

Delve Deeper into *The Return*

A film by Kelly Duane De La Vega and Katie Galloway

This list of fiction and nonfiction books, compiled by Susan Conlon of Princeton Public Library and Hanna Lee of Batesville Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *The Return*.

In 2012, California amended its "Three Strikes" law, shortening the sentences of thousands of "lifers." See this unprecedented reform through the eyes of those on the front lines—prisoners suddenly freed, families turned upside down and attorneys and judges wrestling with an untested law. A co-presentation with the National Black Programming Consortium. Official Selection of the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival.

ADULT NONFICTION

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness.* New York: The New Press, 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.

Bernstein, Nell. *All Alone in the World: Children of the Incarcerated.* New York: The New Press, 2007. Award-winning journalist Nell Bernstein turns her rigorous reporting into a powerful argument against the effect of the U.S. penal system on family structure and resilience.

Chesney-Lind, Meda and Marc Mauer. *Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment.* New York: The New Press, 2003. The first comprehensive examination of the hidden ramifications of conviction on individuals, families, and communities, incorporates essays from leading scholars and advocates and defines a new field of inquiry in criminal justice.

Jones, Sabrina and Marc Mauer. *Race to Incarcerate: A Graphic Retelling.* New York: The New Press, 2013. By adapting Mauer's seminal book on race, class and incarceration into a graphic novel inspired by political cartoon commentary, Jones updates the text for the next generation and imbues it with new life.

Kilgore, James. *Understanding Mass Incarceration: A People's Guide to the Key Civil Rights Struggle of Our Time.* New York: The New Press, 2015. We all know that orange is the new black and mass incarceration is the new Jim Crow, but how much do we actually know about the structure, goals, and impact of our criminal justice system? This title offers the first comprehensive overview of the incarceration apparatus put in place by the world's largest jailer: the United States.

Lamb, Wally. *Couldn't Deep It to Myself: Testimonies from Our Imprisoned Sisters.* New York: ReganBooks, 2003. Recounts the backstories of a teacher's women inmate students at York Correctional Institution – and how they came to tell their own stories through writing.

Mears, Daniel P. and Joshua C. Cochran. *Prisoner Reentry in the Era of Mass Incarceration.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2014. Using extensive reliance on both theory and empirical research, the authors identify how reentry reflects criminal justice policy in America and, at the same time, has profound implications for crime prevention and justice.

Petersilia, Joan. *When Prisoners Come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Drawing on dozens of interviews with inmates, former prisoners, and prison officials, Petersilia convincingly shows us how the

current system is failing to help the enormous numbers of jailed Americans reenter society.

Price, Joshua M. *Prison and Social Death.* New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2015. In *Prison and Social Death*, Joshua Price exposes the unexamined cost that prisoners pay while incarcerated and after release, drawing upon hundreds of often harrowing interviews conducted with people in prison, people on parole, and their families.

Robinson, Joseph. *Think Outside the Cell: An Entrepreneur's Guide for the Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated.* New York: Resilience Multimedia, 2007. This step-by-step, no-nonsense guide offers a golden key to successful re-entry by teaching inmates and former inmates how to use their entrepreneurial talents to realize their dreams and break the cycle of recidivism.

Ross, Jeffrey Ian and Stephen C. Richards. *Beyond Bars: Rejoining Society After Prison.* Philadelphia: ALPHA, 2009. The most current, practical, and comprehensive guide for ex-convicts and their families about managing a successful reentry into the community.

Rule, Shelia R. and Marsha R. Rule. *Counting the Years: Real-Life Stories About Waiting for Loved Ones to Return Home from Prison.* New York: Resilience Multimedia, 2011. The men and women in this poignant anthology bear the weight of waiting for loved ones to return home from prison. Their powerful real-life stories overturn one-dimensional stereotypes of the incarcerated and their families and offer instead a rich tapestry of voices, experiences and lives—all of them tied together by longings of the heart.

Stevenson, Bryan. *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and*



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Redemption. New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2015. The founder of the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama recounts his experiences as a lawyer working to assist those desperately in need, reflecting on his pursuit of the ideal of compassion in American justice.

Simon, Jonathan. *Mass Incarceration on Trial: A Remarkable Court Decision and the Future of Prisons in America.* New York: The New Press, 2016. Using the landmark Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Plata* on overcrowding in California prisons as his starting point, Simon suggests that incarcerating people on a "mass" scale simply cannot be accomplished in comportment with the Eighth Amendment's prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment.

Travis, Jeremy and Michelle Waul. *Prisoners Once Removed: The Impact of Incarceration and Reentry on Children, Families, and Communities.* Washington: Urban Institute Press, 2004. The authors examine the psychological impact of incarceration on prisoners and their families and communities.

ADULT FICTION

Braly, Malcolm. *On The Yard.* New York: NYRB Classics, 1994 (reprint). A book of penetrating psychological realism in which Malcolm Braly paints an unforgettable picture of the complex and frightening world of the penitentiary.

Carpenter, Don. *Hard Rain Falling.* New York: NYRB Classics, 2009 (reprint). A Dostoyevskian tale of crime, punishment, and the pursuit of an ever-elusive redemption. The novel follows the adventures of Jack Levitt, an orphaned teenager living off his wits in the fleabag hotels and seedy pool halls of Portland, Oregon.

King, Stephen. *Different Seasons.* New York:

Scribner, 2016 (reprint). "Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption: Hope Springs Eternal," the inspiration for the film *The Shawshank Redemption* included in this 1982 novella collection, offers a fictional account of the impact of prison life on inmates.

NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Higgins, Melissa and Wednesday Kirwan. *The Night Dad Went to Jail: What to Expect When Someone You Love Goes to Jail.* Mankato, MN: Picture Window Books, 2013. An illustrated guide for 5-8 year olds navigating the realities of having an incarcerated parent. Part of the *Life's Challenges* series, which addresses topics such as death, abuse and divorce.

Zehr, Howard and Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz. *What Will Happen to Me?* Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2011. Original testimonials from 30 children who have an incarcerated parent, including portraits and reflections by their caregivers. Also included is practical advice on topics such as staying in touch, self-care and reentry.

FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Beatty, Daniel. *Knock Knock: My Dad's Dream for Me.* New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2013. A boy wakes up one morning to find his father gone. At first, he feels lost. But his father has left him a letter filled with advice to guide him through the times he cannot be there.

Hill, Kirkpatrick. *Do Not Pass Go.* New York: Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2007. When Deet's father is jailed for using drugs, Deet learns that prison is not what he expected, nor are other people necessarily the way he thought they were.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Lockdown.* New York:

Amistad Press, 2011. Reese navigates his new life at a juvenile facility – including locked doors, new friends and new challenges as he tries to prove to himself – and everyone else – that he's a decent guy.

Paterson, Katherine. *The Same Stuff as Stars.* New York: HarperCollins, 2004. Angel Morgan's family is falling apart. Her daddy is in jail, and her mother has abandoned Angel and her little brother, Bernie, at their great-grandmother's crumbling Vermont farmhouse. Grandma spends most of her time wrapped in a blanket by the wood stove. There is one bright spot in Angel's world -- a mysterious stranger who teaches Angel all about the stars and planets and constellations.

Stanglin, Jackie A. *Mami, Que Es una Carcel?.* Littleton, CO: Lifevest Publishing, 2007. This Spanish-language illustrated book helps younger readers understand the incarceration of a parent.

Volponi, Paul. *Riker's High.* New York: Speak, 2011. Arrested on a minor offense, a New York City teenager attends high school in the jail facility on Rikers Island, as he waits for his case to go to court.

Williams, Vera B. *Amber Was Brave, Essie Was Smart: The Story of Amber and Essie Told Here in Poems and Pictures.* New York: Greenwillow Books, 2001. A series of poems tells how two sisters help each other deal with life while their mother is working and their father has been sent to jail.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Visiting Day.* New York: Scholastic Press, 2001. A young girl and her grandmother prepare to visit the girl's father in prison. Woodson's text and James Ransome's illustrations captures the jubilant reunion and the transcendent love between the girl and her father.

