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Compassionate Confinement: A Year in the Life of Unit C (Critical Issues in Crime and Society)

Professor Laura S. Abrams, Professor Ben Anderson-Nathe

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To date, knowledge of the everyday world of the juvenile correction institution has been extremely sparse. *Compassionate Confinement* brings to light the challenges and complexities inherent in the U.S. system of juvenile corrections. Building on over a year of field work at a boys' residential facility, Laura S. Abrams and Ben Anderson-Nathe provide a context for contemporary institutions and highlight some of the system's most troubling tensions.

This ethnographic text utilizes narratives, observations, and case examples to illustrate the strain between treatment and correctional paradigms and the mixed messages regarding gender identity and masculinity that the youths are expected to navigate. Within this context, the authors use the boys' stories to show various and unexpected pathways toward behavior change. While some residents clearly seized opportunities for self-transformation, others manipulated their way toward release, and faced substantial challenges when they returned home.

Compassionate Confinement concludes with recommendations for rehabilitating this notoriously troubled system in light of the experiences of its most vulnerable stakeholders.

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