

Gay village

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

A **gay village** (also **gay ghetto** or **gayborhood**) is an urban geographic location with generally recognized boundaries where a large number of lesbian, gay, transgender, and bisexual people live. They often contain a number of gay-oriented establishments, such as gay bars or pubs, nightclubs, bathhouses, restaurants, bookstores, and other businesses.

Such areas may represent a gay-friendly oasis in an otherwise hostile city, or may simply have a high concentration of gay residents and/or businesses. As with many urban 'groups', gay and lesbian spaces or villages are a manifestation both of their necessity for a tolerant space as well as choice. Much as other urbanized groups, some gay men and women have managed to utilize their spaces as a way to reflect gay cultural value and serve the special needs of individuals in relation to society at large. In cities that have the necessary critical mass to support such a community, the gay "ghetto" provides a normalization of space that is essential to the culture's ability to be supported and practiced in a safe environment.

The traditional stereotypes of ghettos as dangerous and oppressive places rarely, if ever, apply to the gay "ghetto". Typically these neighborhoods are found in the upscale or trendy parts of town, chosen for aesthetic or historic value rather than resulting from the corraling of citizens bound together by mutual socioeconomic hardship. Today's manifestation of gay ghettos hardly resembles those of the 1970s.^[1]

Contents

- 1 The "ghetto"
- 2 History of the gay village
- 3 Gentrification
- 4 Consumerisation
- 5 List of gay villages
- 6 Top US cities
- 7 See also
- 8 Notes
- 9 References
- 10 External links

LGBT and Queer studies series



LGBT Portal

Lesbian · Gay · Bisexual · Transgender
· Homosexuality

LGBT history

Timeline · Gay Liberation · Social movements · AIDS timeline

Culture

Community · Pride · Coming out · Gay slang · **Gay village** · Queer theory · Religion · Symbols · Queer · Questioning

Law

Marriage · Civil union · Adoption · Sodomy law · Military service · Hate crime · Laws by country

Categories

The "ghetto"

The term *ghetto* is often used to describe gay communities in urban areas. Because this is a term that is employed by sociologists to describe a city housing a segregated cultural community, many believe that this definition is not an entirely inappropriate term. The term *ghetto*, throughout the 20th century, has been used to describe a variety of groups that mainstream society deemed outside the norm, including poor people, gay men and lesbians, hobos, prostitutes, and bohemians (also racial minorities).

It is not surprising that these neighborhoods often arise from zones of discard — that is, crowded, high density, and often deteriorated inner city districts. Indeed, many of these inner city districts were the only spaces where alternatives to identity and community based on the nuclear family could be constructed. These spaces — and the institutions of which they are comprised — are critical sites where members of gender and sexual minorities congregate. From one perspective, these spaces are places of marginality created by an often homophobic heterosexual community; from another perspective, they are places of refuge where members of gender and sexual minorities can benefit from the concentration of safe, non-discriminatory resources and services.

In some cities, gays and lesbians concentrate in visibly gay neighbourhoods, while in other cities they concentrate in neighbourhoods that require less gay visibility because a liberal, affirming counterculture is present. For example, gays and lesbians in San Francisco concentrate in the overtly gay and lesbian-oriented Castro neighbourhood, while gays and lesbians in Seattle concentrate in the bohemian stomping ground of Capitol Hill. Both areas, however, have higher concentrations of gay and lesbian residents and businesses that cater to them than do surrounding neighbourhoods.

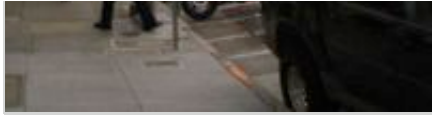
History of the gay village



Prior to the 1960s and 1970s, specialized gay communities did not exist as such; bars were usually where gay social networks developed, and they were located in certain urban areas where police zoning would implicitly allow so-called 'deviant entertainment' under close surveillance. In New York, for example, the congregation of gay men had not been illegal since 1965; however, no openly gay bar had been granted a license to serve alcohol. The police raid of a private gay club called the Stonewall Inn on June 27, 1969 led to a three day rebellion involving over 1000 people. Stonewall managed to change not only the profile of the gay community but the dynamic within the community itself. This along with several other similar incidents precipitated the appearance of gay ghettos throughout North America, as spatial organization shifted from bars and street-



Metro station in Montreal's Gay Village.



Rainbow flag banners are displayed each June honoring Pride month in The Castro area of San Francisco as a symbol of gay pride and LGBT unity.

cruising to specific neighbourhoods. This transition “from the bars to the streets, from nightlife to daytime, from ‘sexual deviance’ to an alternative lifestyle” was the critical moment in the development of the gay community (Castells, 1983 p.141).

The term *gay village* derives from New York City's Greenwich Village, where the Stonewall riots took place.

Gentrification

The gentrification of some urban neighbourhoods has been catalysed by gay villages. Certain patterns of residential development are particular to the community.

The gentrification is linked, in part, to changing national and global economies, and in particular to the social and spatial restructuring of labour processes. Heavy industry has been leaving North America for developing countries or leaving central business districts (CBDs) for suburban areas, seeking, in both cases, cheaper land, labour, and tax costs. Conversely, the service sector has been steadily expanding, and investment in high-tech industries has increased. Much of the new corporate-managerial and service-sector investment has tended to be, not insignificantly, in the CBDs of large cities, and these sectors have also tended to employ large proportions of low-wage and/or part-time labour, much of it female. The expansion of these jobs in CBDs has constituted a significant part of the economic pull-factor to urban areas for lesbians and gay men, complementing the attraction of the cities as centres of gay life.

Lauria and Knopp, professors at the University of New Orleans and University of Minnesota respectively, tie these processes to the spatial nature of the urban renaissance which was occurring at the time. They also argue that the “first wave” of low-wage gay residences in these urban centres paved the way for other, more affluent gay professionals to move into the neighbourhoods; this wealthier group played a significant role in the gentrification of many inner city neighbourhoods. The professors also noted that the presence of gay men in the real estate industry of San Francisco was a major factor facilitating the urban renaissance of the city in the 1970s.

Consumerisation

The gentrification of once run-down inner-city areas, coupled with the staging of pride parades in these areas, has resulted in the increased visibility of gay communities. Parades such as Sydney's Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras



The entrance to Chueca metro station in the Plaza de Chueca (Chueca square) in Madrid, during gay pride week.



attract significant investment and create tourist revenue, and cities are beginning to realize, firstly, that the acceptance (or promotion) of lesbian and gay culture is fast becoming a sign of urban "sophistication", and secondly, that gay-oriented events, such as pride parades, the World Outgames and the Gay Games, are potentially lucrative events, attracting thousands of gay tourists and their dollars. The growing recognition of the economic value of the gay community is not only associated with their wealth but also with the role that lesbians and gay men have played (and continue to play) in urban revitalization.



Boystown in Chicago

Some cities have taken it upon themselves to artificially create gay villages to capitalize on gay dollars. In 2004, Oakland, California tried to create a village in a run-down portion of the city in an attempt to divert entertainment and shopping dollars from neighbouring San Francisco. The project has achieved mixed results as that city's gay community is spread out over a wide area. Moreover, some critics claim that the level of social acceptance is higher in Oakland than in other cities, negating the need for a centralized gay village.

List of gay villages

Gay villages can vary widely from city to city and country to country. Furthermore, some large cities develop "satellite" gay villages that are essentially "overflow" areas; in such cases, lesbians and gay men become priced-out of gentrified gay villages and move to other, more affordable areas, thereby creating entirely new gay villages. Some of the listed gay villages are technically not neighborhoods of a larger city but a separate entity entirely from the city for which they are the primary gay enclave, e.g., West Hollywood, California, and Wilton Manors, Florida.

Some cities have a well-defined gay village in the heart of a larger area with a significant gay population that would not necessarily be considered a gay village. For example, Davie Village is the heart of Vancouver's gay community, but sits within the greater West End area which, though decently populated by gay people, is not necessarily considered a gay village. Other examples of this phenomenon include Boystown, Chicago, a well-defined gay village situated in the larger Lakeview community. Lakeview has a reputation for being a stronghold of liberal and progressive political views, but is far from exclusively gay, as a large number of straight families call the neighborhood home. Similarly, despite its predominantly gay population and higher concentration of gay venues, the South Beach area in Miami Beach, Florida, was never exclusively gay, because of its popularity among straight people alike. Philadelphia's gay village in Pennsylvania comprises downtown blocks from 12th and Walnut to 13th and Locust and is called "the Gayborhood". It is known for a wide range of clubs, bars, and restaurants along with LGBT health facilities. Some cities are often associated with being "gay" cities, for instance San Francisco in the United States, Manchester or Brighton in the United Kingdom, Sydney in Australia, and even Mykonos in Greece is associated as a gay Island.



Toronto's Church and Wellesley district, one of the largest gay villages in Canada.

San Diego has its own gay village called "Hillcrest", which sits around Balboa Park. Hillcrest is right next to the downtown area but is able to maintain a small town eclectic feel. While it is considered by most as the gay area of San Diego with its gay bars and dance clubs, the overall population of the area has only gotten more and more diverse with the rise in condominium projects.

In Minneapolis, Minnesota areas surrounding Loring Park, site of the local GLBT pride festival, are regarded as a "gay" neighborhood, though many gay and lesbians people have migrated to more residential neighborhoods such as Bryn Mawr and Whittier.

Church and Wellesley is an LGBT-oriented community located in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. It is roughly bounded by Gould Street to the south, Yonge Street to the west, Charles Street to the north, and Jarvis Street to the east, with the intersection of Church and Wellesley Streets at the centre of this area. The boundaries are not fixed, as some gay and lesbian oriented establishments can be found outside of this area. Many LGBT people also live in the nearby residential neighbourhoods of The Annex, Cabbagetown, St. James Town and Riverdale, and in smaller numbers throughout the city and its suburbs.

In some cities, such as Stockholm and Copenhagen, there are no established gay villages, partly due to the differing social dynamics of these cities (less social segregation within the city), but also due to earlier and greater social acceptance of the gay community within mainstream society. However there are areas which were historically known as meeting places for gays, such as Södermalm in Stockholm, which remains a somewhat trendy area for gay people to live, though it does not have a predominantly gay population.

Top US cities

The US city with the largest gay population is New York, with an estimated 360,000–500,000 gay residents ^[2]. Los Angeles is second with 154,270, followed by Chicago with 114,449, and San Francisco, with 94,234.

The US metro area with the largest gay population is New York–Northern New Jersey–Long Island, with an estimated 568,903 gay residents. Los Angeles–Long Beach–Santa Ana is a close second with 442,211, followed by Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, IL-IN-WI with 288,748. ^[3]

The following charts show a list of the top US cities, states, and metro areas with: 1) the highest population of gay residents, and 2) the highest percentage of gay residents within city limits. (GLB population as a percentage of total residents). ^[4]

Rank	City	Percentage of City Population	GLB Population	
			population	rank
1	New York City	6%	360,000–500,000 ^[2]	1
2	Los Angeles	5.6%	154,270	2
3	Chicago	5.7%	114,449	3
4	San Francisco	15.4%	94,234	4

5	Phoenix	6.4%	63,222	5
6	Houston	4.4%	61,976	6
7	San Diego	6.8%	61,945	7
8	Dallas	7.0%	58,473	8
9	Seattle	12.9%	57,993	9
10	Boston	12.3%	50,540	10
11	Philadelphia	4.2%	43,320	11
12	Atlanta	12.8%	39,085	12
13	San Jose	5.8%	37,260	13

Rank	State	Percentage of State Population	GLB Population	
			population	rank
1	California	5.2%	1,338,164	1
2	Florida	4.6%	609,219	2
3	New York	4.2%	592,337	3
4	Texas	3.6%	579,968	4
5	Illinois	3.8%	345,395	5
6	Ohio	4.0%	335,110	6
7	Pennsylvania	3.5%	323,454	7
8	Georgia	4.3%	278,943	8
9	Massachusetts	5.7%	269,074	9
10	Washington	5.7%	266,983	10

Rank	City	Percentage of City Population	GLB Population	
			population	rank
1	San Francisco	15.4%	94,234	4
2	Seattle	12.9%	57,993	9
3	Atlanta	12.8%	39,805	12
4	Minneapolis	12.5%	34,295	16
5	Boston	12.3%	50,540	10
6	Sacramento	9.8%	32,108	20
7	Portland	8.8%	35,413	14
8	Denver	8.2%	33,698	17
9	Washington	8.1%	32,599	18

10	Orlando	7.7%	12,508	36
----	---------	-------------	--------	----

Rank	Metro Area	Percentage of Metro Population	GLB Population	
			population	rank
1	San Francisco	8.2%	256,313	4
2	Seattle	6.5%	154,835	11
3	Boston	6.2%	201,344	5
4	Portland	6.1%	94,027	21
5	Tampa	5.9%	119,044	16
6	Austin	5.9%	61,732	29
7	Denver	5.8%	99,027	19
8	Minneapolis	5.7%	130,472	15
9	Orlando	5.7%	81,272	24
10	Hartford	5.6%	49,000	33

See also

- Gay tourism

Notes

- ↑ Hayasaki, Erika. "A new generation in the West Village". Los Angeles Times: May 18, 2007.
- ↑ ***^a*** ***^b*** Beveridge, Andrew. "Counting Gay New York (<http://www.gothamgazette.com/article/demographics/20010701/5/598>) ", Gotham Gazette, 2001-06-03. Retrieved on 2007-08-01.
- ↑ (note: the study cited is unclear as to the exact metro NY area that is included; on table 5, page 8, "New York–Northern New Jersey–Long Island" is included, but in Appendix 2, page 15, Pennsylvania also seems to be included as it states "New York–Northern New Jersey–Long Island, NY–NJ–PA")
- ↑ Gary J. Gates Same-sex Couples and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Population: New Estimates from the American Community Survey (<http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/SameSexCouplesandGLBpopACS.pdf>) PDF (2.07 MiB). The Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy, UCLA School of Law October, 2006. Retrieved April 20, 2007.

References

- Cante, Richard C. (March 2008). *Gay Men and the Forms of Contemporary US Culture*. London: Ashgate Publishing. ISBN 0 7546 7230 1.
- Castells, Manuel 1983. *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- D’Emilio, John 1992. *Making Trouble: Essays on Gay History, Politics, and the University*. New York,

London: Routledge.

- Escoffier, Jeffrey 1998. *American Homo: Community and Perversity*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Florida, Richard 2002. *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*. New York: Perseus Books Group.
- Forest, Benjamin 1995. "West Hollywood as Symbol: The Significance of Place in the Construction of a Gay Identity" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 13: 133-157.
- Kenney, Moira Rachel 1998. "Remember, Stonewall was a Riot: Understanding Gay and Lesbian Experience in the City" Chapter 5, pp. 120-132 in: Leoni Sandercock (ed) *Making the Invisible Visible*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Lauria, Mickey and Lawrence Knopp 1985. "Toward an Analysis of the Role of Gay Communities in the Urban Renaissance" *Urban Geography* 6(2): 152-169.
- Levine, Martin P. 1979. "Gay Ghetto" pp. 182-204 in: Martin Levine (ed) *Gay Men: The Sociology of Male Homosexuality*. New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London: Harper & Row.
- Ray, Brian and Damaris Rose 2000. "Cities of the Everyday: Socio-Spatial Perspectives on Gender, Difference, and Diversity" pp. 507-512 in: Trudi Bunting and Pierre Filion (eds). *Canadian Cities in Transition: The Twenty-First Century*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

External links

- Memoir and history of gay Upper West Side in Manhattan, NYC (<http://www.nycnotkansas.com/>)
- Counting Gay New York (Gotham Gazette, July 2001) (<http://www.gothamgazette.com/article/demographics/20010701/5/598/>)

Retrieved from "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gay_village"

Categories: Gay villages

-
- This page was last modified on 22 February 2008, at 18:48.
 - All text is available under the terms of the GNU Free Documentation License. (See **Copyrights** for details.)
- Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a U.S. registered 501(c)(3) tax-deductible nonprofit charity.