

Amnesty International

IMPRISONED WRITERS



DAILY READINGS: TOP AUTHORS READ FROM WORK THAT HIGHLIGHTS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES & RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Thursday 16 August

#BlackLivesMatter

Today's readings:

A black attorney working in Alabama, **Bryan Stevenson**, grew up in segregated Delaware, graduated from Harvard Law School, and established the *Equal Justice Initiative*, offering pro bono defence for inmates of death row. His recent book, *Just Mercy*, describes both his career progression and the stories of some of his clients.

Temi Mwale is the founding director of *The 4Front Project*, a youth-led social enterprise to empower young people and communities to live free from violence. Growing up on the Grahame Park Estate in North West London, it was Temi's early experiences of injustice that formed her primary motivation to create change. She founded *The 4Front Project* in 2012 to raise awareness of the causes and solutions to violence and deliver interventions to support young people affected by violence.

Colin Kaepernick is the recipient of the 2018 Amnesty International Ambassador of Conscience Award. During the 2016 pre-season of the American National Football League, Colin Kaepernick knelt during the US national anthem, as a respectful way of calling for the country to protect and uphold the rights of all its people. The bold move was a response to the disproportionate numbers of black people being killed by police. It sparked a movement that follows a long tradition of non-violent protests that have made history.

Inspired by Nina Simone's "*Feeling Good*", **Ogechi Egonu, Paige Bentum, and Ugochi Egonu**, three 18-year-olds from San Francisco wrote and performed this untitled poem at a local Open Mic in January 2017 to document and preserve their initial reactions to the election of Donald Trump.

Today's readers:

Paul Kenyon is a BAFTA award winning investigative journalist, and correspondent with the BBC series *Panorama*. His latest book, *Dictatorland: The Men Who Stole Africa*, details how insatiable western greed has allowed dictators to employ increasingly brutal methods of maintaining power over their population.

Bruce Pascoe is an indigenous Australian author. He is also an Aboriginal Language researcher. Bruce's literary works include *Dark Emu: Black Seeds: Agriculture or Accident?* and *A Little Red Yellow Black Book: An introduction to indigenous Australia*.

An award-winning playwright, Icelander **Lilja Sigurðardóttir** has written four crime novels, with *Snare*, the first in a new series, hitting bestseller lists worldwide. The film rights have been bought by Palomar Pictures in California.

Novuyo Rosa Tshuma is a Zimbabwean writer. She is a graduate of the Iowa Writers Workshop. Her latest novel, *House of Stone*, was published in June of this year, and she received the prestigious 2017 Bellagio Centre Literary Arts Residency Award for her work.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALL TO ACTION:

Photojournalist Shawkan has been locked up in a brutal Egyptian prison for over four years. Tell the Egyptian authorities to drop the charges and release Shawkan immediately.

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/actions/egypt-journalism-not-crime>

Recommended reads (a non-exhaustive list):

Reni-Eddo Lodge - *Why I Am No Longer Talking to White People about Race*

Michelle Alexander - *The New Jim Crow*

Bryan Stevenson - *Just Mercy*

Carol Anderson – *White Rage*

Afua Hirsch – *Brit(ish)*

Ta-Nehisi Coates – *Between the World and Me*

Patrisse Khan-Cullors – *When They Call You a Terrorist*

Nikesh Shukla & Claire Heuchan – *What is Race? Who are Racists? Why Does Skin Colour Matter? And Other Big Questions*

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