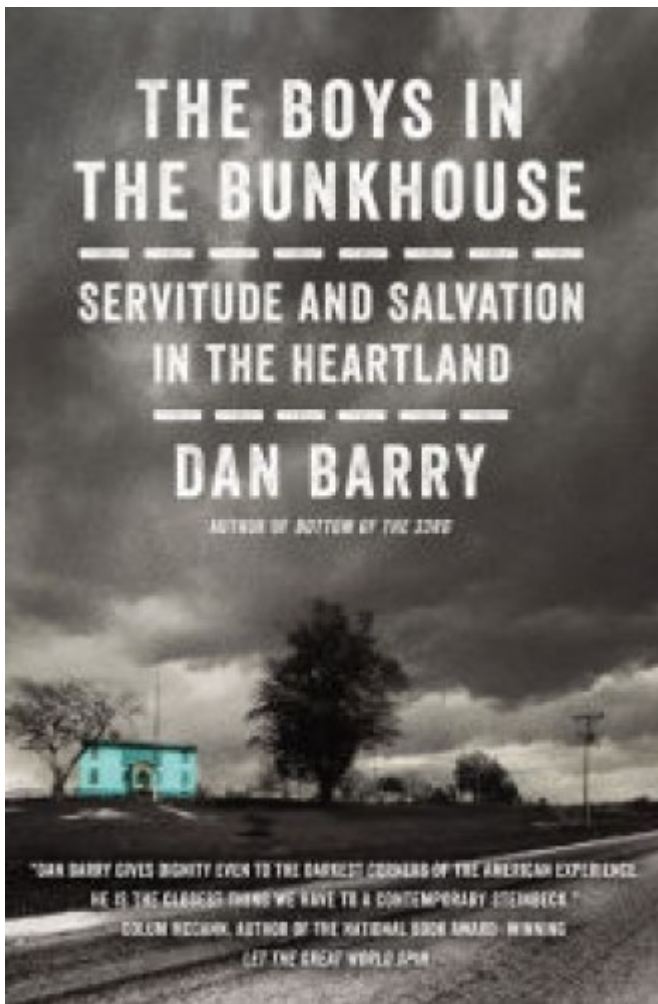


*The Boys in the Bunkhouse*, by Dan Barry

Books in the [September 14, 2016](#) issue

## In Review



## The Boys in the Bunkhouse

By Dan Barry  
Harper

This harrowing story chronicles the decades-long indentured servitude of a group of intellectually disabled men that persisted until 2013. Journalist Dan Barry explains how the residents of a small town in Iowa interacted with the men who lived in their

old schoolhouse, offering a mix of paternalism and kindness while failing to see the conditions under which the men were being kept. The story's characters—the local Lutheran church and its pastor, employees of the turkey company that exploited the men, and most significantly, the intellectually disabled men themselves—interact vividly. The narrative's underlying question is unsettlingly familiar: “Am I my brother's keeper?”