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Census Snapshot: Idaho

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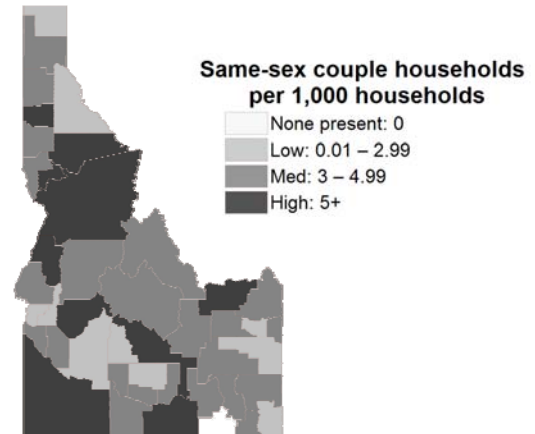
Romero, Adam P
Rosky, Clifford J
Badgett, M.V. Lee
et al.

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Adam P. Romero, *Public Policy Fellow*
Clifford J. Rosky, *Research Fellow*
M.V. Lee Badgett, *Research Director*
Gary J. Gates, *Senior Research Fellow*

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 Idaho. 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 Idaho.¹



In many ways, the almost 2,100 same-sex couples living in Idaho are similar to married couples. According to Census 2000, they live throughout the State, are racially and ethnically diverse, have partners who depend upon one another financially, and actively participate in Idaho’s economy. Census data also show that 16% of same-sex couples in Idaho are raising children. However, same-sex couples with children have fewer economic resources to provide for their families than married parents: they have lower household incomes and lower rates of homeownership.

SAME-SEX COUPLES AND THE LGB POPULATION IN IDAHO

- In 2000, there were 1,873 same-sex couples living in Idaho.²
- By 2005, the number of same-sex couples increased to 2,096.³ This increase likely reflects same-sex couples’ growing willingness to disclose their partnerships on government surveys.
- In 2005, there were an estimated 23,615 gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (single and coupled) living in Idaho.⁴

INDIVIDUALS IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE

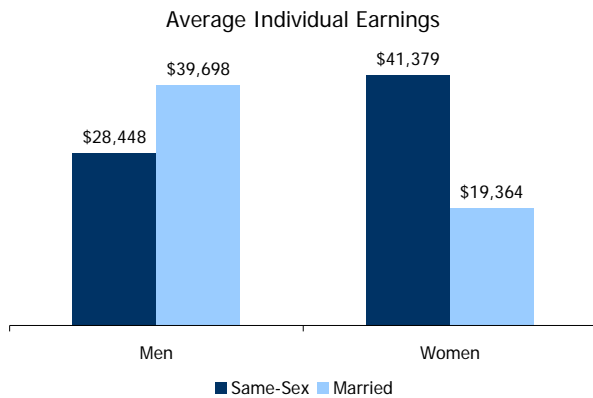
- There are more female same-sex couples (52%) than male same-sex couples (48%) in Idaho.⁵
- Individuals in same-sex couples are, on average, 40 years old, and significantly younger than individuals in married couples (47 years old) in Idaho.

- Same-sex couples live in all but one of the counties in Idaho and constitute 0.6% of coupled households and 0.4% of all households in the state. Ada County reported the most same-sex couples with 561 couples (0.49% of all households in the county), followed by Canyon County with 168 couples (0.37%), and Kootenai County with 132 couples (0.32%). The counties with the highest percentage of same-sex couples are Lewis County (0.90% of all county households), Adams County (0.77%), Owyhee County (0.67%), and Benewah County (0.67%).⁶
- Idaho’s same-sex couples are significantly more racially and ethnically diverse than their married counterparts: 19% of individuals in same-sex couples are nonwhite, compared to 9% of married individuals.

PEOPLE IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN THE STATE ECONOMY

- Individuals in same-sex couples in Idaho are significantly more likely to be employed than married individuals: 85% of individuals in same-sex couples are employed, compared to 66% of married individuals.

- 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 Idaho earn \$28,448 each year, significantly less than \$39,698 for married men. The median income of men in same-sex couples in Idaho is \$24,000, or 25% less than that of married men (\$32,000).
- Women in same-sex couples in Idaho earn an average of \$41,379 per year (with a median of \$37,500), more than married women, whose earnings average \$19,364 (with a median of \$16,000).



- Individuals in same-sex and married couples in Idaho are most likely to work in the private sector: 64% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the private sector, compared to 66% of married individuals; 20% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the public sector, compared to 18% of married individuals; and 15% of individuals in same-sex couples are self-employed, compared to 16% of married individuals.
- Individuals in same-sex couples are more likely to have a college degree: 33% of individuals in same-sex couples and 22% 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 are more likely to have served in the military: 18% of individuals in same-sex couples are veterans, compared to 17% of married individuals.

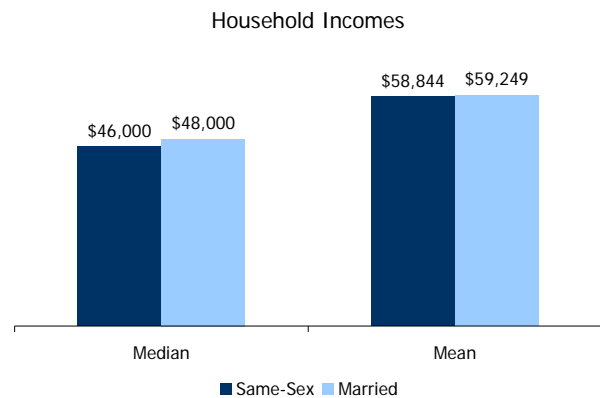
SAME-SEX PARTNERS IN IDAHO DEPEND UPON ONE ANOTHER IN WAYS THAT ARE SIMILAR TO MARRIED COUPLES

- Couples in which one partner does not work or earns significantly less than the other partner may indicate financial interdependence. 3% of same-sex couples have only one wage earner, compared to 30% of married couples.

- The mean income gap between same-sex partners is \$14,914, compared to \$23,684 for married spouses.
- 14% of same-sex couples have at least one partner who is disabled, compared to 27% of married couples.
- 10% of same-sex couples have at least one partner who is age 65 or older, compared to 18% of married couples.

SAME-SEX HOUSEHOLDS IN IDAHO HAVE SIMILAR ECONOMIC RESOURCES TO MARRIED HOUSEHOLDS

- The median income of same-sex coupled households in Idaho is \$46,000, less than that of married couples (\$48,000). The average household income of same-sex couples is \$58,844, less than that of married couples (\$59,249).

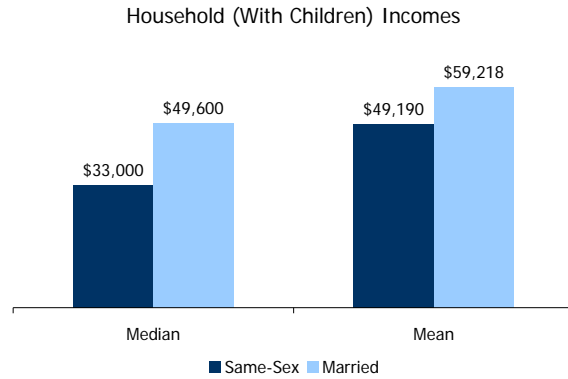


- Same-sex couples are less likely than married couples to own their homes: 72% of same-sex couples in Idaho own their home, compared to 83% of married couples.

SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE RAISING CHILDREN IN IDAHO, YET WITH FEWER ECONOMIC RESOURCES THAN MARRIED PARENTS

- 16% of same-sex couples in Idaho are raising children under the age of 18.
- As of 2005, an estimated 417 of Idaho's children are living in households headed by same-sex couples.⁷
- In Idaho, same-sex couples with children under 18 in the home have, on average, 1.2 children, compared to 2.1 children for married parents.
- 12% of Idaho's same-sex parents have only one wage earner, compared to 35% of married parents.

- Same-sex parents have fewer financial resources to support their children than married parents in Idaho. The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$33,000, or 33% lower than that of married parents (\$49,600). The average household income of same-sex couples with children is \$49,190, less than \$59,218 for married parents.
- While 45% of same-sex couples with children own their home, a larger percentage of married parents (79%) own their home.



CONCLUSION

Census data provide valuable information about gay and lesbian couples in Idaho. While in many respects Idaho's same-sex couples look like married couples, same-sex couples with children have fewer economic resources to provide for their families than married parents and lower rates of homeownership.

	Same-Sex	Married
Race/Ethnicity ⁸		
White*	81.0%	91.1%
Black	0.0%	0.2%
Hispanic	3.2%	5.8%
Asian	0.0%	0.1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native*	6.6%	0.8%
Other*	9.3%	1.1%
Average age*	40.4	46.8
Percent with college degree or better	33.0%	22.3%
Percent employed*	84.9%	66.0%
Employment ⁸		
Private employer	64.5%	65.6%
Public employer	20.3%	17.9%
Self-employed	15.3%	16.0%
Veteran status	17.6%	16.9%
Average individual salary		
Men*	\$28,448	\$39,698
Women*	\$41,379	\$19,364
Median individual salary		
Men	\$24,000	\$32,000
Women	\$37,500	\$16,000

* Difference significant at the 5% level or better (two-tailed tests).
 ^ Difference significant at the 10% level or better (two-tailed tests).

	Same-Sex	Married
At least one partner 65 or older	10.4%	18.0%
Percent disabled	13.6%	27.1%
Average household income	\$58,844	\$59,249
Median household income	\$46,000	\$48,000
Income gap between partners*	\$14,914	\$23,684
Single wage earner*	3.2%	30.5%
Homeownership	72.2%	83.3%
Percent with children under 18*	16.5%	50.0%

* Difference significant at the 5% level or better (two-tailed tests).
 ^ Difference significant at the 10% level or better (two-tailed tests).

	Same-Sex parents	Married parents
Average number of children under 18 in the household*	1.2	2.1
Single wage earner (parents)	12.0%	35.3%
Average household income (parents)	\$49,190	\$59,218
Median household income (parents)	\$33,000	\$49,600
Homeownership (parents)	44.6%	79.0%

* Difference significant at the 5% level or better (two-tailed tests).
 ^ Difference significant at the 10% level or better (two-tailed tests).

Appendix A: Counts and percent of same-sex couples by county

County	Number of same-sex couples	Percent of same-sex couples out of all households
Ada	561	0.49%
Adams	11	0.77%
Bannock	96	0.35%
Bear Lake	3	0.13%
Benewah	24	0.67%
Bingham	49	0.37%
Blaine	39	0.50%
Boise	16	0.61%
Bonner	58	0.39%
Bonneville	78	0.27%
Boundary	11	0.30%
Butte	4	0.37%
Camas	1	0.25%
Canyon	168	0.37%
Caribou	9	0.35%
Cassia	36	0.51%
Clark	2	0.59%
Clearwater	20	0.58%
Custer	6	0.34%
Elmore	25	0.27%
Franklin	16	0.46%
Fremont	19	0.49%
Gem	14	0.25%
Gooding	24	0.48%
Idaho	35	0.58%
Jefferson	24	0.41%
Jerome	26	0.41%
Kootenai	132	0.32%
Latah	50	0.38%
Lemhi	10	0.31%
Lewis	14	0.90%
Lincoln	4	0.28%
Madison	18	0.25%
Minidoka	26	0.37%
Nez Perce	54	0.35%
Oneida	0	0.00%
Owyhee	25	0.67%
Payette	21	0.28%
Power	8	0.31%
Shoshone	16	0.27%
Teton	8	0.38%
Twin Falls	86	0.36%
Valley	14	0.44%
Washington	12	0.32%

About the Authors

Adam P. Romero is Public Policy Fellow at the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. J.D. Yale Law School; A.B., *summa cum laude*, Cornell University. His current research examines the significance of family in society and law, especially as relevant to disabled adults without family.

Clifford J. Rosky is Research Fellow at the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. J.D. Yale Law School; B.A., *summa cum laude*, Amherst College. His current research examines the significance of gender in family law cases involving lesbian and gay parents.

M.V. Lee Badgett is Research Director at the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law, and Director of the Center for Public Policy and Administration at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where she is also on the faculty of the Department of Economics. She studies family policy and employment discrimination related to sexual orientation.

Gary J. Gates is Senior Research Fellow at the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. He studies the demographic and economic characteristics of the lesbian and gay population.

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 Due to rounding, percent may not add to 100.

For more information, contact:
The Williams Institute
UCLA School of Law
Box 951476
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1476
T (310)267-4382
F (310)825-7270
williamsinstitute@law.ucla.edu
www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute