

**UCLA**

**Census Snapshots**

**Title**

Same-Sex Couples and Same-Sex Couples Raising Children in California: Data from Census 2000

**Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7bg78074>

**Authors**

Sears, Brad  
Badgett, M.V. Lee

**Publication Date**

2004-05-01

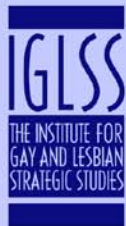
**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES  
RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA  
DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**

**MAY 2004**



*the*  
**Williams  
PROJECT**

R. Bradley Sears, Esq.  
UCLA School of Law  
University of California, Los Angeles  
Williams Project on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy



M.V. Lee Badgett, Ph.D.  
Dept. of Economics, University of Massachusetts Amherst  
Institute for Gay and Lesbian Strategic Studies

# SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA

## DATA FROM CENSUS 2000

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As California considers whether to extend the right to marry to same-sex couples, it is important to consider the characteristics of the California families that will be directly impacted. This report provides demographic and economic information from Census 2000 about same-sex couples and same-sex couples raising children in California.

#### SAME-SEX COUPLES IN CALIFORNIA

- There are over 90,000 same-sex couples living in California, more than in any other state.
- Same-sex couples live throughout California; they live in every California county.
- Same-couples represent the full diversity of the California population. There are individuals in same-sex couples of every race and ethnicity: Spanish speakers and non-Spanish speakers, citizens and non-citizens, people with disabilities and the able-bodied.
- Individuals in same-sex couples actively contribute to the California economy. Seventy one percent of members of same-sex couples are employed compared with 62% of members of married couples. Roughly the same percentage of individuals in both groups work for the government, the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, and are self-employed.
- Individuals in same-sex couples have served California and the U.S. in the armed forces. Eleven percent of individuals in same-sex couples are veterans compared with 14% of individuals in married couples.
- Individuals in same-sex couples depend on each other economically, indicating that they need the legal and economic protections that marriage provides. For members of same-sex couples, the average difference in total individual incomes was \$37,034 in 1999, compared to \$24,502 for unmarried different-sex couples.
- In addition, in 29% of same-sex couples in California, one person is employed while the other is either unemployed or out of the labor force. By comparison, 24% of unmarried different-sex couples have only one person employed.

In short, many same-sex couples in California are taking on responsibilities to care for each other even though they cannot access the legal rights and obligations provided by marriage.

## SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA DATA FROM CENSUS 2000

### Same-Sex Couples Raising Children in California

- Same-sex couples in California are raising over 70,000 children, including over 50,000 of their own children.
- Over 50% of these children are Hispanic and over 50% are children of color. There are over 4,400 Asian-American children being raised by same-sex couples in California, 3,600 African-American children, 4,500 children of mixed race, 17,600 children of other race, 31,000 children of Hispanic origin, and 27,600 White children.
- The children of same-sex couples are more likely to be under five years old, to have disabilities, and to be adopted.
- Compared to married couples with children, same-sex couples with children have fewer economic resources to care for their children. For example, same-sex parents have lower household incomes, lower home ownership rates, and less valuable homes than married couples.
- The median household income for same-sex parents is \$10,000 lower than the median household income for married couples with children; the average household income is over \$13,000 lower.
- Parents in same-sex couples are more likely to be racial minorities, Hispanic, Spanish speakers, non-citizens, and/or disabled than parents in married couples. All of these factors may mean that these parents are more likely to face discrimination in employment or the housing and rental markets, making it more difficult for them to provide for their children.
- Contrary to popular images of affluent, urban, childless gay men, the picture of same-sex couple families in California presented by Census 2000 is quite different. The actual economic situation of same-sex parents suggests that the financial protections and benefits of marriage are likely to be just as important to them as married couples with children. Depriving same-sex couples of marriage deprives both parents and children of the stability, economic security, and support that marriage provides.

## SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA DATA FROM CENSUS 2000

### I. INTRODUCTION

Currently, law suits in California courts challenge the denial of marriage to gay men and lesbians as violating the state constitution, and a proposed bill in the California Assembly would extend marriage licenses to same-sex couples. As California considers whether to extend the right to marry to same-sex couples, it is important to consider the characteristics of the California families that will be directly impacted.

This report provides demographic and economic information from Census 2000 about same-sex couples and same-sex couples raising children in California. To provide a picture of same-sex couples and their children in California, we used data from Census 2000. In most cases we compared married couples with same-sex “unmarried partners,” which the Census Bureau defines as an unmarried couple who “shares living quarters and has a close personal relationship.”<sup>1</sup> We compared economic and household variables for these two sets of couples.

### II. SAME-SEX COUPLES IN CALIFORNIA

Data from Census 2000 demonstrates that California’s exclusion of same-sex couples from marriage impacts over 90,000 couples, or over 180,000 California residents. These individuals represent the full diversity of California’s population, are active contributors to the State’s economy, and have served the State and the country in the armed forces.

#### **There are over 90,000 same-sex couples living in California.**

According to data provided in Census 2000, there are thousands of families in California that are harmed by being denied the legal protections and support provided by marriage. The Census Bureau reports that there are over 92,000 (92,128) same-sex couples living in California.<sup>2</sup> Just over half of California’s same-sex couples (54%) are made up of two men, and 46% are made up of two women.<sup>3</sup>

It is important to note that not all same-sex couples in California identified themselves in Census 2000. Many same-sex couples might have been afraid to identify their sexual orientation to the government on the U.S. Census. Others may not have applied the “unmarried partner” category on the Census to their relationship. In addition, the ability to identify one’s self as a member of a same-sex couple is relatively new and many same-sex couples may not understand how to identify themselves as such on the Census. Surveys of same-sex couples taken after Census 2000 indicate that at least 16-19% of same-sex couples did not identify themselves as such on Census 2000.<sup>4</sup> In light of this undercount, the number of same-sex couples in California is likely to be well over 100,000 couples.

**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA**  
**DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**

**More same-sex couples live in California than any other state.**

Same-sex couples are 1.4% of all couples living in California. California is the state with the highest percentage of same-sex couples, followed by Massachusetts, New York and Vermont. Same-sex couples make up 1.3% of all couples in those states.<sup>5</sup> While California has 11% of all households in the United States, 16% of same-sex couples in the United States live in California.<sup>6</sup>

The Census Bureau has identified San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, and Long Beach as being among the top ten cities of 100,000 or more in terms of same-sex couple households as a percentage of all households.<sup>7</sup>

**Same-sex couples live throughout California.**

There are same-sex couples in every county in California. As a percentage of all couples in each county, same-sex couples range from 0.6% in Glenn and Tehama Counties to 6.9% in San Francisco County. In terms of the absolute numbers of couples, same-sex couples range from 2 couples in Alpine County to over 25,000 couples in Los Angeles County.

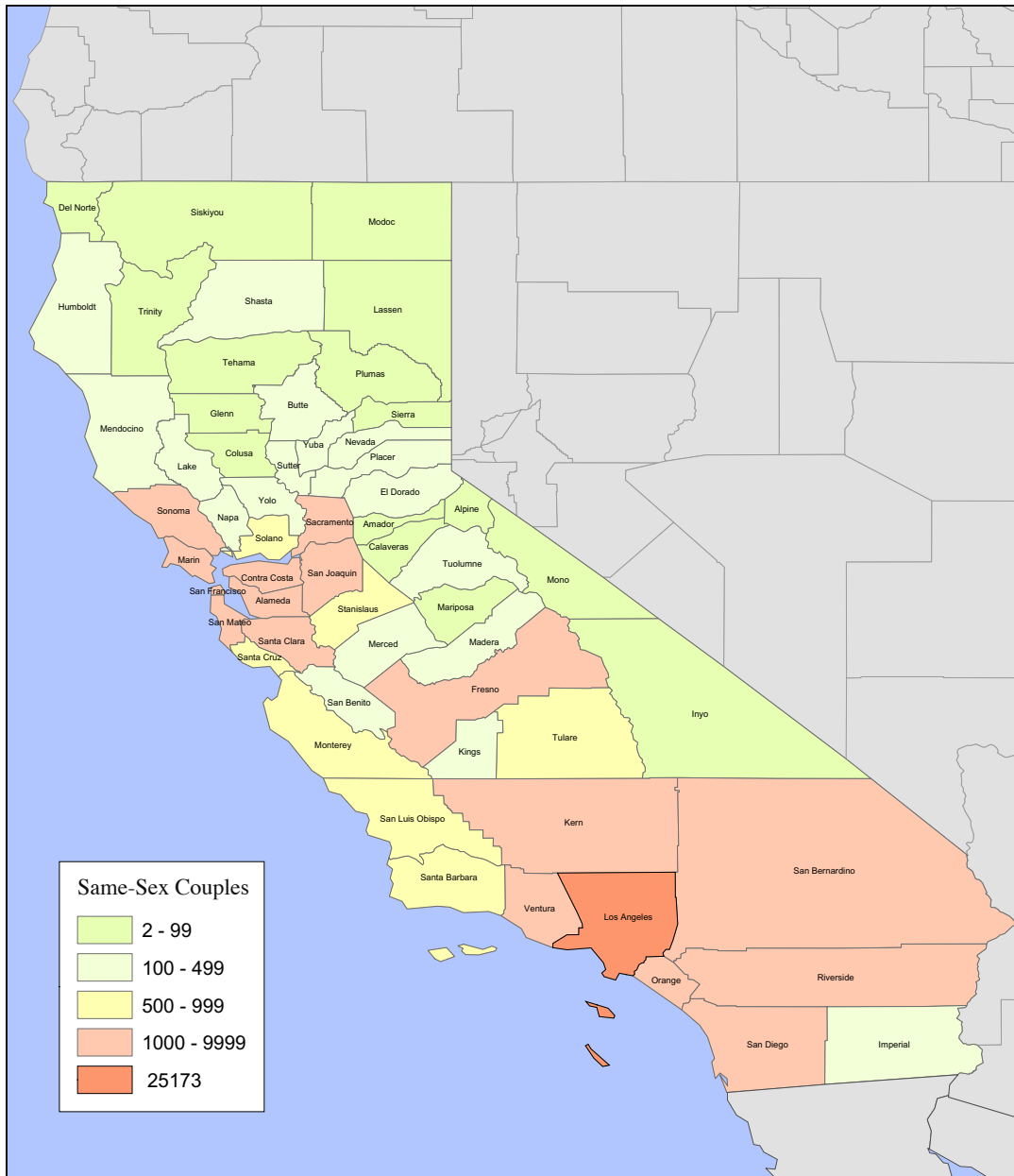
**Table 1 : Same-sex couples by county in California**

County	Same-sex couples as a percent of all couples	Same-sex couples	Male partners	Female partners
Alameda County	2.1%	5,884	2,604	3,280
Alpine County	0.8%	2	2	0
Amador County	0.8%	62	25	37
Butte County	1.0%	428	151	277
Calaveras County	0.8%	85	23	62
Colusa County	0.7%	27	15	12
Contra Costa County	1.3%	2,722	1,316	1,406
Del Norte County	0.8%	42	19	23
El Dorado County	0.9%	351	133	218
Fresno County	1.1%	1,594	785	809
Glenn County	0.6%	33	17	16
Humboldt County	1.4%	383	119	264
Imperial County	0.8%	205	101	104
Inyo County	1.1%	45	24	21
Kern County	0.9%	1,144	560	584
Kings County	0.9%	200	100	100

**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA**  
**DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**

Lake County	1.5%	196	96	100
Lassen County	0.7%	42	20	22
Los Angeles County	1.5%	25,173	14,468	10,705
Madera County	1.1%	265	134	131
Marin County	1.9%	1,052	499	553
Mariposa County	1.2%	50	27	23
Mendocino County	1.5%	284	123	161
Merced County	0.9%	364	173	191
Modoc County	0.9%	20	11	9
Mono County	0.9%	27	14	13
Monterey County	1.2%	911	454	457
Napa County	1.2%	315	147	168
Nevada County	0.9%	213	93	120
Orange County	1.0%	5,524	2,901	2,623
Placer County	0.8%	472	194	278
Plumas County	0.7%	37	18	19
Riverside County	1.3%	4,242	2,599	1,643
Sacramento County	1.5%	3,534	1,642	1,892
San Benito County	0.9%	100	44	56
San Bernardino County	0.9%	2,888	1,305	1,583
San Diego County	1.4%	7,645	4,311	3,334
San Francisco County	6.9%	8,902	6,549	2,353
San Joaquin County	1.0%	1,139	550	589
San Luis Obispo County	1.0%	500	207	293
San Mateo County	1.4%	2,058	1,047	1,011
Santa Barbara County	1.2%	892	444	448
Santa Clara County	1.2%	3,932	2,027	1,905
Santa Cruz County	1.9%	979	352	627
Shasta County	0.7%	279	127	152
Sierra County	0.9%	8	4	4
Siskiyou County	0.9%	93	41	52
Solano County	1.1%	917	426	491
Sonoma County	2.1%	2,125	886	1,239
Stanislaus County	0.9%	849	399	450
Sutter County	0.7%	126	54	72
Tehama County	0.6%	74	39	35
Trinity County	0.8%	24	14	10
Tulare County	1.0%	696	325	371
Tuolumne County	0.8%	104	42	62
Ventura County	0.9%	1,382	637	745
Yolo County	1.2%	396	137	259
Yuba County	0.8%	102	40	62

**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA  
DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**



**Map 1 - Same-sex couples by county**



**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA**  
**DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**

**Same-couples represent the full diversity of the California population.**

Same-sex couples in California are of every race and ethnicity. In terms of ethnicity, approximately one-fourth of individuals in same-sex couples (25%) and married couples (26%) in California are of Hispanic origin. In addition, 21% of individuals in same-sex couples are Spanish speakers while 23% of individuals in married couples are Spanish speakers.

Like individuals in married couples, individuals in same-sex couples in California are of every race. While roughly the same percentage of individuals in married couples and same-sex couples are likely to identify themselves racially as Black, being of mixed race, or another race, individuals in same-sex couples are about half as likely to be Asian-American and slightly more likely to be White. Same-sex couples in California are more likely to be interracial than married couples. While 15% of married couples in California have partners of different races or origins, 24% of same-sex couples in California have partners with different races or origins.<sup>8</sup>

Members of same-sex couples in California are slightly more likely to be U.S. citizens than members of married couples. Eighty-five percent of individuals in same-sex couples are citizens, while 82% of individuals in married couples are citizens.

Married and same-sex couples in California include approximately the same percentage of people with disabilities. While 21% of individuals in same-sex couples are disabled, 20% of individuals in married couples are disabled.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 2: Diversity of all same-sex couples in California compared to all married couples in California**

Characteristic	Same-Sex Couples	Married Couples
<b>White</b>	71%	66%
<b>Black</b>	5%	4%
<b>Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</b>	6%	12%
<b>Other/Mixed</b>	18%	18%
<b>Interracial Couples (household data)</b>	24%	15%
<b>Percent speaking Spanish in household</b>	21%	23%
<b>Hispanic</b>	25%	26%
<b>Citizens</b>	85%	82%
<b>People with disabilities</b>	21%	20%

*Note: Interracial couples and the percent speaking Spanish are based on household data as opposed to individual data. The rest of the data is based on individual data.*

**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA**  
**DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**

**Individuals in same-sex couples actively contribute to the California economy.**

Factors identified by Census 2000 also indicate that members of same-sex couples actively contribute to the California economy. Individuals in married couples and same-sex couples are similar in age, with average and median ages in the 40s.

In terms of employment, 71% of individuals in same-sex couples are employed, compared with 62% of members of married couples. Although members of same-sex couples are more likely to be employed, members of both sets of couples have similar employment patterns. Roughly the same percentage of individuals in both groups work for the government, the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, and are self-employed.

Given the military’s official policy of excluding gay men and lesbians from service, individuals in married couples and same-sex couples are also surprisingly similar in terms of their veteran status. While 14% of individuals in married couples in California are veterans, 11% of individuals in same-sex couples are veterans.

**Table 3: Economic characteristics of individuals in same-sex couples in California compared with individuals in married couples in California**

Characteristic	Same-sex couples	Married couples
Average age	43	47
Median age	40	44
Percent employed	71%	62%
Type of employment for those employed		
• Private-for profit sector	63%	64%
• Non-profit sector	8%	6%
• Public sector (federal, state, local govt.)	16%	16%
• Self-employed	13%	14%
Veteran status	11%	14%

**Individuals in same-sex couples depend on each other economically, indicating that they need the legal and economic protections that marriage provides.**

Many same-sex couples in California are in positions that suggest a high level of interdependence, but these couples cannot marry and receive the public and private support that makes such interdependence more secure. By being denied the ability to marry under California law, these interdependent couples are highly vulnerable.

**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA**  
**DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**

For example, couples care for each other when one partner is sick or disabled. In 9.5% of same-sex couples, one or both partners are 65 or over. In 21.7% of same-sex couples (compared with 19.5% of married couples), one member of the couple has a disability while the other does not. In these couples, one partner may be taking on responsibility to provide for or contribute to the care of a senior or disabled partner. However, when they do so they are not afforded the support that marriage would provide.

In addition, in 29% of same-sex couples in California, one person is employed while the other is either unemployed or out of the labor force. By comparison, 34% of married couples have only one person employed, and 24% of different-sex couples have just one earner. This disparity in employment status suggests that at least some members of same-sex couples are paying for a partner's education or taking on full-time child care responsibilities without the protections that marriage provides for such specialization of roles among spouses.

The interdependence of members of same-sex couples in California is also shown by the disparities between members' individual incomes. For members of same-sex couples, the average difference in total individual incomes was \$37,034 in 1999, compared to \$42,497 for married couples and \$24,502 for different-sex unmarried couples. To put that figure in perspective, the average total household income for same-sex couples was \$89,366. Some of the factors that result in these income disparities reflect decisions that couples are likely to make together: hours worked, degree of labor force participation, time in child-rearing, etc. However, they are making these decisions without the protections provided for by marriage. If one partner dies or if the relationship ends, the lower wage-earner may experience financial difficulties without the protection that marriage provides.

**Table 4:**  
**Indicators of interdependence among couples in California, by type of couple**

Indicator of interdependence	Different-sex unmarried couples	Same-sex couples	Married couples
Only one partner employed	24%	29%	34%
Average difference in individual income between partners	\$24,502	\$37,034	\$42,497
Only one partner has a college degree or higher	18%	24%	21%
Only one partner disabled	19%	21%	19%
Only one partner a U.S. citizen	11%	11%	11%

## SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA DATA FROM CENSUS 2000

Factors such as employment status and the difference in individual incomes suggest that same-sex couples in California are more interdependent than different-sex unmarried couples and less interdependent than married couples. This may indicate that some same-sex couples are forming partnerships that more closely resemble the interdependence created by marriage than the relationships of different-sex couples who do not marry. However, they are doing so without the protections of marriage.

The fact that the measures of interdependence are still lower for same-sex couples than for married couples also implies that the lack of access to marriage has increased the independence of individuals in same-sex couples.<sup>10</sup> These couples are not able to achieve a higher and more efficient level of interdependence, like married couples, because they are not allowed to marry. The differences in patterns among same-sex couples also probably indicate that the total group of same-sex couples is comprised of those who would marry and those who would not. Same-sex couples are clearly more interdependent than different-sex unmarried couples, but different-sex couples have the option to marry under existing law.

The statistics above indicate that many same-sex couples in California are taking on responsibilities to care for each other even though they cannot access the legal rights and obligations provided by marriage under California law. By denying these couples marriage, these couples are at great risk in the event of the death or disability of a partner, or in the event the partners separate.

### III. SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA

Marriage contributes to economic and emotional security for children by encouraging couples to enter into long-term relationships that will provide children with stable environments and the care and support of two parents. In addition, the legal rights and obligations of marriage provide for the continued support of children in the event of the death of one or both parents or the termination of the parents' relationship.

#### **Same-sex couples in California are raising over 70,000 children.**

Many same-sex couples in California are raising children. In California in 2000, 28.4% of all householders with a same-sex partner reported that they were raising their "own" children, and 33% percent of female same-sex couples reported having their own children.<sup>11</sup> The Census category of "own" children includes all children who are the biologically-related, adopted, or step children of the householder. It does not include foster children.<sup>12</sup> In comparison, 51% of married couples in California are raising their own children.<sup>13</sup> In short, Census 2000 reveals that over 52,000 gay men and lesbians are parents in California. These figures do not include gay men and lesbians who are single parents.

Also, 32.3% of same-sex couple households in California include children under 18. Unlike "own" children, this figure includes children unrelated to the householder but who are also living in the house. The reason why these children might not be the "own children" of the householder

**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA**  
**DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**

could be due to legal obstacles that same-sex parents face in obtaining legal recognition of their parental status.

In short, same-sex couples in California are raising 70,500 children in their households: 58,600 of these are their “own” children. Both figures suggest a high degree of responsibility for children among same-sex couples in California.

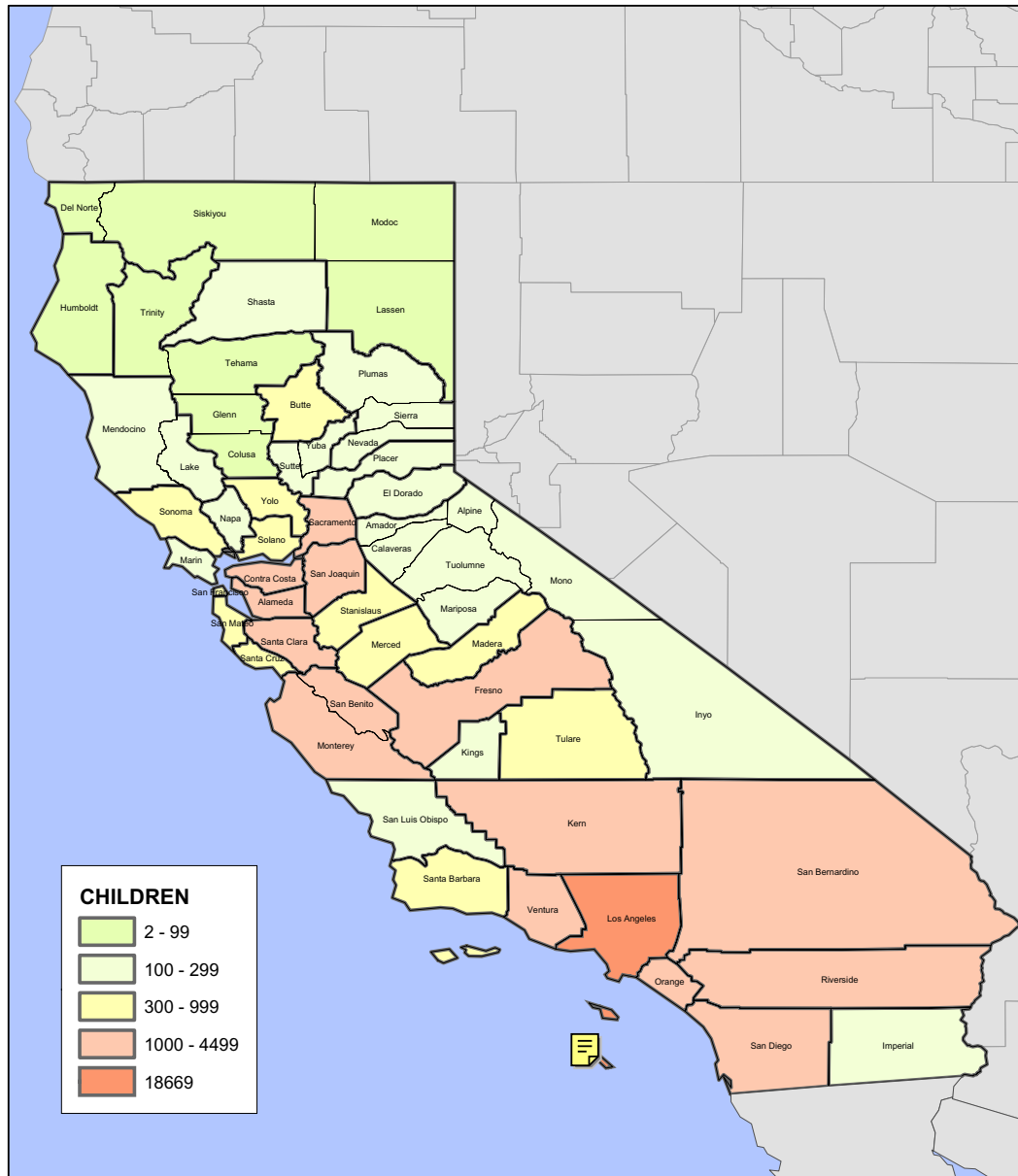
The Census also shows that the children of same-sex couples are twice as likely to be adopted as the children of married couples. While 8% of the children of same-sex couples are adopted, only 4% of the children of married couples are adopted.

California includes 11 of the top 50 counties in the country in terms of the number of same-sex couples who are raising children, including Los Angeles County which is ranked number one.

**Table 5:**  
**Counties in California with the most same-sex couples raising children<sup>14</sup>**

County	Rank nationally	Number of same-sex couples raising children
Los Angeles County	1	8015
Orange County	8	1930
San Diego County	10	1900
Alameda County	12	1410
San Bernardino County	14	1315
Riverside County	17	1260
Santa Clara County	19	1210
Sacramento County	26	960
Contra Costa County	30	755
Fresno County	34	715
San Francisco County	39	655

**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA  
DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**



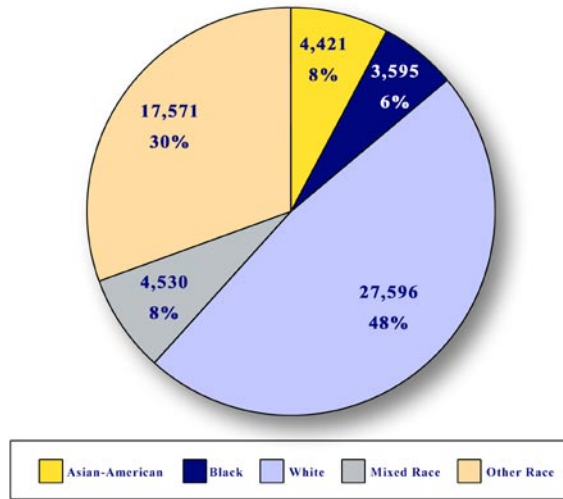
**Map 2 - "Own" children of same-sex couples by county**

**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA**  
**DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**

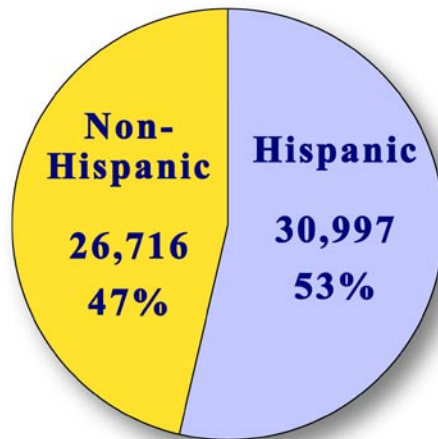
**The children being raised by same-sex couples are racially and ethnically diverse.**

These California children being raised by same-sex parents are in every community. For example, looking just at the “own” children of the householder (biologically related, step-children, or adopted), there are approximately 4,400 Asian-American children being raised by same-sex couples in California, 3,600 African-American children, 4,500 children of mixed race, 17,600 children of other race, 31,000 children of Hispanic origin, and 27,600 White children.

**Race of Own Children Raised by Same-Sex Couples in California**  
 Data from Census 2000



**Ethnicity of “Own” Children Raised by Same-Sex Couples in California**  
 Data from Census 2000



**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA**  
DATA FROM CENSUS 2000

**The children of same sex-couples are more likely to be under five years old, disabled, and adopted.**

Both married couples and same-sex couples with their own children in California have, on average, 2 children. In addition, married couples with children are similar to same-sex parents in terms of average and median age: both groups are in their late 30s.

Children of same-sex couples are slightly younger than children of married couples and more likely to be disabled. They are more than twice as likely to be adopted. Almost 30% of the children being raised by same-sex couples are under five years old, compared with 27% of the children of married couples. Six percent of the children being raised by same-sex couples have disabilities,<sup>15</sup> compared with 5% of the children of married couples. While 2% of the children of married couples are adopted, almost 5% of the children of same-sex couples are adopted.

**Table 6: Characteristics of same-sex couples with children in California compared to married parents**

Household characteristic	Same-sex couple parents	Married parents
Average number of children	2	2
Average age of parents	37	39
Median age of parents	37	38
Percentage of children under 5 years old	29%	27%
Percentage of children with disabilities	6%	5%
Percentage of children who are adopted	5%	2%

**Same-sex couples who are raising children in California need the economic and legal support that marriage provides.**

Comparisons of households with same-sex couples raising their own children and married couples raising their own children show that same-sex parents have fewer economic resources to provide for their children, partly as a result of the financial disadvantages of not being married. For example, same-sex couples are less likely to have health insurance and other employment benefits and more likely to have to pay for adoption services because they are not allowed to marry.



**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA**  
**DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**

Parents in same-sex couples have lower levels of education than parents in married couples. Only 21% of parents in same-sex couples have a college or advanced degree, while 27% of parents in married couples have a college or advanced degree. In addition, while 70% of parents in married couples are employed, only 66% of parents in same-sex couples are employed.

The household incomes of gay and lesbian parents in California are lower than the household incomes for married couples with children. The median household income for same-sex parents is \$10,000 lower than the median household income for married couples with children; the average household income is more than \$13,000 lower.

Many same-sex parents own homes, but at lower rates than married couples with children. While 63.2% of married couples with children in California own their own homes, only 51.1% of same-sex parents own their own homes. In addition, the homes of these same-sex parents are not as valuable. The median property values for married couples with children are \$37,500 higher than the median property values of same-sex couples with children.

**Table 6: Socioeconomic characteristics of same-sex couples with children in California compared to married couples with children**

Household characteristic	Same-sex couples	Married couples
<b>B.A. or advanced degree</b>	21%	27%
<b>Veteran status</b>	6%	7%
<b>Percent of parents employed</b>	66%	70%
<b>Percent homeowners</b>	51.1%	63.2%
<b>Property values (average)</b>	\$272,586	\$289,546
<b>Property values (median)</b>	\$187,500	\$225,000
<b>Household income (average)</b>	\$66,224	\$80,022
<b>Household income (median)</b>	\$51,000	\$61,000

Parents in same-sex couples also differ from individuals in same-sex couples as a whole (as described in section I above) and parents in married couples in ways that might create additional obstacles for them in providing for their children.

Parents in same-sex couples are more likely to be racial minorities, Hispanic, Spanish speakers, non-citizens, and/or disabled. All of these factors may mean that these parents are more likely to face discrimination in employment or the housing and rental markets, making it more difficult for them to provide for their children.

**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA**  
**DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**

While approximately 39% of same-sex parents in California identify themselves as Black, of mixed race, or of another race, only 28% of parents in married couples identify themselves in these three racial categories. Fifty-three percent of parents in same-sex couples identify themselves as White compared with 58% of parents in married couples.

While parents in same-sex couples are 46% Hispanic and 41% Spanish speakers, only 36% of parents in married couples are Hispanic and 32% Spanish speakers.

Thirty-one percent of parents in same-sex couples are non-citizens compared with only 26% of married parents. While 24% of parents in same-sex couples are disabled, only 17% of parents in married couples are disabled.

**Table 7: Diversity of same-sex couples with children in California compared to diversity of married couples with children in California**

Characteristic	Same-Sex Couples	Married Couples
<b>White</b>	53%	58%
<b>Black</b>	6%	4%
<b>Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</b>	8%	14%
<b>Mixed</b>	6%	4%
<b>Other</b>	27%	20%
<b>Percent speaking Spanish in household</b>	41%	32%
<b>Hispanic</b>	46%	36%
<b>Citizens</b>	69%	74%
<b>Percent with disability</b>	24%	17%

Contrary to popular images of affluent, urban, childless gay men, the picture of same-sex couple families in California presented by Census 2000 is quite different. The actual economic situation of same-sex parents suggests that the financial protections and benefits of marriage are likely to be just as important to same-sex couples with children as married couples with children. Depriving same-sex couples of marriage deprives both parents and children of the stability, economic security, and support that marriage provides.

SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA  
DATA FROM CENSUS 2000

ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, data in this report is from the 5% Public Use Micro Samples (PUMS) provided by the U.S. Census Bureau for our calculations (available at <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/PUMS.html>, and <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2003/PUMS5.html>). The Census Bureau also provides household weights and person weights that allow us to make projections from the samples to create estimates for the whole population of couples in California.

<sup>2</sup> Tavia Simmons and Martin O’Connell, Married-Couple and Unmarried-Partner Households, Census 2000 Special Reports, CENSR-5, U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau Feb. 2003, Table2, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Lee Badgett and Marc Rodgers, Left out of the count: Missing same-sex couples in Census 2002, Institute of Gay and Lesbian Stratific Studies, 2003, [http://www.iglss.org/media/files/c2k\\_leftout.pdf](http://www.iglss.org/media/files/c2k_leftout.pdf), accessed on May 5, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Simmons and O’Connell, *supra* note 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* at 7

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* at 8.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at 12, Table 5. The seven race groups used for this analysis were White, Black or African-American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race alone, or two or more races. If either spouse or partner was not in the same single race as the other spouse or partner, or if at least one partner was in a multiple-race group, then the couple was classified as an interracial couple. *Id.* at n. 19.

<sup>9</sup> For Census 2000, disability is defined by reporting a “long lasting condition” such as blindness or deafness, or a condition that limits physical or life activities. Individuals were classified as having a disability if any of the following three conditions was true: 1) They were five years old and over and reported a long-lasting sensory, physical, mental or self-care disability; 2) They were 16 years old and over and reported difficulty going outside the home because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more; or 3) They were 16 to 64 years old and reported difficulty working at a job or business because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more. [http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/meta/long\\_101608.htm](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/meta/long_101608.htm), accessed on 05/05/04.

<sup>10</sup> The other reason that has been offered to explain why same-sex couples’ workforce patterns are different from married couples is that the gender norms that influence married couples’ labor force decisions are not present for same-sex couples. See M. V. Lee Badgett, Money, Myths, and Change: The Economic Lives of Lesbians and Gay Men, University of Chicago Press, 2001.]

<sup>11</sup> Simmons and O’Connell, *supra* note 3, p. 9, Table 4.

<sup>12</sup> *Id.* at n. 16.

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

<sup>14</sup> Lisa Bennet and Gary Gates, The Cost of Marriage Inequality to Children and their Same-Sex Parents, Human Rights Campaign Foundation Report, April 12, 2004. p. 5

<sup>15</sup> This percentage does not include children under five because the Census Bureau does not code them as having disabilities or not.

**SAME-SEX COUPLES AND SAME-SEX COUPLES RAISING CHILDREN IN CALIFORNIA**  
**DATA FROM CENSUS 2000**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to thank the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund for generously providing the Williams Project with funding for this and other studies related to same-sex marriage.