



## REVIEW: *IPERSTORIA* FALL/WINTER ISSUE 2019

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We're glad to share our review on the latest *Iperstoria* Fall/ Winter issue, which its editors kindly sent our way. *Iperstoria* is a multilingual, international, blind peer-reviewed biannual journal with a focus on English and American Studies with a multidisciplinary approach, based at the Università degli Studi di Verona (IT).

"Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness," are among the "unalienable rights" given to all humans by their creator, according to one of the most celebrated documents in American history. Yet, the self-proclaimed leader of the free world, the United States, remains the country with the highest incarceration rate in the world, beating much larger countries and even totalitarian ones<sup>1</sup>. The American country holds more than two million prisoners, a prison population that, if put together, would overcome that of other major cities such as Philadelphia, Phoenix or Dallas. For this reason, the Italian journal *Iperstoria* has dedicated its XIV issue to the so-called 'fourth city', as described by Doran Larson in *Fourth City: Essays from the Prison in America*.

Included within the Fall/Winter issue, under the title *Bars and Stripes. The United States as penitentiary*, *Iperstoria's* monographic section combines a collection of essays, some in English and some in Italian, dealing on the influence of prisons and jails on US culture from varied points of view. With the purpose of offering a historically detailed insight on the daily experiences of prisoners back in the 1970s, the issue begins with an unpublished collection of pictures by Bruce Jackson on prison farms in Texas: twenty one pictures that will recall slavery times to more than one. The literary focus is provided by Diana Archibald. By analysing the image of prisons and jails in Charles Dickens' major works, Archibald succeeds in showing Dickens's keen understanding of the dark side of American Exceptionalism by his impressions on American incarceration. A contribution on prisons in popular media is also provided at the end of the

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<sup>1</sup> Drew Kann, 2019. "The US Still Incarcerates More People Than Any Other Country". CNN, <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/06/28/us/mass-incarceration-five-key-facts/index.html>.



monographic sections, with one essay on the 1930s movie *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*, and other two on the worldly-known TV series *Orange is the New Black*. Among the contributions in Italian, particularly interesting is Rosso's contribute on the American myths related to the Vietnam war and war prisoners.

Aside from offering a complete and solid image of the current reality of US prisons in contemporary times, the latest issue of *Iperstoria* offers a helping hand to everyone looking to expand on Prison Studies or just interested on the daily reality of over two million people in the United States, its 'fourth city'.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCE

Bordin, Elisa, Stefano Bosco and Roberto Cagliari eds. 2019. *Iperstoria 14: Bars and Stripes. The United States as penitentiary*. <http://www.iperstoria.it/joomla/numeri/166-indice-numero-xiv-fall-2019>.

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