

Carrabine seeks to show how various dimensions of the prison's organization, culture and demolition were imprinted by discourses of masculinity, the analysis is also somewhat uncomfortable. To identify the gendered elements of prison officer culture, management styles and of violent transgression is certainly important, but the sections in which Carrabine does so feel a little 'tacked-on'.

The book is also somewhat concept-heavy. It is always refreshing to see a criminologist draw on social and cultural theory, but at times the explanation of terms such as 'translation', 'drift', 'resistance', 'genealogy' and 'fatalism' makes for difficult reading. The last term is the most important and the most problematic. If fatalism promotes stability, but can also lead to such deep feelings of hopelessness that prisoners are inclined towards dramatic displays of agency, how are we to understand which one is the likely outcome? To some degree, this is precisely Carrabine's point: that we cannot over-generalize about when riots will occur and the shape they will take. True though this is, the difference between shrugging one's shoulders and taking up arms is significant and this difference would merit further exploration. Finally, Carrabine may have overstated the degree to which fatalism is absent from previous discussions of prison order. Sparks et al. (1996) would no doubt argue that their description of the Vulnerable Prisoners Unit at HMP Albany is all about prisoners being resigned to the 'external fact' of their predicament, in the absence of legitimacy. Nevertheless, in the term 'dull compulsion', Carrabine has provided a crucial vocabulary for a key element of prison life that has certainly been under-theorized elsewhere. His book is crammed with interesting ideas about the diverse sources of order and resistance; and his ambition to span traditional dualisms within prison sociology should serve as an example to others within the field.

### Reference

Sparks, Richard, Anthony Bottoms and Will Hay (1996) *Prisons and the problem of order*. Oxford: OUP.

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*The criminals of Lima and their worlds: The prison experience (1850–1935)*, Carlos Aguirre. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005. 328 pp. \$22.95. ISBN 0822334690 (pbk).

There is a tendency, among scholars of contemporary crime and punishment, to decry recent penal developments as evidence of uniquely disturbing dimensions of our times. In my own work, I worry that I might at times exaggerate the novelty of recent happenings because of a lack of familiarity with how similar forces have played out at other places and times. For others who share such limitations, Carlos Aguirre's *The criminals of Lima and their worlds: The prison experience (1850–1935)* is a useful and tremendously edifying text. The book explores the creation and construction of the modern prison system in Peru, examining the way the exclusionary structures of broader society shaped, and were in turn shaped by, the emergent institution of the prison in Lima. Though the book steeps the reader in the details, transporting her to a place and time

that may be unfamiliar for many readers, it is accessible to nonspecialists and will no doubt enlighten many – not only about the history of Lima's prisons but also about punishment and society in settings that are likely unfamiliar for many US readers. Sometimes one comes to understand the familiar best when it is placed in comparative context; this is one of those books that, in addition to educating readers about the particulars of its specific topic, invites broader comparisons and deeper analysis of topics outside its specific bounds.

Most readers of this journal will not approach this book for its insights on the Peruvian state's modernization project of the 19th and 20th century; in any event I am ill-positioned to assess its contributions in this regard. But as a scholar interested in the broader underpinnings of punishment and social control, even though I am largely unfamiliar with the Peruvian context, I found many fascinating insights within these pages. There are many points of resonance with contemporary US penal politics: Aguirre chronicles, for example, the emergence of concern about the 'criminal question' in Lima, suggesting that growing concerns about crime may have had less to do with actual incidence of crime than with broader tensions stemming from the social and political transformations that shaped the birth of modern Peru. He argues, in part, that crime's emergence as a social problem requiring modern solutions was a reaction to the abolition of slavery and attempts to abolish capital punishment, and part of a larger conservative political backlash.

In his richly detailed treatment of the operation of Peru's prison system, Aguirre depicts a contradictory and unstable institution, where the lofty intentions of modernizing experts were subject to contestation and reconfiguration in the day-to-day practices of police, inmates and guards. Aguirre provides a rare glimpse into the world of the prisoners themselves, showing their efforts to challenge and reshape the institution of which they were a part. His account is precise and nuanced: neither diminishing the extraordinary violence and exclusion that characterized these settings, nor depicting an environment shaped by total domination, Aguirre offers a careful examination of daily acts of resistance ranging from attempted escapes to the construction of clientelistic relations with prison employees. The discussion of an emergent rights-talk among prisoners in the early 20th century is particularly fascinating. Aguirre traces the growing practice of prisoners collectively advocating for reform in letters to outside authorities to the influence, first, of the modernizing penal institution itself, with its retinue of trained specialists and discourse of progress and correction; and second, of the political prisoners imprisoned alongside common criminals, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s.

Through this detailed study of the prison system, Aguirre provides a window on the contradictions of the country's modernization process as a whole: characterized by fits and starts, filled with gaps between theory and practice, and deeply etched by the markings of class, ethnic and gender exclusion – not because of incomplete implementation, Aguirre reminds us, but because these forms of exclusion were central to the modernizing project itself. In this sense, the fate of Lima's penitentiaries tell us as much about these particular sites of punishment and control as they do about the larger world in which they were embedded. Ultimately, Aguirre argues convincingly, these institutions failed – at least at achieving their stated objectives of erecting a new penal regime characterized by humanitarian discipline and moral suasion. He offers some

explanations for this failure, including the state's inability or unwillingness to thoroughly implement its own reform program, the exclusionary nature of the modern Peruvian state more generally and the prisoners' successful reconfiguration of the formal rules into an informal set of practices Aguirre describes as a 'customary order' based on unstable compromises and shifting alliances. Ultimately, however, Aguirre's purpose lies less in explaining the failed outcomes of specific state policies than it does in restoring agency and contestation to the history of even these spaces where liberties are so clearly and dramatically curtailed. This book serves as a powerful reminder of the fragmented and permeable nature of all human institutions, and opens a window on the spaces in which contestation occurs – even in the darkest corners, by actors denied the most basic rights under systems of harsh and violent exclusion.

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*No bond but the law: Punishment, race, and gender in Jamaican state formation, 1780–1870*, Diana Paton. Durham, NC & London: Duke University Press, 2004. xv + 291 pp. (including index). \$23.95. ISBN 0–8223–3398–8.

Jamaica has suffered a rapidly escalating violent crime rate over the last decade. In 2003, the number of murders exceeded the figure for 1980 (an exceptional year marked by chronic electoral violence) for the first time. In 2004, all previous records were broken, with over 1500 murders. For an island of fewer than 3 million people, this is a horrific statistic. Worldwide, only Colombia and South Africa can boast a higher per capita murder rate. It is against such a dismal backdrop that any historical study of crime in Jamaica is naturally set. Yet such studies are thin on the ground. It is indeed remarkable that crime and punishment both in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean has stimulated so little historical research. David Trotman's (1986) pioneering study of Trinidad was published 20 years ago. Since then, the topic has been more or less ignored by historians and our understanding of its roots is all the poorer as a consequence.

One of the few historians to explore the phenomenon is Diana Paton, who has followed her Yale doctoral dissertation with a number of articles and book chapters on various aspects of the history of punishment in Jamaica. *No bond but the law*, which appears in a series entitled *New wave: New directions in women's studies*, constitutes a substantially reworked version of her thesis, and 'investigates the cultural, social, and political history of punishment' (p. 2) between 1780 and 1870.

This period of nearly a century before and after the abolition of slavery was of course one of rapid economic and social change both in Britain and the Caribbean. In the late 18th century, Jamaica was still at the high point of slave-based wealth, the semi-autonomous jewel in the crown of the (as yet pre-industrial) British empire. By 1870, following the successive traumas of the abolition of slavery, the great slave revolt of 1831, emancipation, apprenticeship, the decline of sugar and the Morant Bay rebellion of 1865, the island had become a troublesome backwater, subject to direct rule from London, now established as the capital of the first industrial nation.

Following an introduction in which Paton constructs an impressively coherent historiographical and conceptual framework for her study, she goes on to examine the