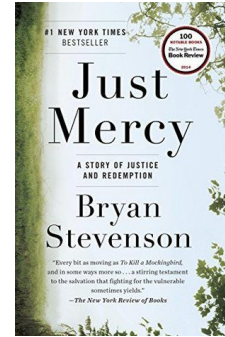


Social Justice and Literature

Summer 2020 Reading Assignment

Before you begin to read the novel *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson (ISBN-10: 9780812984965) this summer, please carefully read the information below.



1) If you have access to a printer, print out and carefully read the PDF article, “Interrogating Texts: 6 Reading Habits to Develop in Your First Year at Harvard.” Annotate the article as you read it, following the tips provided in the article for annotating, marking ideas and concepts that are important and making notes in the margins. (You can find the article [here](#).) If you do not have access to a printer, then please just read the article online and write your annotations on a separate sheet of paper or type them on a Google Doc.

2) Using your understanding of how to read and mark a text from the Harvard article, read and annotate *Just Mercy*. Please do not worry about the quantity of annotations, just mark the text whenever you feel moved to do so.

A mini-description of *Just Mercy*:

“A powerful true story about the potential for mercy to redeem us, and a clarion call to fix our broken system of justice—from one of the most brilliant and influential lawyers of our time Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn’t commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinksmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.” - From Goodreads

3) After reading the book, write a 1-2 page response to **ONE** of the two prompts below citing specific pages from the text.

- ❖ Stevenson remembers his grandmother telling him throughout his childhood, “You can’t understand most of the important things from a distance, Bryan. You have to get close.” Explain how we see the author getting close to issues of punishment and mass incarceration throughout the book? Use at least two examples to justify your opinion.
- ❖ Stevenson writes that injustice occurs when “we allow fear, anger, and distance to shape the way we treat the most vulnerable among us.” As you begin your last years of high school and prepare for your collegiate studies, how will you get close to the issues that are most important to you? Discuss an issue that is important to you and argue why society should also be concerned. Be sure to explain how you will “get close” to the issue yourself.