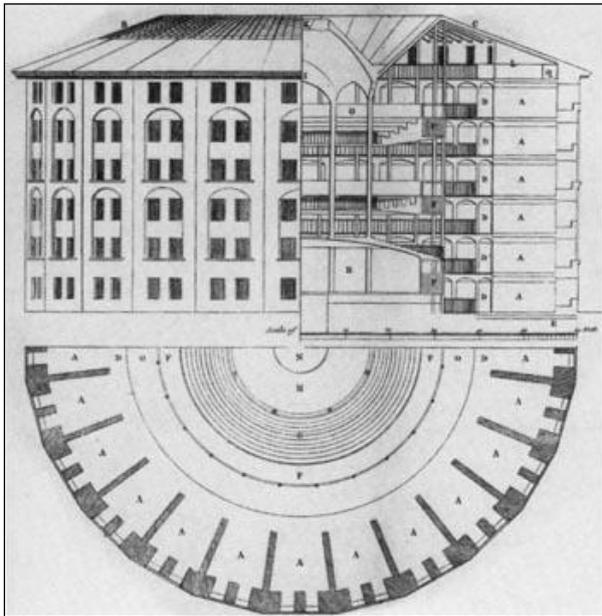


Lecture 10: The Great Incarceration

Structure of the lecture:

- Bentham's Panopticon – Big Brother
- Debates on incarceration and the crime wave of the mid-century
- Development of institutions – workhouses, infirmaries, almshouses, prisons
- historiography

Jeremy Bentham, 'Panopticon' (1787)



'Morals reformed – health preserved – industry invigorated – instruction diffused – public burthens lightened – Economy seated, as it were, upon a rock – the gordian knot of the Poor Laws are not cut, but untied – all by a simple idea in Architecture.'

'a new mode of obtaining power over mind over mind in a quantity hitherto without example.'

[*'Principles of Penal Law,'* in The Works of Jeremy Bentham, ed., J. Bowring (Edinburgh, 1843), vol I, p. 557.]

New ways of thinking about social institutions:

- 1693 John Locke, Some Thoughts Concerning Education
- Medical advances
- New thinking on penal law and punishment – Cesare Beccaria, and John Howard (1726-90), The State of the Prisons (1777)
- Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) – 'father of utilitarianism'

Debate on the 'crime wave', capital punishment and transportation

1751 Murder Act

Politics and Culture in eighteenth-century Britain
Dr Katrina Navickas

1776 Act – hulks set up
1778 Hard Labour Bill
1784 act re-established transportation

The emergence of new-style institutions

Workhouses

Infirmaries and asylums, Foundling Hospital 1739

Prisons - 1816 Millbank penitentiary

Historiography:

1. State formation – Webbs, history of crime, Marxist
2. Foucaultian

Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish (NY, 1979), pp. 201-2:

'Bentham laid down the principle that power should be visible and unverifiable...It is an important mechanism, for it automizes and disindividualizes power. Power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes...'

Further reading:

Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon - <http://cartome.org/panopticon2.htm>

See also UCL's Bentham project: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/Bentham-Project/info/jb.htm>

Douglas Hay; Peter Linebaugh; John Rule; Edward Palmer Thompson; Calvin Winslow, Albion's fatal tree: crime and society in eighteenth century England (1975)

V. A. C. Gatrell, The hanging tree: execution and the English people, 1770-1868 (Oxford, 1994)

Foucaultian analyses:

Michael Ignatieff, A just measure of pain: the penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850 (London, 1978)

Francis Martin Dodsworth, "'Civic' police and the condition of liberty: the rationality of governance in eighteenth-century England", Social History [London], 29:2 (2004), 199-216

Patrick Joyce, The rule of freedom: liberalism and the modern city (London, 2003)