

Delve Deeper into "Prison Town, USA"

A film by Katie Galloway and Po Kutchins

This multi-media resource list, compiled by Paul A. Bareño of the San Diego Public Library in partnership with the American Library Association, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the upcoming P.O.V. documentary "Prison Town, USA" that premieres on July 24th, 2007 at 10 PM (check local listings at www.pbs.org/pov/).

In the 1990s, at the height of the prison-building boom, a prison opened in rural America every 15 days. "Prison Town, USA" tells the story of Susanville, California, one small town that tries to resuscitate its economy by building a prison — with unanticipated consequences. Weaving the stories of a laid-off mill worker turned guard, a struggling dairy owner and an inmate's family stranded in Susanville, the film sheds light on an industry that is transforming the landscape of rural America. A co-production of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and KQED/Truly California.

ADULT NONFICTION

Abramsky, Sahsa. *American Furies: Crime, Punishment, and Vengeance in the Age of Mass Incarceration*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2007. An author whose longtime focus has been U.S. penitentiaries and the communities around them, Abramsky looks critically at how law and order wins political races, and jails provide jobs in places where industry has dried up.

Abramsky, Sahsa. *Hard Time Blues: How Politics Built a Prison Nation*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002. A history of the growth of the American prison system over the past quarter century, but also the story of the careers of politicians who rose to power on the "crime issue."

Bernstein, Nell. *All Alone in the World: Children of the Incarcerated*. New York: Free Press, 2005. An investigation into the lives of children with imprisoned parents by an award-winning journalist. Bernstein is also the coordinator of the San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership.

Braman, Donald. *Doing Time on the Outside: Incarceration and Family Life in Urban America*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004. Provides detailed documentation of the destructive impact of incarceration on social capital and the broad effects of widespread social stigma related to incarceration and behavior labeled as criminal.

Carroll, Leo. *Lawful Order: A Case Study of Correctional Crisis and Reform*. New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1999. Carroll describes the radical transformation of Rhode Island's prisons in response to prisoners' rights litigation.

Conover, Ted. *Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing*. New York: Random House, 2000. Provides a detailed, unsentimental account of the author's experiences during the course of a year as a prison guard, beginning with his training at the academy for correctional officers.

Davey, Joseph Dillon. *The Politics of Prison Expansion: Winning Elections by Waging War on Crime*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998. Argues that prison expansion does not reduce crime but creates profits and gets "law and order" candidates elected, often with political contributions that came from those profits.

Dyer, Joel. *The Perpetual Prisoner Machine: How America Profits from Crime*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000. Big business now has a vested financial stake in seeing large prison populations remain steady or continue to climb.

Elsner, Alan. *Gates of Injustice: The Crisis in America's Prisons*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall Financial Times, 2004. An exposé of the U.S. prison system: how over 2 million Americans came to be incarcerated; life on the inside; and how the "prison-industrial complex" promotes imprisonment over other solutions.

Gilmore, Ruth Wilson. *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007. A critical study of the causes and effects of the largest prison building, and filling, plan in the

history of the world--California's 23 major new state prisons since 1982.

Hallinan, Joseph T. *Going Up the River: Travels in a Prison Nation*. New York: Random House, 2001. Pulitzer Prize winner Hallinan gives a thought-provoking treatise concerning one of the U.S.'s biggest growth industries: prisons; and the struggling towns and cities left behind by the information age.

Harris, Othello and R. Robin Miller (eds). *Impacts of Incarceration on the African American Family*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2003. Unidentified authors present 16 essays exploring theoretical perspectives on how the massive incarceration of African American men is negatively impacting their families and communities.

Irwin, John. *The Warehouse Prison: Disposal of the New Dangerous Class*. Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing Company, 2005. Examines the cause of the five-fold increase in the U.S. prison population during the last two decades of the 20th century, the new forms of imprisonment it produced, and the particular and broader effects it caused.

King, Ryan S. et al. *Big Prisons, Small Towns: Prison Economics in Rural America*. Washington DC: Sentencing Project, 2003. www.soros.org/initiatives/justice/articles_publications/publications/bigprisons_20030201
The economics behind agricultural and manufacturing based rural areas in the U.S. and the current role of prisons as economic development for these communities.

Kleinig, John and Margaret Leland Smith (eds). *Discretion, Community, and Correctional Ethics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2001. Provides a framework for discussion of prison personnel ethics within institutional constraints. With 2 million Americans in jail or prison, the book addresses the despair of imprisonment and punishment.

Martone, Cynthia. *Loving Through Bars: Children with Parents in Prison*. Santa Monica, CA: Santa Monica Press, 2005.

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Presents the plight of children with parents serving time in prison through a series of poignant stories; introduces some of the 2.3 million children who have become victims of their parents' crimes.

Mauer, Marc and Meda Chesney-Lind (eds). *Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment.* New York: New Press, 2002. A comprehensive examination of the hidden ramifications of conviction for inmates, ex-felons, their families and the communities they come from.

Pattillo, Mary et al. *Imprisoning America: The Social Effects of Mass Incarceration.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2004. Essays written by 19 scholars resulting from the 2001 conference "The Effects of Incarceration on Children and Families" hosted by the Institute for Policy Research.

Travis, Jeremy and Michelle Waul (eds). *Prisoners Once Removed: The Impact of Incarceration and Reentry on Children, Families, and Communities.* Washington DC: Urban Institute Press, 2003. Scholarly articles about the impact of incarceration on inmates, the consequences of imprisonment on those closest to inmates, and the impact of prisons on the surrounding community.

ADULT FICTION

O'Nan, Stewart. *The Good Wife.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005. Follows Patty through the twenty-eight years of her husband's incarceration, as she raises her son, navigates a system that has no place for her, and braves the scorn of her community.

NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Hill, Mary K. *Prisons.* Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2006. A part of the series "Social Issues Firsthand," designed for young adult readers, this collection provides a wide range of individual perspectives from those involved in various aspects of the prison system.

Skanccke, Jennifer (ed). *Alternatives to Prisons.* Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2005. An anthology that explores the reasons behind the exploding prison population, whether prisons are a successful deterrent to crime, and the various alternatives to incarceration.

Weems, Eugene. *Prison Secrets.* Daly City, CA: Black Panther Party Press, 2005. Depicts the daily rituals of prison life. Written for young people as a deterrent to gangs and criminal activity.

Wittbold, Maureen. *Let's Talk About When Your Parent is in Jail.* New York: PowerKids Press, 1997. A book for children that discusses why jails exist, why people go to jail, and how to deal with having a parent in prison.

FILMS/DOCUMENTARIES

"Correction." A film by Michael Mulcahy. ITVS, 2004. (60 min.) "Correction" contrasts the training that correctional officers receive with their real-life experiences inside prison. The experiences of four people negotiating the Arizona Department of Corrections' seven-week training academy reveal that both officers and inmates are trapped within the correctional system, controlled by contradictory imperatives between security, justice, punishment and the economic realities of state government.

"Doing Time: Life Inside the Big House." A film by Alan Raymond. Docurama, 2006. (82 min.) Hard-edged look at life inside the walls of Lewisburg, a maximum security federal penitentiary where rehabilitation and parole have all but been abandoned. www.docurama.com

"P.O.V.: Omar & Pete." A film by Tod Lending. Nomadix Pics, 2005. (86 min.) Omar and Pete are determined to change their lives. Both have been in and out of prison for more than 30 years — never out longer than six months. This intimate and penetrating film follows these two longtime African-American friends after what they hope will be their final release. www.docurama.com

"P.O.V.: What I Want My Words To Do To You." A film by Madeleine Gavin, Judith Katz and Gary Sunshine. Borrowed Light, 2003. (86 min.) Focuses on a writing group led by playwright and activist Eve Ensler at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility. Ensler's classes have given birth to a powerful writing community in which women from strikingly different strata of society, all of whom are serving long sentences, help each other tell their stories. www.shoppbs.org

"Shakespeare Behind Bars." A film by Hank Rogerson and Jilann Spitzmiller. ITVS, 2005. (84 min.) "Shakespeare Behind Bars" follows the members of an all-male Shakespeare company working within the bars of a Kentucky prison as they rehearse and perform *The Tempest* over the course of one year. Within the rigid context of prison, Shakespeare's timeless themes provide a catalyst for the inmates to examine their pasts with remarkable candor, testing the power of truth, change and forgiveness.

"Troop 1500." A film by Ellen Spiro and Karen Bernstein. Mobilus Media, 2005. (69 min.) At the Gatesville Prison in Texas, a unique Girl Scout troop unites daughters with mothers who have been convicted of serious crimes. Facing steep sentences from the courts and tough questions from their children, the mothers struggle to rebuild relationships with the daughters who endure a childhood without them. Mobilusmedia.com

"Visiting Day." A film by Jacqueline Woodson. GPN Educational Media, 2004. (30 min.) A young girl and her grandmother make a long bus trip every month to visit the girl's father in prison. Shoppgn.com