

2010

## FP-10-08 Same-Sex Couple Households in the U.S., 2009

Kristy M. Krivickas  
*Bowling Green State University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/ncfmr\\_family\\_profiles](https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/ncfmr_family_profiles)



Part of the [Family, Life Course, and Society Commons](#)

[How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!](#)

---

### Repository Citation

Krivickas, Kristy M., "FP-10-08 Same-Sex Couple Households in the U.S., 2009" (2010). *National Center for Family and Marriage Research Family Profiles*. 14.

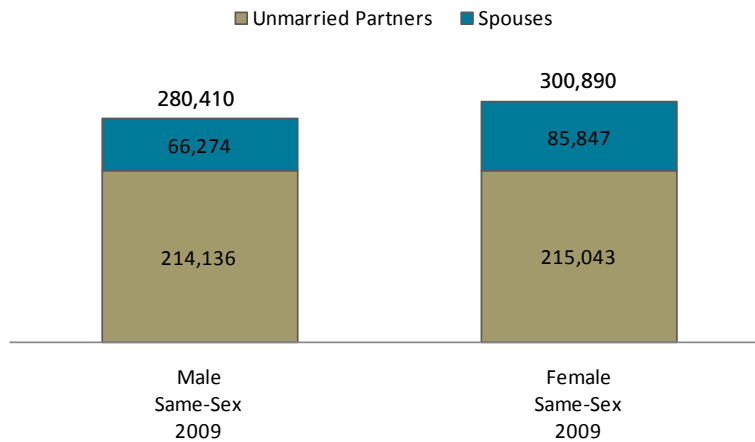
[https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/ncfmr\\_family\\_profiles/14](https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/ncfmr_family_profiles/14)

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Arts and Sciences at ScholarWorks@BGSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in National Center for Family and Marriage Research Family Profiles by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@BGSU.

## Number of Same-Sex Unmarried Households

- In 2009, there were a total of 581,300 same-sex couple households in the U.S.
  - » The number of female same-sex households outnumbered male same-sex households by 20,480 households (Figure 1).
- Using the ACS 2009, the U.S. Census Bureau separately reports the number of same-sex householders who report their partner as an unmarried partner and as a spouse.
  - » More female same-sex householders (85,847) report their partner as a spouse than male same-sex householders (66,274).
  - » When the percentage of same-sex couple householders who report their partner as a spouse is examined, similar percentages of males and females report living with their spouse (24% and 29%, respectively).

Figure 1: Number of Same-Sex Households by Sex, 2009



Source: 2009 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

## Characteristics of Unmarried Households, Comparing Same-Sex and Different-Sex Households, 2009

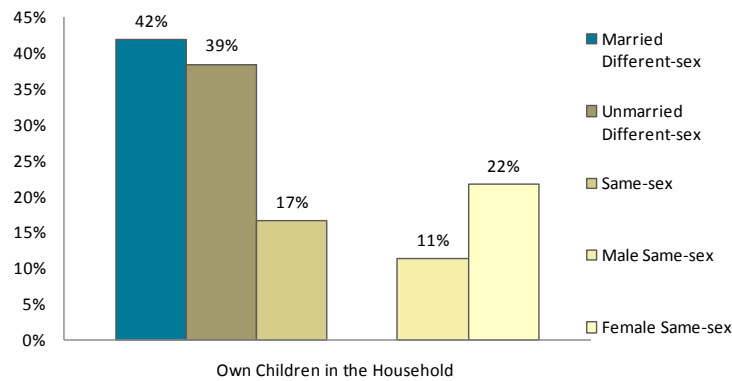
- *Socioeconomics*
  - » Male same-sex couple households (\*for the remainder of this profile, all same-sex couple households include those designated as unmarried-partner households and spousal households) have the highest average household income of all couple households at nearly \$117,000, while unmarried different-sex couple households have the lowest average household income at approximately \$64,000 ([Families and Living Arrangements, Same-Sex Couples](#), Data from the American Community Survey, [U.S. Census Tables](#).)
  - » There is a larger percentage of households where both partners have at least a Bachelor's degree among same-sex couple households (30%) compared to all other couple households. Among different-sex households, 21% of marrieds and only 10% of unmarrieds have college degrees.
  - » Over two-thirds of married different-sex and same-sex couples own their homes, whereas under half of unmarried different-sex couples do.

Family Profiles examine topics related to NCFMR's core research themes. Data are presented at both the national and state levels using new data sources. Written for both researchers and broad communities, these profiles summarize the latest statistics on U.S. families.

• *Children*

- » Nearly one-fifth (17%) of same-sex households include a biological, step, or adopted child.
- » Married different-sex and unmarried different-sex households are more likely to have children present (42% and 39%, respectively) than same-sex couple households (Figure 2).
- » Female same-sex households are twice as likely to contain a child as male same-sex households (22% versus 11%).

Figure 2: Percentage of Households with Own Child by Union and Couple Type, 2009

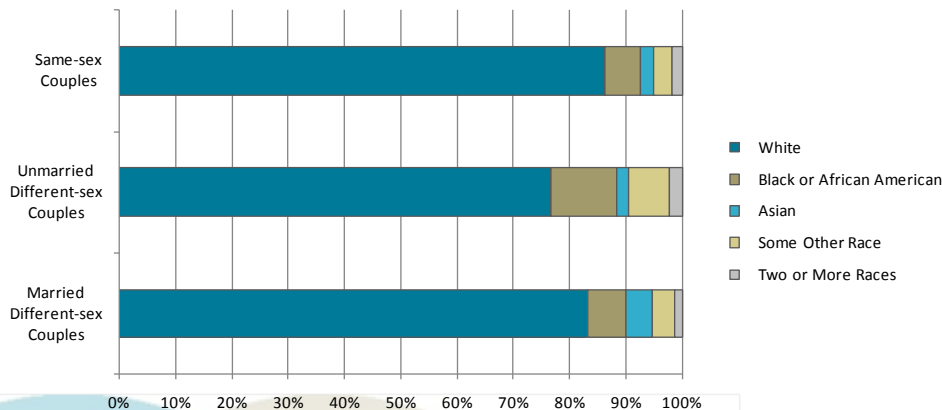


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009, 1-Year Estimates. ACS defines an own child as a “never-married” child under 18 years who is a son or daughter by birth, a stepchild, or an adopted child of the householder.

• *Race*

- » Similar percentages of same-sex and married different-sex couple households are headed by Whites (83-87%). A smaller percentage of unmarried different-sex households are White (77%) (Figure 3).
- » A larger percentage of unmarried different-sex households are headed by Blacks (11.7%) compared to same-sex (6.4%) and married different-sex (6.8%) couple households. These figures reflect a 53% difference in the percentage of unmarried different-sex households headed by Blacks.
- » With respect to Asian household heads, same-sex couple households more closely resemble unmarried different-sex households (2.3% and 2.0%, respectively). The largest percentage Asian is found among married different-sex couple households at 4.7%.
- » For more comparisons of U.S. households based on union and couple type, please view the new [Same-Sex Couples Census](#) tables on families and living arrangements utilizing the [ACS](#) 2009 data.

Figure 3: Racial Composition of U.S. Households by Union and Couple Type, 2009

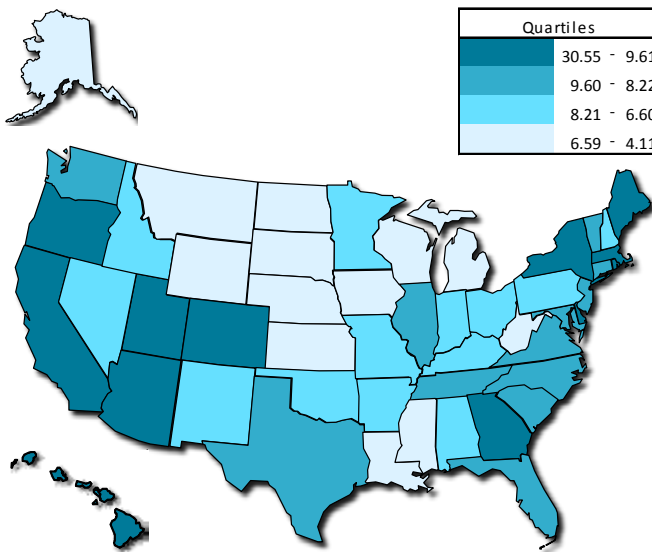


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009, 1-Year Estimates.

### Proportion of Same-Sex Unmarried Households: Geographic Variation, 2009

- Among all fifty states, the District of Columbia ranks number one with 31% same-sex households among all unmarried-partner households (Table 1).
- States with the highest proportion of same-sex households tend to be clustered in the Western Region (Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, California, Utah, and Arizona) (Figure 4).
- States with the lowest proportion of same-sex households tend to be clustered in the Midwestern Region (Kansas, Michigan, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota) (Figure 4).
- For a ranking table with all states (including Washington, DC) organized by quartiles, [click here](#).

Figure 4: Geographic Variation in the Percentage of Same-Sex Households Among All Unmarried-Partner Households, 2009



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009, 1-Year Estimates.

Table 1: Top and Bottom Five Ranking States: Percentages of Same-Sex Unmarried-Partner Households Among All Unmarried-Partner Households, ACS 2009

Ranking State	Percentage	Margin of Error
<b>1</b> Wash, DC	30.55	+/- 4.71
<b>2</b> Massachusetts	13.57	+/- 1.49
<b>3</b> Colorado	12.21	+/- 1.58
<b>4</b> Hawaii	12.11	+/- 3.35
<b>5</b> Oregon	11.67	+/- 1.36
<b>United States</b>	<b>8.94</b>	<b>+/- 0.09</b>
<b>47</b> Montana	5.39	+/- 1.96
<b>48</b> Nebraska	5.20	+/- 1.76
<b>49</b> South Dakota	4.71	+/- 2.51
<b>50</b> Wyoming	4.64	+/- 2.49
<b>51</b> Mississippi	4.11	+/- 1.25

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009 1-Year Estimates

## Five States with the Highest and Lowest Percentage of Unmarried Households That Are Same-Sex Households by Sex, 2009

- The District of Columbia had the highest percentage of male same-sex households (Table 2). Approximately 26% of unmarried households in Washington, DC, are male same-sex households. For females, Massachusetts had the highest percentage of same-sex households. About 8% of unmarried households in Massachusetts are female same-sex households (Table 3).
- With only about 1% of unmarried households being male same-sex households and slightly more than 2% of unmarried households being female same-sex, Montana and West-Virginia (respectively) have the smallest proportion of male and female same-sex households among all unmarried households.
- For ranking tables with all states organized by quartiles (male), [click here](#).
- For ranking tables with all states organized by quartiles (female), [click here](#).

Table 2: Top and Bottom Five Ranking States:  
Percentage of Male Same-Sex Partner Households  
Among All Unmarried-Partner Households, ACS 2009

Ranking	State	Percentage	Margin of Error
1	Wash, DC	26.49	+/- 4.25
2	Georgia	5.96	+/- 0.86
3	Massachusetts	5.92	+/- 0.90
4	Hawaii	5.81	+/- 2.72
5	California	5.76	+/- 0.37
	New York	5.76	+/- 0.54
<b>United States</b>		<b>4.31</b>	<b>+/- 0.11</b>
47	Iowa	1.84	+/- 0.63
48	Wyoming	1.58	+/- 1.53
49	North Dakota	1.47	+/- 0.91
50	Mississippi	1.45	+/- 0.70
51	Montana	1.16	+/- 0.91

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009 1-Year Estimates

Table 3: Top and Bottom Five Ranking States:  
Percentage of Female Same-Sex Partner Households  
Among All Unmarried-Partner Households, ACS 2009

Ranking	State	Percentage	Margin of Error
1	Massachusetts	7.65	+/- 1.26
2	Colorado	7.59	+/- 1.22
3	Oregon	7.19	+/- 1.04
4	Hawaii	6.30	+/- 2.12
5	Delaware	6.26	+/- 2.19
<b>United States</b>		<b>4.63</b>	<b>+/- 0.11</b>
47	Louisiana	2.75	+/- 0.68
48	Mississippi	2.66	+/- 1.06
49	Nebraska	2.59	+/- 1.04
50	South Dakota	2.45	+/- 1.60
51	West Virginia	2.42	+/- 1.06

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009 1-Year Estimates

### Measurement Differences in Number of Same-Sex Unmarried Households between 2000 and 2009

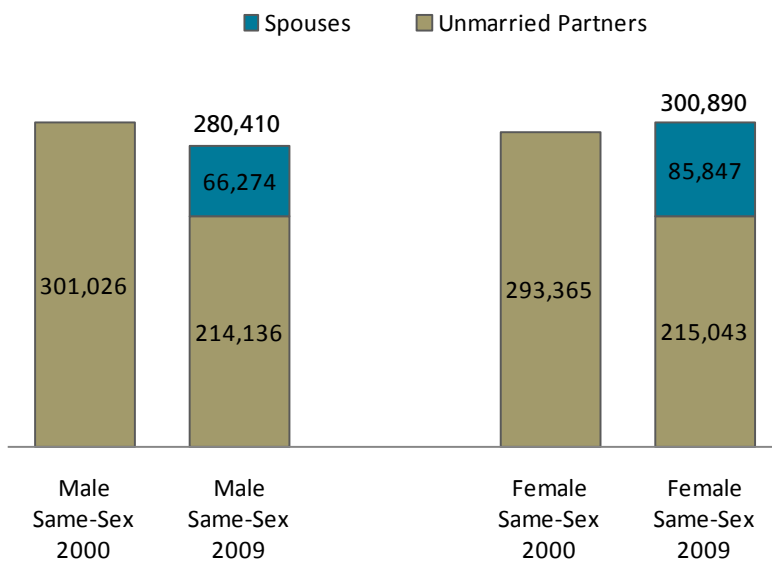
- Estimates from the 2009 ACS indicate there were 280,410 male same-sex households and 300,890 female same-sex households in the United States in 2009. Compared to estimates from the 2000 U.S. Census, this represents a reduction (6.8%) in the number of male same-sex partners and an increase (2.6%) in the number of female same-sex partners (Figure 5).
  - » These differences should be interpreted with caution. Examination of Census 2000 data revealed recoding of responses that lead to misclassifications of different-sex couple households as same-sex “unmarried partner” households (Black, Gates, Sanders, & Taylor, 2007; Gates & Steinberger, 2009). There has been considerable discussion about the classification of households. For more information on how the classification of same-sex couple households has evolved, please reference the following publications:

Black, D., Gates, G., Sanders, S., & Taylor, L. (2007). [The measurement of same-sex unmarried partner couples in the 2000 U.S. Census](#). On-Line Working Paper Series, California Center for Population Research, UC Los Angeles.

Gates, G. (2010). [Same-sex couples in US Census Bureau Data: Who gets counted and why](#). Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law.

O’Connell, M., & Lofquist, D. (2009). [Counting same-sex couples: Official estimates and unofficial guesses](#). Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Detroit, MI.

Figure 5: Number of Same-Sex Households by Sex, 2000-2009



Source: Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial and 2009 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

Table 4: Percentage of Same-Sex Households Among All Unmarried-Partner Households, ACS 2009

[Return to page 3](#)

Ranking	State	Percentage	Margin of Error
1	Wash, DC	30.55	+/- 4.71
2	Massachusetts	13.57	+/- 1.49
3	Colorado	12.21	+/- 1.58
4	Hawaii	12.11	+/- 3.35
5	Oregon	11.67	+/- 1.36
6	Georgia	11.61	+/- 1.14
7	Delaware	11.41	+/- 2.74
8	Maine	10.62	+/- 2.27
9	California	10.44	+/- 0.46
10	New York	10.40	+/- 0.63
11	Utah	10.12	+/- 2.41
12	Arizona	9.85	+/- 1.16
13	Rhode Island	9.84	+/- 3.27
14	Florida	9.52	+/- 0.68
15	North Carolina	9.14	+/- 1.03
15	Maryland	9.14	+/- 1.35
17	New Jersey	9.10	+/- 1.03
18	Vermont	9.05	+/- 2.54
19	Texas	9.00	+/- 0.64
	<b>United States</b>	<b>8.94</b>	<b>+/- 0.09</b>
20	South Carolina	8.90	+/- 1.47
21	Virginia	8.88	+/- 1.20
22	Washington	8.60	+/- 0.94
23	Connecticut	8.59	+/- 1.65
24	Illinois	8.58	+/- 0.82
25	Tennessee	8.35	+/- 1.23
26	Kentucky	8.08	+/- 1.35
27	Oklahoma	8.04	+/- 1.46
28	New Mexico	7.94	+/- 1.81
29	New Hampshire	7.87	+/- 1.79
30	Arkansas	7.85	+/- 1.85
31	Ohio	7.83	+/- 0.78
32	Minnesota	7.69	+/- 0.93
33	Pennsylvania	7.66	+/- 0.64
34	Indiana	7.61	+/- 0.94
35	Nevada	7.59	+/- 1.46
36	Missouri	7.01	+/- 0.98
37	Idaho	6.75	+/- 1.65
38	Alabama	6.64	+/- 1.25
39	Kansas	6.44	+/- 1.48
40	Michigan	6.43	+/- 0.81
41	Wisconsin	6.42	+/- 0.71
42	Alaska	6.38	+/- 2.73
43	North Dakota	5.94	+/- 2.41
44	Louisiana	5.70	+/- 0.97
45	Iowa	5.63	+/- 0.99
46	West Virginia	5.53	+/- 1.64
47	Montana	5.39	+/- 1.96
48	Nebraska	5.20	+/- 1.76
49	South Dakota	4.71	+/- 2.51
50	Wyoming	4.64	+/- 2.49
51	Mississippi	4.11	+/- 1.25

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009 1-Year Estimates

Table 5: Percentage of Male Same-Sex Partner Households Among All Unmarried-Partner Households Organized by Quartiles, ACS 2009

[Return to page 4](#)

Ranking	State	Percentage	Margin of Error
1	Wash, DC	26.49	+/- 4.25
2	Georgia	5.96	+/- 0.86
3	Massachusetts	5.92	+/- 0.90
4	Hawaii	5.81	+/- 2.72
5	California	5.76	+/- 0.37
5	New York	5.76	+/- 0.54
7	Rhode Island	5.52	+/- 2.55
8	Delaware	5.15	+/- 1.89
9	Florida	5.02	+/- 0.51
10	Maine	4.90	+/- 1.66
11	Virginia	4.73	+/- 0.96
12	Colorado	4.62	+/- 1.09
13	Oregon	4.48	+/- 0.95
14	North Carolina	4.45	+/- 0.77
15	Illinois	4.40	+/- 0.64
16	Utah	4.34	+/- 1.75
17	South Carolina	4.32	+/- 0.97
	<b>United States</b>	<b>4.31</b>	<b>+/- 0.11</b>
18	New Jersey	4.25	+/- 0.76
19	Nevada	4.16	+/- 1.13
20	Tennessee	4.15	+/- 0.90
21	Arizona	4.12	+/- 0.84
22	Texas	4.05	+/- 0.47
23	Maryland	3.93	+/- 1.11
24	Minnesota	3.89	+/- 0.76
25	Washington	3.86	+/- 0.60
26	Connecticut	3.80	+/- 1.16
27	Kentucky	3.76	+/- 0.92
28	Pennsylvania	3.67	+/- 0.41
29	Ohio	3.49	+/- 0.59
30	Indiana	3.46	+/- 0.74
31	Oklahoma	3.24	+/- 0.91
32	Arkansas	3.13	+/- 1.34
33	West Virginia	3.11	+/- 1.28
34	Missouri	3.09	+/- 0.66
35	New Hampshire	3.04	+/- 1.28
36	Vermont	3.02	+/- 1.19
37	New Mexico	2.99	+/- 1.07
38	Louisiana	2.95	+/- 0.72
39	Alabama	2.83	+/- 0.90
40	Kansas	2.69	+/- 0.89
41	Nebraska	2.61	+/- 1.45
42	Michigan	2.60	+/- 0.50
43	Wisconsin	2.45	+/- 0.45
44	South Dakota	2.26	+/- 1.95
45	Idaho	2.05	+/- 1.11
46	Alaska	1.95	+/- 1.33
47	Iowa	1.84	+/- 0.63
48	Wyoming	1.58	+/- 1.53
49	North Dakota	1.47	+/- 0.91
50	Mississippi	1.45	+/- 0.70
51	Montana	1.16	+/- 0.91

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009 1-Year Estimates



Table 6: Percentage of Female Same-Sex Partner Households Among All Unmarried-Partner Households Organized by Quartiles, ACS 2009

Return to page 4

Ranking	State	Percentage	Margin of Error
1	Massachusetts	7.65	+/- 1.26
2	Colorado	7.59	+/- 1.22
3	Oregon	7.19	+/- 1.04
4	Hawaii	6.30	+/- 2.12
5	Delaware	6.26	+/- 2.19
6	Vermont	6.03	+/- 2.30
7	Utah	5.77	+/- 1.75
8	Arizona	5.73	+/- 0.87
9	Maine	5.72	+/- 1.64
10	Georgia	5.65	+/- 0.82
11	Maryland	5.21	+/- 0.82
12	Texas	4.96	+/- 0.46
13	New Mexico	4.95	+/- 1.52
14	New Jersey	4.86	+/- 0.73
15	New Hampshire	4.83	+/- 1.33
16	Oklahoma	4.80	+/- 1.19
17	Connecticut	4.79	+/- 1.22
18	Washington	4.74	+/- 0.76
19	Arkansas	4.72	+/- 1.33
20	Idaho	4.70	+/- 1.27
21	North Carolina	4.69	+/- 0.74
22	California	4.68	+/- 0.31
23	New York	4.64	+/- 0.36
<b>United States</b>		<b>4.63</b>	<b>+/- 0.11</b>
24	South Carolina	4.58	+/- 1.16
25	Florida	4.50	+/- 0.47
26	North Dakota	4.47	+/- 2.27
27	Alaska	4.43	+/- 2.43
28	Ohio	4.34	+/- 0.53
29	Rhode Island	4.32	+/- 2.18
29	Kentucky	4.32	+/- 1.04
31	Montana	4.23	+/- 1.77
32	Tennessee	4.21	+/- 0.88
33	Illinois	4.17	+/- 0.55
34	Virginia	4.15	+/- 0.78
34	Indiana	4.15	+/- 0.62
36	Wash, DC	4.07	+/- 2.61
37	Pennsylvania	3.99	+/- 0.51
38	Wisconsin	3.98	+/- 0.58
39	Missouri	3.92	+/- 0.76
40	Michigan	3.83	+/- 0.65
41	Alabama	3.82	+/- 0.92
42	Minnesota	3.80	+/- 0.58
43	Iowa	3.79	+/- 0.80
44	Kansas	3.75	+/- 1.22
45	Nevada	3.43	+/- 0.97
46	Wyoming	3.06	+/- 2.01
47	Louisiana	2.75	+/- 0.68
48	Mississippi	2.66	+/- 1.06
49	Nebraska	2.59	+/- 1.04
50	South Dakota	2.45	+/- 1.60
51	West Virginia	2.42	+/- 1.06

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009 1-Year Estimates

Suggested Citation:  
Krivickas, K. (2010). Same-Sex Couple Households in the U.S., 2009 (FP-10-08) National Center for Family & Marriage Research. Retrieved from [http://ncfmr.bgsu.edu/pdf/family\\_profiles/file87414.pdf](http://ncfmr.bgsu.edu/pdf/family_profiles/file87414.pdf)

This project was supported with a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, grant number 5 UOI AE000001-04. The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the author(s) and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of any agency of the Federal government.