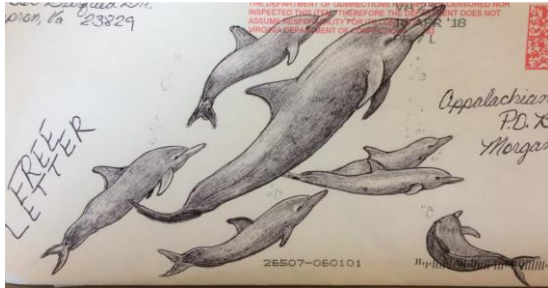


ENGL 275 JUSTICE AND LITERATURE

MWF 11:30 – 12:20

Dr. Katy Ryan | Fall 2021

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Redaction is a dialect after prison.
Dwayne Betts, *Felon*

This discussion-based course will provide an introduction to the literature and history of imprisonment in the United States. This is a history of trauma as well as creative resistance and collective struggle. We will focus on 20th-century literary works written mainly by people who have been in prison. In addition to memoirs, poems, and novels, we will read historical scholarship on the legal and prison systems. Among our questions will be:

- Who is in prison and why?
- How did the United States come to lead the world in incarceration?
- What are the human, environmental, & financial costs of mass incarceration?
- What economic role do prisons play in the Appalachian region?
- What does education look like inside prison?
- What do victims of violence need?
- What might restorative and transformative justice models have to offer?

Possible Readings

Robin Levi, ed., *Inside This Place, Not of It: Narratives from Women's Prisons*
Bruce Franklin, ed., *Prison Writing in Twentieth-Century America*
Dwayne Betts, *Felon*
Ernest Gaines, *A Lesson Before Dying*
Colson Whitehead, *Nickel Boys*

Selections from Patrick Alexander, Douglas Blackmon, Angela Davis, Che Gossett, Sarah Haley, Mariame Kaba, Patricia McConnell, Leonard Peltier, Danielle Sered, Brett Story, Heather Thompson, Alfred Woodfox, Bryan Stevenson

Your Work

Discussion, four short written reader responses, one essay, and a multimedia project. There will be an Honors component available for this class.