

## Dear Bi Men: A Black Man's Perspective on Power, Consent, Breaking Down Binaries, and Combating Erasure

**J. R. Yussuf**

North Atlantic Books (Apr 16, 2024)

Softcover \$19.95 (304pp)

978-1-62317-968-7

Pulling from personal experiences, pop culture, and social analyses, J. R. Yussuf's *Dear Bi Men* is a tender and insightful guide to claiming one's identity.

Yussuf—who is Black and bisexual—found that his upbringing colored his sense of self. He received conflicting teachings from his Nigerian family, his Christian faith, and experiences with other queer-identifying people in his neighborhood. Bisexual men had a bevy of negative connotations attached to them, from hypersexualization to more insidious and harmful tropes. Yussuf and other bisexual men internalized these entrenched stereotypes, leaving them feeling even more isolated and afraid to be their true selves.

The book's instructional qualities are filtered through deep personal experiences; much of the book reflects Yussuf's own life and perspectives shared with him, complemented by insights from the social sciences and pop culture. The result is a guidebook of sorts for bisexual men and those who wish to support them. There are tips on how to come out, who it might be safe to come out to, and how to do so in the safest way, given with insight with tenderness. And the book's examination of bisexuality's representation in pop culture covers both positive and negative examples alongside a standout analysis of how those representations affect the bisexual community. This work is personalized with witty asides, as where Yussuf points out unintentional puns.

About being true to oneself, safely, *Dear Bi Men* covers topics including safe sex practices, finding the right medical professionals, dating tips, presenting a bisexual identity online, LGBTQIA+ advocacy, and the ethical consumption of pornography. The result is a compassionate guidebook by a Black bisexual man who hopes to remove remaining stigmas around bisexuality.

JOHN M. MURRAY (May / June 2024)

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