

# Teacher Toolbox: *Just Mercy*

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## Part One: *Stuff We Can Teach*

### ~Teaching Materials & Readings:

Companion Texts (mostly Literary/Film) for *Just Mercy*, compiled by the KCC Reads Cohort:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzFKnUy0tIbvQVJGMDfWn1B1MkU/view?usp=sharing>

Prof **Babette Audant** recommends the following *Democracy Now* piece:

[http://www.democracynow.org/2016/10/3/from\\_slavery\\_to\\_mass\\_incarceration\\_ava](http://www.democracynow.org/2016/10/3/from_slavery_to_mass_incarceration_ava)

Prof **Eleanor Bader** recommends the following:

Prof Bader's own article in TruthOut on the Pell Grant Program for Incarcerated Students:

<http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/37778-after-22-year-ban-pilot-pell-program-for-incarcerated-students-kicks-off>

And, the following articles from TruthOut on matters relevant to *Just Mercy*:

- 1) <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/27543-scholarship-mentor-program-helps-children-of-incarcerated-parents-go-to-college>
- 2) <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/32097-formerly-incarcerated-activist-leads-organization-to-mobilize-hearts-and-minds-for-decarceration>

KCC Librarian, Prof **Wendy Chu's** detailed Bibliography on *Just Mercy*:

The Online Version:

<http://kbcc.cuny.libguides.com/c.php?g=472904&p=3235568>

A PDF of the entire Bibliography:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzFKnUy0tIbvemJaSDZkalBsOE0/view?usp=sharing>

Prof **Maureen Fadem** recommends any and all of the following:

Fadem's Syllabus for English 12 (Freshman Composition I) Fall '16 with *Just Mercy* as primary text:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzFKnUy0tIbvUlpizWk0S0RZNU0/view?usp=sharing>

Excellent, Relevant Reportage by **Adam Gopnik** (*The New Yorker*):

- 1) "Riker's High": <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2001/02/19/rikers-high>
- 2) "The Caging of America": <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/01/30/the-caging-of-america>

Relevant, excellent Op-Eds by former columnist, **Bob Herbert** (*New York Times*):

1) **"Too Long Ignored"** (about conditions of life for young black and Latino males):

[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/21/opinion/21herbert.html?rref=collection%2Fbyline%2Fbob-herbert&action=click&contentCollection=undefined&region=stream&module=stream\\_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=49&pgtype=collection&mtrref=www.nytimes.com&gwh=8DE2A0094D9F413A5DF9CDCAD873AF18&gwt=pay&assetType=opinion](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/21/opinion/21herbert.html?rref=collection%2Fbyline%2Fbob-herbert&action=click&contentCollection=undefined&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=49&pgtype=collection&mtrref=www.nytimes.com&gwh=8DE2A0094D9F413A5DF9CDCAD873AF18&gwt=pay&assetType=opinion)

2) **"Broken Beyond Repair"** (about the death penalty and the justice system):

[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/30/opinion/30herbert.html?rref=collection%2Fbyline%2Fbob-herbert&action=click&contentCollection=undefined&region=stream&module=stream\\_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=17&pgtype=collection&mtrref=www.nytimes.com&gwh=AC674692E4143D87DF1E41822DB6E195&gwt=pay&assetType=opinion](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/30/opinion/30herbert.html?rref=collection%2Fbyline%2Fbob-herbert&action=click&contentCollection=undefined&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=17&pgtype=collection&mtrref=www.nytimes.com&gwh=AC674692E4143D87DF1E41822DB6E195&gwt=pay&assetType=opinion)

3) **"Separate and Unequal"** (about school segregation and poor neighborhoods):

[http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/22/opinion/22herbert.html?rref=collection%2Fbyline%2Fbob-herbert&action=click&contentCollection=undefined&region=stream&module=stream\\_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=2&pgtype=collection&mtrref=www.nytimes.com&gwh=A2E4E5973AFAF8D093029B4E04CD9AFA&gwt=pay&assetType=opinion](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/22/opinion/22herbert.html?rref=collection%2Fbyline%2Fbob-herbert&action=click&contentCollection=undefined&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=2&pgtype=collection&mtrref=www.nytimes.com&gwh=A2E4E5973AFAF8D093029B4E04CD9AFA&gwt=pay&assetType=opinion)

Recent work by **Nikole Hannah-Jones** is excellently paired with *Just Mercy*— see the following examples:

1) "School Segregation and the Continuing Tragedy of Ferguson":

<https://www.propublica.org/article/ferguson-school-segregation>

2) "Choosing a School for My Daughter in a Segregated City":

[http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/12/magazine/choosing-a-school-for-my-daughter-in-a-segregated-city.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/12/magazine/choosing-a-school-for-my-daughter-in-a-segregated-city.html?_r=1)

3) Episode of *This American Life* on the school district Michael Brown graduated from 3 weeks before his death:

Part One: <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/562/the-problem-we-all-live-with>

Part Two: <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/562/the-problem-we-all-live-with?act=2>

**"The Death of the Death Penalty"** (*Time Magazine*):

<http://time.com/deathpenalty/>

**"Inside Shane Bauer's Gripping Look at the Workings of a Private Prison":**

<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2016/06/cca-executive-summary>

**"My Friend Died in a Police Van. That Could Have Been Me if I were Black,"** by Chun Rosenkranz:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/apr/16/my-friend-died-in-police-van-that-could-have-been-me>

**"After Homelessness and Jail, a Harlem Woman Finds Stability Working Construction"** (*NY Times*):

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/03/nyregion/after-homelessness-and-jail-a-harlem-woman-finds-stability-working-construction.html?smid=fb-nytmetro&smtyp=cur&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/03/nyregion/after-homelessness-and-jail-a-harlem-woman-finds-stability-working-construction.html?smid=fb-nytmetro&smtyp=cur&_r=0)

**"The Mysterious Lynching of Frank Little"** (*The Guardian*):

[https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/sep/21/mysterious-lynching-of-frank-little-equality-activist?CMP=fb\\_gu](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/sep/21/mysterious-lynching-of-frank-little-equality-activist?CMP=fb_gu)

**"For White People Who Want the Racist Nightmare to End, We Must Reclaim Our Lives From Anti-Black Racism":**  
<https://ummahwide.com/for-white-people-who-want-the-racist-nightmare-to-end-we-must-reclaim-our-lives-from-anti-black-27ce57887af2#.dl9ld5ifm>

**"George Washington: Slave Catcher" (NY Times):**  
[http://mobile.nytimes.com/2015/02/16/opinion/george-washington-slave-catcher.html?referrer&\\_r=0](http://mobile.nytimes.com/2015/02/16/opinion/george-washington-slave-catcher.html?referrer&_r=0)

**Editorial: "Children Caught In a Racist System" (NY Times):**  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/08/opinion/children-caught-in-a-racist-system.html?smid=fb-nytimes&smtyp=cur>

**Prof Kate Garretson** recommends the following *New York Times* articles:

- 1) <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/09/nyregion/a-false-conviction-is-overturned-but-the-system-that-allowed-it-remains.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share>
- 2) <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/16/us/mississippi-closes-private-prison-walnut-grove.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share>

**Mara Gittleman** created a list of food organizations focused on social justice and prisoner rights:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzFKnUy0tIbV521IOWY3MUxiVms/view?usp=sharing>

**Prof Maggie Hill** shares classroom teaching materials for *Just Mercy* that she is using:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzFKnUy0tIbVcDAtbU5VM2VHZE0/view?usp=sharing>

**JoAnne Meyers** recommends the following video resource:  
<https://www.facebook.com/NPR/videos/vb.10643211755/10154792344661756/?type=2&theater>

**Prof Jennifer Radtke** recommends the following *New York Times* article:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/11/magazine/an-effective-ut-exhausting-alternative-to-high-school-suspensions.html>

**Robert Schacter** recommends the following interview with author **Bryan Stevenson**:  
<http://www.newyorker.com/podcast/political-scene/bryan-stevenson-talks-to-david-remnick-about-the-legacy-of-racial-terror>

**Prof Madeline Sorel** recommends the following sources and assignments:

The **Story Corps** Justice Project:  
<https://storycorps.org/storycorps-justice-project/>

And, her **assignment** in connection with the Story Corps Justice Project (above):  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzFKnUy0tIbVdTdBMETzMWlvZUk/view?usp=sharing>

A recent piece from *The NY Times* on **the death penalty**:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/28/magazine/where-the-death-penalty-still-lives.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcore-iphone-share>

### KCC Librarian, Prof **Betsy Tompkins'** special resources for teaching *Just Mercy*:

A Bibliography of Texts Referenced by **Ta-Nehisi Coates** in "The Black Family In the Age of Mass Incarceration":  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzFKnUy0tlbvbmtRUkl0eldQQIE/view?usp=sharing>

A grouping of **Ebsco e-Books on Mass Incarceration** Betsy had the Library purchase as support for *Just Mercy*:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzFKnUy0tlbvb0xxUnICUUIFRG8/view?usp=sharing>

A grouping of **Ebsco e-Books on Peace & Social Justice in Education**, purchased for the library by Betsy with funds from a donation made in memory of former KCC English Dept. chair, Steven Weidenborner:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzFKnUy0tlbVRIJWnd2cE40Z0U/view?usp=sharing>

### ~*Online Teaching Resources.*

Prof Frank Roberts' **Black Lives Matter Fall 2016 Syllabus** (NYU):  
<http://www.blacklivesmattersyllabus.com/fall2016/>

A PDF of the Penguin/Random House **Teacher's Guide** for *Just Mercy*:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzFKnUy0tlbvcVFGaE8xS3U3ZVE/view?usp=sharing>

Penguin/Random House **Common Reading Support**:  
<https://commonreading.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2015/05/9780812994520.pdf>

**Chapter Outline** of *Just Mercy*:  
<https://commonreading.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2015/05/just-mercy-chapter-map.pdf>

**Discussion Questions** from UW Madison:  
[http://www.madisonpubliclibrary.org/sites/default/files/Discussion\\_Questions\\_Just\\_Mercy\\_Final.pdf](http://www.madisonpubliclibrary.org/sites/default/files/Discussion_Questions_Just_Mercy_Final.pdf)

**More Discussion Questions** from Mount Prospect Public Library:  
[https://mppl.org/check\\_it\\_out/book-discussion-questions-just-mercy-by-bryan-stevenson/](https://mppl.org/check_it_out/book-discussion-questions-just-mercy-by-bryan-stevenson/)

**Bryan Stevenson's Letter** to Readers of *Just Mercy*:  
<https://commonreading.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2015/05/Letter.pdf>

### ~*Video File Teaching Aids:*

Video **Op-Ed by Jay Z** (Shawn Carter) on the War on Drugs and Mass Incarceration:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000004642370/jay-z-the-war-on-drugs-is-an-epic-fail.html?smid=fb-share>

From **Bryan Stevenson's** EJI website: "**From Slavery to Mass Incarceration**"  
[https://youtu.be/r4e\\_djVSag4](https://youtu.be/r4e_djVSag4)

Also from **Bryan Stevenson's** EJI website: "**Sentencing 13- and 14-Year-Old Children to Die in Prison**"  
[https://youtu.be/0gTJgwpcs\\_Y](https://youtu.be/0gTJgwpcs_Y)

An animated **video/story** by **Destini Riley** about her brother's incarceration:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/02/opinion/i-destini-race-policing-prisons.html>

NPR Video: "**Three Things to Know About Mass Incarceration**":  
<https://www.facebook.com/NPR/videos/vb.10643211755/10154792344661756/?type=2&theater>

*\*Special Section\**: Videos of KCC Reads Events on Just Mercy (2016/17):

Prof Debra Schultz's **Inaugural Lecture** on *Just Mercy*: extremely informative and a great teaching aid:  
<http://kbvideo.kingsborough.edu/embed/278/>

## *~Audio File Teaching Aids:*

Episode of *This American Life* about the school district **Michael Brown graduated from** 3 weeks before he died:  
Part One: <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/562/the-problem-we-all-live-with>  
Part Two: <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/562/the-problem-we-all-live-with?act=2>

*Wrongful Conviction* with Jason Flom is a podcast about innocent persons sent to prison:

Itunes: <http://www.itunes.com/wrongfulconviction>

Google Play: <http://bit.ly/2dUtJtv>

Spotify (Mobile Only): <http://spoti.fi/2dqIrhk>

An excellent *New Yorker* Interview with **Bryan Stevenson**:  
<http://www.newyorker.com/podcast/political-scene/bryan-stevenson-talks-to-david-remnick-about-the-legacy-of-racial-terror>

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## **Part Two: *Stuff We Can Do***

### *~How To Get Involved:*

**How To Get Involved:** From **Bryan Stevenson's** EJI Website:  
<http://eji.org/get-involved>

The **Innocence Project** Website:  
<http://www.innocenceproject.org/>

The **Prisoner's Literature Project** Website:  
<http://www.prisonersliteratureproject.com/>

**Drive Change:**  
<http://drivechangenyc.org/>

**The Fortune Society:**

<http://fortunesociety.org/>

**The Strangers Project:**

<http://strangersproject.com/>

**The Story Corps Justice Project:**

<https://storycorps.org/storycorps-justice-project/>

## *~Off-Campus Events:*

**Sat. Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> at the Brooklyn Museum:** screening of the documentary "Profiled":

[https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/calendar/event/film\\_profiled\\_fsat\\_october\\_2016/2016/10/01](https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/calendar/event/film_profiled_fsat_october_2016/2016/10/01)

The **Schomburg Library** Public Programs Page:

<https://www.nypl.org/events/programs/schomburg>

Events at the **Sackler Center** for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum:

<https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/calendar/tag/Sackler%20Center>

**October Conference at BMCC:** Transcending Punishment

<http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/transcending-punishment/index.jsp>

## *~KCC Reads On-Campus Events:*

<http://www.kbcc.cuny.edu/kccreads/Pages/events.aspx>

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## *~LINKS:*

Prof Chu's list of **Social Movements** addressing issues in *Just Mercy*:

<http://kbcc.cuny.libguides.com/c.php?g=472904&p=3235573>

Prof Chu's **Author / Book Page** for *Just Mercy*:

<http://kbcc.cuny.libguides.com/c.php?g=472904&p=3774492>

Resources from **Michigan State University** re: racism in the food system:

[http://foodsystems.msu.edu/resources/structural\\_racism\\_in\\_us\\_food\\_system](http://foodsystems.msu.edu/resources/structural_racism_in_us_food_system)

The **Racial Justice Page** from **Bryan Stevenson's** EJI Website:

<http://eji.org/racial-justice>

**Note:** **Books** are available, for as long as they last, in Room M-386.  
Have questions about or additions to this page? Email: [kccreads@kbcc.cuny.edu](mailto:kccreads@kbcc.cuny.edu)