

Making Migration Sexy: Immigrants in Same-Sex Couples in the United States *

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Galvanized by greater social acceptance and new rights, numbers of same-sex couples in the United States are increasing, yet few demographers have studied immigrants in same-sex couples. Using the American Community Survey from 2008 to 2018, this study compares same-sex couples including at least one immigrant to corresponding opposite-sex couples in order to characterize and assess the scale of sexual migration to the U.S. Moreover, we evaluate how the policy environment related to same-sex couples shapes migratory patterns. We find that same-sex couples generally have higher incomes and occupational prestige and are somewhat more educated. Moreover these couples are influenced by LGBT policies, both in their origin country and their U.S. state destination, and are less influenced by previous migration of conationals. Our findings put into question predominant models of migration that emphasize economic and network effects, suggesting the importance of considering political and lifestyle motivations.

Keywords: immigration, same-sex couples, LGBTQ policy

Table 1: States ranked by average estimated number of couples containing one or two immigrants

Different-sex rank	State	Same-sex rank	State
1	California	1	California
2	Texas	2	New York
3	New York	3	Florida
4	Florida	4	Texas
5	New Jersey	5	New Jersey
6	Illinois	6	Illinois
7	Washington	7	Massachusetts
8	Virginia	8	Washington
9	Massachusetts	9	Virginia
10	Georgia	10	Pennsylvania

Table 2: States ranked by proportion immigrant couples with same-sex partners

Rank	State or district	Proportion same-sex
1	District of Columbia	6.19 %
2	Vermont	2.09 %
3	Maine	1.63 %
4	Montana	1.47 %
5	Missouri	1.18 %
6	Massachusetts	1.12 %
7	New York	1.1 0%
8	Florida	1.01 %
9	Mississippi	1 .00%
10	Minnesota	0.96 %

Table 3: Sending countries ranked by proportion U.S. immigrants in same-sex couples

Rank	Country of origin	Proportion same-sex
1	Australia	2.53 %
2	Mongolia	2.37 %
3	Belgium	2.25 %
4	New Zealand	2.12 %
5	Singapore	2.11 %
6	Netherlands	2.08 %
7	France	2.05 %
8	Malaysia	2.05 %
9	Zimbabwe	2.01 %
10	Spain	1.98 %

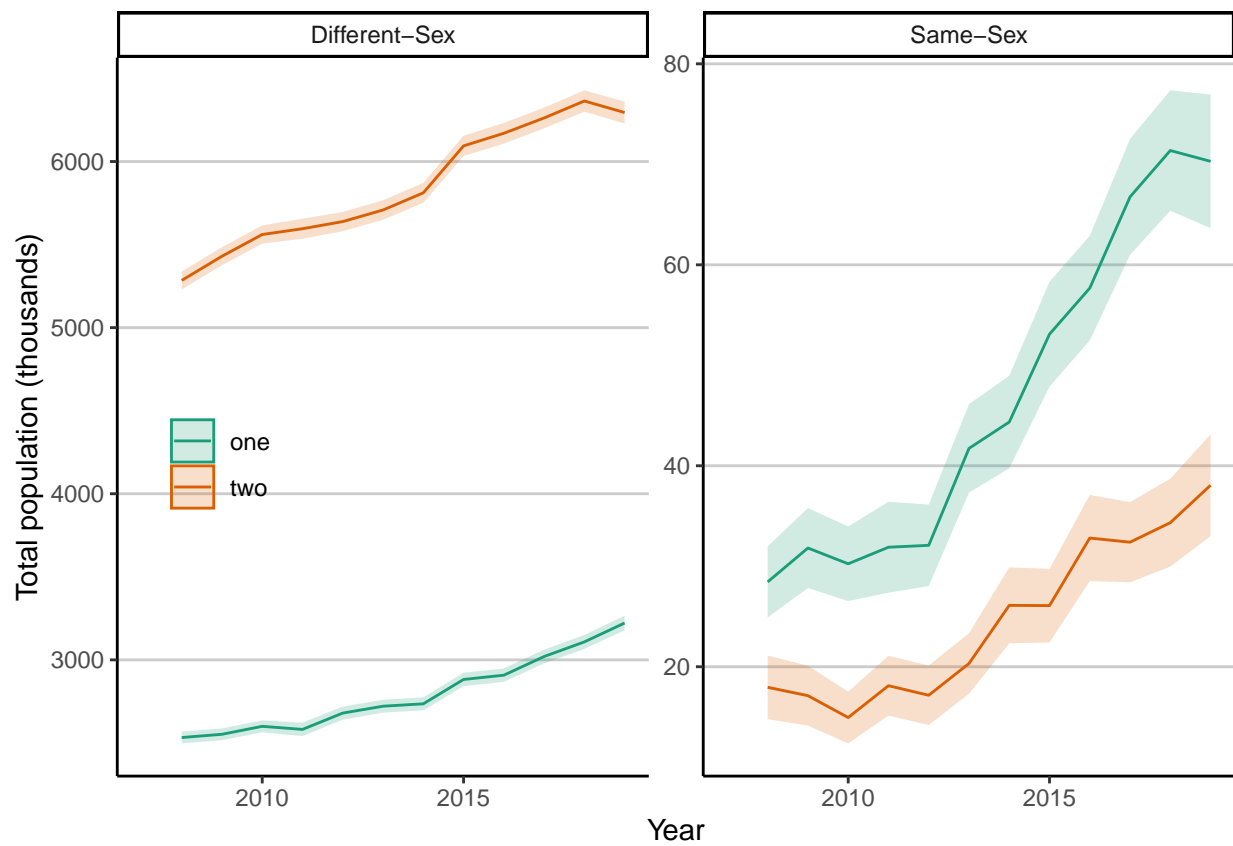


Figure 1: Estimated totals of different- and same-sex couples containing one or two immigrants, 2008-2019

Table 4: 100*Proportion same-sex in a country-year of immigration

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	prop_same_sex			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
origin_score	0.079*** (0.007)		0.066*** (0.010)	0.037+ (0.019)
distw		0.00002* (0.00001)	0.00003** (0.00001)	0.002* (0.001)
contig		0.110 (0.200)	−0.037 (0.200)	2.500+ (1.500)
comlang_off		−0.012 (0.081)	0.003 (0.081)	−17.000* (7.900)
comlang_ethno		−0.051 (0.069)	0.010 (0.069)	8.500* (3.800)
colony		0.300* (0.140)	0.120 (0.140)	12.000* (5.700)
wage_dif		0.00001 (0.00001)	−0.00001 (0.00001)	0.00001 (0.00001)
unemp_dif		−0.002 (0.004)	−0.002 (0.004)	0.005 (0.009)
polity5		0.036*** (0.004)	0.023*** (0.005)	0.0004 (0.010)
Country-clustered SEs?	yes	yes	yes	yes
Country FEs?	no	no	no	yes
Observations	3,811	2,995	2,995	2,995
R ²	0.031	0.028	0.041	0.120

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
+p<0.1; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table 5: 100*Proportion same-sex in a country-state-year

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	same_prop		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
state_unemploy		−0.033 ⁺ (0.017)	−0.001 (0.023)
state_income		0.00001 (0.00001)	−0.00003 (0.00002)
origin_score	0.053*** (0.011)	0.050*** (0.011)	0.110** (0.040)
distw			0.004*** (0.001)
contig			5.900*** (1.600)
comlang_off			−35.000*** (8.600)
comlang_ethno			18.000*** (4.100)
colony			26.000*** (6.200)
wage_dif			0.0001** (0.0001)
unemp_dif			−0.022 ⁺ (0.012)
polity5			−0.001 (0.012)
state_policy	0.033 ⁺ (0.017)	0.008 (0.034)	0.041 (0.036)
State-clustered SEs?	yes	yes	yes
State FEs?	no	yes	yes
Country FEs?	no	no	yes
Observations	44,431	44,076	39,147
R ²	0.001	0.003	0.010

Note: +p<0.1; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table 6: Individual ordered logit analysis of three-category state policy score

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	state_policy_binned		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
same_sex	0.160*** (0.020)	0.100*** (0.027)	20.000*** (0.0003)
origin_score		−0.051*** (0.003)	−0.022*** (0.003)
sexMale			−0.059*** (0.013)
age			0.001 ⁺ (0.001)
educcollege			0.070*** (0.010)
educHS			−0.036*** (0.011)
educsome col			−0.023* (0.011)
nchild			0.045*** (0.006)
log_income			0.070*** (0.002)
no_income			0.610*** (0.002)
yrimmig			−0.020*** (0.00002)
same_sexTRUE:origin_score		0.038*** (0.008)	0.052*** (0.009)
same_sexTRUE:sexMale			0.041*** (0.002)
same_sexTRUE:age			−0.005*** (0.002)
same_sexTRUE:educcollege			0.120*** (0.003)
same_sexTRUE:educHS			0.005** (0.002)
same_sexTRUE:educsome col			0.064*** (0.001)
same_sexTRUE:nchild			−0.017 (0.021)
same_sexTRUE:log_income			0.029*** (0.006)
same_sexTRUE:no_income			0.290*** (0.001)
same_sexTRUE:yrimmig			−0.010*** (0.0001)
Country-clustered SEs?	yes	yes	yes
Survey year FEs?	yes	yes	yes
Observations	111,880	107,168	107,168

Note: +p<0.1; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Data**Methods****Results***Descriptive statistics**Models*

*We appreciate...

References