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*The Rise and Fall of California's Radical Prison
Movement.* Eric Cummins.

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interpretations of events. Information about the attitudes of women towards crime is presented together with an account of the way they are currently served by both statutory and voluntary agencies. The responses of the police and lawyers are also examined. The book concludes with a detailed set of recommendations for improving the situation. At the time of publication, the book's major recommendations had already been adopted by the West Yorkshire Police. Its recommendations and findings deserve to be widely read, analyzed and implemented.

Eric Cummins: *The Rise and Fall of California's Radical Prison Movement*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994. \$45.00 hardcover; \$16.95 papercover.

The political activities of students, poor people, welfare recipients, oppressed minorities and others during the 1960s has been well documented. Less well known are the efforts of prison inmates at the time to organize themselves and to express their frustrations through political activism. Although the inmate movement emerged in several states and in other countries as well, it was particularly forceful in California where a highly organized convict movement attracted national attention through its persistence campaigns to improve prison conditions, and secure public support for its activities.

Cummins has written a gripping book which contains a detailed narrative of events in the California prison system during the 1960s and 1970s, as well as important sociological insights into the way prisons operate, the way prisoners are treated and the way they respond. The book focuses on the most celebrated events of the period—the efforts of Caryl Chessman to escape the death penalty, the imprisonment of political activists such as Eldridge Cleaver and George Jackson, and the creation of the first prison unions. The book shows how these activities failed in the face of a brutal reaction to secure meaningful changes. Its conclusions are depressing in light of the inexorable rise in crime during the 1980s and 1990s, the rapid expansion of the prison system and the perpetuation of simplistic beliefs about the possibility of prisons solving the nation's crime problem.