

Background

- Scholarly and media attention to same-sex relationships has skyrocketed in recent years.
- The 2011 Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report calls for more research on same-sex relationships.
- Prior research on the health and well-being of sexual minorities emphasizes place.

Prior Research

 Few studies have compared the stability of same-sex and differentsex unions (Table 1).

TABLE 1. STUDIES OF STABILITY AMONG SAME-SEX COUPLES (SSC)								
Author(s) & Year	Data Source(s)	Data Yrs.	Same-Sex Sample	N of SSC	Measurement of Instability			
Badgett & Herman 2013	Administrative from 11 U.S. States	1997-2010	Marriages, civil unions, and domestic partnerships	≈93,652	Dissolution of legal relationship			
Balsam et al. 2008	CUPPLES ¹	2000-2001	Couples with and without civil unions	287	Dissolution of relationship at or prior to 3-year follow-up			
Blumstein & Schwartz 1983	American Couples ²	1978-1981	Cohabiting couples	828	Dissolution of relationship at or prior to 18-month follow-up			
Carpenter & Gates 2008	California LGBT Tobacco Survey	2003	Self-identified gay men and lesbians	547	Retrospective duration length			
Gates 2006	U.S. Census 2000	2000	Co-residential households	77,114	Coresidential duration length			
Kurdek 1998	Kurdek Primary Data Collection ³	1990-1995	Cohabiting couples	117	Dissolution of relationship at or prior to last of 5 yearly interviews			
Kurdek 2004	Kurdek Primary Data Collection ³	1990-2002	Cohabiting couples	227	Dissolution of relationship at or prior to last of 12 yearly interviews			
Rosenfeld 2013	How Couples Meet and Stay Together	2009-2011	Romantic or sexual (any type)	399	Dissolution of relationship at or prior to last of 3 yearly interviews			
Weisshaar 2013	How Couples Meet and Stay Together	2009-2011	Romantic or sexual (any type)	402	Dissolution of relationship at or prior to last of 3 yearly interviews			
		Europ	pean Studies					
Author(s) & Year	Data Source(s)	Data Yrs.	Same-Sex Sample	N of SS	Measurement of Instability			
Andersson et al. 2006	Norway Registers Sweden Registers	1993-2001 1995-2002	Registered partnerships	1,293 1,526	Registration of divorce at or prior to last year of data (8 years)			
Kalmijn, Loeve, & Manting 2007	Netherlands Income Panel Study	1989-1999	Cohabs (>= 1 year) 30+ year olds	731	Dissolution at or prior to last year of data (10 years)			
Lau 2012	NCDS (G. Britain) BCS70 (G. Britain)	1958-1991 1970-2004	Cohabiting unions since age 16	263	Dissolution at or prior to last year of data (8 years)			
Noack, Seierstad, & Weedon-Fekjær 2005	Norway Registers	1993-2001	Registered partnerships	1,293	Dissolution at or prior to last year of data (8 years)			
Office for National Statistics 2013	Civil Partnership Statistics, UK	2005-2012	Civil partnerships	60,454	Dissolution at each year of available data (7 years)			
Ross, Gask, & Berrington 2011	Civil Partnership Statistics, UK	2005-2010	Civil partnerships	31,827	Dissolution at each year of available data (4 years)			
Wiik, Seierstad, & Noak 2012	Norway Registers	1993-2011	Reg. partnerships and marriages	3,422	Divorce at or prior to last year of available data (18 years)			
¹ Population and convenience sample: primary respondents drawn from all same-sex couples who obtained civil unions in								

²Convenience sample. ²Convenience sample: different-sex couples primarily based in Ohio, same-sex couples were recruited through requests published in periodicals for gay men and lesbians.

Social Context and the Stability of Same-Sex and Different-Sex Relationships

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Current Investigation

• To compare the stability of young adult same-sex and different-sex relationships

• To examine the influence of contextual factors on the stability of same-sex couples

Data and Samples

• National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health).

• Add Health respondents who reported a sexual / romantic relationship at Wave 4 (2007-2009) and who have Wave 3 (2001-2002) contextual data.

• Sensitivity tests include comparisons to the National Health and Social Life Survey (1992), restriction of analyses to Add Health respondents who were consistent in reports of partnering and identity, and left-truncated models.

Key Measures

• Sex composition of most recent union:

- Different-sex couple
- Same-sex female couple
- Same-sex male couple

• Neighborhood-level variable (Wave 3):

Same-sex couple concentration in respondent's census tract

• State-level variable (Wave 3):

Whether respondent's state has a statute that protects sexual minorities

Analyses

Weighted life table estimates

• Survey-adjusted Cox models for comparisons across different data sources and samples

TABLE 2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS			2 I A 2		
	Different-	Same-Sex Unions			
	Sex Unions	Women		Men	
Variable	Mean	Mean		Mean	_
Control Variables:					
White	0.69	0.69		0.60	
Black	0.14	0.19		0.14	
Hispanic	0.12	0.07		0.16	
Asian	0.04	0.01	*	0.06	
Age at W4 interview	28.32	27.90		28.51	
With both biological parents at W1	0.57	0.50		0.50	
Family SES W1	5.56	5.42		5.54	* * *
Prior marriage	0.10			0.00	***
No. of other sex partners	10.63	11./5		20.71	*
Interracial relationship	0.19	0.24			•
Partner age difference (absolute value)	5.55	4.27		4.44	
Only baying say	0.04	0.03		0 08	
Dating casually	0.04	0.05		0.00	
Dating casually Dating exclusively or engaged	0.16	0.05		0.10	**
Cohobiting	0.27	0.23	***	0.40	
	0.27	0.54	ماد ماد ماد	0.40	ملد ملد ملد
Married	0.46	0.10	ጥጥጥ	0.02	ጥ ጥ ጥ
Timing of union transitions					
Months to coresidence	19.31	6.32	***	7.58	***
Months to marriage	34.75				
Fertility within the union:					
Had a birth with partner	0.38	0.08	***	0.00	***
Geographic mobility variables (W3):					
Changed residences between W1 & W3	8 0.72	0.77		0.72	
Changed states between W1 & W3	0.20	0.20		0.21	
Neighborhood variables (W3 interview):					
Living in a totally urbanized tract	0.58	0.67		0.63	
% of tract residentially stable	57.35	52.84		55.31	
% of households headed by SS couples	0.56	0.73		0.73	
State-level LGB policies (W3 interview):					
Living in state with any LGB protection	0.62	0.54		0.64	
Consistency in reports:					
100% straight & no lifetime SS partners	0.85				
Not 100% straight & same-sex partners	;	0.76		0.94	**
N of cases	11,169	139		138	

Note: Means and standard deviations adjust for design effects. p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001 (two-tailed tests between respondents in DS &

Figure 2. Relative Odds of Dissolution by



Figure 1. Life Table Estimates of Dissolution Based on Most Recent Unions of Add Health W4 Respondents w/W3 Data



BLE 3. ODDS RATIOS FROM MULTILEVEL DISCRETE-TIME MODELS OF DISSOLUT Model 1 Model 2 Model 3 Model 4

Couple type (versus DS unions):	4 9 9 4		4 9 9 7		1 202		1 200		1
Women in SS unions	1.281	***	1.30/	***	1.292	***	1.500		т.
Low SS concentration in tract	2.150		2.155		2.135		3 1 4 7	***	
Moderate SS concentration							2.220	***	
High SS concentration							1.224		
State without LGB protection									3.
State with LGB protection									1.
Individual characteristics:									
Black (versus White)	1.224	***	1.192	**	1.183	**	1.182	**	1.
Hispanic (versus White)	0.880	#	0.868	*	0.859	*	0.860	*	0.
Asian (versus White)	1.260	***	1.230	***	1.218	***	1.218	***	1.
Age at W4 interview	0.904		0.911		0.911		0.912		U.
With both biological parents	1.050	*	1.011	*	1.015	*	1.012	*	1. 1
Failing SES WI	1.022		1.020		1.018		1.018		1. 1
logged no other sex nartners	1.068	***	1.068	***	1.068	***	1.068	***	1.
Homogamy:									
Partner race difference	1.318	***	1.311	***	1.310	***	1.306	***	1.
Partner age difference	1.036	***	1.037	***	1.037	***	1.037	***	1.
Time-varying covariates:									
Coresidential relationship	0.974		0.993		0.994		0.988		0.
Marriage	0.363	***	0.365	***	0.366	***	0.366	***	0.
Mobility between W1 & W3:									
Changed residences			0.729	***	0.712	***	0.715	***	0.
Changed states			1.198	**	1.179	**	1.180	**	1.
Neighborhood (tract) variables:									
Resides in urbanized tract			1.167	**	1.108		1.120		1.
% residentially stable					0.996	**	0.997	*	0.
% SS couple households					1.049				
Intercept	0.107	***	0.092	***	0.115	***	0.116	***	0.
Baseline hazard									
Month of risk	0 010	***	0 010	***	0 010	***	0 010	***	Δ
	1.001	***	0.949	***	0.949	***	0.949	***	0. 1
ivionth of risk squared	1.001		1.001	.111.	1.001		1.001		1.
Estimated variances (intercept):									
Tract	0.052	***	0.045	***	0.042	***	0.044	***	0.
County	0.047	***	0.064	***	0.060	***	0.060	***	0.
Notes: Models estimated in HLI	M7 incl	ude	samplir	ng de	esign va	ariab	les at V	V1 (I	າວ
N = 564,633 person-months.		p <	.05; **	p <	.01: **	* p <	:.001 ([.]	two-	tai
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Relative odds are based on a multilevel discrete-time model of



Conclusions

- Same-sex male couples have the highest rates of dissolution and different-sex couples exhibit the lowest rates.
- Same-sex female couples have only slightly higher rates of dissolution than different-sex couples.
- Same-sex male couples are more stable in neighborhoods with higher concentrations of same-sex couples and in states with statutes that protect sexual minorities.

Limitations

- The measures of social context are based on the 2000 Census data.
- The indicator of same-sex couple concentration has some error (DiBennardo and Gates 2012) and is not sex-specific.

References

DiBennardo, Rebecca, and Gary J. Gates. 2013. "Research Note: U.S. Census Same-Sex Couple Data: Adjustments to Reduce Measurement Error and Empirical Implications." Population **Research and Policy Review.**

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