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Census Snapshot: Oregon

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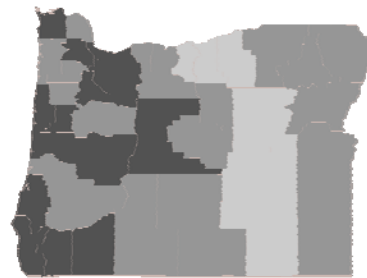
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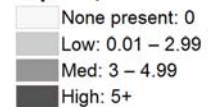
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Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, this report provides demographic and economic information about same-sex couples and same-sex couples raising children in Oregon. We compare same-sex “unmarried partners,” which the Census Bureau defines as an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



Same-sex couple households per 1,000 households



In many ways, the almost 11,000 same-sex couples living in Oregon 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 Oregon’s economy. Census data also show that 19% of same-sex couples in Oregon are raising children, and they have similar economic resources to provide for their families as married couples.

SAME-SEX COUPLES AND THE LGBT POPULATION IN OREGON

- In 2000, there were 8,932 same-sex couples living in Oregon.²
- By 2005, the number of same-sex couples increased to 10,899.³ This increase likely reflects same-sex couples’ growing willingness to disclose their partnerships on government surveys.
- In 2005, there were an estimated 121,645 gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (single and coupled) living in Oregon.⁴

INDIVIDUALS IN SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE

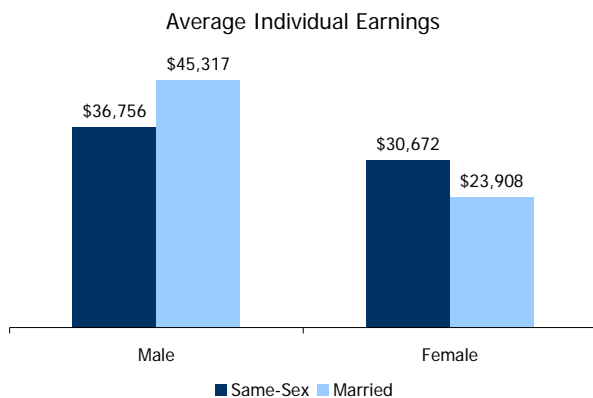
- There are more female same-sex couples (57%) than male same-sex couples (43%) in Oregon.⁵
- Individuals in same-sex couples are, on average, 40 years old, and significantly younger than individuals in married couples (48 years old) in Oregon.

- Same-sex couples live in every county in Oregon and constitute 1.1% of coupled households and 0.7% of all households in the state. Multnomah County reported the most same-sex couples with 3,263 couples (1.20% of all households in the county), followed by Lane County with 957 couples (0.73%), and Washington County with 943 couples (0.56%). The counties with the highest percentage of same-sex couples are Multnomah County (1.20% of all county households), Lane County (0.73%), Lincoln County (0.70%), and Jackson County (0.65%).⁶
- Oregon’s same-sex couples are as racially and ethnically diverse as their married counterparts: 10% of individuals in same-sex couples are nonwhite, compared to 11% of married individuals.

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

- Individuals in same-sex couples in Oregon are significantly more likely to be employed than are married individuals: 80% of individuals in same-sex couples are employed, compared to 65% 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 Oregon earn \$36,756 each year, significantly less than \$45,317 for married men. The median income of men in same-sex couples in Oregon is \$33,000, or 8% less than that of married men (\$36,000).
- Women in same-sex couples in Oregon earn an average of \$30,672 per year (with a median of \$30,000), more than married women, whose earnings average \$23,908 (with a median of \$20,000). Women in same-sex couples earn less than married men as well as men in same-sex couples.



- Individuals in same-sex couples in Oregon are more likely to work in the public sector: 22% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the public sector, compared to 16% of married individuals; 65% of individuals in same-sex couples work in the private sector, compared to 67% of married individuals; and 13% of individuals in same-sex couples are self-employed, compared to 16% of married individuals.
- Individuals in same-sex couples are significantly more likely to have a college degree: 45% of individuals in same-sex couples and 26% 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: 9% of individuals in same-sex couples are veterans, compared to 19% of married individuals.

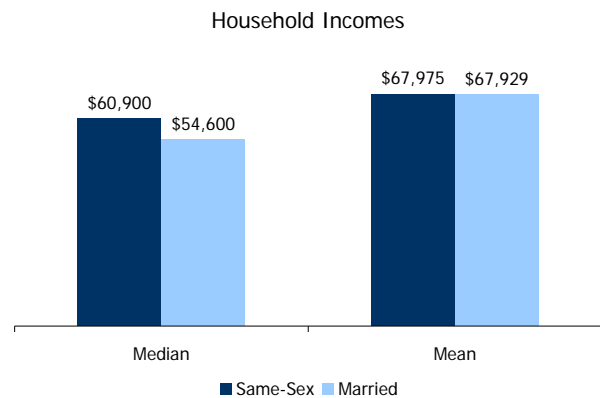
SAME-SEX PARTNERS IN OREGON DEPEND UPON ONE ANOTHER IN WAYS THAT ARE SIMILAR TO MARRIED COUPLES

- Couples in which one partner does not work or earns significantly less than the other partner may indicate financial interdependence. 22% of same-sex couples have only one wage earner, compared to 31% of married couples.

- The income gap between same-sex partners is \$20,188, compared to \$26,529 for married spouses.
- 24% of same-sex couples have at least one partner who is disabled, compared to 29% of married couples.
- 5% of same-sex couples have at least one partner who is age 65 or older, compared to 19% of married couples.

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

- The median income of same-sex coupled households in Oregon is \$60,900, compared to \$54,600 for married couples. The average household income of same-sex couples is \$67,975, compared to \$67,929 for married couples.

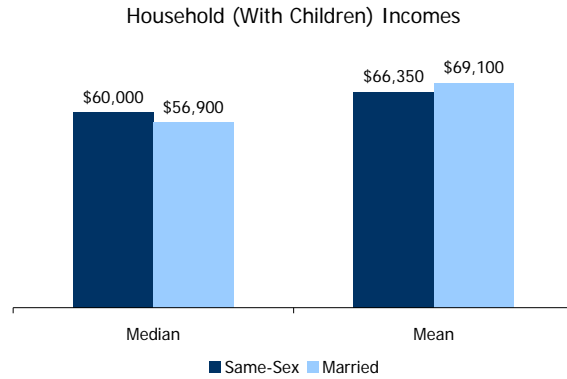


- Same-sex couples are significantly less likely than married couples to own their homes: 66% of same-sex couples in Oregon own their home, compared to 80% of married couples.

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

- About 19% of same-sex couples in Oregon are raising children under the age of 18.
- As of 2005, an estimated 3,207 of Oregon's children are living in households headed by same-sex couples.⁷
- In Oregon, married and same-sex couples with children under 18 in the home have, on average, 2 children.
- More than 5% of Oregon's adopted children (or 1,232 children) live with a lesbian or gay parent.⁸
- 38% of Oregon's same-sex parents have only one wage earner, compared to 36% of married parents.

- Same-sex parents in Oregon have similar financial resources to support their children as married parents. The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$60,000, compared to \$56,900 for married parents. The average household income of same-sex couples with children is \$66,350, compared to \$69,100 for married parents.
- While 56% of same-sex couples with children own their home, a significantly larger percentage of married parents (73%) own their home.



CONCLUSION

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

	Same-Sex	Married
Race/Ethnicity ⁹		
White	89.6%	88.2%
Black	2.7%	0.8%*
Hispanic	3.8%	5.4%
Asian	0.4%	2.9%*
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.5%	0.8%*
Other	2.0%	1.8%
Average age	40.2	48.2*
Percent with a college degree or better	44.7%	26.4%*
Percent Employed	80.3%	64.6%*
Employment ⁹		
Private employer	64.7%	67.2%
Public employer	21.8%	16.3%*
Self-employed	13.5%	16.1%
Veteran Status	9.2%	18.6%*
Average individual salary		
Men	\$36,756	\$45,317*
Women	\$30,672	\$23,908*
Median individual salary		
Men	\$33,000	\$36,000
Women	\$30,000	\$20,000

* 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	4.9%	19.5%*
Percent disabled	24.2%	28.6%
Average household income	\$67,975	\$67,929
Median household income	\$60,900	\$54,600
Income gap between partners	\$20,188	\$26,529*
Single wage earner	21.7%	30.6%*
Homeownership	66.1%	79.5%*
Percent with children under 18	18.9%	45.4%*

* 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	1.6	2.0*
Single wage earner (parents)	38.1%	35.9%
Average household income (parents)	\$66,350	\$69,100
Median household income (parents)	\$60,000	\$56,900
Homeownership	56.2%	73.4%*

* 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 county

County	Number of same-sex couples	Percent of same-sex couples out of all households
Baker	29	0.42%
Benton	188	0.62%
Clackamas	693	0.54%
Clatsop	75	0.51%
Columbia	66	0.40%
Coos	135	0.52%
Crook	32	0.44%
Curry	50	0.52%
Deschutes	231	0.51%
Douglas	167	0.42%
Gilliam	2	0.24%
Grant	8	0.25%
Harney	9	0.30%
Hood River	29	0.40%
Jackson	468	0.65%
Jefferson	34	0.51%
Josephine	155	0.50%
Klamath	98	0.39%
Lake	10	0.32%
Lane	957	0.73%
Lincoln	135	0.70%
Linn	127	0.32%
Malheur	31	0.30%
Marion	541	0.53%
Morrow	11	0.29%
Multnomah	3263	1.20%
Polk	114	0.49%
Sherman	1	0.13%
Tillamook	40	0.39%
Umatilla	107	0.42%
Union	40	0.41%
Wallowa	10	0.33%
Wasco	30	0.32%
Washington	943	0.56%
Wheeler	3	0.46%
Yamhill	100	0.35%

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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