**Bryan Stevenson’s *Just Mercy:*  Annotations of Chapter 10 “Mitigation”[[1]](#footnote-1)**

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| **A**  **abandonment**  **(p. 197)** | to leave someone (especially children) a person is responsible for |
| **abundantly (p. 191)** | in large quantities |
| **abuse (p. 187)** | cruel or violent treatment of someone |
| **accommodate**  **(p. 199)** | to make room for someone/something, to consider the needs of a special group |
| **acutely psychotic**  **(p. 190)** | being strongly affected by a serious mental illness which is characterized by defective or lost contact with reality |
| **advocate (p. 187)** | someone who publicly supports someone or something |
| **to aggravate (p. 188)** | to make worse, more serious, or more severe |
| **appeal (p. 199)** | a formal request to a court or to someone in authority asking for a decision to be changed |
| **assistance of counsel**  **(p. 198)** | person that legally advises a defendant |
| **to authorize (p. 191)** | to give official permission for something |
| **B**  **biased (p. 198)** | unfairly preferring one person or group over another |
| **to bicker (p. 190)** | to argue, especially about something very unimportant |
| **to brace (p. 200)** | to mentally prepare yourself for something unpleasant |
| **to burden (p. 198)** | something difficult or worrying that you are responsible for |
| **Brown v. Board of Education (p. 193)** | court decision that ruled racial segregation in public schools unlawful |
| **C**  **capital murder**  **(p. 190)** | killing a person with a special intent, when planning a murder over a long period of time, or when connected to other horrific circumstances such as murdering a police officer, murdering a child, or murdering multiple victims;  punished by death penalty |
| **cautiously (p. 196)** | carefully |
| **chuckle (p. 202)** | to laugh quietly |
| **close-cropped**  **(p. 196)** | cut very short |
| **cognitive impairment (p. 197)** | lessened ability to know, understand, or learn something |
| **to be committed**  **(p. 187)** | to be taken in with a psychiatric unit |
| **competency examination (p. 190)** | test of a person’s cognitive skills |
| **compliance (p. 188)** | when someone obey to a rule or agreement |
| **to comply (p. 195)** | to do what you have to do or are asked to do |
| **composure (p. 195)** | feeling or seeming outwardly calm |
| **to conduct (p. 191)** | to carry out a particular activity or process, especially in order to get information or prove facts |
| **Confederate Memorial Day (p. 193)** | *Confederate*: the 11 southern states of the United States during their secession from the United States between 1860 and 1865 - South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee  *Confederate Memorial Day*: any of several days appointed for the commemoration of servicemen of the Confederate States of America |
| **confinement (p. 186)** | the act of putting someone in a room, prison etc that they are not allowed to leave, or the state of being there |
| **to contend (p. 198)** | to compete against someone in order to gain something |
| **to convulse (p. 188)** | if your body or a part of it convulses, it moves violently, and you are not able to control it |
| **correctional officer**  **(p. 194)** | warden at prison |
| **cotton (p. 192)** | a plant with white hairs on its seeds that are used for making cotton cloth and thread |
| **cowardly (p. 199)** | opposite of brave |
| **credentials (pl.)**  **(p. 191)** | someone’s education, achievements, experience etc that prove they have the ability to do something |
| **cruel (p. 199)** | making someone suffer or feel unhappy |
| **culpability (p. 198)** | responsibility for wrongdoing or failure |
| **D**  **death penalty (p. 191)** | the legal punishment of death |
| **death row (p. 191)** | the part of a prison where prisoners who will be punished by being killed are kept |
| **decal (p. 192)** | sticker |
| **to decline (p. 187)** | decrease in quantity, numbers are lowering |
| **to deem (p. 197)** | to consider or to judge |
| **deinstitutionalization**  **(p. 187)** | Process of restructuring psychiatric care for mentally ill that led to the incarceration of many individuals with mental illnesses, took place in the 1960s and 1970s |
| **demeanor (p. 200)** | the way someone behaves, dresses, speaks etc that shows what their character is like;  AE spelling |
| **detention (p. 189)** | being kept in prison or confinement |
| **dignity (p. 195)** | being respected or deserving respect |
| **disastrous (p. 188)** | very bad |
| **dismissive (p. 199)** | refusing to consider someone or something seriously |
| **disoriented (p. 189)** | confused, not understanding what is happening around you |
| **distraught (p. 190)** | so upset and worried that you cannot think clearly |
| **disturbing (p. 192)** | worrying or upsetting |
| **dixiecrat (p. 193)** | Southern Democrat who is a supporter of the 1948 presidential ticket opposing the civil rights stand of the Democrats |
| **driving force (p. 186)** | something or someone who is powerful and has a lot of influence on the way things happen |
| **E**  **to emancipate**  **(p. 192)** | to give someone the political or legal rights that they did not have before |
| **to be embittered**  **(p. 192)** | angry, sad, or full of hate because of bad or unfair things that have happened to you |
| **to emerge (p. 187)** | to appear or come out from somewhere |
| **encounter (p. 195)** | to meet someone without planning to |
| **episodic (p. 192)** | not all the time but a change between good and bad episodes |
| **erratic (p. 189)** | something that is erratic does not follow any pattern or plan but happens in a way that is not regular |
| **evidence (p. 191)** | proof for something |
| **to exploit (p. 189)** | to treat someone unfairly by asking them to do things for you, but giving them very little in return |
| **F**  **feces (pl.) (p. 190)** | solid waste material from the bowels |
| **foster care (p. 197)** | a situation in which for a period of time a child lives with and is cared for by people who are not the child's parents |
| **to fuel (p. 186)** | support or stimulate |
| **G**  **to glare (p. 200)** | to look angrily at someone for a long time |
| **Greyhound (p. 189)** | largest service in North America of busses serving long routes between cities |
| **to grunt (p. 196)** | to make short sounds or say a few words in a rough voice, when you do not want to talk |
| **gun rack (p. 196)** | a shelf for guns or other weapons |
| **H**  **harassment (p. 196)** | when someone behaves in an unpleasant or threatening way towards you |
| **hostile (p. 194)** | unfriendly, unwelcoming, threatening |
| **I**  **impaired (p. 196)** | being in an imperfect or weakened state or condition |
| **impatience (p. 196)** | annoyance at having to accept other people’s weaknesses |
| **incarceration (p. 186)** | the act of putting someone in prison |
| **incoherent (p. 186)** | not expressed clearly and therefore, difficult to understand |
| **incompetency (p. 191)** | the lack of ability or skill to do something |
| **incredulously**  **(p. 201)** | unwilling or unable to accept or believe something that is true |
| **inexorably (p. 191)** | synonym: unstoppably |
| **institutional care**  **(p. 186)** | a facility that provides twenty-four-hour nursing services (such as hospitals) |
| **internment (p. 186)** | the practice of keeping someone in prison without charging them with a crime |
| **intimidation (p. 192)** | the act of frightening or threatening somebody into doing something |
| **involuntary (p. 187)** | doing something that is contrary to one’s own will |
| **K**  **Ku Klux Klan**  **(p. 192)** | a violent secret American political organization of Protestant white men who oppose people of other races or religions |
| **L**  **loathsome (p. 200)** | very unpleasant or cruel; disgusting |
| **lynching (p. 192)** | a crowd of people killing someone without legal approval or permission |
| **M**  **to malinger (p. 190)** | to pretend or exaggerate incapacity or illness (as to avoid duty or work) |
| **to marginalize**  **(p. 192)** | to make a person or a group of people unimportant and powerless in an unfair way |
| **to masquerade**  **(p. 191)** | to pretend to be someone or something different |
| **menacing (p. 200)** | making you expect something unpleasant; synonym: threatening |
| **mentally distressed**  **(p. 187)** | mental illness that describes the disorder of emotional processes, thought or cognition that influences someone’s behavior or ability to cope with situations |
| **misguided (p. 186)** | led by wrong or inappropriate motives or ideals; intended to be helpful but in fact making a situation worse |
| **mitigation (p. 188)** | a reduction in how unpleasant, harmful, or serious a situation is |
| **to mumble (p. 195)** | to say something too quietly or not clearly enough so that other people cannot understand you; synonym: to mutter |
| **myriad (p. 188)** | a great number of something; very many |
| **O**  **Old South (p. 192)** | the American South before the Civil War |
| **overcrowded (p. 188)** | filled with too many people or things |
| **P**  **padlock (p. 195)** | a removable device that you can put on a door, bicycle etc. It has a U-shaped part that is pushed into another part to close and is usually opened with a key |
| **partial (p. 198)** | of or relating to a part rather than the whole; not complete |
| **pat-down (p. 194)** | an act of passing one’s hands over a person and searching for illegal items such as drugs or weapons |
| **perilous (p. 188)** | very dangerous |
| **perspiration (p. 201)** | liquid that appears on your skin when you are hot or nervous |
| **to persuade (p. 190)** | to make someone believe something; synonym: to convince |
| **policy (p. 188)** | a way of doing something that has been officially agreed on; a selected method of action to guide and determine present and future decisions |
| **postconviction**  **(p. 199)** | refers to the legal process that takes place after a person is found guilty of a crime |
| **post-Reconstruction era (p. 192)** | refers to the time after the Reconstruction era (1865-77)  The Reconstruction era describes the period of American history after the Civil War when the southern states rejoined the US. Slavery was abolished, African Americans were given the right to vote, and a few universities were established for African-American people. However, many white southeners strongly opposed these measures and some formed the Ku Klux Klan. |
| **to predate (p. 191)** | to happen or exist earlier in history than something else |
| **pretrial (p. 193)** | occurring or existing before the actual trial |
| **prison record**  **(p. 197)** | a report on a person’s prison history |
| **profound (p. 198)** | very severe; extreme |
| **to proliferate (p. 193)** | when something increases quickly and spreads to many different places |
| **psychotropic (p. 191)** | drugs that have an effect on your mind |
| **R**  **recidivism (p. 189)** | a tendency to fall back into a previous condition or mode of behavior |
| **reign (p. 192)** | a period during which something is the most powerful or most important feature of a place |
| **to render (p. 199)** | to officially announce a decision or judgment about something |
| **reputation (p. 190)** | the opinion that people have about someone or something because of what happened in the past |
| **resident (p. 187)** | someone who lives or stays in a particular place |
| **to resist (p. 190)** | to use force to stop something from happening |
| **to roam (p. 189)** | to go from place to place without purpose or direction; synonym: wander |
| **to retry (p. 191)** | to judge a person or a law case again in court |
| **S**  **segregation (p. 188)** | the separation or isolation of a race class or ethnic groups |
| **seizure (p. 188)** | a sudden condition in which someone cannot control the movements of their body, which continues for a short time |
| **serious (p. 188)** | something that is extremely bad or dangerous |
| **shrine (p. 192)** | a place that people visit and respect because it is connected with a famous or holy person or event |
| **to smirk (p. 195)** | to smile in an unpleasant way that shows that you are pleased by someone else’s bad luck or think you are better than other people |
| **solitary confinement**  **(p. 189)** | the state of being kept alone in a prison cell away from other prisoners |
| **to squabble (p. 190)** | to argue about something unimportant |
| **stab wound (p. 192)** | caused by an object that is forced into the skin (e.g. a knife) |
| **to steer clear of sth./sb. (p. 198)** | to avoid someone or something unpleasant or difficult |
| **stress-induced**  **(p. 192)** | a particular physical condition caused by stress |
| **strip-searched**  **(p. 194)** | a process in which you have to remove your clothes so that your body can be checked (e.g. for drugs) |
| **subordinate (p. 192)** | placed in a lower class, rank or position |
| **Supreme Court**  **(p. 187)** | the most important court of law in some countries or some states of the US |
| **T**  **testimony (p. 198)** | a formal statement saying that something is true (e.g. in a court of law) |
| **Thorazine (p. 187)** | antipsychotic medication |
| **trial (p. 190)** | a legal process in which a judge and a jury examine information to decide whether someone is guilty of a crime |
| **troubling (p. 192)** | causing feelings of worry or anxiety |
| **turmoil (p. 197)** | a state or condition of extreme confusion, excitement or anxiety |
| **U**  **unaided (p. 199)** | without help or assistance |
| **uncommunicative**  **(p. 189)** | unable to talk easily to other people |
| **to uncover sth.**  **(p. 191)** | to make known; bring to light |
| **unprecedented**  **(p. 186)** | never having happened before |
| **V**  **to victimize (p. 192)** | to treat someone unfairly because of their beliefs/ race/ … |
| **W** | to walk around without a clear direction or purpose |
| **warden (p. 194)** | AE: the person who is in charge of a prison |
| **wasp (p. 189)** | a thin black and yellow flying insect that can sting you |
| **Wendy’s (p. 201)** | US-founded international fast food restaurant |
| **to withdraw (p. 192)** | synonym: to remove |

The annotations were designed with the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (<https://www.merriam-webster.com>) and the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (<https://www.ldoceonline.com>) and adapted by the authors.

1. The annotations (page numbers) are based on the following edition of the book: Stevenson, Bryan. 2020. *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*. London: Scribe Publications. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)