

Dr. Jodi Schorb, Asst. Professor of English

Contact information

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Office Hours & Location (Fall 2014)

TUR 4334

Office Hours: Drop in office hours are held every Tuesday from 5:00-6:30pm. You can also request an appointment on Wednesdays (flexible) or Thursdays (5:00-6:15). I teach right before our class, but meetings on different days or at different times are possible; after class is especially good, as are Wednesdays.

Our class meets T 8-9, R9 in Tur 2333

Course Objectives:

This is a course for students interested in the history of early prison history and literature in America. Our core questions: What transformed the "gaol" into the modern "prison" and what were the cultural and literary effects of this change? How did the invention of the penitentiary "capture" the early American literary imagination? In what contexts, and to what impact or effect, did literature by actual inmate-authors circulate to "freeworld" reading audiences? How does the experience of captivity authorize the subject, shape identity, and produce new knowledge?

Our readings will be drawn from three primary areas: historical pamphlets and essays by prison reformers, imaginative literature (novels, short fiction) in which the penitentiary plays an interesting role, and non-fiction and imaginative writing (poetry, fiction) penned by prisoners.

Beginning in the 1780s, American prison reformers participated in a transatlantic debate about the value and promise of reformatory incarceration. Historical readings from the 18th and 19th centuries (by Benjamin Rush, Charles Dickens, and others) trace the invention of the penitentiary and debates over the value of capital punishment and solitary confinement, theorize the possibilities of reformatory incarceration, and help give us historical context for understanding the current crisis of mass incarceration.

The new knowledge, debates, and architecture of the prison concurrently influenced the development of nineteenth-century American fiction, in part through what Caleb Smith has named the "Poetics of the Penitentiary"—narratives of rebirth structured upon the convict's civil or virtual death.

Essays, autobiographies, fiction, and poetry by real prisoners also influence debates around punishment and justice, and we will also read many accounts by real prisoners, from Thoreau's influential essay, "Civil Disobedience," to Martin Luther King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," to a sustained series of selections driven by student interest.

Together, the readings will help students understand the significance of the prison in early American thought, literature, and society, while strengthening their reflective and analytical writing.

Required Textbooks and Materials (in order):

1. Required **Coursepak** to be purchased by Week 3 through **Xerographic Copy Center**, 927 NW 13th St (near Applebees and Office Depot); see website or phone 375-0797 for hours and directions; <http://www.xerographicgainesville.com>

The following books are required and available online or through the UF Bookstore:

(<http://www.bsd.ufl.edu/G1C/bookstore/bookstore.asp>)

2. Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* (Penguin Classics); ISBN 9780142437261
3. Jack London, *The Star Rover* (Modern Library); ISBN 9780812970043
4. H. Bruce Franklin, ed. *Prison Writings in 20th Century America* (Penguin); ISBN 9780140273052
5. Angela Y. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete* (Open Media); ISBN 9781583225813

You'll need a valid Gatorlink account to access to our course Sakai site (<http://lss.at.ufl.edu>), as well as software able to open files in .pdf format and submit work in .docx (preferred format) or .rtf (acceptable format).

Assignments and Weighting:

Unit A Reading Quiz	5%
Reading Reflections (Unit A Reflection, Final Course Reflection)	10% (5% each)
Mid-Semester Essay (27.5%), plus peer workshop (2.5%)	30%

Unit Three, Group Research and Oral Presentation on Inmate Author	10%
Final Essay (27.5%), plus peer workshop (2.5%)	30%
Regular participation & preparation (which means completing homework, reading worksheets, in class group work, and possible pop reading quizzes)	15%
	<hr/> 100%

More about Major Essays (60% of grade)

- You will have the assignments many weeks in advance
- You will complete two essays. The first will be a 6-7 page essay based on one of the primary texts of interest in Unit B (i.e. Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, etc.). The second will be a 7-9 page essay based on a text or writer of interest from Unit C; this will require independent reading and some outside research.
- Both essays will be workshopped by peers in class; you will lose points on the "peer workshop" portion of the grade for missing these mandatory workshops with an unexcused absence, and you will also lose points if you come late, come with a too-short draft, or if you fail to give your peers feedback. (On the plus side, you will earn points by coming prepared with a draft, on time, and participating.) (See assignment handout for details)
- You are allowed to bring a draft to my office or to the campus writing center, and encouraged to consult with me on your topic or your outline.

Extensions, late penalties and late policies:

Assignments may be graded down one half grade for each calendar day they are late.

If you feel your situation warrants an extension, you can request an extension; however, I reserve the right to deny the request, especially when poor time management, technology failures, recurrent tardiness, recurrent requests for extensions, or frequent lack of class preparation factor into the need for more time.

Late work will be graded but will NOT contain detailed instructor's comments, just a short explanation of the final grade.

Grading Chart (Letter to Number Conversion):

You'll get a letter grade and numeric equivalent on all your papers (and your class participation grade). I will then record this number in my gradebook. This chart is used to convert letter grades to numbers on all assignments. The parentheses include the range of numbers that may apply to the corresponding letter grade. This chart is also used to determine your final grade in the course:

A+	98.5	(97-100)
A	94.5	(93-96)
A-	91	(90-92)
B+	88	(87-89)
B	84.5	(83-86)
B-	81	(80-82)
C+	78	(77-79)
C	74.5	(73-76)
C-	71	(70-72)
D	67.5	(66-69)
F	60	(65 or under)

Grading Expectations for Essays (Midsemester Essay and Final Essay):

A-range papers are thoughtful, carefully developed, and clearly presented. They demonstrate strong comprehension of the materials under discussion, clear engagement with course themes and contexts, and offer a sustained reading that successfully illuminates the text or texts under discussion. A-papers are well-organized, well-supported, well-developed, and written in an engaging, polished, and clear prose style.

B/B- papers are solid, competent and capable; they would clearly benefit from **either** more complex development, fuller explanation or examples, increased risk-taking (including subtler or more original examples), or clearer presentation (structure, prose style, grammar).

C-range papers are passable and often promising, but have **multiple** key areas that require considerable improvement: a more rigorous topic, a stronger thesis, stronger development of ideas, improved focus (in identifying the issue or guiding the reader through your analysis), fuller explanation of examples, increased risk-taking (including subtler or more original examples), and/or clearer presentation (structure, prose style, grammar).

D-level papers are not yet adequate; they are often off track, superficial, or struggle to narrow down a viable topic, or they struggle to organize and sustain a persuasive reading in readable prose.

F papers fail to meet the basic criteria of argument, organization, and mechanics, or they fail to respond in a meaningful way to the assignment, or they contain passages that are plagiarized.

Grading Expectations for Reflections (Unit A Reflection, Final Course Reflection):

A-range: Reflections marked excellent are thoughtful, clearly developed, and clearly presented. They demonstrate clear engagement with the course themes and contexts, strong comprehension of their chosen text(s), and substantive arrangement of ideas that help lay forth and unfold their thinking; they are written in a polished prose style.

B-range: Reflections marked very good are competent and capable, but would benefit from **either** more complex development, fuller explanation or examples, increased risk-taking (including subtler or more original examples), or clearer presentation (structure, prose style, grammar).

C-range: Promising, but has **multiple** areas that require considerable improvement: more substantive engagement with the assignment, stronger development of ideas, improved focus (in identifying the issue or guiding the reader through your thinking), fuller explanation of examples, increased risk-taking (including subtler or more original examples), and/or clearer presentation (structure, prose style, grammar).

D or below: Off track or inadequate, either because it is too brief, lacks comprehension, is carelessly composed, or presents a superficial response to the topic.

Grading expectations for Course Participation & Preparation:

To earn an "A" for regular participation and preparation, the A level student is **regularly** prepared and engaged. They have their materials handy and are able to refer to specifics in their materials during class. They are able to make connections from the readings and/or build productive discussion from student or instructor ideas. They contribute to the ongoing discussion by responding thoughtfully to others and/or by asking questions that help build useful group understanding. They contribute regularly and are active listeners in group work. They abide by the attendance policy.

B range participants **mostly** meet the above criteria, C range participants **occasionally** meet the above criteria, D range participants **rarely** meet the above, F range participants **fail** to meet the above criteria.

Grade appeals:

In the unlikely event that a student wishes to appeal his or her final grade, the student should consult Prof. Stephanie Smith, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Dept. of English Main Office. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

For more information, <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Attendance, Participation, Preparation: I expect you to attend class regularly, rarely missing class.

You are allowed 3 absences (no explanation needed), although it is unusual for students to avail themselves of all 3. Upon a fourth absence, your participation grade will be lowered up to one letter. Successive unapproved absences (5th, 6th....) will continue to lower your grade. Habitual tardiness (i.e. arriving after roll) will be marked as absenteeism. Speak to me in conference if you are facing unusual circumstances that affect your ability to abide by these expectations. Speak to me early in the semester and provide documentation of travel dates if you are on a university-approved athletic or scholastic team and need the attendance policy adjusted for travel, per university policy.

A handful of group work days are marked in bold "mandatory attendance": these days you must attend (unless you have an excused absence that day, like a medical note). Skipping these days with an unexcused absence will impact your grade up to 2.5% per major assignment.

The success of the class requires your active presence. A strong class doesn't just happen by chance: it involves each of us committing to creating a learning community attentive to each other's ideas, writing, and the readings. For this reason,

participation and preparation are essential. I expect you to be here on time, having thought about the readings, ready to speak about things you thought about as you read, and ready to listen and respond when put in groups. Be an attentive listener, and share when called upon. Having an off week is to be expected. But if you have a pattern (i.e. consecutive days) of unpreparedness, or you seem to habitually rely on others to carry the weight of the work and discussion, expect your participation grade to be notably lower than that of your peers.

Be conscious of what you can do to facilitate your peers' discussion and your peers' engagement. I value directness (articulating your honest feelings about readings), but also courtesy and sharing discussion time so that a conversation can build. Be conscious of annoying behaviors or dismissive gestures: don't walk away from groups during group discussions, do not distract others with your electronic devices or any web surfing, look at the person speaking, and wait for break to leave the classroom during small group work. Laptops are discouraged except for days where we are reading assigned electronic texts and they are too long to print (i.e. *A Florida Enchantment*, our last novel). Bring hard copies of our readings and your coursepak.

If you miss a class, you are responsible for coming prepared to the next class. Therefore, while you do not need to explain your absence to me, you should either contact me or another student before the *next* class meeting and you should make arrangements to pick up missed handouts, key announcements, or assignments. (Get notes from a fellow student, not me.) Do not show up in class and ask if you missed anything: find that out beforehand, and arrive prepared.

Reading Notes: Get into the habit of reserving a space in a notebook for a momentary pause and reflection when you complete the day's assignments, jotting down a few informal ideas to jump start class discussion. This will help your participation and preparation immensely.

You might reserve space for: *initial reactions* (things to share at check in; broad responses to the week's readings); *more in-depth reflection points*: these are the things you wish to speak most to in class, or write more about, or to hear others' opinions on (this may include passages from primary or secondary sources that interest you). If you take copious notes or mark up your texts a lot, you will benefit from taking the time to "pull out" a few thoughtful ideas for class or for assignments from the bulk of your scribbles. Same goes for those that aren't prone to copiously mark up your assigned readings.

My role, in general, will be to provide relevant background and context for introducing the readings, and for unpacking their significance or importance, then step back, prompting you with questions that help you apply and develop your readings, facilitating the ensuing discussions, and incorporating student ideas into the flow of discussion, to help you come to a fuller understanding and engagement with the text. Long-form lecturing and rote learning are therefore not a prominent part of my pedagogy.

Please speak to me if you are having issues that are affecting your attendance or performance, or if there is something about the class that is bothering you and you feel it could reasonably be addressed/modified.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is intellectual theft and fraud. It means passing off someone else's work (including borrowed words and phrases) as one's own. It occurs when one fails to acknowledge the source(s) of ideas, quotations, or information. It also occurs when someone else supplies the content of **any part** of one's paper, even if the person is unknown (i.e. paper bank, a webpage). When in doubt, cite. If you have concerns or questions about documenting sources, or wish to report a suspected plagiarism, consult with me in office hour.

Plagiarism does not include incorporating feedback from classroom discussion into your essays, as long as you do not another student to significantly contribute language to, or significantly revise, your arguments. The same applies to consultations with writing center staff.

All students are required to abide by the Student Conduct and Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/scct/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

Online Evaluation Process: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

Additional information:

UF Disability Resource Center strives to provide quality services to students with physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities, to educate them about their legal rights and responsibilities so that they can make informed decisions, and to foster a sense of empowerment so that they can engage in critical thinking and self-determination.

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

001 Building 0020 (Reid Hall). For information, call 352-392-8565 or email accessuf@dso.ufl.edu

If you have a documented disability, please set up a confidential discussion with me before week three to discuss how this may impact your performance and how I can best accommodate your needs.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. For more information, see:

<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/families/applicant-information>

UF Writing Studio (Formerly the UF Reading & Writing Center) offers UF students help becoming better readers and writers, including study skills sessions, test preparation workshops, and 30-minute sessions of individual help with essay drafts. The website includes multiple resources, including MLA citation guides, annotated bibliography writing guides, and resume guides.

<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-center/>

302 Tigert Hall; (352) 846-1138

UF Counseling and Wellness Center offers individual counseling, wellness counseling, couples counseling, problem solving help, CERC crisis services, and other assistance:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

3190 Radio Road; (352) 392-1575 (8am-5pm, Monday through Friday)

Sexual Harassment, UF Student Affairs:

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see:

http://www.ufsa.ufl.edu/faculty_staff/fees_resources_policies/sexual_harassment/

SCHEDULE OF READINGS: "The Pen and the Penitentiary"

This course meets T 8-9, R9 in Tur 2333

UNIT A: THE BIRTH OF THE PENITENTIARY: HISTORY AND EARLY LITERATURE

Week 1

Tu 8/26: Course Introduction and Policies; Overview of readings and Course ELS-Sakai page.

Brief snapshot: the mass incarceration crisis of today.

Sample poem, if time.

R 8/28: Punishment before Penitentiaries: early history and early execution literature.

Print and read from ELS-Sakai (<https://ls.ot.ufl.edu/>) prior to class:

- o Secondary literary criticism: **Karen Haltunnen**, "The Murderer as Common Sinner," from *Murder Most Foul: The Killer and the American Gothic Imagination* (1998).
- o Primary texts (examples of early published criminal confessions): "**Declaration and Confession of Esther Rodgers**" (1701) and the "**Life, Last Words, and Dying Confession of Rachel Wall**" (1789); both texts are combined in one pdf file.

In colonial American (pre 1780s), those found guilty of crime were *not* sentenced to serve time behind bars; instead they were publicly punished or fined: punishments included branding, ear cropping, whipping, and for those convicted of capital crimes, execution by hanging. The dominant genres of prison literature prior to 1800 were *execution sermons* (defined and explained by Haltunnen) and *criminal confessions*, which traced a criminal's descent into crime and recorded their purported final words and warnings to audiences. The reading will help you reflect upon the purpose, the intended effects, and the possible unintended consequences of this earliest era of prison writing.

Prepare to discuss the following in class:

- What was the role of public punishment? In other words, why was punishment public?
- What role was the condemned to play in this ritual and in the published literature? Locate examples from Esther Rodgers or Rachel Wall's confessions to illustrate your ideas.
- Are there any ways listening to these last words or reading criminals' narratives might have unintended effects on audiences, effects different than ministers or authorities hoped? (How might these confession narratives be read against the grain??)

Week 2:

Tu 9/2: The evolving genre of 18th-century criminal confession literature. Print and read from ELS-Sakai:

- o **"A Journal of the Life and Travels of Joseph-Bill Packer" (1773) and "The Confession &c. of Thomas Mount" (1791)**; both texts are combined in one pdf file.

Prepare to discuss the following in class:

- By the time of Joseph Bill Packer, Thomas Mount, and Rachel Wall's confessions, gallows speeches had been popular for nearly a century. Does the form and purpose of the genre feel the same as it did at the start of the century (i.e. 1701, the time of Esther Rodgers's narrative). What is similar and what is different? In what ways might you hypothesize that the gallows genre changed?

R 9/4 The End of Public Punishment. Print and read from ELS-Sakai:

- o **Benjamin Rush, "Enquiry into the Effects of Public Punishment" (1787)**, ELS

This essay, first delivered as a speech in 1787, is one of the most influential American essays against public punishment. As you read, flag areas of interest for discussion. As you read, keep a running list of Rush's main objections to public punishment. After this, synthesize a brief answer to the following 2 questions: *Why does Rush feel public punishment increases social disorder and crime, rather than the inverse? What system does Rush propose near the end of the essay, and why does he feel it will be a better solution?* Bring these notes to class to share in group work; I may collect them (It is fine if your summary and synthesis is handwritten, informal, on scrap paper, etc. This is not graded, but does demonstrate preparedness.)

Future reference note: If you end up conducting research later in the class on early prison reformers who influenced the rise of the modern prison, two other influential works (besides Rush) are Cesare di Beccaria, *Essay on Crimes and Punishments* (1764) and John Howard, *The State of Prisons in England and Wales* (1777).

You will need to purchase the Coursepak from Xerographic prior to the next class. Plan accordingly.

week 3

Tu 9/9,

This is our capstone week on the birth of the penitentiary.

Reading Quiz Due at the start of class.

These two secondary articles are written by contemporary historians (David Rothman and Norman Johnston); Rothman provides a historical overview on the wide changes that took place in American Prisons starting in 1789 and Johnston offers a more detailed history of America's most famous penitentiary, Eastern State Penitentiary (also known as "Cherry Hill"), in Philadelphia. You should strive to absorb the history described in these 2 pieces, as future readings will often refer to this history; the quiz will help you absorb relevant information.

All readings located in the *Coursepak*

- o **David J. Rothman**, "Perfecting the Prison: United States, 1789-1865" (1995) from the *Oxford History of the Prison*
- o **Norman Johnston**, "The World's Most Influential Prison: Success or Failure?" (2004)

R, 9/11 Theorizing the transformation of punishment.

- o Read **Michel Foucault, from *Discipline and Punish***, "The Body of the Condemned" (pp. 3-16) and "The Spectacle of the Scaffold" (pp. 42-69), *Coursepak*.

Today's reading comes from the most influential work of critical theory on the prison, Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1975). In these two excerpts, Foucault—using mostly examples from European history—explains the importance of the execution ritual, the difference between early public punishment and later private punishment (by which we mean imprisonment in penitentiaries, which were not invented until around 1790), and, at the very end, the significance of "gallows" (or criminal confession) literature. While colonial American hangings were more sober than Foucault's more violent European examples (as Haltunnen explained in the earlier reading), Foucault's arguments about the symbolic importance of public punishment continue to shape how we interpret the purpose of public punishment, and how we explain the significance of the rise of the prison. Foucault begins by juxtaposing two scenes only 80 years apart: the public torture of Damiens and a timetable for penitentiary inmates, and asks us to think about the significance of these two very different approaches to punishment.

- As you read two excerpts from this brilliant yet quirky philosopher, try to explain in your own words how execution becomes, according to Foucault, a "truth-producing" event. What (per Foucault) is the primary purpose of **public** punishment? What is the role/job of the prisoner on the scaffold? (And do any moments or passages from the criminal confession literature we read come to mind as useful examples or illustrations of Foucault?)

- And what are the biggest shifts or changes that occurred after punishment became private (i.e. after Western nations like England, France, and America shifted away from public executions and public torture, in favor of incarceration in penitentiaries.)

Week 4: Firsthand accounts of the early penitentiary

These readings let us extend our discussion of how prisoners' experienced the penitentiary, while also providing some useful historical wrap up to Unit 1.

Tu 9/16 Read **Charles Dickens, from *American Notes (1842)***, Coursepak.

In class, we will also have small group discussion and brainstorms for Reading Reflection 1.

Th 9/18 Read **J.H. Banka, from *State Prison Life By One Who Has Been There*** (Cincinnati, 1872), one of the earliest extended accounts of life on the inside by a prisoner, Coursepak.

Unit A Reflection is due by Friday, 9/19 at 11:55pm to ELS. Answer the following in no more than 5 pages (double spaced, standard font, standard margins):

What, for you, are the most significant things to recognize and be mindful of about the birth of the penitentiary? Draw on a few primary and/or secondary readings from the first unit to contextualize and to illustrate your claims.

This is not an essay; it is a reflection based on the first unit of the course. While not an essay, use the assignment to demonstrate your comprehension and engagement with the assigned readings that you found most useful.

UNIT B: IMAGINED PRISONS: THE PRISON IN THE 19th CENTURY LITERARY IMAGINATION

"The more the cell becomes a metaphor for subjectivity at large, the more the historical prison disappears. . . . [When we] see the prisoner as a metaphor, [we often] don't see Auburn system and its silent laborers. Living and dying inmates fade from view—but if we reverse this transmutation, we might perceive new dynamics in the formation of our own conceptual vocabulary. . . . Ultimately at stake is how deeply, and often secretly, real captivity influences the ongoing imagination of freedom" (Caleb Smith, "Emerson and Incarceration" 208-09).

We don't need to turn the prison into a *metaphor* to perceive its influence on 19th century American fiction; the tangible, historic prison influenced the imagination of well-known artists, but it takes critical work to "unearth" the prison's effects and meaning in these texts. In this unit, we will consider Benjamin Rush's hope that, as prisoners' voices moved into a private sphere of restricted communication and restricted visibility, fiction would emerge as a potent and haunting new realm of representation. Thus, the *imagined prison* would become crucial to understanding how the prison circulated in the 19th century cultural imaginary.

This unit explores how influential American artists—Poe, Melville, Thoreau, Hawthorne—drew from this available cultural history of the prison, seized on its possibilities, associations, and debates, and used it to help craft their literary plots and themes.

Week 5: *Mid-Semester Essay assigned.*

Tu 9/23 Read:

- o **Edgar Allen Poe, "The Pit and The Pendulum" (1842)**, Coursepak; along with
- o secondary literary criticism by Jason Haslam, "Pits, Penitentiaries and Penitentiaries: Reframing the Detained Subject" (Print from ELS-Sakai). Haslam argues that we can read Poe's tale as a critique of private punishment and the new modern penitentiary. Prepare to unpack and debate the persuasiveness and utility of Haslam's arguments.

R 9/25 Read:

- o **Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* (1850)**, book, chapters 1-8.

Week 6

Tu 9/30 Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, chapters 9-16, along with secondary literary criticism by **Caleb Smith**, from *The Prison and the American Imagination* (2009), Coursepak.

R 10/2 Finish *The Scarlet Letter*, chapters 17-24.

Week 7:

Tu 10/7

- o Read:
- o **Henry David Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience" (1849)**, Coursepak.
- o Secondary literary criticism, from **Victor Brombert, *The Happy Prison***, Coursepak.

R 10/9 Begin **Herman Melville, *Bartleby the Scrivener; A Story of Wall-street* (1856)**, Coursepak

Week 8

Tu 10/14 Finish Melville, *Bartleby the Scrivener*, together with Caleb Smith's secondary article, "Prisons and the Poetics of Living Death" (2008), on ELS-Sakai.

R 10/16: Essay #1 PEER WORKSHOP. BRING 2 COPIES OF A LEGIBLE, WORKING DRAFT. MANDATORY ATTENDANCE.

Essay due to ELS by 10/19 (Sunday) by 11:55pm. (essays will be graded and returned in 3 weeks)

Week 9: Prison history, continued:

Tu 10/21 Read Edgardo Rottman, "The Failure of Reform, United States, 1865-1965." Coursepak.

In class, I will begin the process of assigning your inmate author for the next unit by reviewing the unit and soliciting your top choices.

Final Essay Assigned.

R 10/23: Read Michelle Alexander, "The New Jim Crow" (article version, although there is also a book of the same name), Coursepak.

UNIT C: INMATE AUTHORS: THE MODERN LITERARY TRADITION

Prioritizing both prisoners' perspectives and student-centered learning, this unit will often be led by student groups. Every student will be assigned a group (of 3 students) devoted to one inmate author and the group will read more widely from and research this inmate author. On the day when your group leads class, you will guide the class through your assigned author's relevant history, reception, and significance (i.e. Who was this inmate-author? What is their work known or recognized for? What most interests you about them or their work?). Classmates will come to class having read shorter excerpts by the inmate author. Much of the class reading will come from Franklin's anthology of American prison writing.

Potential Inmate authors (you will determine the final 12):

1. A. Donald Lowrie, *My Life in Prison* (1912), free ebook
- B. Agnes Smedley, "Cell Mates" (1920), Franklin
- C. Kate Richards O'Hare, *Crime and Criminals* (1921), Franklin
- D. Chester Himes, "To What Red Hell" (1930), Franklin [or *Yesterday Will Make You Cry* (1993), originally published as *Cast the First Stone* (1952)]
- E. Robert Elliott Burns, *I am a Fugitive from a Georgia Chain Gang* (1932), free ebook
- F. Nelson Algren, "El Presidente de Mejico" (1947), Franklin
- G. Martin Luther King, *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* (1963), Coursepak.
- I. Malcolm X & Alex Haley, from *The Autobiography* (1965), Franklin
- J. George Jackson, *Soledad Brother* (1970), Franklin 157-
- K. John Cheever, *Falconer* (1977)
- L. Jack [Henry] Abbott, from *In the Belly of the Beast* (1981) Franklin 187-
- M. Assata Shakur, *Assata* (1987), Franklin 200-
- N. Etheridge Knight, *Poems from Prison* (1968), Franklin 230-
- O. Jimmy Santiago Baca, poems (1979), Franklin 252-
- P. Kathy Boudin, poems (1997)
- Q. Angela Davis, *Autobiography* (1974)
- R. Miguel Pinero, *Short Eyes* (drama, 1974)
- S. John Edgar Wideman, *Brothers and Keepers: A Memoir* (1984)
- T. Leonard Peltier, *My Life is My Sun Dance* (1999)

Week 10:

Tu 10/28 Read:

- o **Jack London, "Pinched" and "The Pen" (1907)**, from H. Bruce Franklin's anthology *Prison Literature in America*. Bring book to class.

- o Begin Jack London's ***The Star Rover (1915)***, bring book to class.

R 10/30:

- o Continue reading ***The Star Rover (1915)***, first half of book. Bring book to class.
(note, for Inmate Author Assignment: be sure to order books and/or request any interlibrary loans by now)

Week 11: Early 20th Century Prison Literature: From Protest Literature to Hard Boiled Fiction

Tu 11/4 Finish *The Star Rover*.

What follows is just a basic guideline. You will receive an updated schedule specifying which groups will be presenting that day, and which inmate authors these groups will be presenting on. Prepare to read brief selection of each inmate author's writing. Most of the reading will come from H. Bruce Franklin's anthology, *Prison Literature in America*.

R 11/6 **Groups #1 and 2 will present.** Students should come to class having read the assigned excerpt from each author being presented on that day,

Week 12: Early 20th Century Prison Literature, cont'd.

Tu 11/11 holiday, no class

R 11/13 **Groups #3 and 4 will present.** Students should come to class having read the assigned excerpt from each author being presented on that day,

Week 12: The Prison's Literary Renaissance

Tu 11/18 **Groups #5, 6, 7, and 8 will present (2 presentations per period).** Students should come to class having read the assigned excerpt from each author being presented on that day,

R 11/20 **Groups #9 and #10 will present.** Students should come to class having read the assigned excerpt from each author being presented on that day,

Week 13: The Prison Literature Renaissance, cont'd

Tu 11/25 **Groups #11 and 12 will present.** Students should come to class having read the assigned excerpt from each author being presented on that day.

R 11/27 No class, Thanksgiving

Week 14:

Tu 12/2 Read book, **Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?***

- Bring your informal reactions and questions about today's reading to launch group exchange and discussion.
- **Small group exchange and discussion on remaining two assignments:** bring some of the points you are developing for your final course reflection, for a small group idea exchange.

R 12/4 TBA.

Final Course Reflection is Due Friday 12/5 by 11:55pm.

Tu 12/9 Peer work on Essay #2 (Final Essay), **Bring 2 copies of your current essay. Mandatory Attendance.** Course wrap. Please complete the online evaluation.

Essay 2 is due by Sunday, Dec. 14 to ELS, by 11:55pm.