

## DWC: List of recommended documentaries

Compiled Summer 2016 by Kelly Faust with assistance from the DWC listserv and special thanks to Rebecca Hayes.

Documentaries are listed in alphabetical order with descriptions. Suggested pairings for readings to accompany the documentaries are also provided for several titles. An index is provided at the end of the document with hyperlinks to the associated films. Click [HERE](#) to go there directly.

1. *3 ½ Minutes, 10 Bullets*: <http://www.candescentfilms.com/three-half-minutes/>  
In *3 ½ Minutes, Ten Bullets*, two lives intersected and were forever altered. On Black Friday 2012, two cars parked next to each other at a Florida gas station. A white middle-aged male and a black teenager exchanged angry words over the volume of the music in the boy's car. A gun entered the exchange, and one of them was left dead. Michael Dunn fired 10 bullets at a car full of unarmed teenagers and then fled. Three of those bullets hit 17-year-old Jordan Davis, who died at the scene. Arrested the next day, Dunn claimed he shot in self-defense. Thus began the long journey of unraveling the truth. *3 ½ Minutes, Ten Bullets* follows that journey, reconstructing the night of the murder and revealing how hidden racial prejudice can result in tragedy.

Note\*- May pair well with "The Essence of Innocence: Consequences of Dehumanizing Black Children" by Goff et al. in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

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2. *15 to Life*: <http://www.pbs.org/pov/15tolife/>  
Does sentencing a teenager to life without parole serve our society well? The United States is the only country in the world that routinely condemns children to die in prison. This is the story of one of those children, now a young man, seeking a second chance in Florida. At age 15, Kenneth Young received four consecutive life sentences for a series of armed robberies. Imprisoned for more than a decade, he believed he would die behind bars. Now a U.S. Supreme Court decision could set him free. *15 to Life: Kenneth's Story* follows Young's struggle for redemption, revealing a justice system with thousands of young people serving sentences intended for society's most dangerous criminals.

Note\*- May pair well with "Children Left Behind Bars: Sullivan, Graham, and Juvenile Life without Parole Sentences" by Agyepon in *Journal of International Human Rights*.

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3. *America Betrayed*: <http://www.americabetrayedmovie.com/>

America Betrayed is the story of waste, fraud, and abuse at the very highest echelons of our federal government. America Betrayed takes an in-depth look at just how our government's dirty little secrets have impeded an investigation into 9/11 and nearly ruined a great American city...New Orleans.

From the contractors who built sub-standard structures in New Orleans and were told to "keep quiet", to the whistleblowers who sacrificed their jobs to come forward and expose the cover-ups, cooked books, and cronyism nationwide within the Army Corps of Engineers, this film digs deep to unearth the truth. While scientists charged with investigating the Katrina disaster were intentionally led astray, journalists dug their heels in to get to the root of "disaster capitalism" a process by which government insiders cash in with emergency no-bid contracts, in times of national stress.

America Betrayed clearly exposes our government's misappropriation of funds in spending its citizens' hard-earned tax dollars on rebuilding the Iraqi infrastructure, while the bridges, dams, levees and highways in this country are crumbling. America Betrayed is a cautionary tale for those who trust their government, and hopefully a wake-up call to change the status quo in Washington.

Note\*- Works well with "Hurricane Katrina Victimization as a State Crime of Omission" by Faust and Kauzlarich in *Critical Criminology* and/or "Devastation in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina as a state crime: social audience reactions" by Faust and Carlson in *Crime, Law, and Social Change*.

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4. *Central Park Five*: <http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/centralparkfive/>

THE CENTRAL PARK FIVE, a new film from award-winning filmmaker Ken Burns, tells the story of the five black and Latino teenagers from Harlem who were wrongly convicted of raping a white woman in New York City's Central Park in 1989. The film chronicles The Central Park Jogger case, for the first time from the perspective of these five teenagers whose lives were upended by this miscarriage of justice.

Note\*- May pair well with "The Essence of Innocence: Consequences of Dehumanizing Black Children" by Goff et al. in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

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5. *The Confessions*: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/the-confessions/>

In The Confessions, FRONTLINE producer Ofra Bikel (Innocence Lost, An Ordinary Crime) investigates the conviction of four men -- current and former sailors in the U.S. Navy -- for the rape and murder of a Norfolk, Va., woman in 1997. In the first television interviews with the "Norfolk Four" since their release, Bikel learns of some of the high-pressure police

interrogation techniques -- the threat of the death penalty, sleep deprivation, intimidation -- that led each of the men to confess, despite the lack of any evidence linking them to the crime.

Note\*- Great paired with "Framing innocents: the wrongly convicted as victims of state harm" by Westervelt and Cook in *Crime, Law, and Social Change*.

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6. *Crime After Crime*: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1746153/>

The story of the battle to free Debbie Peagler, an incarcerated survivor of brutal domestic violence. Over 26 years in prison cannot crush the spirit of this determined African-American woman, despite the injustices she has experienced, first at the hands of a duplicitous boyfriend who beat her and forced her into prostitution, and later by prosecutors who cornered her into a life behind bars for her connection to the murder of her abuser. Her story takes an unexpected turn two decades later when a pair of rookie land-use attorneys cut their teeth on her case -- and attract global attention to the troubled intersection of domestic violence and criminal justice.

Note\*- Can pair with Ferraro's book, *Neither Angels Nor Demons* or her article "The words change, but the melody lingers: the persistence of the battered woman syndrome in criminal cases involving battered women" in *Violence Against Women*. Another possible pairing is "Differential Police Response to Black Battered Women" by Robinson and Chandek in *Women and Criminal Justice*. Although not a direct match, could be paired with "Older African American women and barriers to reporting domestic violence to law enforcement in the rural deep South" by Lichtenstein and Johnson in *Women and Criminal Justice*.

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7. *Cruel and Unusual*:

Imagine being a woman in a men's prison. For many individuals, this is a grim reality because the U.S. prison system decides where to place inmates based on their genitalia, not their gender identity. This award-winning documentary makes an unflinching examination of transgender women in men's prisons. Ashley, Linda, Anna, Yolanda and Ophelia describe their experiences undergoing inhumane and humiliating treatment including rape, violence, solitary confinement and denial of medical care. One interviewee explains, "A lot of times I wake up, and I look around at my surroundings, and I see all these men. I think, 'What am I doing here?'" The women in *Cruel and Unusual* don't deny that they must serve their sentences, but their stories raise very important questions about their treatment. Are the human rights of these women and many others across the United States violated? If Gender Identity Disorder is a recognized condition by the American Psychiatric Association, should inmates receive therapy for it in prison? If therapy consists of counseling, female hormones, and in some cases, sexual reassignment surgery, how far should prisons go? Despite their crimes, *Cruel*

and Unusual asks if the punishment these individuals receive is indeed cruel and unusual and a violation of their Eighth Amendment Constitutional protection.

Note\*- Great paired with “Transgender Victims and Offenders: Failures of the United States Criminal Justice System and the Necessity of Queer Criminology” by Buist and Stone in *Critical Criminology*.

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8. *A Death in St. Augustine*: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/death-in-st-augustine/>

On the night she broke up with her police officer boyfriend, Michelle O’Connell was found dead from a gunshot in the mouth. Next to her was her boyfriend’s semi-automatic service pistol. The sheriff’s office ruled it suicide - but was it? FRONTLINE and The New York Times investigate what can go wrong when the police are faced with domestic violence allegations within their own ranks.

Note\*- Works well with “Fox in the Henhouse: A Study of Police Officers Arrested for Crimes Associated With Domestic and/or Family Violence” by Liederbach and Stinson in *Criminal Justice Policy Review*.

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9. *Deep Run*: <http://www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c933.shtml>

Executive produced by Susan Sarandon, DEEP RUN is a powerful verité portrait of trans life in rural North Carolina. Exiled by her family and rejected by an ex-partner, 17-year-old Spazz has no one to lean on for support. But when Spazz falls in love again and summons up the courage to become Cole, a strong-willed trans-man, his candid humor and steadfast, all-inclusive Christian beliefs counter the bigotry he experiences daily.

This deeply personal documentary reveals rebirth and courage within America’s deeply conservative Bible Belt as Cole struggles to find a church that will affirm his identity and the couple’s relationship. With a small group of supportive friends, relatives, and his girlfriend, Ashley, Cole’s search for love and belonging leads him to a radical revision of what faith and church can be. An intimate study of young outsiders in an insular Christian community, DEEP RUN explores the intersection of modern identity and faith in the American South. Essential viewing for LGBTQIA Audiences, Queer and Gender studies classes.

Note\*- Could pair with “Unequal Treatment of Transgender Individuals in Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Programs” by Seelman in *Journal of Social Service Research* to further the discussion.

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10. *Every F\*\*\*ing Day of My Life*: <http://documentarystorm.com/one-minute-to-nine/>

Married at 16 years old followed by over 20 years of violence left Wendy terrified. She summoned the courage to deal with her husband the only way she imagined would keep her and her kids safe from his abuse: by killing him. This shocking documentary, when it was aired on HBO, was renamed with a somewhat more in-your-face title, "Every Fucking Day of My Life," referencing the abuse that Wendy and her family endured over the years. A harrowing portrait of domestic abuse, the project draws heavily on video shot by the dead abuser, as his wife, Wendy Maldonado, spends her final days of freedom before going to jail for his murder. The net result is every bit as chilling and depressing as one might expect.

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11. *Every Mother's Son*: <http://www.pbs.org/pov/everymothersson/>

In the late 1990s, three victims of police brutality made headlines around the country: Amadou Diallo, the young West African man whose killing sparked intense public protest; Anthony Baez, killed in an illegal choke-hold; and Gary (Gidone) Busch, a Hasidic Jew shot and killed outside his Brooklyn home. *Every Mother's Son* profiles three New York mothers who unexpectedly find themselves united to seek justice and transform their grief into an opportunity for profound social change. It was Iris Baez, who had become a veteran activist since her son Anthony's death, who approached Amadou's mother, Kadiatou, and Gary's mother, Doris, after their sons were killed. As a Puerto Rican woman from the Bronx, a West African woman who relocated to New York, and a Jewish woman from Long Island, they made an unlikely but powerful team. The grassroots movement they inspired in New York is challenging the militarization of law enforcement and the erosions of constitutional protections. When police kill someone under suspicious circumstances, the mothers assemble to help the family deal with its grief and to seek the truth and accountability. The mothers have also become advocates for police reforms, including better training and more citizen oversight, and have connected to a larger national movement against police brutality.

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12. *The Execution of Wanda Jean*: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0303282/>

"The Execution of Wanda Jean" chronicles the life-and-death battle of Wanda Jean Allen. By telling one woman's story, the film becomes an unforgettable exploration into one of America's most controversial moral and political dilemmas: the death penalty. "The Execution of Wanda Jean" is an unflinching investigation of the role that poverty, mental health, race, and sexuality play within the criminal justice system.

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13. *Extreme Realities*: <http://www.pbs.org/video/2365380402/>

Hosted and narrated by Matt Damon, Extreme Realities is a new Journey to Planet Earth episode investigating the link between extreme weather, climate change, and threats to our national security.

Note\* good paired with “Gendering Climate Change: A Feminist Criminological Perspective” by Wonders and Danner in *Critical Criminology*.

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14. *Fall From Grace*: <http://www.documentaryfilms.net/index.php/fall-from-grace/>

Rev. Fred Phelps of Westboro Baptist Church has gained notoriety over the years for his slurs against the gay community. Probably most known for picketing the Matthew Shepard funeral with offensive signage, Phelps has also taken it upon himself to protest soldier deaths too. It seems gaining national recognition only motivates him. This intimate documentary uses past and current footage along with new interviews to paint a picture of the controversial figure and his like-minded family.

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15. *For My Wife*: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1322918/>

In December 2006 Kate Fleming died in a flash flood in the basement of her Seattle home. Charlene Strong, her partner of nine years struggled heroically to save her and at the hospital in the final moments of Kates life, was denied access to be by her side. A month and a half later Charlene testified at before the House and the Senate at the state capital in Olympia and as a result of her testimony the Domestic Partnership bill passed in Washington State. She then embraced her newfound status as an activist for marriage equality and traveled the United States educating and urging others to take a stand for justice. The film culminates in a rousing tribute to Charlene's courage at the GLAAD Media Awards.

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16. *Gideon's Army*: <http://gideonsarmythefilm.com/>

GIDEON'S ARMY follows the personal stories of Travis Williams, Brandy Alexander and June Hardwick, three young public defenders who are part of a small group of idealistic lawyers in the Deep South challenging the assumptions that drive a criminal justice system strained to the breaking point. Backed by mentor Jonathan “Rap” Rapping, a charismatic leader who heads the Southern Public Defender Training Center (now known as Gideon's Promise) they struggle against long hours, low pay and staggering caseloads so common that even the most committed often give up in their first year. Nearly 50 years since the landmark Supreme Court ruling *Gideon vs. Wainwright* that established the right to counsel, can these courageous lawyers revolutionize the way America thinks about indigent defense and make “justice for all” a reality?

Note\*- May pair well with Justice Policy Institute report, "System Overload: The Costs of Under-Resourcing Public Defense" (see: [http://www.justicepolicy.org/research/2756?utm\\_source=%2fsystemoverload&utm\\_medium=web&utm\\_campaign=redirect](http://www.justicepolicy.org/research/2756?utm_source=%2fsystemoverload&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=redirect)), can also compliment Alexander's *The New Jim Crow*.

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17. *Girlhood*: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0368745/>

Documentary chronicling America's justice system. Follows two female inmates - victims of horrific violence and tragedy - who are serving time in a Maryland juvenile detention center.

Note\*- Great paired with Flavin's book, *Our Bodies, Our Crimes*. Could also work with Miller's book, *Getting Played: African American Girls, Urban Inequality, and Gendered Violence* or Ryder's book, *Girls and Violence: Tracing the Roots of Criminal Behavior*. Also, Nikki Jones' *Between Good and Ghetto*.

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18. *Girl Trouble*: <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/girltrouble/>

Although the youth crime rate in San Francisco has declined in the past decade, the number of girls in the juvenile justice system has doubled. GIRL TROUBLE, an intimate documentary by directors Lexi Leban and Lidia Szajko, goes beyond the statistics and chronicles four years in the lives of three teenage girls struggling to free themselves from San Francisco's complex and flagging juvenile justice system.

While the documentary tells the compelling stories of Stephanie, Shangra and Sheila, it also opens a window onto the juvenile justice system, exposing its failure to break the cycle of poverty, crime and incarceration that consumes vulnerable young women. While girls now represent 28 percent of the U.S. juvenile detention population, they receive only two percent of delinquency services, according to a 2001 study by the American Bar Association.

Note\*- Great paired with Flavin's book, *Our Bodies, Our Crimes* or Ryder's book, *Girls and Violence: Tracing the Roots of Criminal Behavior*. Also, Nikki Jones' *Between Good and Ghetto*.

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19. *Half the Sky*: <http://www.halftheskymovement.org/pages/film>

Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide is a four-hour series shot in 10 countries: Cambodia, Kenya, India, Sierra Leone, Somaliland, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Liberia and the U.S. Inspired by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn's book, the documentary series introduces women and girls who are living under some of the most difficult circumstances imaginable — and fighting bravely to change them. Traveling with intrepid reporter Nicholas Kristof and A-list celebrity advocates America Ferrera, Diane Lane, Eva Mendes, Meg Ryan, Gabrielle Union and

Olivia Wilde, the film reflects viable and sustainable options for empowerment and offers an actionable blueprint for transformation.

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20. *A Hard Straight (2004):*

<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/hardstraight/film.html>

Starting with the day they are released from California state prisons, A HARD STRAIGHT follows three former prisoners as they enjoy their newly regained freedom while negotiating the difficulties of returning to an uncaring—and often hostile—society.

The film interweaves the stories of Regina Allen, Richard "Smiley" Martinez and Aaron Shepard in their attempts to construct new lives: from the ecstatic moment of their first taste of freedom to the inevitable frustrations, joys, and banality of life on the outside. A HARD STRAIGHT reveals what parolees must do in order to survive after leaving the prison gates with little money and little outside support, how an extended stay in an environment marked by racism, violence, severe regimentation and subjugation affects their ability to re-integrate into "outside life," and what sorts of resources are necessary for them to make a successful transition.

A HARD STRAIGHT was shot on location in San Francisco and Los Angeles over a two-year period. From the hard streets of gangland San Fernando Valley to a drug rehab center teetering on the edge of survival, the film covers ground rarely featured in the debate over our country's soaring recidivism rates. Director Goro Toshima shot extensive footage with each of the three parolees, gaining entry into their private lives and documenting their successes as well as their almost inescapable mistakes. Portraying the reentry process with a clear and direct eye, A HARD STRAIGHT offers multi-dimensional portraits of people with personal histories, observations, remembrances, hopes and fears, providing a real understanding about the profound experience of doing time and trying to go straight.

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21. *Hate Crimes in the Heartland:*

"Hate Crimes in the Heartland," a feature documentary explores the 250,000 hate crimes committed in America each year through the powerful stories of two crimes committed in Tulsa, Oklahoma - over 90 years apart. Like no other documentary exploring this topic, "Hate Crimes in the Heartland" tells powerful stories of survivors, activists, leaders, and community members. The film explores current and past hate crimes in our nation, asking important questions related to social justice, and portrays the remarkable influence of the media on the justice system.

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22. *The House I Live In:* [www.thehouseilivein.org/](http://www.thehouseilivein.org/)

For the past 40 years, the war on drugs has resulted in more than 45 million arrests, \$1 trillion dollars in government spending, and America's role as the



world's largest jailer. Yet for all that, drugs are cheaper, purer, and more available than ever. Filmed in more than twenty states, *The House I Live In* captures heart-wrenching stories of those on the front lines — from the dealer to the grieving mother, the narcotics officer to the senator, the inmate to the federal judge — and offers a penetrating look at the profound human rights implications of America's longest war.

Note\*- Great paired with Alexander's book, *The New Jim Crow* and/or Ritchie's *Arrested Justice*.

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23. *The Hunting Ground*: <http://www.thehuntinggroundfilm.com/>

The statistics are staggering. One in five women in college are sexually assaulted, yet only a fraction of these crimes are reported, and even fewer result in punishment for the perpetrators. From the intrepid team behind *The Invisible War* comes *Campus Assaults*, a piercing, monumental exposé of rape culture on campuses, poised to light a fire under a national debate. In a tour de force of verité footage, expert insights, and first-person testimonies, the film follows undergraduate rape survivors pursuing both their education and justice, despite ongoing harassment and the devastating toll on them and their families.

Note\*- could pair with "Rape Myth Adherence Among Campus Law Enforcement Officers" by Miller et al. in *Criminal Justice and Behavior* OR can be used with "Normalizing sexual violence: Young women account for harassment and abuse" by Hlavka in *Gender and Society* to address pervasiveness of rape culture in education, leading into higher education.

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24. *India's Daughter*: <http://indiasdaughter.com/home/>

INDIA'S DAUGHTER is the story of the short life, and brutal gang rape and murder in Delhi in December 2012 of an exceptional and inspiring young woman. The rape of the 23 year old medical student by 6 men on a moving bus, and her death, sparked unprecedented protests and riots throughout India and led to the first glimmers of a change of mindset. Interwoven into the story line are the lives, values and mindsets of the rapists whom the film makers have had exclusive and unprecedented access to interview before they hang. The film examines the society and values which spawn such violent acts, and makes an optimistic and impassioned plea for change.

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25. *Inside Job*: <http://www.sonyclassics.com/insidejob/>

'Inside Job' provides a comprehensive analysis of the global financial crisis of 2008, which at a cost over \$20 trillion, caused millions of people to lose their jobs and homes in the worst recession since the Great Depression, and nearly resulted in a global financial collapse. Through exhaustive research and

extensive interviews with key financial insiders, politicians, journalists, and academics, the film traces the rise of a rogue industry which has corrupted politics, regulation, and academia. It was made on location in the United States, Iceland, England, France, Singapore, and China.

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26. *The Invisible War*: <http://invisiblewarmovie.com/index.php>

An investigative and powerfully emotional documentary about the epidemic of rape of soldiers within the US military, the institutions that perpetuate and cover up its existence, and its profound personal and social consequences.

Note\*- Possible pairing with “Military Sexual Trauma Among US Servicewomen During Deployment: A Qualitative Study” by Burns et al. in *American Journal of Public Health*.

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27. *Juvies*: <http://www.juvies.net/thefilm.php>

Being tough on crime is one thing. But trying children as adults, and dispensing brutal sentences that are shockingly out of proportion to the offense, is quite another. Most Americans would say this can't happen here, yet for thousands of young people, this is the reality of the present day juvenile justice system, which has turned its back on its initial mission to protect young people and now sends over 200,000 kids through the adult system each year.

From award-winning documentary filmmaker Leslie Neale (*Road to Return*) comes this riveting look at a world most of us will never see: the world of juvenile offenders who are serving incredible prison sentences for crimes they either did not commit or were only marginally involved in. For two years, Neale taught a video production class at Los Angeles Central Juvenile Hall to 12 juveniles who were all being tried as adults. *Juvies* is the product of that class, which was a learning experience for both students and teacher—and becomes a learning experience for all of us, as we witness the heartbreaking stories of children abandoned by families and a system that has disintegrated into a kind of vending machine justice.

Note\*- Could pair with “Sentencing Convicted Juvenile Felony Offenders in the Adult Court: The Direct Effects of Race” by Howell and Hutto in *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*.

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28. *Kids for Cash*: <http://kidsforcashthemovie.com/>

KIDS FOR CASH is a riveting look behind the notorious scandal that rocked the nation when it first came to light in 2009. Beginning in the wake of the shootings at Columbine, a small town in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania elected a charismatic judge who was hell-bent on keeping kids in line. Under

his reign, over 3,000 children were ripped from their families and imprisoned for years for crimes as petty as creating a fake MySpace page. When one parent dared to question this harsh brand of justice, it was revealed that the judge had received millions of dollars in payments from the privately-owned juvenile detention centers where the kids—most of them only in their early teens—were incarcerated. Exposing the hidden scandal behind the headlines, *KIDS FOR CASH* unfolds like a real-life thriller. Charting the previously untold stories of the masterminds at the center of the scandal, the film reveals a shocking American secret told from the perspectives of the villains, the victims and the unsung heroes who helped uncover the scandal. In a major dramatic coup, the film features extensive, exclusive access to the judges behind the scheme. Now serving a 28 year sentence in federal prison, the former juvenile court judge at the heart of the scandal shares his ulterior motives, revealing that his attorneys never knew about his interviews for this film.

Note\*- Could pair with “Investigating Racial Disparity at the Detention Decision: The Role of Respectability” by Kurtz et al. in *Southwest Journal of Criminal Justice* OR “Juvenile Penalties for “Lawyering Up”: The Role of Counsel and Extralegal Case Characteristics” by Armstrong and Kim in *Crime and Delinquency*.

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29. *Killing Them Safely*: <http://www.ifcfilms.com/films/killing-them-safely>  
Hundreds of deaths. Zero oversight. In the early 2000s, brothers Tom and Rick Smith revolutionized policing by marketing the Taser to law enforcement agencies. This supposedly safe alternative to handguns was supposed to curb the use of deadly force—so why have over 500 people died from Taser-related injuries since? At a time when questions about police methods are at the forefront of the national dialogue, *Killing Them Safely* brings together startling archival footage and eye-opening interviews with experts on both sides of the debate to shed much-needed light on an urgent issue.

Note\*- May work well with “Focal Concerns and Police Use of Force: Examining the Factors Associated with Taser Use” by Crow and Adrion in *Police Quarterly*.

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30. *Law and Order: An Inside View of the Criminal Justice System*: <http://www.films.com/ecTitleDetail.aspx?TitleID=1657>  
Summary- One of the ways that the Constitution ensures our rights to life, liberty, and property is by providing for an impartial criminal justice system. In this 2-part series, lawyers, prosecutors, judges, and police officers take us through the entire process of jurisprudence, from investigation and arrest procedures to courtroom proceedings and sentencing. Both programs point out any differences applicable to juvenile law. Legal concepts such as

misdemeanor, felony, Miranda, probable cause, indictment, and right of appeal are clearly explained.

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31. *Lost for Life*: [http://www.snagfilms.com/films/title/lost\\_for\\_life](http://www.snagfilms.com/films/title/lost_for_life)

In the United States today, more than 2,500 individuals are serving life-without-parole sentences for crimes they committed when they were 17 years old or younger. Children as young as 13 are among the thousands serving these sentences. *Lost for Life*, tells the stories of these individuals, of their families' and of the families of victims of juvenile murder.

Note\*- May pair well with “Children Left Behind Bars: Sullivan, Graham, and Juvenile Life without Parole Sentences” by Agyepon in *Journal of International Human Rights*.

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32. *The Mothers of Bedford*: <http://www.mothersofbedford.com/>

Is it possible to become a better mother while serving time in a maximum security prison? Many parents find it hard to imagine being away from a child for a week. Imagine being separated for ten or twenty years? *Mothers of Bedford* explores the effects of a long-term prison sentence on the mother-child relationship.

Note\*- Complementary reading could be Siegel's book, *Disrupted Childhoods: Children of Women in Prison* or Sandra Enos' book, *Mothering from the Inside*.

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33. *On the Outs*: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0389235/>

Follows the choices made by three young women - one a drug dealer, one an addict, one a pregnant teen - in Jersey City

Note\*- Not a documentary. Pairs well with Flavin's book, *Our Bodies, Our Crimes* or Ryder's book, *Girls and Violence: Tracing the Roots of Criminal Behavior*.

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34. *Out In The Night*: <http://www.outinthenight.com/>

*Out in the Night* is a documentary that tells the story of a group of young friends, African American lesbians who are out, one hot August night in 2006, in the gay friendly neighborhood of New York City. They are all in their late teens and early twenties and come from a low-income neighborhood in Newark, New Jersey.

As they walk under the hot neon lights of tattoo parlors in the West Village, an older man sexually and violently confronts them. He says to Patreese “let me get some of that” as he points below her waist. When she says that they are gay, the man becomes violent and threatens to “fuck them straight”. He spits and throws a lit cigarette. Renata and Venice defend the group and a

fight begins, captured by security cameras nearby. The man yanks out hair from Venice's head and chokes Renata. Then, Patreese pulls a knife from her purse and swings at him. Strangers jump in to defend the women and the fight escalates. As the fight comes to an end, all get up and walk away. But 911 has been called and the man involved has a puncture wound from the knife. Police swarm to the scene as their radios blast out warning of a gang attack. The women are rounded up and charged with gang assault, assault and attempted murder.

Note\*- Good paired with Logan, L. (2011). The case of the "killer lesbians." The Public Intellectual. Retrieved from

<http://thepublicintellectual.org/2011/07/18/the-case-of-the-killer-lesbians/>

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35. *Oxyana*: <http://oxyana.com/>

A portrait of Oceana, WV, an old coal mining town that has become the epicenter of the oxycontin epidemic, earning the nickname Oxyana. Tucked in the Appalachian mountains of Southern West Virginia, Oceana, is a small, once thriving coal-mining town that has fallen victim to the fast spreading scourge of prescription painkiller Oxycontin. As the coal industry slowly declined and times got tough, a black market for the drug sprung up and along with it a rash of prostitution, theft and murder. Soon its own residents had nicknamed the town Oxyana and it began to live up to its reputation as abuse, addiction and overdoses became commonplace. Oxyana is a harrowing front line account of a community in the grips of an epidemic, told through the voices of the addicts, the dealers and all those affected. It is a haunting glimpse into an American nightmare unfolding before our eyes, a cautionary tale told with raw and unflinching honesty.

Note\*- May work paired with "The OxyContin epidemic and crime panic in rural Kentucky" by Tunnell in *Contemporary Drug Problems* OR – (Although this deals with a different drug, could turn it into an examination of rural crime/drug abuse more generally) "Beyond the Ghetto: Police Power, Methamphetamine and the Rural War on Drugs" by Linnemann and Kurtz in *Critical Criminology*.

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36. *The Perfect Victim*: <http://www.theperfectvictim.com/>

Together, Shirley, Carlene and Ruby have collectively spent over eighty-five years in Missouri State prison having each been convicted of killing their abusive husbands. Beaten, raped, sold, abused and nearly killed, these women suffered for years prior to the crimes. Denied the opportunity to enter their abuse into evidence during trial, each of the women now represents a system broken by media-sensationalized stereotypes and an outdated understanding of domestic abuse.

A beacon of hope arrives when a group of impassioned lawyers and law students form the Missouri Battered Women's Coalition. Once the group

plucks these women from a number of worthy cases, they begin a decade and a half long quest to secure their freedom. Having already been abused once by their husbands, and again by the notoriously secretive Missouri parole board who determine their fate, the three women have advocates on their side for the first time.

Meanwhile, another crime occurs decades later when Tanya kills her abusive husband. When given poor legal advice, she takes a manslaughter plea and is given the maximum sentence for her crime. Without the involvement of the clemency coalition, Tanya slowly deteriorates under the weight of her guilt and the terror of her memories.

The Perfect Victim examines these women both as unique case studies and as commentary on our society's lack of understanding and support for victims of domestic abuse. Has the legal and gender-based bias surrounding this issue created the unattainable image of "The Perfect Victim"?

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37. *Pervert Park*: <http://www.sundance.org/projects/pervert-park>

The sex offender label is a scarlet letter in the United States. Individuals given this designation are relegated to a life of public shame, their photos posted online for all to see, with few opportunities for redemption. Only a small number of facilities, such as the beaten-down trailer park at the center of Frida and Lasse Barkfors' unflinching new film, offer people the chance to confront their crimes and re-integrate—as much as the law will allow—into society. Although the formal title of the place is Florida Justice Transitions, local neighbors have nicknamed it "Pervert Park." Within this outcast community, a handful of offenders tell searing personal stories that paint a troubling portrait of abuse and justice in America. Pervert Park seeks neither to forgive nor defend its subjects, some of whom have committed acts so atrocious they cannot even forgive themselves, but it does question the severity of laws designed to stifle rather than rehabilitate those yearning for a second chance.

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38. *The Plea*: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/plea/>

The real American justice system is unlike anything depicted on Law & Order and Court TV," says producer Ofra Bikel. Only about 5 percent of all felony convictions result from jury trials. The rest are settled by plea bargains. And these deals aren't always to the defendant's advantage. "The Plea" tells several stories -- different people, different charges, different parts of the country, all with one thing in common: the difficult dilemma of confronting a plea. The program also interviews experts on the criminal justice system.

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39. *Power and Control: Domestic Violence in America*:

<http://www.powerandcontrolfilm.com/all-dvds/#338>

An exploration of the shocking persistence of violence against women in the US, as refracted through the story of Kim, a mother of three in Duluth, MN. As Kim and her fragile daughters take up residence in a shelter, we follow the struggles in a single-parenting survivor's quest to find work, housing and peace of mind. Kim tenaciously copes with her many challenges, but the surprising outcome of her efforts shows how difficult it is to achieve lasting change. The help Kim receives in the shelter wouldn't have existed 30 years ago — in the early 1980s, Duluth was a birthplace of the international domestic violence revolution, and the film celebrates the innovators who shaped this revolution. The multi-level narrative examines the deepest causes of domestic violence, and also looks at some new alternative approaches now being advocated. The film is being widely used, from the Ivy League to the armed services. It is particularly recommended for studies in sociology, social work, psychology, women's studies, political science, law enforcement, law and the health care professions. DVD extras include director's cut interviews with Kim and her husband, and with Ellen Pence and Michael Paymar, co-founders of the "Duluth Model" and key figures in the domestic violence revolution of the 1980s.

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40. *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* (2008; Liberia, women, peace):

<http://www.forkfilms.net/pray-the-devil-back-to-hell/>

Summary- *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* is the extraordinary story of a small band of Liberian women who came together in the midst of a bloody civil war, took on the violent warlords and corrupt Charles Taylor regime, and won a long-awaited peace for their shattered country in 2003.

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41. *Private Violence*: <http://www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c887.shtml>

Emmy™ Nominated PRIVATE VIOLENCE explores a simple but deeply disturbing fact of American life: the most dangerous place for a woman in America is her own home. Every day in the U.S., at least four women are murdered by abusive (and often, ex) partners. Through the eyes of two survivors—Deanna Walters, a mother who seeks justice for the crimes committed against her at the hands of her estranged husband, and Kit Gruelle, an advocate who seeks justice for all women—we bear witness to the complex realities of intimate partner violence. Their experiences challenge entrenched and misleading assumptions, providing a lens into a world that is largely invisible; a world we have locked behind closed doors with our silence, our laws and our lack of understanding. PRIVATE VIOLENCE begins to shape powerful, new questions that hold the potential to change our society: "Why does he abuse?" "Why do we turn away?" "How do we begin to build a future without domestic violence?"

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42. *Rape in the Fields*: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/rape-in-the-fields/>

FRONTLINE and Univision partner to tell the story of the hidden price many migrant women working in America's fields and packing plants pay to stay employed and provide for their families. This investigation is the result of a yearlong reporting effort by veteran FRONTLINE correspondent Lowell Bergman, the Investigative Reporting Program at UC Berkeley, and the Center for Investigative Reporting.

Note\*- Possible complimentary reading, "Experiences of Immigrant Women Who Self-Petition Under the Violence Against Women Act" by Ingram et al. in *Violence Against Women*.

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43. *Rape on the Night Shift*: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/rape-on-the-night-shift/>

Following up on the award-winning collaboration that produced *Rape in the Fields/Violación de un Sueño* in 2013, FRONTLINE (PBS), Univision, Reveal from The Center for Investigative Reporting (CIR), the Investigative Reporting Program (IRP) at UC Berkeley, and KQED are teaming up to uncover the sexual abuse of immigrant women who clean the malls where you shop, the banks where you do business, and the offices where you work.

Note\*- Possible complimentary reading, "Experiences of Immigrant Women Who Self-Petition Under the Violence Against Women Act" by Ingram et al. in *Violence Against Women*.

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44. *Rape on the Reservation*: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cp\\_hO9EcTGE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cp_hO9EcTGE)

One in three Native American women will be raped in her lifetime. Correspondent Mariana van Zeller travels to Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota, where sexual assault and violence against women has escalated to murder.

Note\*- Possible complementary reading, "Estimating the Magnitude of Rape and Sexual Assault Against American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Women" by Bachman et al. in *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology*.

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45. *The Return*: <http://www.pbs.org/pov/thereturn/>

In 2012, California amended its "Three Strikes" law — one of the harshest criminal sentencing policies in the country. The passage of Prop. 36 marked the first time in U.S. history that citizens voted to shorten sentences of those currently incarcerated. Within days, the reintegration of thousands of "lifers" was underway. *The Return* examines this unprecedented reform through the eyes of those on the front lines — prisoners suddenly freed, families turned



upside down, reentry providers helping navigate complex transitions and attorneys and judges wrestling with an untested law. At a moment of reckoning on mass incarceration, what can California's experiment teach the nation? A co-production of American Documentary | POV and ITVS. A co-presentation with the National Black Programming Consortium (NBPC). Official Selection of the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival.

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46. *Searching for Angela Shelton*: <http://www.searchingforangelashelton.com/>  
In the uplifting and multiple award-winning documentary, *Searching for Angela Shelton*, filmmaker Angela Shelton drives around the United States surveying other Angela Sheltons. She discovers that 70% of the Angela Sheltons she speaks to are survivors of rape, childhood sexual abuse and/or domestic violence.

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47. *A Sentence For Two*: <http://www.angelsflightproductions.net/sentence/>  
Christina, Trisha and Kristin are pregnant inmates facing years behind bars in an Oregon prison. Tangerine has already been through it. These four women share their very personal details of pregnancy, incarceration and delivery as they struggle with the uncertain future of their newborns. The search for safe and healthy homes for their babies is agonizing as one plan after another falls apart. When it comes to placing their children, pregnant inmates have few options; foster care, family members or adoption. Only a small number of states have prison nurseries where inmates can keep their newborns with them. This documentary visits the nursery at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in New York where Dr. Mary Byrne of Columbia University conducted the first-ever research study on the development of babies during their first year of life in a prison environment. As the number of women in prison continues to rise, Dr. Byrne's findings will have a big impact on the future of other states considering prison nurseries in their women's facilities.

Note\*- Complementary reading could be Siegel's book, *Disrupted Childhoods: Children of Women in Prison*.

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48. *Sex + Money*: <http://sexandmoneyfilm.com/film/#more-21>  
*Sex+Money*: A National Search for Human Worth is a documentary about domestic minor sex trafficking and the modern-day abolitionist movement fighting to stop it. Since September 2009, the crew has traveled to over 30 states and conducted more than 75 interviews with federal agents, victims, politicians, activists, psychologists, porn-stars, among others.

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49. *Sin by Silence*: <http://www.sinbysilence.com/>

Inside the California Institution for Women, the first inmate initiated and led group in U.S. prison history, shatters the misconceptions of domestic violence.

Convicted Women Against Abuse (CWAA) was created in 1989 to help women inside prison break the silence about abuse and learn more about what they needed to do to help others stop the cycle of violence.

Instead of fighting a system that does not fully comprehend the complexities of abuse, the women of CWAA led an initiative to help educate the system.

Through careful orchestration of letter writing campaigns, media coverage, and senate hearings a movement was born and laws for battered women were changed. And for the founder of CWAA, the flicker of hope begins to grow as her possible freedom, after 26 years in prison, lies moments away.

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50. *Tapestries of Hope*: <http://tapestriesofhope.com/about-the-movie/>

*Tapestries of Hope* is a feature-length documentary that reveals the story of human rights activist Betty Makoni and the Girl Child Network (GCN) in Zimbabwe, Africa. The documentary exposes the myth behind the belief that raping a virgin cures a man of HIV/AIDS.

Director Michealene Cristini Risley travelled to Zimbabwe to explore the rape and AIDS crisis in the country. She had previously befriended Betty Makoni, a born and raised Zimbabwean, and got to know about Makoni's organization, The Girl Child Network, which aims to re-empower abused kids and provides a network of protection for these girls.

The stories were told by the girls of Zimbabwe and Makoni was the main cast for this film. Throughout the film, Makoni helps these girls to become re-empowered and find their voice. Part of healing process for girls is about speaking out about the crimes committed against them. During filming Risley and her assistant were arrested and incarcerated. The film was also seized by the Zimbabwean Intelligence Office (C.I.O). However, the team managed to retrieve the footage before being deported from Zimbabwe.

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51. *Tar Creek*: <http://tarcreekfilm.com/>

TAR CREEK is the story of the worst environmental disaster you've never heard of: the Tar Creek Superfund site. Once one of the largest lead and zinc mines on the planet, Tar Creek is now home to more than 40 square miles of environmental devastation in northeastern Oklahoma: acid mine water in the creeks, stratospheric lead poisoning in the children, and sinkholes that melt backyards and ball fields. Now, almost 30 years after being designated for federal cleanup by the Superfund program, Tar Creek residents are still fighting for decontamination, environmental justice, and ultimately, the buyout and relocation of their homes to safer ground. As TAR CREEK reveals, America's Superfund sites aren't just environmental wastelands; they're community tragedies, too.

Note\*- Could pair with “Mining for Conflict and Staking Claims: Contested Illness at the Tar Creek Superfund Site” by Shriver et al. in *Sociological Inquiry*.

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52. *Telling Amy's Story*: <http://telling.psu.edu/>

Hosted by actress and activist Mariska Hargitay, and told by detective Deirdri Fishel, *Telling Amy's Story* follows the timeline of a domestic violence homicide that occurred on November 8, 2001.

53. *Trained in the Ways of Men*: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0982942/>

The 2002 murder of transgender teen Gwen Araujo is the focus of this harrowing documentary, which chronicles the explosive and controversial trial, as well as the demonstrations staged by supporters who encouraged prosecution of the assailants under California's hate crime laws. Exploring issues of justice and gender identity, the film offers a gripping account of the tragic case.

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54. *Very Young Girls*: <http://www.gems-girls.org/get-involved/very-young-girls>

*Very Young Girls*, whose title reflects the fact that in the United States the average age of entry into prostitution is just thirteen. The film takes us into the work of a former sexually exploited youth-turned-activist named Rachel Lloyd, who started the New York City organization GEMS (Girls Educational and Mentoring Services) to help victimized young women escape their pimps and find another way of life. We meet teen aged girls at different stages of this transition. Some have been so psychologically manipulated by their pimps that they feel compelled to return. Others have successfully broken with their pasts. As we come to know these girls better, they emerge as well-rounded individuals full of unexpected laughter and insight. One chilling element the film uncovers is a videotape - confiscated by police - of two pimps recording their activities with the intent of making a reality television show. Later we see Lloyd get recognized for her work at a human rights awards ceremony shortly after the song "It's Hard Out Here for a Pimp" wins an Academy Award.

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55. *The War on Kids*: <http://thewaronkids.com/>

THE WAR ON KIDS begins with the history of “Zero Tolerance” policy. In the 1990s, almost all schools began instituting guidelines that were originally designed to keep weapons and drugs off campus. Very quickly, school officials began to arbitrarily decide what should be considered a weapon and what should be considered a drug. Hundreds of situations followed where children were (and continue to be) suspended or expelled for possessing food knives, nail clippers, key chains, chicken strips, aspirin, and candy. Kindergarteners were even suspended for playing cops and robbers and using their fingers as guns. Under the guise of Zero Tolerance, administrators

have been able to wield tremendous power without the burden of responsibility and this authority continues to be increasingly abused. Students invariably feel despondent and fearful in the Kafka-esque state that has been created.

The film reveals that students' civil rights have been virtually obliterated. They can be searched, drug-tested, denied the right to express themselves verbally and in print, as well as be physically punished without due process. They are routinely deprived of protection from self-incrimination and in some circumstances can even be strip searched without the consultation of parents. Courts typically uphold the rights of schools to behave in whatever manner they deem appropriate where children's rights are involved.

Note\*- Possible complementary reading, "Building, Staffing, and Insulating: An Architecture of Criminological Complicity in the School-to-Prison Pipeline" by Schept et al. in *Social Justice*.

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56. *What I Want My Words to do to You*: <http://www.pbs.org/pov/whatiwant/>  
What I Want My Words To Do To You offers an unprecedented look into the minds and hearts of the women inmates of New York's Bedford Hills Correctional Facility. The film goes inside a writing workshop led by playwright Eve Ensler, consisting of 15 women, most of whom were convicted of murder. Through a series of exercises and discussions, the women, including former Weather Underground members Kathy Boudin and Judith Clark, delve into and expose their most terrifying realities as they grapple with the nature of their crimes and their own culpability. The film culminates in an emotionally charged prison performance of the women's writing by acclaimed actors Mary Alice, Glenn Close, Hazelle Goodman, Rosie Perez and Marisa Tomei.

57. *When Kids Get Life*:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/whenkidsgetlife/>

When Kids Get Life profiles the cases of five juveniles sentenced in Colorado to life in prison without the possibility of parole. The film explores whether juveniles should receive sentences that, in effect, end any possibility of life outside of prison.

The film makes the point that the United States is one of the only countries in the world that allows persons under 18 to be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. According to Human Rights Watch, over 2,200 of the inmates in the United States who are serving life sentences without the possibility of parole received those sentences for crimes they committed when they were under 18 years old. By contrast, according to self-reporting numbers from the rest of the world, only 12 people serving the same sentence were sentenced as juveniles.

Note\*- May pair well with “Children Left Behind Bars: Sullivan, Graham, and Juvenile Life without Parole Sentences” by Agyepone in *Journal of International Human Rights*.

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58. *Who Killed Vincent Chin*: <http://www.pbs.org/pov/whokilledvincentchin/>  
On a hot summer night in Detroit, Ronald Ebens, an autoworker, killed a young Chinese-American engineer with a baseball bat. Although he confessed, he never spent a day in jail. This gripping Academy Award-nominated film relentlessly probes the implications of the murder in the streets of Detroit, for the families of those involved, and for the American justice system.

Note\*- Possible complementary reading, “Embracing Mistaken Identity: How the Vincent Chin Case Unified Asian Americans” by Wu in *Asian American Policy Review*.

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59. *You Belong To Me*: <http://www.youbelongtome.net/>  
August 3, 1952. Live Oak, Florida, the heart of the Jim Crow South. Ruby McCollum, age 42, shoots State Senator-elect, Dr. Clifford LeRoy Adams, firing her .32-caliber revolver four times into his body, before going home and warming a bottle of milk for her baby daughter. What began as a bizarre murder case quickly turned into a bright light on the rotting underbelly of the Old South.  
Ruby McCollum was the wealthiest black woman in Suwannee County, Florida. She lived in one of Live Oak's finest homes. Her husband, Sam, ran the local numbers racket, owned several farms, and sat on the board of Florida's largest black life insurance company. Murdering the most powerful white man in the town over a doctor's bill would seem the least-likely crime she might commit. The film exposes the truth of what it meant to be an African American in the Jim Crow South and the long road to healing. Was Ruby insane, or was the killing of Dr. Adams the last sane act of a woman whose wealth and status could not protect her from the blind indifference and humiliations of the Jim Crow South? Her testimony proved so explosive, the local paper refused to print it. Her case haunted jurors and prosecutors for decades.

Note\* - Good paired with *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance--A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power* (2011) by Danielle L. McGuire OR with “Older African American women and barriers to reporting domestic violence to law enforcement in the rural deep South” by Lichtenstein and Johnson in *Women and Criminal Justice*.

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