

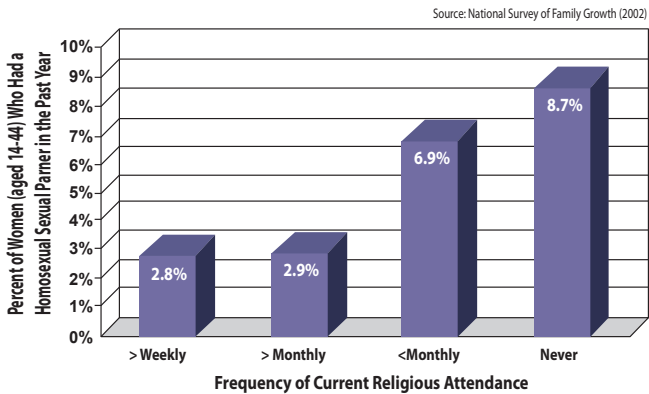


# Mapping America™

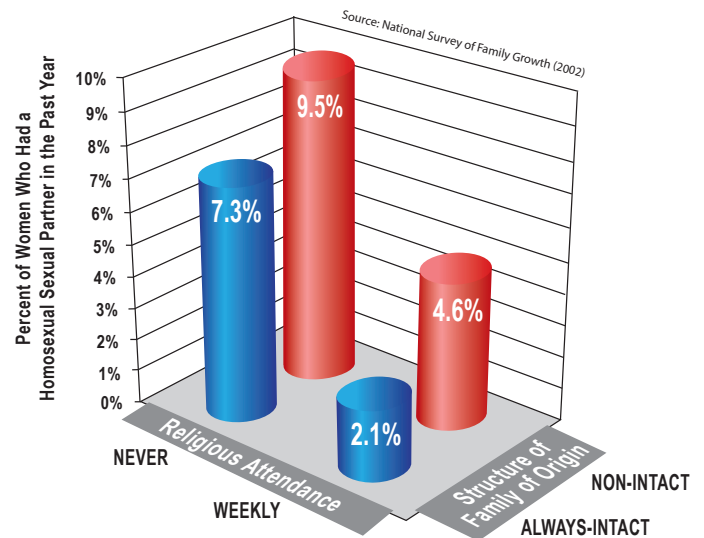
Marriage, Religion, and the Common Good – Number 93

## “Women (aged 14-44) Who Had a Homosexual Sexual Partner in the Past Year” by Current Religious Attendance and Structure of Family of Origin

“Women (aged 14-44) Who Had a Homosexual Sexual Partner in the Past Year”  
by Current Religious Attendance



“Women (aged 14-44) Who Had a Homosexual Sexual Partner in the Past Year”  
by Current Religious Attendance and Structure of Family of Origin



Current Religious Attendance and Structure of Family of Origin Combined

This chart looks at women who had a homosexual sexual partner in the past year at the extremes of four demographic quadrants.

These four quadrants are derived from combining two sets of family structures (always-intact vs. non-intact\*) and two sets of religious attendance (high vs. low).

The families occupying the four corners (or four extremes) of these quadrants are:

The always-intact married family that worships weekly;

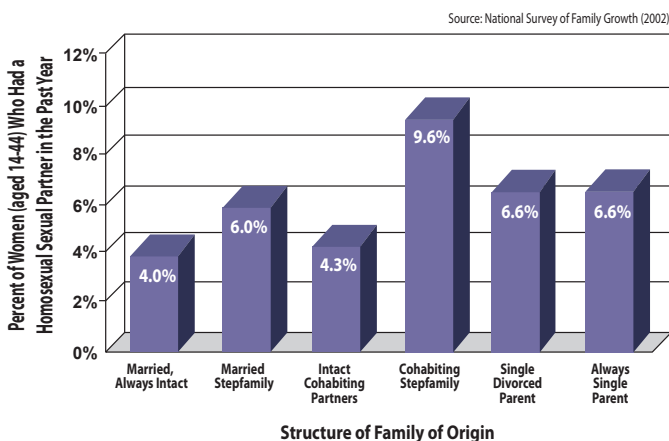
The always-intact married family that never worships;

The non-intact family\* that worships weekly;

The non-intact family\* that never worships.

(\* The non-intact group consists of women in the following categories: married stepfamily, intact cohabiting partners, cohabiting stepfamily, single divorced parent, and always single parent.)

“Women (aged 14-44) Who Had a Homosexual Sexual Partner in the Past Year”  
by Structure of Family of Origin



# Women (aged 14-44) Who Had Homosexual Sexual Partners in the Past Year Are More Likely to Worship Infrequently and to Have Grown Up in Non-Intact Families

Women (aged 14-44) who have not had a homosexual sexual partner in the past year are more likely to worship at least weekly and to have grown up in intact families than those who have had a homosexual sexual partner in the past year. According to the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), 2.1 percent of women who grew up in intact married families and attend religious services at least weekly have had a homosexual sexual partner in the year prior to being asked, followed by women who grew up in other family structures and worship at least weekly (4.6 percent), those who grew up in intact married families and never worship (7.3 percent), and those who grew up in other family structures and never worship (9.5 percent).

Examining structure of family of origin only, four percent of women who grew up in intact married families have had a homosexual sexual partner in the year prior to being asked, followed by women who grew up in intact cohabiting families (4.3 percent), those from married stepfamilies (6 percent), single divorced parent families (6.6 percent), always single parent families (6.6 percent), and cohabiting stepparent families (9.6 percent).

Examining current religious attendance only, 2.8 percent of women who worship at least weekly have had a homosexual sexual partner in the year prior to being asked, followed by women who worship between one and three times a month (2.9 percent), those who worship less than once a month (6.9 percent), and those who never attend religious services (8.7 percent).<sup>1</sup>

## Related Insights from Other Studies

Several other studies throw some light on why this might be so. Michele Dillon of Yale University reported that 44 percent of frequent Catholic church attendees “said that sexual relations between two adults of the same sex were wrong,” compared to 10 percent “of those who attended occasionally or never.”<sup>2</sup>

Darren Sherkat of Southern Illinois University also found that heterosexual women have much higher rates of church attendance than homosexual women.<sup>3</sup>

Examining the *current* family structure of homosexual men, Daryl Higgins of Deakin University reported that homosexual men who married women usually did so because “it seemed natural” or they “wanted children or family life.” Separation or divorce from their spouses often “led to an increase in the range of sexual behaviors engaged in with other men.”<sup>4</sup>

As the evidence indicates, more family brokenness in family of origin and less frequent worship correlate positively with homosexual activity.

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- 1 These charts draw on data collected by the National Survey of Family Growth, Cycle 6 (2002). The sample consists of women between the ages of 14 and 44 and numbers 7,643.
  - 2 Michele Dillon, “The Persistence of Religious Identity among College Catholics,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 35 (1996): 165-70.
  - 3 Darren E. Sherkat, “Sexuality and Religious Commitment in the United States: An Empirical Examination,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 41 (2002): 313-23.
  - 4 Daryl J. Higgins, “Gay Men from Heterosexual Marriages: Attitudes, Behaviors, Childhood Experiences, and Reasons for Marriage,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 42 (2002): 15-34.



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