



ENGL 631: STUDIES IN NONFICTION PROSE

Prison Autobiographies, or Life-Writing from the Concrete Tomb

Language gave me a way to keep the chaos of prison at bay and prevent it from devouring me.

Jimmy Santiago Baca

Hopelessness is the enemy of justice.

Bryan Stevenson

Katy Ryan, Associate Professor of English
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Course Description

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, the United States was the most incarcerated country in the world. How did this happen, and what does literature teach us about the modern prison?

Twentieth-century and contemporary autobiographies by imprisoned and formerly imprisoned people provide imaginative access to a highly controlled and locked down space. From conversion narratives to oral histories to political autobiographies, these life-writings offer critiques of policing and the criminal justice system, analyze gendered and racialized carceral environments, testify to internal and communal resources for survival and transformation, and reflect on the nature of time and isolation.

Our work will involve synthesizing the knowledge presented in imprisonment literature and arriving at an understanding of the social and political function of prisons today. The idea behind the nineteenth penitentiary was this: Isolated in a cell, chastened by silence, disciplined by labor, the imprisoned subject would reflect and become penitent, journey through death to rejoin the human family, reborn, rehabilitated. It pretty much never worked that way. (According to Foucault, it was never meant to work that way.)

For those interested, there will be an opportunity to visit the Appalachian Prison Book Project, a local nonprofit that sends free books to imprisoned people in six states and facilitates book clubs inside a federal prison. You will also be invited to participate in a Service-Learning Weekend with students from James Madison University March 31-April 2.

Contents of Syllabus

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1. Course Goals

- To read 20th-century and contemporary prison autobiographies
- To study the history and politics of the modern prison in the United States
- To understand the racial dimensions of the criminal justice system
- To create a supportive intellectual and creative community
- To reflect on, and contribute to, discussions about the humanities in public life

2. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students should be able to do the following:

- Contribute to scholarly discussions about prison autobiographies
- Identify patterns and tropes in this literature
- Define the carceral state and the prison industrial complex
- Compose a strong analytical research essay that responds to literature
- Respond thoughtfully to the ideas of others
- Present ideas clearly and effectively in writing and speech

3. Inclusivity Statement

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services. Accessibility Services is located in Suite 250 at 1085 Van Voorhis Rd (beside Applebee's and across from the Mountaineer Station transportation center). 304-293-6700; access2@mail.wvu.edu; <http://accessibilityservices.wvu.edu/>.

4. Required Texts

Malcolm X, *Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1965)

Piri Thomas, *Down These Mean Streets* (1967)

Assata Shakur, *Assata* (1975)

John Wideman, *Brothers and Keepers* (1984)

Leonard Peltier, *Prison Writings: My Life is My Sun Dance* (1991)

R. Dwayne Betts, *A Question of Freedom* (2010)

Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow* (2012)

Handouts

Jack London, "Pinched": A Prison Experience" and "The Pen"

Agnes Smedley, "Cell Mates" and Kate Richards O'Hare, from *Crime and Criminals*

Chester Himes, "To What Red Hell"

Willie Francis, "My Trip to the Chair"

Poems by Lewis, McDonough, Ruzas, Masters; Song by Earle

Jack Abbott and Norman Mailer, from *In the Belly of the Beast: Letters from Prison*

Patricia McConnell, "Sing Soft, Sing Loud"

Dwayne Betts, "Only Once I Considered Suicide"

Poems by Etheridge Knight

Readings Available on ECampus

- Mumia Abu-Jamal, excerpts from *Live from Death Row* (xv-23)
- Anonymous, "Autobiography of an Imprisoned Peon," *Prison Writing*
- Jimmy Santiago Baca, "Coming Into Language," *Doing Time*
- Douglas Blackmon, excerpt from *Slavery By Another Name* (intro + chapter xv + epilogue)
- Paul Butler, excerpt from *Let's Get Free: A Hip-Hop Theory of Justice* (chapter 2 + 9)
- Deborah Denno, "When Willie Francis Died: The 'Disturbing' Story Behind One of the Eighth Amendment's Most Enduring Standards of Risk," *Death Penalty Stories*
- Bruce H. Franklin, Introduction to *Prison Writing in 20th-Century America*. Foreword by Tom Wicker.
- Michel Foucault, excerpt from *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*
- David Garland, excerpt from *The Peculiar Institution* (preface + intro)
- Che Gossett, "Abolitionist Imaginings." Interview with Bo Brown, Reina Gossett, and Dylan Rodriguez in *Captive Genders*
- Caren Kaplan, "Resisting Autobiography: Out-Law Genres and Transnational Feminist Subjects." *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader*
- Nancy Kurshan, "Women and Imprisonment in the US"
- Jack London, "Pinched": A Prison Experience" and "The Pen" from H. Bruce Franklin, ed. *Prison Writing in 20th-century America*
- Dannie "Red Hog" Martin, "A Mount Everest of Time," *Prison Writing*
- Kate Richards O'Hare, *Crime and Criminals, Prison Writing*
- Dylan Rodriguez, excerpt from *Forced Passages*
- Agnes Smedley, "Cell Mates," *Prison Writing*
- Caleb Smith, excerpt from *Prison and the American Imagination*
- Paul St. John, "Behind the Mirror" from Bell Chevigny, ed., *Doing Time: 25 Years of Prison Writing*
- Eric A. Stanley, "Fugitive Flesh: Gender Self-Determination, Queer Abolition, and Trans Resistance," *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex*, eds. Eric A. Stanley and Nat Smith (1-11)
- Megan Sweeney, *Reading Is My Window* (chapter one)

5. Grading Distribution

A) Participation	15
B) Six Reader Responses (paced)	30
C) Annotated Bibliography	10
D) 12-page Research Essay	30
E) Symposium Presentation	15

6. Requirements

A) Participation and One Big Question (15 points)

The Practice

Participation involves active discussion in class. If you have any concerns about talking in class, please visit me in my office early in the semester. Participation will also include posting and commenting on our course blog.

Civility

I welcome lively discussion and dissent, and set a high bar for thoughtful and civil exchange. Our primary readings offer perspectives on incarceration from those who have survived it, and not survived it. Feel free to bring materials and ideas to class that challenge these perspectives.

A Big Question

Everyone will have a chance to prepare a big question for one class discussion. By this, I mean the kind of question that occurs only after you have done the reading and given it serious thought. Pull back and see if you can offer us a new and broad perspective. Your question should not be easily answered, nor should there be necessarily a single answer.

I will ask you to write your question on the board for us to ponder as we have our discussion. At some point, we will turn directly to your question.

B) Reader Responses (30 points)

You will compose six 500-word reader responses. Please pace these responses throughout the semester. You can focus on whatever you would like in the primary or secondary literature. The best responses typically respond to a specific question or idea and are anchored in the language of literary, historical, or theoretical works. Be sure to quote directly from the texts.

Once during the semester, you have the option to write a retrospective response. This means that you can write a response *after* the class has discussed a particular work. Retrospective responses must be turned in within 2 weeks of the reading.

You also have the option to write one creative response. With the creative option, you could imagine an additional scene, write a letter to a character or author, create a dialogue between characters from different works, or something else entirely. The goal is to offer insight into the original work through a creative engagement.

One last option! For those who are interested in writing an abstract for the final paper, you can use one of your responses for this purpose.

***Please upload reader responses to ECampus / Responses by Monday 9:00 PM.

C) Annotated Bibliography (10 points)

To prepare for the final essay, you will compile an annotated bibliography with a minimum of 7 scholarly sources. Each notation should be approximately 250-300 words. Sources should be varied (books, chapters, journal articles).

D) 12-page Research Essay (30 points)

See separate handout.

E) Symposium Presentation (15 points)

At the end of the semester, we will hold a one-day symposium to showcase your work. This will be an opportunity to present your ideas and research to an interested and supportive public.

7. Additional Resources

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Robert Burns, *I am a Fugitive from a Georgia Chain Gang!*
Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul on Ice*
Angela Davis, *An Autobiography*
Earl Dudding, *Trail of the Dead Years*
Damien Echols, *Life After Death*
Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, *My Life as a Political Prisoner*
Piper Kerman, *Orange Is the New Black*
Donald Lowrie, *My Life In Prison*
Jarvis Jay Masters, *That Bird Has My Wings*
Haywood Patterson and Earl Conrad, *Scottsboro Boy*
Sanyika Shakur, *Monster: The Autobiography of an L.A. Gang Member*
Iceberg Slim, *The Naked Soul*
Stanley Tookie Williams, *Blue Redemption*

ANTHOLOGIES

Jean Casella, James Ridgeway, Sarah Shourd, eds. *Hell is a Very Small Place: Voices from Solitary Confinement*
Siobhan Dowd, ed. *This Prison Where I Live: PEN Anthology*
Marc Falkoff, ed. *Poems from Guantánamo: The Detainees Speak*
Wally Lamb, ed. *Couldn't Keep It To Myself*

PRISON PUBLICATIONS

Fortune News (Fortune Society)
Stateville Speaks <http://www.neiu.edu/academics/college-of-arts-and-sciences/departments/justice-studies-department/stateville-speaks>
Prison Legal News <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/>
American Prison Writing Archive <http://www.dhinitiative.org/projects/apwa>

LEGAL, HISTORICAL, AND CULTURAL STUDIES SELECTIONS

Joanne Braxton, *Black Women Writing Autobiography: A Tradition within a Tradition*
Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*
Colin Dayan, *The Story of Cruel and Unusual*
Robert Ferguson, *Inferno: An Anatomy of American Punishment*
Bruce Franklin, *Prison Literature in America: The Victim as Criminal and Artist*
David Garland, *Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society*
Ruth Gilmore, *The Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis and Opposition in Globalizing California*
Lisa Guenther, *Solitary Confinement: Social Death and its Afterlives*
Barbara Harlow, *Barred: Women, Writing and Political Detention*
Joseph T. Hallinan, *Going Up the River: Travels in a Prison Nation*
Joy James, *Imprisoned Intellectuals*
Jeanne Marie Laskas, "Inside the Federal Bureau of Way Too Many Guns,"
<http://www.gq.com/story/inside-federal-bureau-of-way-too-many-guns>
Regina Kunzel, *Criminal Intimacy*
Marc Mauer and Meda Chesney-Lind, eds., *Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment*
Quentin Miller, ed. *Prose and Cons: Essays on Prison Literature*

James Morris, *Jailhouse Journalism*
Naomi Murakawa, *The First Civil Right: How Liberals Built Prison America*
Martha Nussbaum, *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*
David M. Oshinsky, "*Worse Than Slavery*": *Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice*
Margo V. Perkins, *Autobiography as Activism: three Black Women of the Sixties*
Katy Ryan, ed. *Demands of the Dead: Executions, Storytelling, and Activism in the United States*
Bryan Stevenson, *Just Mercy*
Bruce Western, *Punishment and Inequality in America*
Rivkah Zim "Writing Behind Bars: Literary Contexts and the Authority of Carceral Experience." [The Rise of Prison Literature](#) [Thomas S. Freeman](#) *Huntington Library Quarterly* 72. 2 (June 2009): 133-146.

FILMS

I Am A Fugitive from a Georgia Chain Gang! Dir. Mervyn LeRoy, 1932
The Last Mile, Dir. Sam Bischoff, 1932
Zoot Suit, Dir. Luis Valdez, 1981
Kiss of the Spiderwoman, Dir. Hector Babenco 1985
Weeds, Dir. John Hancock, 1987
Shawshank Redemption, Dir. Frank Darabont, 1994
Murder in the First, Dir. Marc Rocco, 1995
Dead Man Walking, Dir. Tim Robbins, 1995
Sleepers, Dir. Barry Levinson, 1996
Dancer in the Dark, Dir. Lars Von Trier, 2000
Piñero, Dir. Leon Ishaso, 2001
Talk to Me, Dir. Kasi Lemmons, 2007

DOCUMENTARY FILMS

13th, Dir. Ava DuVernay, 2016
The House I Live In, Dir. Eugene Jarecki, 2012
A Sentence Apart, Dirs. Jason Sussberg and Theo Rigby (<http://asentenceapart.com/>)
Big House--Alderson, PBS, 1998
Hard Road Home, Dir. Macky Alston, 2007 (<http://www.hardroadhome.org/>)
Incident at Ogala, Dir. Michael Apted, 1992
Scottsboro: An American Tragedy, Dir. Barak Goodman, 2000
Thin Blue Line, Dir. Errol Morris, 1988
Execution of Wanda Jean Allen, Dir. Liz Garbus, 2002
Shielded Brutality (spokefilms.com), 2007
Up the Ridge, dirs. Amelia Kirby and Nick Szuberia
Slavery By Another Name <http://video.pbs.org/video/2176766758/>
Solitary Confinement <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/solitary-nation/#solitary-nation>

WEBSITES/VIDEOS

Informational

Marshall Project <https://www.themarshallproject.org/#.iEMIMLRae>
Death Penalty Information Center <http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/>
Real Cost of Prison: Comic Books: <http://www.realcostofprisons.org/comics.html>
Sentencing Project Interactive Map <http://www.sentencingproject.org/map/map.cfm#map>
Prison Culture visuals: <http://www.usprisonculture.com/blog/visualizations/>
[ACLU Infographic](#) on mass incarceration

Solitary Watch

http://www.salon.com/2013/05/07/battling_censorship_behind_bars_partner/

Stanford Experiment: <http://zimbardo.socialpsychology.org/>

Humanities Action Lab Global Dialogues on Incarceration

<http://humanitiesactionlab.org/globaldialogues/incarceration/>

Rikers & Teens in Solitary <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/questioning-solitary-confinement-adolescents-rikers-island/>

Maria Gottschalk, "Prison Overcrowding and Brown v. Plata." *New Republic* 8 June 2011.

<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/politics/89575/prison-overcrowding-brown-plata-supreme-court-california>

On Education and Re-Entry

All of Us or None: http://www.allofusornone.org/newsite/about_us

Inside Out Center <http://www.insideoutcenter.org/>

Education Justice Project <http://www.educationjustice.net/home/>

Alabama Prison Creative Arts + Education <http://apaep.auburn.edu/>

Prison Studies Project <http://prisonstudiesproject.org/about/>

Arizona State University Prison English <http://english.clas.asu.edu/prisonenglish>

Chris Hedges, "The Play's the Thing" <http://billmoyers.com/2013/12/18/the-plays-the-thing/>

New Yorker article <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/12/12/the-ex-con-scholars-of-berkeley>

Prison English News

<http://english.clas.asu.edu/files/PrisonEnglishNewsletterSummer2013final.pdf>

Presentation by Arthur Longworth on LWOP:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yC8wGu7uCMk&index=7&list=PLki4QkQQoBsGP3ofy8YDJok2K9LMmUVXy>

Appalachian Prison Book Project <http://aprisonbookproject.wordpress.com/>

SCHEDULE

- ❖ We may, for sanity's sake, need to cut back on some of the required readings.
- ❖ Everyone can take a pass on the reading for one week. Let me know beforehand, and please still come to class that day.

Jan 10

What it might help me to know. Introductions.
Syllabus. Overview. Sign Up for Big Question Day
Clips from *Slavery By Another Name* (1-17:00; 59:25-1:09:35)

LIBERATION, WITH ONE EXCEPTION

Jan 17

Anonymous, "Autobiography of an Imprisoned Peon" (1903)
[ECampus—see "Wicker, Franklin, and Autobiography"]

Jack London, "'Pinched': A Prison Experience" "Pen" (1894)
<http://carl-bell.baylor.edu/jl/Pinched.html>
<http://carl-bell-2.baylor.edu/belc/IL/ThePen.html>

Pictures of Erie PA Penitentiary
http://www.wnyheritagepress.org/photos_week_2012/jack_londen_pen/jack_londen_pen.htm

Sarah Haley, "'Like I Was A Man': Chain Gangs, Gender, and the Domestic Carceral Sphere in Jim Crow Georgia," *Signs* 39.1 (Autumn 2013). [ECampus/JSTOR]

Douglas Blackmon, excerpt from *Slavery By Another Name* – Introduction, Chapter XV, and Epilogue [ECampus]

Recommended:

Article on Austin Reed's *The Life and Adventures of a Haunted Convict, or the Inmate of a Gloomy Prison*
<http://www.mhpbooks.com/random-house-buys-rights-to-unearthed-1850s-prison-memoir/>

Jan 24

Agnes Smedley, "Cell Mates" (1920) [handout/ECampus]

Kate Richards O'Hare, from *Crime and Criminals* (1923) [handout/ECampus]

Chester Himes, "To What Red Hell" (1934) [handout]

Oscar Wilde, "Ballad of Reading Gaol" (1898) [ECampus]

H. Bruce Franklin, Introduction to *Prison Writing in 20th-Century America*

Tom Wicker, Foreword to *Prison Writing* [Ecampus—See “Wicker, Franklin, and Autobiography”]

Recent Prison Strikes:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-37502279>

Recommended:

Beth Schwartzapfel, “A Primer on the Nationwide Prisoners’ Strike,” *Marshall Project* [https://www.themarshallproject.org/2016/09/27/a-primer-on-the-nationwide-prisoners-strike#.ux2vA\]38j](https://www.themarshallproject.org/2016/09/27/a-primer-on-the-nationwide-prisoners-strike#.ux2vA]38j)

Ryan S. King, Marc Mauer, and Tracy Huling, “Big Prisons, Small Towns: Prison Economics in Rural America.” Report by The Sentencing Project (Feb. 2003). Online.

STATE KILLING

Jan 31

Willie Francis, “My Trip to the Chair” [handout/Ecampus]

Poems by Lewis, McDonough, Ruzas, Masters; Song by Earle [handout]

Mumia Abu-Jamal, from *Live from Death Row* [Ecampus]

David Garland, Prologue and Introduction to *Peculiar Institution* [Ecampus]

Commencement address:

<http://www.prisonradio.org/media/audio/mumia/goddard-commencement-speech-1054-mumia-abu-jamal>

“To Murder Victims’ Families Executing Killers is Justice”

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/bal-md.kane05feb05-column.html>

Murder Victims Families for Reconciliation <http://www.mvfr.org/>

Murder Victims Families for Human Rights <http://www.mvfhr.org/>

In Class: *Witness to an Execution*

<http://www.soundportraits.org/on-air/witness-to-an-execution/>

Recommended:

“Lawsuit Challenging Pennsylvania’s ‘Mumia’s Gag Order”

<http://unprison.com/2014/11/11/lawsuit-challenging-pennsylvanias-mumia-gag-order-overlooks-copyright-protection/>

“PA is ordered to provide Hepatitis C Drugs to Inmate”

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/pennsylvania-is-ordered-to-provide-hepatitis-c-drug-to-inmate-1483545769>

Deborah W. Denno, “When Willie Francis Died . . .” [Ecampus]

Eric Jensen and Jessica Blank, *The Exonerated* (documentary play)

Bob Curley, father of a child who was murdered, discusses changing view of death penalty.
<http://www.necn.com/video/#!/news/politics/Life-Sentence-Vs--Death-Penalty-for-Tsarnaev/299625511>

Anthony Ray Hinton on how he got through 30 years on death row as an innocent man.
http://www.democracynow.org/2015/4/6/they_couldn_t_take_my_soul

Jim Hall, "Commute All Death Sentences" 27 Dec. 2016
http://www.columbiatribune.com/opinion/oped/commute-all-death-sentences/article_045535e0-f4a0-59d4-90bb-405fc0ceaaaa.html

CONVERSIONS/TRANSFORMATIONS/LIBERATING WORDS

Feb 7

Malcolm X, *Autobiography of Malcolm X*

Manning Marable, "Rediscovering Malcolm's Life: A Historian's Adventures in Living History," *Souls* 7.1 (2005)
http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ccbh/pdfs/Souls.Rediscovering_Malcolms_Life.pdf

Linda Anderson, *Autobiography* 2nd Edition. Introduction [ECampus]

Recommended:

Linda Anderson, *Autobiography*, Chap 5. WVU Library E-Book

Digital Scholarship: <http://www.brothermalcolm.net/>

David Remnick in *New Yorker*:
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2011/04/25/this-american-life>

Feb 14

Excerpt from Jack Abbott and Norman Mailer, *In the Belly of the Beast* [handout]

Patricia McConnell, "Sing Soft, Sing Loud," *Prison Writing* 294-306 [handout]

Michel Foucault, excerpt from *Discipline and Punish* [ECampus]

Atul Gawande, "Hell-hole"
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2009/03/30/hellhole>

Interactive Map -- <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/criminal-justice/locked-up-in-america/how-much-time-u-s-prisoners-spend-in-solitary/>

ARTWORK

Fly in the Ointment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CUs8K1jZEvs&feature=youtu.be>

Views from Solitary -- Photographs

<https://prisonphotography.org/2012/11/19/views-from-solitary-prisoners-imaginations-made-real-by-activists-photographs/>

Damien Nichols

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/how-making-art-on-death-row-saved-damien-echols-life_us_570c0ff0e4b0885fb50e0224

Recommended:

Dannie "Red Hog" Martin, "A Mount Everest of Time," *Prison Writing*

Adam Gopnick, "Learning from the Slaughter in Attica"

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/08/29/learning-from-the-slaughter-in-attica>

On Hell is a Very Small Place

http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/crime/2016/02/is_solitary_confinement_torture_former_inmates_on_life_in_isolation.html

Optional

Sat. Feb 18: APBP Training Day 10:00-1:00 at the Aull Center, 351 Spruce St.

Feb 21

Piri Thomas, *Down These Mean Streets*

Jimmy Santiago Baca, "Coming Into Language" [ECampus]

Eric A. Stanley, "Fugitive Flesh: Gender Self-Determination, Queer Abolition, and Trans Resistance," *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex*, eds. Eric A. Stanley and Nat Smith [ECampus]

Recommended:

Alfredo J. Sosa-Velasco, "Gerald and Thomas: The Subtext within the Text in *Down These Mean Streets*," *Romance Notes* 49.3 (2009): 287-299.

Caleb Smith, *Prison and the American Imagination*, pp 190-199 on Baca [ECampus—See "Caleb Smith and Butler" in Readings for April]

African American Policy Forum, et. al. "Black Girls Matter,"

http://www.atlanticphilanthropies.org/app/uploads/2015/09/BlackGirlsMatter_Report.pdf

Feb 28

Dwayne Betts, *A Question of Freedom*

Betts, "Only Once I Considered Suicide" [handout]

Etheridge Knight, "Hard Rock Returns..." and "For Freckle-Faced Gerald" [handout]

Recommended:

Jeffrey Goldberg, "A Matter of Black Lives," *Atlantic* September 2015 (Angola)
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/09/a-matter-of-black-lives/399386/>

Video on Angola: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ABpWhY5Xzk>

Timothy Head and Grover Norquist "High Costs of Mass Incarceration," *National Review* 13 Aug 2015
<http://www.nationalreview.com/article/422476/over-incarceration-not-making-america-safer>

Mar 4 -12 Spring Break

Mar 14

John Edgar Wideman, *Brothers and Keepers*

Robin Riley Fast, "Brothers and Keepers and the Tradition of the Slave Narrative," *MELUS* 22.4 (1997) [ECampus]

Recommended:

Eugene Philip Page, "'Familiar Strangers': The Quest for Connection and Self-Knowledge in *Brothers and Keepers*" [ECampus]

ACLU on life sentencing: <https://www.aclu.org/blog/criminal-law-reform-human-rights/15-year-old-gets-six-life-sentences>

Guantánamo Diary

http://www.democracynow.org/2015/1/22/inside_the_us_torture_chambers_prisoners

PRISON ABOLITION

Mar 21

Assata Shakur, *Assata*

Angela Davis, Chap 3 of *Are Prisons Obsolete?*

<https://www.feministes-radicales.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Angela-Davis-Are-Prisons-Obsolete.pdf>

Amanda Davis, "On Teaching Women's Prison Writing: A Feminist Approach to Women, Crime, and Incarceration," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 32. 3/4, (Fall - Winter, 2004): 261-279 [ECampus]

Recommended:

Michael Hames-García, *Fugitive Justice*, chap. 3 [See Google Books]

Joy James, "Framing the Panther: Assata Shakur and Black Female Agency" in *Want to Start a Revolution? Radical Women in the Black Freedom Struggle*, eds. Jeanne Theoharis, Komozi Woodard, and Dayo F. Gore. (New York: NYU Press, 2009).

<http://humanities.williams.edu/joy-james/>

Beth Ritchie, Chapter 5, "The Matrix: A Black Feminist Response" in *Arrested Justice* [WVU E-Book]

DUE: Paper Proposal

March 28

Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow* (esp Intro, chaps 1, 3, 5, 6)

Stephanos Bibas, "The Truth About Mass Incarceration," *National Review* 16 Sept 2015 <http://www.nationalreview.com/article/424059/mass-incarceration-prison-reform>

Che Gossett, "Abolitionist Imaginings" (Interview with Bo Brown, Reina Gossett, and Dylan Rodriguez) [Ecampus]

Martin Luther King, Jr. "Letter from Birmingham Jail" [Ecampus]

Doran Larson, "Toward a Prison Poetics," *College Literature* 37.3 (2010): 143-150 [Ecampus]

Recommended:

Interview with Angela Davis and Toni Morrison

<http://news.ucsc.edu/2014/10/morrison-davis-q-a.html>

Ruth Gilmore, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-chgMlctL90>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTPjC-7EDkc>

S. Lamble, "Carceral Logics: 10 Reasons to Dismantle the Prison Industrial Complex Through Queer/Trans Activism and Action," *Captive Genders*.

DUE: Annotated Bibliography

March 31-April 2:

APBP / James Madison University Service-Learning Weekend

SPECIAL VIEWING: 13th (documentary film)

Apr 4

Leonard Peltier, *Prison Writings: My Life is My Sun Dance*

Deena Ryhms, "Discursive Delinquency in Leonard D. Peltier's Prison Writings." *Genre* XXXV (2002). [MLA Bib]

“What Dying Looks Like in America’s Prisons,” *Atlantic* 16 Feb. 2016
<http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2016/02/hospice-care-in-prison/462660/>

Doran Larson, “Why Scandinavian Prisons Are Superior”
<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/09/why-scandinavian-prisons-are-superior/279949/>

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? Research, Education, Art

Apr 11

Angela Davis, from *Are Prisons Obsolete?* Introduction, Chaps 3 and 6
<https://www.feministes-radicales.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Angela-Davis-Are-Prisons-Obsolete.pdf>

Paul St. John, “Behind the Mirror,” *Doing Time* [ECampus]

Dylan Rodriguez, chapter 2 of *Forced Passages* [ECampus]

Seth Farranti, “Prison Dorm Continuum” *Ozy* http://www.ozy.com/true-story/the-prison-dorm-continuum/39210?utm_source=dd&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=09042015

Carceral Studies Network – Duke <https://carceralstudies.duke.edu/>

Education Justice Project – U of Illinois U-C <http://www.educationjustice.net/home/>

Alabama Creative Arts + Education Project – Auburn <http://apaep.auburn.edu/>

Arizona State University Prison Education Program
<https://english.asu.edu/research/community-university-initiatives/prison-english-program>

Alcatraz Installation by Ai Weiwei
<http://www.cnn.com/2014/10/22/world/ai-weiwei-alcatraz/>

Recommended:

Megan Sweeney, Chapter One from *Reading Is My Window* [ECampus]

Conversation with Angela Davis and Toni Morrison
<http://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/angela-davis-and-toni-morrison-in-conversation-literacy-libraries-and-liberation/#.VHxnc3tjNK0.facebook>

Stephen John Hartnett, Jennifer K. Wood & Bryan J. McCann, “Turning Silence into Speech and Action: Prison Activism and the Pedagogy of Empowered Citizenship”

Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies 8.4 (December 2011): 331- 352
[ECampus]

April 13-18

DUE: Essay Drafts (staggered deadlines)

Apr 18

Visit to Hazelton FCI

Paul Butler, excerpts from *Let's Get Free: A Hip-Hop Theory of Justice*
Chaps 1 and 9 [ECampus]

Abolition Syllabus http://www.aaihs.org/prison-abolition-syllabus/?utm_content=bufferb8dbc&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

Interview with Eric Stanley <http://thenewinquiry.com/features/the-carceral-state/>

Bryan Stevenson, Commencement Address [ECampus]

April 20-25

DUE: Final Essays (staggered deadlines)

Apr 25

Concluding Thoughts

TBA: Prison Autobiographies Symposium