



## Farm Boys: Lives of Gay Men from the Rural Midwest

From University of Wisconsin Press

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**Farm Boys: Lives of Gay Men from the Rural Midwest** From University of Wisconsin Press

Homosexuality is often seen as a purely urban experience, far removed from rural and small-town life. *Farm Boys* undermines that cliché by telling the stories of more than three dozen gay men, ranging in age from 24 to 84, who grew up in farm families in the midwestern United States. Whether painful, funny, or matter-of-fact, these plain-spoken accounts will move and educate any reader, gay or not, from farm or city.

“When I was fifteen, the milkman who came to get our milk was beautiful. This is when I was really getting horny to do something with another guy. I waited every day for him to come. I couldn’t even talk to him, couldn’t think of anything to say. I just stood there, watching him, wondering if he knew why.”—Henry Bauer, Minnesota

“When I go back home, I feel a real connection with the land—a tremendous feeling, spiritual in a way. It makes me want to go out into a field and take my shoes off and put my feet right on the dirt, establish a real physical connection with that place. I get homesick a lot, but I don’t know if I could ever go back there and live. It’s not the kind of place that would welcome me if I lived openly, the way that I would like to live. I would be shunned.”—Martin Scherz, Nebraska

“If there is a checklist to see if your kid is queer, I must have hit every one of them—all sorts of big warning signs. I was always interested in a lot of the traditional queen things—clothes, cooking, academics, music, theater. A farm boy listening to show tunes? My parents must have seen it coming.”—Joe Shulka, Wisconsin

“My favorite show when I was growing up was ‘The Waltons’. The show’s values comforted me, and I identified with John-Boy, the sensitive son who wanted to be a writer. He belonged there on the mountain with his family, yet he sensed that he was different and that he was often misunderstood. Sometimes I still feel like a misfit, even with gay people.”—Connie Sanders, Illinois

“Agriculture is my life. I like working with farm people, although they don’t really understand me. When I retire I want the word to get out [that I’m gay] to

the people I've worked with—the dairy producers, the veterinarians, the feed salesmen, the guys at the co-ops. They're going to be shocked, but their eyes are going to be opened.”—James Heckman, Indiana

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## **Editorial Review**

From Library Journal

The vision of the "gay lifestyle" conjured up by many Americans is informed chiefly by media and cultural images emanating from the large cities of the East and West Coasts. This vision, however, is limited and limiting. In places like Eau Claire, Lincoln, and Des Moines, there are also queers who possess their own distinct experiences, views, and voices that are often obscured in the bicoastal din. The two works here attempt to right this situation as they explore and celebrate from a Midwestern point of view the diversity within the gay community. *Farm Boys* presents a series of autobiographical narratives by gay men raised on farms over this century—the oldest was born in 1909, the youngest in 1967. They describe perceptions of and responses to conditions inherent in farming communities and the influence this experience has had on their lives. The roughhewn quality of the narratives (only one was written by a professional writer) creates an ambience that is often powerful and poignant, conveying the sadness of isolation and the strength of self-reliance. *Reclaiming the Heartland* takes a more literary approach, presenting a diverse collection of fiction, poetry, drama, essays, and photography by men and women who have lived or are living in the Midwest. The works focus on the Midwest as place, the broader issues of desire, and the Midwestern perspective on and in other locations. The goal is to prove that queer identity and cultural practices do indeed thrive in the heartland. The pieces themselves are something of a mixed bag, but the whole is satisfying. Both these works serve as important reminders that gay people do live, work, and love all across the land. They should be seriously considered by all libraries supporting gay studies as well as public libraries throughout the Midwest. —David W. Henderson, Eckerd Coll. Lib., St. Petersburg, Fla.  
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Review

"*Farm Boys* breaks the silence that has fallen on gay rural life."—David Bergman, editor of *Men on Men 5: Best New Gay Fiction*

About the Author

Will Fellows is a writer and educator who grew up on a Wisconsin dairy farm. He lives in Milwaukee.

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Marjorie Batchelder:**

The reserve with title *Farm Boys: Lives of Gay Men from the Rural Midwest* contains a lot of information that you can study it. You can get a lot of benefit after read this book. This specific book exist new information the information that exist in this e-book represented the condition of the world right now. That is important to yo7u to know how the improvement of the world. This book will bring you in new era of the globalization. You can read the e-book in your smart phone, so you can read this anywhere you want.

**Gerald Conway:**

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playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity that's look different you can read the book. It is really fun for yourself. If you enjoy the book that you read you can spent 24 hours a day to reading a e-book. The book Farm Boys: Lives of Gay Men from the Rural Midwest it doesn't matter what good to read. There are a lot of folks that recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. In case you did not have enough space to deliver this book you can buy the particular e-book. You can m0ore very easily to read this book from your smart phone. The price is not too expensive but this book offers high quality.

### **Penny Stout:**

This Farm Boys: Lives of Gay Men from the Rural Midwest is great e-book for you because the content that is full of information for you who also always deal with world and also have to make decision every minute. This kind of book reveal it information accurately using great organize word or we can declare no rambling sentences within it. So if you are read that hurriedly you can have whole info in it. Doesn't mean it only will give you straight forward sentences but difficult core information with beautiful delivering sentences. Having Farm Boys: Lives of Gay Men from the Rural Midwest in your hand like having the world in your arm, details in it is not ridiculous just one. We can say that no e-book that offer you world with ten or fifteen small right but this publication already do that. So , this is good reading book. Heya Mr. and Mrs. hectic do you still doubt in which?

### **Bethany Zuniga:**

In this era which is the greater person or who has ability in doing something more are more important than other. Do you want to become one of it? It is just simple strategy to have that. What you have to do is just spending your time not much but quite enough to experience a look at some books. Among the books in the top list in your reading list is actually Farm Boys: Lives of Gay Men from the Rural Midwest. This book and that is qualified as The Hungry Hillside can get you closer in becoming precious person. By looking upward and review this publication you can get many advantages.

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