Queer Prison Stories

Prison is a central subject and setting in queer and trans literature. The SNMA has over 150 American and international books related to prisons, particularly from the 1970s to the present, that include personal memoirs, poetry, historical fiction, pulps, and political criticism. Explore library materials that illuminate the diverse stories and experiences of those behind bars—as well as those fighting to remake the criminal justice system.

French translation of an Arabic novel exploring gay experience in an Egyptian prison.

Autobiographical novel set in a prisoner-of-war-camp during World War II.

Autobiographical account of the author’s upbringing in Cuba, time in prison, and escape to the U.S.

A memoir of Beatty’s life as a trans woman, including experiences in jail.

Influential memoir of a Canadian robber who served 23 years in prison.

Semi-autobiographical novel about homoerotic desire in the prison system.

A queer film that captures a play put on by prisoners in mid-century Quebec.

The story of a bisexual professor in postwar New York City.

Gay erotica that takes place in a Turkish prison.

A book that brings together personal experiences of, and political insights into, prison.
A pulp classic focusing on lesbians in prison.

Interviews with men in Australian prisons.

Novel about Tomato Rodriguez, a bicoastal bisexual biker.

Andrea Freud Loewenstein, *This Place* (Boston: Pandora Press, 1984).
Novel about lesbian relationships in and outside of prison.

A poetry collection addressing the author’s experience in prison in the early 1960s.

A play about prison life that tackles the subject of pedophilia.

A classic gay BDSM novel that takes place in a military prison.

A Spanish-language novel about two cellmates in an Argentine prison.

An imaginative transgender take on the story of Jack Sheppard, an eighteenth-century thief in London.

An investigation into sexual cultures and HIV/AIDS in Latin American prisons.

Lesbian prison novel about friendship and survival.

Writings by feminist activist Barbara Deming, accompanied by Joan E. Biren’s photographs.

An autobiographical book exploring life in federal prisons at the outset of World War II.
A lesbian novel that unfolds at Millbank Prison in Victorian London.

The complete stories, plays, and poems of Oscar Wilde, who had a consequential sodomy trial and prison sentence.

Memoir of the real-life person played by Alex Vause in *Orange is the New Black*.

A sociological study of men and sex in prison.