

ity of a brief and highly readable seventeenth-century Iroquois ethnography in translation. Students, too, will enjoy this edition for the same reason, although they may have to look elsewhere for materials to deepen their understanding of the conceptual frameworks that shaped Cuillerier's — and more generally European — views of Native peoples in the seventeenth century.

Peter Cook
Nipissing University

BROWN, Alyson — *English Society and the Prison: Time, Culture and Politics in the Development of the Modern Prison, 1850–1920*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2003. Pp. vii, 205.

Alyson Brown has written a welcome contribution to the history of English penology. Despite the great volume of scholarship devoted to the study of penal practices in England during the quarter-century since the appearance of Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1975; English translation, 1977), surprisingly few studies have been produced of the practices prevailing during the late Victorian and Edwardian eras. The bulk of the running has centred on the mid-eighteenth through early nineteenth centuries: not surprisingly, perhaps, given that so large a component of Foucault's agenda was to question the extent to which genuinely "humanitarian" purposes and effects best characterize the era in which imprisonment began to come to the fore of penal practices throughout most of Europe. In England, by comparison, the incarceration of all people convicted of serious criminal offences (other than murder) did not become central until after the end of transportation to Australia in the 1860s. The material available for the study of English imprisonment in this latter era is vast and complex, and many of the key historical studies to address it in detail — notably those of Leon Radzinowicz and Roger Hood (1986), as well as Seán McConville (1995) — make for vast and daunting reads. Brown deserves much gratitude simply for producing so compact and effective a study as she has in this short, tightly argued volume.

Many historians of English punishments will perhaps find the attention she gives to Foucault surprising, given the extent to which his characterization of "Enlightenment" era developments has been generally minimized or outrightly rejected in the English context. In fact, Brown clearly keeps Foucault's more explicitly theoretical agenda — as well as that of some of his most effective critics, like David Garland — to the forefront of her concerns in writing this book. Although her account provides a useful chronology of intellectual and practical developments in the history of English imprisonment during the late nineteenth century, it is primarily concerned with investigating those problematic aspects of the experience of imprisonment that suggest that Foucault was at least on to something. These include: the unreasonable burden of expectations placed upon the regime's presiding officials (which invariably ended with their resorting primarily to tactics intended simply to keep the prison population under control, rather than effectively to "treat" or "punish" in any

meaningful fashion); the ambiguous status of political prisoners (who sought, with mixed success, to challenge their implicit status as “common criminals” by obtaining more privileged treatment behind bars); and, above all, the generally tortuous experience of most “run-of-the-mill” criminal inmates themselves.

Brown does this by concentrating primarily on the prison as an institution in crisis. Much of this book is concerned with the causes and immediate consequences of rebellions that took place in Hull Prison (March 1854), Chatham Prison (February 1861), and London’s Wormwood Scrubs (April 1907). Such incidents and their aftermaths tended to reinforce a practical emphasis on maintaining control inside prison institutions, which, all too often, belied formal official professions of dedication to ideals of either reform or care for the prisoner. The more traditional (or “classical”) criminological ideal of deterrence through punishment, scaled not according to the prisoner’s individual circumstances but rather to the perceived seriousness of his or her crime, continued to be central to judicial sentencing practices and internal prison organization and management, whatever formal statements of purpose and intention seemed to suggest. Whether or not such evidence should inspire us to believe that coercive control was explicitly intended by penal “reformers” (as Foucault would suggest), coercion — rather than reform (or, from the 1890s onwards, “treatment”, as recent studies by Garland and Martin Wiener would argue) — undoubtedly was (and remains) the primary experience of hundreds, if not thousands, of the criminal offenders incarcerated in English prisons during the last century and a half.

For this reader, Brown illustrates this proposition most compellingly in her second chapter, which deals with a theme that has gone largely unexamined in its historical context: the experience of time by long-term prison inmates. Here, more fully than in any other section of the book, Brown deploys actual first-person accounts from apparently representative members of the prison population to telling effect. “The [regimented] prison environment”, she argues, “and the extended sense of the present which hung so heavily on long-term prisoners were an intrinsic part of their punishment” (p. 30). Subsequent chapters, by comparison, are not always so persuasive in strictly historical terms. Like many theses transformed into first monographs, the burden of much of the later analysis sometimes seems to rely more heavily upon engagement with secondary works — most notably (amongst historians proper) Victor Bailey’s important 1997 questioning of a purported late-Victorian shift towards determinist notions of criminality and wide-scale decarceration. One sometimes wishes that more time and attention had been devoted in these latter chapters to the fuller exploration of the substance and complexity of primary materials, so effectively displayed in Brown’s analysis of the prisoner’s experience of time. To be fair, though, Brown’s background is primarily sociological rather than historical, so such an emphasis in analytical approach may not be inappropriate. A great deal of the material presented in the final chapter — concerning such categories of “political” offenders as Irish nationalists, political suffragettes, and conscientious objectors — while successfully highlighting the theme of imprisonment as primarily a mode of state coercion, also distracts somewhat from the more vital and compelling theme of imprisonment as it was experienced by garden-variety inmates. In general, one wonders how complete a picture of the prison regime as a whole emerges when the main

focus of research is on those points at which it broke down most dramatically. One would like to know a little more about how relatively “easy” it appears to have been for officials to restore order soon afterwards, perhaps especially in light of the often more violent and sustained outbreaks of prison rebellion that have appeared since the First World War, particularly in the United States.

Perhaps this would be asking too much. Or, at least, it might be demanding a book that would perhaps be less compelling and readily assimilable than this one. All students of late-Victorian English imprisonment will find much in this book that is instructive and that provokes serious reflection on the full complexities of the subject of English penological history.

Simon Devereaux
University of Victoria

CALDER, Robert — *Beware the British Serpent: The Role of Writers in British Propaganda in the United States, 1939–1945*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2004. Pp. xx, 311.

Robert Calder, a professor of English at the University of Saskatchewan, has provided a cogent analysis that highlights the importance of literary figures in the British propaganda campaign in America during the Second World War. Drawing his title from the February 1940 isolationist manifesto of the popular Irish-American (and anti-Semitic) broadcaster Father Charles Coughlin (p. 33), Calder demonstrates how British writers were used to undermine isolationism and anglophobia in the United States, keep the American war effort focused on Europe after Pearl Harbor, assist in constructing the postwar “special relationship”, and defend British imperial interests. Revelations in the interwar years concerning the influence of British propaganda on American involvement in the Great War meant that American cooperation, let alone belligerency, in any new conflict was far from guaranteed. British concern that the use of propaganda in the United States might create support for isolationism and damage the political prospects of President Roosevelt induced the Foreign Office initially to impose a strict “no propaganda” policy in America. Yet Calder effectively establishes how the official minds of the Ministry of Information and the Foreign Office found other, less official means of conveying British viewpoints on the conflict with Nazi Germany to Americans. These included the use of “appropriate personalities” from the British literary elite, often on “private visits” to America (p. 58).

Using wider studies such as Nicholas Cull’s *Selling War: The British Propaganda Campaign Against American “Neutrality” in World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995) to set his stage, Calder draws upon archival research, memoirs, and literary analysis to shed light on the role of such figures in the British propaganda campaign. His vivid and engaging case studies of W. Somerset Maugham (on whom Calder previously published a biography), Noel Coward, and H. G. Wells provide detailed analyses of each author’s motives, actions, and work. Combining these with broader thematic sections on fiction, non-fiction, radio, and film propaganda, the