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Census Snapshot: Michigan

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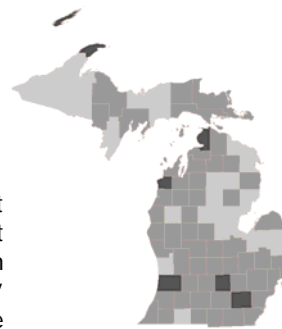
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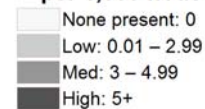
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Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, this report provides demographic and economic information about same-sex couples and same-sex couples raising children in Michigan. We compare same-sex “unmarried partners,” which the Census Bureau defines as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



Same-sex couple households per 1,000 households



In many ways, the more than 22,000 same-sex couples living in Michigan are similar to married couples. According to Census 2000, they live throughout the state, are racially and ethnically diverse, have partners that depend upon one another financially, and actively participate in Michigan’s economy. Census data also show that 18% of same-sex couples in Michigan are raising children. However, same-sex couples in Michigan, particularly those with children, 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 MICHIGAN

- In 2000, there were 15,368 same-sex couples living in Michigan.²
- By 2005, the number of same-sex couples increased to more than 22,000.³ This increase likely reflects same-sex couples’ growing willingness to disclose their partnerships on government surveys.
- We estimate that there are more than 251,000 gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (single and coupled) currently living in Michigan.⁴

INDIVIDUALS IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE

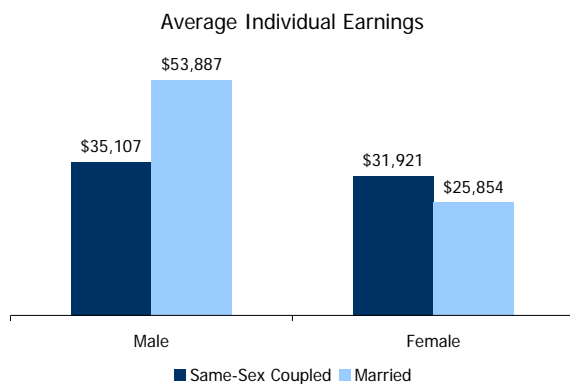
- 53% of same-sex couples in Michigan are female; 47% are male.⁵

- Individuals in same-sex couples are, on average, 38 years old, and significantly younger than individuals in married couples (48 years old) in Michigan.
- Same-sex couples live in every county in Michigan. Wayne County reported the most same-sex couples with 3,255 couples (0.4% of all households), followed by Oakland County with 2,039 couples (0.4%). The county with the highest percentage of same-sex couples is Washtenaw County with 0.7% same-sex couples out of all households (918 couples).⁶
- Michigan’s same-sex couples are more racially and ethnically diverse than their different-sex married counterparts: 22% of same-sex couples are nonwhite, compared to 13% of married couples.

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

- Individuals in same-sex couples in Michigan are more likely to be employed than are married individuals: 78% compared to 65%.

- Contrary to a popular stereotype, men in same-sex couples have significantly lower annual incomes than married men. On average, men in same-sex couples in Michigan earn \$35,107 each year, significantly less than \$53,887 for married men. The median income of individuals in male same-sex couples in Michigan is \$30,000, or 32% less than that of married men (\$44,200).
- Women in same-sex couples, on the other hand, earn an average of \$31,921 per year (with a median of \$28,000), significantly more than married women, whose earnings average \$25,854 (with a median of \$21,000). Same-sex coupled and married women earn less than same-sex coupled and married men.



- Individuals in same-sex couples in Michigan are more likely to work in the private sector and less likely to be self-employed: 80% of individuals in same-sex partnerships work in the private sector, compared to 76% of married individuals; 5% of same-sex individuals are self-employed, compared to 11% of married individuals.
- Individuals in same-sex couples are more likely to have a college degree: 32% of individuals in same-sex couples and 25% 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, albeit at lower rates than married individuals: 10% of individuals in same-sex couples are veterans, compared to 16% of married individuals.

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

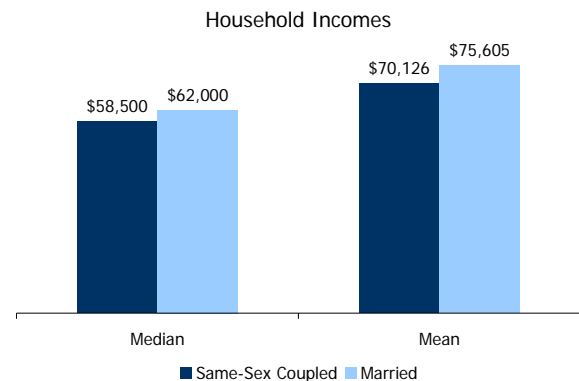
- Couples in which one partner does not work or earns significantly less than the other partner may indicate financial interdependence. Nearly one in

four same-sex couples (or 24%) have only one wage earner, fewer than the nearly one in three (30%) married couples with a single wage earner.

- A higher percentage of same-sex couples in Michigan have at least one partner who is disabled: 33% of same-sex couples, compared to 27% of married couples.

SAME-SEX HOUSEHOLDS IN MICHIGAN HAVE FEWER ECONOMIC RESOURCES THAN MARRIED HOUSEHOLDS

- The median income of same-sex coupled households in Michigan is \$58,500, or 6% less than that of married couples (\$62,000). The average household income of same-sex couples is \$70,126, less than \$75,605 for married couples.

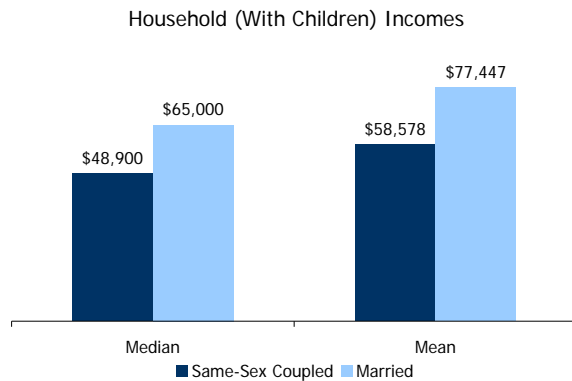


- Same-sex couples are significantly less likely than married couples to own their homes: 63% of same-sex couples in Michigan own their home, compared to 89% of married couples.

SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE RAISING CHILDREN IN MICHIGAN

- Approximately 18% of same-sex couples in Michigan are raising children under the age of 18.
- As of 2005, an estimated 7,800 of Michigan's children are living in households headed by same-sex couples.⁷
- In Michigan, married and same-sex couples with children under 18 in the home have, on average, 2 children.
- Roughly 1.6% of Michigan's adopted children live with a lesbian or gay parent.⁸
- Same-sex parents have fewer financial resources to support their children than married parents. The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$48,900, or 25% lower

than that of married parents (\$65,000). The average household income of same-sex couples with children is \$58,578, significantly less than \$77,447 for married parents.



- While 51% of same-sex couples with children own a home, a much larger percent of married parents (87%) own a home.

CONCLUSION

Census data provide valuable information about gay and lesbian couples in Michigan. While in many respects Michigan's same-sex couples look like married couples, on average, they have fewer resources to provide for their families.

Table One: Characteristics of individuals in couples

	Same-Sex	Married
Race/Ethnicity ⁹		
White	78%	87%*
Black	15%	7%*
Asian	1%	2%
Hispanic	3%	2%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1%	<1%
Other	3%	1%*
Average age	38	48*
Percent with a college degree or better	32%	25%*
Percent Employed	78%	65%*
Employment		
Private employer	80%	76% [^]
Public employer	15%	13%
Self-employed	5%	11%*
Veteran Status	10%	16%*
Average individual salary		
Men	\$35,107	\$53,887*
Woman	\$31,921	\$25,854*
Median individual salary		
Men	\$30,000	\$44,200
Woman	\$28,000	\$21,000

* 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 over 65	7%	18%*
Percent disabled	33%	27%*
Average household income	\$70,126	\$75,605*
Median household income	\$58,500	\$62,000
Income gap between partners	\$22,869	\$32,464*
Single wage earner	24%	30%*
Homeownership	63%	89%*
Percent with children under 18	18%	47%*

* Difference significant at the 5% 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	2	2
Single wage earner (parents)	26%	35%
Average household income (parents)	\$58,578	\$77,447*
Median household income (parents)	\$48,900	\$65,000
Homeownership	51%	87%*

* Difference significant at the 5% 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
Alcona	19	0.40%
Alger	11	0.30%
Allegan	215	0.60%
Alpena	28	0.20%
Antrim	40	0.40%
Arenac	18	0.30%
Barry	69	0.30%
Bay	129	0.30%
Benzie	34	0.50%
Berrien	290	0.50%
Branch	71	0.40%
Calhoun	197	0.40%
Cass	72	0.40%
Charlevoix	32	0.30%
Cheboygan	44	0.40%
Chippewa	42	0.30%
Clare	38	0.30%
Clinton	100	0.40%
Crawford	13	0.20%
Delta	51	0.30%
Dickinson	37	0.30%
Eaton	144	0.40%
Emmet	64	0.50%
Genesee	648	0.40%
Gladwin	23	0.20%
Gogebic	21	0.30%
Grand Traverse	131	0.40%
Gratiot	45	0.30%
Hillsdale	66	0.40%
Houghton	29	0.20%
Huron	47	0.30%
Ingham	687	0.60%
Ionia	65	0.30%
Iosco	27	0.20%
Iron	11	0.20%
Isabella	94	0.40%
Jackson	230	0.40%
Kalamazoo	450	0.50%
Kalkaska	28	0.40%
Kent	976	0.50%
Lake	10	0.20%
Lapeer	114	0.40%
Leelanau	37	0.40%
Lenawee	113	0.30%
Livingston	183	0.30%
Mackinac	19	0.40%
Macomb	1014	0.30%
Manistee	35	0.40%

County	Number of same-sex couples	Percent of same-sex couples out of all households
Marquette	98	0.40%
Mason	36	0.30%
Mecosta	51	0.30%
Menominee	20	0.20%
Midland	89	0.30%
Missaukee	18	0.30%
Monroe	178	0.30%
Montcalm	81	0.40%
Montmorency	16	0.40%
Muskegon	280	0.40%
Newaygo	62	0.40%
Oakland	2039	0.40%
Oceana	37	0.40%
Ogemaw	35	0.40%
Osceola	37	0.40%
Oscoda	11	0.30%
Otsego	27	0.30%
Ottawa	236	0.30%
Presque Isle	13	0.20%
Roscommon	25	0.20%
Saginaw	282	0.40%
Sanilac	46	0.30%
Shiawassee	101	0.40%
St. Clair	198	0.30%
St. Joseph	70	0.30%
Tuscola	41	0.20%
Van Buren	130	0.50%
Washtenaw	918	0.70%
Wayne	3255	0.40%
Wexford	40	0.30%

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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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*, PCT014.

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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