

## Same-sex Couples' Consistency in Reports of Marital Status

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### Abstract:

Limited research has examined how same-sex couples report their marital status, especially when broken out by those who report themselves as spouses versus unmarried partners. In this paper I expand on prior qualitative research by Bates, DeMaio, Robins, and Hicks (2010), who found that unless same-sex couples were legally married, they were more likely to chose a marital status of something other than “now married”. Mills and Poortman (2010) found that 67 percent of same-sex couples in Europe chose “now married” even if they lived in a country that did not recognize same-sex marriage. Using the 2010 ACS, my findings show that 24 percent of all same-sex couples chose “now married” in the United States. When broken out by response to the relationship item, almost 80 percent of those reported as spouse chose “now married” compared to 3 percent of those reported as unmarried partner. Forty-one percent of all same-sex couples living in states that perform same-sex marriage reported as married. Only 21 percent of those living in states with no legal recognition reported themselves as married. Almost 88 percent of those households reported as spouses had at least one own child present as compared to close to 82 percent in households reported as unmarried partners. In logistic regression models the presence of own children was strongly associated with whether couples reported as married. Same-sex couples with children present were more likely to report being “now married.”

*This report is released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion of work in progress. The views expressed on statistical or methodological issues are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.*

## Same-sex Couples' Consistency in Reports of Marital Status

### Introduction

Starting in 2004, same-sex couples were legally able to marry in the state of Massachusetts. Over the course of the next 7 years, six more states (Connecticut, Iowa, New Hampshire, New York, Vermont, and California<sup>1</sup>) and the District of Columbia legalized same-sex marriage. In 2010, only five states and the District of Columbia still performed same-sex marriage. Since same-sex marriage has become legal in some areas, research has started to focus on how same-sex couples report their relationship and marital statuses on surveys. Much of the research on same-sex couples by the Census Bureau has focused on the former. However, limited research has examined how same-sex couples report their marital status, especially comparing those who report themselves as spouses versus unmarried partners. The current study identifies same-sex couples by the relationship item (husband/wife or unmarried partner) and sex variable from the American Community Survey (ACS).<sup>2</sup> I focus on how the householder and his or her partner reported their marital statuses. The ACS is ideal for a study of this kind because it is a nationally representative survey that has a large sample that makes it ideal for measuring the small population of same-sex couples.

### Background

Bates, DeMaio, Robins, and Hicks (2010) explored how the current decennial Census relationship item and the American Community Survey relationship and marital status items are interpreted by both same-sex and opposite sex couples. Through focus groups they found that respondents generally viewed both the relationship and marital status items as asking about legal

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<sup>1</sup> Same-sex marriage was only legal in California for several months in 2008 before it was stopped due to the passing of Proposition 8.

<sup>2</sup> The relationship question asks for each household member's relationship to the householder.

status. They also found that few respondents in same-sex cohabiting relationships chose the answer categories of “husband/wife” for relationship or “now married” for marital status. Most couples who were legally married, regardless of state of residence, reported that they were “husband/wife” and “now married.”

Legal recognition of marriage is not necessary for people to report that they are married. O’Connell and Lofquist (2009) found that in the 2008 ACS there were 564,743 same-sex couples, with almost 150,000 of those reporting themselves to be “husband or wife” on the relationship item. According to Gates and Steinberger (2009) the number of same-sex couples reporting “husband or wife” in the ACS is much larger than the actual number of legally married same-sex couples in the United States. This coincides with research by Mills and Rigt-Poortman (2010) who found that even in countries in Europe where same-sex marriage is not legally recognized the majority of same-sex respondents report themselves as “married.” However, Virgile (2011) found that same-sex couples were most likely to report their relationship as “husband or wife” if they resided in a state that recognized same-sex marriage than in states not recognizing same-sex marriage. Research by the Census Bureau on same-sex couples has not looked at the consistency of reports of marital status for those same-sex couples reported in the relationship question as unmarried partners and spouses. To further build on this research, I use both the relationship and marital status items in my analyses. I examine the consistency in reporting of relationship and marital status items, and then run logistic regression models to see what characteristics of the couples might be associated with reporting themselves as married.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> From analyses of the 2010 Decennial Census (using a names index), Martin O’Connell and Sarah Feliz (2011) have estimated that from the mailout/mailback forms with a similar format as the 2010 ACS, that about 4 percent of same-sex unmarried partners were actually opposite-sex couples who had checked the wrong sex box, while for same-sex spouses this number could be as high as 57 percent. We do not have a similar names index available in the ACS that would allow for the same type of analyses.

## **Data and Methods**

The analyses in this paper use the relationship, sex, and marital status items in the 2010 American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS was fully implemented in 2005 and was designed to replace the collection of data from the long form decennial census questionnaire that was previously distributed to 1 in 6 households in 2000. The American Community Survey is a mandatory survey that is conducted annually over a 12-month calendar period. The Census Bureau mails approximately a quarter-million ACS questionnaires every month to a nationwide sample. The questionnaire is administered through a mailout/mailback paper form, with a nonresponse follow up using a computer assisted telephone and/or in-person interviews. The final unweighted sample generally ranges from 1.9 to 2.0 million households in the U.S. annually. This sample is then weighted to be representative of the nation's population as a whole. The ACS provides nationally representative data on households, which includes social, demographic, economic, and housing data. Given its large sample size, the ACS is an ideal survey for measuring small populations, including same-sex couples. Additional information about the ACS, its methodology, and data products can be found at <http://www.census.gov/acs/www>.

### *Methods*

I restrict my analyses to those individuals age 15 and older, who either report unmarried partner or husband/wife on the relationship item, and who report being of the same sex as their partner. Overall, the weighted sample sizes are 566,801 for 2008; 581,300 for 2009; and 593,324 for 2010. The analyses in Tables 3, 4, and 5 only use data from the 2010 ACS – the most recent data released.

This paper focuses on the reports of marital status by both partners in a same-sex cohabiting couple. This study identifies those same-sex couples where either one or both partners report being either “now married” or another status, including widowed, divorced, separated, and never married. Marital status for respondents is identified using the unedited marital status data only available in the 2008, 2009, and 2010 ACS internal data files. Thus the marital status for the couples is the actual report of the respondents. I identify those couples that are reported as spouses and unmarried partners, using the unedited internal data for the relationship question. Couples who responded using the computer assisted telephone and in-person interviews were removed from the "all same-sex couples" and "reported as spouse" categories shown in the table since their marital status was automatically set to "now married" when they reported "husband or wife" as their relationship. This resulted in 27 percent of all same-sex couples and 25 percent of those reported as spouses being excluded from the analysis.

The coding of the independent variables used in the logistic regression models is listed in Table 1. To better understand reports of marital status by same-sex couples, three descriptive tables show variations in the characteristics among couples reporting married versus not reporting married.<sup>4</sup> Table 2 shows estimates on partners reported as either spouses or unmarried partners are presented for same-sex households for 2008, 2009, and 2010. These estimates are further shown in Table 3 are based on whether state laws recognize same-sex couples (states performing same-sex marriages, domestic partnerships/civil unions, all other states). For all of 2010 there were only 5 states, including the District of Columbia, that performed same-sex marriages, 10 states that granted domestic partnerships or civil unions, and 35 states with no

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<sup>4</sup> I originally planned to only focus on those couples in which only both partners report being married. In analyses not shown, I found that only one percent of same-sex couples have just one partner reporting married and the other not married, so these couples were added to those where both partners reported married. In this study, I focus on reporting married by same-sex couples, even if only one partner reports being married.

legal recognition of same-sex couples. In Table 4, I examine the distribution of same-sex couples by relationship status for those who have children in their households. Finally, logistic regression models were performed to understand which couples were likeliest to report being married (Table 5).

**Table 1: Coding of variables included in the logistic regression models of marital status**

| Variable                                  | Coding  |
|---|---|
| <b>Age</b>                                |   |
| 15 to 24 years                            | 1=Yes; 0=No   |
| 25 to 34 years                            | 1=Yes; 0=No   |
| 35 to 44 years                            | 1=Yes; 0=No   |
| 45 to 54 years                            | 1=Yes; 0=No (excluded age category)   |
| 55 to 64 years                            | 1=Yes; 0=No   |
| 65 years and older                        | 1=Yes; 0=No   |
| <b>Race and Hispanic Origin</b>           |   |
| One race, Not Hispanic or Latino          |   |
| White                                     | 1=White alone; 0=Does not identify as White alone (excluded race/origin category)   |
| Black or African-American                 | 1=Black alone; 0=Does not identify as Black alone   |
| American Indian and Alaska Native         | 1=AIAN alone; 0=Does not identify as AIAN alone   |
| Asian                                     | 1=Asian alone; 0=Does not identify as Asian alone   |
| Some other race                           | 1=Some other race alone; 0=Does not identify as Some other race alone <sup>1</sup>  |
| Two or more races, not Hispanic or Latino | 1=Two or more races; 0=Does not identify as Two or more races   |
| Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)   | 1=Hispanic or Latino of any race; 0=Does not identify as Hispanic or Latino   |
| <b>Interracial Couple</b>                 | 1=Interracial couple; 0=Not an interracial couple   |
| <b>Educational Attainment</b>             |   |
| Neither partner is a college graduate     | 1=Yes; 0=No (excluded educational attainment category)  |
| Only one partner is a college graduate    | 1=Yes; 0=No   |
| Both partners are college graduates       | 1=Yes; 0=No   |
| <b>Child under 18 years in household</b>  | 1=Has a child in the household under the age of 18 years; 0=No child in the household under the age of 18 years.                                  |
| <b>Household Income</b>                   |   |
| Less than \$35,000                        | 1=Yes; 0=No   |
| \$35,000 to \$49,999                      | 1=Yes; 0=No   |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999                      | 1=Yes; 0=No   |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999                      | 1=Yes; 0=No   |
| \$100,000 or more                         | 1=Yes; 0=No (excluded household income category)  |
| <b>State by Legal Recognition</b>         |   |
| States performing same-sex marriages      | 1=Lives in a state that performs same-sex marriages; 0=Does not live in a state that performs same-sex marriages (excluded category) <sup>2</sup> |

<sup>1</sup> Due to small sample size, Some other race includes Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

<sup>2</sup> States performing domestic partnerships/civil unions are combined with states not legally recognizing same-sex relationship because of a high collinearity (.84) between these two variables.

## **Findings**

### *Same-sex couples by year*

Table 2 presents the distribution of same-sex couple households by gender for all same-sex couple households, broken down by spouse reports, and those reported as unmarried partner for the 2008, 2009, and 2010 American Community Surveys. In 2008, approximately 23 percent of all same-sex couple households reported being married: 20 percent for male-male couples and 26 percent for female-female couples. For 2009, about 23 percent of all same-sex couples reported being married, with about 21 percent of male-male couples and 24 percent of female-female couples reporting being married. In 2010, about 24 percent of all same-sex couples, 21 percent of male-male couples, and 26 percent of female-female couples, report being married.

Overall, at least 80 percent of all same-sex spousal households reported a status of “married” in 2008, 2009, and 2010. Approximately 83 percent of male-male spousal households reported being married in 2008, compared with only 77 percent in 2010. For male-male unmarried partner households, only 2 percent reported married in 2008 compared to almost 4 percent in 2010. A slight increase was noted between 2009 and 2010 in the proportion of female same-sex spousal households reporting married, from about 79 to 82 percent. For female-female unmarried partner households, the percent reporting married ranged from almost 2 percent in 2009 to 3 percent in 2010. Though these differences are substantively small, all are statistically significant.

### *State recognition of same-sex marriage and unions*

Table 3 shows the distribution of same-sex couple households by state recognition of same-sex marriages and unions. Investigating the data this way allows us to gain a better

understanding of whether living in a state with legal recognition is associated with reporting being married. This is further shown by reports of unmarried partner or husband/wife in the relationship item. Out of all same-sex couple households approximately 24 percent report being married. Forty-one percent of couples residing in states performing same-sex marriages report married; 27 percent reported married in states performing domestic partnership/civil unions, and only 20 percent of those in all other states report married. For male-male households in states performing same-sex marriages about 33 percent report being married, compared with 47 percent of female-female households in these same states.

For those couples who reported their partner as a “spouse”, almost 80 percent reported their marital status as married. Ninety percent of these couples living in states performing same-sex marriages reported married compared to about 85 percent of those in states with domestic partnerships/civil unions and 75 percent of those in all other states. For all same-sex couples reported as spouses, female-female households report a higher percent with partners married than did the respective male-male households (82 and 77 percent, respectively). In contrast, only about three percent of couples reported as unmarried partner reported being married. This percentage did not vary much by state recognition or type of couple.

Whether couples report as unmarried partners or as spouses, their reports on marital status tend to be fairly consistent with that report, although this is less often the case for couples reporting as spouses. The data show that few couples who report being unmarried partners report that they are married (3 percent) which indicates great consistency between their responses to the relationship and marital status questions. However, for couples reported as spouse, over 80 percent of those households reported as married, regardless of state recognition.



### *Households with children*

Table 4 shows the distribution of same-sex couple households with children. More specifically it shows what percent of households with children have at least one own child related to the householder and those which only have children unrelated to the householder.<sup>5</sup> Own child is further broken out by type of own child (biological, step only or adopted only, and combination of any of these types). Of the total number of same-sex couple households with children, 84 percent report having at least one own child in their household. Of those who report being married with children, 93 percent of male-male couples report at least one own child and 90 percent of female-female couples.<sup>6</sup> Sixteen percent of all same-sex couples with children report having only nonrelated children in their households. Of course, these children are reported as unrelated to the householder, but may be the child of the householder's partner. Almost seventy-two percent of all same-sex couples with children present in the household have only biological children residing with them, 81 percent for male-male couples and 78 percent for female-female couples.<sup>7</sup>

Of the 58,099 same-sex couples who report having own children only in their households, 23,950 reside in households with same-sex couples reporting as spouses and the other 34,149 are in households reporting as unmarried partners. Eight-four percent of all same-sex couples with children, regardless of relationship type (spouses and unmarried partners), report having at least one own child in their household. The percentage of couples with at least

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<sup>5</sup> Over ninety-nine percent of opposite-sex married couples with children report having an own child only in the household. Of these households, 90.5 percent had only biological children of the householder. For opposite-sex unmarried partner households, 87 percent report own children only in the households, with 87 percent of these households having only biological children. Krivickas and Lofquist (2011).

<sup>6</sup> Male-male couples and female-female couples are statistically different from the total of all same-sex couples; however, they are not statistically different from each other.

<sup>7</sup> Male-male couples and female-female couples are statistically different from the total of all same-sex couples; however, they are not statistically different from each other.

one own child in the household does not vary statistically by gender of the couple when comparing reported as spouse or unmarried partner. Seventy-nine percent of those who report as spouse have a biological child only in their household compared to nearly 66 percent of those reported as unmarried partners. Female-female couples with biological children only in their household are more likely to have children when they report themselves to be unmarried partners compared to reported as spouse (91 percent and 77 percent, respectively). Households reported having step only or adopted only children in their households ranged from 14 reported as spouses to 28 percent reported as unmarried partner.

The bivariate results have given us a general understanding of same-sex couples who report themselves as married. The results show that those who reported as spouse have a higher percentage saying that they are married; couples in states that recognize marriage have a higher percentage saying married when compared to other states. To get a more in-depth understanding about same-sex couples who report as married, I will now look at this in a multivariate context to see what characteristics of the couples and their households might be associated with them reporting as married.

### *Odds of reporting married*

Table 5 presents the results from logistic regression where the dependent variable is whether partners report being now married as their marital status. Findings shown in Table 5 indicate a number of demographic differences among same-sex couples. Looking at age of all same-sex couples, couples in which the householder was age 55 to 64 had odds that were 1.4 times as high as those aged 45 to 54. Those aged 65 years and older had 2.6 times higher odds to report married than those aged 45 to 54 years. Those between the ages of 15 to 44 have lower

odds of reporting married than those aged 45 to 54 years. Other socio-demographic characteristics are associated with the odds of same-sex couples reporting married. Asians had odds ratios 2.4 times higher than those of non-Hispanic whites, while Hispanics had 1.4 times higher odds of reporting being married. Interracial couples had lower odds of reporting married than those not in an interracial relationship. Couples in which at least one partner had a college degree had lower odds of reporting married than those couples in which neither partner had a college degree. Couples with a child in the household had odds ratios 1.9 times higher of reporting married than those of couples without children present. Household income is not significantly associated with reporting married. Couples living in states that perform same-sex marriages had odds ratios 2.8 times higher of reporting married than couples living in any other state.<sup>8</sup>

There are not as many significant socio-demographic characteristics associated with the likelihood of reporting “now married” among those couples who reported as spouses as among all same-sex couples. Unlike all same-sex couples, those who reported as spouse do not have a clear age pattern. Compared to those aged 45 to 54 years, those aged 15 to 24 years had lower odds of reporting married, while those aged 25 to 34 and 35-44 years both had higher odds of reporting married (1.7 times and 1.8 times, respectively). Compared to non-Hispanic whites, blacks have a lower likelihood of reporting married. Those couples with only one partner with a college degree have 1.6 times higher odds of reporting married than those with no college degree, while both partners having a college degree increases their odds of reporting married by 2.8 times. Those couples with a household income of less than \$35,000 had lower odds of reporting married than those with a household income of \$100,000 or more. Couples living in

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<sup>8</sup> For the logistic regression analyses all other states refer to both those granting domestic partnerships or civil unions and those with no legal recognition. The states with domestic partnerships/civil unions and those states with no legal recognition are combined because both state types yielded similar findings.

states that perform same-sex marriage had odds 1.5 times higher of reporting married than couples living in other states.

The results of the logistic regression model for those who reported as unmarried partner are shown in the right-most column on Table 5. Those between the ages of 15 to 44 years had lower odds of reporting married than those aged 45 to 54 years. Asians had 3.2 times higher odds of reporting married than non-Hispanic whites. Those who are of some other race had lower odds of reporting married than non-Hispanic whites. In terms of education, if both partners have a college degree then they had lower odds of reporting married than those where neither had a college degree. Having a child in the household is associated with higher odds (1.5 times) of reporting married. There is no clear pattern between household income and reporting married. However, those who had income between \$50,000-\$99,999 had higher odds of reporting married (1.6 and 1.9, respectively) compared to those whose income is \$100,000 or more.

## **Conclusions**

Building on prior research by the Census Bureau, the current study examined how same-sex partners reported their marital status. The purpose of this paper was to gain a better understanding of same-sex couples' responses to the marital status question on the American Community Survey. The findings showed that the responses to marital status have not changed much between 2008, 2009, and 2010, even with the changes in state laws regarding same-sex marriage. Overall, regardless of state recognition, same-sex couples who identified as unmarried partners reported themselves as something other than married. Thus, if they did not choose to report themselves as spouses on the relationship item, then they were not likely to report themselves to be "now married." Not surprisingly, those who identified themselves as spouses

also reported that they were “now married.” Consistent with research by Bates et al. (2010) I found that couples who reported as spouses still reported being married even if they resided in a state that does not recognize same-sex marriage. This shows a disconnect between the state laws governing whether or not same-sex couples can marry and how same-sex couples define their relationship and marital status.

Over 86 percent of all same-sex households with children present who say that they were married (regardless of sex) reported having at least one own child in the house compared to 82 percent of all similar same-sex couple households. For those households with only own children in them, over 70 percent reported only biological children. Same-sex couples with own children may be more likely to report married (80 percent) because those couples may be in longer term committed relationships or it could be that having children makes them feel more “connected”.

My finding that most same-sex couples who reported as spouses also said that they were married falls in line with the research by Bates et al. (2010) which stated that those couples who were legally married were more likely to report themselves as married regardless of their state’s recognition of same-sex marriage. Mills and Poortman (2010) found that 67 percent of same-sex couples in Europe reported themselves as “married” even when same-sex marriage was not legally recognized. In the current study we see that nearly 24 percent of all same-sex couples reported themselves as “now married” regardless of state recognition. The contexts of same-sex marriage in the United States and Europe are very different. In the Mills and Poortman (2010), study there were 6 out of 23 countries in which same-sex marriages were performed country wide. Therefore, the legality of same-sex marriage was indisputable. In the United States, only 5 states and the District of Columbia performed same-sex marriages in 2010 and none of these marriages were recognized at the federal level. Since the majority of states in the United States

do not perform or recognize same-sex marriage, there are discrepancies between the social definition of marriage and legal definition of marriage that may not occur in Europe.

The logistic regression findings show interesting variations in reports of married by same-sex couples. For same-sex couples as a whole, I found that younger respondents had lower odds of reporting “now married” than middle-aged respondents, while respondents who were aged 55 years and over had higher odds of reporting married. The higher odds of reporting married among those 55 years and older may reflect the effect of age: older people have the possibility of having been in a long-term committed relationship that they may define as married even though they were living in a context where marriage was not an option. Asians and Hispanics had higher odds of reporting married than do non-Hispanic whites. Couples in which at least one partner has a college degree had lower odds of reporting married compared to those couples where neither partner has a college degree. Not surprisingly, there were higher odds of reporting “now married” in states where same-sex marriages are performed when compared to all other states.

Not all same-sex couples are alike. What is related to reporting married for those who report as spouses is not necessarily the same as for those reporting married who also reported as unmarried partners. The findings showed that same-sex couples who reported as spouse are quite different from those who reported unmarried partner. For both couple types, age was associated with who reported that they were married but different age groups acted differently. For those reported as spouses, those aged 15 to 24 years had lower odds of saying that they are married, while only those unmarried partners younger than 45 years had lower odds of reporting married. The effect of race and Hispanic origin also varied between those reported as spouse and unmarried partner. Blacks or African American spousal householders and unmarried

householders of some other race had lower odds of reporting married, whereas Asian unmarried householders had higher odds of reporting married when compared to non-Hispanic white householders. Couples with at least one partner with a college degree had higher odds of reporting married when they reported as spouses rather than unmarried partners. Unmarried partner households with a household income between \$50,000 and \$99,999 had higher odds of saying that they were married. If both partners have a college degree then they have lower odds of reporting married than if neither partner has a college degree for those reporting as unmarried partners. For those reported as spouse, if both partners have a college degree then they have higher odds of reporting married than if neither has a college degree. The differences in the educational attainment findings between reported as spouse and unmarried partner are interesting since prior research has found that more educated people are generally more accepting of same-sex marriage than are those with less education regardless of sexual orientation (Sherkat, de Vries, and Creek, 2009). Same-sex couples reported as spouse who lived in a state performing same-sex marriages had higher odds of reporting married, however this was not statistically significant for those reported as unmarried partners. Having a child in the household was statistically related to higher odds of reporting married for only those reported as unmarried partner.

The purpose of this study was to identify the characteristics of same-sex couples that are associated with them reporting as married. Same-sex couples were looked at as a whole, those reported as spouses, and unmarried partners. There were two primary findings. Children and state recognition matter. Unmarried partner couples who reported a child under the age of 18 years in their household had higher odds of reporting that they were married. Same-sex couples as a whole and those reported as spouse had higher odds of living in a state that performed same-

sex marriage than all other states, while this is not a significant characteristic for unmarried partners. However, in the bivariate results, I found that even in states that do not perform same-sex marriages that there were still over 20 percent of couples who reported married and reported spouse even when they were not legally able to marry. This finding shows that even though there appears to be relative consistency of reporting relationship and marital status for same-sex couples as a whole, it does vary by how couples answer the relationship question.



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Table 2.

**Estimates of Unedited Same-Sex Households with Partners Reporting "Married": ACS 2008-2010**

| NEW<br>Survey year and<br>sex of couple | All same-sex households |           |                   |           | Reported as Spouse |           |                   |           | Reported as unmarried partner |           |                   |           |
|---|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|
|   | Total                   |           | Reporting married |           | Total              |           | Reporting married |           | Total                         |           | Reporting married |           |
|   | Number                  | Std Error | Percent           | Std Error | Number             | Std Error | Percent           | Std Error | Number                        | Std Error | Percent           | Std Error |
| 2010                                    |                         |           |                   |           |                    |           |                   |           |                               |           |                   |           |
| Total                                   | 434,389                 | 5,114     | 23.5              | 0.2       | 114,540            | 2,234     | 79.8              | 0.8 *+    | 319,849                       | 4,736     | 3.3               | 0.2 *     |
| Male-Male                               | 213,508                 | 3,688     | 20.8              | 0.7       | 49,959             | 1,636     | 76.5              | 1.4 *+    | 163,549                       | 3,319     | 3.8               | 0.4 *     |
| Female-Female                           | 220,881                 | 3,758     | 26.1              | 0.6 #     | 64,581             | 1,942     | 82.4              | 1.2 *+#   | 156,300                       | 2,972     | 2.8               | 0.3 *#    |
| 2009                                    |                         |           |                   |           |                    |           |                   |           |                               |           |                   |           |
| Total                                   | 428,539                 | 4,937     | 22.5              | 0.4 x     | 112,722            | 2,553     | 80.2              | 1.0 *+    | 315,817                       | 3,923     | 1.8               | 0.2 *x    |
| Male-Male                               | 205,272                 | 3,043     | 20.6              | 0.7       | 47,095             | 1,708     | 82.2              | 1.3 *+x   | 158,177                       | 2,741     | 2.2               | 0.3 *x    |
| Female-Female                           | 223,267                 | 3,731     | 24.2              | 0.7 #x    | 65,627             | 1,892     | 78.8              | 1.3 *+#x  | 157,640                       | 3,087     | 1.5               | 0.2 *#x   |
| 2008                                    |                         |           |                   |           |                    |           |                   |           |                               |           |                   |           |
| Total                                   | 409,719                 | 5,028     | 22.6              | 0.5 x     | 106,801            | 2,554     | 81.0              | 0.7 *+    | 302,918                       | 4,449     | 2.1               | 0.2 *x    |
| Male-Male                               | 196,961                 | 3,179     | 19.5              | 0.8       | 42,457             | 1,768     | 82.7              | 1.6 *+x   | 154,501                       | 2,809     | 2.1               | 0.2 *x    |
| Female-Female                           | 212,758                 | 3,642     | 25.6              | 0.6 #     | 64,344             | 1,911     | 79.8              | 1.1 *+    | 148,414                       | 3,018     | 2.0               | 0.3 *~x   |

Source: Tables from 2008 ACS, 2009 ACS and 2010 ACS

\* indicates statistically different from all same-sex households

+ indicates statistically different from unmarried partner

# indicates statistically different from males

x indicates statistically different from 2010

Table 3.

**Distribution of same-sex couple households by states grouped by legal recognition of same-sex couple marriages and unions: 2010**(In percent. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/acs/www](http://www.census.gov/acs/www) )

| State by legal recognition and gender of couple   | All same-sex households |           |                   |           | Reported as spouse |           |                   | Reported as unmarried partner |         |           |     |      |
|---|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------------------------------|---------|-----------|-----|------|
|   | Total                   |           | Reporting married |           | Reporting married  |           | Reporting married |                               |         |           |     |      |
|   | Number                  | Std Error | Percent           | Std Error | Percent            | Std Error | Percent           | Std Error                     | Percent | Std Error |     |      |
| Total same-sex couple households                  | 434,389                 | 5,114     | 23.5              | 0.5       |                    |           | 79.8              | 0.8                           | #       | 3.3       | 0.2 | #~   |
| Male-Male   | 213,508                 | 3,688     | 20.8              | 0.7       | <                  |           | 76.5              | 1.4                           | #<      | 3.8       | 0.4 | #~   |
| Female-Female                                     | 220,881                 | 3,758     | 26.1              | 0.6       | x<                 |           | 82.4              | 1.2                           | #x<     | 2.8       | 0.3 | #~x  |
| States performing same-sex marriages <sup>1</sup> | 31,279                  | 1,297     | 40.7              | 1.8       | *                  |           | 89.4              | 1.7                           | ##*     | 2.5       | 0.8 | #~   |
| Male-Male   | 13,512                  | 924       | 32.7              | 2.7       | *<                 |           | 85.5              | 3.4                           | ##*     | 1.8       | 0.7 | #~   |
| Female-Female                                     | 17,767                  | 1,007     | 46.7              | 2.2       | *x<                |           | 91.7              | 1.8                           | ##*     | 3.2       | 1.4 | #~   |
| Domestic Partnership/Civil Unions <sup>2</sup>    | 122,699                 | 2,731     | 26.9              | 1.0       | *+                 |           | 84.7              | 1.3                           | ##*+    | 3.7       | 0.5 | #~   |
| Male-Male   | 60,505                  | 2,304     | 25.8              | 1.1       | *+                 |           | 82.8              | 2.1                           | ##*     | 3.8       | 0.7 | #~+  |
| Female-Female                                     | 621,494                 | 1,776     | 27.9              | 1.3       | +                  |           | 86.4              | 1.8                           | ##*+    | 3.6       | 0.7 | #~   |
| All other states                                  | 280,411                 | 4,228     | 20.1              | 0.6       | *+^                |           | 75.3              | 1.3                           | ##+^    | 3.2       | 0.3 | #~   |
| Male-Male   | 139,491                 | 2,867     | 17.5              | 0.8       | *+^<               |           | 71.1              | 2.2                           | ##+^<   | 4.0       | 0.4 | #~+  |
| Female-Female                                     | 140,920                 | 2,962     | 22.7              | 0.8       | *+^x<              |           | 78.4              | 1.7                           | ##+^x<  | 2.4       | 0.3 | #~x< |

<sup>1</sup> This includes Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and the District of Columbia.<sup>2</sup> This includes California, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Nevada, New Jersey, Oregon, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Source: Unpublished tables from 2010 ACS

\* indicates significantly different from the total same-sex households

# indicates significantly different from all same-sex households

~ indicates statistically different from reported as spouse

+ indicates statistically different from states performing same-sex marriage

^ indicates statistically different from states with domestic partnerships/civil unions

x indicates statistically different from males

&lt; indicates statistically different from average

**Same-sex couple households with children: 2010**

(In percent. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/ipeds/www](http://www.census.gov/ipeds/www).)

|   | All Same-sex Households |           |                   |           |               |           | Reported as spouse |           |                   |           |               |           | Reported as unmarried partner |           |                   |           |               |           |
|---|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
|   | Total                   |           | Reporting married |           | Female-Female |           | Total              |           | Reporting married |           | Female-Female |           | Total                         |           | Reporting married |           | Female-Female |           |
|   | Number                  | Std Error | Percent           | Std Error | Percent       | Std Error | Number             | Std Error | Percent           | Std Error | Percent       | Std Error | Number                        | Std Error | Percent           | Std Error | Percent       | Std Error |
| <b>Households with Children (number)</b>      | 69,358                  | 2,236     | 9,617             | 736       | 16,106        | 868       | 27,437             | 1,219     | 8,332             | 737       | 14,884        | 863       | 41,921                        | 1,736     | 1,285             | 309       | 1,222         | 246       |
| Own children <sup>2</sup>                     | 84.3                    | 1.1       | 92.9              | 1.9 #     | 89.9          | 1.6 #     | 87.9               | 1.5 <     | 92.5              | 2.2 #     | 90.0          | 1.7       | 81.9                          | 1.5 ^     | 95.3              | 3.8 #     | 88.5          | 6.3       |
| Not own children <sup>3</sup>                 | 16.2                    | 1.1 *     | 7.1               | 1.9 *#    | 10.5          | 1.7 *#    | 12.7               | 1.5 *#<   | 7.5               | 2.2 *#    | 10.4          | 1.8 *     | 18.5                          | 1.5 *#    | 4.7               | 3.8 *#    | 11.5          | 6.3 *     |
| <b>Households with Own Children Only</b>      | 58,099                  | 2,110     | 8,934             | 707       | 14,412        | 864       | 23,950             | 1,154     | 7,710             | 711       | 13,330        | 864       | 34,149                        | 1,656     | 1,224             | 299       | 1,082         | 235       |
| Biological Only <sup>4</sup>                  | 71.6                    | 1.6       | 80.6              | 3.2       | 78.4          | 2.3       | 79.1               | 1.7 <     | 80.0              | 3.4       | 77.4          | 2.5       | 66.4                          | 2.4 <^    | 84.2              | 7.8       | 90.6          | 5.6 <^    |
| Step Only or Adopted Only <sup>5</sup>        | 22.3                    | 1.3 ~     | 13.3              | 2.7 ~     | 14.0          | 2.1 ~     | 13.9               | 1.6 ~<    | 14.5              | 3.1 ~     | 14.6          | 2.3 ~     | 28.2                          | 2.1 ~<^   | 5.8               | 5.8 ~     | 6.7           | 4.9 ~     |
| Combination of own children only <sup>6</sup> | 6.1                     | 0.8 ~+    | 6.1               | 1.9 ~+    | 7.6           | 1.3 ~+    | 7.0                | 1.1 ~+    | 5.5               | 2.0 ~+    | 8.0           | 1.4 ~+    | 5.5                           | 1.0 ~+    | 10.0              | 5.4 ~     | 2.7           | 2.8 ~<^   |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

<sup>1</sup> Children are identified by their relationship to the householder.

<sup>2</sup> Households with at least own children. Can contain not own children as well.

<sup>3</sup> Households that contain grandchildren, other relative, or other nonrelative all under the age of 18 years.

<sup>4</sup> Households with biological children only.

<sup>5</sup> Households with either stepchild only or adopted child only.

<sup>6</sup> Combination of two or more of the three own children types.

\* indicates statistically different from own children

~ indicates statistically different from biological only

+ indicates statistically different from step only/adopted only

# indicates statistically different from total

x indicates statistically different from males

< indicates statistically different from all same-sex households

^ indicates statistically different from spouse

**Table 5: Logistic regression predicting same-sex couples' likelihood of reporting separated, widowed, divorced or never married: ACS 2010**

|   | All same-sex couples - 2 |      |            | Reported as spouse - 2 |      |            | Reported as unmarried |      |            |
|---|--------------------------|------|------------|------------------------|------|------------|-----------------------|------|------------|
|   | Estimate                 | SE/1 | Odds Ratio | Estimate               | SE/1 | Odds Ratio | Estimate              | SE/1 | Odds Ratio |
| <b>Age</b> ( <i>excluded category is 45 to 54 years</i> )   |                          |      |            |                        |      |            |                       |      |            |
| 15 to 24 years  | -1.4091 ***              | 0.29 | 0.24       | -1.0536 *              | 0.42 | 0.35       | -1.8674 *             | 0.89 | 0.16       |
| 25 to 34 years  | -0.3209 **               | 0.11 | 0.73       | 0.5272 *               | 0.27 | 1.69       | -0.5844 *             | 0.25 | 0.56       |
| 35 to 44 years  | -0.1440                  | 0.09 | 0.87       | 0.5736 *               | 0.23 | 1.78       | -0.6497 *             | 0.29 | 0.52       |
| 55 to 64 years  | 0.3407 ***               | 0.09 | 1.41       | -0.0840                | 0.21 | 0.92       | 0.2345                | 0.25 | 1.26       |
| 65 years and older  | 0.9575 ***               | 0.08 | 2.61       | -0.3710                | 0.19 | 0.69       | 0.3931                | 0.27 | 1.48       |
| <b>Race and Hispanic Origin</b>   |                          |      |            |                        |      |            |                       |      |            |
| One race, Not Hispanic or Latino ( <i>excluded category is White, not Hispanic or Latino</i> )    |                          |      |            |                        |      |            |                       |      |            |
| Black or African-American   | 0.0677                   | 0.15 | 1.07       | -0.9436 ***            | 0.21 | 0.39       | 0.1919                | 0.31 | 1.21       |
| American Indian and Alaska Native   | 0.3038                   | 0.37 | 1.36       | -0.4455                | 0.85 | 0.64       | -0.2824               | 1.09 | 0.75       |
| Asian   | 0.8657 ***               | 0.18 | 2.38       | -0.2033                | 0.42 | 0.82       | 1.1576 *              | 0.49 | 3.18       |
| Some other race   | -0.2247                  | 0.87 | 0.80       | 0.0944                 | 1.51 | 1.10       | -11.5475 ***          | 1.16 | <.001      |
| Two or more races, Not Hispanic or Latino   | 0.6654 **                | 0.26 | 1.95       | -0.1363                | 0.61 | 0.87       | 0.0832                | 0.75 | 1.09       |
| Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)   | 0.3169 *                 | 0.14 | 1.37       | -0.3777                | 0.22 | 0.69       | 0.4369                | 0.31 | 1.55       |
| <b>Interracial Couple</b> ( <i>excluded category is not of the same race</i> )                    |                          |      |            |                        |      |            |                       |      |            |
| <b>Educational Attainment</b> ( <i>excluded category is neither is a college graduate</i> )       |                          |      |            |                        |      |            |                       |      |            |
| Only one partner is a college graduate  | -0.3296 **               | 0.08 | 0.72       | 0.4541 **              | 0.16 | 1.58       | -0.2478               | 0.22 | 0.78       |
| Both partners are college graduates   | -0.2417 **               | 0.08 | 0.79       | 1.0198 ***             | 0.19 | 2.77       | -0.5248 *             | 0.23 | 0.59       |
| <b>Own Child under 18 years in household</b> ( <i>excluded category is no children under 18</i> ) |                          |      |            |                        |      |            |                       |      |            |
| <b>Household Income</b> ( <i>excluded category is \$100,000 or more</i> )                         |                          |      |            |                        |      |            |                       |      |            |
| Less than \$35,000  | 0.6375 ***               | 0.06 | 1.89       | 0.0228                 | 0.14 | 1.02       | 0.4154 *              | 0.20 | 1.52       |
| \$35,000 to \$49,999  | 0.0695                   | 0.10 | 1.07       | -0.5191 **             | 0.18 | 0.60       | 0.2918                | 0.29 | 1.34       |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999  | -0.0236                  | 0.13 | 0.98       | 0.0088                 | 0.22 | 1.01       | -0.1694               | 0.41 | 0.84       |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999  | -0.1772                  | 0.10 | 0.84       | -0.2799                | 0.17 | 0.76       | 0.4907 *              | 0.21 | 1.63       |
| <b>State by Legal Recognition</b> ( <i>excluded category is all other states</i> )                |                          |      |            |                        |      |            |                       |      |            |
| States performing same-sex marriages  | 0.1568                   | 0.09 | 1.17       | 0.1212                 | 0.19 | 1.13       | 0.6308 **             | 0.20 | 1.88       |
| 1.0153 ***  | 0.07                     | 2.76 | 0.4179 *   | 0.20                   | 1.52 | 0.0277     | 0.37                  | 1.03 |            |
| <b>Intercept</b>  |                          |      |            |                        |      |            |                       |      |            |
| Unweighted n  | -1.3450 ***              | 0.08 | (X)        | 1.3098 ***             | 0.21 | (X)        | -3.5342 ***           | 0.21 | (X)        |
| Weighted n  | 8,062                    |      |            | 2,234                  |      |            | 6,878                 |      |            |
|   | 434,389                  |      |            | 114,540                |      |            | 440,989               |      |            |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010

1/ Standard errors were computed using the Jackknife method.

Significance is noted as the following: \*(p<0.05); \*\*(p<0.01); \*\*\*(p<0.001).