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Publication: *Amerasia Journal*

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Asians and Pacific Islanders in Same-Sex Couples in the United States:

Data from Census 2000

Gary Gates, Holning Lau, and R. Bradley Sears

Introduction

The lesbian and gay Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities in the United States represent a rarely studied segment of the larger lesbian and gay community. In part due to their relatively small numbers and the lack of large national surveys that include questions about sexual orientation, social scientists rarely have data to separately explore the characteristics of this population. With large sample sizes and a mechanism to identify same-sex unmarried partners, commonly understood to be gay and lesbian couples, the US Census provides an opportunity to fill this research void. Transgendered couples are not separately identified within this data.

Using data from Census 2000, this study presents demographic and socio-economic information about APIs in same-sex couples in the United States. In this report, the category "API couples" means couples where both members are Asian or Pacific Islander; "inter-ethnic couples" means couples where only one member is

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Asian or Pacific Islander; and "non-API couples" indicates couples where neither member is Asian or Pacific Islander.

Previewing some of the analyses, we find that over 38,000 APIs identified themselves as living with a same-sex partner in Census 2000, comprising 3% of individuals in same-sex couples in the United States. California ranks first as the state with the largest number of API same-sex partners followed by Hawaii and New York. Hawaii ranks first as the state with the highest per capita rate of API same-sex partners.

The demographic and socio-economic profile of APIs in same-sex couples is more similar to APIs in different-sex couples than it is to non-APIs in same-sex couples. APIs in same-sex couples differ little from their different-sex counterparts in terms of citizenship, military service, income, education, rates of public assistance, and rates of employment. Nearly four in ten (37%) Asian/Pacific Islanders in same-sex couples are in inter-ethnic couples. When API same-sex couples (those where both partners are Asian/Pacific Islander) are analyzed separately, their socio-economic situation is worse than both non-API same-sex couples and inter-ethnic same-sex couples. For example, the average household income of API same-sex couples is over \$3,800 less than that of non-API same-sex couples and over \$8,800 less than that of API different-sex couples.

Large portions of APIs living with a same-sex partner are raising children. Among same-sex parents aged 25-55 with at least one API partner, 39% are raising their own children.¹ API same-sex parents are much more likely to be raising their own children (57%) than both inter-ethnic same-sex couples (25%) and non-API same-sex couples (34%). API same-sex couples are raising over 15,860 of their own children and more than 17,050 children under 18 (related and unrelated children).

Asian/Pacific Islander same-sex parents are raising their children with fewer resources than different-sex parents (both API and non-API). Parents in API same-sex couples have annual household incomes that are, on average, over \$12,200 less than parents in non-API different-sex couples. In addition, while 77% of parents in non-API different-sex couples own a home, only 52% of parents in API same-sex couples do.

Data from Census 2000 demonstrate that there are a large number of API same-sex couples and families with children in the United States, and that without the support and protections provided by marriage, they are more vulnerable than other families.

Data and Methodology

Data for this report come from several Census 2000 public data releases. Geographic data are drawn from Summary File-2, a set of tables describing characteristics of households based on the race/ethnicity of the "householder," the person who filled out the census form.

Estimates of other demographic characteristics are made using the Census 2000 Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS). The 5% PUMS represents a one in four sample of the approximately 26% of American households that filled out a census long-form. The 1% PUMS represents a one in sixteen sample of the same households. The census long-form contains detailed information about all members of the household, including citizenship, country of origin, and a variety of demographic and economic characteristics.

Asian/Pacific Islanders (APIs) are defined as those who identified their ethnicity as one of eleven categories when filling out the census forms.² APIs include all individuals who identified themselves within these categories alone or in combination with other race categories.

Estimates of characteristics of same-sex couples and their families are made from a sample of those families drawn from both the 5% and 1% PUMS files. Characteristics of different-sex couples and their families are estimated using the 1% PUMS sample only.

Same-sex couples are identified from the roster that the householder uses to describe how every person in the house is related to him or her. These same-sex couples are commonly understood to be primarily gay and lesbian couples even though the Census does not ask any questions about sexual orientation, sexual behavior, or sexual attraction (three common ways used to identify gay men and lesbians in surveys). Rather, census forms include a number of relationship categories to define how individuals in a household are related to the householder. These fall into two broad categories: related persons (including husband/wife, son/daughter, brother/sister, etc.), and unrelated persons (including unmarried partner, housemate/roommate, roomer/boarder, other non-relative, etc.).

Since 1990, the Census Bureau has included an "unmarried partner" category to describe an unrelated household member's relationship to the householder. If the householder describes an-

other adult of the same sex as his or her "unmarried partner" or "husband/wife," the household counts as a same-sex unmarried partner household.³

The Census data regarding same-sex couples do not capture all gay men and lesbians in the United States for at least two important reasons. First, the Census only captures data about same-sex couples of which one person in the couple is the partner of the householder. The Census does not identify single gay men and lesbians. Limited data make it difficult to assess exactly how coupled gay men and lesbians might differ from their single counterparts, but in the general population, single people tend to be younger, less educated, and have lower incomes than their coupled counterparts.

In addition, the Census most likely undercounts even the population of same-sex couples. There are several potential reasons for suspecting an undercount. Concerns about revealing their sexual orientation (even indirectly) to the federal government may have led many gay and lesbian couples to indicate a status that would not indicate the true nature of their relationship. Other couples may have felt that "unmarried partner" or "husband/wife" does not accurately describe their relationship. A study of the undercount of same-sex unmarried partners in Census 2000 indicates that these were the two most common reasons that gay and lesbian couples chose not to designate themselves as unmarried partners.⁴ Census tabulations also would not capture couples living in a household with someone else who filled out the census form. While determining the size of this undercount is challenging, estimates suggest that the true counts are 10 to 50 percent higher than the Census figures.⁵

In addition to undercounting the number of same-sex couples in the population, the Census may also erroneously include some different-sex couples in the same-sex couple population. A measurement error results from different-sex married couples inadvertently checking the incorrect sex of one of the partners. This error, although thought to be small, may impact some of the characteristics of same-sex couples. For example, estimates of child-rearing among same-sex couples could be overstated due to this sample error because different-sex couples are more likely to have children. The magnitude of this error is not easily ascertained, but Gates and Ost suggest that while national unadjusted figures show that 28.2% of same-sex couples are raising children, a more accurate estimate that attempts to adjust for the presence

of different-sex couples is 27.5%. The estimates of child-rearing in this report do not adjust for this form of error and thus may somewhat overstate this characteristic.

APIs in Same-sex Couples in the United States

The Census identified 38,203 APIs in same-sex couples in the United States. They comprise 3% of all individuals in same-sex couples. Overall, nearly 4% of same-sex couples include an API (23,776 couples). More than half (53%) of API same-sex couples are inter-ethnic, meaning one partner is an API and one is not.

California ranks first as the state with the largest number of API same-sex partners; over one-third (13,288) of the APIs in same-sex couples live in California. California is followed by New York, Hawaii, Texas, and New Jersey (see Table 1). Hawaii ranks first as the state with the highest per capita rate of API same-sex partners.

Table 1: API Same-sex Unmarried Partners
among Adults (age 18+), Top Ten States

Rank by no. of API same-sex partners	State	No. of API same-sex unmarried partners	API same-sex unmarried partners per 10,000 adults	% of unmarried API same-sex partners
1	California	13,288	5.4	7%
2	New York	4,775	3.3	5%
3	Hawaii	2,186	23.9	46%
4	Texas	1,989	1.3	2%
5	New Jersey	1,498	2.4	5%
6	Florida	1,444	1.1	2%
7	Washington	1,419	3.2	4%
8	Illinois	1,036	1.1	2%
9	Massachusetts	925	1.9	3%
10	Georgia	873	1.5	2%

Sources: Census 2000 SF-1, PUMS (5% and 1% combined)

Ethnic Heritage

Like other API adults, APIs who are part of same-sex couples are ethnically diverse. Filipinos represent the largest group within API same-sex couples (18%). High proportions of API same-sex partners also indicated that they are Chinese, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Japanese, and Korean (see Table 2).

Table 2. Detailed Ethnic Heritage for APIs
within Same-sex Couples and among All Adults

Detailed ethnicity	API partners in same-sex couple	API adults generally
Filipino alone	18.0%	16.2%
Two or more major races	17.5%	11.8%
Chinese, except Taiwanese	16.9%	19.7%
Asian Indian alone	11.4%	13.7%
Vietnamese alone	8.0%	9.0%
Japanese alone	7.1%	7.6%
Korean alone	7.0%	8.9%
Combination of Asian races	1.8%	1.6%
Native Hawaiian alone	1.5%	1.2%
Pakistani alone	1.4%	1.2%
Asian (not specified) alone	1.2%	0.8%
Guamanian/Camorro alone	1.2%	0.4%
Cambodian alone	1.1%	1.2%
Laotian alone	1.1%	1.1%
Thai alone	1.0%	1.0%
Samoan alone	0.9%	0.7%
Taiwanese alone	0.6%	1.1%
Hmong alone	0.6%	0.9%
Tongan alone	0.3%	0.3%
Other Micronesian or in combo	0.3%	0.1%
Malaysian alone	0.3%	0.1%
Indonesian alone	0.2%	0.3%
Other Polynesian alone or in combo	0.2%	0.1%
Other Asian alone	0.2%	0.2%
Other NH and other PI	0.2%	0.3%
Sri Lankan alone	0.1%	0.2%
Melanesian alone or in combo	0.0%	0.1%
Bangladeshi alone	0.0%	0.4%

Source: Census 2000 PUMS (5% and 1%)

Individual Characteristics

Comparisons of demographic characteristics shown in Table 3 demonstrate a high degree of similarity between APIs in same-

sex couples and their different-sex counterparts. A pattern emerges: in the case of traits like citizenship, military service, speaking English well, and college education, income and employment, APIs in same-sex couples have individual characteristics that differ from the population of non-APIs in same-sex couples but are more similar to their different-sex coupled counterparts.

These comparisons raise an interesting question—why do APIs in same-sex couples look different, among a number of individual characteristics, from non-APIs in same-sex couples? Demographically at least, APIs in same-sex couples appear to have more in common with the API community than they do with the broader lesbian and gay community, where APIs represent a relatively small minority. These comparisons suggest that API heritage plays a strong role in shaping individual demographic and economic characteristics, perhaps stronger than the role of sexual orientation.

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of Individuals within Couples

	Same-Sex		Different-Sex	
	Non-APIs	APIs	APIs	Non-APIs
Age (mean)	43.0	40.9	43.6	46.9
Disabled	22%	22%	18%	19%
Citizen	93%	68%	65%	94%
Military service	15%	9%	7%	19%
Speak English well	75%	79%	78%	75%
Speak non-English language	16%	66%	78%	14%
Income (mean)	35,144	32,793	35,018	34,255
College degree	32%	39%	44%	25%
Public Assistance	2%	2%	2%	1%
Employed	71%	68%	67%	66%

Source: Census 2000 PUMS (5% and 1%)

Sex, Age, and Disability

API same-sex couples are more likely to be male couples; fifty-four percent of all API same-sex couples are male couples. The sex distribution of non-API same-sex couples is more balanced; roughly half of all non-API same-sex couples are male couples.

Individuals in same-sex couples are, in general, younger than

individuals in different-sex couples. APIs in couples, both same- and different-sex, are younger than their non-API counterparts. Consequently, APIs in same-sex couples are the youngest of the four groups compared (40.9) and are closest in age to non-APIs in same-sex couples (43.0).

APIs in same-sex couples report a similar rate of disability as non-APIs in same-sex couples (22%), which is higher than the rate reported by APIs in different-sex couples (18%).

Citizenship and Military Service

APIs in same-sex and different-sex couples have similar rates of citizenship: 68% and 65%, respectively. Across both same-sex and different-sex couples, APIs have a lower rate of citizenship than their non-API counterparts. Citizenship rates for non-APIs in same-sex and different-sex couples are 93% and 94%, respectively.

The same pattern holds true for same-sex partners' rates of military service: 9% for APIs in same-sex couples and 7% for APIs in different-sex couples, compared with 15% for non-APIs in same-sex couples and 19% for non-APIs in different-sex couples.

Language Proficiency

Similar percentages of APIs in same- and different-sex couples report that they "speak English well" (79% v. 78%). However, APIs in same-sex couples are less likely than their different-sex counterparts to speak a non-English (second) language (66% v. 78%).

Income and Education

While APIs in same-sex couples have a higher rate of holding a college degree than non-APIs in same-sex couples (39% v. 32%), their incomes are slightly lower (\$32,793 v. \$35,144). APIs in same-sex couples (\$32,793) also have lower incomes than APIs in different-sex couples (\$35,018). In contrast, non-APIs in same-sex couples have slightly higher incomes than non-APIs in different-sex couples (\$35,144 v. \$34,255).

Studies consistently find that despite higher levels of education, gay men tend to have lower incomes than other men.⁶ Lesbian incomes are often higher than those of other women. This trend is true for APIs. API men in same-sex couples have lower average incomes than API men in different-sex couples (\$34,249 v. \$49,752). Conversely, API women in same-sex couples have higher average incomes than their counterparts in different-sex couples (\$31,085 v. \$22,384).

Employment and Public Assistance

The employment rates of APIs in same-sex couples closely resemble those of their different-sex counterparts (68% v. 67%). In contrast, non-APIs in same-sex couples have higher rates of employment than their different-sex counterparts (71% v. 63%). Rates of receiving public assistance do not vary much among persons in various couple types.

Inter-ethnic Same-Sex Couples

The census data also allow us to make two types of comparisons regarding inter-ethnic same-sex couples: 1) comparisons between APIs in inter- and intra-ethnic couples and 2) comparisons between APIs and non-APIs in inter-ethnic couples.

APIs in Inter-ethnic Couples v. APIs in Intra-ethnic Couples

APIs in intra-ethnic same-sex couples differ in significant ways from APIs in inter-ethnic same-sex couples. They are much less likely to be citizens (61% v. 80%), to indicate that they speak English well (75% v. 93%), to have a college degree (34% v. 47%), and to be employed (63% v. 76%). Not surprisingly, they also have average individual incomes that are over \$8,500 less than APIs in inter-ethnic same-sex couples, and average household incomes that are over \$21,000 less (see Table 4).

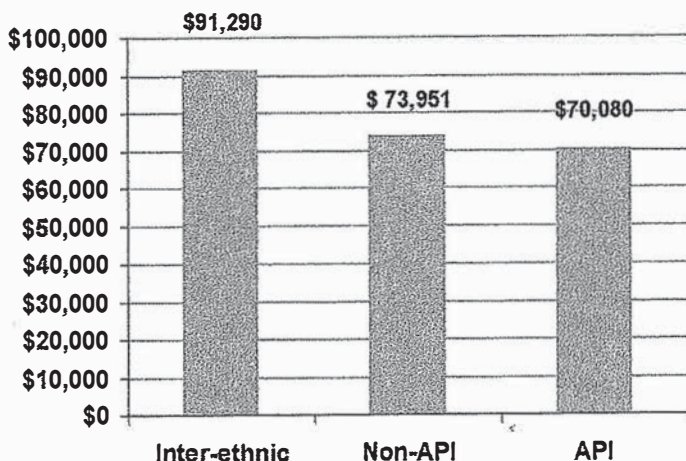
Table 4. Demographic Characteristics of APIs in Inter-ethnic Couples and Intra-ethnic Couples

	Same-sex		Different-sex	
	Inter-ethnic	Both API	Inter-ethnic	Both API
Female	40%	50%	68%	50%
Age (mean)	38.1	42.6	41.0	44.3
Citizen	80%	61%	80%	61%
Military service	11%	7%	9%	6%
Public Assistance	1%	2%	1%	2%
Disabled	14%	26%	14%	20%
Speak non-English language	42%	81%	45%	87%
Speak English well	93%	75%	94%	75%
Individual Income (mean)	38,311	29,505	34,091	35,255
Household income (mean)	91,290	70,080	83,474	78,941
Household income (median)	72,400	54,600	65,020	62,000
College degree	47%	34%	39%	45%
Employed	76%	63%	71%	66%

Source: Census 2000 PUMS (5% and 1%)

The mean household income of same-sex couples with two API partners is over \$3,800 less than that of non-API same-sex couples and over \$21,000 less than that of inter-ethnic same-sex couples with an API partner.

Chart 1: Mean Household Income of Same-sex Couples



APIs v. Non-APIs in Inter-ethnic Couples

While there are differences between API and non-API members of inter-ethnic same-sex couples, generally the API members of those couples are more similar to their non-API partners than to APIs in intra-ethnic same-sex couples (see Table 5).

API partners in inter-ethnic relationships are slightly younger than their non-API partners, are less likely to be citizens, and are less likely to have earned a college degree. Not surprisingly, APIs in inter-ethnic couples have much higher rates of speaking a non-English language than their partners (42% v. 18%), although they are about half as likely to speak a non-English language as APIs in an intra-ethnic same-sex couple (81%). They also differ noticeably from their non-API partners in terms of average income (\$38,311 v. \$49,770) and rates of military service (11% v. 18%). APIs partnered with a same-sex API report high rates of disability (26%) compared to both APIs and non-APIs in inter-ethnic couples (14% and 15%).

Table 5: Demographic Characteristics of APIs and Non-APIs in Inter-ethnic Same-sex Couples

	Inter-ethnic		
	Non-API	API	Both API
Age (mean)	40.3	38.1	42.6
Citizen	95%	80%	61%
Military service	18%	11%	7%
Public Assistance	2%	1%	2%
Disabled	15%	14%	26%
Speak non-English language	18%	42%	81%
Speak English well	87%	93%	75%
Income (mean)	49,770	38,311	29,505
College degree	47%	47%	34%
Employed	80%	76%	63%

Source: Census 2000 PUMS (5% and 1%)

In terms of the race/ethnicity of their non-API partners, APIs in inter-ethnic same-sex couples predominantly partner with Whites (76%) and Latino/as (12%). This pattern is similar to the pattern among their different-sex counterparts.

Table 6: Race of Non-API Partner in Inter-Ethnic Couples

	Same-Sex	Different-Sex
White	76%	79%
Black	6%	6%
Latino/a	12%	11%
API	0%	0%
AK Nat./Am. Ind.	2%	1%
Other/Multiracial	4%	4%

Source: Census 2000 PUMS (5% and 1%)

Household Demographic Characteristics

In this section, we turn from looking at individual characteristics to household characteristics. We focus our analysis of household characteristics on two issues that have come up in recent debates about extending marriage to same-sex couples:

1) Do same-sex couples raise children and need the same type of support and protections that the States provide to married couples?; and 2) Do members of same-sex couples depend upon each

other in ways similar to members of different-sex couples?

Our analyses show that API same-sex couples are raising children and depending on each other at levels demonstrating that they would benefit from the protections that marriage provides.

API Same-sex Couples Raising Children?

As shown in Table 7, dual-API same-sex couples are much more likely to be raising their own children than non-API same-sex couples (57% v. 34%).

Table 7. Demographic Characteristics of Couples with Children, Both Partners aged 25-55

	Same-sex			Different-sex		
	Inter-ethnic	Both API	Non-API	Inter-ethnic	Both API	Non-API
Raising own children	25%	57%	34%	59%	70%	62%
Average number of own children	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.9	2.0
Age	38.2	38.7	37.5	38.4	39.6	38.3
College degree	29%	35%	22%	40%	46%	28%
Mean household income	77,569	66,419	65,819	88,036	78,678	74,569
Median household income	60,000	53,300	52,000	68,200	62,000	59,600
Own home	57%	52%	66%	74%	63%	77%

Source: Census 2000 PUMS (5% and 1%)

Non-API same-sex parents tend to have fewer resources than their different-sex counterparts. Their average household incomes are over \$8,700 lower than non-API different-sex parents and they are less likely to own a home (66% v. 77%). In addition, the education advantage that individuals in same-sex couples as a whole have (those with and without their own children) disappears. Non-API same-sex parents are less likely to have a college degree than their different-sex counterparts (22% v. 28%).

The same is true for API same-sex parents. Their average household incomes are over \$12,200 less than API different-sex parents and they have much lower rates of home ownership (52% v. 63%). API same-sex parents are also less likely to have a college degree than their different-sex counterparts (35% v. 46%).

Interestingly, both same- and different-sex inter-ethnic cou-

ples have higher average incomes than their API and non-API counterparts. This could be explained in part by the fact that such a high percentage of APIs in inter-ethnic couples are partnered with Whites, as well as by the fact that the non-API groups include a large number of Latino/as (13%) and Blacks (11%), who typically have fewer resources.⁸

Chart 2: Mean Household Income of Couples with Children

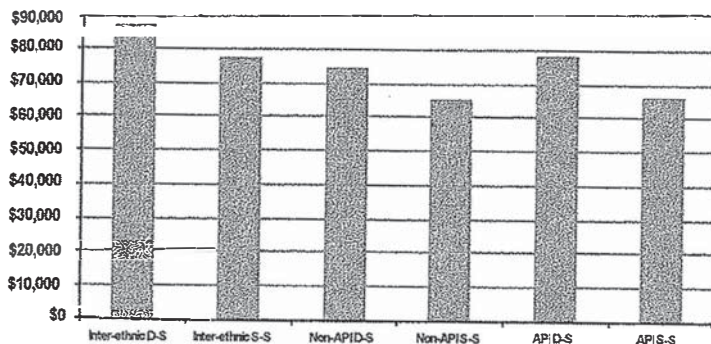
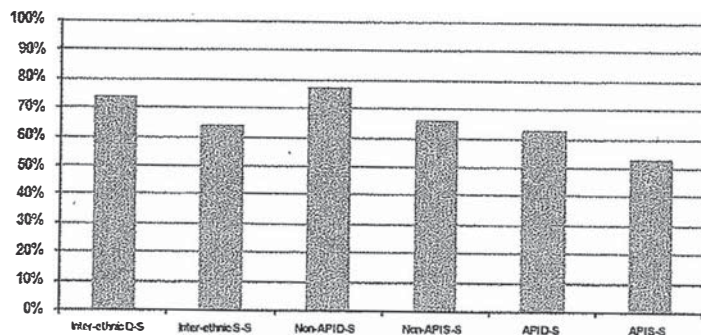


Chart 3: Home Ownership Among Couples with Children



An estimated 17,051 children under age 18 are living in the households of same-sex couples with at least one API partner, of which 15,862 are the "own child" of the person who filled out the census form. Among these "own children" of same-sex couples, 5,552 (35%) are being raised by inter-ethnic couples, while 10,310

(65%) are being raised by couples where both persons are APIs.

The children being raised by API same-sex couples are just as likely to be adopted as are the children of non-API same-sex couples (4%). Inter-ethnic couples, however, are more likely to raise adopted children (7%) than both API and non-API same-sex couples. (See Table 8).

Unfortunately, census records do not allow us to identify the exact relationship between a child and both partners of the same-sex couple or the circumstances that led to the children being raised by the couple. However, the racial/ethnic composition of children suggests that biological connections between the couple and child are likely; as 85% of the children of same-sex dual-API couples are also API. Nineteen percent of the children of inter-ethnic same-sex couples are API, while 17% are White, 21% are Hispanic, and 35% are multiracial or are identified as of another race. Fewer than one percent of the children of non-API same-sex parents are API.

Stated differently, 88% of API children being raised by same-sex couples are in a household where at least one parent is API and 66% percent are being raised in a household where both parents are API.

Table 8. Demographic Characteristics of the Own Children of Couples

	Same-sex			Different-sex		
	Inter-ethnic	Both API	Non-API	Inter-ethnic	Both API	Non-API
Under 5 years old	31%*	30%	29%	33%	27%	27%
Adopted	7%*	4%	4%	3%	1%	3%
Disabled	9%*	5%	7%	4%	4%	6%
Race/ethnicity:						
API	19%	85%	<1%	13%	91%	<1%
White	17%	<1%	56%	24%	<1%	72%
Hispanic	21%	4%	25%	13%	2%	17%
Black	6%	<1%	16%	3%	<1%	9%
AK Nat./Am. Ind.	2%	1%	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Other/Multiracial	35%	10%	2%	46%	7%	2%

Source: Census 2000 PUMS (5% and 1%)

* These differences are not statistically significant when compared to the Both API and Non-API same-sex columns. The apparent differences may be the result of a small sample (n) for this column.

Interdependence

Another issue that has come up in the debate about extending marriage to same-sex couples is whether same-sex partners rely upon each other economically in ways similar to married couples. A study of API same-sex couples in California shows that such couples display a high level of interdependence, measured in terms of disparities in income and earnings potential, investing in real property, and making major life decisions together, such as raising children.⁹ Members within these couples depend upon each other even though they do not have the protections that marriage provides. National census data on API same-sex couples also display many indicators of economic interdependence despite the fact that they are not protected by the rights or obligations of marriage.

Income, Employment, and College Education

Partners in API same-sex couples have an average difference in individual incomes of \$27,601 compared with \$37,481 for their different-sex counterparts (see Table 9). The proportion of couples with only one partner employed is comparable between same-sex and different-sex API couples (37% v. 36%). Similarly, API same-sex couples are about as likely as their different-sex counterparts to have only one partner with a college degree (23% v. 22%).

Some of the factors that result in these income and employment disparities between partners may reflect decisions that couples are likely to make together: hours worked, degree of labor force participation, time in child-rearing, etc. However, most same-sex couples are making these decisions without the protections that marriage provides, such as community property and spousal support upon dissolution of the relationship.

Disability and Public Assistance

The fact that one member of a couple is disabled or on public assistance may also indicate a level of economic interdependence within the couple. One partner is disabled and one is not among 20% of API same-sex couples, compared to 15% of API different-sex couples. Same-sex couples where both partners are API are the most likely to have one partner having received public assistance (4%). Only 3% of API different-sex couples have one partner receiving public assistance.

Homeownership, Co-residential Stability, and Childrearing

Home ownership, living together for a period of time, or raising children may indicate that couples are pooling resources and making long-term decisions together. There is a difference between home ownership rates of API same-sex couples and their different-sex counterparts (52% v. 62%). However, API same-sex couples and their different-sex counterparts are about equally as likely to have lived together for at least five years (49% v. 48%).

While a substantial portion of API same-sex couples are raising their own children (46%), they are less likely to be doing so than API different-sex couples (57%). However, their rates surpass that of both non-API same-sex couples (29%) and non-API different-sex couples (45%).

Table 9. Measurements of Interdependence
from Household Characteristics of Couples

	Same-sex			Different-sex		
	Inter-ethnic	Both API	Non-API	Inter-ethnic	Both API	Non-API
Mean household income	72,400	54,600	58,000	83,474	78,941	71,786
Mean difference in individual income	38,396	27,601	29,567	41,799	37,481	36,178
One partner employed	25%	37%	26%	32%	36%	31%
One partner with college degree	30%	23%	23%	26%	22%	20%
One partner disabled	16%	20%	21%	16%	15%	20%
One partner on public assistance	3%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Own Home	57%	52%	66%	69%	62%	79%
Together at least 5 years	36%	49%	47%	45%	48%	59%
Raising own children	23%	46%	29%	51%	57%	45%

Source: Census 2000 PUMS (5% and 1%)

Conclusion

This study attempts to highlight an understudied population with the lesbian and gay community. More than any other research purpose, these analyses attempt to make visible the often invis-

ible Asian and Pacific Islander population within the lesbian and gay community in the United States.

One of the most interesting findings from these analyses of census data regards the high rates of child-rearing among same-sex couples that include an API, especially those where both are API. They are much more likely to be raising children than are other same-sex couples. Further, they experience economic disadvantages relative both to other same-sex couples who are not API and to their different-sex counterparts. This raises the important issue of marriage equality and its role in providing a social and economic safety net for many families. Same-sex couples that include an API partner, especially those raising children, would likely benefit from many of the legal protections that marriage provides.

This detailed and complex picture of Asian/Pacific Islanders within same-sex partnerships in the United States demonstrates that they share many characteristics with the broader API community. API heritage, perhaps more so than sexual orientation, plays a strong role in shaping individual demographic and economic characteristics.

Notes

1. See the Data and Methodology discussion for an explanation of why child-rearing rates may be subject to a degree of measurement error in the Census and possibly over-stated. Gates and Sell (Measuring Gay and Lesbian Couples in *The Handbook of Measurement Issues in Family Research*, eds. S Hofferth and L Casper, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., forthcoming) describe methods to adjust for this error. Even when making such adjustments, it is still likely that over a third of these couples are raising their own children.
2. The census categories included Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Other Asian, Native Hawaiian, Guamanian or Chamorro, Samoan, and Other Pacific Islander, with blanks for specifying which "other" ethnicity.
3. Gary J. Gates and Jason Ost, *The Gay and Lesbian Atlas* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press, 2004) offers a detailed explanation of counting same-sex couples.
4. M.V. Lee Badgett and Marc A. Rogers, "Left Out of the Count: Missing Same-Sex Couples in Census 2000," (Amherst, MA: Institute for Gay and Lesbian Strategic Studies, 2003).
5. Gates and Ost.
6. M. V. Badgett, "The Wage Effects of Sexual-Orientation Discrimination," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 48:4 (1995): 726-739. Dan Black, Gary Gates, Seth Sanders, and Lowell Taylor, "Demographics of the Gay and Les-

bian Population in the United States: Evidence from Available Systematic Data Sources," *Demography* 37:2 (2000): 139-154. Dan Black, Hoda Makar, Seth Sanders, and Lowell Taylor, "The Earnings Effects of Sexual Orientation," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 56:3 (2003): 449-469. M. V. Badgett, "The Wage Effects of Sexual-Orientation Discrimination," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 48:4 (1995): 726-739. Sylvia Allegretto and Michelle Arthur, "An Empirical Analysis of Homosexual/Heterosexual Male Earnings Differentials: Unmarried and Unequal?" *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 54:3 (2001): 631-646.

7. In this section, we control for age and only look at the population of couples with members between the ages of 25-55. We do this because these people are more likely to be raising their own children in this age range and doing so excludes a large number of older, different-sex couples who are no longer raising their own children. If these couples were included, the difference between the percentage of same-sex and different-sex couples raising their own children would be significantly smaller.
8. Gary J. Gates and R. Bradley Sears, "Blacks in Same-Sex Couples in California: Data from Census 2000," Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Project on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy (2005). Gary J. Gates and R. Bradley Sears, "Latino/as in Same-Sex Couples in California: Data from Census 2000," Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Project on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy (2005).
9. Gary J. Gates and R. Bradley Sears, "Asians and Pacific Islanders in Same-Sex Couples in California: Data from Census 2000," Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Project on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy (2005).