



Place at the Table: The Gay Individual in American Society

By Bruce Bawer

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Bruce Bawer exposes the heated controversy over gay rights and presents a passionate plea for the recognition of common values, "a place at the table" for everyone.

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Place at the Table: The Gay Individual in American Society By Bruce Bawer Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Conservative cultural critic Bawer's canny appraisal of the gay rights movement calls for a more equitable place in American society for lesbians and gays.

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From Library Journal

Positing that negative stereotypes of homosexuals are the result of both right-wing propaganda and the high visibility of "radical gay activists," Bawer, a self-proclaimed spokesperson for the "silent majority of gays," attempts to absolve "mainstream gays" of responsibility by criticizing "subculture-oriented gays," including but not limited to Donna Minkowitz, Paul Monette, Edmund White, members of ACTUP, and those involved in Gay Pride parades. This heartfelt if misguided meditation cum manifesto is provocative, but the author's self-righteous generalizations and misrepresentation of the ethnic, socio economic, and geographic diversity of American lesbians and gays, as well as the lack of either an index or citations for the many sources, undermine the divisive diatribe.

- James E. Van Buskirk, *San Francisco P.L.*

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From [Booklist](#)

In his third book this year (after *The Aspect of Eternity*, critical essays, and *Coast to Coast*, poems), one of the finest young American literary critics turns his lucid, fluent, and precise prose to what we've been told is the topic of the year, if not the decade--homosexuality. Homosexual himself, Bawer differs from the homosexual stereotype in that he is devoutly Christian, conservative, staunchly monogamous, and temperate. He believes that there are so many others like him that they constitute a virtual gay silent majority--silent both because temperamentally deferent and because the anti-homosexual religious right and the oppressive gay subculture, rife with sexual and political excess (not to mention, Bawer maintains, profound self-loathing), drown out all moderating voices. In the two meaty central chapters--more than half of the four-chapter book--Bawer first patiently, logically, and ethically critiques the attacks and refutes the charges of anti-gays and then analyzes the self-destructiveness of the gay subculture. Gays need civil rights, he concludes, particularly to have their domestic relationships recognized. This will remain a dream as long as the preponderance of gay spokespersons continue to taunt anti-gays and defend every excess of the most outrageous and rebellious elements of the homosexual community. Bawer will probably be roundly reviled and misrepresented in both conservative and gay media, but to read him is to confront a reasonable, moral, and personable man whose opinions and interpretations open-minded and moderate persons will find very compelling. *Ray Olson*

Users Review

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Pablo McNamara:

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