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Census Snapshot: Hawaii

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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 Hawaii. 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 Hawaii.¹



In many ways, the more than 3,200 same-sex couples living in Hawaii 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 Hawaii’s economy. Census data also show that about 21% of same-sex couples in Hawaii are raising children, and they have similar economic resources to provide for their families as married couples.

SAME-SEX COUPLES AND THE LGB POPULATION IN HAWAII

- In 2000, there were 2,389 same-sex couples living in Hawaii.²
- By 2005, the number of same-sex couples increased to 3,262.³ This increase likely reflects same-sex couples’ growing willingness to disclose their partnerships on government surveys.
- In 2005, there were an estimated 41,785 gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (single and coupled) living in Hawaii.⁴

INDIVIDUALS IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE

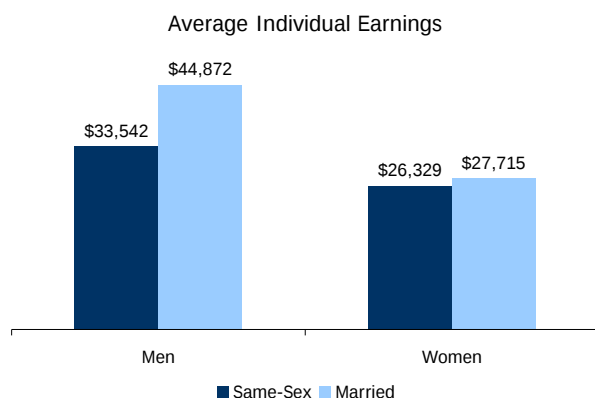
- There are more male same-sex couples (52%) than female same-sex couples (48%) in Hawaii.⁵
- Individuals in same-sex couples are, on average, 43 years old, and significantly younger than individuals in married couples (49 years old) in Hawaii.

- Same-sex couples live in all but one of the counties in Hawaii and constitute 1.0% of coupled households and 0.6% of all households in the state. Honolulu County reported the most same-sex couples with 1,520 couples (0.53% of all households in the county), followed by Maui County with 373 couples (0.86%), and Hawaii County with 368 couples (0.69%). The counties with the highest percentage of same-sex couples are Maui County (0.86% of all county households), Hawaii County (0.69%), and Kauai County (0.63%).⁶
- Hawaii’s same-sex couples are racially and ethnically diverse: 54% of same-sex couples are nonwhite in Hawaii.

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

- Individuals in same-sex couples in Hawaii are significantly more likely to be employed than married individuals: 77% of individuals in same-sex couples are employed, compared to 60% of married individuals.

- Contrary to popular stereotypes, the annual earnings of individuals in same-sex couples are lower than those of married individuals. On average, men in same-sex couples in Hawaii earn \$33,542 each year, significantly less than \$44,872 for married men. The median income of men in same-sex couples in Hawaii is \$25,000, or 31% less than that of married men (\$36,000).
- On average, women in same-sex couples in Hawaii earn \$26,329 each year, less than \$27,715 for married women. The median income of women in same-sex couples in Hawaii is \$20,000, or 17% less than that of married women (\$24,000).



- Individuals in same-sex couples in Hawaii are more likely to work in the private sector: 66% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the private sector, compared to 63% of married individuals; 17% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the public sector, compared to 24% of married individuals; and 16% of individuals in same-sex couples are self-employed, compared to 13% of married individuals.
- Individuals in same-sex couples are significantly more likely to have a college degree: 41% of individuals in same-sex couples and 28% 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: 11% of individuals in same-sex couples are veterans, compared to 17% of married individuals.

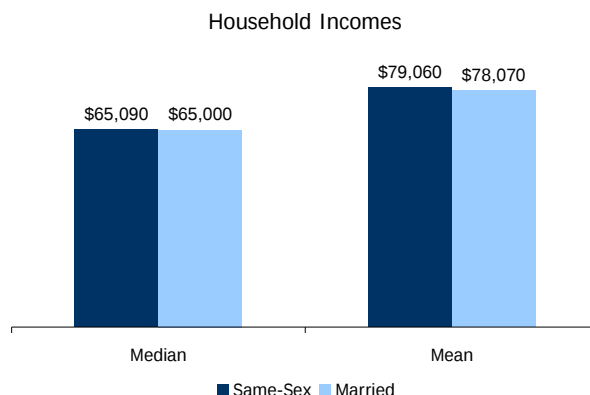
SAME-SEX PARTNERS IN HAWAII DEPEND UPON ONE ANOTHER IN WAYS THAT ARE SIMILAR TO MARRIED COUPLES

- Couples in which one partner does not work or earns significantly less than the other partner may indicate financial interdependence. 30% of same-sex couples have only one wage earner, compared to 29% of married couples.

- The mean income gap between same-sex partners is \$16,637, compared to \$24,488 for married spouses.
- 26% of same-sex couples have at least one partner who is disabled, compared to 28% of married couples.
- 14% of same-sex couples have at least one partner who is age 65 or older, compared to 22% of married couples.

SAME-SEX HOUSEHOLDS IN HAWAII HAVE SIMILAR ECONOMIC RESOURCES AS MARRIED HOUSEHOLDS

- The median income of same-sex coupled households in Hawaii is \$65,090, compared to \$65,000 for married couples. The average household income of same-sex couples is \$79,060, compared to \$78,070 for married couples.

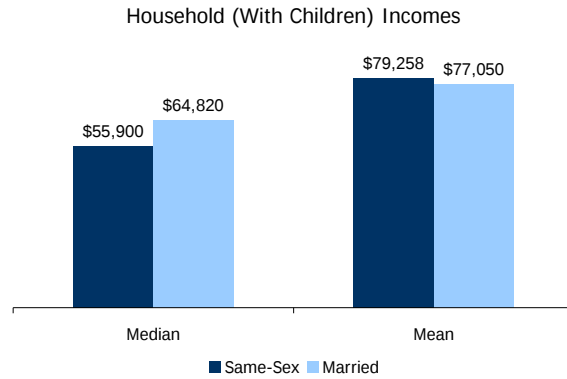


- Same-sex couples are significantly less likely than married couples to own their homes: 44% of same-sex couples in Hawaii own their home, compared to 66% of married couples.

SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE RAISING CHILDREN IN HAWAII WITH SIMILAR ECONOMIC RESOURCES AS MARRIED PARENTS

- 21% of same-sex couples in Hawaii are raising children under the age of 18.
- As of 2005, an estimated 1,164 of Hawaii's children are living in households headed by same-sex couples.⁷
- In Hawaii, married and same-sex couples with children under 18 in the home have, on average, two children.
- More than 1% of Hawaii's adopted children (or 95 children) live with a lesbian or gay parent.⁸
- 46% of Hawaii's same-sex parents have only one wage earner, compared to 30% of married parents.

- Same-sex parents in Hawaii have similar financial resources to support their children as married parents. The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$55,900, compared to \$64,820 for married parents. The average household income of same-sex couples with children is \$79,258, compared to \$77,050 for married parents.
- While 45% of same-sex couples with children own their home, a larger percentage of married parents (60%) own their home.



CONCLUSION

Census data provide valuable information about gay and lesbian couples in Hawaii. In many respects, Hawaii's same-sex couples are similar to married couples. Many same-sex couples in Hawaii are raising children, and they have economic resources similar to married couples to provide for their families.

Table One: Characteristics of individuals in couples

	Same-Sex	Married
Race/Ethnicity ⁹		
White*	45.6%	26.9%
Black	2.5%	1.8%
Hispanic	7.3%	5.1%
Asian*	28.0%	53.4%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.0%	0.2%
Other	16.7%	12.6%
Average age*	43.2	49.1
Percent with college degree or better*	41.2%	28.1%
Percent employed*	77.3%	60.0%
Employment ⁹		
Private employer	66.5%	62.6%
Public employer	16.7%	23.7%
Self-employed	16.3%	13.3%
Veteran status [^]	11.1%	17.2%
Average individual salary		
Men*	\$33,542	\$44,872
Women	\$26,329	\$27,715
Median individual salary		
Men	\$25,000	\$36,000
Women	\$20,000	\$24,000

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

Table Two: Characteristics of couples

	Same-Sex	Married
At least one partner 65 or older	13.9%	21.9%
Percent disabled	25.8%	28.3%
Average household income	\$79,060	\$78,070
Median household income	\$65,090	\$65,000
Income gap between partners*	\$16,637	\$24,488
Single wage earner	30.0%	28.9%
Homeownership*	43.7%	66.1%
Percent with children under 18*	20.7%	50.1%

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

Table Three: Characteristics of couples with children

	Same-Sex parents	Married parents
Average number of children under 18 in the household	1.7	2.0
Single wage earner (parents)	46.4%	30.1%
Average household income (parents)	\$79,258	\$77,050
Median household income (parents)	\$55,900	\$64,820
Homeownership (parents)	45.1%	59.8%

* 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
Hawaii	368	0.69%
Honolulu	1520	0.53%
Kalawao	0	0.00%
Kauai	128	0.63%
Maui	373	0.86%

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.

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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, *Adoption and Foster Care by Gay and Lesbian Parents in the United States* (2007), available at <http://www.law.ucla.edu/Williamsinstitute/publications/Policy-Adoption-index.html>.

⁹ Due to rounding, percent may not add to 100.

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