PSYC 2400: Developmental Psychology
University of Connecticut
Instructor: Jamie Kleinman, Ph.D.

Reaction to *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson

Problem: The criminal justice system in our country is problematic, particularly for those who are not white. Systemic racism is pervasive. It exists not just within the judicial system, but also in all areas of daily life, from the education system, to the medical system, to policies implemented in local and national governments.

Task: In the field of psychology, we often focus on research that is done on large samples and is highly generalizable. However, there is tremendous value in case studies and listening to narratives. Read *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson and write a reaction paper. Include one of the studies from chapters 10-16 of your textbook to illustrate one of the experiences or scenarios described in the book.

Requirements:
*   Intro, body, conclusion and a clearly stated thesis
*   Make sure you use proper grammar and punctuation. **SPELL CHECK**
*   Proper formatting (APA style)
*   Support your argument with data from the book. In this case it is okay to use quotations.
*   Use critical thinking (observation, interpretations, analysis, inference, evaluation, explanation, meta-cognition)
*   Typed, 12-pt font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, double spaced, 2-4 pages (800-1500 words) in length. Submitted via HuskyCT

Resources:
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/
http://www.writingcenter.uconn.edu/s_psychology.php

Questions to Address:
1. How did this book make you feel? Did it confirm your beliefs? Did it surprise or challenge them?
2. Pick on aspect of the book to focus on. State your thesis clearly (Intro)
3. Describe how the aspect you picked is explained by the research study you chose (Body)
4. Would you recommend this book to others? Why or why not? Will you read more about this topic? Do you have a next step? (Conclusion)

Category	Unacceptable (Below Standards) (*1)	Acceptable (Meets Standards) (*2)	Good (Occasionally Exceeds) (*3)	Excellent (Exceeds Standards) (*4)	Score
Introduction (5 points)	Does not convey topic/lacks adequate thesis	Describes subtopics and has basic thesis	Clearly conveys topic and subtopic, good thesis	Strong understanding of topic, strong thesis	
Focus and Sequencing (5 points)	Little evidence of organization, transitions unclear or nonexistent	Material all related to main topic, attempts to provide transitions	All material clearly related to main topic and logically organized	All material clearly related to topic, strong transitions and integration	
Support (5 points)	No support of thesis with material from the book.	Little use of facts from the book to support thesis.	Good use of material from the book, including some data.	Strong use of information from the book and integration of data.	
Conclusion (5 points)	Does not summarize evidence or discuss impact of materials on topic	Review of key conclusions, some integration with thesis statement	Strong review of key conclusions, discussion of impact of research materials on topic	Strong review, integration, and insightful discussion on impact of research materials	
Grammar and Mechanics (2 points)	Grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors dramatically detract from paper	Few grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors interfere with paper	Rare errors, do not detract from the paper	The paper is free of errors	
APA Style and Communication (2 points)	No title page, headers, page numbers. Writing is choppy and hard to understand	A few errors in APA style, tone is informal	Rare errors in APA style, tone is scholarly.	No errors in APA style, tone is scholarly, writing is flowing and easy to follow.	
Citations and References (1 points)	Reference and citations errors detract from paper	A few references or citations missing or incorrect	One or two references or citations missing or incorrect	All references and citations are correctly written and present	
				Total score	**/100**