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Same-sex Couples in Ohio: A demographic summary



by Gary J. Gates
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Introduction

This research brief offers analyses of data from the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) to describe the characteristics of same-sex couples and their families in Ohio compared to their different-sex married counterparts.

Same-sex couples are identified in the ACS when an adult in the household is identified as either the "husband/wife" or "unmarried partner" of the person who filled out the survey, referred to as the householder, and both partners or spouses are of the same sex. These analyses combine ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) files from 2011 and 2012, yielding sample sizes of:

- 323 same-sex couples
- 103 children under age 18 being raised by same-sex couples
- 46,868 different-sex married couples
- 33,283 children under age 18 being raised by different-sex couples

Same-sex couples

Tabulations from Census 2010 show that there are 19,684 same-sex couples living in Ohio. These couples were identified in all but three of Ohio's counties. The majority of same-sex couples are female (54%).¹

Age

The average age of individuals in same-sex couples in Ohio is nine years younger than that of different-sex married couples—42.7 and 51.7 years old, respectively. Table 1 shows the percentages of adults in same-sex and different-sex married couples by age group. The lowest percentage of same-sex couples is in the 65 and over group (6%) while the lowest percentage of different-sex married couples is in the youngest age group of those under age 30 (6%).

Table 1. Individuals in couples, by age (2011-2012 ACS)

Age	Same-sex	Different-sex married
<30	20%	6%
30-49	49%	39%
50-64	25%	35%
65+	6%	20%

More than one tenth of individuals in same-sex couples in Ohio are members of racial or ethnic

minorities. Table 2 shows that 13% of individuals in same-sex couples are members of racial or ethnic minorities compared to 11% of individuals in different-sex married couples.

Latinos and Latinas comprise 2% of individuals in same-sex couples and different-sex married couples. The portion of African-Americans is 8% among those in same-sex couples and 6% among those in different-sex married couples. Asians, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders comprise 0.3% of individuals in same-sex couples and 2% of those in different-sex married couples.

Table 2. Individuals in couples, by race/ethnicity (2011-2012 ACS)

Race/ethnicity	Same-sex	Different-sex married
White	87%	89%
African-American	8%	6%
Latino/a	2%	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.3%	2%
Am. Indian/AK Native	0.2%	0.1%
Other	2%	1%

Same-sex couples with children

Nearly one in five same-sex couples in Ohio (19%) are raising children under age 18 in their homes. More than 3,760 same-sex-couple households in the state are raising nearly 6,800 children.

More than half (53%) of children being raised by same-sex couples in Ohio are biological children, 6% are stepchildren, 13% are adopted, and 0.1% are foster children. This implies that same-sex couples in the state are raising an estimated 3,600 biological children, 400 stepchildren, and 900 adopted children. More than a quarter (28%) of children being raised by same-sex couples in Ohio, approximately 1,900 children, are identified as grandchildren, other relatives, or other children who are not relatives.

¹ Gates, GJ, Cooke, A (2011). *Ohio Census Snapshot: 2010*. Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. Retrieved from: http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Census2010Snapshot_Ohio_v2.pdf.

Same-sex couples in Ohio are more likely than their different-sex married counterparts to be raising an adopted child. Approximately 13% of the children of same-sex couples in Ohio are adopted, compared to 2% of the children of different-sex married couples. 15% of same-sex couples with children have an adopted child, compared to 3% of different-sex married couples.

Same-sex couples in Ohio are somewhat less likely to be fostering children than different-sex married couples. Approximately 0.1% of the children of same-sex couples in Ohio are fostered, compared to 0.2% of the children of different-sex married couples.

Race/ethnicity

Nearly three in ten individuals in same-sex couples who are members of racial or ethnic minorities (29%) are raising a child under age 18, compared to 18% of their White counterparts.

Income

The median annual household income of same-sex couples with children under age 18 in the home is 31% lower than the median annual household income of comparable different-sex married couples (\$53,339 versus \$77,786).

This may in part be because, compared to different-sex married couples raising children, same-sex couples with children include a higher portion of female couples, who tend to have lower earnings than different-sex married couples.

About the author

Gary J. Gates, PhD is the Williams Distinguished Scholar and a national expert in the demographic, geographic, and economic characteristics of the LGBT population.

About the Institute

The Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Law and Public Policy at UCLA School of Law advances law and public policy through rigorous, independent research and scholarship, and disseminates its work through a variety of education programs and media to judges, legislators, lawyers, other policymakers and the public. These studies can be accessed at the Williams Institute website.

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