

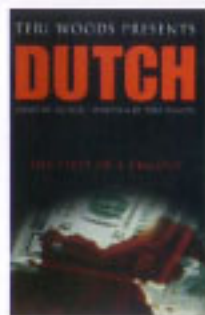
bestseller, and Kwame Teague who wrote the Teri Woods best seller *Dutch* and *Dutch II*. Kwame has had so many problems in the New Jersey prison system with the notoriety he's received as an author that he doesn't even put his own name on the books he writes to avoid harassment and retaliation from the prison authorities, who maintain that he has no right to write.

"People committed desperate offences behind Atlanta's walls. They killed. They raped," Michael Santos, a veteran of the penitentiary who is doing a forty-five year sentence for dealing cocaine, wrote in his first novel *About Prison*. Currently at the Federal prison camp in Lompoc, California, Santos says "I've studied the federal prison system and the people it holds from the inside. As a man who has lived his entire adult life in prison, I try to provide commentary and analysis. People who read my work learn about the

prison system from the perspectives of prisoners." Santos has published to other books and his latest: *Inside: Life behind Bars in America* comes out this year.

Since the beginning of the penal system the written word of

prisoners have escaped the walls towers and razor wire of the industrial prison complex to enlighten society and influence popular culture, the media and Hollywood. Their words have exposed that which is hidden and that which prison officials would have no one know about. In 21st century America convict authors are still going strong. They blend the entrepreneurial spirit of the hip hop hustler with the calculating cool of the convict to publish books that sell from the heart of the cellblock gaining fame and finances while serving time for their offences. Only in America, the land of celebrity convicts. Seth Ferranti's website is www.Gorillaconvict.com Also check out www.michaelsantos.net and www.illstreetz.com



In *Prison Stories* 'Guero', a young, suburban white kid is banged up on a marijuana rap. This book follows his transition into adulthood amidst the ever-present chaos and danger of the penitentiary. It's not a pleasant read: at times you feel so frustrated by the sheer pointlessness of the endless power-tripping, petty dealing and constant conflict that you want to bang your head against the wall. But this is what makes it so powerful. It's raw, honest and doesn't hold back from describing daily life with a bunch of people who are just trying to make it through the day in incredible circumstances. Thankfully I've never had to find out, but I suspect that this book is very much telling it like it is.