



# The Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society

By David Garland

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The past 30 years have seen vast changes in our attitudes toward crime. More and more of us live in gated communities; prison populations have skyrocketed; and issues such as racial profiling, community policing, and "zero-tolerance" policies dominate the headlines. How is it that our response to crime and our sense of criminal justice has come to be so dramatically reconfigured? David Garland charts the changes in crime and criminal justice in America and Britain over the past twenty-five years, showing how they have been shaped by two underlying social forces: the distinctive social organization of late modernity and the neoconservative politics that came to dominate the United States and the United Kingdom in the 1980s.

Garland explains how the new policies of crime and punishment, welfare and security—and the changing class, race, and gender relations that underpin them—are linked to the fundamental problems of governing contemporary societies, as states, corporations, and private citizens grapple with a volatile economy and a culture that combines expanded personal freedom with relaxed social controls. It is the risky, unfixed character of modern life that underlies our accelerating concern with control and crime control in particular. It is not just crime that has changed; society has changed as well, and this transformation has reshaped criminological thought, public policy, and the cultural meaning of crime and criminals. David Garland's *The Culture of Control* offers a brilliant guide to this process and its still-reverberating consequences.

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## The Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society By David Garland Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #507806 in Books
- Published on: 2002-08-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .90" w x 6.00" l, .97 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 336 pages

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

How, asks NYU Law professor Garland, did we in both the U.S. and Britain evolve into a society obsessed with crime and meting out increasingly harsh punishments? In an engrossing, complex study, *Garland (Punishment and Welfare)* pursues a somewhat familiar thesis that falling crime rates are accompanied paradoxically by expanded imprisonment, curtailment of civil liberties and stigmatization of a largely minority underclass by closely addressing subtle gradations of class and race relations. Garland initially charts how the "penal-welfare" system of rehabilitation, parole and social assistance rapidly fell from favor after nearly a century of widespread acceptance. The pursuit of seemingly radical ideologies (e.g., prisoner rights) by criminal-justice theorists during the 1960s and '70s alienated politicians and the public, paving the way for "law and order" revivals (epitomized by the Reagan administration in the U.S. and Thatcher's in England) emphasizing "punitive sanctions and expressive justice" (justice that conveys public sentiment). Garland traces the ascendance of "crime-in-the-streets" rhetoric evidenced in American gun culture, the victims' rights movement and the rising private security sector (e.g., gated communities). Meanwhile, lawmakers advocate more aggressive policing styles (as in New York's Mayor Giuliani's "quality of life" sweeps), and longer terms in harsher prisons. Garland also examines changing conceptions of the criminal "other" and public willingness to deem offenders a sub-citizenry undeserving of fundamental liberties. This ambitious book's formal prose may prove slow going for mainstream readers, as opposed to the more accessible *Going Up the River* (see *Forecasts*, Feb. 5), by Joseph Hallinan, which covers similar material. Still, this sweeping yet finely detailed examination of law enforcement's drift towards punishment and away from rehabilitation makes an important contribution.

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From the Inside Flap

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About the Author

**David Garland** is the Arthur T. Vanderbilt Professor of Law and Professor of Sociology at New York University. He is the author of the award-winning studies *Punishment and Welfare* and *Punishment and Modern Society*.

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### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Andrew Spivey:**

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