

Same-sex Couples in Nevada: A demographic summary



by Gary J. Gates
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Introduction

This research brief offers analyses of data from the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) to describe the characteristics of same-sex couples and their families in Nevada compared to their different-sex counterparts.

Same-sex couples are identified in the ACS when an adult in the household is identified as either the "husband/wife" or "unmarried partner" of the person who filled out the survey, referred to as the householder, and both partners or spouses are of the same-sex. These analyses combine ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) files from 2008 through 2011, yielding sample sizes of:

- 200 same-sex couples
- 71 children under age 18 being raised by same-sex couples
- 22,650 different-sex couples
- 17,950 children under age 18 being raised by different-sex couples

Same-sex couples

Tabulations from Census 2010 show that there are 7,140 same-sex couples living in Nevada. These couples were identified in all but one of Nevada's counties. The majority of same-sex couples are male (53%), accounting for 3,768 couples. There are 3,372 female couples.¹

Age

The average age of individuals in same-sex couples in Nevada is more than four years younger than that of different-sex couples—43.8 and 48.2 years old, respectively.

Table 1 shows the percentages of adults in same-sex and different-sex couples by age group. The lowest percentage of same-sex couples is in the 65 and over group (7%) while the lowest percentage of different-sex couples is in the youngest age group of those less than age 30 (12%).

Table 1. Individuals in couples, by age (2008-2011 ACS)

Age	Same-sex	Different-sex
<30	14%	12%
30-49	55%	43%
50-64	23%	28%
65+	7%	16%

Race/ethnicity

Nearly a third of individuals in same-sex couples in Nevada are members of racial or ethnic minorities. Table 2 shows that 31% of individuals in same-sex couples are members of racial or ethnic minorities compared to 37% of individuals in different-sex couples.

Table 2. Individuals in couples, by race/ethnicity (2008-2011 ACS)

Age	Same-sex	Different-sex
White	69%	63%
African-American	3%	6%
Latino/a	20%	21%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5%	8%
Am. Indian/AK native	1%	1%
Other	2%	1%

Latinos and Latinas comprise 20% of individuals in same-sex couples and 21% of those in different-sex couples. The portion of African-Americans is 3% among those in same-sex couples and 6% among those in different-sex couples. Asians, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders comprise 5% of individuals in same-sex couples and 8% of those in different-sex couples.

¹ Gates, GJ, Cooke, A. 2011. [Nevada Census Snapshot: 2010](#), Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law.

Same-sex couples with children

Fully one in five same-sex couples in Nevada (20%) are raising children under age 18 in their homes. More than 1,400 same-sex-couple households in the state include more than 3,000 children.

More than three-quarters (77%) of children being raised by same-sex couples in Nevada are biological children, 3% are stepchildren, 11% are adopted, and 1.5% are foster children.

This implies that the 1,400 same-sex couples in the state raising children include 1,330 couples who are raising an estimated 2,300 biological children, 90 stepchildren, and 330 adopted children. Nearly 16% of same-sex couples are raising children identified as grandchildren, siblings, or other children. An estimated 220 same-sex couples in Nevada are raising approximately 225 such children.

Same-sex couples are six times as likely as their different-sex counterparts to be raising an adopted child. Approximately 2% of the children of different-sex couples in Nevada are adopted, compared to 12% of the children of same-sex couples.

Same-sex couples in Nevada are also nine times as likely as their different-sex counterparts to be raising foster children. Among couples with children under age 18, 1.8% of same-sex couples in the state are raising a foster child, compared to just 0.2% of different-sex couples.

Sex and Race/ethnicity

In Nevada, six in ten same-sex couples (60%) raising children under age 18 are female while 40% are male.

More than four in ten individuals in same-sex couples who are members of racial or ethnic minorities (42%) are raising a child under age 18, compared to 11% of their White counterparts.

Table 3 shows that more than half of individuals in same-sex couples raising children under age 18 are Latino/a compared to just a third of comparable individuals in different-sex couples.

Table 3. Individuals in couples raising children under age 18, by race/ethnicity (2008-2011 ACS)

Age	Same-sex	Different-sex
White	36%	50%
African-American	6%	6%
Latino/a	52%	33%
Asian/Pacific Islander	-	8%
Am. Indian/AK native	-	1%
Other	6%	2%

Income

The median annual household income of same-sex couples with children under age 18 in the home is 13% lower than the median annual household income of comparable different-sex couples (\$62,700 versus \$72,100).

This may in part be because, compared to different-sex couples raising children, same-sex couples with children include a higher portion of women and racial and ethnic minorities, who tend to have lower earnings than men and White individuals.

About the author

Gary J. Gates, PhD is the Williams Distinguished Scholar and a national expert in the demographic, geographic, and economic characteristics of the LGBT population.

About the Institute

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