

**Is Nightlife Dead?  
Did Bar Culture Disappear?  
Where Did All the Gay Guys Go?**

**Understanding the Profound and  
Far-Reaching Changes Taking Place in the  
Social and Cultural Organization of  
Gay Men's Communities**

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**Welcome, Self-Introduction, Who is Here?**

- **Welcome to...**
- **Who am I and how did I come to work on this topic?**
- **Who is here and why are you here? What observations, experiences, questions bring you here tonight?**

## **Distinct Eras in Gay Male Social Organization post-1969:**

- **Gay Liberation & the 1970s (1969-1982)**
- **AIDS Era (1983-1992)**
- **Post-Crisis / Post-AIDS (1993-?)**

**Profound Changes Are Occurring→  
Industrial Revolution in Gay Male Social &  
Cultural Organization**

## **Basic Observations Motivating this Inquiry—What People are Pointing Toward:**

- **Arrival and expansion of cyberspace and its many uses**
- **Anecdotal reports of diminished participation in bars, community meetings, health promotion groups**
- **Decline, disappearance, or hetero-colonization of gay urban enclaves and resort communities**
- **Decline of gay bookstores; closure or shrinking of gay newspapers**
- **Disappearance or diminution of sex-on-site premises: privatization of sexual cultures and decline or transformation of public sexual cultures**
- **Intensification of assimilationist movement priorities: marriage and military; decline in liberationist values and overt movement focus on radical liberationist priorities**

## **What People Rarely Seem to Note:**

- **Expansion of other technologies: Cell phones, text messaging, Blackberries, wireless systems, DVDs, iPods...**
- **Escalation of niche organizing of various gay male identities, subcultures, and populations**
- **Generational divides between gay male cohorts and distinctions in masculinities, sexual and gender organization and practices, identity understandings and naming, social positioning**
- **Expansion of three-day and four-day party weekends; expansion of special one-night-a-week club nights**
- **Paradoxical emergence of gay men in popular culture and entrenchment of anti-gay Right and Right-wing domination of public institutions**
- **Shifts in the understandings, meanings, and experiences of HIV for diverse populations of gay men and MSMs**

- **Escalation of racial/ethnic diversification of communities and accompanying repositioning of white men in community life**
- **Deepening of economic or socio-economic class splits among gay men and decline of venues and sites where contacts are made across class lines**
- **Globalization of gay; Gayization of the globe**

## **What is Happening in the Broader Social Context that might be Significant:**

- **Rapidly escalating pace of change**
- **Documented shifts in worker hours, job security, and anxiety about economic conditions**
- **Increase public concern over terrorism: expansion of policing and surveillance, diminution of privacy, human rights, and public accountability**

## **FOUR OVERARCHING QUESTIONS:**

**What's Happening?**

**What Forces are Triggering these Changes?**

**What Effects Might these Changes Have?**

**What Can We Do to Shape the New Era?**