

Out in the Night

A film by Blair Dorosh-Walther

This list of fiction and nonfiction books, compiled by Susan Conlon of the Princeton Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *Out in the Night*.

In a case that made headlines, African-American lesbians fought back against a threatening man and were charged with assault and attempted murder. Out in the Night delves below surface sensationalism to examine race, gender and sexuality in our justice system.

ADULT NONFICTION

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: New Press; [Jackson, TN]: Distributed by Perseus Distribution, 2012.

This work argues that the War on Drugs and policies that deny convicted felons equal access to employment, housing, education, and public benefits create a permanent under caste based largely on race.

Baldwin, James. *The Fire Next Time*. New York: Vintage Books, 1992. A national bestseller when it first appeared in 1963, *The Fire Next Time* galvanized the nation and gave passionate voice to the emerging civil rights movement. At once a powerful evocation of James Baldwin's early life in Harlem and a disturbing examination of the consequences of racial injustice, the book is an intensely personal and provocative document. It consists of two "letters," written on the occasion of the centennial of the Emancipation Proclamation, that exhort Americans, both black and white, to attack the terrible legacy of racism.

Castañeda, Laura and Shannon B. Campbell (eds). *News and Sexuality: Media Portraits of Diversity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Publications, 2005. *News and Sexuality: Media Portraits of Diversity* is a practical teaching tool that addresses complex and often controversial issues in an engaging and accessible manner for journalism students. This comprehensive text includes the history of media coverage of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex issues and covers important contemporary topics in the news that range from cross-dressing to AIDS to same-sex marriage.

Chesney-Lind, Meda and Lisa Pasko. *The Female Offender: Girls, Women, and Crime*. Thousand Oaks: Sage

Publications. Scholarship in criminology over the last few decades has often left little room for research and theory on how female offenders are perceived and handled in the criminal justice system. Co-authored by Meda Chesney-Lind, one of the pioneers in the development of the feminist theoretical perspective in criminology, the subject matter of *The Female Offender: Girls, Women and Crime* redresses the balance by providing critical insight into these issues.

Davis, Angela J. *Arbitrary Justice: The Power of the American Prosecutor*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. What happens when prosecutors, the most powerful officials in the criminal justice system, seek convictions instead of justice? Drawing on her dozen years of experience as a public defender, Davis demonstrates how the everyday, legal exercise of prosecutorial discretion is responsible for tremendous inequities in criminal justice.

Davis, Angela J. *Are Prisons Obsolete?* New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003.

Examining the social movements behind the abolition of slavery and racial segregation, as well as the unfulfilled promises of the prison industrial complex, Davis makes the case for the abolition of prisons.

Law, Victoria. *Resistance Behind Bars: The Struggles of Incarcerated Women*. Oakland: PM Press, 2012. In 1974, women imprisoned at New York's maximum-security prison at Bedford Hills staged what is known as the August Rebellion. Protesting the brutal beating of a fellow prisoner, the women fought off guards, holding seven of them hostage, and took over sections of the prison. *Resistance* seeks to spark further discussion and research into the lives of incarcerated women and galvanize support for their struggles.

Lorde, Audre. *Coal*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1976. A rich gathering of love poems, elegies, and narratives, Lorde's first work released by a major publisher explores the multifaceted-nature and intersectionality of identity. "Black, lesbian, mother, urban woman: none of Lorde's selves has ever silenced the others; the counterpoint among them is often the material of her strongest poems." writes fellow poet Marilyn Hacker.

Mogul, Joey L., Andrea J. Ritchie, and Kay Whitlock. *Queer (In)Justice: The Criminalization of LGBT People in the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2011. Sharing the stories of queer experience in the criminal justice system, including the 2006 "New Jersey Four" case explored in *Out in the Night*, *Queer (In)Justice* examines how the legal system reinforces gender and race inequities.

Richie, Beth. *Arrested Justice: Black Women, Violence, and America's Prison Nation*. New York: NYU Press, 2012. Black women in marginalized communities are uniquely at risk of battering, rape, sexual harassment, stalking and incest. Through the compelling stories of Black women who have been most affected by racism, persistent poverty, class inequality, limited access to support resources or



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institutions, Beth E. Richie shows that the threat of violence to Black women has never been more serious, demonstrating how conservative legal, social, political and economic policies have impacted activism in the US-based movement to end violence against women.

Peterson, Dana and Vanessa R. Panfil (eds). *Handbook of LGBT Communities, Crime, and Justice.* New York: Springer Publishing, 2014. Contemporary scholars have begun to explore non-normative sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression in a growing victimization literature, but very little research is focused on LGBTQ communities' patterns of offending (beyond sex work) and their experiences with police, the courts, and correctional institutions. This Handbook, the first of its kind in Criminology and Criminal Justice, will break new ground by presenting a thorough treatment of all of these under-explored issues in one interdisciplinary volume that features current empirical work.

Talvi, Silja J.A. *Women Behind Bars: The Crisis of Women in the U.S. Prison System.* Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2007. More and more women are doing hard prison time all across the United States. Talvi travels across the country to weave together interviews with inmates, correctional officers, and administrators, providing readers with a glance at the impact this dramatic increase in incarceration has on our society.

Wallace, Michele. *Queer Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman.* New York: Verso Press, 1990. Originally published in 1978, this book caused a storm of controversy as Michele Wallace blasted the masculinist bias of the black politics that emerged from the sixties. She describes how women remained marginalized and the ways in which a genuine female subjectivity was blocked

by the traditional myths of black womanhood. *Black Macho* raises issues and arguments that framed the terms of current feminist and black theory and continues to be relevant today.

Watterson, Kathryn. *Women In Prison: Inside the Concrete Womb.* Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996. Award-winning author, journalist, and teacher of writing at Princeton University draws on candid interviews with over 400 women inmates and prison officials. This work sheds a shocking light on our penal system as it affects women.

ADULT FICTION

Carbado, Devon W., Dwight A. McBride, and Donald Weise, eds. *Black Like Us: A Century of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual African American Fiction.* Berkeley: Cleis Press, Inc., 2011. Including authors such as Langston Hughes, James Baldwin, Alice Walker, and Jacqueline Woodson, this collection offers a sweeping view of black sexuality in American literature. From the Harlem Renaissance to the Great Migration of the Depression era, from the postwar civil rights, feminist, and gay liberation movements, to the unabashedly complex sexual explorations of the present day, *Black Like Us* accomplishes a sweeping survey of 20th century literature.

Stewart Ruff, Shawn, ed. *Go the Way your Blood Beats: An Anthology of Lesbian and Gay Literary Fiction by African-American Writers.* New York: Henry Holt, 1996. This anthology examining identity in the African American LGBT community contains 32 stories and novel excerpts from prominent writers such as Alice Walker and Sapphire.

NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Jacob, Iris. *My Sisters' Voices: Teenage Girls of*

Color Speak Out. New York: Henry Holt, 2002. Teenage girls of color share their thoughts on love, loss, sex, friends, family, racism, and more in this collection of personal essays and stories.

Hernandez, Daisy. *A Cup of Water Under My Bed: A Memoir.* New York: Beacon Press, 2014. Hernandez shares her poignant, coming-of-age stories of her Hispanic heritage upbringing, childhood experiences of violence and victimization, and her traditional family's views of race and sexuality as she struggles to define her own identity in the contemporary world.

FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Moskowitz, Hannah. *Not Otherwise Specified.* New York: Simon Pulse, 2015. Auditioning for a New York City performing arts high school could help Etta escape from her Nebraska all-girl school, where she is not gay enough for her former friends, not sick enough for her eating disorders group, and not thin enough for ballet, but it may also mean real friendships.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *The House You Pass on the Way.* New York: Penguin Group, 1997. When thirteen-year-old Staggerlee, the daughter of a racially mixed marriage, spends a summer with her cousin Trout, she begins to question her sexuality and catches a glimpse of her possible future self.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Visiting Day.* New York: Scholastic, 2002. In Woodson's poignant, award-winning picture book, a little girl eagerly awaits visiting day at her father's prison. Joined by her grandmother and a community of families who take the long bus ride upstate to visit loved ones, Woodson paints a story of strong families who understand the meaning of unconditional love.

