

# **The Impact of Age Differences and Race on the Social Security Early Retirement Decision for Married Same Sex Couples**

**Diane Scott Docking**  
Northern Illinois University  
Department of Finance  
DeKalb, IL 60115  
815-753-6396  
[ddocking@niu.edu](mailto:ddocking@niu.edu)

**Rich Fortin**  
New Mexico State University  
MSC 3 FIN, Box 30001  
Las Cruces, NM 88003  
575-646-3009  
[rfortin@nmsu.edu](mailto:rfortin@nmsu.edu)

**Stuart Michelson \***  
Stetson University  
School of Business – Unit 8398  
421 N. Woodland Blvd.  
DeLand, FL 32723  
386-822-7376  
[smichels@stetson.edu](mailto:smichels@stetson.edu)

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of race and age differences on the social security early and delayed retirement decision for same-sex married couples. This paper extends the analysis of Docking, Fortin and Michelson's previous studies, which assumed a heterosexual couple, to same-sex couples. We analyze eighteen married couple combinations for the following races: Whites (W), Hispanics (H) and Blacks (B). We develop an Excel model to compute the breakeven internal rate of return (BE IRR) for each of the race-gender combinations under different retirement scenarios. The primary substantive conclusions from this study depend on the age comparisons that are being made. For couples who retire at the same age or at different ages, the greater the age difference the greater the incentive to retire early as the hurdle rate is lower to overcome.

