

There Goes the Gayborhood?

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Description: Gay neighborhoods, like the legendary Castro District in San Francisco and New York's Greenwich Village, have long provided sexual minorities with safe havens in an often unsafe world. But as our society increasingly accepts gays and lesbians into the mainstream, are "gayborhoods" destined to disappear? Amin Ghaziani provides an incisive look at the origins of these unique cultural enclaves, the reasons why they are changing today, and their prospects for the future. Drawing on a wealth of evidence—including census data, opinion polls, hundreds of newspaper reports from across the United States, and more than one hundred original interviews with residents in Chicago, one of the most paradigmatic cities in America—*There Goes the Gayborhood?* argues that political gains and societal acceptance are allowing gays and lesbians to imagine expansive possibilities for a life beyond the gayborhood. The dawn of a new post-gay era is altering the character and composition of existing enclaves across the country, but the spirit of integration can coexist alongside the celebration of differences in subtle and sometimes surprising ways. Exploring the intimate relationship between sexuality and the city, this cutting-edge book reveals how gayborhoods, like the cities that surround them, are organic and continually evolving places. Gayborhoods have nurtured sexual minorities throughout the twentieth century and, despite the unstoppable forces of flux, will remain resonant and revelatory features of urban life.

Subjects: Gay culture—United States
Gay community—United States
Gay men—United States—Social life and customs

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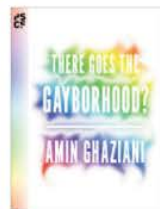
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AMIN GHAZIANI

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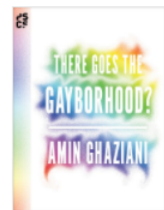
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The Happiest Ending

Chicago has captivated scholars for more than a hundred years. It even inspired its own brand of sociology, known as the Chicago School of Urban Sociology. The professors who developed this intellectual tradition in the early twentieth century focused on the importance of place in everyday life. Today, the city remains “as much a sexual laboratory as a social one,” notes Chad Heap, a historian who studies the legacies of the Chicago School, and this makes it a logical site for a case study. As of the 2010 Census, Chicago (population 2,695,598) was the third most populated city in the United States, after New York (8,175,133) and Los Angeles (3,792,621).¹

There are many ways to think about the Windy City. Some observers remark that it is a global city, a command point in the



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