

Seminar Series

The University of Melbourne

Who is getting married? The demographics of Australia's same-sex marriage 'pioneers'

Presenter: Fiona Shalley

**Monday 7th October 3pm–4pm
Seminar Room 515, Level 5
207 Bouverie Street, Carlton**

Same-sex marriage is surely one of the most significant socio-demographic phenomenon of the early 21st century, with Australia becoming the 27th country to legalise same-sex marriage in 2017. Social and familial circumstances of same-sex partnerships are not well documented in Australia, and the group itself is obscured in population data because few nationally representative datasets include identification. Using a unique Australian dataset from State/Territory Registrars, we present a demographic profile of gay and lesbian couples who married in the first year of the changed legislation. Situated in the international experience, the data shows that the opportunity to marry has been embraced by same-sex couples in Australia with higher proportions of marriage registrations compared to trends in other countries. Data on usual residence of same-sex married partners provides new information on their spatial distribution that could be used to improve understanding of place based needs and associated policies and support services.



With a previous career in the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Fiona Shalley is now a Research Associate with the Northern Institute at CDU. She is interested in challenges associated with data about population minorities, and with Dr Tom Wilson published the first estimates of Australia's non heterosexual population. Fiona supports empowering people with the knowledge and skills to use quantitative data to tell their stories and improve the strength of their advocacy. Her research interests include identity statistics and enhancing quantitative data sources with qualitative research to contextualise and enrich data story telling.