

Creating Behind the Razor Wire

Perspectives from Arts in Corrections in the United States



Edited by Krista Brune

**Contributors include Buzz Alexander, Grady Hillman, Margo Perin,
Victoria Sammartino, Judith Tannenbaum and others**

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Preface

Over a year has passed since I began collecting the diverse contributions to this book. I spent much of that time in Brazil studying the importance of the arts, especially popular music, during the social and political unrest of the military dictatorship. As I listened to Brazilian music from the 1960s and 1970s, the value of art as a form of self-expression and socio-political engagement during periods of repression became increasingly evident. The military junta in Brazil inflicted terror and violence on the country with its disregard for government institutions, denial of civil rights, and widespread censorship. To a certain extent, I could see parallels between life under Brazilian military rule and imprisonment in the United States. In both contexts, freedom is replaced by restrictions and repression. Creative expression becomes a valued realm, a place where freedom of thoughts and feelings can blossom while the authorities continue to deny physical freedom.

Everyone involved in this project, from the prisoners discovering their voices to the nonprofits and teaching artists sharing their passion for creativity, can attest to the power of the arts for imprisoned men and women. For these individuals often ignored by society, writing poetry, painting a mural or acting in a play allows them the opportunity to express themselves, discover their voices and, hopefully, be heard. In the two years since I began this project, the importance of arts and education opportunities for imprisoned individuals has not diminished, a fact that is being recognized across the country. Articles in local newspapers applaud the efforts of prison arts nonprofit organizations, while programs on public radio interview the people making this work possible. Recent books, ranging from memoirs by teaching artists like Richard Shelton to anthologies of prisoner writings, have focused their attention on arts in corrections.

Most importantly, perhaps, the connections between teaching artists, nonprofit organizations, university professors, students and others working in the field of arts in corrections continue to improve. Websites, like the Community Arts Network's Arts in Corrections page and the PrisonArts.info site that developed from this research, strive to better connect programs across the country by documenting their work, sharing curriculum ideas and funding tips, and providing updates on recent events. Last October, the Mural Arts Program in Philadelphia hosted the national Arts in Criminal Justice Conference. Over four days, prominent names in arts and corrections and newcomers to the field discussed their programs and exchanged ideas, laying the groundwork for a national alliance for the arts in criminal justice. Gatherings such as this October conference in Philadelphia and the Blue Mountain gatherings at the beginning of this decade are essential to the vitality of arts in corrections in the United States. The sharing of ideas, experiences and creative works with others in the field strengthens arts and education programs across the country. The future of arts in corrections is a promising one and a crucial one. As I end my brief excursion into this field to start graduate study in Latin American literatures and cultures, I am confident that artists, nonprofits, professors and students will continue to provide opportunities for creative self-expression to the millions of individuals imprisoned in this country.

Krista Brune
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I would also like to extend my thanks to the many individuals I have talked to and met with over the past months. These people include: Dorothy Albertini, Buzz Alexander, Pat Andres, Irene Baird, Lilly Bechtel, Jennifer Blaine, Laurie Brooks, Joe Bruchac, Cindy Burstein, Jim Carlson, Scott Christianson, Dominique Cieri, Ken Cormier, Paula Davidoff, Dale Davis, Judy Dworin, Steve Emrick, Ana Flores, H. Bruce Franklin, Nancy Gabor, Julie Gayer, Sandy Gibson, Sarah Gibson, Richard Gold, Makenna Goodman, Pat Graney, Nathan Graves, Jeff Greene, Dale Griffith, Stephen Hartnett, Susan Hill, Grady Hillman, Allyson Holtz, Allie Horevitz, Jane Ellen Ibur, David Inocencio, Gary Isaac, Tobi Jacobi, Hettie Jones, Rhodessa Jones, Terry Karson, Max Kenner, Amanda Klonsky, Phyllis Kornfield, Joe Lea, Mark Levine, Fred Marchant, Alexis Marnel, Nancy Meis, Quentin Miller, Zoe Mullery, Leslie Neal, Merrell Noden, Margo Perin, Jennifer Scaife, Joanne Epply Schmidt, Claire Schwadron, Jonathon Shailor, Richard Shelton, Dennis Sobin, Kyes Stevens, Jennifer Storey, Michele Lise Tarter, Beth Thielen, Curt Tofteland, Jean Trounstone, Katherine Vockins, Sara Weinberger, Agnes Wilcox, Rachel Marie-Crane Williams, and Lois Young.

I would also like to thank prisoners who have maintained correspondence with me during this research and have shared their perspective on arts programs, including Spoon Jackson, Alejo Rodriguez and Germain Santana. Finally, I extend my gratitude to all of the contributors to this collection. Without their participation in this project, there would be no book, merely my thoughts and reflections on my research. Thanks to the input and suggestions of others, this collection provides a more nuanced and in depth vision of arts in corrections currently. Finally, I must thank Tess Korobkin, the program director of Voices UnBroken, for her assistance with the design and publication of this book.

Krista Brune

Introduction

I am a newcomer to this field of arts in corrections. As a recent college graduate with a degree in Spanish and Portuguese and a love of Latin American culture, I enter this field not as an artist, but rather as a student and a researcher. My only experience with arts in corrections before this project was the rejection of a proposal to facilitate creative expression workshops at the women's prison in New Jersey. While attempting to start these workshops, I did not know who to talk to, what was already out there, or how to go about gaining access. I assumed that there must be other individuals and organizations providing arts programs in correctional settings; I simply had not discovered them yet. I longed to transform my frustration from that experience into a resource for others working in the field. With the help of Victoria Sammartino, I developed a proposal for the ReachOut 56 fellowship, a grant from Princeton's Class of 1956 that funds two graduating seniors each year to complete an independent, self-designed project in affiliation with a small nonprofit organization. I proposed to work with Sammartino's Bronx based organization Voices UnBroken to research the arts in prisons, jails and juvenile detention centers across the country in order to enhance communication among people working in the field and to increase awareness of the current work and past history of arts in corrections.

Thanks to this fellowship, I have spent the past eight months reading about prisons and their arts-based activities, visiting certain programs to observe their work, interviewing people involved in prison arts projects, and recording this information. This research has taken me across the country, from the Arts-in-Corrections' rooms in California's New Folsom and San Quentin prisons to the auditorium of Sing Sing in Ossining, New York. I have had an unparalleled opportunity to see programs in action and also to talk with practitioners, both past and present, about their experiences with arts in corrections. I observed, listened and read in order to gain an understanding of this vast field that provides creative writing, drama, visual arts, music, dance and other arts-based programs in correctional facilities throughout the United States.

Given the current climate of limited funding and a punitive corrections mentality, one could mistakenly assume that arts programs in correctional facilities have disappeared. While arts-in-corrections may not be thriving or as organized in the United States as the field is in other countries like the United Kingdom, individual artists, non-profit organizations and university professors are carving out spaces for innovative and inspiring arts programs in correctional facilities. Decreased state and federal funding for arts-in-corrections, combined with the 1994 crime bill that abolished Pell Grants for inmates to attend college, could have left a deep chill over arts and humanities programs in prisons, jails and detention centers. While these changes in funding left a large artistic and educational gap in many correctional facilities as community colleges were forced to abandon their prison classes, new programs and approaches have developed in an effort to fill this void. These emerging arts programs cover the spectrum of artistic disciplines, from the more traditional creative writing workshop to integrated, multidisciplinary arts practices. They receive funding and other necessary support from a variety of sources, ranging from the government in a few cases to non-profit organizations to universities. In spite of their differences, all of these programs provide incarcerated individuals the tools and opportunities for artistic expression.

Based on my research and personal experiences of the past months, I have attempted to paint a picture of the current scene of arts in corrections in this country in the pages that follow. Instead of relying solely on my brief experience in this field, this collection features the perspectives of individuals with different backgrounds and relationships to arts in corrections.

In the subsequent essays, the voices of teaching artists, nonprofit leaders, prison administrators, prisoners and university professors or students provide insight into the diversity of arts in corrections as a field while revealing the distinct viewpoints of those with different connections to this work.

Teaching artists, including Jane Ellen Ibur, Margo Perin, Jennifer Blaine and Beth Thielen, describe their first experiences entering a prison, how they adapted their lessons to the needs of an incarcerated population, and how they relate to both their students and other individuals in the community who ask about their work. Nonprofit directors, including Victoria Sammartino of Voices UnBroken and Kyes Stevens of Alabama Prison Arts + Education, discuss the challenges they have encountered beginning, sustaining and strengthening their organizations. Prison employees, such as Steve Emrick, the artist/facilitator at San Quentin, and Nathan Graves, the volunteer coordinator at the St. Louis Juvenile Detention Center, illustrate their views on arts in correctional facilities from an administrative perspective. Prisoners, including Spoon Jackson, Alejo Rodriguez and Germain Santana, have contributed their creative writing, visual art and reflections on their involvement in the arts to this collection. College students, such as Lilly Bechtel and Allie Horevitz, explore the difficulties they faced when facilitating creative writing workshops in prisons. University professors, including Irene Baird, Tobi Jacobi and Jonathan Shailor, discuss their teaching experiences in prison and college classrooms, comparing the challenges and joys they face in the different environments.

In addition to these essays featuring the unique voices of individuals working in the field, this book also features the wisdom from experts in arts in corrections. In a roundtable format, experienced practitioners and consultants, including Judith Tannenbaum, Grady Hillman and Buzz Alexander, share their wisdom gained from years of working in, researching and teaching about arts in corrections. The subsequent appendices include a directory of programs and individuals working in the field and a comprehensive resource list featuring books, articles and multimedia sources about prisons and their arts programs.

This text provides a snapshot of arts programs in correctional facilities throughout the United States at the time of my research. By no means does my research capture all of the individuals and organizations facilitating the arts in this country's prisons, jails and juvenile detention centers. Every week, a new workshop can emerge in a correctional facility as another program disappears; the field is constantly changing and evolving. Throughout my research, the one thing I have heard again and again is that the only consistency in arts in corrections is its inconsistency. By showcasing a spectrum of voices, this collection explores the diversity within the field of arts in corrections, highlighting the unique challenges faced in different settings and the potential benefits of those programs. I envision this book as a resource for students, artists, professors and other individuals interested in learning more about arts in corrections and perhaps starting their own work in the field. It is my response to the frustration I felt as a college student trying to start a program with limited support, a tool to strengthen the connections that exist in field and to foster additional communication. I hope that this account serves as a starting point for continued dialogue between the many people working in this field, separated by physical distance yet connected through their work.

Krista Brune
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PART I: THE TEACHING ARTIST



Etchings and book design by Beth Thielen's students (Photo courtesy of Peter Merts)

“DENYA: A Life Story.” One-week Intensive Acting and Writing Project for Maximum-security inmates at York Correctional Institution

By Jennifer Blaine

Blaine, a performance artist and actress, started her theater work at York Correctional Institution in 1995 as a guest artist performing her one-woman show. She returned to York over the next decade to perform other pieces and also to teach acting and playwriting classes every other year starting in 1999. In this essay, she describes her intensive residency at York in 2002, which resulted in the creation and performance of “DENYA: A Life Story.”

I have had a decade long relationship, leading Acting and Writing projects at York Correctional Institution for Women in Niantic, Connecticut. In 2002 I was invited by the prison’s school to lead a project through a grant called “Women, Violence, and Change.” I immersed a dozen of the inmates in a one-week intensive Acting/Writing project, which culminated in a show that they performed for the general population. The main character was “Denya” and each of the women contributed a monologue, which was loosely based on the inmate’s life. Many of the women don’t have a GED but were able to improvise situations, write dialogue and imagine conflicts from their lives and spin it all into riveting drama. The experience was new and energizing for them all, helping them develop basic writing skills, express buried feelings and build self-confidence. It prompted them to look honestly at their past and see themselves anew.

All the women played the character “Denya” at different points of her life: as a child, a woman in prison, and as a parent who wants a better life for her child. Denya has suffered an abusive childhood, poor relationships with everyone, and was incarcerated for assault. None of the inmates’ real names are used in the following text.

In the first character excerpt, Lisa appears as an eleven year old Denya, helpless and suffering, rocking herself in bed. (“My lip hurts so bad.... I said I fell off my bike – but that’s not the truth.”) We watch her struggle with both physical and psychological pain. (“The truth is they pushed me down the stairs.”) Denya protects her family, even at the risk of hurting herself. She is cowering in bed, terrified that her brother Paul is about to rape and beat her. (“Oh no God. Here he comes!”) We flash forward in time to Denya confronting Paul. (“I’m not going to live in constant fear of you anymore.... You can’t hurt me anymore, I won’t let you!”) Denya has found her voice. She will go to court and make sure she is protected.

In the next piece we see Denya when she is in prison, where she is systematically judged by her appearance. “I’m not what I seem,” Rita tells us. People may judge her as tough, because she’s big and black and doesn’t smile on the outside, but Denya tells us she is a compassionate person who wants people to “cry on my shoulder whenever you need to.” Rita’s Denya invites the audience to look at Denya and themselves with new eyes. This monologue validates women for their positive qualities, which they may not have realized they even had.

Maria plays the Denya who is now out of prison. Her son has cut school. She sits him down at breakfast and asks why he played hooky. She grows so angry and she notices she has the impulse to hit her son (“the way I was beat.”) Instead, she reflects on why she is so angry with her son. Because she is able to talk it out with herself and cry, she appropriately disciplines her son without beating him. She says he is so thankful and (“He lives his life now and nothing bad happens to him.”) This monologue shows how women can continue to learn to accept themselves and change destructive behavior. They are then able to treat their children and others better than they themselves were treated, as Maria illustrates so well.

The last moment of the play suggests that our discoveries about Denya are just the beginning and there is more exploration and growth in store. “I’m not just a survivor, I’m a leader... I’m not just a weak woman; I’m a phenomenal woman.... I’m not just a conversation, I’m listening.”) After the show, Rita announced to the entire prison: “Ms. Blaine, I have never performed in my whole life. I was always sick on performance days at school. But you and this project made me want to be seen and heard for what I have to share.” Ever since, she has been an active participant in the prison’s Creative Writing class and has completed part of a memoir.

The general population of the prison assembled as the audience. They loved the show and were able to share their impressions articulately and respectfully with the performers. In prison it is rare to have people trust one another, let alone admire and praise each other’s work and the project achieved all these things. I am deeply inspired by the risks my students made and it encourages me to take more risks. The project impacted me to take my work out in the world even more.

Why I Go to the Jail

By Jane Ellen Ibur

Ibur, a St. Louis writer, has facilitated creative writing workshops with Class A felons at the St. Louis County Jail and other facilities for over fifteen years. For additional writing about her experience teaching the arts in prison, read her contribution to Teaching the Arts Behind Bars, edited by Rachel Marie-Crane Williams.

“So?” Rich (Volunteer Coordinator for the St. Louis County Department of Justice Services) asks as I slump into a chair in his office. We do this routine after each creative writing class. I shake my head slowly. “Like that huh?”

“It’s unbelievable. I just don’t understand it.”

“How long’s it been now?”

“I don’t know, 17, 18 years. I’ve lost count. But it’s the same every time.”

“That good?”

“Better. Amazing. Magic.”

“And you’ve never had one bad class?”

“Never.”

Rich doesn’t know exactly what I do. No one does. What I do is revolutionary: honest talk, honest writing, two hours a week for what grew from an 8-week class to a 25 to 30-week class, sponsored through the West County Family YMCA, as a community outreach program. I arrive each week with a plan, something like an exercise in sonnet writing, but then I start talking about what’s on my mind at that moment, or I’ll take the emotional temperature of the class and ask what’s on their minds and we talk. We talk, we write, we read aloud what we’ve written in an atmosphere of acceptance and support because writing is dangerous and courageous and any exercise can access your stuff. The truth can make a grown man cry.

Tim came to class one day telling me people were always afraid of him. “Okay,” I said shaking his hand. I’m not afraid and for some reason never have been since I began working first with women, for one class only, then juvenile males for 7 years, then adults and for the last several years male class A felons. I won’t work with women in prison – too close to home.

The afternoon Tim came I was teaching sonnets. I assigned each man to write one sonnet for the next session. My schedule got interrupted the following week; I had a guest coming to record poems from three men who’d studied with me for months, the CD to be played on my literary radio show. I told Tim he couldn’t participate since he’d only attended one class, but he could return the next week. “Figures. Whenever I find something, it never works out. I’m probably gone by next week anyway.”

Turns out he’d written seven sonnets, beautifully horrific poems about childhood sexual abuse by his mother and daily beatings by his father. I called Rich and said, “I’m breaking my rule. Give my home phone number to Tim. He’s going back to the penitentiary any second and I’ve got to speak with him first.”

When he called I said, “Tim, I hear you. I understand why you’re a violent repeat offender. But it’s not serving you. You’ve spent over half your 35 years locked up. Maybe you can break the cycle by telling your story.”

Over the next year, he sent me over 60 stunning sonnets. He called me yesterday, 3, 4 years later. He’s been out since May. His mother and stepfather (his father is dead) said poetry was supposed to be beautiful and his work was ugly and crap. He shared two poems with a woman he met; she called him an artist. Then he remembered me, called, wants to find an open mic to start reading in public. We’re meeting after the holidays.

My job is giving people their voices. Most people have not been involved in creative process. I tell them, “They can lock your body down, even forever, but your mind can always be free, always growing. You can spend your time doing nothing or you can, as Anne Sexton says in her poem ‘Kind Sir: These Woods’ ‘...Lost and of your same kind/ ...I am afraid of course/ to look – this inward look that society scorns -/ Still, I search in these woods and find nothing worse/ than myself, caught between the grapes and the thorns.’ You can be more than a prisoner doing time. You can go on this amazing journey through art, with writing, and find things that surprise, amaze and excite you.”

That’s why I go to the jail.

Writings by Jane Ellen Ibur's Students

Dean Lindsey participated in Ibur's creative writing course at the St. Louis County Detention Center. These brief pieces illustrate the value of writing for prisoners like Dean.

I Remember...

I remember going to the penitentiary the very first time. It was July 26, 2000. Hot. It was very hot. Fear. I was so scared. Lonely. The loneliest time I had ever experienced. Change. I have never been the same man as I was before.

My mother always told me I would end up in the penitentiary before I was thirty years old. Well I showed her; I didn't go till I was thirty-two. It was summertime, hot and humid, end of July, but that was the least of my worries. I was TERRIFIED! Let me explain. I wasn't afraid of being beat up or raped; I've always managed to take care of myself. I was afraid of the unknown, the new subculture I was entering. Not knowing the "unwritten rules," codes of conduct, who to trust or not to trust. Confusion, loneliness. Oh! The loneliness just compounded my fear. The questions with no answers. How does one's step into a world of societies completely foreign to him? How do you do this, scared to death, but not show an inkling of fear? A façade, complete façade. I pulled it off, I don't know how. I made some wrong decisions, but mostly the right ones. You know, you get in where you fit in.

I remember going to the penitentiary the second time. It was July 24, 2002. Hot. It was very hot. Fear, there was none; I knew exactly what to expect. Lonely, the second loneliest time I had ever experienced. Change. Some things never change.

Evaluation

I look forward to your class. It is the highlight of my week. When I'm in class I'm not in jail. I have gotten in touch with many feelings that have been suppressed. Without this class I would not have known about the talent of my peers. I didn't even know of my own writing ability. I have discovered that I really enjoy writing.

Because of your class I have found an area to bond with my father. Our relationship has been different, to say the least. He's been in and out of my life regularly, tried to shoot and kill me twice. But now because of this class I've found a side of him I've never known. He's a writer, too. This bond takes away some of my animosity toward him.

I feel high when I come out of your class. My emotions shine during class. I look so forward to your class that on Tuesdays I feel so anxious till you get here. This class has sparked something in me that I plan to pursue to my fullest abilities.

I've enjoyed learning sestinas and sonnets. I like finding, what you call "good verbs" and bringing them to class.

I know I will always cherish the days spent in your class. It is the starting, the birthplace, of my very own writing adventures.

Jobnell A. Bell also participated in Jane Ellen Ibur's creative writing workshop at the St. Louis County Detention Center. Ibur would use a variety of activities in her workshops, as revealed in the writing of her students. These poems illustrate a more formal approach to writing, following the "rules" for certain poetic structures.

"Da System"

To my understanding it's knowledge that brings wisdom these days
and I can't see how a cage can help to rehabilitate
or why soldiers of the same struggle constantly hate
or why justice in the U.S. is so damn fake
That's like a how a jury that's suppose to be my peers never been where I stay
and eight out of twelve of them got a different color face
and on the streets look at my feet and trip off how my shoe's laced
and wouldn't take they kids to the same park where I let my daughter play
and couldn't even fix they lips to let they mouth say
they lost a loved one to the streets or need a gun to be safe.
I say it's real fucked up the way this system was built.
What good is it to blindfold justice if it's seen through silk
but that's spilt milk and I don't have no time to cry.
Instead I'm tryna justify a homicide
and convince twelve strangers who hold my life
to get me back to my kids 'cause that a be what's right

Terza Rima

As I sit here alone angry from the start
Because even though the light stays on
This room always seems so dark.

I speak and I have to watch my tone
But I really don't know why they care
About the noise or who's on the phone.

I just know that I'm not supposed to be there
And this is the only time I get away.
So now I write instead of pulling out my hair.

This place makes me so mad I don't know what to say.
It seems like it's so hard just to smile.
It's a struggle just to wake up here every day.

I can't adjust and I've been here for a while
And they expect me to be happy while I'm losing in trial.

My Life

This is my life I'll live it how I want to
And take advantage of every situation I'm in
I dare any two men to try to fill my one shoe

I've stumbled before and I know I will again
But I'll learn from my mistakes
And take advantage of every situation I'm in

I've taken the goods with the bads like the loves and the hates
And Lord knows that I'm nowhere near perfect
But I'll learn from my mistakes

I fall to learn and every fall was worth it
Because I used to think that I did no wrong
But Lord knows that I'm nowhere near perfect

And at least I can say that I'm dancing to another song
'Cause I had to get my mind right for me
Because I used to think that I did no wrong

Time's got hard and I could barely even see
So I had to get my mind right for me
And realize that this is my life I'll live it how I want to
And I dare any two men to try to fill my one shoe

Is This Place Home?

Is this place home to me
The only place I'll ever see
This just can't be right
Because there's not a house in sight
And to my door they hold the key

He described this place down to a tee
And I always wondered why did he
Did he know it would be this tight
Is this place home?

We went wrong somewhere didn't we
Now the house I used to call home's empty
But I'm gone fight
With all my might
To get where I should be...
Is this place home?

Ibur also asked students to write letters, evaluations and other forms of writing. The following samples demonstrate other techniques of writing introduced in her class. Campbell's piece highlights the importance of the creative writing workshop for him and other prisoners.

To Whom This May Concern:

I'm incarcerated in the St. Louis County Justice Center and as much as I dislike being here I cannot bring myself to say that we don't need jails in America, because that's far from being true.

From my inside view, I can see that the focus is not to get people that are a detriment to society off the streets, but to make money for the city, county and state government. And the only part of that money that goes to the inmates is what it takes to keep them alive.

Any money that can be gotten from whatever source that would be used to educate people with skills that will keep them from these places is greatly needed. Most of the people that will benefit from programs that educate them will probably never pay as much money in taxes that the city, county and state get from the Feds, but some may.

Or should the people in jails seek help from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) for help? Some animals are better cared for.

-Jimmy D. Love-El

What Creative Writing Means to Me?

Creative writing means that I can think creatively. I can shed the stigma of the worst thing that ever happened to me defining me. Some critical mind might prefer me to word it the worst thing I've done...but I'm writing this and it makes me feel better if I chose to word it that way. Speaking of choices, that's exactly what creative writing gives me is a choice in a place where there are few. Class also gives me an opportunity to be around people who care. I am forced to explore my humanity and emotional state of being by listening to stories from a similar perspective as mine, which makes me feel normal and not alone. I also listen to stories from a different perspective that makes me re-examine some of my actions and behaviors. Creative writing makes me examine myself in ways that makes me realize becoming a better man means becoming a better person, a better father and a better citizen. This class makes me feel like I am a part of something special, so I am someone special and I can do something special. Janie (creative writing teacher) said if she was paralyzed she could still have a good quality life because she would still have her mind. Now she also has a part of mine as well as my heart because she cares. Why? Because she does and that is the most beautiful thing in the world; to have a person to care and treat you as a thinking and feeling human being, when most of us for the better part of our lives, have gone through life with this as our motto:

DON'T NOBODY GIVE A FUCK ABOUT ME!!

Maybe I was wrong. And if I'm wrong about that maybe I'm wrong about other things. Maybe if I examine myself on a job as closely as I examine myself in class when I get out of here I can get and keep a job.

Thanks Janie.

Teaching Creative Writing in the County Jail

By Margo Perin

A writer and writing instructor, Margo Perin has taught at universities, colleges and schools for more than twenty-five years. She has been teaching therapeutic writing to men and women at the San Francisco County Jail since 2001. For more information about Perin, please see her website www.margoperin.com.

When I first began working at San Francisco County Jail, I was so nervous I drove up to the compound on the wrong side of the road. A deputy coming out of the gates in a white van shook his head at me as he swerved to avoid me, as if I was a recalcitrant criminal, and in a way I felt like I was. My father had taken our family on the run during my childhood for a secret crime that he didn't divulge, and so I grew up with a strong subterranean knowledge of the threat and danger of authority figures. That my father was violently authoritarian added another *je ne sais quoi* ingredient to the mix, so when I began teaching at the jail, I naively assumed that the deputies would be evil perpetrators and the incarcerated men their innocent victims on two unbridgeable sides of the criminal divide. I have occasionally seen or heard deputies acting violently towards prisoners, but overall in the facility where I work, I have learned that many of the deputies come from similar socio-economic backgrounds as my students, and often have a lot more in common with them than arts and other teachers. This can work both for and against us, and I have found trying to be sensitive and cooperative with everyone helps facilitate a better atmosphere for my classes and enables them to continue as productively as they can.

What I have also learned is that therapeutic writing is of most value to my students, and so I have designed exercises that are individually tailored to help them explore themselves at the deepest possible level. This helps them become more in touch with what they think and feel, and express their life experiences from their perspective. I ask them to suspend self-judgment to quiet the inner critic. Usually I am the only one to give feedback, with the intention of helping them to go deeper and further with their material. I do this because giving productive feedback requires a great deal of skill and attention, and students are constantly coming and going while fighting their cases and/or having served their time. My students can be in the jail for as little as a day to as long as four years so I have designed an approach to give them as much opportunity and encouragement as possible in a short time.

While occasionally some students write fictional pieces, the class is focused on autobiographical writing to help them develop more insight into themselves during the relatively short time they spend in jail. I don't teach craft except when it helps them to express themselves better, or when someone requests it, as I want to encourage them to feel their way along, rather than think about "writing" and become more removed from the process. I also tell them to put aside their concerns about grammar and punctuation, which most of them have, saying that it's all about voice, not grammar and spelling. I find that these aspects of the class are especially relevant with a transient population.

Every student's first assignment is to write his/her life story in twenty minutes, and from there I set individual assignments that tease out or build on what was expressed in that first story. They can write in prose or poetry, rap, or song. Occasionally, I draw on art or drama exercises to help them expand their expression or delve deeper.

In terms of the jail environment, situations can suddenly arise, including changes in classroom assignment, cancellation of a class, or a lockdown, so being able to go with the flow makes teaching in this military milieu less stressful and more possible. Teachers are not always informed about what is going on so being generally cooperative and accommodating helps to

forge better relationships with staff and administrators and allows for a positive environment for the class to be able to continue.

Outside jail, hosting public readings every three months or so for the writers to be able to read their work to an audience after their release has been an important extension of the class. While life outside can be too difficult for some previously incarcerated writers to come, several writers turn up and we've had anywhere from three to thirteen writers at one time. These readings create a bridge over the prison walls and are a great opportunity for the larger community to identify and forge bonds with people who are incarcerated and vice versa, thus allowing for greater personal identification and community building. Sometimes the family members or friends of writers who are still incarcerated read their work in their place, which is another powerful way the readings connect different communities. I also produce quarterly anthologies of writing from the class and in 2006 published *ONLY THE DEAD CAN KILL: Stories from Jail* with the help of an arts grant. It is extremely validating for the writers to see their work in print and I view this as an integral part of my work. The writers have given readings at the jail to others who are incarcerated, spoken at conferences, and have been featured on radio, which was broadcasted in the jail, and in the newspaper. This has helped to further strengthen their voices and illuminate their humanity to people both inside and outside the jail.

In the Interest of Longevity

By Beth Thielen

Thielen is a California artist working with incarcerated men and women. Her work and the work of her inmates was part of an exhibit "Black/White and Read" at the New York Center for the Book, April 13 - June 30, 2007.

I first started working in Corrections in the mid-eighties, when the California Arts Council was funding artists to go into communities. At the time, nearly every prison in the state had an Artist-in-Residence program, which brought artist time and funds in trade for involvement in difficult communities. As an artist-in-resident, I received state training and worked under the guidance of other artists with more experience in this field.

I am now the only artist working with women in California state prisons. I have managed to continue this work by donating my time and by receiving funds from the Sandler Foundation of New York in the late 1990s and, more recently, from the Kalliopeia Foundation. I fear that if I were to stop this work, there would no longer be current working procedures for tools to be brought in by visual artists teaching prison classes. It would also mean the end of outside funded arts programming for women inmates in the state.

Very little works well in the overburdened prison system these days. Arts programming in prison is like a water purification plant: it takes those who feel polluted by their lives and uses filters of reflection and creative problem solving through art to recycle them back into a healthy environmental state of being. After having done this work for over twenty years, I would love to see reinforcements coming over the hill.



Thielen's students at California Rehabilitation Center (Norco, CA) with some of the books they created.
(Photo Courtesy of Beth Thielen)

To teach art in prison is to work with a cloister. Unlike college classes I have taught, if you must cancel your prison art class, the students will express disappointment and sadness that they won't have class. What they lack in sophistication, they make up in enthusiasm. There will always be a waiting list to get in and they will thirst for all the knowledge you have to offer. Here are some suggestions for those who would continue this work:

Follow the procedures for tool control.

As a visual artist, I often must bring into the prison tools that could be used as weapons. The prison staff must believe that I won't create a dangerous situation where someone could be hurt. Imagine an airline allowing you to bring on board mat knives, scissors and metal rulers. The prison's trust in you will constantly be tested. Recognize that it should be: it is part of the checks and balances you agree to in order to be there. Don't take it personally.

When I enter the prison, an officer compares the tools I am bringing in to those on a pre-approved list of what I am allowed to bring. Among the tools I often bring is a retractable mat knife with snap off blades. The gate officer refers to it, every time, as my "murder weapon." I do not react. He counts the snap off blades on the knife and I make sure the same number of blades comes out with me at the end of class. The reason the knife is retractable is so I can keep it in my pocket when not in use. If I were to set it down on the table and walk away from it in class, the inmate students would nervously point it out to me. They want a safe environment too.



Thielen instructs a bookbinding class in the Arts-in-Corrections room in California State Prison- San Quentin. Steve Emrick, the artist/facilitator at San Quentin, stands behind Thielen on the left. (Photo courtesy of Peter Merts, www.petermerts.com/probono)

Integrity includes a circle of peers.

Once, at a yearly state conference of artists working in the prison system, Claude Finn, a prison official, stood before the artists in the room and said: “If you are to be successful teaching here, you must do your work. You must be a working artist.” At the time, I marveled that a self-proclaimed prison bureaucrat could say something so utterly true to me, the artist. His comment opened my mind to the possibility of finding colleagues among the custody staff. You will find plenty of officers that don’t believe you should be there. You will also find officers who understand that you make their work easier. With both inmates and custody staff, show respect for the best of what they do and they will usually respect the territory you occupy within their realm. Be open with staff and custody. Have nothing to hide. Believe in what you do. Invite custody staff in. Show them the work that comes out of the program. In other words, establish enough trust to weather the storms that come when a staff person, officer or inmate becomes troublesome to your program. When that happens, if you have been professional and inclusive, your program will have its protectors throughout the prison system.



These beautiful books were created in Thielen’s bookbinding workshop at San Quentin. The men and other of Thielen’s peers continue working on their books. (Photo courtesy of Peter Merts)

PART II: THE NONPROFIT VIEW



Participants in a Shakespearean work presented by the St. Louis based nonprofit organization Prison Performing Arts (Photo courtesy of <http://www.prisonartsstl.org/>)

Making Poetry Happen and The Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project

By Kyes Stevens

Stevens has run and taught poetry with the Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project since its inception in 2002. She is a poet with an MFA and MA from Sarah Lawrence College.

I never get used to leaving a prison. The walk from the gate to my little blue station wagon is brutal—a terrible mix of thankfulness for the blessings in my life, my good family pitted against the capacity of humans to diminish each other and how hopelessness lingers in the eyes of men and women I see locked away. I leave a creative high and crash back to the reality of the outside world. I guess that's the opposite from what most folks would expect, but since my first couple of times entering to teach poetry in prisons in Alabama, leaving after each class is the hardest part.

I never thought I would teach poetry in a prison. I was not opposed to the idea; it just wasn't on my radar. I certainly did not think I was going to want to build a program around it. However, as a result of the planets aligning and a grant that allowed me to teach poetry at the Talladega Federal Men's Prison in Alabama, I had the great fortune to visit Laurie Brooks, director of the William James Association, a nonprofit organization that ran the Arts-in-Corrections program in California and also worked with the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Justice for their granting program.

While in California, our training group visited several facilities with long-established art programs. The quality of the workshops and creative space, the dedication of the artists and writers, and the work of the students had a remarkable effect on me. I returned to my beloved Alabama with the dream to build a program.

I believe in learning for the sake of learning, writing for the sake of writing, and making art because it needs to be made. No justifications are needed. All our students need is curiosity and a desire to create and explore. Making a space to do this creating in a prison is a vital step in building a program that lasts.

I started teaching poetry in prisons not too long after finishing graduate school. It was in these alternative classrooms that my understandings of "good poetry" grew. I began to think about language and the formal acceptations of how it should be used. Teaching in prisons made me think a lot about the "shoulds" in the world that I live in. The rawness of living and thinking in a world full of so much strife was the poetry that resonated for me. And my students were writing that poetry.

The Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project is a program of the Center for the Arts & Humanities in the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University. Several administrators at Auburn had the vision to see the importance of the project and supported a full-time position so that we could better develop programming. The program has grown since then from one poet teaching in a women's prison in Alabama to ten classes in the spring of 2007 with loads of writers, scholars, and artists teaching.

It is not easy to build and run a prison arts and education program. The animosity encountered is truly stunning, especially since we are supposed to be such an advanced, sophisticated society. As a poet, I struggle with the roles of poet and teacher (what got me started in this to begin with) and the role of administrator (to build the program and sustain it).

There certainly have been moments when the administrative stress pushes me to the edge, but then, I go to class. And class is magic. In that space, learning and creativity are as vital as breathing, and stunningly diverse people come together to work toward creating better poems. I have always thought that poetry is seeing—and that is how I teach. I push students to

find new ways to see, and to always respect what they have seen before. The writing assignments are wide open. I don't think that just because a person is incarcerated that they should always focus on that fact in their writings—I give assignments that let each individual find their way into a poem that suits them.

I administer the program because the thought of the program falling apart sickens me. I do it so that I can teach, and all the other truly brilliant and inspiring artists, writers, and scholars who teach with us can continue to share their passion for creating and learning. I do it so that every semester, a few more people are transformed by art and learning and the goodness of people.

In so many respects, a university is a perfect place to run a program like this—the potential benefits to students and faculty are countless. Auburn University is a land-grant institution, so one of the three primary missions of the university is to share the resources of Auburn with the community of Alabama. But funding in a university setting is challenging. Because there are a multitude of art and humanities programs that come out of any institution of higher education, there is competition for funding. The Alabama State Council on the Arts and the Alabama Humanities Foundation have been great supporters of the program, but their resources are limited, and the needs in this state are so staggering. Auburn funds my position and provides an office space, and their Office of Outreach has provided some financial support, but all funds for classes must be raised externally. We can only offer as many classes as we can procure funds for, which limits our programming. If we had the resources, we could put classes in every facility in the state. We have worked to build and nourish a strong relationship with the Alabama Department of Corrections and the Alabama Board of Pardons and Paroles. We support each other the best we can.

I guess, in some respects, that is my philosophy in trying to make this program the best it can be—for people to support people through learning and creativity, through the absolute brilliant experiences of exploration and discovery, and what comes to each individual as a result of that experience. I believe that every soul who wants to learn to write poems should have the opportunity. The same holds true for drawing, painting or studying Southern Literature.

In five years, this program has profoundly impacted many, many lives—mine included. It is worth the work and the thousands of miles driven. The folks that we work with in Alabama are a part of our state, and in that regard, they are our citizens. Our prison classes provide educational opportunities, making the essential experience of the arts and humanities accessible to people who want to learn.

The Birth of a Nonprofit Organization

By Victoria Sammartino

Sammartino is the Founder and Executive Director of Voices UnBroken, a Bronx-based nonprofit organization that facilitates creative writing workshops primarily for women and youth in jails, prisons, juvenile detention centers and other alternative settings. In this piece, Sammartino describes the origins and growth of her organization.

The story of Voices UnBroken's birth is my story. It is a story I have told often, yet each time I marvel at what a journey it has been since that day almost a decade ago when I innocently decided to 'start a workshop for the girls.' I was a junior at Bennington College and had returned home to The Bronx for the winter to do an internship at an arts organization in Manhattan. There were some male writers going to Rikers to facilitate a poetry workshop for incarcerated boys attending Island Academy High School. I asked if I could join them, mostly out of curiosity. Growing up, Rikers Island was a place people talked about, but only in the most casual way. "Hey, you seen Gary?" "You didn't hear? He's been on Rikers since last month." Or, "like I told him, he better stop doin' that stuff 'cause I ain't goin' out to no jail to visit him or send him packages or nothin'." As a teenager, I wrote in my journal that jail made people quiet, because everyone I knew who went to Rikers came back that way: quiet.

My first request for clearance was denied. The male poets told me, "You look like a little girl." Without knowing where this statement would lead me, I said "---- you, I'll start a workshop for the girls."

It took me a year to gain clearance to facilitate a poetry workshop for adolescent girls (ages 16-18) at Rosewood High School on Rikers Island (the high school has since merged with Island Academy High School). After that initial poetry workshop, I was offered a teaching position at the school and taught there briefly before resigning. As I was resigning, I asked the principal if I could keep coming back once a week to facilitate a poetry workshop, and she agreed. I began substitute teaching at various high schools and working a series of part time jobs – as an administrative assistant, a community organizer, a youth worker and as an academic counselor for women coming home from prison. I was also facilitating workshops anywhere I could. Sometimes these workshops were set up by a nonprofit organization and sometimes I just talked my way into a prison or community setting that spoke to me. It was very intuitive and very exhausting. When you begin, as I do, with the premise that all people matter and all people have a unique and sacred story to tell, there is no end to the work to be done.

Other people in this book write about being a 'teaching artist,' but this was not my initial experience as a facilitator. I was not an 'artist' – I kept a journal religiously and was a poet-on-the-low, but had not published or performed my own writing. I believe this is an important distinction because it helps answer the "why start an organization?" question teaching artists sometimes ask me. The assumption behind this question is that I gave up something to start the organization. Perhaps, if I had already been an artist in my own right, this would have been true, but I didn't read a poem onstage until after I taught my first workshop. I didn't really believe I was an artist until I had my heart broken for the first time, and I discovered I could write the terrible – and beautiful – things I did not know how to say.

In fact, Voices UnBroken was more of a gift I received than a decision I made. In 1999, a friend left a message on my answering machine telling me about a foundation that wanted to fund organizations run by young women, "... all you need is a name, a proposal and a fiscal sponsor." After my first visit to Rikers, I scribbled, "Sisters, may your voices go unbroken," into my journal, the origin of the name Voices UnBroken. I contacted the organization I had been

interning for when this work began, and they agreed to serve as my fiscal sponsor. A friend of a friend offered to let me use a computer at Columbia University to write my first proposal. In 2000, Voices UnBroken received our first grant of \$2,000, which I used to buy a computer, a printer and card stock for printing brochures.

For the next five years, Voices UnBroken was my roommate; we lived together in my tiny studio apartment. That apartment hosted writing workshops, housed a resource library and was the work site for our first two staff members – two brilliant high school students who had their own set of keys and were often waiting for me when I got home from teaching. Voices UnBroken served over 1,500 people during those first few years. It is easy to be nostalgic as I write about this phase of the organization's development, but it was, in fact, a very difficult time. The apartment had no heat and, with limited funding and bit of a martyr complex, I chose not to take a salary and, instead, found myself working and teaching to the point of exhaustion.

In 2001, Voices UnBroken and I were awarded the Union Square Award. There were two awards ceremonies, the second of which was held at the Church of Saint John the Divine. I had been told that I would have to go onstage to accept the award, but I was not prepared for the crews of people who went before me – every organization seemed to have at least a dozen staff or participants accompanying them. When it was my time to accept the award, I ascended the stairs of the stage alone and stood there, alone, giving a somewhat-prepared speech and reading a few poems by my students. I could write that I felt my students' presence there that night, that they were there in spirit, but I do not want to glorify the solitary process of teaching inside and of founding an organization. The only thing I felt that night, aside from a very cautious sense of pride, was a loneliness that characterizes this work. Prison work is lonely work. This is something we do not all speak about, all of us who do this work and are shaped as much by the act of leaving prisons as we are by what happens while we're in them. Not only is teaching in jails or prisons lonely work, but so is the act of founding an organization.

What about my Board of Directors, my staff, my friends, my family, my students? With so many people 'in my corner,' how could I possibly feel alone? I used to ask myself this question, but as the organization has grown, I have come to understand that this kind of solitude has been necessary. It is important that anyone who wants to start a nonprofit organization understands that, while there are many things you can share with others, the ultimate responsibility of the organization's growth and well-being will be yours alone. It is both overwhelming and humbling to know that I have been trusted to do this awesome and important work.

That said, it was also critical that Voices UnBroken and I get our own places. In 2005, a grant from the Union Square Awards Grants Program made it possible for Voices UnBroken to move into an office/workshop space on 149th Street and 3rd Avenue in The Bronx. This move represented a new phase for the organization. In a matter of months, we hired our first program staff, welcomed community members to our office for workshops and began increasing our programs. This kind of growth required an increase in funding, which has forced me to learn new skills and develop new relationships.

Suddenly, the skills I had honed – cooking a full meal while facilitating a writing workshop in my living room/kitchen/office, crafting a budget that accurately reflected the in-kind donations that sustained us, writing a lesson plan on the hour-long train ride before a workshop, answering the phone, "Good Morning, Voices UnBroken," at 7 AM, etc. – are not the most important skills. Being a good Executive Director and a responsible Founder means embracing this challenge to learn an entirely new set of skills and to ensure that the values I founded the organization on are something we intentionally communicate to others. It is my

responsibility as the Founder and Executive Director to lead Voices UnBroken with our mission to guide us, and our participants to ground us.

As my role for the organization has changed and my time has increasingly become a commodity, I continue to facilitate the poetry workshop on Rikers that initially introduced to this work. Traveling to that rancid island has been a weekly ritual that I have maintained through even the most chaotic and emotional times. Each week, I cross the bridge that connects Rikers to Queens on my way in and on my way out – and in each direction I whisper words of thanks, for the hundreds of students I have taught and for all that they have taught me.

PART III: VOICES FROM COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES



“Yet Free” by James Wilt, an artist imprisoned in Michigan who participated in University of Michigan’s Prison Creative Arts Project (Image courtesy of PCAP website: http://www.lsa.umich.edu/english/pcap/pages/gallery/gallery_visual_art.htm)

Reflections of a New Poetry Facilitator

By Lilly Bechtel

Bechtel, a senior at Bard College concentrating in literature with an emphasis on creative writing, has facilitated poetry workshops at Beacon Correctional Facility for Women for the past three years as a volunteer with the Bard Prison Initiative (BPI). While BPI's main focus is its degree-granting college program at Eastern and Woodburne Correctional Facilities, it continues to provide creative writing workshops organized and led by undergraduate students at the minimum-security facility of Beacon.

Teaching poetry workshops have given me a sense of humility that I have not cultivated in other areas of my education. Humility as an organizer, a student, and a writer. My organizational skills have been challenged in the process of coordinating with other Bard students who are teaching the workshop, and the most valuable lesson I have learned is that what makes me feel organized and efficient in a seven day week is not necessarily what makes me feel organized when working with several other people. I have been slowly and clumsily learning that there is a point where I must let my skills end and other people's begin, if I am going to consider myself having any skill at all.

As a student, I am very used to having control over the effort I put into my work and the outcome that results. Considering myself an "army of one," whether realistic or not, has been a part of my success at Bard. This outlook does not function when I am working with other women to teach a poetry workshop. Nor does the idea that, if I just make a better lesson plan, I will get a better response from the women, something akin to them raising their faces in attentive delight, writing an epoch poem about their inner psyche in perfect meter, or thanking me for the hours of work I have done. This is not to say that a lot of thought and time doesn't go into a lesson plan for it to effectively excite and teach a varied group of women. It does. The point is that it is unrealistic for me to build a bridge between my work and the outcome of that work, because the outcome ultimately has nothing to do with me. If I am precise with the way that I approach the process of sharing poetry and how it is received, not only with the other Bard students but also with the women at Beacon, then I am missing the most exciting thing about volunteer work and poetry itself: the terrifying and messy unpredictability of it. This has been a much needed and very difficult lesson for me to learn as a college student.

As a writer, these poetry workshops have made it clearer to me that writing is essentially expression, which is essentially speaking, and speaking is essentially sound if no one is listening. Writing, for me, can be traced back to the presence of a set of vocal chords and how they change or convey what is happening in the heart and how this affects other human beings. Because of this, I have begun to consider poetry as somewhat ineffective if it is a solitary act. Bringing the group of students and women a little closer together through the sounds that words make is the ultimate magic that can occur in the class. It has been an interesting challenge to remember that I am simply trying to help the women construct the bones and feathers of their verbal wings; ultimately the goal of this process is that they can better fly in any direction that they please. In order to do this, I must listen as much as I speak and, in doing so, learn as much, if not more, than I teach. Ultimately, the process of learning to be humble is the path that all aspects of teaching these workshops have shown me. As an individual, I do not think there is a more difficult or more valuable lesson to learn.

A Play of Our Own: A Student's Perspective

By Allie Horevitz

Horevitz graduated from the University of Michigan in 2005 with degrees in Creative Writing and Literature. She currently works as a defense investigator for the Habeas Corpus Resource Center, an organization that provides legal counsel to indigent inmates on California's death row. Last year, she worked as a litigation assistant at the Prison Law Office on class-action lawsuits that sought to improve prison conditions in Californian state prisons.

In winter of 2005, I was a senior in my final semester at the University of Michigan. I had enrolled in English 319, "Theater and Social Change," led by Buzz Alexander. A class of mostly juniors and seniors, we were asked to enter into prisons, juvenile facilities, and Detroit high schools to facilitate theater workshops once a week. The workshops would ultimately culminate in original theater performances. Buzz's classes were known around campus for being "life changing." Indeed, many students who experience Buzz's classes continue on to facilitate art in prisons through the Prison Creative Arts Project, or PCAP, and often choose career paths in the vein of social justice.

Standing outside the prison in Jackson, Michigan, where my workshop partner, Matt, and I would create a play with seven men over the course of the next four months, I was not thinking about life changes. I was thinking about the knot that had formed in my gut. With Buzz's seemingly spare instructions to "be ourselves and do our best," I had no idea what to expect on the raw January evening of our first workshop. I was frightened by the sight of the barbed wire coiled high on the tall chain-link fences surrounding the prison—a world foreign to me, one which I was uncertain if I still wanted to enter, even if only for a few hours. I was unsure about how the men in my workshop would perceive me. I was worried that our workshop would fail. I was horrified and disgusted by the warden's words that warned Matt and me that the men in the prison and our workshop were "animals."

And then, into a small classroom of cement walls, they entered: the seven men with whom we would create our play. Some of the men entered with confidence, others shuffled in nervously. They were different ages, shapes, sizes and colors, but nothing like the images "animals" had conjured in my mind. We started the workshop with a few icebreaker games, which I needed as much as anyone.

Then, we talked. We talked about why each of us had come to the workshop that night. I remember appreciating the honesty of their responses, and I loved some of the stories they had to tell. Dino told us he was there because everyone told him he had a good poker face and he wanted to try his hand at acting, and I laughed. Bollingbaugh said he wanted to try something new, take a risk, and I thought: me too.

Over the next four months, we would share many astonishing and beautiful moments. There were moments of silence, tears, anger and laughter. The men challenged me to be real with them. We encouraged and pushed each other to take risks in the different roles we portrayed. In our conversations and feedback sessions, they demanded my honesty and I demanded theirs as we learned about each other through the creation of our play.

We faced our share of obstacles and hurdles in the workshop. Sometimes men entered the workshop angry or deeply saddened about the results of a parole board hearing, or they would not show up at all, and we put the play on hold. There were the power struggles within the group, the times I felt uncomfortable and self-conscious when our conversations turned in the direction of sex and women. There were the times when issues of race and crime came up

between the men and divided our workshop. There were times when men shared painful stories about their past, and I did not know how to respond, and I felt the men could see that in me.

When I faced these challenges, I returned to Buzz's original advice of remaining true to myself and doing my best, which proved to be far richer advice than I had originally understood, and helped me navigate the new waters I was traversing. Through it all, despite our different backgrounds, fears, egos and anxieties, our shared goal of performing a play together allowed us to meet on common ground.

As our weekly workshops continued, the structure of English 319 supported both our experiences in the workshops, as well as our growth as thinkers and leaders. We were asked to explore and question our opinions, each other and the world. The process sometimes left me infuriated with my classmates, or Buzz, or myself. We used class time to discuss various texts dealing with issues of social change, mass incarceration, and the significance of art as a tool for discovery and change. Outside of class, we met in small groups to brainstorm and discuss the successes and difficulties we encountered during our weekly workshops. We wrote weekly journal entries reflecting on our experiences, thoughts and emotions over the course of the class and theater workshops. Each week, Buzz responded individually to these journal entries, thus allowing for individual, penetrating conversations in written form. Of all my college writing, my journal conversations with Buzz are my most cherished.

We performed our play on two separate occasions for prison and semi-public audiences in the prison gymnasium. The play was not the masterpiece of theater I had dreamed it would be; in fact, in the actual performance, we encountered new tensions and unexpected kinks. It was ours nonetheless, created in a shared space inside a solitary world.

A friend once told me that the beauty of creative expression in a prison environment is discovering and sharing in human moments in a mostly un-human world. Presently, as a defense investigator for inmates on death row, I often return to this idea and my memories of the human moments in our workshop. The memories of those moments bring me back to the knowledge that hope and magic can be found behind high and seemingly insurmountable wall.

Connecting University Courses and Literacy Action to A Local Detention Center

By Tobi Jacobi

Jacobi is an assistant professor of English and the director of the Center for Community Literacy at Colorado State University. She co-edited a special edition of Reflections: A Journal of Writing, Service-Learning and Community Literacy (Volume 4, Number 1 Winter 2004) that featured essays and other writings on prison literacy, writing and education. Currently, she is co-editing a collection on women, writing and incarceration in the United States with Ann Folwell Stanford. In this piece, Jacobi describes her work at the Larimer County Detention Center. An accompanying piece, co-written by Jacobi and two of her students, reflects on the experience of facilitating the women's writing workshop in the detention center.

Since 2004, the English Department at Colorado State University and the Larimer County Detention Center have developed and strengthened through a shared interest in improving adult access to literacy programming. The resulting programs share this and an additional common goal: to increase public awareness of issues of incarceration and inspire efforts toward a more socially just world.

I arrived at an assistant professor at Colorado State University in Fall 2003 with a couple of years of experience teaching writing in a state prison and a strong desire to continue working as a prison teacher and literacy researcher.¹ After several semesters of false starts and ineffectual attempts to gain access to the local correctional system as a volunteer, I began working with women writers through a weekly women's writing workshop at the Larimer County Community Corrections facility. This work rapidly led to a series of writing workshops for women and girls in various stages of the county justice system. Although we have recently moved toward programming for male populations, we center our work on improving access to a range of literacy activities for women, a population that too often remains invisible within and beyond the corrections system. This commitment to women writers has resulted in biannual writing workshops, occasional special topics workshops (e.g. resume writing), locally distributed writing anthologies, and university-jail writing mentorships.

To date, I've been able to launch and develop three prison writing initiatives. I began with a writing workshop for women in our local community corrections and jail, and then developed a senior capstone course on prison literature with a community action component. One of those community action projects, the Writing Mentor Program, garnered enough interest and the potential for sustainability that it inspired transformation from a course project to an ongoing university-jail collaboration housed in our Center for Community Literacy.

The SpeakOut! Writing Workshop: This ten session weekly workshop series aims to provide a safe and encouraging space for women to express themselves through writing and through dialogue within the workshop. In addition to refining writing skills, the goal of the workshops include building self-esteem, fostering space for creativity, reflecting upon past actions and envisioning life change, and promoting community action and social change. Over the past three years, over one hundred women have cycled through the workshops and six writing anthologies have been published and locally distributed.

¹ I thank Dr. Margaret Himley (Syracuse University) for providing access to my first prison teaching opportunity and Dr. Ann Folwell Stanford (DePaul University) for her patient mentoring and friendship as she shared the design and challenges of her outstanding Women, Writing, and Incarceration Project in the Illinois corrections system.

E465: Prison Writing and Literature: In Spring 2006, I designed and taught a capstone course on prison writing and literature, a course that blended a historical and topical approach to published prison writings and included an action project requirement. The latter service learning projects were designed to help students see the complexities of accessing and achieving dominant literacy education and of producing and circulating prison writings. Students proposed five collaborative action projects: a book drive for the local detention center library, organization of a well-known prison writer guest visit, and three projects that engaged students directly with men and women at the detention center through GED tutoring, writing workshop facilitation, and as mentors in a new distance writing mentoring program (adapted from the PEN Prison Mentor Program). The results were astounding as students collected over 700 books, mentored eighteen writers, lead writing workshops, taught GED learners, and raised over \$8500 to bring renowned Latino poet Jimmy Santiago Baca to our community for a series of readings on campus and at the jail.

The Writing Mentor Program: The prison literature course strengthened our ongoing relationship with the detention center as we continue to offer the SpeakOut! Writing workshops with increased undergraduate involvement and have adapted the Writing Mentor Program into an ongoing literacy action program sponsored by our Center for Community Literacy. In 2006-2007, I worked with an English graduate student, Aaron Leff, to adapt the course assignment into a fully functioning literacy program. We have trained fifteen graduate and undergraduate students as mentors and connected them with local and national incarcerated writers to develop strong relationships based on writing.

In each of these projects, I engage as a teacher first, a researcher second. There are a wide range of issues that both inform and emerge from the trajectory of engagement with the prison arts and literacy projects described above. I've identified four of the most salient ones below, issues I am committed to recognizing and addressing through pedagogical, research, and public frameworks.

- **Achieving Access for Teaching and Research:** We currently enjoy open access to women writers at the jail through our direct and distance pedagogy-based programming. While we are committed to community teaching and intend to maintain and strengthen our programs, our commitment to increasing public awareness and contributing to prison literacy scholarship necessitates research. Limited data is collected through program evaluations, but we must have more sustained bodies of data, if viable claims are to emerge from our work.
- **Balancing Complicity and Social Justice:** As the director of several programs and a feminist teacher in and out of the jail, I am acutely aware of the tension that exists between the social justice motives of our programming and the complicities inherent in the facilities that authorize them. I have experienced a great deal of freedom from both institutions I navigate (academic and correctional) in terms of program development and facilitation; on the other hand, I recognize that I enjoy that freedom largely because of my own participation in within the boundaries they construct.
- **Engaging in Curriculum Development/Revision:** As program designers and facilitators, our primary concern is whether or not writing workshops in jail and prison can offer writers meaningful and useful tools for transitioning into spaces beyond bars. Critical and feminist pedagogies have strongly influenced our philosophical choices, but

- we also recognize the challenges they introduce. Assessing useful ways to engage in direct programming and socially just action inspires constant revision of our curriculum.
- **Sustaining University-Jail Collaborations:** The Writing Mentor Program, in particular, has made visible the challenge of sustaining university-community partnerships as we have moved from a course-based service-learning project to a departmental writing mentor opportunity. We've been grappling with issues of representation, ethical interaction, and equitable outcomes as we consider what it means to train volunteer writing mentors to work with incarcerated writers.

Finally, I'd like to close with a comment about the relationship between community and higher education. I am privileged to be a part of the English Department faculty at Colorado State University. I recognize this. I also recognize that the sense of fulfillment I experience as an engaged university professor is deeply and inexorably tied to my connections to the community. I am able and interested in teaching graduate and undergraduate courses and researching out-of-school literacy practices because of the motivated and inspired perspectives of adult learners I have had the privilege to work with beyond campus. I thank them for working with me.

Reflections on Facilitating the SpeakOut! Women's Writing Workshop

By Laura Van Etten, Emily Silva, and Tobi Jacobi

Our SpeakOut! Women's Writing Workshops are collaboratively facilitated by a university professor, a graduate student and an undergraduate student. Each week we planned and facilitated the workshops, responded to writings composed in and beyond the workshop, and collected work for the bi-annual SpeakOut! Anthology. In the dialogue that follows, we reflect upon the workshops, our subject positions, and the ethics of responding and publishing incarcerated writers.

Tobi: Each Wednesday night, we walk through a series of steel doors to reach a space we intend to represent linguistic freedom. We are excited, confident, and nervous. *Will the writing exercises inspire writing or fall flat? Will we be able to read the women's needs in ways that can be met through our brief time together (humor, empathy, expertise, vulnerability)? Will our time together be meaningful for us all?* More often than not, we depart two hours later feeling energized, proud, and hopeful about the writers and writing that has emerged.

Laura: The women come to our writing group for many reasons, and I think many struggle to figure out what's going on, how to feel out the room, the rules, the expectations, and open prompts, and might initially feel uncomfortable. During the first few sessions they often ask questions about the writing prompt that start with a tone of: "Are we allowed to...?" They want to do it right. I've seen this before in women's shelters and in psych wards as one way that those who have been identified by our social system survive. Most of the women quickly identify our group as a safe place. We work to not have rules. We work to approach this as a feminist environment in terms of power dynamics. We work to establish a space that is significantly different for 90 minutes each week.

Emily: The women at the Larimer County Detention Center who participate in our weekly workshop are there by choice and, like the rest of us, they are there to write. Writing is a powerful form of communication and they use it to their full ability. I am always amazed by how talented the women who walk through the door are. To me, they are not a last name, which is how the guards refer to them; they are writers. They tell their stories because they, like me, realize how powerful their words can be when used in the right context. Working with the women in the LCDC has made me question my assumptions about incarcerated women and the negative connotations that come with being in a detention center. Once I realized that these assumptions existed, I was able to think of the women who participate in our weekly workshops as writers.

Laura: I love going out to the detention center on Wednesday nights, but I often feel a slight resistance. I get nervous. Will there be a 'bad' guard? Will the women be resistant? Will they accept us? Will there be 'buddies' who whisper as I sit there with my control issues: *it's quiet writing time!* The resistance really isn't that much about the women who will come because I rarely feel anyone leaves with a 'bad' taste in their mouth. Still, I fear a potential resentment, or judgment. I feel guilty. I suddenly feel embarrassed of my education and my position. I want to establish, every time, the *lack* of the differences. I want to prove that I know, to some extent, their experiences, but I am there once a week for a few hours. And I am not identified as one of the 'bad' ones as we make our way down the hall. I can't say: *Oh, I understand, ladies. I've been there.*

Tobi: I feel this tension too. Each time we enter the jail we occupy multiple subjectivities. We are guards as we escort the women to and from the workshop through the silent hallways. We are co-writers and teachers in the workshop, and volunteers waiting for institutional approval in the waiting room. Revolutionaries collecting and disseminating words for change. Complicit workers enforcing rules. Experts. Novices. The list could go on forever. The important thing is that the tension remains visible and useful as we work toward balancing our weekly efforts with our larger social goals.

Laura: The writing that emerges from the LCDC workshop, “Speak Out!” reflects the diversity of the participants; there are poems and short stories, narratives and free-write that defy form or genre; the writing reflects tones of sadness, remorse, reflection, insight, joy and perhaps most often—humor. But there’s another ‘kind’ of writing that, admittedly, I have a sensitive ear for—and it gets at this tension we are discussing. It’s what I think of as ‘institutionalized writing.’ It has a tone that I’ve heard infrequently in general population writing groups, but very frequently from participants burdened by labels of deviancy or other institutionalization (youth facilities, homeless and women’s shelters). It is a familiar story: *I was bad and it was all my fault and I learned my lesson and I promise I’ll be good now, which you’ve defined for me, and if I am, I will be rewarded with a ‘good’ life.* Of course, there are positive merits for taking responsibility for our actions, but this leaves some huge components silenced. For instance, where is the ownership of responsibility from our social culture, our affluent, our middle-class, our educators, our politicians, and our community leaders? Where are they included in: *Do the crime, do the time?* Are the women ‘taking responsibility’ for historical experiences, ethnicity, economic class, and what might be simplified as ‘environmental factors’? If a woman voices this, is she making ‘an excuse’?

Tobi: This sort of confessional and systemically inspired narrative enters nearly every session we hold, and there are times when we are acutely aware of the power dynamics that intersect with our understated aims of social justice. We regularly face this through the challenge of responding to and publishing that diverse writing. I am particularly aware of the politics of language we control when we make comments on drafts since during the workshop; the writers are often quite reluctant to offer critical feedback. They are adept at offering positive commentaries, but seldom venture in the realm of criticism. We work hard to model positive and critical feedback during our time together—and in our marginal comments to the writers.

Emily: As we close each workshop, we ask the women if they would like to turn in any writing to receive written feedback. Responding to the women’s submissions is at times challenging. Most of their writing is very personal, and although it is generally very good, I struggle to give feedback that will help them edit and revise their pieces. Of the work I receive most are handwritten which gives the writing a personal feel but also contributes to an ethical dilemma I tend to struggle with. As a workshop facilitator and a responder to the women’s writing it is not my job to correct grammar or spelling, I am not responding to their usage, I am responding to their writing and their ideas. I tend to give feedback and suggestions on how to make their writing clearer by including punctuation, line breaks, or more vivid details, for example.

Laura: To circle back to the writing that emerges from our workshop, there are many women who shout out, write their manifestos, rebel against all of this, but other times I feel that I am trying to work against ‘institutionalized’ writing. We are working *against* when our workshop encourages reflection, anger and awareness of all experiences as shared and part of a much larger system. Too often, though, I hear a woman that’s been instructed to tidy up her story, silence

the feelings behind it, seek approval from a patriarchal institution, create one more divide away from self, and be told to gratefully shake the hand of her invisible oppressor.

Emily: At the end of the ten-week workshop, I put together the *Speak Out!* Journal, which included the women's work. As the numbers at the LCDC are always changing, many of the women who were there in the first weeks were not there when it came time to decide on what should be included. It was up to me to remember the work that certain women who were not able to voice their opinions wanted to be included, talk about pressure! As painstaking as it was, I spent many hours in front of a computer trying to do the women's work justice. The end result was a 44-page journal including the women's writing, artwork, and pictures, to say the least it was something to be proud of—and in December 2006, over 60% of the female inmates attended our final SpeakOut! reading. That was terrific!

Tobi: In *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (1990), bell hooks offers the margins as a place for hope, for possibility rather than despair. We see the SpeakOut! Workshops as one such "marginal" space for engaging in what hooks calls "radical openness," a opportunity to realize individual and societal change on a local level. We recognize that such work is not easy for incarcerated writers—just as it is not a simple choice for educators and students to leave the relative comfort of campus to engage in community teaching. It is not easy; rather, it is necessary.

Venus and Mars Revisited: How and Why Inmates Affirm and Act Out Traditional Gender Roles

By Irene C. Baird

Baird, a professor at Pennsylvania State University Harrisburg, has taught in the county jail using her unique humanities-based approach since 1994. In this essay, she describes her work with female prisoners initially and later males, highlighting the differences she has encountered working with these distinct populations.

I have heard some inmates musing unreflectively, almost flippantly, about how or why she or he ended up in jail, blaming “the system,” society or the ubiquitous “whatever.” Author and motivational speaker Iyanla Vanzant would respond, as she did in a tough love letter to her son, that, “There are many kinds of jails... We are all doing some kind of time. The only difference is that some of us have keys to our cells.”²

Since the fall of 1994, female inmates of different hues and ethnicities and I have met in a stark county jail multipurpose room to embark on a directed journey: to explore the “how” and “why” in order to unlock the personal cell. The guide for this journey is a non-threatening model I created in which literary content serves to introduce new world and new ways of thinking, and model new ways of being.³ The process involves reading, reflection and discussion of the traumas and their resolution of female authors of similar race, class and experience as the participants. Each inmate then selects an issue relevant to her situation, critiques and analyzes it in a written format of her choice. Clothed in baggy beige pants and tunics with huge prison letters boldly imprinted on the back – a throwback to the age of the *Scarlet Letter*, they invite us into their world, through their exploration, to see them as human beings with human issues they are trying to resolve.

Over this period of time, we have met some incredible authors whose insights from their earlier rocky journeys have provided perspectives, inspiration and direction down a different path than the one they once followed and which the inmates were now experiencing. We have parsed Nikki Giovanni’s and Maya Angelou’s poetry; we have been roused to action by Giovanni’s 70s poetry, along with works by bell hooks and Iyanla Vanzant; we have felt empathy for Patrice Gaines through her autobiography, which became our “reality show” when she was a guest in our class. We were into narrative theory before it became a buzzword. Eventually, through all of the reading, storytelling and writing, specific themes began to emerge consistently: all aspects of identity, addictions and, most frequently, abusive relationships with family, friends, lovers and spouses. The women acknowledged the damaging affects of: “growing up believing and thinking I was less than. Not loving myself”; “looking for love in all the wrong places ... the dealer that would pay my bills, or the man who would tell me what I wanted to hear”; “having children to have someone to love me when I was in despair”; “being addicted which didn’t allow me to be there for my children.” They wrote of “feeling the pain and seeing the bottom of his foot come down to meet my face”; the altercations where he ended up in the hospital and “I end up in jail”. From Gaines and Vanzant, they learned that women were not responsible for sexual abuse, that it was time to rid themselves of that guilt trip. The culture of race and class presented their own set of issues; by inviting us into their world and through their self-definition, choices and expectations, the female inmates underscored that gender is central.

² Iyanla Vanzant, *Yesterday I Cried: Celebrating the Lessons of Living and Loving* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998) 268.

³ Irene C. Baird, *Unlocking the Cell: A Humanities Model for Marginalized Women*. American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, Fall 1997.

In 1999, the prison administration allowed me to create a similar kind of program for incarcerated males housed at the same jail. The intent was to afford them the opportunity to understand the outcomes of acting out their socially constructed sense of maleness. Since these prison programs are dependent on outside funding and since local funders are concerned about the proliferation of violence, the intent of the men's program was to promote a sense of responsibility to the self, an intimate partner and the community.

My role continues as with the women: to bring in reading resources and occasionally visitors such as Patrice Gaines, and to negotiate an anonymous question and answer exchange between the female and male groups as an exercise in trying to understand female/male interaction. I am the "conduit;" the inmates own the process as their truth is being addressed.

As with the women, men volunteer to participate and there is always a waiting list. Their learning begins by reading the women's abuse writings and works by Gaines and Vanzant. In addition to graphically describing abusive relations, Gaines' books candidly detail her earlier, boyfriend-initiated drug addiction, which led to her incarceration because the males stored drug paraphernalia in her purse. Alternatively, Vanzant's *Up From Here* directs men's thinking about the root causes of their acting out.⁴ The men spend time analyzing the powerful writing of poet Jimmy Santiago Baca and Carl Upchurch, hardened criminals who credit the use of literature as a "wake-up call," a subsequent guide to impressive transformation.

In discussing and writing about their own perceptions of maleness, the men admitted they felt superior to women. Society, TV and rap gave them permission; they were entitled. There was pride in their sexuality, in fathering many children as soon as possible, "... she looked like a red apple to be picked... she could have been the first to have my baby."

The men further acknowledged that their "superior" status allowed them to refer to females in any fashion they chose. They have difficulty accepting such labeling as "abuse". In our groups, they are expected to use a women's name to acknowledge her as a human being, rather than as a possession or a thing. They recognized their behavior towards others, especially females, is learned from fathers, older siblings, their "homies," and TV. Underneath the "roar," however, they feared change; they raged at how society had treated them and some raged at having been sexually abused as children.

The inmates in my groups acknowledge that gender, with acceptance and adherence to rigidly traditional, socially constructed roles, is very central. It is inextricably woven into their sense of self, their behavior and choices. With that given, some have found that elusive key.

⁴ Iyanla Vanzant, *Up From Here* (New York: Pocket Books, 2003).

A Professor's Perspective: The Shakespeare Project at Racine Correctional Institution

By Jonathan Shailor

Shailor is founder and director of The Shakespeare Project at Racine Correctional Institution. He is also founder and director of the Program in Conflict Analysis and Resolution and Associate Professor of Communication at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.

"We are all artists, and theatre is a language. We have no better way to work together, to learn about each other, to heal, and to grow." (Michael Rohd, *Theatre for Community, Conflict and Dialogue*, 1998).

A Little Perspective

As children, we learn who we are and who we can be through play, experimentation, rehearsal and continuous feedback from a variety of audiences (this is sometimes called "socialization"). If we are lucky, we come to actually understand the "made-upness" of our everyday existence—the ephemeral and malleable nature of our relationships and identities. We may even develop a sense of confidence, and sometimes joy, in our growing ability to act in ways that produce the worlds we want to live in. The alternative to this recognition is a sense of being stuck in an already-existing reality. Most of us live somewhere between these extremes of freedom and imprisonment—feeling neither completely free to improvise the world we want, nor completely hemmed in by existing circumstances.

I was lucky enough to grow up in a family where I was encouraged to perform, experiment and dream about an almost infinite array of possible identities and adventures. I sang like a bird, made up comics like "Phoobie the Wonder Snot" and performed Marx Brothers routines with my brothers and sister. Our raucous, performance-oriented family life was then supported and amplified by the opportunities at school. My siblings and I had inspired teachers who shared with us their love of music and theatre, and who presented these arts not merely as pastimes or entertainments, but as passions, journeys and transformations.

In some ways, however, the performing arts seemed cut off from the rest of a life that was, in some ways, very troubled. Like many children, I was often misunderstood, neglected, degraded and subjected to arbitrary and frightening acts of cruelty. The arts became a safe haven: an escape from emotional violence, a place where I could relax, be more myself, and experiment with different ways of being. It wasn't until later in life that I realized that these two spheres of reality could be brought together, in fact needed to be brought together: the everyday, the tawdry, the mundane world, with all its pain, craziness and confusion, and the world of freedom, beauty, heightened experience and magical possibility. At the intersection of these worlds lies the possibility of re-visioning the world and creating new realities. Although I had intimations of this truth through much of my life, I will always be grateful to Augusto Boal and his development of *Theatre of the Oppressed* for helping me to crystallize this realization. Since my introduction to his work in the early 1990s, I have become acquainted with other theatre activists who also serve as sources of instruction and inspiration. I have taken their ideas and woven them into my own practice, a practice that permeates my life as an actor, director, teacher, consultant, family member and public citizen.

I first introduced my methods as a teaching and training tool at the university level, particularly in my classes on conflict analysis and resolution. In 1995, I had the opportunity to teach a class at a local medium-security prison, a setting that became a primary focus. Over the past 12 years, I have taught classes geared toward inmates' personal and social development at Racine Correctional Institution. I came to call my own practice *The Theatre of Empowerment*. The

overarching goals of this practice are: the empowerment of the individual through an increased sense of dignity, discipline, creativity and capability; the development of relational responsibility through the practice of empathy and establishing good working relationships; and the cultivation of wisdom through a greater awareness of the historical, social, cultural and spiritual dimensions of our shared humanity.

By telling stories, reflecting upon the stories found in books and films, and using the tools of theatre games, improvisation and sociodrama, we explore and interrogate our habitual ways of managing our lives with the aim of finding more creative ways of responding to life's challenges. This general method has been applied in many different ways. A course titled *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover* (after the title of a text by Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette) involved an exploration of the archetypal roles that all men play over the course of a lifetime. In *Clear Mind, Open Heart*, I drew upon my experience as a practicing Buddhist to teach meditation as a tool for the development of self-awareness, compassion, and emotional and mental stability. *The Shakespeare Project* is the latest in this long line of efforts. While the project focuses on the development of full-length, fully realized productions of Shakespeare's plays, it also incorporates the general themes from our earlier work: individual empowerment, relational responsibility and the cultivation of wisdom. We treat Shakespeare's texts with reverence, but not as dead artifacts. Improvisation, experimentation, reflection, exploration and increasing self-awareness are still central to our work.

The Shakespeare Project

For the past four years, inmates at Racine Correctional Institution in Sturtevant, Wisconsin have produced a full-length Shakespeare play under my direction. In 2004-2005, the play was *King Lear*; 2005-2006: *Othello*; 2006-2007: *The Tempest*; and 2007-2008: *Julius Caesar*. In a very short time, the program has received a considerable amount of positive recognition. Media coverage has included *The New York Times* story on *King Lear* (April 29, 2005), and Wisconsin Public Radio's one-hour program on *Othello Behind Bars (Here on Earth with Jean Feraca—June 17, 2006)*.

Members of the public who had the opportunity to attend performances responded positively and passionately. Regarding *Othello*: "It was stunning - Shakespeare as Shakespeare was meant to be - real, raw, and electrifying. The actor who played the lead had a powerful on-stage presence and emoted real anguish. Iago was positively Machiavellian. And Desdemona made me cry. It was by far the most memorable performance of the play I have ever seen - truly transformative" (Jean Feraca). And in response to *The Tempest*: "I think it was the best Shakespeare I have ever seen... I was so moved by their eloquence and dignified presence onstage. Most of all I was touched by their interaction with their families, and the deep emotional commitment they gave to the show. You don't find that in regular theatre very often. (Alyssa Sorresso, Graduate, Prison Creative Arts Project, University of Michigan; Program Manager, Music Theatre Workshop, Chicago).

For the inmates who participate in the program, the experience can be profound:

"Hello humanity! Welcome back! I know first hand for certain we definitely left an overwhelmingly positive impression on both the staff and inmate population. It's been over a week now and I'm still hearing compliments and congratulations. And the impression on my daughter's face is forever etched in my heart, my mind and my soul. The whole nine month process was worth that smile from my daughter and my wife."

“The very first time the dam of regret burst and let my true emotions flow. As my tears flowed I was both scared and elated about it all. I will never forget this program for giving me the tools to feel alive again.”

The Process

This is a voluntary educational program for inmates, which is advertised within the institution through the standard institutional mechanisms and by word of mouth. In order to qualify for the program, inmates must have an 8th grade reading proficiency and no major conduct reports over the 90 days prior to the start of the program. Each year, 15 to 20 inmates sign up for the program, and 14 to 17 complete it.

Meetings and rehearsals run for nine months (September through June)—at first, every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 6:00-8:30, and in the final weeks, Monday through Thursday evenings. During the nine-month rehearsal period, the prison administration assists the program by placing a hold on inmate transfers to other institutions. Inmates promise to refrain from enrolling in any new programs that would interfere with rehearsals.

On the first day of the program, participants are given a syllabus and a schedule. The syllabus outlines the following goals of The Shakespeare Project:

Cultural literacy. We will develop a sophisticated understanding of Shakespeare’s plays, in terms of context, sources, plot, character, themes, language, imagery and performance history.

Performance. We will develop *range, power, creative intelligence and flexibility* in our ability to perform as actors.

Empathy. We will *appreciate* the *humanity* of each of the characters in the play through an exploration of their hopes and fears.

Insight. We will analyze the ways in which each character connects his/her experiences to specific *thoughts, feelings, and actions*, and we will evaluate the *consequences* of each character’s behavior as s/he interacts with others.

Self-awareness. We will explore the ways in which the characters’ personalities and choices are similar to and different from our own.

Teamwork. We will work *together* by wholeheartedly *committing* our individual energies to this project, and by *listening, respecting, and supporting* each other throughout our time together.

Playfulness. We will cultivate humor, gentleness, kindness, and creativity in our work together.

We pursue these goals in a number of ways. The core elements of this process include: (1) Building ensemble and performance capability through games and acting exercises; (2) Mastering the text of the play through careful reading and re-reading, discussion and rehearsal (Scott Kaiser’s *Mastering Shakespeare* is especially useful here); (3) Viewing and discussing multiple film versions of the play; (4) Writing regular journal entries where cast members can reflect on whatever they consider to be relevant about the play, the rehearsal process or their lives.

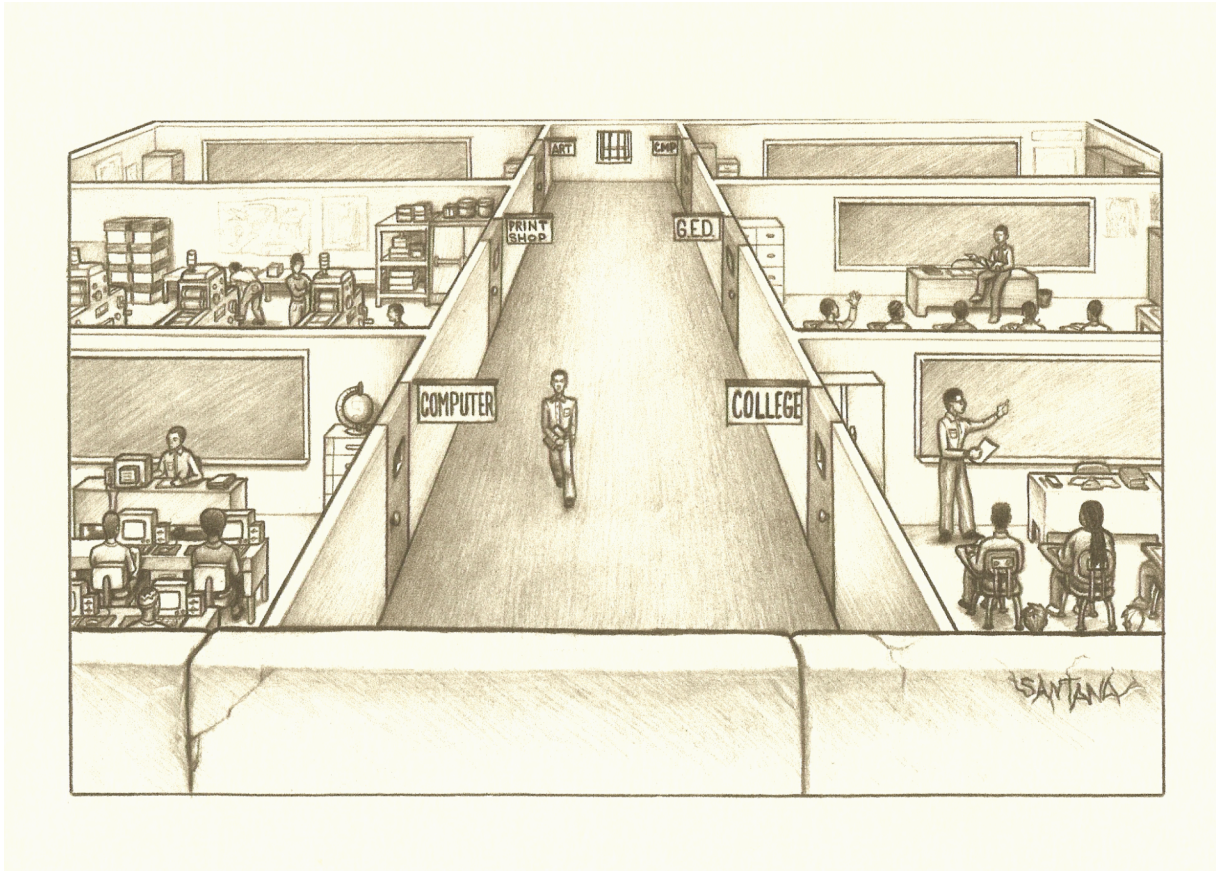
Infrastructure and Support

Although my time is offered on a voluntary basis, The Shakespeare Project is sponsored and supported by the Wisconsin Department of Corrections through an annual grant ranging from \$2000-\$2500. The Director of Education at Racine Correctional Institution provides oversight and logistical support. Working inmates, education staff and prison officers support the program in various ways. We have ongoing access to the prison library for our rehearsal space and a storage area for costumes and props. For the past two years, most of our costumes have been designed and constructed by Cotton Talbot-Minkin, a friend of the project who resides in Massachusetts. Cotton builds the costumes and ships them to us, then arrives a few days before the first performance to make alterations. My brother Christopher Shailor, who also lives near Boston, travels here each year to videotape the final week of rehearsals and performances. The videos, which are archived in the prison library, include celebratory music videos highlighting process and performance. Local organizations also support our work. The Theatre Arts Program at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside has provided support in various ways, including the loan of costumes. Also, it has become a tradition for me to travel 30 miles north to rent some old-fashioned, storm-making equipment (including rain sticks, thunder sheet, wind machine) from the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre. Shakespeare loved a good storm. Wouldn't you know it—next year's production calls for one, too.

Research and Further Development

I am currently in the process of reviewing and reflecting upon the first three years of this project, spending this year writing and publishing these reflections. This year, I also plan to visit the programs run by Curt Tofteland (*Shakespeare Behind Bars*, in Kentucky) and Agnes Wilcox (*Prison Performing Arts*, in Missouri). I welcome contact and conversation with others who are involved in prison theatre programs, and with anyone who thinks they might benefit from a discussion about this kind of work.

PART IV: WORDS FROM ADMINISTRATORS



This pencil drawing by Germain Santana illustrates the programs available in some prisons.

Arts-in-Corrections at San Quentin State Prison

By Steven Emrick

An artist, Emrick has served as the artist facilitator at San Quentin State Prison for the past five years. He has about twenty years experience working in the arts in California's state prisons and youth facilities.

My office is a 20 by 30 foot loft, which is above a 600' square foot area that makes up the Art Studio for San Quentin. Behind me is a gun walk where tower officers walk past safely above the prison yard carrying several types of weapons used to quell riots and attacks that might occur on the yard below. Looking out the front bank of windows, through coils of razor wire is the entrance to condemned row and the gas chamber that is now used for lethal injections (currently on hold due to a court injunction). Below me, the room that now provides space for painting and drawing classes, creative writing, music, printmaking, bookmaking, theater and other forms of art used to be called "Blood Alley" or the "OK Corral" because it once was a bathroom off the upper yard and a blind spot where many disputes and scores could be settled out of the eyes of staff. I have coordinated the Arts in Corrections program at San Quentin State Prison for the last five years. One hundred and fifty five years old it is the oldest prison in the state of California.

Most of my students are lifers or three strikers who have worked their way down to a medium security prison. They have survived wars, lock downs, boredom, fights, stabbings and the list goes on to get to San Quentin and the comparative freedom and programming which enrich prison life. After twenty years of working in prisons and a short stint in youth facilities I have experienced the darkest side of our society and its institutions and still am amazed by the power of the arts and the richness it brings to men behind concrete razor wired walls. The arts inside are the lifeline, the last piece of humanity and identity that many grab hold of. Men participating in the arts will cross racial, gang, and many other lines drawn in prison. When they leave the room, those lines reappear out of pressure from the culture and their own need to survive. But at least once a week for a few hours they can work together with an artist from the outside and emerge out of a shell into the discipline of their art form.

San Quentin is located in one of the wealthiest counties in California. I live in Staff housing with my poet wife and five-year-old daughter. I have the good fortune to be employed by the Department of Corrections with benefits and retirement that many artists working in prisons do not have. The trade off is that we live and work in a system that executes people, warehouses individuals in overcrowded facilities, in an environment that is stressful and hazardous. Outside of the violence, which is mostly directed between prisoners, I, like them, am exposed to tuberculosis, HIV, Hepatitis C, and many other diseases that exist in an overcrowded, high-risk population. My family is very safe in our little community away from the prison walls. My daughter gets a hug from her favorite correctional officer at the gate on her way to school each morning. The alarms and loud speakers become like trains or freeways as one soon learns to distinguish between real and false alarms and the routine calls to lock up for count and a major incident.

The key for me working in prison is to be open to inhabitants of this foreign culture. The staff and the prisoners have codes of conduct that are completely different than what an outsider might think, say, and do. After a time you learn that even behind the shadows of thick cement walls humanity exists and the men yearn for and thrive on small bits and pieces of human contact and communication that artists bring with them. The process of creating is digging deep, taking risks, and facing your weak areas dead on.

The arts offer a transforming experience that can help individuals better understand themselves, give voice to their experience, and to communicate this to others. These moments are evident when a guest artist sings a song that leaves a room of prisoners softened and speechless. The first successful drawing or painting sent home to a mother, sister, or other family and the pride that is voiced when the artist states, “won’t they be surprised I have never been able to send anything home before”. These experiences have kept me rolling the stone up the mountain of red tape and obstacles real or imagined to make another class, performance, mural, or exhibit happen. I have been able to do this with the friendship and support of Laurie Brooks and the William James Association, the nonprofit organization that piloted the Arts In Corrections programs back in the 1970s. When the program was cut in 2003 and no funding was provided for over three years, Laurie worked with me to secure grants and funding for artists to keep the arts alive in San Quentin. San Quentin is one of the only prisons that still has paid artists working inside. Four years ago, 33 prisons provided state-funded arts programs with a 2.5 million dollar budget. Today those programs solely exist on the talents and energy of the Artist Facilitators and inmate mentor/instructors. Working in the arts is about overcoming obstacles and finding a way to keep going.

The different individuals and programs that have started and exist in various parts of the country and world always amaze me. I have had the opportunity to meet many artists working in prisons in the last four years at San Quentin and find that each one was drawn into working in prison because of the strong experience the institutions and the inmates offer. They work against bias, red tape, and hatred to enter into this unknown territory of prison and the arts. It’s inspiring to hear other artists’ stories and compare notes, frustrations and the unique approach that individuals bring to this kind of work. There is a special gift and understanding that we all walk away with when we step outside the last gate into the outside once again.

Opportunity Gained

By Nathan Graves

Graves is the Activity Coordinator at the St. Louis City Juvenile Detention Center.

Time in the Juvenile Detention Center can move at a myriad of paces for the young people who reside there. It can be a time filled with locked doors, lonely thoughts and more of the same uncertainty that has become a daily routine for the many youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system. The juvenile justice system varies widely from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, across states and nation-wide; however, there are often common characteristics found among court involved youth which include low self-esteem, missed educational opportunities, family strife and most importantly untapped potential.

The juvenile justice system is intended to be rehabilitative in nature, which is why state by state during the first part of the 20th century legislatures and courts decided to separate the criminal justice system into separate adult and juvenile programs. The idea was that youth, still in their formative years, should be treated differently than adults and rational thought, physiological, psychological, and criminal justice research have all backed up that idea over the past several decades. The debate rages on though in many circles as to whether a youth's time in pre-court Detention or post-adjudication placement should be punitive or therapeutic, a consequence or a learning experience, and both sides present compelling anecdotes and statistics to further their case. For me, however, it comes down to this simple truth: that the youth who come into secure juvenile detention, regardless of their crime, will one day leave their confinement and be asked to participate as productive members of society. The questions then for our community at large, and particularly for those of us who work with detained youth, are: what will we teach our young people while they are in our custody and how will we empower them? These are the questions that guide my work.

As the Activity Coordinator of the St. Louis City Juvenile Detention Center, I have the role of providing programs and activities for the 100 or so youth who live there on any given day. Programs are a vital part of a Detention Center and successful programs fit soundly into five main objectives. The first is that programs make youth's time in Detention both stimulating and productive. Without programming, youth often spend their time idly watching TV, playing cards, sitting in their assigned positions or in their cells. Stimulation is stifled, and hopeless feelings, depression and suicidal thoughts are given more opportunity to creep into a youth's mind. Programs provide youth with important stimulation while reinforcing the need to be a productive and active person.

Secondly, successful programs provide opportunities for youth to learn and build skills. Whether it is acting class, AA meetings or time spent with a mentor, youth are exposed to new skills and ideas that can help them once they return to their community. Next is a program's ability to increase self-esteem. Programming allows youth the opportunity to be successful and creative, and to learn. When youth begin to see themselves in a positive way, their self-esteem increases and they set themselves up to make better choices. I have literally seen a youth's self-esteem increase in front of my eyes. Don't believe it can be witnessed? Come to a performance at the Detention Center, see a young person succeed for the first time ever and be congratulated by their peers, staff and families. It will bring tears to your eyes; it has to mine.

Fourth, programs provide structure to the day. When youth are engaged in programming, facilities have fewer incidents such as fights, outbursts and breakdowns. Youth typically work well within the structured environment programs provide and allow youth to count on something while they are incarcerated. Even the toughest kids excel when

expectations are clearly defined and caring staff are willing to listen, offer consistency and hold them accountable for their actions. Finally, programs introduce youth to opportunities in their community that exist outside of Detention walls. Many youth lack knowledge of the opportunities that exist in their own community or schools. Programming introduces youth to various organizations and positive outlets that can assist youth in making better choices. Whether it is discovering they are a math wiz, a budding singer, or have the ability to lead their peers, through dedicated educators and staff, youth learn about the many organizations that partner with the Center to provide programs, thus exposing them to real opportunities that could occupy their time and talents once they are released. Sometimes youth never know that a community theatre, the chess club at school or the support group they need to overcome a tragedy are available right in their own community.

Arts programs in particular touch on all of these objectives. The work of Thomas Armstrong on multiple intelligences helps explain why the arts, particularly in a Detention setting, are such a good fit. In his book, *7 Kinds of Smart*, Armstrong talks about how people have each of the seven intelligences he identifies, but all in varying amounts. The premise is that due to this, everyone learns differently and therefore we all must be aware of how we learn in order to maximize our potential. I think about this concept when it comes to arts programming. Not every child learns through lecture, notes, a blackboard and the traditional school setting. Some youth need to move, sing, abstractly fit things together and have concepts presented to them in a non-traditional way. The ability and desire to learn are there; it simply takes the right medium.

Theatre is a great example of using non-traditional methods as a teaching tool. Instead of writing the standard essay on what you did last summer break, an acting teacher will have a young person play it out in an improv scene. All of the aspects of a good essay are contained within their piece, but it took the theatre for a young person to understand just how it all fit together. In our Afro-Caribbean Dance class, students do more than just work up a sweat and learn more than just Dunham technique. The classes are fused with lessons in language, geography and culture. The same knowledge about Ghana that could be checked out of the library in book form is brought to life in an arts program that has kids moving, yet still memorizing and learning that same material.

Our Center has tried classes in drumming, dance, creative writing, acting, circus skills, gymnastics, yoga, ceramic tile murals, metalsmithing, pottery, various mediums of visual art, choir, photography, opera, graphic design, movement, Capoeira, forum theatre, playback theatre, crocheting, a DJ class, beat making and probably a few more I can't recall. Why do I break out the laundry list? To illustrate that you never know when or how a program will impact a youth, so it is imperative to present learning opportunities to youth from every angle. Limiting the field only limits your ability to make an impact because every youth learns differently. Every one of these programs produced positive experiences for young people because the teachers who led these classes were dedicated to their work and challenged their students to think, learn and create through the arts.

Of course, how do we know what arts programs to pursue in the Detention facility? It is quite easy actually; try them all. I know that sounds a bit overzealous and obviously some programs are more difficult logistically in terms of equipment and space in particular (just imagine what precautions we had to take to bring in a metalsmithing class), however, most of the time a creative mind and an administrator willing to take a chance can problem solve those issues. So how do we sift through all the possibilities then? The most important aspect is to choose the right teaching artist.

I've worked with several teaching artists at the Center and each one has their own style, demeanor and methodology. What unifies them all though is their passion for their art and their desire to work with young people in the Detention setting. Working in Detention is not the same as working at the local community center or after-school program. Teaching artists should be fully aware of the complexities that exist when taking on the challenge of working with a detained population. In comparison to the average teenager, youth in Detention Centers typically have experienced higher rates of all forms of abuse, have anger management issues, varying levels of education and literacy, higher levels of stress, depression and anxiety, suicidal tendencies and a multitude of behavior disorders - just to name a few of the intricate characteristics.

Therefore, administrators and program coordinators and planners must fully prepare teaching artists for these circumstances and choose teaching artists who understand how to deal with these sensitive variables. Of course, the practical aspects of teaching in a Detention setting can be learned but on the ground level there must exist within the artist a sincere desire to work with and commit to this population. When you begin a program in Detention, the kids often times count on it more than you anticipate. The teaching artist's commitment must match that level of expectation that the children hold.

Teaching artists must be attuned to the needs of the youth and understand the dynamics that exist for youth who are living with each other in a secure facility. Some programs and activities require that youth dig deep into their personal experiences and lives. Sometimes, that digging brings to the surface painful memories and fresh wounds. It is essential for the teaching artist to be aware of the power of their art form and what emotions their exercises may evoke. The best teaching artists are able to help youth channel those emotions into positive learning experiences, empowering youth with healthy coping mechanisms that they can use when those same feelings surface again.

It takes a special person to be a teaching artist in the Detention setting; to be sure it is not a job for everyone. Successes are more difficult, struggles are more intense and youth frequently return to your classes after high hopes of never recidivating. However, the rewards are brilliant when they do manifest themselves.

In terms of program design, a well-developed curriculum obviously goes a long way, but most teaching artists are already aware of the attention spans of teens, the need for stimulation and a variety of activities and the emotional nature of young people and can address those in their planning. I've found that one of the most important aspects of developing programming in a Detention Center is realizing that process outweighs almost any other dimension of a program. Most Detention facilities are short-term centers where kids only stay for a few weeks; therefore it is essential that classes are designed to stand alone so that youth who may only attend a class for a few sessions will still get value from their experience.

In addition, it is easy to get pulled into the trap of assuming you need to have a grand event to cap off an artist's residency. Recognition is essential to positively reinforce successes; however, setting up youth for failure with unattainable expectations must be avoided. During our choir program one summer, we decided that a big showing at the end of the 12-week program would be a great opportunity to have the kids showcase all they had learned during the classes. Two weeks before the show, several youth, including a few key members, had been released from the Center leaving only a handful of youth out of almost 30 who began the program. Of course, those few youth sang their hearts out and were rightfully proud of it, but what was lost on some of the audience who came for the final show was all the hard work and learning that took place every week during the residency. The point is that process, not outcomes, should be the driving force behind programs particularly in a short-term environment

– not exactly what most funding organizations look for when writing checks, but that is sometimes the nature of a short-term facility. What are most important are the learning experiences the kids have week in and week out, not necessarily the final product. This is not to say that evaluation based on outcomes is not essential to continually improving a program, but teaching artists and administrators should always be mindful of how they choose to measure success.

Teaching artists play an important role in the daily life of the Detention Center where I work because they bring so much of themselves to the table every time they work with youth. Because of their dedication, many youth have been impacted with positive experiences and have found their voice through the arts. Without the arts, we would have a void that no other medium could possibly fill. Arts programming has provided unique opportunities for juveniles to continue to develop as individuals and members of their community.

PART V: THE PRISONERS' PERSPECTIVES



Women at Mission Creek Correctional Center in Belfair, WA performing in Keeping the Faith: The Prison Project (Photo courtesy of the Pat Graney Company)

Poems by Alejo Dao'ud Rodriguez

Currently incarcerated at Arthur Kill Correctional Facility in Staten Island, NY, Rodriguez has participated in writing workshops with Janine Pommy Vega at Eastern Correctional Facility in Napanoch, NY, and continues to write. His poetry can be found in the collection Doing Time: 25 Years of Prison Writing edited by Bell Gale Chevigny.

A Learnt Behavior

A fetus becomes its universe.

A husband backhands his wife.

A landlord calls the cops.

A policeman really doesn't want to get involved.

A certain amount of rent is also overdue.

A job needs to cut back on hours.

A father needs to cut back on drinking.

A pregnant mother needs to read the warning on cigarette packs.

A fetus cringes in the womb.

Autumn Like Love

Autumn like love.

The beautiful fading of New England trees,

The greening orange to golden to yellow-like gray

In every branch there's a sunset dangling,

In every leaf on ground

Fallen stars cracking beneath my footsteps.

The air smells of rain.

I feel the first drops against my face

My face against the wind.

The following poem tied for first place in the poetry category of the PEN Prison Writing Contest of 2002.

Parole Board Bluez

The first time they hit him.
They hit him in the head with 24 months.
Told him it had nothing to do with his institutional record
Institutionally he'd been programmed, eh um... I mean,
Been programming quite well.
40 yrs olds with a GED, A.V.P., A.R.T.'s, I.T.P's, A.A.s, N.A.s
The whole alphabet soup on certificate paper,
Toilet paper it might as well had been
Cause it all meant shit
When he read:
YOUR APPLICATION FOR RELEASE ON PAROLE
HAS BEEN DENIED DUE TO THE NATURE OF
THE CRIME.

"The nature of the crime?" He said,
"Still? After 25 yrs?!"
"After 25 years even crime has changed its nature, man.
We're talking about days of a Tricky Dick president,
flower children, LSD,
Vietnam,
Jimi Hendrix's Star Spangle Banner
Black Power, Black Panthers, black berets
And \$2.00 bags of dope,

*I'm your Momma, I'm your Daddy, I'm that nigga in the alley.
I'm your doctor when in need, want some coke have some weed,
you know me I'm your friend your main boy thick and thin,
I'm your pusher man.⁵*

"Pusher man, pusher man,"
25 yrs ago and he still can tell you how
"Pusher man had some goooood shit, man."
He'd run up on him and say;
"Hey, cat daddy, what's shaking, man?"
Ah Yeah, my man"
See the exchange would go down
In one quick handshake and
All it took was one quick hit
And my man could fly, he could fly.
I'm talking about wings and dreams and potholes in his arms
He could fly, he could fly.
Really he was nodding on the #6 train uptown
To "PELHAM BAY!!! Last Stop!"

⁵ *Superfly, Curtis Mayfield*

“Last stop? Last Stop!
Ah man! I done missed my stop! Damn!
I missed 138th, 143rd, 49th,
Brook, Cypress... Ah Forget about it, man
That was about 20 stops ago.
Damn, now I know this is some gooooood shit, bro.
Ha.”
And he slid back inside close eyes.

Now you might’ve seen him on the subway as a dope
fiend on a train in a nod,
But he was a fucking angel on a unicorn in the blackness of the universe,
Body-surfing the colors of Saturn’s Rings
The glow, the halo,
The freaky things Venus does after she loves
She burns, she kisses your lips and
You’re a knight in shining armor,
A fucking prince, man.

Though it was more like the frog the people though of
At the smell of him, at the sight of him at the
BROOKLYN BRIDGE: LAST STOP!
“Last Stop? Last Stop! Ah, man, I did it again?
Nah, unbelievable.
I’m at the other Last Stop.
Ain’t this some shit, man?
3rd Ave., 125th, a hundred and ...
Ah fuck it, man, I missed a WHOLE borough.
Ain’t there ever no middle stops or
WARNING stops on this bad boy? Nah.
They only got last stops: PELHAM BAY last stop!
BROOKLYN BRIDGE last stop!
The whole world LAST STOP!
That’s all this is.
An underground rat maze, no way out, no beginning, no end.
Just turn around and start going back the same way in reverse.
Your life coming to the end of the line?
Stop and go back the same way in reverse
This way the last stop will always be the first.
Reverse the universe.
Can you dig it?! I’m a fucking philosopher, bro!
Can you dig it? CAN YOU DIG IT*TT*!!!”
He knew no one was listening to him though,
But did they know,
They were merely people on a train.
He was Superman in his cape
Flying like a mug w/ no Kryptonite in sight. Until, until,

Until he starts coming down,
He starts coming down,
Until he gets cold,
He starts coming down
until he gets the shakes, he gets cold,
He starts coming down
he starts coming down
All balled up
In the hallway
At the front of a tenement building apartment door
The shrine the altar he kneels before
Waiting to be fed Holy Communion in a cellophane wrapper
Form the hands of a *Superfly* priest/god
He confesses;
“Check it out, bro, I’m sick, man, real sick
let me get 2 for 3, bro.
I know I’m a little short right now
But I’ll get it back to you tonight. You know I’m good for it.
Come one, man, I’m sick, man?”
But all he did was to summons the wrath of Thor
His 3 dollars snatched from his hands to the floor
A snubnose nickel plate to his face and a
“What the fuck did I’d tell you about coming to my pad, like this, huh?
I ought to shoot your junkie ass tight here!”

See, he just had the shakes, see.
He didn’t mean no harm, see.
He was just a little jumpy, you know and
It was only a natural reaction to smack something away
From your face when it’s shoved it it like that.
He didn’t even realize the fun went off when it did.
But it did, see.
(And the ricochet took a chunk out of the open apartment door).
All he wanted was a couple of bags, man,
Instead he got a .38 shoved in his face.
And found him self pushing away at the barrel to keep
it out of his mouth.
He never even held a gun before,
Shit he was only 15 and dope fiend
And there he was wrestling with a piece
Like a scene from a Western movie. (And

Until this very day he can’t tell which of the two
That it was that emptied his soul
The click of the trigger or the powwww
of the shot that rung his ears
The click of the trigger the pow of the shot
The pow of the shot that rung his ears) And

Superfly's eyes looked so soft as he melted
Down the side of his leg.
“Ah man, get up! Get up, man! Stop playing, bro.”
Pulling at *Superfly's* collar, he
Never though he'd see a god cry.
But God cries.
He didn't have to think about what to do next, only he
Never thought about closing the dead man's eyes shut
Before he went digging through his pockets
“Damn, only 4 bags! There's gotta be more, right?
Right youstupidmotherfuckeryou!”
He added youstupidmotherfuckeryou
Because he heard someone say it once
And it sounded really cool
YOUSTUPIDMOTHERFUCKERYOU!
As he *Superfly* stepping over him and inside the open
apartment door-
Way quiet. Wood floors creak.
He always remembers it the same way
The wood floor creaks and there's a doll on the floor
lying
In a puddle of Black Cherry Kool Aid
Well that's what it looked like at first glance
Until he looked again...and
“Ah man, noooooooooo!”
The little doll couldn't been more than 2yrs. old.
She looked just like her father

The second time they hit him
They hit him in the head with 24 mos.
Told him it had nothing to do with his institutional record, institutionally
He had been programmed – eh um I mean programming – quite well.
Still the decision sunk in like welfare peanut butter,
Knotting everything up inside.

“What they say, Pops? They
Gonna' cut you loose this time, right?”

Pops is what the young ones call him now.
They may be 18, 19, 20, sometimes 16 yrs old.
“Nah,” he answers back with his face up against the bars
“It says that I'm a threat to society.” And,
Just like that everything went quiet. He got up and
Turned off the lights.

No one ever hears a man crying in the dark.
Sighs and sobs muffle just right when done into a pillow.
Flush every toilet when wailing of blowing the nose gets too loud.

Everyone knows prayers are for suckers and
He ain't never been no sucker, so he'll just
Wait until everyone's asleep. Hell,
He's not even sure he believes in God, but S
Since all the other old times have gone
him and God are the only ones still around from the old school.
Yeah, no one ever hears a man crying in the dark, but everyone knows
The third time they hit him, things just went all wrong. See,
He'd been reading those self help books
On how to take control of his life.
This time he would speak instead of being spoken to.
Why couldn't he ask a few questions? "Mr. and Mrs.
Parole Board: How do you see
A man's future by looking at his past? Better yet,
How do you determine
Remorse by meeting with a man
Three times in the last twenty-nine years,
For the sum total of twenty-seven minutes?
Were you even born twenty-nine years ago?
Wait!
Wait a minute!
Why can't I ask
A few questions?
This is MY LIFE!"

This time when the notice of decision came around
He didn't even open it and
Nobody even bothered to call out to ask what happened.
They knew like he knew.

He got up
And turned off the lights.

From Student to Teacher: The Perspective of a Prison Poet

By Spoon Jackson

Jackson, a prisoner at California State Prison Sacramento, participated in writing workshops with Judith Tannenbaum at San Quentin in the 1980s. He continues to write poetry and articles, which have been featured in various publications such as The San Francisco Chronicle, The Progressive Magazine and Prisoners Express as well as his website www.spoonjackson.com. Jackson currently teaches creative writing to his fellow prisoners through the Arts-in-Corrections program at CSP-Sacramento.

I realized early in my prison journey that we were all students because of all the time in a day we had to study and ponder things. Later on, I came to realize that we were all teachers also. The teaching part of me did not come into my full consciousness until I learned from Judith Tannenbaum, Diana Henning and others in their writing groups. I have come to believe you can learn from anyone or thing – a stone, a sparrow, a dog, a cat – silence, pain or a dream. Everything has something to offer when you are open as the sky.

Long before I found out I was an artist, I gleaned I was a student of life – through books, reflections and observations. In prison, I have more time in a day than teaching artists and people in general in the free world - time to read, write, study and ponder. Time moves passed you so fast in the free world. Physical freedom allows you to bounce from one thing to another, often before you have completed one task. In prison, after a couple of hours of moving around, if you are not on lockdown, your physical freedom has ended, leaving 20 or more hours in a day. I believe in using this time to create and to build bridges to the free world.

Hopefully, my students learn that their responsibilities to self, family and friends are to be the best that they can be, even if they never become a published poet or writer. My hope is that writing about their lives and selves helps them find their true niche. I don't think anyone's true niche is to be incarcerated. Most of my students are eager to learn and grow. Some have already been writing and longing just for fellowship and a place to hone their skills.

Through the writing process, each person comes to see himself without lenses, blinders or filters. I hope my students see themselves in a richer and deeper way. Often, something their mom or dad said that could have kept them out of jail and that they did not understand before, now appears obvious and as true as sands under their feet and birds in the sky after they stop and reflect.

I stress to my students over and over again that we have more time in a day, even more time in a moment and a year. I do not accept that a student is too busy to write. If they are not writing, they chose not to. Compared to artists in the free world, who often must go to a retreat, a writer's colony or a cabin somewhere away from everything, writers in prison must go to a spot inside – a sacred or secret place, yet it can be everywhere – a sacred area inside to bring forth the powers and the realness of our creations.

The challenge I faced transitioning from student to teaching artist was to know what I am speaking about, especially when it comes to the technical aspects of creative writings – things you can learn by repetition and practice. For instance, I had to learn my way around words, diction, language and grammar – sentence and paragraph structure. I had to learn the language of writing, and make it the foundation and a part of me. But then I had to let all the structure go to build or to get out of the way of my poetry or my stream of consciousness.

However, there are tools one can use to mold the text – the figurative language, structure and form. I remember my mentor Judith stressing you must show and not tell in your piece, especially poetry, and the way you do that is by embracing the powers of the figurative language

available to you. I stress that belief to my students because most everything a teaching artist uses is their style and voice to inspire their students.

I learned from both Judith and Diana that if I did not know something or had forgotten something that it is okay to go to a dictionary or reference – any book to clarify and understand a point – to discuss things out with the group until understanding is reached.

I carried that belief and devotion over to my two creative writing classes. I think it is important to be willing and brave enough to admit you don't know or forgot something, and to research to find the answers. Over time, I have learned quickly how and where to go in a book for needed answers. I have my group help sometimes, handing out dictionaries and reference books. I make sure the student who asked the question helps in the research. I explain denotative and connotative meanings.

Just recently, one student asked what the difference is between poetry and prose. I explained what I have come to know as the difference between poetry and prose, which seemed a bit abstract, so we went to the books. I could see in the student's eyes that lights had been turned on. The desert that was bare now had some seeds watered – some new understanding.

I told my class first that everything that is not poetry is prose - songs, plays, fiction and non-fiction. We read, discussed and pondered the denotative meanings of both poetry and prose. For me, I had to say that poetry comes from a sacred, often mysterious place and that one must be able to get out of the way for the flow to happen, so that the poetry can come the way it needs to. I mentioned that everything can be poetry, but everything is not poetry. I let my students know that prose can be a real and vibrant art form.

For me, I must stand back out of the way to “feed the fire” – to allow the poetry to come out organically and in one's own unique voice like an unaltered underground river surfacing where it needs to – the valley, the mountains, the meadows or the desert.

When I was a teacher's aide, I used the “guided tour” method I learned from Judith, where I encouraged a student to speak in his own way and I write down what the student says. Sometimes great prose or seeds of poetry came out.

I remember that Diana stressed how to leave some words or phrases out of a poem or prose piece, which allows a reader or listeners to step into a text from many angles and levels. She taught me how to use understatements, to allow people into a piece. People must be able to step into your work however they need to. Diana also introduced me to annotating poems and using examples to back up any statements I made. Sometimes, I have my classes verbally and on paper annotate poems using the language of writing terms and supporting examples.

My style differs from Judith and Diana in the sense that I have taken what they taught me and often put my own twist on it. I sometimes combine lessons from both Judith and Diana. I stress to my students the importance of taking the exercises and keep working on them – the text may turn into something.

It is a real blessing and honor to facilitate workshops, to be a teaching artist, and to have the respect of my students and also of teaching artists from the free world whom believe in what I do. There are even some prison officials that believe in the transforming power of the arts.

You must put the personal out there in your work and in your workshops. It is okay to put yourself out there when being real. Most likely, you will get the realness back. It is important to be venerable as an artist to show that the universal is personal. We all have a common human landscape: inspiring each other in awe. It is okay for the sun to be just a sun and also a star among billions of other stars.

Writing from New Folsom: Work by Spoon Jackson's Students

Participants in Spoon Jackson's writing workshop at California State Prison – Sacramento wrote these poems and other pieces. Jackson and his students are working on creating an anthology of their writing.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is said to be a faded memory, a lost thought that no longer occurs.
But I don't care what is said. And I don't care what is though.

Though it's true that day after day and year after year, for years and years on end
they try to kill rehabilitation and creation, with condemnation and correction.

But year after year they still fail to obliterate the passion of an artist's soul.

And I hear rehabilitation day after day and year after year.

I hear it in the scratching of pencils across paper, I hear it in the newly formed notes on an
instrument that still remains, and I hear it boldly announced in the poet's words.

To hell with rehabilitation is dead.

I and many other artists will not be denied the god given gift to create and to dream. To escape
the confines of correction on the wings of our passion.

So when there is a flute, a pen, a paintbrush, a guitar or any other artistic paraphernalia in our
hands we are examples of rehabilitation.

No longer in need of condemning or correcting.

Rehabilitation is found in an artist's passion to create.

Rehabilitation lives. It lives in me and in every other artist
who, in spite of this place,
Still exercises the god given gift to be an artist.

--Rick

“...Do not judge me by the color of my skin, but by the content of my character...”

It's the early 60s
The future is looking iffy
I see a million “colored” faces
How many are here with me?
The state of Alabama
Is draggin’ us down further
They say “peaceful resistance”
Where enemies commit murder
I got my rifle
I stand firm right here beside you
You don’t see the point
In killing for freedom, homie,
But I do.
Insightful still –
And there’s a time to kill
I’m like a Brown Malcolm Little
But now I find you real
Until the day
You hear the President Sing
At Capital Hill
“All men are created equal”
I will eagerly spill
Blood for the love of the people
Cause I believe too
Many of us have died
For the white side of the eagle.

--Glica

Poetic Dreams

Wake up!
Smell the coffee.
Dammit, take a nice long look at the world.
Look at the destruction of our nation.
Not the American nation, but the Afrikan nation.
The dominant structure of the human society.

They've fed drugs to our
 Brothas
 Sistas
 Moms
 And Pops
Causing them to forget their intended purpose
 which is to
 Lead
 Nurture
 Direct
 And Guide.

Our nation is slowly diminishing to nothingness.
We no longer have teachers in our homes that we can depend on.
Hell no! It's not just Afrikans
Who have lost the insight of our forefathers
Who shed blood for our so-called freedom;
Our teens are now focused on destruction,
territorial dominance and hate.
Instead of strengthening their minds
 making rights out of wrongs
 and allowing themselves to grow.
Seeing into the future
 I see babies teaching their parents
 the new world order.
In the new world, drugs are taboo
and leaving kids to fend for themselves
 is punishable by social castration.
If being taught by our offspring doesn't open our eyes
then it's too late for spiritual and mental growth.
World War III has arrived and who's fighting?
Not our moms and pops, but the offspring.
Trying to ensure that moms and pops can
continue to use drugs and abandon our little brothas and sistas.
The new world order is peace and harmony to all.
We are all brothas and sistas
 Black, White, Brown, Red and Yellow.
Unity, prosperity and a universal love for all.
Good night all...
 I'll see you all in my poetic dreams.

--Smokey

“The day begun...”

When the first hint
of early morning
shows its face
without a warning
when the eyes of fate
dance in first light
dreams spin away
with receding night.

When the first thought
turns on its wheel
casts its lots
in winter chill
When the first breath
is deeply taken
and webs in head
are outward shaken

Then and only then
has the day begun.

--R. Dean Morris

In the Way

When I feel what I feel
and I want you to understand,
all I have is words
and the words get in the way
of what I want to say
about the way that I feel.

Perception, intention;
your perception, my perception
what is the intention, no deception.

With consultation,
perspiration, limitation, frustration,
heart palpitation, precipitation,
purification, persuasion on occasion
and the words still get in the way.

When I feel, what I feel,
in passion, compassion
I want you to understand
all I have is words
for what I want to say
about the way I feel
and the words get in the way.

--J.B.

Dreams

Dreams I've had, dreams I've seen
Unrealistic, impossible yet time will reveal.
Mammals, insects and reptiles
 cold blooded or warm
 all will come to know one.
Speak, preach and seek to comprehend
 the world at hand.
Cartoonish fantasy, unbelievably believe
 open doors or shut
 all leads to one seed.
How many steps will it take,
 how many breath will one wheel?
Who knows, if not his own he counts,
 Rough or smooth all will choose
 still at the end none will comprehend.
These dreams is to be seen
 by all who dares open
 themselves to the unknown
 for fear has no home....
--Vue

Three Strikes

I'm doing a life sentence
Behind the three strikes provision
I know what I did wasn't right
But the courts were wrong for giving me life for stealing a bike.
America claims to be a free country
But that's a lie
Just like this fake ass democracy
Because America incarcerates more people per capita than communist countries.
Someone challenged the three-strike law in the highest court in the land.
But them Supreme Court justices voted seven to two to let the law stand.
--Kirkton P. Moore

Sacrifice

This page mocks me,
daring me to give it the touch of ink.
Deriding my inability to interpret my own thoughts
and my total lack of experience in such things.

So I wrestle with this pen
in an agony of self-exploration
on cold white pages
that wear an empty expression.

But whatever thought it is I had planned to save
has once again failed me
and flown from my grasp...
No longer my own to hold
for ideas are a privacy I forfeit with a pen.

Still the black ink pours out and out in sacrifice
like a wound that refuses to be healed.

But no matter how many gallons of blood I spill
the pages will never get their fill.
Parched parchment swallowing my every drop of thought
in delight at the torture I've put myself through.

To think that I could give voice
to the inexplicable self
in an embodiment of ink
is a useless task.

Every shade of emotion, thought and perception
is proven false once I think it's written.
As if I could continue my mind to a simple definition.

And though I've writhed under the labor
of failure for so long,
I refuse to let it be my epitaph.

I'll continue on and on with my quest
to quench the thirst of paper for thought.
Even though I know that
it's intimacy I surrender in ink.

With cruel pages peeling laughter
at the heap of hollow letters I've presented
as a monument and an offering
to the gods of self deception.

--Ben Winter

Germain Santana: A Short Biography

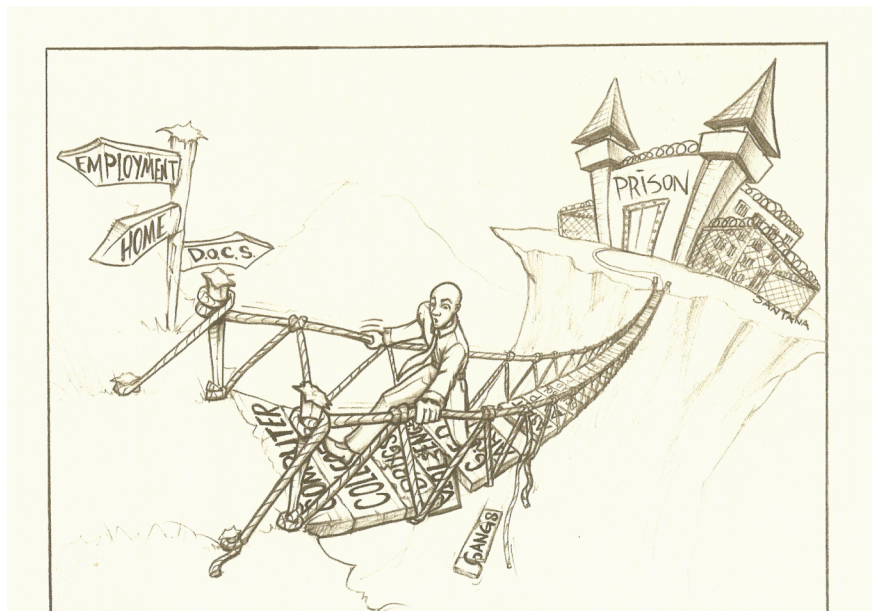
Germain was born in the New York City borough of the Bronx in 1976. Though he spent most of his youth adapting to the constraints of the inner-city protocols of the Bronx, he was fortunate to have traveled and lived during some of his youth in places such as Florida, Georgia, and Kansas. However, as fate many times mandates, he eventually returned to New York by default of parental agreement.

Back in the city, culture shock had set the stage for Germain's eccentric perspective and approach to life. Not being able to fit in comfortably with city-life norms, he sought refuge in hobby that his mother, Carmen, influenced him with: drawing. Though his mother was not an artist per se, her drawings entertained, comforted and inspired Germain as a child. Seeking that same experience in his teenage years, he began drawing in what seemed to be a step above the beginner level. To accompany his hobby, he collected comic books that served not only as inspiration and as reference, but also as the means by which he took his drawing skill to new heights. From drawing in comic book style, he moved to drawing live models, then from his imagination.

Nevertheless, a variety of social, cultural, economic, and familial dysfunctions had stunted his artistic growth for several years: his parents separated, the street life had become appealing, negative peer-influence took hold; the need to "get a job" was explicit, etc. Consequently, interest in art faded into the background while teenage exploration took the fore.

By the age of 18, this exploration took a turn for what appeared to be one of the worst-case scenarios: incarceration.

However, what appeared to be the worst brought out the best in Germain. Not long after his imprisonment, he returned to drawing full time despite his stressful circumstances. Within several years he had developed a style of his own and published some of his work. Germain has illustrated pieces for websites, magazine publications, novel covers, CD covers, prison newsletters, and a few advertisements. Along with honing his skill in art, he developed himself in the academic field as well, earning himself a GED, an Associates' Degree in the Liberal Arts, tentatively a Bachelor's Degree in Behavioral Science, and various other program certificates. Awaiting his parole hearing 2010, Germain prepares himself for his eventual release and career in the art world.



This pencil drawing by Germain Santana reveals his visual style and also the sociopolitical issues that he tackles through his art.

Words on Art

By Germain Santana

Most of my artwork, whether thought of by me or not, expresses my experience and perception, be it in concept or execution. When I approach a piece, I always consider a way to put myself in it. This, I think, is the significance of having a distinct style. One's Style is one's perception and identity. With it, one is present in the artwork. Therefore, in my artwork you will see my presence – some reflection of my experience, travels and story; my illustrative style reflects my experience as a child who loved comics; my political work reflects my recognition of the power and influence of political systems, etc. Along with this, I perceive art as a means of returning what I have taken from the world. I hope to give back through possibly inspiring, creating opportunities for, and/or educating others. Hopefully, I can create the opportunity for others to free themselves from the limitations of the world.

I do not consider what I do to be artwork, a craft, a hobby, or any other label or category that I can think of. Likewise, I do not consider myself an artist. This is because names and titles are limiting. True “artists” are not bound by any limiting titles and cringe at any thing that makes them appear limited. Art is not just a means of expression, but is a means of liberation. It can serve as a therapy for pain and confliction, freeing us from that which binds us, whether subjective or objective. Art is a philosophy for living and perceiving existence. As a self-taught “artist” I recognize the importance of perceiving and learning the world for one's self. Without this, we live vicariously and are unable to see through the smog of social definitions and limitations.



This 2005 pencil drawing by Santana shows his interest in political issues like power and the influence of political system.



"Burning Liberty," Pencil drawing by Germain Santana



"Prison in Mind," Drawing by Germain Santana, 2003



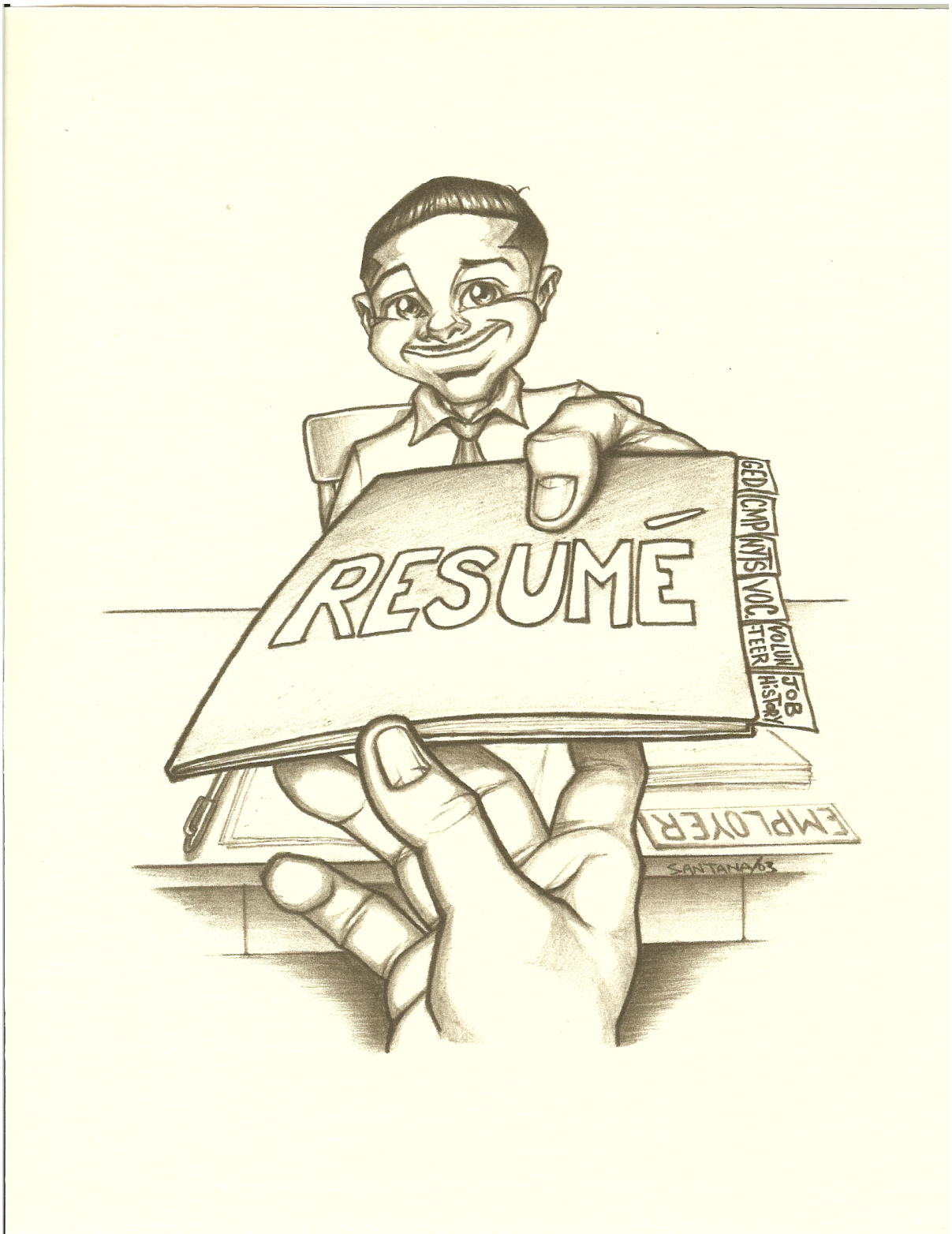
"Self Development," Pencil drawing by Germain Santana



“Loved Ones,” Pencil drawing by Germain Santana



"Comedy and Tragedy," Pencil drawing by Germain Santana



“Résumé” Pencil drawing by Germain Santana, 2003

Epilogue: So, You Want to Start a Prison Arts Program...

Advice from Experts in the Field

This project developed from a place of frustration. I was an eager college student longing to start a creative expressions workshop in New Jersey's prison for women. My peers and I had no idea of what we were potentially getting ourselves into. We were filled with questions and enthusiasm for this work, yet we had little, if any, practical experience. Now, over a year later and in a very different context, I have an opportunity to ask experienced practitioners in the field of arts in corrections for advice and suggestions. These questions are based on inquiries I had while trying to start a program, as well as questions asked by college students, artists and others who have recently begun facilitating workshops. My hope is that the following advice will be a tool for other students, artists, activists, or organizations interested in creating artistic opportunities in correctional settings.

Artists and educators who have been facilitating workshops in prisons since the 1980s can provide a wealth of information. From their years of working in correctional facilities, writing about their experiences and researching other arts in corrections programs, they have accumulated a diversity of knowledge and practical advice. This roundtable discussion is an attempt to tap into this well of wisdom and disseminate the information they have gathered through experience and reflection on the field.

This dialogue features three notable figures in the field of arts in corrections. These individuals have often spoken at national conferences about arts in conferences, and have written about their work in publications like *Teaching the Arts Behind Bars* (Northeastern, 2003) and the Community Arts Network website. Buzz Alexander, a professor of English at the University of Michigan, founded the Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP) in 1990. Alexander teaches courses in the English department that train students to facilitate arts workshops in state prisons and juvenile facilities and Detroit high schools. In addition to the workshops offered through the courses, PCAP, as a student/faculty/community organization, provides collaborative arts workshops in prisons, juvenile facilities and other settings. The Carnegie Foundation recognized Alexander as the 2005 Professor of the Year. Since the beginning of PCAP, Alexander has been involved with a theater group inside of the women's prison. Alexander has also served as the co-curator for PCAP's annual exhibition of art by Michigan prisoners, which is now in its twelfth year. A strong believer in the importance of collaboration and sharing of resources, Alexander organized the Blue Mountain Group to End Massive Incarceration in the late 1990s, which met through 2001.

Grady Hillman is a poet, writer, folklorist and translator who first became involved with "arts-in-corrections" when he did a creative writing residency in the Texas prison system in 1981. Since then he has worked in more than 50 correctional facilities in Florida, California, Massachusetts, Colorado, Idaho, Oklahoma, Texas, Peru and Ireland. In 1991, he co-founded the Southwest Correctional Arts Network. Hillman has published extensively in the area of community arts and humanities programs. In 2002, he published *Arts Programs for Juvenile Offenders in Detention and Corrections: A Guide to Promising Practices* for Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the National Endowment for the Arts. Currently, Hillman serves as a consultant for developing programs in correctional institutions.

Judith Tannenbaum is a writer and a teacher who currently serves as the training coordinator for San Francisco's WritersCorp program. She has taught poetry in urban, rural and suburban public schools through California Poets in the Schools, and at San Quentin and other state prisons through Arts-in-Corrections. Her memoir, *Disguised as a Poem: My Years Teaching*

Poetry at San Quentin (Northeastern, 2000), is based on her experiences as a contract artist and an artist-in-resident at San Quentin in the 1980s. Tannenbaum also wrote and edited: *Memo: Arts* (California's Arts-in-Corrections' newsletter), their book length *Manual for Artists Working In Prison*, and the *Handbook for Arts in the Youth Authority Program*. The manual, available at <http://www.judithtannenbaum.com/Novella.pdf>, addresses many of the issues raised in the questions below. Poetry by her prison students and other useful links can be found on her website www.judithtannenbaum.com. She has taught in prisons across the country, and has been keynote speaker and on panels at many conferences on prison and prison arts.

I thank Buzz, Grady and Judith for their participation in this dialogue. Newcomers to arts in corrections benefit immensely from their expertise in this field and their continued dedication to enhancing the connections between individuals and organizations working in prison arts.

1. How do you establish a rapport with the prisoners when the workshop first begins? What types of activities work well when initially beginning a workshop?

Grady: I typically come into an established art or writing workshop as a guest artist, so some biographical info about me is generally in order. I start with my professional writing and research credentials, and this piques interest and generally begins discussion. I've worked in prisons around the U.S. and abroad, so there's often curiosity about other programs and how they operate. Depending on time constraints and what I've been brought in to do, I'll segue the discussion into a writing exercise. In long-term residencies, I begin every class with a three-minute free write—a warm-up—which isn't shared with the class but kept or tossed away as the participant wishes.

Judith: The advice I always hear, and this advice seems good to me, is “be real.” Be yourself. In terms of activities, there are many possibilities but one I think works well is to share your own art work – give a poetry reading, bring in slides of your artwork, play your trumpet (if you can bring these inside). This sharing works both to let prisoner students know something about you – your artistic interests, values, curiosities – and to show your expertise in the art form you're there to share/teach/encourage.

If you're going in as a college student, before you may have developed your own art, I still think it's a good idea to share some work. Read a poem you love, or describe a painting that moves you.

Buzz: We don't come as teachers, but as people entering a common creative space with the prisoners; all of us, facilitators and prisoners, entering the space bring our personalities, talents, skills, and histories, and with that, working collaboratively, we will create a theater piece or build a challenging, vulnerable, risk-taking poetry workshop. We also get to work – the best thing to overcome all the differences of race, class, and gender that are between us and most of the prisoners (my students are afraid the prisoners will think them to be elite, privileged, naïve students, and the prisoners are afraid that these people from the outside have already condemned them and think of them as criminals), is to have a creative task. Knowing that we're all risking on a play, writing or art gets everyone comfortable right away. It is also very important to be honest in everything: that is highly appreciated.

We have specific activities, but generally, the important thing is to have a lot of fun the first several sessions, move around, be foolish, do games (acting, writing, art), get loud and wacky. This relaxes people, and equalizes everyone. Then – while not leaving the wacky and fun entirely behind – get to the work.

2. **One thing I have often heard is the only thing that is consistent about working in correctional settings is its inconsistency. What advice would you give to people starting to facilitate workshops in a prison, jail or juvenile detention center to be prepared for the unstable nature of the environment? How would your suggestions vary for different settings, such as long-term prison v. short-term jail or receiving center, adult facility v. juvenile detention center, male prisoners v. female prisoners?**

Grady: Hmmm, the latter question - the compare/contrast - is worthy of a book. I think a very important thing to do before going in is for the artist to be introduced to staff and the roles and responsibilities of artist and staff be addressed and identified, especially when it comes to classroom management. Most of the hassles artists complain about relate to staff issues, but once you begin to explore the issue with staff, they oftentimes don't know if the artist is a volunteer, a teacher, or a staff person, too. It's important for staff to know the artist is being paid and is being held accountable as part of the correctional or treatment philosophy of the institution.

Lockdowns, having students removed or held out from the classroom for institutional purposes, artist supply issues, not being able to get in to teach because you're not on the daily memo—there is a wide variety of “stuff” that can interrupt or derail a workshop. Some of it is natural for correctional facilities—you can't do anything about a lockdown—but many interruptions and hassles can be mitigated or at least understood by having a defined and communicative relationship with staff.

Buzz: You cannot be arrogant or uppity or impatient. You must be very clear with yourself and with the staff from the start that you are going to comply with all rules and regulations. You have to remember that the jobs in these places are hard, full of friction on all sides and often disturbing, and that people's lives are affected. Your role is to offer everyone your respect, to be friendly, informal and chatty, and to say thank you a lot: that paves the way and gets you into your workshop, which is where you want to be. Sometimes you have to walk away. Sometimes you have to figure how to get things done that the setting and people in it aren't letting you do, but you've got to figure out how to do it without jeopardizing the workshop. That's the key thing: the prisoners and the opportunities to create that your workshop offers them and you. Keep that in mind. Take a deep breath; come back the next week. If you've lost prisoners to the hole or a transfer or whatever, just regroup and go on.

Judith: The best advice I've ever heard was that given to me by Jim Carlson, the artist-facilitator at San Quentin when I began teaching there. Jim said something like, “the key to this work is to both stay focused on what it is you intend to do, and at the very same time to know you'll never get it done in the way you plan.” Jim – who has facilitated art programs in prisons for over 20 years – has recently reduced this advice to two words: “tenacious patience.”

3. **How would you generally structure a workshop in terms of class time, exercises, and culminating projects? Would this structure differ depending on the type of the facility, the general traits of the population in your workshop, and the prisoner's average length of stay?**

Judith: It's important, of course, to go in with a structure, but the particulars of this structure can arise from your own tastes and style, as well as the expectations or limits placed by prison officials. In the best of all possible worlds, it might be useful to set a time period (a 6-week workshop, a 12-week workshop), and to decide what you plan to cover in that time period (for a beginning poetry workshop it might be sessions on image, sound, line, voice, etc.) and to decide if you're going to have a final project (an anthology of poems, an art show, etc.).

In practice, though, it's like this: class might occur at the same time as prison jobs or med lines or visiting, which means students might show one week, and not the next. There might be a lockdown; one unit might be delayed and get to class an hour late; in a lower security institution, there might be lots of turn-over; in California at least, students of one race might be locked down while other students are able to attend class. Etc. In other words, Jim's advice again applies. Be prepared, and at the same time know that things are likely to take an unexpected turn.

Grady: In juvenile facilities or other institutions with a high degree of transiency, the artist has to develop a curriculum where each workshop produces a satisfying product or at least a defined step in the process of creating a completed product—such as producing a complete pinch pot one workshop, glazing it in another.

In my long term workshops, particularly with adults, the men or women had defined their own writing projects—a screenplay, a novel, a book of poems. I made sure they had time to share recent work with the group and get feedback every class.

Buzz: Our semester-long theater workshops begin with games and improvisations for a couple of weeks. Then we'll do something like a conflict improvisation based on stories they come up with, just one-on-one, so that they're thinking about conflict and plays based in reality. The next week we ask for their ideas for a play. After some suggest ideas, we ask them to put up the first scene that comes to mind and we look at it. If it catches, we begin to build the play scene-by-scene, character-by-character (character interviews are key in plot-building). By the end of the semester, we have an improvised play lasting anywhere from twenty to forty minutes. Much of this is more difficult with incarcerated youth, because of the chaos they like to produce, but it still works.

In our on-going workshops, we simply begin with ideas for the next play after a play is completed. A play can take anywhere from ten weeks to a year to produce. Our longest plays are an hour and forty-five minutes of well worked-through scenes and plots based in improvisation. It doesn't matter how long a prisoner is staying; if someone leaves, he or she has created a character, and someone steps up and takes on the character, including the night of the performance.

4. **Many students in a prison, juvenile detention facility or jail have other needs, such as re-entry, housing, mental health, employment, etc. How do you help provide for those needs within the context of the workshop?**

Judith: This isn't one I know a whole lot about since I've taught Lifers mostly.

Grady: I don't emphasize that in individual workshops. However, I do emphasize the creation of workshop programs that provide a continuum of prevention, intervention and after-care arts opportunities—that allow participants to continue their arts experience throughout the criminal justice system and as part of their re-entry into society as citizens.

Buzz: We don't directly provide for those needs within the context of the workshop (we have separate projects for re-entering prisoners and work closely with the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative). However, since the prisoners create the plots for their own plays and since our writing exercises are very open-ended, prisoners often create plots in which family and neighborhood situations are stirred up and resolved. They often write about their past and future in ways that are deeply significant for them, even when they don't know that directly. And one of the emphases of our work is that we are committed to each person in the workshop, including ourselves, in terms of growth, ideas, and where all of this is taking us, and much time is spent sharing this. We don't practice therapy, but the workshops are, for all of us, therapeutic. One of my students once said, "I've figured it out: the men come to the workshop and I come to the workshop because something is missing in our lives and we have come there to find it."

5. **The bureaucracy within the department of corrections and each prison's administration seem to be overwhelming and difficult to navigate. How do you suggest a new facilitator interact with the administration, correction officers and other prison employees?**

Judith: Respectfully. That's how I suggest one interacts with all people inside.

Best of all is if you're going in as part of a program, or if there's someone inside whose job it is to be your liaison. If you're going to work within either of these structures, an important piece of advice is to listen to the person designated as your guide. You might be frustrated at something in their attitude or their go-slow'ness or some other quality or action that strikes you as wrong, but my advice is to assume (especially when you're starting out) that they know something you don't know. Or at least recognize that your needs (getting inside in time to teach, bringing in adequate material for what you're there to share, making sure prisoner students are on whatever list they need to be on to get out of their cells/dorms, etc.) are unlikely to be the most important needs to any prison staff.

In an important, bottom-line way, you have no power (a truth even more applicable to your prisoner students). Remember that truth, and also notice how to work with it toward the most positive outcomes. The inevitable limitations will be frustrating, of course, but they can also be interesting. As much as possible, try for interesting. See if you can discover and cultivate light, curious, parts of yourself.

Also try to find someone inside who can be some kind of ally. This person might be a guard, a program associate, someone from the education department – the position doesn't really matter. But if there's some staff person who seems glad for what you have to give, someone who's supportive, turn to this person for advice and suggestions.

Buzz: Like I mentioned earlier [in response to question 2], you cannot be arrogant or uppity or impatient. From the start, I've recognized that my language and the language of the enclosed prison bureaucracy, from top to bottom, are different. Their language is sometimes very hard to dope out, and sometimes it's crucial to dope it out. I try, for one thing, to understand that when they talk about security, they mostly know what they are talking about, and that it is possible for me to be naïve and make mistakes. I also try to figure out when what they are telling me is oppressive to the creativity and opportunities of the prisoners, and I try to find my way around what they are doing, but without risking the workshop. I seldom go over anyone's head, because that's a good way to have a very bad time the remainder of the time. When a lot is at stake, I do go over someone's head, but only after much thought and consultation. We have a warden on our advisory board; I call her, and she has helped us out immeasurably. We have also nourished relations with people higher up.

Grady: [In more practical terms], it starts with a contract or Memorandum of Agreement that spells out roles and responsibilities. This is negotiated with people at the top. That's followed up with site visits and planning sessions with staff and participants. And there should be an introduction of the artist and program to corrections staff through their weekly briefings. Everybody has to have an opportunity to learn what the art program is about.

6. Over the extent of the workshop, I could imagine that the prisoners involved may open up and become more vulnerable through their writing and art. How do you ensure that there is a safe space for them both within the workshop and when they return to their prison residence?

Grady: They [the prisoners] take care of that. Mistrust in prison is so great that it's rare someone divulges personal info that could prove damaging. On occasion, prisoners have kept journals and guards have confiscated them to look for information about prison crimes. But that was in the school and not the art workshop.

Respect for others is a requirement for all workshops, adult or juvenile. I don't encourage participants to write about their crimes or criminal life. I go for professionalism (technique) over therapy, and encourage my artists to follow that same route. Making art involves taking lots of chances and manifesting courage; I don't ask for more than that.

Judith: An important truth to remember is that you CAN'T ensure safety – not in your class and certainly not in the institution. To the extent your class is a safe place, it will be made that by the mutual agreement of everyone in the room. And that created safety might change with the addition or loss of a new class member. The institution as a whole is inherently unsafe – from the fact that guards can go through prisoners' property whenever they want, to the fact that you will never know the complexities (racial, neighborhood, religious, etc.) that exist among your students.

Given these truths, the most important thing – I think this is always one of the most important things – is to never assume you know more than you know. And to remember not to push anyone to be more open or revealing than he or she wants to be. In my experience, people in prison – as is true for most people most places – are the best judge of their own safety and comfort. Take your cues from your students.

Buzz: Students who wish to take our courses in which they do their first workshops have to interview with us. We are very clear about the responsibilities of the work and about our practice; we do all we can to bring honest, respectful, trusting, believing, challenging, fun, laughing, risk-taking, vulnerable facilitators into our practice. That goes a long way: who *we* are, how we listen, how we speak, what we're willing to try in our own writing or acting or art. Also, it is generally understood by the prisoners that these workshops are very special spaces for them; they protect these spaces and keep them safe. They'll deal with each other in the workshop or in the yard if members are being disrespectful or out of line.

It is usually understood by them that what happens in the workshop belongs in the workshop. They are proud of what they are doing and brag it up, share it in the yard and invite others to their performances. When there is a disruption, we open it to the group and talk it out, rather than avoid it. There is a lot at stake: we all want to be able to create at our best, which means risk and vulnerability, and we try to keep the group, as many of them end up saying, "like a family."

7. How do you grapple with the paradox of being something that not only is so beneficial to prisoners, but also makes the prison look so good? How do you deal with being something that makes the system even stronger, because it appears to be rehabilitative, and might run the risk of masking the fact that it is not at all?

Buzz: I have the same issue with universities and colleges, whose main role is to reproduce the social order, and we've got an unjust social order. Every site is a place of struggle, and if our only purpose or result is to make the prison look good, then we are on the wrong side in that struggle. But we're not: we are there for the specific individuals we work with and for their possibilities for strengthening and growth and returning to their communities as determined parents and citizens (and by that, I mean people ready to intervene and fight for their communities, if they can get to that point). I haven't met a prisoner who wants us to leave because they think we are window-dressing for the prisons: they see us as part of their opportunities to resist the trauma and humiliation of incarceration. And we bear witness to incarceration, we have a speakers' bureau, and we have an analysis. Because we go inside, a lot of people on the outside become more sophisticated, lose their stereotypes, and have a richer understanding of the politics and economics and human dimensions on all sides inside.

Grady: Adult prisons make no pretense about being rehabilitative anymore, and they shun the media. The arts programs do make the prisons safer and provide incentives for good behavior which is the primary reason some adult facilities want arts workshops now that mandatory sentences have eliminated good time and parole for many inmates. The juvenile system is totally chaotic—probation, corrections, parole, the schools rarely communicating to one another. Arts program provide some coherency and structure, and a measure of

relief for juveniles passing from one venue to another, and a positive connection to the outside world

Judith: I think people who care about prison issues and people in prison have to decide on the best place for them to express their concern. The best place might be working from the outside (writing op/ed pieces, joining political or advocacy groups, etc.) But if you're choosing to work on the inside, the paradox described in the question is only one of many you'll encounter. Others include:

- * many of your students may have done something quite harmful to another human being, while at the same time you're likely to know these men and women as bright, creative, funny, kind human beings;
- * your task is to share making art – a deeply open and free human expression – in one of the most closed and un-free environments imaginable;
- * art – imagination – is both a blessing and a curse to someone locked away from most human experiences.

Strengthening your capacity to live with paradox is essential to doing this work, a process that can be interesting, positive, a gift, and not only a tactical response to a difficult situation.

8. As artists or writers who values freedom of expression, how do you reconcile the lack of freedom even in this “liberating” work of arts in corrections? In the end, they are not free; corrections staff may censor their work. How do you deal with this emotionally, professionally, politically, and in the circle of artists involved in corrections?

Judith: As I mentioned earlier [in response to question 7], to do this work, especially over the long haul, one has to find ways to recognize what is, and what isn't, possible. The terms of the question are accurate. You've gone inside to share practices for open expression, and to do so you invite many qualities of your students into the room (in the art-making room, prisoners are not only people who have caused harm, but also individuals with a full range of human qualities). But what you're there to do is often opposite, certainly tangential, to most prisons' missions. So there will always be great limits on your efforts.

You will either find ways to make some kind of peace with this reality in order to share what you can share, or you'll decide to do prison work from the outside. Either choice is completely legitimate and dependent on factors you can only decide for yourself (knowing yourself).

Each individual has to walk this road for him- or her- self. But of course having methods – other people to talk with, journals to write in, books to read and reflect on – helps.

Buzz: The limits aren't great. We know we can't, in a play or piece of writing or piece of art, talk about a specific prison or specific staff in a negative way, that's obvious, and the men and women on the whole watch against obscenities, but not too much. Within those limits, we can tell any stories, make any political points, write powerfully about prison and urban and other experience, and so on. History is full of communities and states where there has

been severe repression and censorship and all of those communities and states have had people who have figured out how to take those limits and resist through the arts, in clandestine meetings, with hidden but understood symbols and meanings, with graffiti in the night. This is liberating. We have had losses: we are prevented from having dance workshops, which we once had and were great workshops. Yet, we have won some battles against attempted censorship of works of art submitted for our Annual Exhibition of Art by Michigan Prisoners.

Grady: With juveniles, there can sometimes be a tendency to make “tough” art for their counterparts in the class, work that might rankle staff. However, every residency ends in a culminating event, an anthology or exhibit, which is presented to the public. I remind kids that parents and grandparents will be invited. Work is sold and they keep the money, or their poetry will be published and family members will receive copies. Understanding the viewpoints of the audience, connecting with an audience is part of the editorial process. Rarely does the staff censor really good work.

I never really experienced much censorship with my adult workshops. Inmates submitted work to free-world publications, and most got published during my years in the Texas system. Publication was their intent. The system didn’t really bother much with what they sent out.

9. I could imagine that working in a prison or another correctional setting must be draining due to the environment and the difficulties facing your students. How do you manage to care for yourself when going into such horrible places while not completely desensitizing yourself to the reality of your surroundings? How can you prevent “burn out”?

Grady: You can’t do it day in day out for a prolonged length of time like I did for three years in the Texas system without losing something. Prisons are depressing environments, and you carry them with you for a while. It takes time to slough them off. I found I’d lost my sense of humor and became much less attentive to family and friend life outside. Now, I travel a great deal and work with programs all over the world. I find “burn out” now means a desire to stay home a while, to get off the road, to garden and cook. Constant travel is the only “burn out” I’m experiencing now.

Buzz: Good question. I realized several years ago that I had become a sadder person and some friends explained to me I had secondary trauma. So I spent some weeks in therapy working on that, and it was very helpful. The stories and lives are painful; anyone sensitive is experiencing pain in this work. We find each other and talk – I am close to those I work with and we ground each other. The work is also beautiful, full of growth and creativity and unforgettable moments and resistance. Remembering that at the worst moments helps. I go on long walks alone on a path in the woods. I seek out old friends. I exercise. I’m in a loving, supportive relationship with someone who shares the work. I have godchildren and friends in Peru; I go find them. It isn’t easy, even with all of this. The hardest part is when I see people being crushed, stifled, humiliated, stereotyped and condemned, and I can only watch. I have to do a lot of trouble-shooting; we make mistakes, we mess up, the prison messes us up, and I have to figure our way out of it. That’s very stressful, even though I’ve become very good at it.

Judith: This is a very important question, and again one I think people have to answer for themselves. For some people, yoga or some similar practice is important. For others, having someone who will listen is essential. Others turn to creating their own artwork. What's universally important is to know that this is a dilemma. Sometimes it helps to remember that no matter how much you give, you can never give enough. If you want to do this work for a long time, you have to figure out how to pace yourself.

One thing I did most days walking into San Quentin was to say (inside myself) the St. Francis prayer (even though I'm Jewish): "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace/Where there is hatred, let me sow love/Where there is injury, pardon" etc. It helped me align as I walked into the horror.

I suggest thinking of training as a process. There's what you need to know just to get started, but the real questions are going to arise from your work as it unfolds. See what you can create to learn more, delve more deeply, etc., over the length of your workshop.

10. How do you balance your life teaching in the prisons with your life in the free world? Most people on the "outside" cannot fully relate to the work of arts in corrections, and many do not recognize the value of the work. How can you help them understand your experiences?

Judith: If at all possible, go in as part of a program where there are others like you so that you do have people to talk with, people who are facing – thinking about, feeling – things similar to what you are. If that isn't possible, perhaps you have a partner or friend who is willing to listen to you very openly, even though they themselves aren't familiar with much of what you're up against.

I think most of us doing this work have gone through a phase where we collar nearly everyone, needing to rant about what we see, know, and are learning.

Since you're an artist, see what you can create through your art. Where does your own art-making process take you as you try to convey this world you've entered?

Buzz: When I introduce myself in any situation, I always say that I work in prisons and that my students work in prisons. That provides an opening. People get interested - it opens up possibilities for them to learn, hear my stories, and hear my voice, and in my voice are the voices of the men, women, boys and girls I know on the inside and outside. I was invited to speak at a reunion of my high school class, to about 200 of my classmates from a very conservative community, and when I showed the art and talked about the people inside and about what we did, the positive response was overwhelming. I don't spend time with people who are belligerent, punitive and who can't get past their punitive stereotypes. I avoid arguments with them. I write about the work and tell stories. In our speakers' bureau, we show the art, the plays, read from the writings, bring formerly incarcerated people with us. At our Annual Exhibition of Art by Michigan Prisoners, formerly incarcerated artists speak at the opening reception and appear on panels, as do their family members and friends. That's the best way for people to realize the value of the work.

Grady: I've been doing this work for 26 years now. It's become a full-time career, and I've managed to fill it with important interests—travel, service, my poetry—and most of my friends are other people with whom I do this work. It provides me with a good living. My kids, who are mostly grown, get it. I've earned plenty of recognition from the world. I see myself as very fortunate.

As for communicating with others, helping them to get it, advocacy is a big part of what I do now—speaking before legislative committees, city councils, conferences, the media. But having a funder or legislator actually visit a workshop is the best way to earn support and understanding.

11. If you could only give one piece of advice to someone starting to facilitate arts workshops in correctional facilities, what would be your suggestion?

Judith: I guess the one piece of advice I'd give to someone just starting would be: be yourself. A second piece of advice to someone starting out is to approach this new unfamiliar world with a lot of humility and curiosity; keep an open mind and don't assume you know the whole story.

But I think the best over-all working-in-prison-over-the-long-haul advice is the advice from Jim about "tenacious patience."

Buzz: Go in every time with high spirits, be open to what comes, take risks, and be sure to have a lot of fun and growth; be consistent, be there every time, be dedicated. I guess that's more than one piece of advice...

Grady: Be flexible and open. Set your assumptions aside. Don't spend a lot of time thinking about how to present yourself. You're not there to be a teacher, a friend, a counselor, a parent, or an advocate. You're there to be an artist, maybe the first one some of these folks have ever met. You're there to teach them how to use the tools. What they do with them is up to them.

APPENDIX A: DIRECTORY OF PROGRAMS AND CONTACTS

ALABAMA

Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project (www.auburn.edu/cah/apaep)

Kyes Stevens, Director (stevenk@auburn.edu)

Center for Arts and Humanities

Pebble Hill

Auburn University

Auburn, AL 36849

Phone: (334) 844-4949

Fax: (334) 844-4949

Founded in 2002, this humanities model offers two sessions of 12-week long courses in six correctional facilities. Courses vary from poetry workshops to introduction to anthropology.

ARIZONA

Patricia (Toni) McConnel (Toni@wordsculptors.com)

<http://www.tonimcconnel.com/>

McConnel, an ex-convict, wrote and participated in workshops while incarcerated. She wrote *Sing Soft, Sing Loud*, a work of fiction about prison experiences, and *Creativity Held Captive: A Guidebook for Artists Working in Prisons*. She has taught workshops in correctional facilities, and wrote this guidebook with support of the Utah Arts Council originally in 1994. This guide focuses on artists working in correctional institutions, touching on topics like the prison environment, rules, staff, culture, and involving inmates as students in the arts.

Richard Shelton (rshhelton@email.arizona.edu)

Phone: (520) 743-7864

A professor of English at the University of Arizona, Shelton has taught creative writing workshops in Arizona prisons for over thirty years, receiving funding from the Lannan Foundation since 1991.

CALIFORNIA

The Beat Within (www.thebeatwithin.org)

David Inocencio, Founder and Senior Editor (dinocencio@newamericamedia.org)

275 Ninth Street

San Francisco, CA 94103

Phone: (415) 503-4170

This weekly publication of writing and art from the inside began in 1996. It has grown to over 100 pages an issue, and features writing from juvenile hall units across the Bay Area and beyond.

Bill Burns (bburns@smcoe.k12.ca.us)

San Mateo County Jail

Phone: (650) 799-7323.

Burns, a freelance professor, educator and retired principal, works part time for the San Mateo County School District and also with Project Read. At the jail, he is involved in a variety of

courses, mentoring and workshops, including an introduction to poetry course and a fathering course.

Jim Carlson

Former Director of California Arts-in-Corrections and current artist/facilitator at California State Prison – Sacramento

Community Works/West (www.community-works-ca.org)

Ruth Morgan, Executive Director (rpine@pacbell.net)

1605 Bonita Avenue

Berkeley, CA 94709

Phone: (510) 486-2340

Fax: (510) 649-8239

Founded in 1979 by Ruth Morgan, Community Works West has served incarcerated populations and at-risk youth, offering arts programming at San Francisco County Jails and post-release facilities, as well as schools, after-school programs, and juvenile detention sites. Currently, their funding for work with incarcerated populations has been reduced.

Each One Reach One (www.each1reach1.org)

Robin Sohnen, Director (info@eoro.org)

1486 Huntington Avenue #304

South San Francisco, CA 94080

Phone: (650) 225-9030

Fax: (650) 225-9033

Founded in 1998 by Robin Sohnen, this organization conducts intensive playwriting programs, which employ theater professionals to work, one-on-one, with at-risk youth of high school age attending alternative schools or incarceration facilities.

Ellen Davidson (ellen.davidson@noaa.gov)

Former Director of the William James Association

Steven Emrick (whitewaves1@aol.com)

P.O. Box 191

San Quentin, CA 94964

Phone: (415) 454-1460 ext. 6021 (Arts-in-Correction Office)

Current artist/facilitator at California State Prison – San Quentin

Susan Hill (hihill@mac.com)

Former Director of Artsreach, a non-profit organization founded in the late 1970s dedicated to providing arts programming to traditionally underserved populations. Artsreach received the Department of Corrections' contract to hire and place artists for the arts-in-corrections' programs.

InsideOUT Writers (www.insideoutwriters.org)

Sandy Gibson, Program Director (InsideOutWriter2@aol.com)

1171 South Robertson Blvd. # 134

Los Angeles, CA 90035

Phone (cell): (310) 936-4794

Phone 2: (310) 858-1245

Fax: (310) 858-1219

This group of professional writers teaches creative writing in juvenile halls in the Los Angeles area in order to discourage youth violence and build in its place a spirit of honest introspection, respect for others, and a love of learning.

The Medea Project: Theater for Incarcerated Women (<http://culturalodyssey.org/medea/>)

Rhodessa Jones, Artistic Director (rhodessa@culturalodyssey.org)

Cultural Odyssey

P.O. Box 156680

San Francisco, CA 94102

Phone: (415) 292-1850

Fax: (415) 346-9163

Jones founded this theater program for women at the San Francisco County Jail #8 in order to see whether an arts-based approach could help reduce the numbers of women returning to jail.

Zoe Mullery (zoe@churchofthesojourners.org)

Creative writing instructor at California State Prison – San Quentin

Prison University Project (www.prisonuniversityproject.org)

Patten University at San Quentin

Jody Lewen, Executive Director (jlewen@prisonuniversityproject.org)

Jennifer Scaife, Administrator and Creative writing instructor

(jscaife@prisonuniversityproject.org)

Heather Rowley, Photographer involved in the personal story project (hmrowley@hotmail.com)

P.O. Box 492

San Quentin, California 94964

Phone: (510) 524-0496

Patten University at San Quentin conducts three 13-week semesters per year, with approximately 12 classes taught each semester in the humanities, social sciences, math, and science by volunteer instructors from local colleges and universities. Students who complete the entire 60-unit curriculum can earn an Associate of Arts degree in liberal arts.

Judith Tannenbaum (jtannen@earthlink.net)

Writer and teacher whose memoir, *Disguised as a Poem: My Years Teaching Poetry at San Quentin*, is about her work in the 1980s. Tannenbaum edited *Memo: Arts* -- the quarterly journal of California's Arts-in-Corrections -- and wrote that program's *Manual for Artists Working in Prison*. The latter, as well as links to work by her San Quentin students and further information about the field, can be found at www.judithtannenbaum.com. She is currently training coordinator with WritersCorps, a program that works with youth (including those in juvenile lock up) in San Francisco (www.writerscorps.org). Tannenbaum has been panelist and keynote speaker at many national gatherings about prison arts.

Beth Thielen (bthielen@earthlink.net)

Visual artist, teaches book arts in the women's unit of California Rehabilitation Center in Norco

William James Association (www.williamjamesassociation.org)

Laurie Brooks, Director (wja@cruzio.com)

P.O. Box 1632

Santa Cruz, CA 95061

Phone: (831) 426-2474

Founded in 1973 by Page and Eloise Smith, this nonprofit organization promotes work service in the arts, environment, education, and community development. Its main program, the Prison Arts Project, contracts with professional artists to provide in-depth, long-term arts experiences for incarcerated men and women.

Write & Rise (www.writeandrise.com)

Margo Perin, Founder (margo@margoperin.com)

Founded by writer and teacher Margo Perin, Write & Rise offers self-exploration-through-writing workshops for inmates in jail and prison to provide opportunities for healing and an understanding of the social, economic, and personal factors that led to their incarceration. Upon release, workshop participants perform public readings at bookstores, libraries, and other venues, and make presentations at universities and conferences to educators, teachers, principals, and professionals in the criminal justice and social work fields. Write & Rise also publishes quarterly and annual anthologies. Publications include *ONLY THE DEAD CAN KILL: Stories from Jail* in print and on CD, funded with a grant from the Creative Work Fund.

COLORADO

Speak Out! Women's Writing Workshop at the Larimer County Detention Center

(<http://literacy.colostate.edu/speakout.html>)

Community Literacy Center at Colorado State University

Tobi Jacobi, Center Director and Assistant Professor of English (tjacobi@colostate.edu)

333 Eddy Hall

Fort Collins, CO 80523

Phone: (970) 491-3344

Jacobi, a graduate student and two undergraduate volunteers facilitate life-writing workshops for the women in the local jail. Jacobi also teaches a prison literature course with a service component.

CONNECTICUT

Eileen Albrizio (EileenRain@aol.com)

Poet, Public Radio "All Things Considered" host, facilitated poetry workshops at York Correctional Institution

Kathleen Archambault (karchambault41@comcast.net)

Working with Mark Patnode to begin an artistic project at Radgowski Correctional Institution

Jennifer Blaine (Jennifer_blaine@comcast.net)

Performance artist and actress who facilitated drama-based workshops at York Correctional Institution

Sharon Charde (sharchar@mindspring.com)

Author and poet who facilitates writing programs at Touchstone, a residential facility for girls

Community Partners in Action's Prison Arts Program (www.cpa-ct.org)

Jeff Greene, Director (cpaprisonarts@earthlink.net)

110 Bartholomew Avenue, Suite 3010

Hartford CT 06106

Phone: (860) 722-9450

Since 1978, the Prison Arts Program has provided classes and projects, as well as publication (*Journal of the Prison Arts* – now in its 18th volume) and annual exhibition opportunities, to people incarcerated in Connecticut's nineteen correctional facilities.

Ken Cormier (kennethcormier@gmail.com)

Poet and educator who facilitated a poetry and performance project at York Correctional Institution, a project that culminated in the "One Vision, Many Voices" CD

Judy Dworin Performance Project, Inc. (www.jdpe.info)

Judy Dworin, Artistic and Executive Director (judy.dworin@trincoll.edu)

233 Pearl Street

Hartford, CT 06103

Phone: (860) 243-2835

JDPP, Inc.'s most recent Moving Matters! residency was at the York Correctional Institution for Women in Niantic, CT, and involved Judy Dworin Performance Ensemble (JDPE) and Women of the Cross (WOTC). The residency introduced a collaborative arts approach to storytelling and performance, working with the already existing movement, writing and choir groups at the prison. JDPE and WOTC performed *TIME IN*, the piece developed during this residency, at the Charter Oaks Cultural Center in Hartford in November 2006.

Ana Flores (ana@art-farm.net)

Cuban-American visual artist with residencies at York CI funding by Concerned Citizens for Humanity and other organizations to create HIV/AIDS murals, a mask project, and a hand quilt http://www.art-farm.net/pages/ana_pages/communityYork.htm

Cathy Ford-Oles (cfo02r@yahoo.com)

Facilitates book clubs for youthful offenders

Wesleyan Prisoner Resource and Education Project (WesPREP)

This undergraduate group at Wesleyan College facilitates creative writing workshops at York Correctional Institution. The organization's other goals include improving awareness of prison issues among their community and establishing a degree-granting college program at York CI.

Dale Griffith (dalemgriffith@comcast.net)

Former teacher at York Correctional Institution, Griffith participated in many arts programs while working at the facility and contributed to *Couldn't Keep It To Myself*.

Phyllis Kornfeld (phylkorn@bcn.net)

A visual artist and author of *Cellblock Visions*, Kornfeld teaches art in a medium-security male prison in Connecticut through CPA Prison Arts and at Massachusetts County Jails.

www.cellblockvisions.com

Wally Lamb (wlamb01@snet.net)

An acclaimed author of *She's Come Undone* and *I Know This Much is True*, Lamb has facilitated creative writing workshops at York Correctional Facility since 1999. He edited a collection of writings by the women in his York writing group, *Couldn't Keep It To Myself: Testimonies from our Imprisoned Sisters*.

Joe Lea (joe.lea@cox.net)

Lea, the librarian at York Correctional Institution, has been a strong supporter and advocate for the arts at York. Currently on sabbatical from his position at York, Lea is pursuing a master's degree at Manchester University (UK) in prison arts, furthering his knowledge of this field.

Mark Patnode (mpatnode@myeastern.com)

Visual Artist collaborating with Kathleen Archambault to implement an arts project at Radgowski Correctional Institution

Ira Sakolsky (dreamacr@sbcglobal.net)

A musician, artist and recording engineer who worked on the HIV/AIDS Poetry CD project, One Vision Many Voices, at York Correctional Institution

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Patricia E. O'Connor (oconnorp@georgetown.edu)

Associate Professor of English

312 New North

Georgetown University

Washington, DC 20057

<http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/oconnorp/>

O'Connor's interests include prison literature, prison literacy, and the language of crime. The author of *Speaking of Crime: Narratives of Prisoners*, O'Connor has taught in D.C. area correctional facilities, initiating service projects like Prisoner Outreach.

Daniel Porterfield (porterfd@georgetown.edu)

Office of Public Affairs, Georgetown University

206 Healy Hall

37th & O Streets, NW

Washington, DC 20057

Phone: (202) 687-8496

<http://publicaffairs.georgetown.edu/porterfield.html>

An assistant professor of English and Georgetown University's Vice President for Public Affairs and Strategic Development, Porterfield teaches courses on the Poetry of American Prisoners, Literacy and Community Action, and other topics in human rights, education and social justice.

The Prison Foundation (www.prisonfoundations.org)
Dennis Sobin, Ex-inmate and Founder (dennissobin@yahoo.com)
Carolyn Cosmos Sobin, Art Director (cmartc@his.com)
Helen Thorne, President
1718 M Street, NW, #151
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 393-1511

The Prisons Foundation is a nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C. that promotes the arts and education in prison and alternatives to incarceration. The foundation recently opened the Prison Art Gallery on 1600 K Street NW, Suite 501, Washington D.C.

FLORIDA

Artspring, Inc. (www.artspring.org)
Leslie Neal, Founder and Executive Director (leslieneal@artspring.net)
PO Box 343432
Florida City, FL 33034
Phone: (305) 278-1601
Fax: (305) 278-1602

Founded by Leslie Neal in 1994, this organization supports self-growth and effective life skills through interdisciplinary arts programs for underserved and institutionalized women, girls and, more recently, men.

Art Behind Bars (www.artbehindbars.org)
Lynne Vantriglia, Founder and Director (Artbhndbrs@aol.com)
P.O. Box 2034
Key West, FL 33045
Phone: (305) 304-4772
Fax: (305) 294-7345

Started by Vantriglia in 1994, Art Behind Bars an art-based community service program for inmates in the Monroe County Detention Center. The mission of Art Behind Bars, through skill-based training and art education, is to give inmates the opportunity to contribute to society through the donation of artwork to numerous non-profit organizations locally and nationally.

ILLINOIS

Music Theatre Workshop (www.mtwchicago.org)
Nancy McCarty, Executive Director
Meade Palidofsky, Founder and Artistic Director
7359 N Greenview Avenue
Chicago, IL 60626
Phone: (773) 973-7266
Fax: (773) 973-7077

mtw@mtwchicago.org

Founded in 1984, this non-profit performing arts organization prepares young people to make positive life choices by training them to write, produce and perform original musical theatre inspired by personal stories. Since 1991, the organization has conducted 11 *Temporary Lockdown*

workshops with incarcerated youth, primarily boys, at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center. In 1998, they expanded the workshop to include *Fabulous Females*.

The Nancy B. Jefferson Literacy and Creative Media Program (www.threadofdevelopment.org)

Ryan Keesling, Founder and Facilitator (rdkees@gmail.com)

Amanda Klonsky, Facilitator (amandaklonsky@gmail.com)

Keesling started this program in Nancy B. Jefferson Alternative High School within the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center 1999. Keesling and Klonsky facilitate poetry and creative writing workshops for the boys and girls in the facility.

Social Justice Action Project

c/o Stephen Hartnett (Hartnett@uiuc.edu)

Associate Professor of Speech Communication

University of Illinois, 244 Lincoln Hall

702 South Wright Street

Urbana, Illinois 61801

Phone: (217) 333-1593

Hartnett facilitates creative writing, public speaking and self-expression workshops at the Champaign County Jail with two student volunteers from the University of Illinois. Starting in January 2007, Hartnett and his students will begin other programs in prisons around eastern Illinois.

Women, Writing and Incarceration Project

Ann Folwell Stanford (astanfor@depaul.edu)

DePaul University School for New Learning

Phone: (312) 362-5498

A community-based service learning externship, taught by Stanford, serves as the gateway into the Women, Writing and Incarceration Project. It provides training for students to facilitate 6-week writing workshops in teams at Cook County Jail, Dwight Correctional Center, and transitional homes for formerly incarcerated women.

IOWA

pARTners Unlimited (<http://www.partnersunlimited.org/>)

Kelly Boon, Founder and Executive Director (partners_unlimited@hotmail.com)

P.O. Box 41141

Des Moines, IA 50311

Phone: (515) 778-0692

pARTners Unlimited provides experiential learning through the arts for people who are at risk of delinquency or criminal behavior. The organization develops long-term programming with groups of people by partnering with schools, social service agencies, community sites, detention facilities, prisons and aftercare programs.

Rachel Marie-Crane Williams (rachel-williams@uiowa.edu)

14 North Hall

Art Education Department, University of Iowa

Iowa City, IA 52242

Phone: (319) 335-3012

<http://www.education.uiowa.edu/people/facstaffs/rwilliams.htm>

A professor of art and art education at the University of Iowa, Williams has taught visual arts, creative expression and writing in the Iowa Correctional Institute for Women for over 12 years. She edited the anthology *Teaching the Arts Behind Bars*.

KANSAS

Arts in Prison, Inc. (www.artsinprison.org)

Nancy Meis, Executive Director (director@artsinprison.org)

1333 27th St.

Kansas City, KS 66106

Phone: (913) 403-0229

Fax: (913) 236-6838

Arts in Prison, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that provides personal growth opportunities through the arts for the incarcerated and their families. Programs include creative writing, gardening, painting, drawing and drama in the Lansing Correctional Facility.

Mary Cohen (marylcohen@gmail.com)

A Ph.D. student in music at the University of Kansas, Cohen has researched Elvera Voth, worked with Arts in Prisons, and is writing her dissertation about choir programs in prisons.

Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (KIPCOR) at Bethel College

Gary Flory, Director (gflory@bethelks.edu)

Kaufman House at Bethel College

P.O. Box 276

North Newton KS 67117

Phone: (316) 284-5217

Fax: (316) 284-5379

KIPCOR encourages research, education and skills in conflict management. KIPCOR's conflict resolution certification provides intensive training within conflict situations, including Prison Arts placements and internships. The Prison Arts program is no longer managed by KIPCOR, yet KIPCOR remains involved in its work.

John McCabe-Juhnke (JMCJUHNB@bethelks.edu)

A professor of English at Bethel College, McCabe-Juhnke has worked with the Prison Arts Program of Offender Victim Ministries to facilitate drama courses at Hutchinson Correctional Facility.

Prison Arts Program Offender Victim Ministries
Gary Isaac, Director of Prison Ministries (isaac.ovm@southwind.net)
900 N. Poplar
Newton, KS 67114
Phone: (316) 283-2038
Fax: (316) 283-2039

The Prison Arts Program administered by Offender Victim Ministries offers theater arts, creative writing, choir, visual arts, guitar, and book discussion programs to prisoners at the Hutchinson Correctional Facility.

Elvera Voth (evoth@sbcglobal.net)

Voth founded the East Hill Singers, a choral group, in the Lansing Correctional Facility. This choral group and additional arts programs at Lansing developed into Arts in Prisons.

KENTUCKY

Shakespeare Behind Bars

Curt Tofteland, Founder and Artistic Director (Tofter@aol.com)

Phone: (502) 637-4933

Tofteland has been running this program at Luther Luckett Correctional Complex near Louisville for 11 years, producing full-length Shakespeare plays that are performed in Luther Luckett and other correctional facilities throughout the state. The program was the subject of *Shakespeare Behind Bars*, a documentary selected for the 2005 Sundance Film Festival.

MARYLAND

Class Acts Arts, Inc. (www.classacts.org)

Claire Schwadron, Project Youth ArtReach Director (Claire.ClassActs@verizon.net)

P.O. Box 3580

Silver Spring, MD 20918

Phone: (301) 588-7525

Fax: (301) 588-7270

This non-profit organization based in Silver Spring, Maryland brings educational and culturally diverse arts experiences to schools and communities in D.C., Maryland and Virginia. They have a great deal of programming that is based in the juvenile detention centers and jails, including the Young Women's Facility of Maryland at the Thomas J. Waxter Center, the Cheltonham Youth Facility, the Montgomery County Correctional Facility, and the D.C. Youth Rehabilitation Services.

Touchstones Discussion Project (www.touchstones.org)

Lee Goldsmith (lg@touchstones.org)

522 Chesapeake Avenue

Annapolis, MD 21403

Phone: (410) 263-2121

Touchstones Discussion Project focuses on two goals in the correctional institutions—humanizing the prison environment and preparing prisoners for productive lives after their release. Touchstones discussions of texts and issues help provide a meaningful experience

within the prison walls, and the skills gained through the program help reduce the rate of infractions by offering inmates better, nonviolent methods of handling anger and frustration.

MASSACHUSETTS

Actors' Shakespeare Project (www.actorsshakespeareproject.org)

Lori Taylor, Education Director (lorilynta@comcast.net)

PO Box 390571

Cambridge, MA 02139

Phone: (617) 661-6622 ext. 704

Fax: (781) 658-2469

ASP works with incarcerated youth, ages 12-17, who are part of the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services in secure lock-up facilities. A month-long workshop culminates in a performance of Shakespeare texts, journal monologues, music, etc. created by the youth and attended by all the children in the facility, including their caregivers and invited guests.

Changing Lives Through Literature (<http://cltl.umassd.edu/about/home.cfm>)

Jean Trounstein, Professor of Humanities (trounstinej@middlesex.mass.edu)

Middlesex Community College

33 Kearney Square

City Campus, #30

Lowell, MA 0185

Phone: (978) 656-3121

Fax: (978) 656-3150

Jean Trounstein, a professor at Middlesex Community College in Massachusetts, worked at Framingham Women's Prison for ten years, where she directed eight plays. Her book, *Shakespeare Behind Bars: The Power of Drama in a Women's Prison* was featured on NPR. She co-edited *Changing Lives Through Literature* and co-founded of the women's branch of Changing Lives Through Literature, an alternative sentencing program that uses discussion of literature to inspire change.

Peggy Diggs (pdiggs@williams.edu)

A professor of art at Williams College, Diggs has worked with Philadelphia's Mural Arts Program

Eric Grunwald (eric@ericgrunwald.com)

Chair, Freedom to Write Committee of PEN New England

Emerson College

120 Boylston St.

Boston, MA 02116

Phone: (617) 504-2003

As the current chair of PEN New England Freedom to Write Committee, Grunwald is coordinating and facilitating writing workshops in correctional facilities in Massachusetts.

Fred Marchant (Fjmarchant@aol.com)

While chair of PEN New England Freedom to Write Committee, Marchant, the creative writing chair at Suffolk University, organized and facilitated writing workshops at Northampton House of Detention.

D. Quentin Miller (qmillier@suffolk.edu)

An associate professor of English at Suffolk University in Boston, Miller chaired the American Studies Association 2006 panel on teaching in and about prisons. He became interested in prison literature while teaching writing in Connecticut prisons. He edited the anthology *Prose and Cons: Essays on Prison Literature in the United States*.

Voices From Inside (www.voicesfrominside.org)

Sara Weinberger, Co-founder, Facilitator and Professor of Social Work at Western New England College (sweinberg@wnec.edu)

Carolyn Benson, Co-founder (carolyn@voicesfrominside.org)

103 Springfield St.

Chicopee, Ma 01013

Phone: (413) 642-0724

Founded in 1999 and located in Western Massachusetts, Voices from Inside provides creative writing workshops where women prisoners and ex-prisoners tell their own stories in their own diverse voices. Through Voices from Inside on the Outside, VFI works to bring the women's words into the larger community to increase public awareness of the human and financial costs of prisons to our society.

MICHIGAN

Phyllis Hastings (pgh@svsu.edu)

Professor of English, Saginaw Valley State University

Science West 319

7400 Bay Road

University Center, MI 48710

Phone: (989) 964-4376

A former student of Buzz Alexander, Hastings has been teaching literature and facilitating discussion and performance between her college students and her prison students at Saginaw Correctional Facility in Freeland. They have created four anthologies, mostly of inmate writing.

Prison Creative Arts Project (<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/english/pcap/pages/contact.htm>)

Buzz Alexander, Founder and Professor of English (alexi@umich.edu)

Janie Paul, Curator of Annual Exhibition and Assistant Professor of Art (janiep@umich.edu)

University of Michigan

3187 Angell Hall

Ann Arbor, MI 48109

Phone: (734) 426-4819

Founded in 1990, the Prison Creative Arts Project is committed to original work in the arts in Michigan correctional facilities and juvenile facilities. Its purpose is to enhance creative opportunities for inmates and to bring them the benefits and skills that come with each art. The project consists of courses taught by Alexander and Paul that explore issue of the criminal justice system, pedagogy and socioeconomic factors and allow for students to facilitate workshops in prisons, juvenile detention centers and schools. Once completing the course, students may become members of PCAP, the University of Michigan student group that continues to facilitate arts programming in correctional settings in Michigan.

MISSISSIPPI

A Profile of the Evaluation of the Core Arts Program

<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/mott/cap.html>

This link features a profile of two program evaluations conducted by William Cleveland of the Center for the Study of Art and Community in Jackson County, Miss., with statistical results of performance improvement in staff and youth participants. This includes reduction in referral rates for youth involved in juvenile justice system. A narrative of the Core Arts Program, initiated by the Mississippi Arts Commission in 2002 is also included.

MISSOURI

Nathan Graves (Nathan.graves@courts.mo.gov)

St. Louis City Juvenile Detention Center

3847 Enright Avenue

St. Louis MO 63108

Phone: (314) 552-2293

Fax: (314) 552-2466

As the activity coordinator at St. Louis City Juvenile Detention Center, Graves is in charge of creating, maintaining and coordinating all programs and volunteers at the center, including arts programming.

Jane Ellen Ibur (drjcowgirl@aol.com)

3536 Victor

St. Louis, MO 63104

Phone: (314) 771-7661

A writer and teacher, Ibur has taught creative writing to Class A felons at the St. Louis County Jail for over 16 years. She contributed to Rachel William's anthology *Teaching the Arts Behind Bars*.

Prison Performing Arts (www.prisonartsstl.org)

Agnes Wilcox, Founder and Artistic Director (agnes@prisonartsstl.org)

Dan Martin, General Manager (dan@prisonartsstl.org)

630 Trinity Ave.

St. Louis, MO 63130

Phone: (314) 727-5355

Prison Performing Arts is a fifteen-year-old, multi-disciplinary, literacy and performing arts program that serves incarcerated adults and children in the St. Louis area and eastern Missouri. The organization fosters individual and social change by providing current and former inmates opportunities to participate in the performing arts as artists, students and audience members.

MONTANA

Chip Clawson (chipclawson@msn.com)

202 Pine Street

Helena, MT 59601

Phone: (406) 443-4521

A ceramic artist, Clawson received a Percent for Art grant from the Montana Arts Council for his 2003-2005 project "All Women Are Role Models" at the Montana Women's Prison in Billings, Montana. His website explains the details of the project:

<http://www.chipclawson.com/id24.html>

Terry Karson and Sara Mast (mastkarson@earthlink.net)

P.O. Box 7069

Bozeman, MT 59771

This husband and wife team worked with the women at Montana Women's Prison from 1996 to 2000 on the project, "Glass Walls." This work developed into weekly arts classes with visiting artists using a variety of media.

NEW JERSEY

ABC Literacy (www.abcliteracy.org)

Lois Young, Director (abcddd@verizon.net)

Marcia Van Dyck, Volunteer (vandyck@unidial.com)

Merrell Noden, Freelance writer, volunteer instructor of writing course (merrell@patmedia.net)

61 Nassau Street

Princeton, NJ 08542

Phone: (609) 924-0667

The ABC Prison Literacy Program is an Outreach Program of the Nassau Presbyterian Church, Princeton, N.J., staffed by volunteers from local churches and the community at large. Led by three experienced reading specialists, the group works with inmate tutors of the L.I.F.E (Learning Is For Everyone) program at the New Jersey State Prison in Trenton, N.J. ABC began consulting with the L.I.F.E program in 1998 at the request of the men in that program.

Artists Collective for Social Change (www.artistscollective4socialchange.org)

Alexis Marnel, Director and Founder (amarnel@aol.com)

44 Bergen Street

Englewood, NJ 07631

Phone: (201) 816-9369

Fax: (201) 816-9369

Founded in 2000, this dynamic, non-profit organization specializes in working with disenfranchised populations. This collaborative of artists interested in social change has facilitated artistic workshops in a minimum-security juvenile detention centers in Newark and Morris Plains, NJ that usually culminate in a sharing, a DVD, a CD, a publication or an exhibition.

H. Bruce Franklin (hbf@andromeda.rutgers.edu; <http://www.andromeda.rutgers.edu/~hbf/>)

Professor of English at Rutgers University Newark, editor of *Prison Writing in 20th Century America* and instructor of classes on prison literature

People and Stories/Gente y Cuentos (<http://peopleandstories.org>)

Patricia Andres, Executive Director (peoplepa@starlinx.com)

Marcy Schwartz, Professor of Spanish at Rutgers University and facilitator of Gente y Cuentos at the Garden State Correctional Facility (mschwartz@spanport.rutgers.edu)

140 East Hanover Street

Trenton NJ 08608

Phone: (609) 393-3230

People and Stories implements its humanities model, where short stories of literary merit are read aloud and discussed using a method that draws upon the life experiences of basic readers to understand literature, in correctional facilities throughout New Jersey. This grassroots nonprofit organization facilitates sessions in the Mercer County Detention Center, New Jersey State Prison, Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women and others.

Playwrights Theater of New Jersey (www.ptnj.org)

Alysia Souder, Education Coordinator (asouder@ptnj.org)

Mark Levine, Playwright who has taught in residency at Green Residential Community Home (misterdrama@earthlink.net)

Dominique Cieri, Playwright who co-teaches with Levine at Green (TMicNik@aol.com)

P.O. Box 1295

Madison, NJ 07940

Phone: (973) 514-2060, ext. 21

Levine and Cieri work with juvenile offenders at Green Residential Community Home through a contract with the New Jersey Juvenile Justice System. As part of a 13-week playwriting and performing class, the juvenile residents from the group centers create 2-3 plays and perform their works at the Playwrights Theater in Madison for their families and peers.

Storytelling Arts, Inc. (www.storytellingarts.net)

Susan Danoff, Founder and Executive Director (susan@storytellingarts.net)

Paula Davidoff, Storyteller, writer and project director (PaulaDavidoff@gmail.com)

Joanne Epply-Schmidt, Storyteller (revjes1@aol.com)

PO Box 135

Kingston, NJ 08528

Phone: (609) 430-1922

Fax: (609) 430-0015

Storytelling Arts, a non-profit organization, contracts a variety of storytellers to work in juvenile detention centers, schools and other settings. The programs in juvenile detention centers, including Morris County Juvenile Detention Center, Mercer County Youth Detention Center and Valentine Residential Community Home, are funded by the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission and by private and corporate donors.

Woman is the Word (<http://www.geocities.com/freedomroad04/mainpage.html>)

Michele Lise Tarter, Facilitator (tarter@tcnj.edu)

Department of English

The College of New Jersey

P.O. Box 7718

Ewing, NJ 08628

Phone: (609) 265-9294

Tarter, a professor of English at the College of New Jersey, has led a memoir writing class at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility since 2001. She structures the 8 to 10 week sessions in order to promote healing and reconciliation for the women, beginning the course with reading of women's autobiographies and culminating in the "publication" of each women's memoir.

NEW MEXICO

Cedar Tree, Inc.'s Prison Literacy Project (<http://www.jimmysantiagobaca.com/projects.html>)
Jimmy Santiago Baca, Founder (baca@swcp.com)

Award-winning poet and author Jimmy Santiago Baca learned to read and write while incarcerated in the Arizona prison system on drug charges from 1973-1978. Baca has conducted writing workshops in hundreds of correctional facilities for 27 years. In 2005, he created the Cedar Tree, Inc. to support his vision of making books, reading and writing real and necessary components of inmates' lives.

Outside In (www.outsideinproductions.org)

David Lescht, Founder and Executive Director (info@outsideinproductions.org)

P.O. Box 5714

Santa Fe, NM 87502

Phone: (505) 986-6054

Outside In is a non-profit community-based organization established in 1995 to bring free, live, professional music, dance and other artistic presentations to people who are confined in shelters, residential treatment facilities, correctional facilities, and nursing homes in New Mexico and who do not otherwise have access to the arts. A major focus of the organization is its Youth With Promise Program, which offers weekly art, music and dance educational workshops for juvenile offenders and other underserved youth.

NEW YORK

Avodah Dance Ensemble (www.avodahdance.org)

Julie Gayer, Artistic Director (jewelzkg@yahoo.com)

c/o HUC-JIR

1 West 4th Street

New York, NY 10012

Since 2000, this dance troupe has been in residency at York Correctional Institution and at Baylor Correctional Institution for Women in Delaware since 2001.

Bard Prison Initiative (<http://www.bard.edu/bpi/>)

Max Kenner, Founder and Director (kenner@bard.edu)

Dorothy Albertini, Volunteer Coordinator (albertin@bard.edu)

Lilly Bechtel, Student Coordinator of the Poetry Workshop at Beacon Correctional Facility
(lillyofthefield@earthlink.net)

Bard College

PO Box 5000

Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 12504-5000

Phone: (845) 758-7308

BPI runs a degree-granting college program inside a long-term, maximum-security prison (Eastern Correctional Facility), a transitional medium-security prison (Woodburne Correctional

Facility) and a medium-security prison for women in New York City (Bayview Correctional Facility). Bard professors who volunteer their time teach the courses, and student volunteers facilitate a wide variety of pre-college opportunities from GED mentoring to courses in theology and workshops in the arts.

Joe Bruchac (nudatlog@earthlink.net)

P.O. Box 308

Greenfield Center, NY 12833

Phone: (518) 584-1728

A Native American storyteller and poet, Bruchac volunteered as writing instructor at Great Meadow Correctional Facility while running the Greenfield Review, which published prison writing. He developed and coordinated the Skidmore's prison college program at Great Meadow Correctional Facility. He published 10 issues of the *Prison Writing Review* and edited the 1984 anthology of prison writing, *A Light From Another Country*.

Bell Gale Chevigny (bchevigny@earthlink.net)

A writer, former prison teacher and professor emeritus of literature at SUNY Purchase, Chevigny has joined the PEN Prison Writing Program and served as its chair. She edited *Doing Time: 25 Years of Prison Writing*, an anthology that featured the best works from the PEN Prison Writing Awards.

Scott Christianson (schris@nycap.rr.com)

Phone: (518) 674-8662

An independent researcher and writer with an interest in prison issues, Christianson wrote *With Liberty for Some: 500 Years of Imprisonment in America*.

Cornell at Auburn (<http://cuauburn.arts.cornell.edu/>)

c/o Winthrop Wetherbee, Director (ww22@cornell.edu)

283 Goldwin Smith Hall

Ithaca NY 14853

Phone: (608) 255-6808

Cornell at Auburn is an outreach program of Cornell University in Ithaca, offering courses in composition, creative writing and literature to inmates at the Auburn Correctional Facility in Auburn, New York. Cornell faculty, lecturers and graduate students teach the courses. Cornell undergraduates also participate in the program, generally through leading small-group discussions and responding to inmate writing.

Durland Alternatives Library (www.alternativeslibrary.org)

Lynn Anderson, Director (alt-lib@cornell.edu, lma2@cornell.edu)

127 Anabel Taylor Hall

Cornell University

Ithaca, NY 14853

Phone: (607) 255-6486

This library holds alternative perspectives and is free and open to the community. They also provide services to the incarcerated populations in the nearby area through their work at a maximum secure unit of a juvenile detention center. They offer some arts programs and creative writing workshops in the facility. The Alternatives Library also sponsors the Prisoner Express project.

Nancy Gabor (ngabor@princeton.edu)

Gabor, an actress and currently a theater professor at Princeton, taught theater in New York State prisons in the 1970s. She worked for two years in Taconic Correctional Facility (a minimum-security facility) and two years at Greenhaven Correctional Facility (a maximum-security facility).

Douglas Goetsch (doug@janestreet.com)

A poet and teacher, Goetsch taught creative writing at Passages Academy at Horizon, a juvenile detention center in the South Bronx for five years, from 2001 to 2006.

Hettie Jones (hettiej@msn.com)

A writer and teacher, Jones led the Bedford Hills Writing Group for 10 years, until 2002. She edited their anthology *Aliens at the Border* and co-wrote with Janine Pommy Vega *Words Over Walls: Starting a Writing Workshop in a Prison*.

Judith Katz (JKNYOffice@aol.com)

A volunteer at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, Katz produced *What I Want My Words to Do to You*, a documentary about Eve Ensler's workshops at Bedford Hills and the women's writing.

Larry Mamiya (mamiya@vassar.edu)

A professor of Religion and Africana Studies, Mamiya directs Vassar's Greenhaven Prison Program. Mamiya teaches two courses (Africana Studies 200 and Africana Studies 201) that combine field visits to maximum-security Greenhaven Correctional Facility and medium-security Otisville Correctional Facility with class meetings. The courses intend to further understanding of the U.S. prison system through the field experience, group discussions, readings, films and guest speakers.

New York State Literary Center (www.nyslc.org)

Dale Davis, Executive Director (ddavis@nyslc.org)

155 South Main Street

Fairport, New York 14450

NYSLC's Arts in Education programs incorporate writing, technology, music and theater, working with youth in residential placement, day treatment centers and juvenile justice facilities in the Rochester area since 1996. In 2004, a program began in Monroe Correctional Facility. As an artist/educator, Davis incorporates hip-hop into the courses, which has had favorable responses.

PEN Prison Writing Program (<http://www.pen.org/page.php/prmID/152>)

Jackson Taylor, Director (taylorj@newschool.edu)

PEN American Center

588 Broadway, Suite 303

New York, NY 10012

Phone: (212) 334-1660

Founded in 1971, the PEN Prison Writing Program believes in the restorative and rehabilitative power of writing, by providing hundreds of inmates across the country with skilled writing teachers and audiences for their work. The program sponsors an annual writing contest,

publishes a free handbook for prisoners, provides one-on-one mentoring to inmates whose writing shows merit or promise, conducts workshops for former inmates, and seeks to get inmates' work to the public through literary publications and readings.

Prisoner Express (www.prisonerexpress.org)

Gary Fine (gmf5@cornell.edu)

The Prisoner Express program, sponsored by the Durland Alternatives Library, promotes rehabilitation by offering inmates information, education and the opportunity for creative self-expression in a public forum. Participation in this program fosters self-exploration, enrichment and knowledge. Currently, 2200 prisoners are members of Prisoner Express, contributing to the publication, participating in the correspondence programs that it offers, and receiving the magazine.

Rehabilitation Through the Arts (www.p-c-i.org)

Katherine Vockins, Founder and Executive Director (pci19@optonline.net)

12 Huntville Road

Katonah NY 10536-2002

Phone: (914) 232-7566

Fax: (914) 232-7701

The Rehabilitation Through The Arts (RTA) program was founded in 1996 at Sing Sing Maximum Security Correctional Facility in Ossining, NY. Its goal is to use theater arts to offer prisoners a safe and supportive structure in which to build skills, to develop leadership, community, and respect for self and for others, and to recognize a sense of achievement.

David Rice (riced@strose.edu)

Assistant Professor, English

The College of Saint Rose

432 Western Ave.

Albany, NY 12203

Phone: (518) 454-5110

Rice currently teaches an upper-level undergraduate course on prison literature, and is working on an article about the issues of narrative authority and audience when teaching prison literature to college students.

Right-to-Write Program

Sarah Lawrence College

Irene King, Office of Community Partnerships (IKing@sarahlawrence.edu)

Sarah Gibson, Program Coordinator and MFA student (Gibson.sarahb@gmail.com)

The Right-to-Write Program provides Sarah Lawrence students with the opportunity to team-teach writing workshops in the Women's Unit of Valhalla Correctional Facility. These weekly workshops focus primarily on creative writing and on creating an environment that empowers the women inmates to explore and express their feelings.

Student Press Initiative (www.publishspi.org)

Erick Gordon, Director (ergordon@tc.edu)

Jim Fenner, Production Coordinator (jimrfenner@gmail.com)

Teachers College, Columbia University

Box 182

525 West 120th Street
New York, NY 10027
Phone: (212) 678-8120

The Student Press Initiative is designed to develop, foster, and promote writing across the curriculum through student publication. SPI has collected oral histories from the incarcerated young men awaiting trial or sentencing at Horizon Academy on Rikers Island, publishing three volumes of these oral histories: *Killing the Sky*, *Killing the Sky 2* and *Echando Humo Para Siempre* (Spanish language).

Janine Pommy Vega

Poet who has taught writing workshops at Woodburne and Eastern Correctional Facilities

Voices UnBroken (www.voicesunbroken.org)

Victoria Sammartino, Founder and Executive Director (voicesunbroken@gmail.com)

370 E. 149th Street

Bronx, NY 10455

Mailing address: P.O. Box 342, Bronx NY 10461

Phone: (718) 292-3018

Voices UnBroken is a Bronx-based non-profit organization dedicated to providing under-heard members of the community with the tools and opportunity for creative self-expression.

Through creative writing workshops in jails, prisons, group homes, residential treatment facilities, and various other transitional and alternative settings, Voices UnBroken nurtures the inherent need in all people to tell their stories.

NORTH CAROLINA

Katie Adams (adamska@appstate.edu)

Professor of prison literature courses at Appalachia State University, taught creative writing in prisons and created the publication *Prisoners Write*

North Carolina Women's Prison Writing and Performance Project

(<http://www.unc.edu/~cramer/prison/>)

Judith Reitman, Project Director (Judithreitman@earthlink.net)

The Jordan Institute

UNC-Chapel Hill CB# 3550

Chapel Hill, NC 27599

Phone: (919) 732-5601

This program is an innovative approach to the issue of women and violence. Through weekly workshops in writing and performance led by working professionals in the arts, incarcerated women move from rage and victimization into reflection and self-awareness, embracing self and community.

PENNSYLVANIA

Irene Baird (icb100@psu.edu)

A professor at Pennsylvania State University Harrisburg, Baird facilitates a humanities-based course that uses literature and writing for problem-solving development and identity formation

at the Dauphin County Jail. Baird has written about her model in educational journals. Tobi Jacobi's dissertation also analyzes Baird's approach.

Books Through Bars Philadelphia (www.BooksThroughBars.org)
info@booksthroughbars.org

4722 Baltimore Ave.

Philadelphia, PA USA 19143

Phone: (215) 727-8170

Books Through Bars was originally established to send packages of books to individual prisoners as they requested them. Today, this remains the primary function of the collective. The organization also began collecting artwork from prisoners, which led to prison art exhibitions and the publication of *Insiders' Art: The Context Collection by Artists in Prison*, which includes art, commentary by the artists and the Contexts Collective, and selected resources.

Cindy Burstein (cindyb@critpath.org)

A documentary filmmaker, Burstein is currently working on a project about the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program and projects with male prisoners at State Correctional Institution - Graterford.

The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program (<http://www.temple.edu/inside-out/IOhome.html>)

Lori Pompa, Director and Professor at Temple University (inout@temple.edu,

lpompa@juno.com)

521 Gladfelter Hall

1115 W. Berks Street

Philadelphia, PA 19122

Phone: (215) 204- 5163

Fax: (215) 204-3872

The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program was established to create a dynamic partnership between institutions of higher learning and correctional systems in order to deepen the conversation about our approaches to issues of crime and justice. Inside-Out brings college students together with male and female prisoners to study as peers in a seminar behind prison walls. The program also offers a training institute for professors or administrators interested in starting a version at their school.

Philadelphia Mural Arts Program (www.muralarts.org)

Jane Golden, Director (Jane.Golden@phila.gov)

Jennifer Storey, Coordinator of October 2007 Arts in Criminal Justice Conference

(jenniferstorey@mac.com)

Department of Recreation, City of Philadelphia

1729 Mount Vernon Street

Philadelphia, PA 19130

Phone: (215) 685-0750

Fax: (215) 685-0757

The Mural Arts Program offers a wide array of mural-making programs for adult men and women at three correctional facilities in the Philadelphia area: the State Correctional Institution (SCI) at Graterford, Riverside Correctional Facility for women, and Curran-Fromhold Correctional Facility (CFCF). The program also works with victims of crime in collaborative projects in order to explore the impact and consequences of violent crime. The Mural Arts Program organized the October 2007 national conference on Arts in Criminal Justice.

The Center for Restorative Justice and Community Arts

(www.restorativejusticecommunityarts.org)

Allyson Holtz, Founder and Executive Director (allyson@restorativejusticecommunityarts.org)

5544 Beverly Place

Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Phone: (412) 719-7677

The Center for Restorative Justice and Community Arts is a private, not-for-profit organization whose mission is to bridge victim and offender advocacy through the arts. Holtz has worked as art instructor, artist-in-residence, program designer and program coordinator in county jails, state prisons, and the federal penitentiary system for over twenty years. From 1997 to 2006 she was employed by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections at maximum-security prisons in Pittsburgh and Fayette County. She recently began the initial steps for developing this center.

Kathryn Watterson (kwatters@english.upenn.edu)

A professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania, Watterson is the author of *Inside the Concrete Womb: Women in Prison*.

RHODE ISLAND

Space in Prison for the Artistic and Creative Expression (SPACE)

(http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Swearer_Center/programs/space.shtml)

Kathleen Bernard, Women's SPACE (kathleen_bernard@brown.edu)

Adam Roberts, Men's SPACE (adam_c_roberts@brown.edu)

Swearer Center for Public Service

Brown University

PO Box 1974

Providence, RI 02919

Phone: (401) 863-2338

Founded in 1992 by a group of women from Brown University interested in working in the Women's Division of the Rhode Island Adult Correctional Institution (ACI), the program has offered theater, creative writing, and visual arts workshops to inmates of the medium and minimum-security facilities. Men's SPACE was added in 2003, offering creative writing, rhymes, screenwriting, and theater workshops to inmates at the men's Medium I and Medium II facilities.

SOUTH DAKOTA

ArtsCorr, part of South Dakotans for the Arts (www.sdarts.org)

Patricia Boyd, Executive Director (soda@rushmore.com)

445 Glendale Drive

PO Box 414

Leed, SD 57754

Phone: (605) 722-1467

Fax: (605) 722-1473

ArtsCorr provides participatory exposure to the arts for incarcerated youth in South Dakota's state juvenile correctional facilities. The program includes artist residencies, correctional staff training, and integration of the arts and educational programs.

TEXAS

Children's Prison Art Project (www.childrenprisonart.org)

Birgit Walker, Executive Director and Founder (childrensprisonart@sbcglobal.net)

P.O. Box 130584

Houston, TX 77219

Phone: (713) 520-7661

Fax: (713) 520-7661 ext. 51

Founded by neighborhood artist Birgit Walker in 1993, this non-profit arts education organization has a mission to expose at-risk youth in correctional facilities and shelters in Harris County to an innovative educational theater and visual arts forum where they can express their thoughts and visions in a constructive way.

Margaret Greco (mgreco@accd.edu)

An instructor at Alamo Community College, Greco is an artist and ethnographer who volunteered at Bear County Jail near San Antonio while researching the aesthetic of prison art for her dissertation.

Southwest Correctional Art Network

Grady Hillman, Founder and President (gradyh@prodigy.net)

7010 Isabelle Drive

Austin, TX 78752

Phone: (512) 467-8382

Fax: (281) 367-2686

In 1991, Hillman founded this networking organization that connects arts groups to work in correctional institutions with both adult and juvenile institutions. Hillman also serves as a consultant for developing programs in correctional institutions and has published extensively in the area of community arts and humanities programs, including *Arts Programs for Juvenile Offenders in Detention and Corrections: A Guide to Promising Practices* for Office of Juvenile Justice in Detention and Prevention and the National Endowment for the Arts.

WASHINGTON

The Center for the Study of Art and Community (www.artandcommunity.com)

William Cleveland, Founder (bill@artandcommunity.com)

4566 Tangleberry Lane N.E.

Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Phone: (206) 855-0977

Fax: (206) 855-1895

Cleveland has written extensively about community arts, arts in other places, and arts-in-corrections. He was the former director of California's Arts-in-Corrections program during the 1980s. Through the Center for the Study of Art and Community, he provides research, evaluation, publishing, training, lectures, and consulting services to artists and arts organizations, educational, human service and criminal justice agencies and the business and philanthropic communities.

Keeping the Faith: the Prison Project (www.patgraney.org/faith.html)

The Pat Graney Company

Pat Graney, Founder and Artistic Director (pgraney@earthlink.net)

1419 South Jackson St. Studio 11

Seattle WA 98144

Phone: (206) 329-3705

Founded in 1994 by Pat Graney, this project consists of workshops that are designed to provide positive, life-affirming experiences for women and girls who are currently incarcerated or are in pre-release programs. The two-month long workshops, currently at the Mission Creek Correctional Center in Belfair, WA, use movement, writing, visual art and performance activities as transformational tools to build the women's self-esteem and life-skills, culminating in a performance.

Pongo Publishing Teen Writing Project (www.pongopublishing.org)

Richard Fold, founder (gold_ericsson@msn.com)

PMB 155

2701 California Ave. S.W.

Seattle, WA 98116

The Pongo Publishing Teen Writing Project is a volunteer, nonprofit effort with Seattle teens in jail, on the streets, or in other ways leading difficult lives. Through poetry, other forms of writing and the publication of annual anthologies of their work, the project help these young people express themselves through poetry and other forms of writing and publish annual anthologies of their work.

WEST VIRGINIA

Kathleen Ryan (kohearnr@wvu.edu)

354 Stansbury Hall

West Virginia University

Morgantown, WV 26506

Phone: (304) 292-8010

A professor of English at the West Virginia University, Ryan teaches courses on prison literature, founded the Appalachian Book Project in West Virginia and edits a quarterly prison newsletter, *Stateville Speaks*, which is available online at www.illinoisprisonstalk.com. The newsletter features creative writing as well as news articles.

WISCONSIN

Jonathon Shailor (shailor@uwp.edu)

7928 Seventh Avenue

Kenosha, WI 53143

Phone: (262) 652-9001

Fax: (262) 595-2271

An associate professor of communications at University of Wisconsin Parkside, Shailor has facilitated drama programs at the Racine Correctional Facility since 1995. From 1995 to 2004, his "Theatre of Empowerment" program focused on scene work and performances based on the inmates' personal experiences. Since 2004, the men have been studying, rehearsing and performing full length Shakespeare plays, including *King Lear*, *Othello* and *The Tempest*.

INTERNATIONAL

The Anne Peaker Centre (www.apcentre.org.uk)
Susan Ashmore, Chief Executive Officer (infor@apcentre.org.uk)
Neville House
90-91 Northgate
Canterbury, Kent CT1 1BA
England
Phone: 0122 747 0629

This national organization serves as a coordinating center for the arts in criminal justice by promoting and supporting the use of arts in criminal justice. The focus areas of its work are: advocacy, capacity building and training, promotion the value of the arts, consulting, evaluation and information.

Leonidas K. Cheliotis (lc324@cam.ac.uk)
A doctoral researcher in the Institute of Criminology, Cheliotis is knowledgeable about arts in corrections in the United Kingdom.

English PEN Writers in Prison Network (<http://www.englishpen.org/writersinprison/>)
Clive Hopwood, Director
This English organization is somewhat similar to the PEN Prison Writing Center in the U.S.

Alistair Fruish (fruish@tspeak.co.uk)
Through the Writers in Prison Network, Fruish worked in HMP Wellingborough for three and a half years and has worked in other prisons of the English system in the past five years. He works with prisoners to write and shoot videos.

Geese Theatre Company UK (<http://www.geese.co.uk/HTML/index.html>)
Midlands Arts Centre
Cannon Hill Park
Birmingham B12 9QH
England
Phone: 0121 446 4370
Fax: 0121 446 5806
mailbox@geese.co.uk
Founded in 1987 by former US company member Clark Baim, this team of actors and group workers present interactive drama, conduct workshops, offer staff trainings and provide consultations within the criminal justice system.

The Koestler Trust for Arts Inside (<http://www.koestlertrust.org.uk/index.html>)
Tim Robertson, Director (trobertson@koestlertrust.org.uk)
168a Du Cane Road
London W12 0TX
England
Phone: 0208 740 0333
Fax: 0208 742 9247

The Koestler Trust is a prison arts charity, founded by the writer Arthur Koestler in 1962. Its aim is to promote the arts in prisons and special institutions, encouraging creativity and the acquisition of new skills. Its activities range across a series of special arts projects in prisons, and centre on the Koestler Awards Scheme, an annual nationwide competition encouraging and rewarding a variety of creative endeavors.

People's Palace Projects (<http://www.peoplespalace.org.br/default.asp>)
Paul Heritage, President and Artistic Director (paul@peoplespalace.org.br)

Brazil: Rua Bambina 147/101, Botafogo
Rio de Janeiro – RJ, CEP 22251-050 Brazil
Phone: (55 21) 2535-5895

UK: School of English and Drama
Queen Mary, University of London, Mile End Road
London E1 4NS United Kingdom
Phone: 44 (0) 207 882 7823

This NGO founded by Paul Heritage, a professor of drama and performance at Queen Mary, University of London, utilizes art to formulate and implement social development project, with a special focus on human rights. Their work occurs in Brazil and the UK, with projects such as “Changing the Scene” dealing with juvenile justice in Rio de Janeiro, and earlier drama work in five prisons throughout Brazil.

Prison Arts Foundation (www.prisonartsfoundation.com)
Unit 3 Clanmil Arts & Business Centre
Northern Whig Building
2-10 Bridge Street
Belfast BT1 1LU United Kingdom
Phone/fax: 44 (028) 9024 7872
office@prisonartsfoundation.com

The Prison Arts Foundation was founded as a charitable trust in November 1996 after extensive discussions between the Northern Ireland Prison Service, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, the Community Relations Council and the Community Arts Forum. The foundation's aims are to create access to the arts for all prisoners, ex-prisoners, young offenders and ex-young offenders in Northern Ireland.

The Theatre in Prisons and Probation Research and Development Center (www.tipp.org.uk)
James Thompson, Founder (james.thompson@man.ac.uk)
The Martin Harris Building
The University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester M13 9PL
England
Phone: 0161 275 3047
Fax: 0161 275 3877
admin@tipp.org.uk

Developed by James Thompson and Paul Heritage in 1992, this organization works from the belief that theatre and related arts have the power to transform people's lives. They develop and implement participatory arts projects, and offer training for artists and for professionals working in the criminal justice system.

APPENDIX B: RESOURCE LIST

Select Bibliography on Prison Issues and History

Books

Bernstein, Nell. *All Alone in the World: Children of the Incarcerated*. New York: The New Press, 2005.

Bernstein, an award-winning journalist and coordinator of the San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership, provides an intimate and often heart-wrenching account of the children of the imprisoned, a much-forgotten population. Drawing on five years of researching and writing on children of the incarcerated, Bernstein explores various aspects of this issue from the initial arrest, the sentencing process, the visitation of children to prison, the “replacements” of grandparents and foster care, and the eventual reentry of parents into their homes and society. With her poignant portraits of the children left behind and her sound policy recommendations, Bernstein sheds light on this often overlooked, yet crucial, element of the criminal justice system in the United States.

Christianson, Scott. *With Liberty for Some: 500 Years of Imprisonment in America*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998.

This informative book traces the development of prisons in the United States from the arrival of Columbus over 500 years ago to the current state of a prison industrial complex. Christianson’s well-researched book shows the close connection between our past slave society and the present situation where a minorities, particularly black and Latino men, account for the majority of prisoners, even though they are a true minority in the general population. This work explains the growth of the prison industry as well as the shifting mentalities of corrections from a focus on rehabilitation to a punitive mentality. Christianson also refers to some well-known prisoners and their written production.

Cole, David. *No Equal Justice: Race and Class in the American Criminal Justice System*. New York: The New Press, 1999.

Cole, a professor at Georgetown University Law Center and an attorney with the Center for Constitutional Rights, has written “a challenging, multilayered analysis of how the disconnection between constitutional theory and legal practice has infected today’s justice system” (*Washington Post Book Review*). This book shows the pervasive presence of double standards based on race and class in the criminal justice system, from police behavior to jury selection and sentencing. Cole argues that our system depends on these double standards in order to operate because these disparities allow the privileged to enjoy constitutional protections from police power without paying the costs that would be associated with extending those rights to minorities and the poor. Cole includes specific examples of these disparities, as well as careful legal explanations. Each chapter also includes suggestions for moving beyond the double standards that have been tolerated for so long. He concludes with a chapter on “remedies” that urges for a healthier sense of community free of this double standard.

Conover, Ted. *Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing*. New York: Vintage Books, 2000.

When his request to shadow a recruit at the New York State Corrections Academy was denied, the writer Ted Conover goes “undercover” to become a guard at Sing Sing prison in

Ossining, Westchester County, New York. The result is this award winning account of investigative journalism that traces Conover's yearlong transformation into a "newjack," a rookie guard at Sing Sing. The winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction, this book follows Conover's journey from the application process to the training regimen to the other side of the gates at Sing Sing. By providing readers with insights into the harsh prison culture, the grueling and demeaning working conditions of the officers, and the impacts of this job on his family life, Conover paints a realistic, and haunting, portrait of the criminal justice system, revealing how this growing system brutalizes nearly everyone connected to it.

Culhane, Chuck, ed. *Concrete Gardens: Women and the Criminal Justice System*. Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Group on Justice in Democracy, 1996.

Culhane, an ex-Death Row inmate and now a law instructor at SUNY Buffalo, edited this book was about women in the system. The book reveals the experience of women in the system, suffering great anguish when separated from their children, from poor medical treatment and a general feeling of helplessness.

Cummins, Eric. *The Rise and Fall of California's Radical Prison Movement*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994.

This academic account of the Californian radical prison movement focuses on the history of San Quentin prison from 1950 to 1980. Cummins combines profiles of famous radical prisoners with a description of the changing academic environment in San Quentin. Key figures in this history include San Quentin librarian and bibliotherapy advocate Herman Spector, the "King of Death Row" Caryl Chessman who wrote *Cell 2455 Death Row* and other writings while on death row, Black Muslim and author of *Soul on Ice* Eldridge Cleaver, and political radical and author of *Soledad Brother* George Jackson. As Cummins describes the rise and fall of the radical movement within San Quentin, he also highlights the connection between the radical inmates and leftists of the Bay Area who discovered a new cause in the prison movement. The book also highlights the increased restrictions on education, special programs and literature that paralleled the fall of the radical prison movement.

Earley, Pete. *The Hot House: Life Inside Leavenworth Prison*. New York: Bantam, 1992.

Earley, formerly a reporter for *The Washington Post*, was the first writer ever to be allowed unlimited access by the federal Bureau of Prisons to one of its maximum-security facilities. The result is this honest portrayal of day-to-day life inside the U.S. penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas based on his observations from July 1987 to July 1989. Known as the "Hot House" for the sweltering conditions of its cells, Leavenworth is the oldest and one of the most dangerous facilities in the nation. Earley structures his book around his observations of key figures in Leavenworth, including infamous inmates and prison employees, and the first-person voices of these participants. The book provides readers with a gripping profile of real men behind bars and the powers that control them, as well as raising questions about this nation's prison policy.

Elsner, Alan. *Gates of Injustice: The Crisis in America's Prisons*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2004.

The national correspondent for Reuters news agency, Elsner provides a shocking and powerful account of the current state of the criminal justice system in the United States. He

focuses on the U.S. criminal justice system because as the global superpower the country cannot ignore the plight of prisoners, who account for over 2 million Americans with another 10 million people cycling through jails every year. He traces how the U.S. became a prison nation with the highest national incarceration rate in the world. The book provides a litany of statistics on the number of prisoners and their demographics. Elsner details the poor health treatment, the difficult conditions for the vulnerable and the mentally ill, the unique problems plaguing women prisoners, the financial incentives of the prison-industrial complex and the challenges of re-entering society and avoiding recidivism. He concludes with some modest suggestions for revamping the criminal justice system.

Faith, Karlene. *Unruly Women: The Politics of Confinement and Resistance*. Vancouver, B.C.: Press Gang Publishers, 1993.

This book challenges the way readers view the unruly, undisciplined and defiant woman. Faith, a community activist for human justice with a Ph.D. in History of Consciousness, grounds her work in feminist analysis as she explores the variety of ways in which women disobey the social order. The revolutionary Santa Cruz Women's Prison Project is of particular interest for those working in prisons.

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Pantheon, 1977; reprint ed., New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

Foucault's masterpiece traces the development of the modern prison from the 1700s in France to the present system. He examines innovations in corrections ranging from the abolition of torture to the institution of forced labor and the emergence of the modern penitentiary, while he explores the meaning of power, discipline, punishment and communication with respect to corrections and also the society in general. He suggests that punishment has shifted its center from the prisoner's body to his soul, implying that society's concern with rehabilitation in fact encourages and refines criminal activity. This work has been a groundbreaking text in a variety of disciplines, including history, philosophy, criminology, sociology and anthropology, leading *The New York Times Book Review* to proclaim his book, "Imaginative, illuminating [and] innovative... Must be reckoned with by humanists, social scientists and political activists." It is a foundational work in understanding the history of prisons and the relations of power plaguing contemporary society and prisons.

Gonnerman, Jennifer. *Life on the Outside: The Prison Odyssey of Elaine Bartlett*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004.

An insightful work of investigative journalism by *Village Voice* contributor Jennifer Gonnerman, this book reveals the tale of Elaine Bartlett before, during and after her incarceration. Bartlett suffered under the Rockefeller drug laws, receiving a twenty years to life sentence for an A-1 felony offense of "selling drugs." In reality, Bartlett served a drug mule from New York City to Albany, toting 4 ounces of cocaine, which the prosecutor, police and informants swore that she sold once in Albany. This book comments not only on the devastating effects of New York's Rockefeller Laws and the nation's "war on drugs," but also highlights the emotional and mental impact of these laws and of prison on the convicted and their families. Gonnerman's account captures the difficulty of returning to society with a felony record after a prisoner has been warehoused away from her community for so many years.

Hallinan, Joseph T. *Going up the River: Travels in a Prison Nation*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Hallinan provides a compelling account of shift in corrections mentality in the United States over the past two centuries. Hallinan's examination of our prison nation combines statistics and descriptions of laws that shaped the current system with portraits of individuals affected by the growing prison-industrial complex. He travels across the country from rural North Carolina where he investigates the tale of the Groves, a family of so-called drug kingpins to tours of Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia. He makes references to a famous prisons across the nation, including the "Corrections Capital of the World" – Fremont County, Colorado with its 13 prisons, the San Quentin prison and its former librarian Herman Spector, and Attica's infamous prison riot in upstate New York. This book creates a balanced view of the current prison-industrial complex that not only highlights the injustices of current sentencing practices but also stresses the massive expense of the system.

Hartnett, Stephen John. *Incarceration Nation: Investigative Prison Poems of Hope and Terror*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003.

In this innovative collection of "investigative poems," Hartnett embarks on the tradition of John Dos Passos, Carolyn Forché and Peter Dale Scott by creating pieces that combine scholarship with poetry to form a dialectical weaving of perspectives. Through this unique format, Hartnett, an assistant professor of speech communications at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, develops poetry and personal narratives energized by academic, poetic and activist traditions. With its vast range of subjects, moods, thoughts and voice, this book explores the prison-industrial complex in works that encompass both hope and terror, and eventually love.

Jacobson-Hardy, Michael. *Behind the Razor Wire: Portrait of a Contemporary American Prison System*. Photographs and text by Michael Jacobson-Hardy; foreword by Angela Y. Davis; essays by John Edgar Wideman, Marc Mauer, and James Gilligan, M.D. New York: New York University Press, 1999.

This beautiful book provides a window into the contemporary American prison system by taking readers behind the razor wire with insightful essays and moving photographs. Jacobson-Hardy's photographs from various correctional facilities in Massachusetts lend a sense of complexity to these human beings behind bars and the criminal justice system that they confront on a daily basis. Poetry by Jimmy Santiago Baca, incarceration statistics, and quotes from Oscar Wilde, Janice Barnes, Fox Butterfield, Michel Foucault and the inmates themselves accompany the photographs. The combination of words with visual images creates a portrait of prisoners, their lives and their surroundings unlike the accounts found in other works.

Johnson, Robert. *Hard Time: Understanding and Reforming the Prison*. 2nd Edition. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 2003.

Johnson, Professor of Justice, Law and Society in the School of Public Affairs at American University, creates a seminal work on the criminal justice system. He treats the current crisis of prisons in American with compassion and intelligence. This work provides a realistic portrait of what life is like as a prisoner today. Based on his observations and insights, Johnson suggests plausible policy recommendations to reform prisons in the U.S. into more functional and humane institutions.

Mauer, Marc. *Race to Incarcerate*. 2nd edition. New York: The New Press, 2006.

Written by the executive director of the Sentencing Project, this book provides the most up-to-date account of prison expansion in the United States over the last three decades. Mauer showers readers with a litany of statistics, graphs and charts that bring the rapid growth of American prisons into a shocking international context. He profiles the changing role of the federal government by tracing the political resonance of the “crime issue” and the resulting policies from the Reagan administration through the George W. Bush years. This complete portrait of the changing criminal justice system also highlights the impact of the “war on drugs,” the racial effect of sentencing and incarceration, the role of the media, and both the intended and unintended consequences of imprisonment. The result is a compelling and well-researched read for anyone interested in our country’s current “race to incarcerate.”

Morris, Norval and David J. Rothman, eds. *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998.

This comprehensive historical handbook edited by a professor of law and a professor of history traces how our ideas of crime and practices of punishment have changed over time. Through essays by distinguished scholars, this volume provides an informed perspective on the rise and development of a central institution in the modern society, as well as gripping and intimate look at the social world of prisoners and their keepers. This text is a fascinating and authoritative addition to the literature on prisons throughout time.

Mauer, Mark and Meda Chesney-Lind, eds. *Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment*. New York: The New Press, 2002.

Edited by Marc Mauer of The Sentencing Project and Meda Chesney-Lind formerly of the American Society of Criminology, this comprehensive collection of essays provides an insightful and eye-opening look at the U.S. criminal justice system. Scholars and advocates reveal the unintended consequences, the collateral damage, of the increasing tendency to warehouse inmates in the U.S. The first section focuses on the lifetime consequences of incarceration in terms of housing, social exclusion and disenfranchisement. The second section focuses on the distorted practices within the criminal justice system. The third section addresses the impact of incarceration on families, while the fourth section places the growth in incarceration in the context of communities in crisis. Topics addressed include the lack of economic progress among blacks in correlation to their increased incarceration rates and the relationship between prison and crime rates in low-income communities. The final section presents prison as socially corrosive as the essays describe the creation of a prison economy in rural America, the impact of mass incarceration on immigrant policy, the poor health care that has led to a tuberculosis epidemic in prisons, the media’s censorship of prison topics, and the negative effects of U.S. corrections policies throughout the world. This book allows its readers to gain a better grasp on the collateral consequences of mass incarceration in the United States.

Owens, Barbara. *In the Mix: Struggle and Survival in a Women’s Prison*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998.

Owens spent three-years observing and visiting the Central California Women’s Facility, home to over 4,000 women, to write this ethnographic account of life in the world’s largest women’s prison. She crafts her tale from descriptions of the physical conditions of the prison, the women’s lives before incarceration, their family situation, the daily life within

various housing segments of the prison population. Owens combines her observations with long passages from interviews and conversations with the inmates. Through her ethnographic approach, she constructs a portrait of life “in the mix,” revealing the culture and struggles of a women’s prison.

Petersilia, Joan. *When Prisoners Come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Petersilia, a professor of criminology at the University of California-Irvine, draws on dozens of interviews with inmates, former prisoners, and prison officials to effectively show readers how the current system is failing. This book explores the harsh realities of prisoner reentry while offering specific solutions to prepare inmates for release, reduce recidivism, and restore them to full citizenship, while never losing sight of the demands of public safety. Petersilia’s book addresses the essential and timely issue of what to do when prisoners come home.

Rathbone, Christina. *A World Apart: Women, Prison, and Life Behind Bars*. New York: Random House, 2005.

Rathbone’s struggle to gain access to cover Massachusetts Correctional Institution at Framingham, the oldest running women’s prison in the country, began in January 2000. After many legal victories, she was granted access to this 128-year-old institution. This book traces the history of Framingham as it shifts from a “reformatory” for adulterers and drunks to an over-crowded female prison plagued with rape, drug problems and poor medical attention.

Rierdan, Andi. *The Farm: Life Inside a Women’s Prison*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.

In the course of her research for this book on the Niantic Correctional Institution in Niantic, Connecticut, Rierdan spent 1400 hours inside this women’s facility, known as the “Farm” for its once functioning dairy farm and rural setting. Rierdan traces the history of the facility from a reformatory to an overcrowded prison with a new component, the York Correctional Institution. She combines this historical perspective with profiles of various inmates, focusing especially on alcoholic Delia Robinson as she moves in and out of Niantic, showing the precarious nature of women in prison and their chances of surviving upon reentry to society.

Rodríguez, Luis J. *Heart and Hands: Creating Community in Violent Times*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2001.

Rodríguez explores the current situation of violence among youth in the United States, drawing on his experience as a peacemaker with gangs in LA and Chicago, a community activist and an artist. He traces his involvement in gang life and violence as a child in LA during the 1960s as he draws connections to the current violent situation facing our communities. His concrete suggestions for addressing violence among youth stress the importance of community and of creative expression, rather than the current punitive mentality that locks up children without thinking of the repercussions.

Watterson, Kathryn. *Women in Prison: Inside the Concrete Womb*. Revised Edition. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996.

A groundbreaking work on women's life in prison when released in 1973, this revised edition updates the account based on the changing demographic of prisons. Watterson interviewed over five hundred women in prison, both inmates and guards, in the course of her visits to 21 jails and prisons for women, 16 county and city jails, 5 state prisons for women, 1 federal prison for women, 5 state prisons for men, 3 jails for men and 5 juvenile detention centers. Her well-researched account shows the gritty reality of day-to-day life in prison, taking readers into the hearts, minds and lives of women behind bars.

Wynn, Jennifer. *Inside Rikers: Stories from the World's Largest Penal Colony*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001.

Wynn brings her experience as a journalist, the editor of the *Rikers Review* with the rehabilitative program Fresh Start, and the director of the Prison Visiting Project at the Correctional Association of New York to this insightful and compelling tale of life on Rikers. She combines personal experience and observations of the inmates with vast knowledge of criminal theory and sociology. By tracing her students' lives both inside the "Rock", as Rikers Island is commonly referred, and on the streets of New York City, she creates a haunting portrait of a segment of the city's population that has been "convicted at birth" and will continue to struggle once returning to society.

Articles

Butterfield, Fox. "Getting Out – A Special Report; Often, Parole is One Stop on the Way Back to Prison." *The New York Times*, 29 Nov. 2000, Late Edition, Section A, Page 1, Column 1, National Desk.

NY Times contributor Fox Butterfield compiles a great deal of research and interviews to provide this detailed report on the complexities of parole and the problems of recidivism. While commenting on a phenomenon nationwide, this article focuses in particular on the disastrous system in place in California.

Gonnerman, Jennifer. "Life Without Parole?" *The New York Times Magazine*, 19 May 2002, Page 40.

Gonnerman, a staff writer for *The Village Voice* and a contributor to the *NY Times Magazine*, provides a detailed investigative report on the parole system in New York City. She combines her observations of meetings between parolees and parole officers at the West 40th office with interviews with officers and parolees and political figures, as well as statistical information. This article is a great exposé on the workings of the parole system in New York City, its problems and the similar issues plaguing parole across the nation, a timely issue as more and more prisoners, especially those with mentally illness and other troubles, re-enter society.

Liptak, Adam. "Ideas & Trends: Crime and Punishment: Sentences are Too Long or Too Short, Rarely Just Right." *The New York Times*, 24 Aug. 2003 Late Edition, Section 4, Page 3, Column 1, Week in Review Desk.

This brief commentary addresses the problematic aspects of the current sentencing system in the United States, highlighting the faults of the mandatory minimum sentencing practices that have nearly eliminated judicial discretion with respect to deciding sentences.

Multimedia

Storycorp, "Witness to an Execution," NPR's *All Things Considered*, April 2000
http://www.soundportraits.org/on-air/witness_to_an_execution/

This 22-minute audio documentary, which won a Peabody Award in 2000, tells the stories of the men and women involved with the execution of death row inmates at the Walls Unit in Huntsville, Texas. Narrated by Warden Jim Willett, who oversees all Texas executions, this audio report documents, in minute-by-minute detail, the process of carrying out an execution by lethal injection. The voices in *Witness to an Execution* tell a rare story.

Select Bibliography of Prisoner Art and Writing

Books

Abbot, Jack Henry. *In the Belly of the Beast: Letters from Prison*. New York: Random House, 1981; reprint ed., New York: Vintage Books, 1991.

This work organizes the letters that Abbot, a convict, sent to Norman Mailer while he was writing *The Executioner's Song*. Abbot offered to educate Mailer in the realities of life in a maximum-security prison. This account by a 37-year old man of his 25 years behind bars is a visionary book in the repertoire of prison literature. The story of Jack Henry Abbot also provides a cautionary tale for the early release of prison writers. With the publication of his book and increased publicity of his case, Abbot was released on parole. Shortly after his release, he killed a man in the alley outside of a restaurant in the East Village, and thus returned to prison, raising questions about the access to writing that inmates should have.

Amberchele, J.C. *How You Lose: A Novel in Stories*. New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2002.

This novel in stories written by a current prisoner tells the tale of Melody, a victim of a crime as a young woman, Alex, the man who shot her and her father, and several people whose lives intersect briefly with Mel's. After visiting the empty house in Denver and relives the night of the shooting in the opening story, the novel continues with Mel's adventures in Mexico, the southwestern border, Denver and the mountains of Colorado. In the final story, occurring nearly 10 years after the shooting, Melody goes to the prison – "Old Max" – to confront Alex and ask him why he committed the crime. According to Bell Gale Chevigny, Amberchele, a winner of the annual PEN Prison Writing Contest, creates, "[an] astonishing collection [that] mines the experience of loss in an unusual range of characters and settings from the brilliant open spaces of Colorado, Mexico, and the Atlantic to the suffocation of prisons, real and figurative."

Arguelles, Marilla, ed. *Extracts from Pelican Bay: An Anthology of Prisoner Poetry, Drawings, and Essays*. Berkeley, CA: Pentograph Press, 1995.

This anthology showcases writing and art from inmates at the notorious prison Pelican Bay in northern California.

Baca, Jimmy Santiago. *Immigrants in Our Own Land and Selected Early Poems*. New York: New Directions Paperbook, 1990.

- - -. *A Place to Stand*. New York: Grove Press, 2001.

Now a renowned Chicano poet, Jimmy Santiago Baca served time in an Arizona maximum-security prison. His early writing developed during his years in prison, many of which were

spent in solitary confinement. Due to his placement in the hole, he could not participate in poetry courses, but nonetheless communicated with Richard Shelton and other poets who critiqued his writing and encouraged him to publish his works and continue writing. The poems in *Immigrants in Our Land* are samples of his early poetry. *A Place to Stand* is his moving memoir that traces his journey from his difficult childhood in rural New Mexico to his incarceration in Arizona, where he transformed from a functional illiterate to a voracious reader and talented poet.

Benowitz, Jill, Tim Dunn and Barbara Hirshkowitz, eds. *Insiders' Art: The Context Collection by Artists in Prison*. Philadelphia, PA: Contexts Project of Books Through Bars, 2000.

This collection features the artwork sent into the Books Through Bars program from all across the country. While the focus of the book is on the artwork, this book also includes the words of the inmates from their letters and book requests, along with some brief essays written by the Books Through Bars volunteers.

Bruchac, Joseph, ed. *Light from Another Country: Poetry from American Prisons*. Greenfield Center, NY: Greenfield Review Press, 1984.

This collection of poetry features an introduction by Richard Shelton, a foreword by Joseph Bruchac, who also edited the anthology, and an afterword by Michael Hogan. Shelton, an English professor at the University of Arizona and the facilitator of creative writing workshops at the Arizona State Prison, mentions the faults of the prison system and the need for writers to encourage and channel the undeveloped and undirected talents in our prison. Bruchac, who has taught creative writing for a decade, states that the collection's purpose "is to present some of the best poetry being written in this country by people who are in prison." The anthology includes powerful poems from prison writers including W.M. Aberg, Jimmy Santiago Baca, Paul David Ashley, Melvin Douglas Brown, Raymond Ringo Fernandez, Michael Hogan, John Shipley, Paul Shiplett and Thomas Waltner. These poems showcase the talent and diversity of writers behind prison doors.

Chevigny, Bell Gale, ed. *Doing Time: 25 Years of Prison Writing. A PEN American Center Prize Anthology*. New York: Arcade Publishing, 1999.

This anthology features the best submissions to the PEN Prison Writing Contest over the past twenty-five years. These stories, poems and essays exude a literary quality akin to other published works, showing the power of prison writing at its most polished. The anthology highlights the importance of the PEN Prison Writing Project and their annual writing contest for prisoners. The PEN group has encouraged writing within prisons across our nation, sponsoring the contest, workshops in local prisons and the creation of handbooks for prison writers and for those interested in starting workshops in prisons. With a foreword by Sister Helen Prejean, of *Dead Man Walking* fame, and an introduction by Bell Gale Chevigny, this collection of amazing writing is a tribute to the importance of writing in correctional facilities and to the PEN Prison Writing Project.

Dowd, Siobhan, ed. *This Prison Where I Live: The PEN Anthology of Imprisoned Writers*. London: Cassell Publications, 1996.

This anthology of memoirs, poems, letters and diary entries by international political prisoners serves as a celebration of PEN (Poets, Playwrights, Essayists, Editors, Novelists) at seventy-five years and its Writers in Prison Committee. The moving pieces of this collection highlight the struggles of these imprisoned writers with survival, in the grittier sense of

stubbornness and the refusal to compromise, emerging as a central theme. Designed to be read from cover to cover, the book intends to present a single journey of various aspects of the prison experience. Contributors include Cesar Vallejo, Irina Ratushinskaya, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Jacobo Timerman, Vaclav Havel, Primo Levi and Wole Soyinka, and represent countries such as China, the former USSR, Argentina, South Africa, Nigeria, South Korea, Cuba and Iran.

Evans, Jeff, ed. *Undoing Time: American Prisoners in Their Own Words*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000.

This anthology of autobiographical prison writings features thirty-six pieces by a diverse group of prisoners – ranging from young to old, forgotten to infamous, check forgers to death row inmates. In their own words, the prisoners explore themselves, their families, their motives, personal demons, their crimes and their experience behind bars. This collection grants inmates the opportunity to communicate to the public, while also giving readers the chance to view convicts as human beings first and foremost. A foreword by renowned poet Jimmy Santiago Baca, who served time in San Quentin, and an afterword by Craig Haney, a professor of psychology focusing on the effects of incarceration, further contribute to the importance of this work.

Fraden, Rena. *Imagining Medea: Rhodessa Jones and Theater for Incarcerated Women*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

Fraden, a professor of English at Pomona College in Claremont, California, chronicles the work of Rhodessa Jones with women in the San Francisco County Jail. With her Medea Project, Jones allows for the creation and performance of productions based on the incarcerated women's stories and incorporating Greek mythology, music and dance. Women prisoners, formerly incarcerated women and other members of Jones' Cultural Odyssey collaborate to create and perform moving works in the jail and also in the community. This book fulfills the need to document the productions and experiences of the women who participate in the Medea Project. Fraden thoughtfully blends a narrative of the process and the productions with her commentary of the project, capturing in words Jones' attempt to blend art and activism.

Franklin, H. Bruce. *Prison Literature in America: The Victim as Criminal and Artist*. Expanded Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

A professor of English literature and American Studies at Rutgers University in New Jersey, Franklin constructs a history of the American prison system through the literature created by its prisoners. This book analyzes prison literature from slavery to contemporary writers, exploring how writers such as Herman Melville, A. Malcolm Braly, B. Chester Himes, Malcolm X, Etheridge Knight, Eldridge Cleaver and George Jackson have discovered themselves and their writing abilities through the process of their incarceration. The comprehensive annotated bibliography recommends a wide range of literature written by prisoners and critical works that study this body of literature.

Franklin, H. Bruce. *Prison Writing in 20th Century America*. New York: Penguin, 1998.

This anthology of prison literature in the United States includes a foreword by Tom Wicker, an introduction by Franklin, an authority on American prison literature, and selections written by prominent prison authors, including Jack London, Kate Richards O'Hare, Jim Tully, Malcolm X, George Jackson, Piri Thomas, Jack Henry Abbot, Kathy Boudin, Jimmy

Santiago Baca and Mumia Abu-Jamal. Franklin limits this anthology to writings that deal with prison, written by individuals who are imprisoned currently or were incarcerated. Through his introductions to these writers and his careful selections, he crafts a compelling history of prisons and the genre of “prison literature” in the United States.

Gordon, Robert Ellis and Inmates of the Washington Corrections System. *The Funhouse Mirror: Reflections on Prison*. Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press, 2000.

Gordon taught fiction writing workshops in the Washington State correctional facilities for nine years (from 1989 to 1998). During this period, he gained more of an insider’s perspective of the criminal justice system and inspired his students to write. Due to cuts in funding, he could no longer teach in the prisons, but he asked six former students to contribute essays and short stories to this collection of reflections on the prison experience. The final chapter, the postlude, is an exploration of his experience as an educator inside the prison in the form of a 1993 lecture given to Department of Corrections administrators. This brief book provides a gallery of portraits of prison life, while also commenting on the importance of writing, arts and education programs within prisons.

Jones, Hettie, ed. *Aliens at the Border: Poems from the Writing Workshop at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility*. New York: Segue Books, 1997.

This collection of poetry written by the women of Bedford Hills Correctional Facility showcases the power, beauty and insight of these writers. Their poetry is eloquent and moving, revealing the struggles of women behind bars with life, abuse, motherhood and ideas of the outside. With contributions by award-winning poets like Judith Clark, Kathy Boudin, Precious Bedell and Joy Wosu, this book showcases the amazing work that can be developed by writing groups like the one led by Hettie Jones at Bedford Hills from 1989 to 2002.

Kornfeld, Phyllis. *Cellblock Visions: Prison Art in America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.

With a brief foreword by Roger Cardinal about the history of visual arts behind bars (“Prison Art”), Kornfeld compiles a beautiful book tracing the development of prison art from its origins in “folk art” to its recent trends. This book balances between insight into her experiences as an “artist-in-residence” in eighteen institutions in six states and her analysis of the prisoners’ art. She describes the inmate, his or her personal experience especially in relation to the art, and examines the technical and thematic aspects of the prisoners’ artwork. This narrative is accompanied by beautiful colored plates of the pieces as well as black and white renditions of some works.

Lamb, Wally and the Women of York Correctional Institution. *Couldn’t Keep It To Myself: Testimonies from our Imprisoned Sisters*. New York: ReganBooks, 2003.

Wally Lamb has taught a writing course at the York Correctional Institution, an all-female prison in Connecticut. In this volume, Lamb’s introduction explores his process of development and discovery that paralleled his students’ similar path during his experience teaching at York since 1999. Through the power of writing and reading, he connects to the women and helps them unlock their stories, which are shared in the subsequent entries of this volume. This anthology received contributions from 10 incarcerated women and Dale Griffiths, a female writing teacher at the York facility since 1994 who co-taught the workshop with Lamb. These pieces do not deal directly with the inmates’ crime, but instead

reveal the imprisonment from abuse, rejection and self-destructive impulses that these women suffered before they ever experienced life behind the bars. Describing their experiences and demons in their own words, these women also reveal a sense of hope and healing as they refuse to be the victims any longer, a testament to the power of the spoken word.

Lamberton, Ken. *Wilderness and Razor Wire: A Naturalist's Observations from Prison*. Mercury House, 2000.

Lamberton, a participant in Richard Shelton's prison writing workshop, began writing after entering prison in 1987. A biologist by training, he has published more than 100 articles in various journals. In this collection, his first book, his nature writing exudes a sense of place. He combines reflections on life in prison with natural descriptions, observations and sketches. He accounts the strain of his sentence on himself and his family, often comparing this experience to the struggle of the natural environment.

Leder, Drew, ed. *The Soul Knows No Bars: Inmates Reflect on Life, Death, & Hope*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.

Leder, a professor of Eastern and Western philosophy at Loyola College in Maryland, brings his philosophy class to the incarcerated men at the Maryland Penitentiary in Baltimore. During his class, Leder discusses key works of philosophy, including the ideas of Socrates, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Foucault, with men imprisoned for robbery, drug dealing and murder. The resulting conversations are powerful, open and honest, accurately described as "philosophy at its best" by Cornel West in the foreword to this account of philosophy behind bars.

Masters, Jarvis Jay. *Finding Freedom: Writings From Death Row*. Junction City, CA: Padma Publishing, 1997.

Masters, an inmate on death row in San Quentin prison, discovered the writings of Tulku Rinpoche, a Buddhist teacher, during his death row trial. After sentenced to death for conspiring to kill a guard, he sought solace and inner peace through meditation and writing sessions with lawyer and friend Melody Ermachild Chavis. The short essays and poetry in this collection are a result of his practice. By studying Buddhism, Masters has gained a greater sense of self-awareness and has transformed from the angry young man that entered San Quentin in 1981 to an advocate for peace at the time of this publication. His writing provides a glimpse at the grim, solitary life on death row and his path to discovering freedom even in this most dismal locale.

Perin, Margo, ed. *Only the Dead Can Kill: Stories from Jail*. San Francisco: Community Works/West, 2006.

This anthology developed from the classes that acclaimed writer Margo Perin teaches in the San Francisco County Jail. Inspired to teach creative writing to inmates by her search for the truth regarding her convict father, Perin encourages the men and women in jail to reflect on their lives and their current through the self-exploratory process of writing. The anthology features these writings and is accompanied by a CD where released men and women read their works. Perin also integrates her own story in the collection through essays that explore her past to help her come to terms with her father's criminality.

Rideau, Wilbert and Ron Wikberg. *Life Sentences: Rage and Survival Behind Bars*. New York: Times Books, 1992.

From the editors of *The Angolite*, the inmate newspaper at Angola State Prison in Louisiana, this collection of essays provides an honest account of life inside. Many of these pieces were previously published as articles in *The Angolite*, but their consolidation into a single volume results in an interesting and revealing description of one of the country's most notorious prisons. The pieces touch on topics such as the dynamics of parole, the history of Angola prison, the financial difficulties facing corrections, and death in prison, among others.

Scheffler, Judith A., ed. *Wall Tappings: An International Anthology of Women's Prison Writings 200 to the Present*. 2nd edition. New York: The Feminist Press of the City University of New York, 2002.

Following Tracy Huling's thoughtful foreword and Judith Scheffler's detailed and thought-provoking introduction, this anthology features a detailed collection of women's writing from prisons throughout the world since 200. The selections reveal the prisoners' desire to vindicate the self and to transcend through causes and beliefs beyond the self. The pieces also touch on the conditions and deprivations of prisons, mechanisms for psychological survival, the importance of motherhood behind bars and solidarity with other women. The appendices showcase the connections that exist between women writers and the rich literature created by women prisoners. The annotated bibliography of works by women inmates is a priceless resource for anyone interested in prison literature, women's literature or the literature of humanity and justice.

Thomas, Piri. *Down These Mean Streets*. 30th Anniversary Edition. New York: Vintage Books, 1997.

This memoir by Piri Thomas, a dark-skinned man of Puerto Rican and Cuban descent born in Spanish Harlem, captures his journey from the streets of the *Barrio* to the suburbs of Long Island to the southern U.S. and eventually to a cell in Sing Sing for shooting a cop. His honest voice touches on difficult subjects like racism in the U.S. and reveals his coping mechanisms of drugs, street fighting and armed robbery. His account of time in prison reveals the importance of reflection and writing for the young Piri, and also the difficulties of the situation. This edition features an Afterword by the author that comments on the continued problems of poverty, drugs, violence and the flawed justice system plaguing the traditionally marginalized.

Vega, Janine Pommy, ed. *No Boundaries: An Anthology of Poetry from Woodburne Correctional Facility*. New York: Segue Books, 1996.

Vega, an American poet associated with the Beats, has worked in arts and education programs in New York for nearly thirty years. She has taught inmates in correctional facilities through Incisions/Arts, work that has led to this slender collection of poetry written by inmates at the Woodburne Correctional Facility.

- - -, ed. *Voices Under the Harvest Moon: An Anthology of Writing from Eastern Correctional Facility*. New York: Segue Books, 1999.

Vega started teaching writing workshops in 1996 at Eastern Correctional Facility in Napanoch. This anthology features mostly poetry, but also prose, including an excerpt from a novel written by one of her students.

This is only a brief selection of writing and art by prisoners. For further examples of prison literature, see published poems, stories, novels and journalism written by individuals who have spent time in prison. Some of these writers include: Nelson Algren, Daniel Berrigan, Philip Berrigan, Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, Eldridge Cleaver (*Soul on Ice*), Angela Davis, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Jean Genet, Emma Goldman, Vaclav Havel, Nazim Hikmet, George Jackson (*Soledad Brother*), Martin Luther King Jr. (*Letter from a Birmingham Prison*), Jack London, Patricia McConnel, O'Henry, Miguel Piñera, Irina Ratuskinskaya, Bobby Seale, Iceberg Slim, Henry David Thoreau, Jacobo Timerman, Voltaire and Malcolm X, to name just a few.

Articles

Liptak, Adam. "Behind Bars, He Turns M&M's Into an Art Form." *The New York Times*, 21 July 2006. Available WWW:

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/21/us/21artist.html?_r=1&oref=slogin.

Liptak profiles the inmate artist Danny Johnson, who innovatively uses M&M's from his commissary and a paintbrush made from his hair and foil to create postcard paintings. Incarcerated at Pelican Bay State Prison in the very northern reaches of California, Johnson, a "problem" prisoner, is held in the Security Housing Unit, the SHU, where he has little to no interaction with others. He has developed ways to create beautiful abstract paintings that recently sold at a gallery in San Miguel de Allende for \$500 each. Although Johnson gave the proceeds from these sales to the Pelican Bay Prison Project, a nonprofit that helps the children of the incarcerated, the prison authorities reprimanded him nonetheless for the attention that his work received.

Select Bibliography on Teaching the Arts in Prison

Books

Cleveland, William. *Art in Other Places: Artists at Work in America's Community and Social Institutions*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1992.

The director of California Arts-in-Corrections from 1981 to 1989, Cleveland examines artists working in alternative spaces in the community and social institutions throughout the country. One section focuses on the artistic work in correctional facilities. In the introduction to this section, he highlights that creative products and services are in high demand within prisons. The subsequent sections profile three different arts-in-corrections experiences: the Geese Theater Company's national prison theater project, Grady Hillman's creative writing program in the Texas Department of Corrections' Winhdam School System and the resulting exhibit "Jailin' in Texas, the Artistic and Folkloric Response," and the institutionalized Arts-in-Corrections in California prisons.

Hillman, Grady. *Arts Programs for Juvenile Offenders in Detention and Corrections: A Guide to Promising Practices*. Washington D.C: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the National Endowment for the Arts, 2002.

This monograph by Hillman, the developer and technical assistant of the Arts Programs for Juvenile Offenders in Detention and Corrections, chronicles the three established programs and the three pilot programs that participated in the project of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the National Endowment for the Arts. This useful publication provides an excellent summary of the programs that participated in this endeavor, as well as suggestions to promising practices and future developments in the field of arts-in-corrections.

Jacobi, Tobi. *Contraband Literacies: Incarcerated Women and Writing as Activism*. Diss. Syracuse University. Ann Arbor: UMI, 2003.

Now a professor at Colorado State University, Jacobi's qualitative dissertation argues that women's prison writing workshops could be spaces to enact feminist critical literacy education and to realize counterhegemonic resistance. Jacobi's assertion is based on interviews with teachers/facilitators at four prisons in the Midwest and Northeast and from textual artifacts such as project funding applications and the final anthologies. She also draws on her own experience as a facilitator of a life writing workshop at a prison in upstate New York. In addition to exploring the practicalities of prison workshops and the writing of incarcerated women, this dissertation inserts a level of theoretical discourse about the purpose and political or social nature of these writing courses.

Jacobi, Tobi and Patricia O'Connor, editors. *Reflections: A Journal of Writing, Service-Learning and Community Literacy*. 4.1 (Winter 2004).

This special edition of the *Reflections* journal focuses on writing in correctional facilities. Contributors include professors who have taught in prisons, writers who have facilitated workshops with incarcerated students, college students who have participated in community based learning courses in correctional settings, and inmates. The pieces from inmates ranged from their own creative writing to essays reflecting on their experience as a participant in a writing workshop. Through the various perspectives, this volume of the journal explores the service learning as pedagogy and community-based research occurring in correctional facilities across the country through workshops, college programs and other educational partnerships.

Liebmann, Marian, ed. *Art Therapy with Offenders*. London: Jessica Kingsley, 1994.

According to this look at the use of art therapy with offenders in Great Britain, art in prison provides an enabling space for overwhelmed prisoners. Art therapy seems as necessary and desirable, especially given the mission of prison in the United Kingdom to secure the rehabilitation of the offender. This book includes chapters by Julie Murphy ("Mists in the Darkness"), Eileen McCourt ("Building up to a Sunset"), Celia Baihe ("Art as Therapy in a Young Offender Institution"), Colin Riches (a particularly useful chapter titled "The Hidden Therapy of Prison Art Education Programs"), and Pip Cronin ("Ways of Working: Art Therapy with Women in Holloway Prison). The observations about art therapy in the historically more rehabilitation-oriented British prison system are useful to individuals interested in the benefits of art for American inmates.

Salzman, Mark. *True Notebooks*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003.

This work captures Salzman's experience teaching writing to the young men in the juvenile detention facility near Los Angeles through the program InsideOut Writers. While initially frustrated, Salzman develops a strong bond with these detainees, learning their stories and helping them to reveal their past through their writing. Salzman's account of his own growth and that of his students speaks to the power of teaching and of the written word.

Shelton, Richard. *Crossing the Yard: Thirty Years as a Prison Review*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007.

Over thirty years ago, Shelton began organizing creative writing workshops beyond bars in Arizona. In this moving and honest memoir, he describes the talented men and women he

has encountered throughout the years, including Jimmy Santiago Baca, Ken Lamberton and others, the difficulties of teaching in the prison environment, and the emotional journey that has accompanied these workshops. A poet and professor emeritus of creative writing at the University of Arizona, Shelton continues to lead creative writing workshops in prison.

Tannenbaum, Judith. *Disguised as a Poem: My Years Teaching Poetry at San Quentin*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000.

This memoir explores Tannenbaum's experience teaching poetry and creative writing in the San Quentin Prison in the 1980s. She taught at the facility as an artist-in-residence through the California Arts in Correction program, working closely with Jim Carlson. Tannenbaum poignantly describes her journey into the San Quentin prison, the prisoners she meets and befriends, her coworkers in the prison's arts program and her evolving view of the criminal justice system as she works on the inside. This honest and eloquent book captures the teaching and the art that emerged during the height of California's arts-in-correction program, which is now only a fragment of what it once was due to budget cuts and society's increasingly punitive focus. In addition to Tannenbaum's reflections on her years teaching at San Quentin, the book also includes samples of her poetry and the poetry of her students – most noteworthy Spoon Jackson.

Thompson, James. *Prison Theatre*. London: Jessica Kingsley, 1998.

Thompson, a Manchester University professor, explores drama in prisons, particularly his work with the Theater in Prisons and Probation Center (TIPP) in this book.

Trounstein, Jean. *Shakespeare Behind Bars: The Power of Drama in a Women's Prison*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001.

An English and drama professor at Middlesex Community College, Trounstein begins teaching in the oldest functional women's prison in the country, the Massachusetts Correctional Institution at Framingham, in 1986. She traces the development of six composite characters as they grow through her literature and drama classes, blossoming with their unique production of plays such as *The Merchant of Venice*, *Lysistrata*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *Rapshew* (an adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew*) and *The Wizard of Oz*. During her decade of teaching literature and drama in the facility, Trounstein realized that art serves as a catalyst for transformation. She concludes her book by advocating for an improvement in the now non-existent arts and education programs in prisons.

Williams, Rachel Marie-Crane, ed. *Teaching the Arts Behind Bars*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2003.

Williams, an artist and art instructor in prisons, compiles a variety of essays and pieces on the variety of experiences of teaching the arts inside correctional facilities. Featuring a foreword from Buzz Alexander, the founder of the Prison Creative Arts Program and an English professor at the University of Michigan, this book provides practical advice for people interested in teaching the arts behind bars, as well as honest reflection from those who have taught visual arts, creative writing and drama in prisons. Contributors include Alexander, Williams, Judith Tannenbaum, William Cleveland, Grady Hillman, James Thompson, Pat MacEnulty, Leslie Neal, Jane Ellen Ibur, Terry Karson and Susan Hill. This book is not only an invaluable tool for the field of arts-in-correction, but is also a testament to the importance of creative expression for positive communication and social interaction, as well as inner healing and self-esteem.

Handbooks

Jones, Hettie and Janine Pommy Vega. *Words Over Walls: Starting a Writing Workshop in a Prison*. New York: Prison Writing Program, PEN American Center, 1999.

Written by two talented poets with years of experience facilitating workshops at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility and Eastern Correctional Facility, this brief handbook describes the steps necessary to start a creative writing workshop inside prisons, from the initial inspiration to getting in to the regulations, the workshop structure, maintaining the workshop and the end product. This pamphlet provides useful tips for writers or other teaching artists interested in starting their own workshop. The handbook also features examples of poetry written inside correctional facilities.

PEN Prison Writing Committee. *Handbook for Writers in Prison*. New York: PEN American Center, 2006.

This manual serves as a guide for writers behind bars who have limited access to organized writing programs. This handbook provides examples and exercises in a variety of writing styles, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, screenwriting, and drama. The guide also includes suggestions for rewriting, grammar, punctuation and additional resources. The handbook closes with a description of the PEN Writing Awards for Prisoners, which is an annual writing contest for prisoners with winning entries being published on the PEN website (www.pen.org). To contact PEN, write to the following address: PEN American Center, 568 Broadway, Suite 401, New York, NY 10012.

Trounstone, Jean and Robert P. Waxler. *Finding a Voice: The Practice of Changing Lives Through Literature*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2005.

This book functions as a guide to the alternative sentencing program, Changing Lives Through Literature. This educational initiative for criminal offenders is based on the idea that studying literature can transform lives. Trounstone and Waxler discuss the origins of the program, which was founded by Waxler in 1991 and extended to women by Trounstone in 1993, and the components of their approach. They provide suggestions for others facilitating Changing Lives Through Literature groups, including sample lesson plans and text recommendations. The book touches on the difficulties encountered during a CLTL session, while also highlighting the benefits of this approach to literature and sentencing.

Articles

Durland, Steve. "Maintaining Humanity: An Interview with Grady Hillman about Arts-in-Corrections." *High Performance* Spring 1996. Available WWW: <http://www.nea.gov/resources/Accessibility/a-maintain.html>.

Durland questions Hillman about arts-in-corrections practices and why they should exist. In response, Hillman provides many reasons to justify arts programming in correctional facilities, including fewer disciplinary incidents, financial benefits, and reduced recidivism. He comments on the general attitude towards corrections today, and on the rise of the prison-industrial complex. Hillman believes the arts can function as prevention and later as an intervention tool to stop the cycle of incarceration, arguing not only for arts in corrections, but also arts in the schools. He also touches on the role of the artist, and the issues of which they should be aware.

Folwell Stanford, Ann. "Where Love Flies Free: Women, Home, and Writing in Cook County Jail." Beyondmedia Education, Women and Prison: A Site for Resistance. Available WWW: <http://www.womenandprison.org/social-justice/ann-f-stanford.html>.

Folwell Stanford, a professor of multidisciplinary and literary studies at DePaul University and the founder and director of the DePaul Women, Writing and Incarceration Project, writes about her experiences teaching writing at the Cook County Jail. Incorporating the writing of her students in this article, she stresses the importance of writing for these women because it functions as a "nexus of bridges: to the self, to family, lovers, and friends, to each other, and to the community of readers." Folwell Stanford clearly understands and advocates the power of writing for all individuals, especially incarcerated women.

Hillman, Grady. "A Journey of Discouragement and Hope: An Introduction to Arts and Corrections." Community Arts Network, CAN/API Publications, December 2001. Available WWW:

http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2001/12/a_journey_of_di.php.

Written by Grady Hillman, a writer and anthropologist with over twenty years of experience in arts-in-corrections, this article provides an overview of arts behind bars in the United States since the 1970s. He focuses on the history of the arts in correctional settings, the general trends in corrections and education that have impacted arts-in-corrections, and examples of sustainable models. He concludes his article with a brief discussion of future opportunities and strategies, based on his experience as the technical assistant for the NJJDP/NEA project, Arts Programs for Young Offenders in Detention and Corrections. A useful bibliography supplements this article.

Lamb, Wally. "A Teacher's Battle to Let Women In Prison Unlock Their Minds and Find Writers' Voices." *The Hartford Courant Northeast Magazine*, 3 September 2006. Available WWW:

<http://www.courant.com/news/local/northeast/hcrevisioncorrections.artsep03,0,1613673.story?page=2&coll=hc-northeast-top>

Lamb describes his experiences facilitating a writing group at the York Correctional Institute in Niantic, CT over the past seven years. He illustrates the joy he discovered through writing, a joy that he hopes to share with his students at York. He traces his journey from teaching in high schools to colleges to prison, highlighting the pleasures and challenges of working with an incarcerated population. The article goes into more details about the lawsuit brought upon the women by the state of Connecticut's Department of Corrections. Following his piece, the magazine includes samples of his students' writings.

Williams, Rachel Marie-Crane. "Women on the Inside." Beyondmedia Education, Women and Prison: A Site for Resistance. Available WWW:

<http://www.womenandprison.org/social-justice/rachel-williams.html>.

Williams, an assistant professor at the University of Iowa, describes her experience teaching the humanities course "Women on the Inside" at the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women. Stressing the power of the written word and one's own story, Williams explains the value in having her students read other women's memoirs in order to come to terms with and to express in writing their own life story. Reading and writing, according to Williams, can be incredible tools for healing and personal growth.

Multimedia

Gavin, Madeleine and Judith Katz, dir. *What I Want My Words to Do to You*. DVD. New York: PBS Home Video, 2004.

Eve Ensler (the playwright, director and social activist famous for *The Vagina Monologues*) leads a writing group of 15 women in the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility. The power of writing becomes apparent as Ensler urges the women to discuss their writing and their experiences, rediscovering themselves through the process of writing. Glenn Close, Marisa Tomei, Rosie Perez and other actresses perform the women's writing in New York and also to the inmates at Bedford Hills. This documentary showcases the important and moving work of the Bedford Hills Writing Group with Ensler, continuing the tradition started by Hettie Jones.

Glass, Ira. *This American Life*, "Act V," Episode 218, 9 Aug. 2002 <http://www.thislife.org/>

This episode of a popular National Public Radio program, "This American Life," is devoted to just one story. Over the course of six months, reporter and "This American Life" contributor Jack Hitt followed a group of inmates in a high security prison, as they rehearsed and staged a production of the last act--Act V--of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Shakespeare may seem an odd match for a group of hardened criminals, but he found that they understand the bard on a level most of us might not. It's a play about murder and its consequences, performed by murderers, living out the consequences.

Johnson, Lorna Ann, dir. *Freedom Road*. Videocassette. New York: Women Make Movies, 2004.

Created by College of New Jersey communications professor Lorna Johnson, this documentary showcases the memoir writing class at Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women. Michele Tarter, an English professor at the College of New Jersey, has taught this course for five years, going into the maximum-security section of the Clinton, New Jersey prison once a week with two of her college students. This documentary interviews Dr. Tarter, showcases her class in the prison, profiles a few of the women participating in her class, and interviews other involved parties, including the inmates' families and politicians, helping to document the importance of Dr. Tarter's work and writing in prison.

Raymond, Alan and Susan, dir. *How Do You Spell Murder*. Videocassette. New York: CINEMAX, 2003.

This documentary showcases the L.I.F.E. (Learning Is For Everyone) literacy program at the New Jersey State Prison in Trenton. Through L.I.F.E., selected inmates receive training from volunteers with ABC Literacy in order to teach their fellow inmates to read and write. With clips of inmates teaching each other as well interviews with the incarcerated tutors and their fellow inmate students, this documentary honestly reveals the importance of literacy and the empowering nature of learning.

Rogerson, Hank, dir. *Shakespeare Behind Bars*. DVD. New York: Philomath Films, 2006.

A 2005 Sundance Film Festival selection, this documentary follows the all-male Shakespearean theater of convicted felons at the Luther Lockett prison in Kentucky for a year as they rehearse and perform a full-production of *The Tempest*, Shakespeare's last play with forgiveness as a central yet underlying theme. Chronicling the work of Curt Tofteland's Shakespeare Behind Bars, this film captures the prisoners as they struggle to understand their characters while uncovering truths about their own lives.

Useful Websites

<http://www.communityarts.net/archivefiles/corrections/index.php> This website provides a great resource list and links to other websites about arts in correction. The sections on arts in correction is one part of the larger website that serves as a resource for artists in all realms of communities.

www.artsincriminaljustice.org This website was initially developed for the October 2007 national conference on Arts in Criminal Justice, hosted in Philadelphia by the Mural Arts Program. The site now presents notes from the conference's sessions and information on the speakers and organizations involved. The website hopes to help connect peers and serve as a forum for discussion of research, curriculum ideas, funding and project updates.

www.prisonarts.info Developed as a result of this investigation, this website provides a searchable program directory, a historical perspective, advice for newcomers to the field, featured events and samples of writing and art by prisoners.

<http://www.nea.gov/resources/Accessibility/corrections.html> This government page includes resources for artists working within prison and juvenile facilities.

<http://www.360degrees.org> This interactive website provides a comprehensive picture of the criminal justice system by combining statistics with personal stories and portraits of individuals touched by the criminal justice system.

www.prisonactivists.org/links A good series of links to art, writing and other articles of interest.

www.judithtannenbaum.com Featuring her writing and information about her memoir *Disguised as a Poem*, this website also provides a good resource list with links to prison poetry.

www.spoonjackson.com Serving life without the possibility of parole, Jackson participated in Tannenbaum's poetry workshops. This website features his poems and other writings, including a monthly newsletter, and more details about his life and his case.

<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/english/pcap/> The webpage for the University of Michigan Prison Creative Arts Project founded by Buzz Alexander describes its workshops, classes for undergrads and its annual prison art show, while also providing links to useful resources about prisons and prison arts.

<http://www.fortunesociety.org/> The Fortune Society, a non-profit organization "building people, not prisons" since 1967, features links, a prison art auction, articles and other information about the criminal justice system in the U.S.

<http://www.nicic.org> The website for the National Institute of Corrections features information about the department of corrections in each state and federally, and provides additional resources for those interested in or working in corrections.