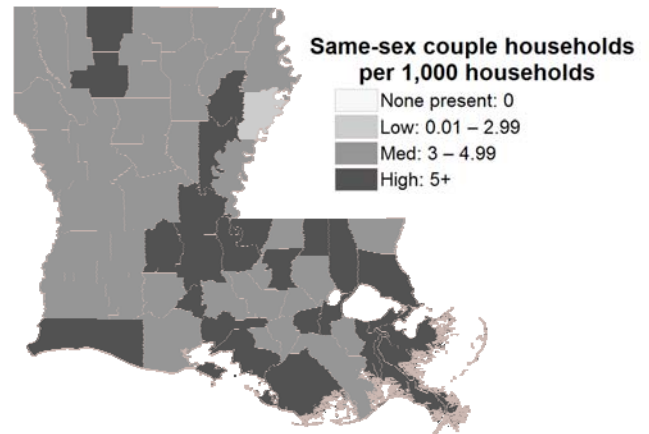


## LOUISIANA

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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 Louisiana. 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 Louisiana.<sup>1</sup>



In many ways, the more than 9,000 same-sex couples living in Louisiana 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 Louisiana’s economy. Census data also show that 25% of same-sex couples in Louisiana are raising children. However, same-sex couples, especially those with children, have fewer economic resources to provide for their families than their married counterparts: they have lower household incomes and lower rates of homeownership.

### SAME-SEX COUPLES AND THE LGB POPULATION IN LOUISIANA

- In 2000, there were 8,808 same-sex couples living in Louisiana.<sup>2</sup>
- By 2005, the number of same-sex couples increased to 9,006.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2005, there were an estimated 102,315 gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (single and coupled) living in Louisiana.<sup>4</sup>

### INDIVIDUALS IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE

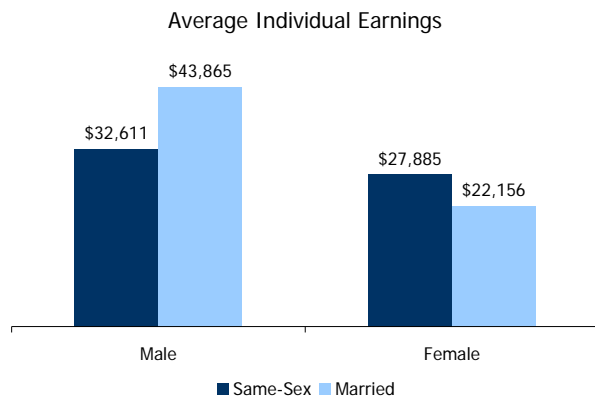
- There are more female same-sex couples (53%) than male same-sex couples (47%) in Louisiana.<sup>5</sup>
- Individuals in same-sex couples are, on average, 39 years old, and significantly younger than individuals in married couples (47 years old) in Louisiana.

- Same-sex couples live in every parish in Louisiana and constitute 1.0% of coupled households and 0.5% of all households in the state. Orleans Parish reported the most same-sex couples with 1,768 couples (0.94% of all households in the county), followed by Jefferson Parish with 998 couples (0.57%), and East Baton Rouge Parish with 796 couples (0.51%). The parishes with the highest percentage of same-sex couples are Orleans Parish (0.94% of all county households), Pointe Coupee Parish (0.63%), Claiborne Parish (0.59%), and Catahoula Parish (0.59%).<sup>6</sup>
- Louisiana’s same-sex couples are more racially and ethnically diverse than their married counterparts: 28% of same-sex couples are nonwhite, compared to 24% of married couples.

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

- Individuals in same-sex couples in Louisiana are significantly more likely to be employed than are married individuals: 76% of individuals in same-sex couples are employed, compared to 62% 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 Louisiana earn \$32,611 each year, significantly less than \$43,865 for married men. The median income of men in same-sex couples in Louisiana is \$28,600, or 18% less than that of married men (\$35,000).
- Women in same-sex couples in Louisiana earn an average of \$27,885 per year (with a median of \$24,000), more than married women, whose earnings average \$22,156 (with a median of \$18,000). Women in same-sex couples earn less than married men as well as men in same-sex couples.



- Individuals in same-sex couples in Louisiana are more likely to work in the private sector: 74% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the private sector, compared to 69% of married individuals; 17% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the public sector, compared to 18% of married individuals; and 9% of individuals in same-sex couples are self-employed, compared to 12% of married individuals.
- Individuals in same-sex couples are significantly more likely to have a college degree: 32% of individuals in same-sex couples and 21% 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: 8% of individuals in same-sex couples are veterans, compared to 16% of married individuals.

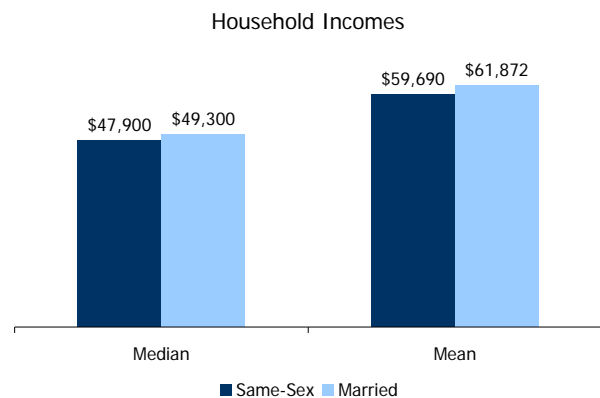
### SAME-SEX PARTNERS IN LOUISIANA DEPEND UPON ONE ANOTHER IN WAYS THAT ARE SIMILAR TO MARRIED COUPLES

- Couples in which one partner does not work or earns significantly less than the other partner may indicate financial interdependence. 29% of same-sex couples have only one wage earner, compared to 35% of married couples.

- The income gap between same-sex partners is \$19,124, compared to \$25,885 for married spouses.
- 32% of same-sex couples have at least one partner who is disabled, compared to 33% of married couples.
- 6% 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 LOUISIANA HAVE FEWER ECONOMIC RESOURCES THAN MARRIED HOUSEHOLDS

- The median income of same-sex coupled households in Louisiana is \$47,900, less than that of married couples (\$49,300). The average household income of same-sex couples is \$59,690, less than \$61,872 for married couples.

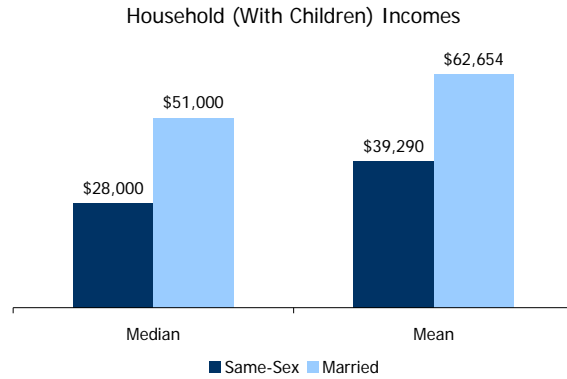


- Same-sex couples are significantly less likely than married couples to own their homes: 57% of same-sex couples in Louisiana own their home, compared to 84% of married couples.

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

- About 25% of same-sex couples in Louisiana are raising children under the age of 18.
- As of 2005, an estimated 4,157 of Louisiana's children are living in households headed by same-sex couples.<sup>7</sup>
- In Louisiana, married and same-sex couples with children under 18 in the home have, on average, 2 children.
- More than 2% of Louisiana's adopted children (or 469 children) live with a lesbian or gay parent.<sup>8</sup>
- 50% of same-sex parents have only one wage earner, compared to 37% of married parents.

- Same-sex parents have far fewer financial resources to support their children than married parents in Louisiana. The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$28,000, or 45% lower than that of married parents (\$51,000). The average household income of same-sex couples with children is \$39,290, significantly less than \$62,654 for married parents.
- While 49% of same-sex couples with children own their home, a significantly larger percentage of married parents (80%) own their home.



## CONCLUSION

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

	Same-Sex	Married
Race/Ethnicity <sup>9</sup>		
White	71.8%	76.3%*
Black	19.2%	18.6%
Hispanic	6.2%	2.3%*
Asian	0.5%	1.4%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.7%	0.5%
Other	1.6%	0.9% ^
Average age	39.0	47.2*
Percent with a college degree or better	32.0%	21.3%*
Percent Employed	75.6%	62.1%*
Employment <sup>9</sup>		
Private employer	74.1%	69.1% ^
Public employer	16.6%	18.4%
Self-employed	9.0%	12.2% ^
Veteran Status	8.1%	15.7%*
Average individual salary		
Men	\$32,611	\$43,865*
Woman	\$27,885	\$22,156*
Median individual salary		
Men	\$28,600	\$35,000
Woman	\$24,000	\$18,000

\* 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	6.3%	17.9%*
Percent disabled	31.8%	32.9%
Average household income	\$59,690	\$61,872
Median household income	\$47,900	\$49,300
Income gap between partners	\$19,124	\$25,885*
Single wage earner	28.6%	34.6% ^
Homeownership	57.3%	83.8%*
Percent with children under 18	24.8%	49.7%*

\* 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	1.9	1.9
Single wage earner (parents)	50.4%	37.3% ^
Average household income (parents)	\$39,290	\$62,654*
Median household income (parents)	\$28,000	\$51,000
Homeownership	49.0%	80.4%*

\* 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 parish**

Parish	Number of same-sex couples	Percent of same-sex couples out of all households
Acadia	86	0.41%
Allen	37	0.46%
Ascension	131	0.49%
Assumption	30	0.36%
Avoyelles	77	0.52%
Beauregard	43	0.36%
Bienville	33	0.54%
Bossier	126	0.34%
Caddo	427	0.44%
Calcasieu	320	0.47%
Caldwell	12	0.30%
Cameron	18	0.50%
Catahoula	24	0.59%
Claiborne	37	0.59%
Concordia	25	0.33%
De Soto	35	0.36%
East Baton Rouge	796	0.51%
East Carroll	9	0.30%
East Feliciana	25	0.37%
Evangeline	71	0.56%
Franklin	41	0.53%
Grant	24	0.34%
Iberia	127	0.50%
Iberville	50	0.47%
Jackson	21	0.35%
Jefferson	998	0.57%
Jefferson Davis	53	0.46%
La Salle	18	0.34%
Lafayette	364	0.50%
Lafourche	138	0.43%
Lincoln	53	0.35%
Livingston	134	0.41%
Madison	22	0.49%
Morehouse	56	0.49%
Natchitoches	45	0.32%
Orleans	1768	0.94%
Ouachita	250	0.45%
Plaquemines	46	0.51%
Pointe Coupee	53	0.63%
Rapides	228	0.48%
Red River	14	0.41%
Richland	35	0.47%
Sabine	41	0.44%
St. Bernard	131	0.52%
St. Charles	81	0.49%
St. Helena	22	0.57%
St. James	38	0.54%
St. John the Baptist	81	0.57%

Parish	Number of same-sex couples	Percent of same-sex couples out of all households
St. Landry	169	0.52%
St. Martin	84	0.49%
St. Mary	103	0.53%
St. Tammany	356	0.51%
Tangipahoa	189	0.52%
Tensas	5	0.21%
Terrebonne	191	0.53%
Union	36	0.41%
Vermillion	89	0.45%
Vernon	57	0.31%
Washington	81	0.49%
Webster	60	0.36%
West Baton Rouge	34	0.44%
West Carroll	16	0.36%
West Feliciana	19	0.52%
Winn	25	0.42%

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**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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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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).

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Simmons & O'Connell, *supra* note 2.

<sup>6</sup> 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).

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> 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>.

<sup>9</sup> Due to rounding, percent may not add to 100.

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