

CRIMINAL JUSTICE ISSUES

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE LIST

for learning and teaching about Mass Incarceration and Restoring Justice

EMO'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE MINISTRIES

Because every faith community has a role to play in restoring justice, we are called to empower and equip our neighbors to help persons impacted by the criminal justice system, including offenders, victims, staff and their families.

You are the good news in the face of a broken criminal justice system: people across Oregon lifting up the stories and needs of those impacted by mass incarceration.

BOOKS

JUST MERCY: A STORY OF JUSTICE AND REDEMPTION

BY BRYAN STEVENSON

Bryan Stevenson's account of his decades-long career as a legal advocate for marginalized people who have been either falsely convicted or harshly sentenced. This account brings hope and inspiration into the pain and brokenness of the US legal system. Stevenson brings his lifetime of work as a lawyer for the marginalized into his work for social and systemic justice. His powerful exhortation is that if we seek to help our neighbors, we must "get proximate" with them. This book is especially good for faith groups.

THE NEW JIM CROW: MASS INCARCERATION IN THE AGE OF COLORBLINDNESS

BY MICHELLE ALEXANDER

A groundbreaking look at how racial discrimination in America influenced the mass incarceration of African-Americans. Arguing that just as slavery mutated after Abolition into the segregation of the Jim Crow era, so too has mass incarceration taken on the role of enforcing a racial hierarchy now, after the Civil Rights movement.

PROVERBS FROM ASHES: VIOLENCE, REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING, AND THE SEARCH FROM WHAT SAVES US

BY RITA NAKASHIMA BROCK AND REBECCA ANN PARKER

This book should be on the shelf of every Christian minister. Exploring and exploding the dominant theories of the Atonement by looking at the personal impact of these theories on the lives of the authors, this book seamlessly weaves storytelling in with profound theological meaning-making, centering the voices and needs of victims. What does the model of redemptive suffering teach families who were interred because of racist war-time policies? What does liberation theology say to a survivor of domestic abuse? As both humans and feminist theologians, the authors embody a prophetic vision that the Christian church must hear and wrestle with.

UNTIL WE RECKON: VIOLENCE, MASS INCARCERATION, AND A ROAD TO REPAIR

BY DANIELLE SERED

Sered leads a powerful group based in New York called Uncommon Justice, which has pushed past the easier aspects of criminal justice reform, into the heart of the matter: reckoning with the devastating harm that criminal violence has caused, and working toward

healing and justice after that. Without shying away from the horrors that some of their clients have committed and suffered, she and her group work toward a community that can wrestle with the humanity of violent offenders. What does a just community look like, not only for the wrongfully accused or those convicted of nonviolent crimes, but for even those who have committed violent acts? How far does our mercy and compassion extend? And what do safe, accountable relationships look like in a community that holds such tension?

GRACE GOES TO PRISON: AN INSPIRING STORY OF HOPE AND HUMANITY

BY MELANIE G SNYDER

A woman named Marie Hamilton started visiting inmates in a Pennsylvania prison in the 1970s, and developed relationships over the decades that transformed her vision of the system, inspiring transformation for those around her. Her service moved her toward the practice of Restorative Justice, touching thousands of lives and bringing humanity and respect to persons so often overlooked.

PRISON FATHERS: PARENTING FROM BEHIND BARS

BY LATIF BOSSMAN

Prison Fathers is a memoir charting the journey of an incarcerated African American father faced with the dilemma of parenting from prison. He copes with the loss of his freedom and struggles to find ways to continue to communicate with his children, provide for them financially, manage stress, provide emotional support, and deal with the addition of new children. Hundreds of miles away from his children, family, and friends removed from a life of so-called normalcy to one filled with so much uncertainty, he faces issues like abandonment, acceptance, and visitation and other struggles in this new world as an incarcerated father. Through all that was a struggle became a strength. With an undying love for his children, his energy was focused in continuing to fulfill his duties as a father. With the help of family, friends, community and a desire to truly be a better father, he was able to remain a staple in the fabric of his children's lives until his release from incarceration.

PRISON FATHERS is available on Amazon and from the Oregon-based author.

FROM THE WAR ON POVERTY TO THE WAR ON CRIME: THE MAKING OF MASS INCARCERATION IN AMERICA

BY ELIZABETH HINTON

This book challenges the belief that America's prison problem originated with the Reagan administration's War on Drugs, Hinton traces the rise of mass incarceration to an ironic source: the social welfare programs of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society at the height of the civil rights era.

ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES: THREE STORIES OF CRIME, PRISON, AND REDEMPTION

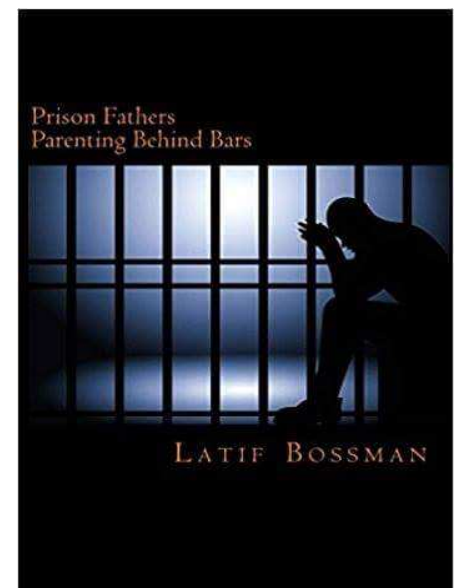
BY WALIDAH IMARISHA

Portland author, teacher, and speaker explores her own relationships with loved ones in prison – and her relationship with the justice system as a whole.

AFTER THE CRIME: THE POWER OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE DIALOGUES BETWEEN VICTIMS AND VIOLENT OFFENDERS

BY SUSAN MILLER

A fundamental text in understanding the views of victims and survivors of crime, from a Restorative Justice perspective.



COMPASSIONATE JUSTICE: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY DIALOGUE WITH TWO GOSPEL PARABLES ON LAW, CRIME AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

BY CHRISTOPHER D. MARSHALL. (PUBLISHED BY CASCADE BOOKS, IMPRINT OF WIPF AND STOCK PUBLISHERS, 2012)

Two simple but subversive parables that have become firmly lodged in popular consciousness are the parable of the Good Samaritan and the parable of the Prodigal Son. Compassionate Justice draws on the insights of restorative justice theory, legal philosophy and social psychology to offer a compelling analysis of how the priorities commended by the parables are pertinent to the criminal justice system today.

THE LITTLE BOOKS OF JUSTICE & PEACEBUILDING

BY GOOD BOOKS (INTERCOURSE, PA 17534, 2005)

Good Books publishes a series of short books (one hundred pages or less) about Restorative Justice topics, which would be suitable for adult education discussion

series. Costing only \$5 each, they provide a concise introduction to such important justice topics as racial healing, justice for sexual abuse, and restorative practices for people in prison. Some titles also cover specific practices, such as victim-offender conferences and circles processes. The following two titles come from this series.

THE LITTLE BOOK OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

BY HOWARD ZEHR

Zehr is a pioneer of Restorative Justice, and this concise text lays out major themes and issues for both new and experienced RJ practitioners.

THE LITTLE BOOK OF BIBLICAL JUSTICE: A FRESH APPROACH TO THE BIBLE'S TEACHINGS ON JUSTICE

BY CHRISTOPHER MARSHALL

Biblical perspectives on justice can help us appreciate some of convictions and values that have helped shape Western political and judicial thought, including the many complexities that surround "justice" in the Bible.

PODCAST REVIEW

"THIS AMERICAN WAR ON DRUGS," *ON THE MEDIA* EPISODE, BROADCAST BY WNYC, AUGUST 24, 2017, 50 MIN.

This episode of the popular weekly National Public Radio show covers the history of the "War on Drugs" and how political machinations created, not the epidemic itself, but the highly punitive, racist societal responses to drug problems.

Featuring a diverse mix of views and voices, the podcast explains how political leaders have used mass hysteria about drug use to feed personal political agendas. It tells the story of Harry Anslinger, a man few people have heard of yet all of us have been impacted by - in that he invented and shaped the modern concept of the war on drugs. Heartbreakingly, he also had a hand in the racist forces that drove musical genius Billie Holiday to her death.

This podcast episode also argues effectively about the ways drug abuse is driven by economic forces - especially despair of the working classes - while at the same time responses to drug use often exploit racist and xenophobic tropes, to exacerbate a hierarchical socio-economic and racial social order.

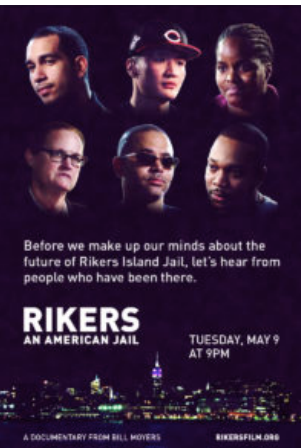
MOVIES

THIRTEENTH

DOCUMENTARY BY AVA DUVERNAY

Available on Netflix, 13th explores the "intersection of race, justice and mass incarceration in the United States;" it is titled after the [Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution](#), which freed the slaves and prohibited slavery ... unless as punishment for a crime. Several discussions guides are available on the internet.

RIKERS: AN AMERICAN JAIL



To understand the human toll of the US's jail crisis, Rikers Island is a good place to start. Of the more than 7,500 people detained at Rikers Island on any given day, almost 80% have not yet been found guilty or innocent of the charges they face. All are at risk in the pervasive culture of violence that forces people to come to terms with what they must do for their own survival. This new documentary from Bill Moyers brings you face to face with men and women who have endured incarceration at Rikers Island. Their stories vividly describe the cruel arc of the Rikers experience—from the shock of entry, to extortion exercised by other inmates, oppressive interactions with corrections officers, torture of solitary confinement and the many challenges of returning to the outside world. Study guides online:

www.RikersFilm.org

FILMS AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE

PRISON KIDS (JUVENILE JUSTICE IN AMERICA)

We incarcerate children at a higher rate than any other developed country. Kids make mistakes—sometimes large, sometimes small. And every day in America, they can be locked up in stark, mismanaged hellholes and marked for life.

RACISM IN OREGON'S JUSTICE SYSTEM

A short movie by Portland State University students for a class under Professor DeEtte Beghtol Waleed in 2017, detailing the impact of racism on Oregon's correctional system: <https://youtu.be/vIT16y-lH9c>

THE EXONERATED

Transcripts of court documents and interviews reveal the harrowing ordeal endured by innocent death-row inmates.

SERVING LIFE

Actor Forest Whitaker narrates the story of a group of inmate volunteers who staff their own hospice inside a maximum security prison in Louisiana where the average sentence is more than 90 years.

ALSO CONSIDER TED TALKS AND YOUTUBE VIDEOS BY ADAM FOSS

TED Talk: Adam Foss, a Prosecutor's Vision for a Better Justice System

ORGANIZATIONS IN OREGON:

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

Oregon's CJC provides a rich online database of facts and figures describing Oregon's prison population.

REMNANT INITIATIVES

This Newberg-based group offers reentry supports and prophetic engagement for justice. www.rem-in.org

PARTNERSHIP FOR SAFETY AND JUSTICE (PSJ)

Key to advocacy for reform in Salem, PSJ has helped craft and pass groundbreaking legislation, most lately around justice reinvestment and alternative sentencing approaches for parents. www.SafetyAndJustice.org

ACLU OF OREGON

Amongst other services, *They Report to You* is a new campaign by Oregon's ACLU to raise awareness about the impact District Attorneys have on sentencing, and mass incarceration as a whole. www.aclu-or.org

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

THE MARSHALL PROJECT

The Marshall Project is a nonpartisan nonprofit news organization seeking to sustain a sense of national urgency about the justice system. www.themarshallproject.org

THE FAIR PUNISHMENT PROJECT

The Fair Punishment Project is helping create a fair and accountable justice system through legal action, public discourse, and educational initiatives.
www.fairpunishment.org

EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

Led by Bryan Stevenson, EJI works to end wrongful convictions and get justice for children in the system. A new project is creating a museum and monuments for the victims of racist lynching. www.eji.org

OAASIS

Oregon Abuse Advocates & Survivors in Service empowers survivors of sexual violence, building a movement to prevent child sexual abuse and help healing, OAASIS is in the heart of true transformation for what justice looks like. www.oaasisoregon.org

OREGON JUSTICE RESOURCE CENTER

OJRC promotes civil rights and improves legal representation for communities that have often been underserved. They train future public interest lawyers, and educate our community on civil rights and current civil liberties concerns. www.ojrc.info

FIGHT AGAINST SEX TRAFFICKING/FIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY/TRAFFICKING

FAST connects groups working to end human trafficking. The FAST monthly email newsletter lists events and ways to plug into the work across Oregon.

CATHOLIC LEGAL IMMIGRATION NETWORK, INC.

CLINIC compiles daily news and advocacy about justice for immigrants in the US, based in Catholic values of welcoming the stranger, per Biblical teachings. www.cliniclegal.org

VERA INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE

The Vera Institute of Justice's vision is to tackle the causes and consequences of mass incarceration, racial disparities, and other pressing issues. www.vera.org

THE SENTENCING PROJECT

Founded in 1986, the Sentencing Project works for a fair and effective U. S. criminal justice system by promoting reforms in sentencing policy, addressing unjust racial disparities and advocating for alternatives to incarceration. www.sentencingproject.org

EVICTED: POVERTY AND PROFIT IN THE AMERICAN CITY

BY MATTHEW DESMOND

Released in 2017, this nonfiction account traces the lives of a diverse series of individuals and families in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who sharing one experience: eviction from their homes in the private rental market. The bulk of the book is intimate portraits of the struggles these families face as they navigate setbacks forced upon them. They are seeking shelter in a society where landlords have disproportionate power - backed by the state - to maximize profit at the expense of public health. Readers cannot help being both moved and frustrated at the struggles they face. The stories make a strong case for systemic reform of the housing market, to strengthen the hand of renters against the power of landlords. The richly researched statistics in the epilogue bring home the harm eviction does to society at large.

The experiences detailed in this book are located in Wisconsin but they translate to Oregon, as we face a crisis in affordable housing statewide, legislative stubbornness, and powerful landlord lobbies.

Connections between the housing crisis and criminal justice reform are worth emphasizing. The instability of the rental market greatly impacts anyone with criminal convictions (especially those who also have children). One of the biggest challenges facing people after prison is housing, so when it's hard for *anyone* to find housing, it's even harder for people with records. Add on a history of sexual offenses, and the barriers to stable housing are high. In a society that expects people who've done their time to seamlessly reintegrate into society - with few formal resources to ease the transition - the barriers that anyone in poverty faces can land doubly hard on people who must continue to wear the label of felon. In addition, evictions can force individuals into the criminal justice system, leaving them scarred with a record. The issues of housing justice and criminal justice reform thus cannot be tidily separated; this is *intersectionality* at work.

TATTOOS ON THE HEART: THE POWER OF BOUNDLESS COMPASSION

BY FATHER GREG BOYLE

Written by a pastor in Los Angeles, California - a city riddled with gang violence - this book focuses on how the power of compassion and restoring humanity can have a powerful healing effect on community. Through Gregory's eyes and experiences, he shares the stories of individuals in his community: their journeys, hardships, and triumphs. Moreover, he shows how faith, kindness, and mercy among other things, teach us how to better love ourselves and those around us - especially those who really need our love.

Overall, one quote from the book captures the heart Gregory's message: "Turns out this is what we all have in common, gang member and nongang member alike: **we're just trying to learn how to bear the beams of love.**"

*Book review by Caitlyn
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