
NEW TITLES

History

**MIND-FORG'D
MANACLES:
A History of Madness in
England from the
Restoration to the Regency**
by Roy Porter
Harvard, 1987
412 pp. \$38.50



"They said I was mad," wrote 17th-century poet Nathaniel Lee when confined to Bedlam, "and I said they were mad; damn them, they outvoted me." Porter, a historian at London's Wellcome Institute, delves into documents from the "long 18th century" (1660-1800) to uncover what madness was before the advent of psychiatry, how it was treated in a society almost devoid of mental institutions, and how attitudes toward it were changed by Enlightenment ideas.

According to the influential social theorist Michel Foucault (*Folie et Dérison*, 1961) 18th-century madmen throughout Europe were victims of the "great confinement"—mad and bad lumped together in a bourgeois plot to rid the streets of lowlife considered to be no better than animals. Not so in England, says Porter. Until the 1845 universalization of county asylums, there were few lockups and an array of treatments. Madness, from 1660 on, was seen first as possession by the devil, then as an imbalance of "humours," and, finally, in light of John Locke's empiricism, as a state of error that experience could correct. Locke's ideas provided not only a new idea of what madmen were but also the groundwork for psychiatry, the new science of the "moral management" of the mad. Those with the "English malady"—far from being trapped, as Foucault would have it, in the frozen category of "Unreason"—were thought only to suffer from misconceptions grounded on false consciousness. And so, like children, says Porter, they could be educated out of it.

THE TRIAL OF SOCRATES
by I. F. Stone
Little, Brown, 1988
282 pp. \$18.95

With the same *chutzpah* that he displayed in his journalism, I. F. Stone asks the question that has vexed many a classical scholar: Why did the open, democratic society of Athens condemn Socrates (470?-399 B.C.) to death for the offense of speaking his own mind?

Stone attempts not only to reconstruct the case for Athens in the famous trial of 399 B.C. but also to discredit Socrates at every turn. He marshals evidence from a vast array of hearsay—the conflicting accounts of Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, and Aristophanes. Socrates, one learns, justly earned