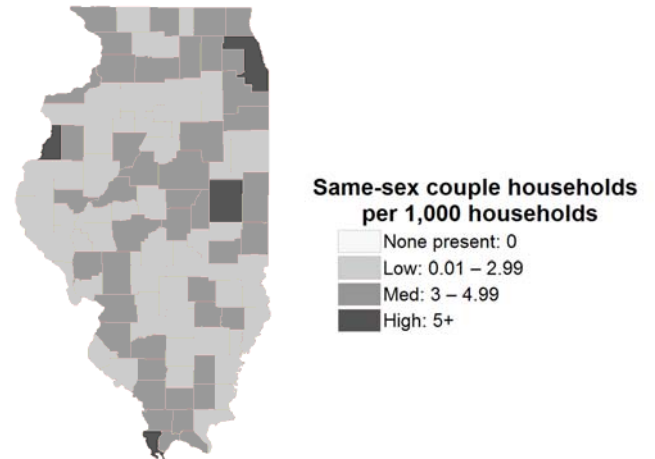


**Adam P. Romero, *Public Policy Fellow***  
**Amanda Baumle, *Public Policy Fellow***  
**M.V. Lee Badgett, *Research Director***  
**Gary J. Gates, *Senior Policy Fellow***

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 Illinois. 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 Illinois.<sup>1</sup>

In many ways, the more than 30,000 same-sex couples living in Illinois 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 the Illinois economy. Census data also show that 22% of same-sex couples in Illinois are raising children. However, same-sex couples with children in Illinois have fewer economic resources to provide for their families than do their married counterparts. These parents have lower household incomes, on average, and lower rates of home ownership.



### SAME-SEX COUPLES AND THE LGBT POPULATION IN ILLINOIS

- In 2000, there were 22,887 same-sex couples living in Illinois.<sup>2</sup>
- By 2005, the number of same-sex couples increased to more than 30,000.<sup>3</sup> This increase likely reflects same-sex couples’ growing willingness to disclose their partnerships on government surveys.
- We estimate that there are more than 345,000 gay, lesbian, and bisexual people (single and coupled) currently living in Illinois.<sup>4</sup>

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

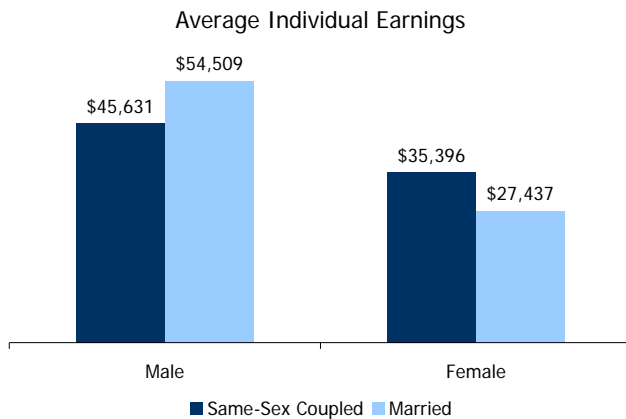
- More same-sex couples are male (53%) than female (47%) in Illinois.<sup>5</sup>

- Individuals in same-sex couples are, on average, 40 years old, and significantly younger than married individuals (47 years old).
- Same-sex couples live in every county in Illinois. Cook County reported the most couples at 13,271 (0.7% of households) followed by DuPage County with 1,293 couples (0.4%), and Lake County with 946 couples (0.4% of households).<sup>6</sup>
- Same-sex couples in Illinois are more racially and ethnically diverse than their married counterparts: 27% of same-sex couples in Illinois are nonwhite, compared to 22% of married couples.

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

- Individuals in same-sex couples in Illinois have higher rates of employment than married couples: 78% of individuals in same-sex couples are employed, compared to 67% of married individuals.

- Contrary to a popular stereotype, men in same-sex couples have significantly lower incomes than married men. On average, men in same-sex couples in Illinois earn \$45,631 per year, compared to \$54,509 for married men. The median income of men in same-sex couples in Illinois is \$35,000, or 17% less than that of married men (\$42,000).
- Women in same-sex couples, on the other hand, earn an average of \$35,396 per year (with a median of \$28,500), significantly more than married women, whose earnings average \$27,437 (with a median of \$22,000), but women in same-sex couples still earn less than men.



- Individuals in same-sex couples are more likely to work in the private sector and less likely to be self-employed, compared to married individuals: 78% of individuals in same-sex partnerships work in the private sector and 9% are self-employed, compared to 75% of married individuals in the private sector and 11% self-employed.
- Individuals in same-sex couples are significantly more likely to have a college degree: 41% of individuals in same-sex couples and 29% 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 14% of married individuals.

### SAME-SEX PARTNERS IN ILLINOIS 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. Close to one in four same-sex couples (or 22%) have one wage earner, compared to 31% married couples.

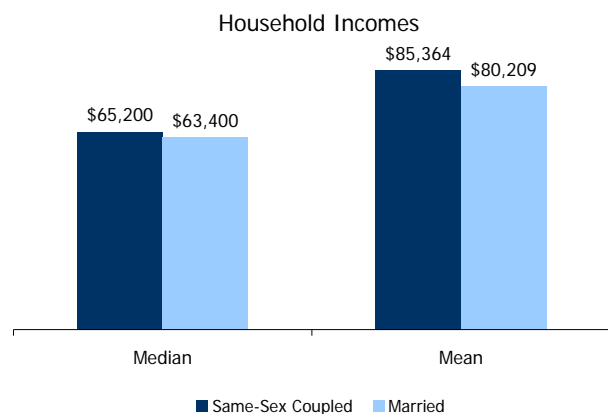
- The average income gap between same-sex partners is sizeable (\$26,863), though smaller than that of married couples (\$33,704).
- The presence of a senior or disabled partner in a couple may indicate interdependence: 6% of same-sex couples include a partner over age 65, compared to 18% of married couples.
- A similar percentage of same-sex and married couples in Illinois have at least one partner who is disabled: 27% of same-sex couples compared to 26% of married couples.

### SAME-SEX COUPLES ARE RAISING CHILDREN IN ILLINOIS

- Approximately 22% of same-sex couples in Illinois are raising children under the age of 18.
- As of 2005, an estimated 12,600 of Illinois's children are living in households headed by same-sex couples.<sup>7</sup>
- In Illinois, married and same-sex couples with children under 18 in the home have, on average, 2 children.
- Roughly 2.6% of Illinois's adopted children live with a lesbian or gay parent.<sup>8</sup>

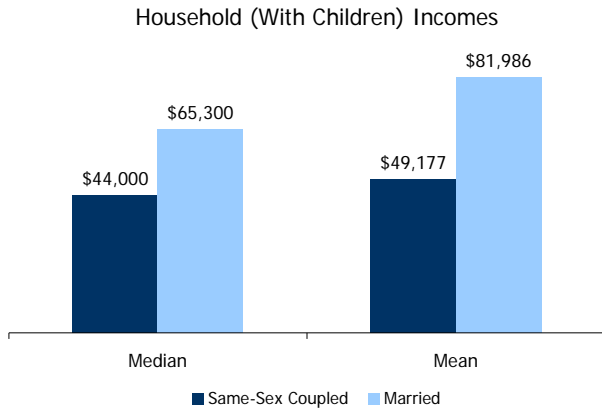
### SAME-SEX HOUSEHOLDS IN ILLINOIS FACE SIMILAR ISSUES TO MARRIED HOUSEHOLDS

- The median income of same-sex couple households in Illinois is \$65,200, which is similar to the \$63,400 median for married couples. The average household income of same-sex couples is \$85,364, which is not statistically significantly different from \$80,209 for married couples.



- Same-sex couples are significantly less likely than married couples to own their homes: 57% of same-sex couples in Illinois own their home, compared to 83% of married couples.

- Sizeable disparities for couples with children exist. The median household income of same-sex couples with children is \$44,000, or 33% lower than that of married parents (\$65,300). The average household income of same-sex couples with children is \$49,177, compared to \$81,986 for married parents.



- Same-sex couples with children are significantly less likely to own a home than are married couples with children: 51% for same-sex parents compared to 80% for married parents.

## CONCLUSION

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

Table One: Characteristics of individuals in couples

	Same-Sex	Married
Race/Ethnicity <sup>9</sup>		
White	73%	78%*
Black	13%	8%*
Asian	1%	4%*
Hispanic	12%	10%*
American Indian/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%
Other	1%	1%
Average age	40	47*
Percent with a college degree or better	41%	29%*
Percent employed	78%	67%*
Type of employment <sup>9</sup>		
Private employer	78%	75% <sup>^</sup>
Public employer	14%	14%
Self-employed	9%	11%*
Veteran Status	8%	14%*
Average individual salary		
Men	\$45,631	\$54,509*
Woman	\$35,396	\$27,437*
Median individual salary		
Men	\$35,000	\$42,000
Woman	\$28,500	\$22,000

\* Difference significant at the 5% level or better (two-tailed tests).  
<sup>^</sup> 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	6%	18%*
Percent disabled	27%	26%
Average household income	\$85,364	\$80,209
Median household income	\$65,200	\$63,400
Income gap between partners	\$26,863	\$33,704*
Single wage earner	22%	31%*
Homeownership	57%	83%*
Percent with children under 18	22%	50%*

\* 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)	36%	34%
Average household income (parents)	\$49,177	\$81,986*
Median household income (parents)	\$44,000	\$65,300
Homeownership	51%	80%*

\* 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
Adams	78	0.30%
Alexander	21	0.60%
Bond	12	0.20%
Boone	38	0.30%
Bureau	33	0.20%
Carroll	27	0.40%
Cass	15	0.30%
Champaign	359	0.50%
Christian	23	0.20%
Clark	19	0.30%
Clay	21	0.40%
Clinton	26	0.20%
Coles	69	0.30%
Cook	13271	0.70%
Crawford	23	0.30%
Cumberland	12	0.30%
De Witt	23	0.30%
DeKalb	119	0.40%
Douglas	20	0.30%
DuPage	1293	0.40%
Edgar	27	0.30%
Effingham	39	0.30%
Fayette	23	0.30%
Ford	16	0.30%
Franklin	47	0.30%
Fulton	32	0.20%
Greene	23	0.40%
Grundy	40	0.30%
Hamilton	12	0.30%
Hancock	15	0.20%
Henderson	17	0.50%
Henry	39	0.20%
Iroquois	35	0.30%
Jackson	108	0.40%
Jefferson	42	0.30%
Jersey	16	0.20%
Jo Daviess	31	0.30%
Johnson	20	0.50%
Kane	628	0.50%
Kankakee	142	0.40%
Kendall	56	0.30%
Knox	66	0.30%
La Salle	120	0.30%
Lake	946	0.40%
Lawrence	16	0.30%
Lee	43	0.30%
Livingston	55	0.40%
Logan	19	0.20%

**Appendix A Continued: Counts and percent of same-sex couples by county**

County	Number of same-sex couples	Percent of same-sex couples out of all households
Macon	169	0.40%
Macoupin	64	0.30%
Madison	378	0.40%
Marion	49	0.30%
Marshall	13	0.20%
Mason	20	0.30%
Massac	22	0.40%
McDonough	36	0.30%
McHenry	308	0.30%
McLean	236	0.40%
Menard	14	0.30%
Mercer	18	0.30%
Monroe	27	0.30%
Montgomery	32	0.30%
Morgan	38	0.30%
Moultrie	12	0.20%
Ogle	49	0.30%
Peoria	286	0.40%
Perry	31	0.40%
Piatt	27	0.40%
Pike	17	0.20%
Pulaski	12	0.40%
Randolph	33	0.30%
Richland	26	0.40%
Rock Island	231	0.40%
Saline	44	0.40%
Sangamon	353	0.40%
Schuyler	11	0.40%
Shelby	26	0.30%
St. Clair	356	0.40%
Stephenson	51	0.30%
Tazewell	157	0.30%
Union	32	0.40%
Vermilion	129	0.40%
Warren	22	0.30%
Washington	18	0.30%
Wayne	12	0.20%
White	16	0.20%
Whiteside	78	0.30%
Will	618	0.40%
Williamson	80	0.30%
Winnebago	466	0.40%
Woodford	37	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.

**Amanda Baumle** is Public Policy Fellow at the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law as well as Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Houston. Ph.D Texas A&M; J.D. University of Texas. She specializes in demography, social inequality, and the sociology of law.

**M.V. Lee Badgett** is Research Director at The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law, and Director of the Center for Public Policy and Administration at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where she is also on the faculty of the Department of Economics. She studies family policy and employment discrimination related to sexual orientation.

**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.

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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*, PCT014.

<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.

For more information, contact:

**The Williams Institute**

UCLA School of Law

Box 951476

Los Angeles, CA 90095-1476

T (310)267-4382

F (310)825-7270

[williamsinstitute@law.ucla.edu](mailto:williamsinstitute@law.ucla.edu)

[www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute](http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute)