

You're the First One I've Told

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*"You're the First
One I've Told"*

New Faces of HIV in the South



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In the second wave of the HIV epidemic, those with the disease are more likely than ever to be female, younger, heterosexual, a racial minority, and rural-living. Vital to the development of user-friendly health care systems is an understanding of the vastly different lives of this second wave of HIV-infected persons. "You're the First One I've Told" offers a view into the lives of men and women infected with HIV. The experiences of twenty-five people living with this disease in rural eastern North Carolina serve as the foundation of this book, which also draws upon unique HIV/AIDS survey data collected by the authors and statistics from the Southeastern United States. This combination of qualitative and quantitative information provides readers with a vivid description of how people live with HIV/AIDS in the midst of their often traumatic lives, and why they manage their illness in ways that seem to contradict mainstream medical and social wisdom. The people interviewed represent a variety of races, genders, professions, family lives, and medical and social service access and utilization. This book is the first to address a history of racism, distrust of formalized medical systems, homophobia, trauma and their interplay with HIV treatment, particularly in the South. It is an indispensable read for students needing to understand health care for the disenfranchised, as well as any provider, policymaker, or researcher involved in HIV service provision.

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