



NEWS RELEASE
North Olympic Library System
2210 South Peabody Street
Port Angeles, WA 98362

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 24, 2016
Contact: Mary Coté, Sequim Branch Library
360.683.1161; mcote@nols.org
Re: The Power of Story: A Conversation About the Death Penalty

This September the North Olympic Library System (NOLS), in partnership with Humanities Washington, will host a multifaceted conversation about capital punishment in the United States. Educator, writer, and activist Dorothy Van Soest—a lecturer with the Humanities Washington Speakers Bureau—will lead this free, engaging discussion at 6:30pm on Tuesday, September 6 at the Port Angeles Main Library; at 6:30pm on Wednesday, September 7 at the Forks Branch Library; and again at 6pm on Thursday, September 8 at the Sequim Branch Library.

The Power of Story

Capital punishment has given rise to considerable differences of opinion in U.S. society. When a moratorium on executions in Washington State was announced in February 2014 by Governor Jay Inslee, it sparked a national debate. Author and educator Dorothy Van Soest will facilitate an interactive group dialogue about the death penalty, and demonstrate how the issue is multifaceted by weaving together personal connections, scientific research, life experience, and creative storytelling. Van Soest will also share stories of ordinary people facing extraordinary situations, and how they have found the courage to transform themselves and the world around them.

About Dorothy Van Soest

Dorothy Van Soest is Professor Emeritus and a former dean at the University of Washington. A writer, social worker, and activist, she has published nine books and more than 50 journal articles, essays, and book chapters that tackle complex issues related to violence, oppression, and injustice. Her 2014 novel, “Just Mercy,” personalizes the topic of the death penalty as told through the perspective of a family. The book was informed by her widely-acclaimed investigation of the lives of 37 men executed by Texas in 1997, and inspired by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice’s Victim Offender Restorative Mediation Dialogue program. Van Soest holds an undergraduate degree in English literature and a Masters and Ph.D. in Social Work. For more information, visit the author’s website at <http://dorothyvansoest.com>.

About Humanities Washington

Humanities Washington sparks conversation and critical thinking using story as a catalyst, nurturing thoughtful and engaged communities across the state. Speakers Bureau is one of Humanities Washington’s oldest and most popular programs. A roster of 28 cultural experts and scholars provides high-quality public presentations across the state, encouraging audiences to think, learn, and engage in conversation. These diverse and engaging speakers cover a variety of topics, including popular culture, photography, architecture, literature, food, film, and history. For more about the Humanities Washington Speakers Bureau, visit www.humanities.org/programs/speakers.

More information

For additional information about this program, visit www.nols.org and select “Events,” contact the Sequim Branch Library at 360.683.1161, or send an email to Discover@nols.org. Programs like these are offered free to the public with the generous support of the Port Angeles Friends of the Library, Friends of the Forks Library, and the Friends of Sequim Library. To receive regular updates about upcoming library events and programs, “Like” NOLS on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/nols). The Port Angeles Main Library is located at 2210 South Peabody Street in Port Angeles. The Forks Branch Library is located at 171 South Forks Avenue in Forks. The Sequim Branch Library is located at 630 North Sequim Avenue in Sequim. The Library is always open at www.nols.org.



Author, educator, and activist Dorothy Van Soest will visit NOLS this September 6-8 to lead discussions about capital punishment in the U.S.



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