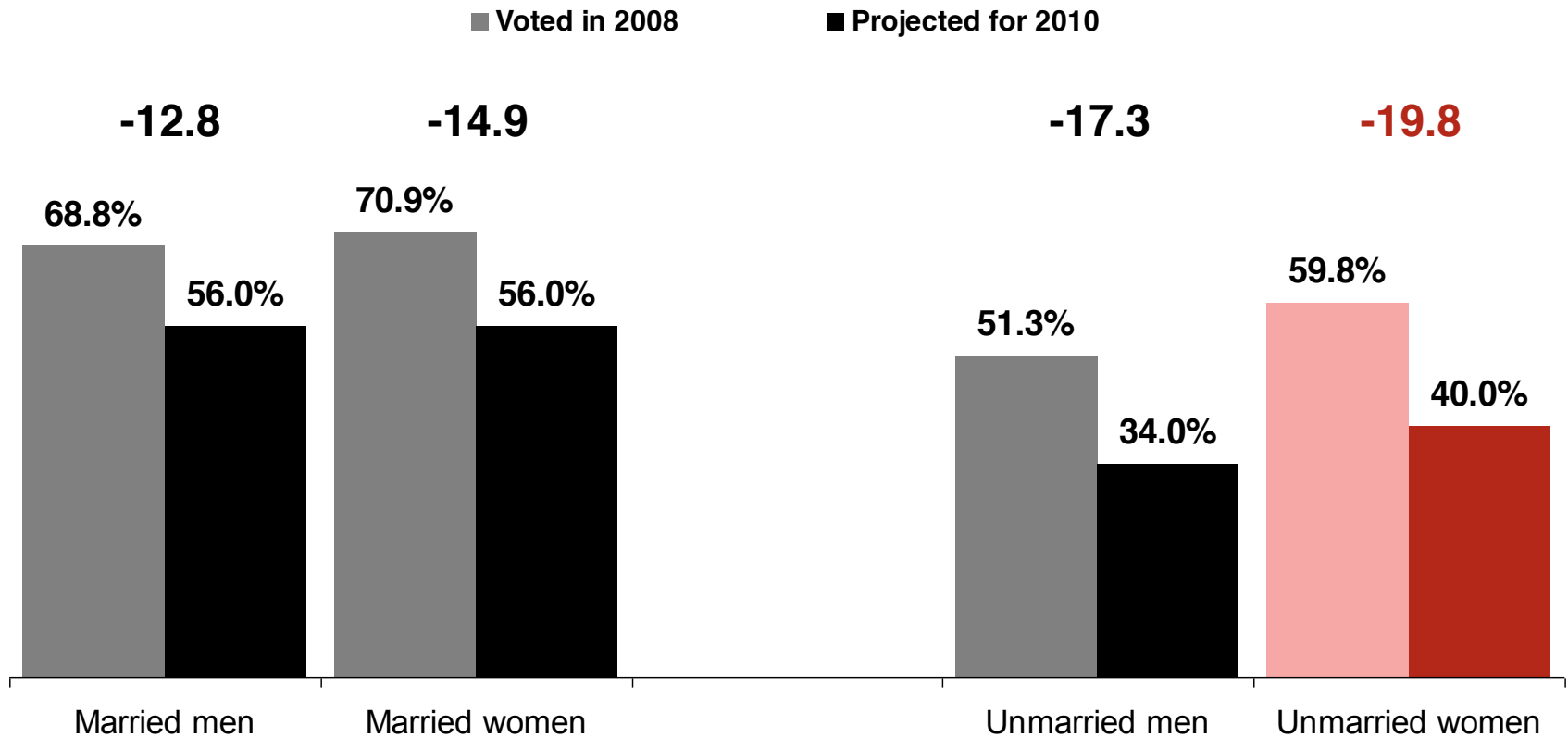
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The growth of unmarried women as part of the electorate will continue in 2010, but efforts are needed to keep these newly engaged voters from dropping off in participation during the midterm election.

Using 2006 voter turnout and the projected 2010 population, projections of voter turnout show that the sharpest drop in turnout for any gender/marital status group may be among unmarried women.

### Turnout Drop-Off in 2010 by Gender/Marital Status



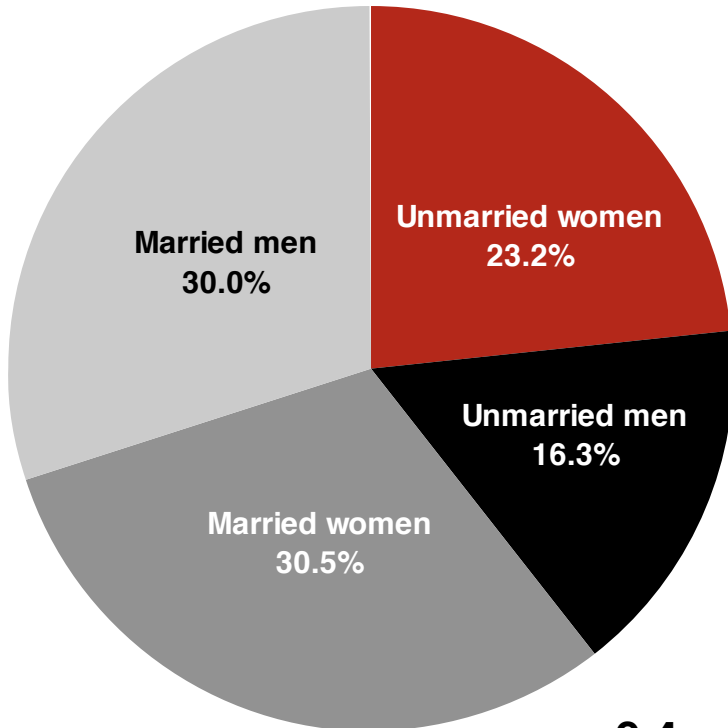
\*Projections were calculated by applying 2006 turnout for each group to the projected 2010 population.

Current Population Survey-November 2008

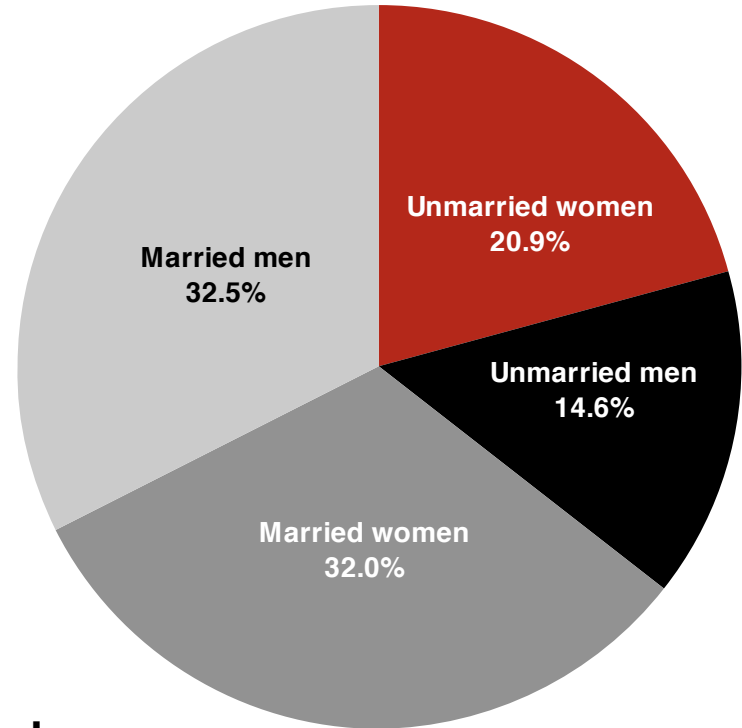
After much progress in turning out unmarried women in 2008, they will shrink as a proportion of the electorate in 2010 unless candidates and organizations make an effort to reach out. The drop-off among unmarried women amounts to more than 9 million voters lost in 2010.

### Voter Distribution by Gender/Marital Status

2008



2010



Unmarried Women

30,454,384

-9.4 million, 31% drop-off



21,058,317

# Who are Unmarried women?



There is a great deal of overlap between unmarried America and the Rising American Electorate.

Unmarried America tends to have more members toward the age extremes, with nearly a third under 30 and a quarter who are senior citizens. Unmarried America is also more Latino and less white than married America.

	Married Men	Married Women	Unmarried Men	Unmarried Women
Men	100%	0%	100%	0%
Women	0%	100%	0%	100%
Age 18-29	6.8%	9.8%	43.2%	32.3%
30-39	17.8%	19.2%	15.0%	12.7%
40-49	23.3%	23.6%	14.8%	13.7%
50-64	32.0%	31.0%	16.9%	19.0%
65+	20.1%	16.4%	10.1%	22.3%
White	77.7%	78.8%	69.1%	66.2%
African American	9.2%	8.3%	10.4%	10.3%
Latino	7.8%	7.4%	15.2%	18.4%
Other	5.2%	5.6%	5.3%	5.1%

Current Population Survey-November 2008

Nearly one in five unmarried women are single mothers. Members of unmarried America are less likely to have a college degree than married Americans, though the fact that unmarried America is young impacts that difference somewhat.

	Married Men	Married Women	Unmarried Men	Unmarried Women
<b>Married</b>	100%	100%	0%	<b>0%</b>
<b>Unmarried</b>	0%	0%	100	<b>100%</b>
<b>Non-Parent</b>	59.6%	59.8%	94.9%	<b>81.6%</b>
<b>Parent</b>	40.4%	40.2%	5.1%	<b>18.4%</b>
<b>H.S. or Less</b>	40.2%	39.0%	48.7%	<b>45.4%</b>
<b>Some College or Post HS</b>	26.0%	28.6%	31.0%	<b>33.6%</b>
<b>College Degree</b>	21.2%	21.9%	15.0%	<b>14.6%</b>
<b>Post Graduate</b>	12.6%	10.6%	5.2%	<b>6.4%</b>
<b>Northeast</b>	17.8%	17.7%	18.9%	<b>19.4%</b>
<b>Midwest</b>	23.3%	23.4%	22.8%	<b>22.0%</b>
<b>South</b>	36.9%	37.4%	35.6%	<b>37.3%</b>
<b>West</b>	22.0%	21.5%	22.7%	<b>21.3%</b>

Current Population Survey-November 2008

# The Economics of Unmarried Women

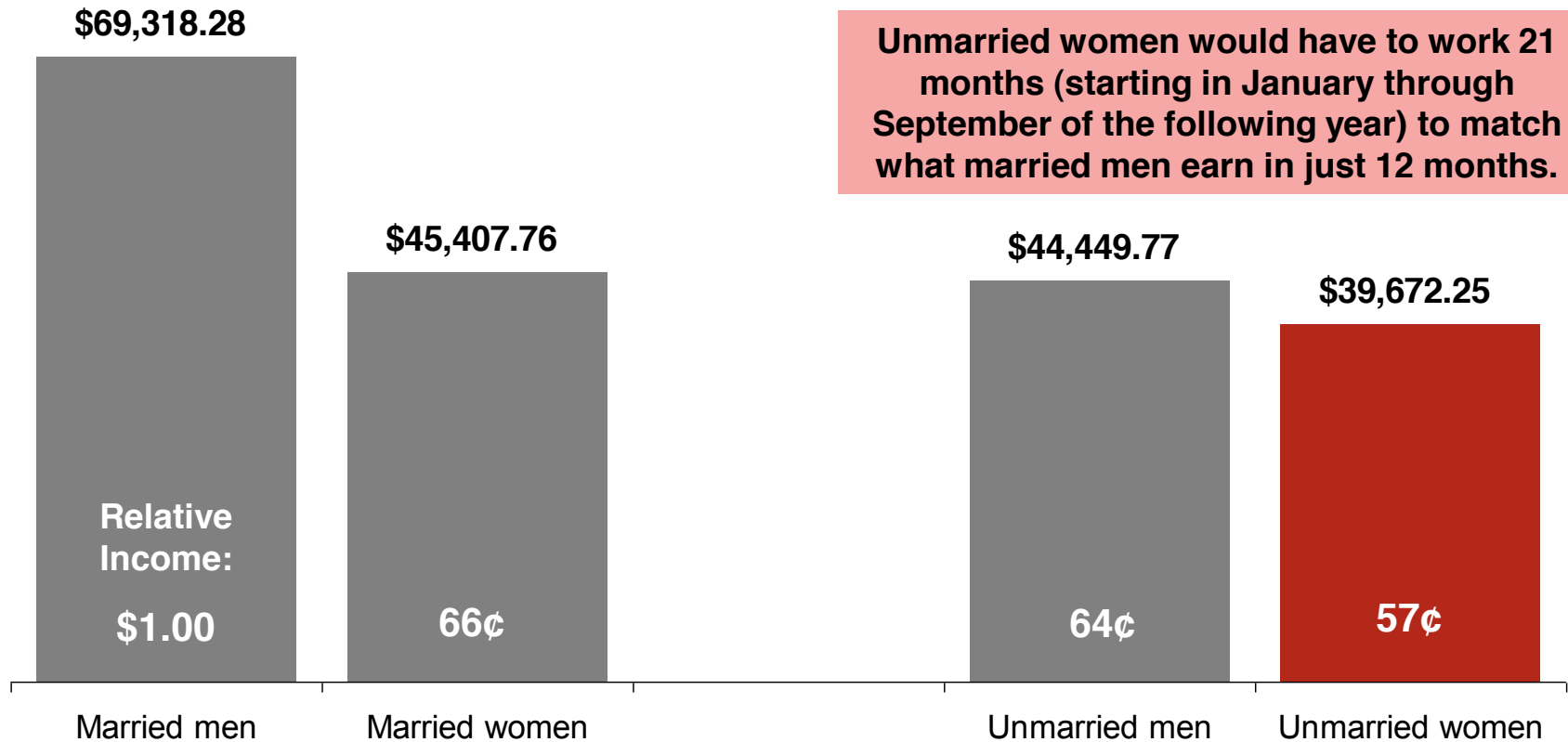


Unmarried women continue to live on the economic margins. They have been among the hardest hit during this economic downturn. And, as shown in the 2007 report, they began feeling the impact before others.

Many unmarried Americans live on the economic margins.  
Unmarried women make only 57 cents on the dollar, compared to married men.

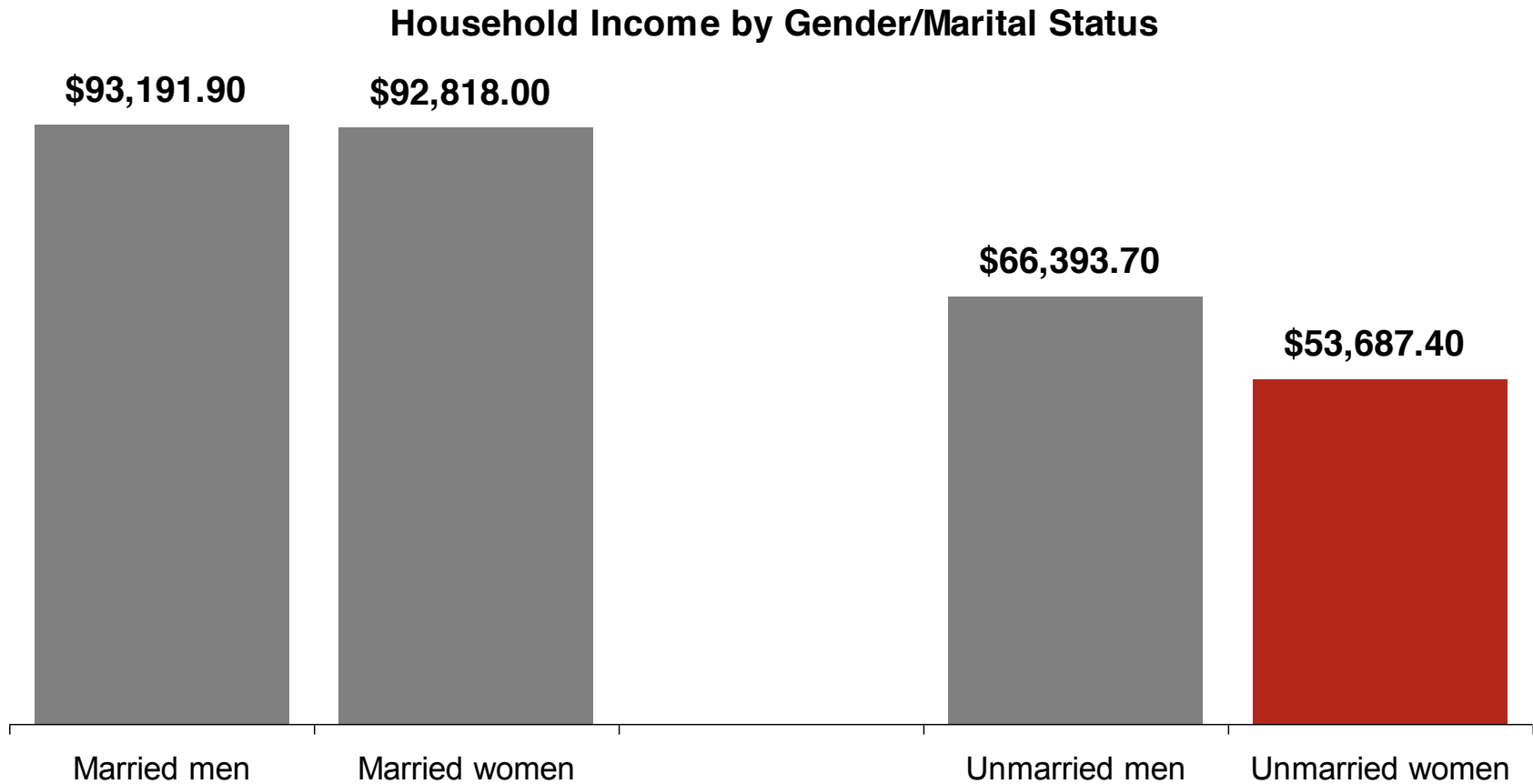
### Personal Earnings by Gender/Marital Status

Unmarried women would have to work 21 months (starting in January through September of the following year) to match what married men earn in just 12 months.



Full-time, Year-round workers, Current  
Population Survey, 2008  
Unmarried America 2009

The disparity is even greater when looking at household income. On average, unmarried women have about \$40,000 less income in their households than do married couples, and that gap has grown from \$37,000 in 2006.

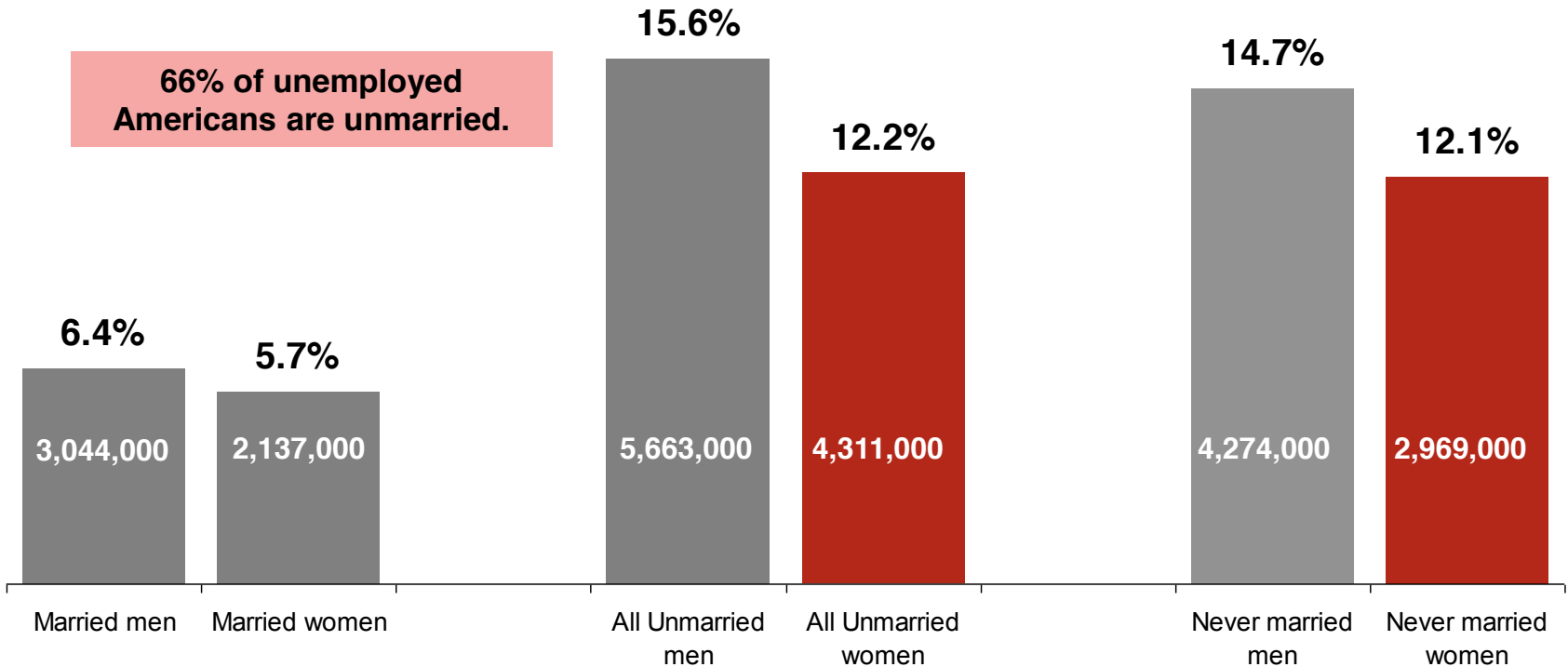


The recent rise in unemployment has disproportionately affected unmarried America. There are nearly 10 million unmarried Americans looking for work. Unmarried men have the highest unemployment rate, with more than one in seven looking for work.

### Unemployment Rate by Gender/Marital Status

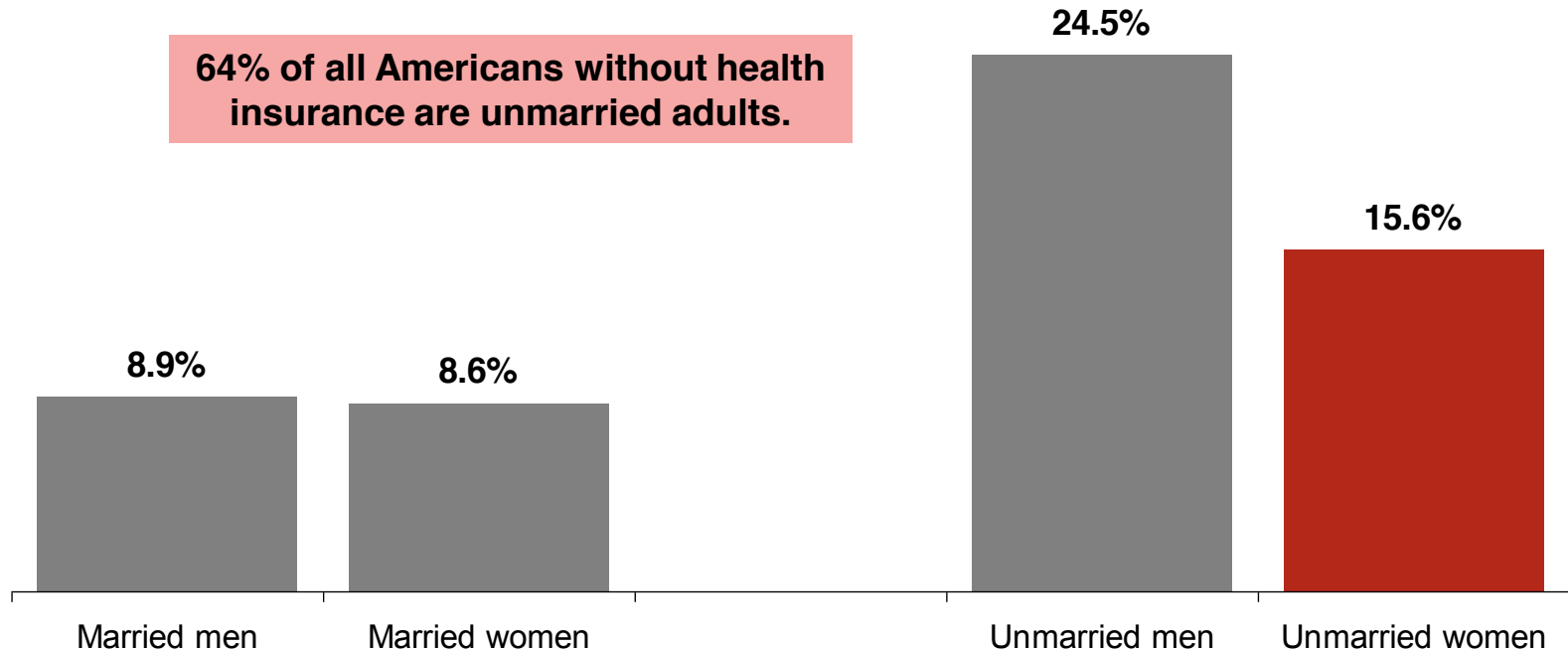
9,974,000 Unemployed Unmarried Americans

66% of unemployed Americans are unmarried.



Health care coverage is also a disproportionate worry for unmarried Americans. While less than ten percent of married men and women lack coverage, the number is nearly twice as high among unmarried women and a full quarter of unmarried men are without health insurance coverage.

### Percent WITHOUT Health Insurance by Gender/Marital Status



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