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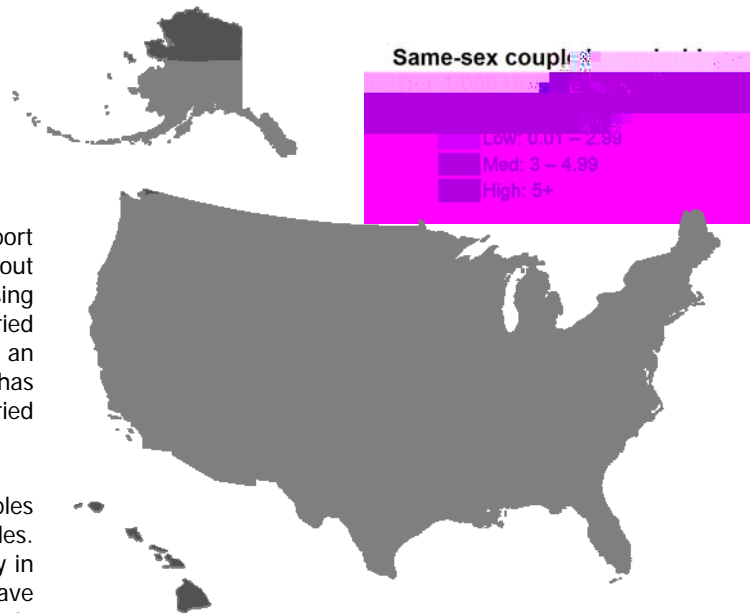
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Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, this report provides demographic and economic information about same-sex couples and same-sex couples raising children in the U.S. We compare same-sex “unmarried partners,” which the Census Bureau defines as an unmarried couple who “shares living quarters and has a close personal relationship,” to different-sex married couples in the U.S.¹

In many ways, the almost 777,000 same-sex couples living in the U.S. are similar to married couples. According to Census 2000, they live in every county in every state, are racially and ethnically diverse, have partners who depend upon each other financially, and actively participate in the U.S. economy. Census data also show that 20% of same-sex couples in the U.S. are raising children. However, same-sex parents have fewer economic resources to provide for their families than do their married counterparts: they have lower household incomes, on average, and lower rates of home ownership.



SAME-SEX COUPLES AND THE LGBT POPULATION IN THE U.S.

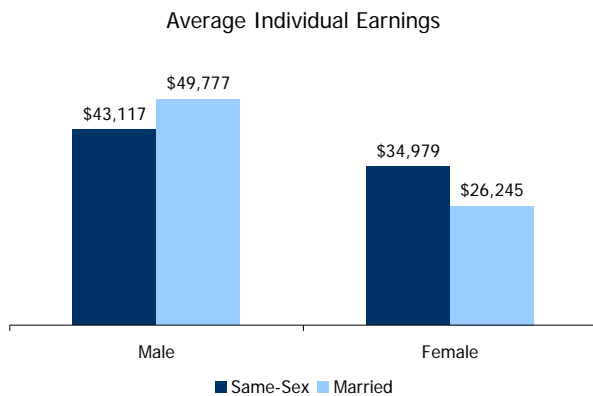
- In 2000, there were 594,391 same-sex couples living in the U.S.²
- By 2005, the number of same-sex couples increased by more than 20% to 776,943.³ This increase likely reflects same-sex couples’ growing willingness to disclose their partnerships on government surveys.
- In 2005, there were an estimated 8.8 million gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (single and coupled) living in the U.S.⁴

- Same-sex couples live in every state in the U.S. and constitute 1.0% of coupled households and 0.6% of all households in the country. California reported the most same-sex couples with 92,138 couples, followed by New York with 46,490 couples, Texas with 42,912 couples, Florida with 41,048 couples, and Illinois with 22,887 couples. Washington, D.C. reported the highest proportion of same-sex couples per total households (1.48%), followed by Vermont (0.80%), California (0.80%), Washington (0.70%), Massachusetts (0.70%), and Oregon (0.67%).⁶
- Same-sex couples are slightly more racially and ethnically diverse than their married counterparts:

INDIVIDUALS IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE

- There are more male same-sex couples (51%) than female same-sex couples (49%) in the U.S.⁵
- Individuals in same-sex couples are, on average, 40 years old, and significantly younger than married individuals (48 years old) in the U.S.

- Contrary to a popular stereotype, the annual earnings of men in same-sex couples are significantly lower than those of married men. On average, men in same-sex couples in the U.S. earn \$43,117 each year, significantly less than \$49,777 for married men. The median income of men in same-sex couples in the U.S. is \$32,500, or 15% less than that of married men (\$38,000).
- Women in same-sex couples in the U.S. earn an average of \$34,979 per year (with a median of \$28,600), more than married women, whose earnings average \$26,245 (with a median of \$21,000). Women in same-sex couples earn, on average, less than married men and men in same-sex couples in the U.S.

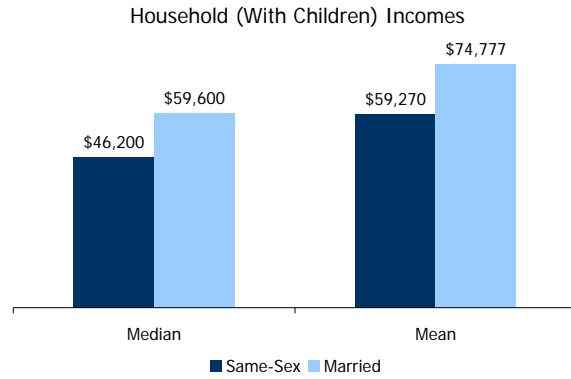


- Individuals in same-sex couples in the U.S. are more likely to work in the private sector: 74% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the private sector, compared to 71% of married individuals; 16% of individuals in same-sex and married couples work in the public sector; and 11% of individuals in same-sex couples are self-employed, compared to 12% of married individuals.
- Individuals in same-sex couples are more likely to have a college degree: 40% of individuals in same-sex couples and 27% of married individuals have earned a college degree.
- Despite the military's historic policies of excluding gay men and lesbians from service, individuals in same-sex couples have served in the military: 10% of individuals in same-sex couples are veterans, compared to 16% of married individuals.

SAME-SEX PARTNERS IN THE U.S. DEPEND UPON ONE ANOTHER IN WAYS THAT ARE SIMILAR TO MARRIED COUPLES

- Couples in which one partner does not work or earns significantly less than the other partner may indicate financial interdependence. Almost one in

- Same-sex parents in the U.S. have fewer financial resources to support their children than married parents. The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$46,200, or 23% lower than that of married parents (\$59,600). The average household income of same-sex couples with children is \$59,270, significantly less than \$74,777 for married parents.
- While 51% of same-sex couples with children own their home, a much larger percentage of married parents (77%) own their home.



CONCLUSION

Census data provide valuable information about gay and lesbian couples in the U.S. While in many respects the U.S.'s same-sex couples look like married couples, those with children have significantly fe

About the Authors

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¹ Unless otherwise noted, we calculate the demographic characteristics from the Census 2000 Public Use Microdata Sample (5% file) available from the U.S. Census Bureau. For a detailed discussion of the Census 2000 methodology used in this report, see *Census Snapshot: Methods Note*, available at <http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/MethodologicalDetailsForCensusSnapshots.pdf>. In estimating numbers of same-sex couples and children raised by same-sex couples, however, we use the total number of same-sex couples from 2005 and the proportion of couples with children from 2000 in order to provide a more up-to-date estimate.

² Tavia Simmons & Martin O'Connell, U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, *Married-Couple and Unmarried-Partner Households*, Census 2000 Special Reports, CENSR-5, p. 4, tab. 2 (Feb. 2003).

³ Gary J. Gates, The Williams Institute, *Same-sex Couples and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Population: New Estimates from the American Community Survey*, p. 11, apx. 1, available at <http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/SameSexCouplesandGLBpopACS.pdf>. Sample sizes for individual states in 2005 are not sufficiently large for the analyses presented in this report, we therefore use data from Census 2000 where samples are on average five times larger than 2005.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Simmons & O'Connell, *supra* note 2.

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, *Unmarried Partner Households by Sex of Partners*, PCT14. Percentages of total households computed by dividing data in PCT14 by data in P15 (total households).

⁷ Computed by multiplying the number of same-sex couples times the percent of same-sex couples with children times the average number of children under 18 in the household.

⁸ Gary J. Gates, M.V. Lee Badgett, Kate Chambers, Jennifer Macomber, The Williams Institute & The Urban Institute,