

Graduate Theory Criminal Justice Fall 2008

Introduction to:

Garland, D. (2002). *The Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.



David Garland is an extremely well known sociologist/criminologist currently at NYU. He has written tomes about imprisonment, punishment, and other social order, crime and justice topics. Some recent work, for example, looks at lynching incidents.¹

The work we are examining fits into the part of criminology concerned with “social reaction to law breaking” (see the Sutherland quote on p. 1 of syllabus).

This volume can be seen as part of a broader scholarly movement to understand how the relationships between crime, law, criminal justice agencies, the public, politicians, and criminals have changed in the last thirty years in the US and the UK.² Work in the US, especially by political scientists, has documented the rise of the law and order agenda starting in the 1960s.³ But, as has become clear to many, the decades of high imprisonment rates since the start of the 1970s, coupled with the longer sentences because of structured sentencing policies, and features in those sentencing policies which markedly racially disparate impacts, has created a “new situation” both politicians, the public, and hard hit communities.⁴ There are new economic realities, like prisons being the biggest growth industry in rural areas in the US⁵ and the rise of the prison industrial complex.

¹ *Penal Excess and Surplus Meaning: Public Torture Lynchings in 20th Century America* in *Law & Society Review*, vol 39 (2005).

² For a view on social control changes see: Innes, M. (2003). *Understanding social control: Deviance, crime and social order*. New York: Open University Press / McGraw Hill.

³ Page, B. I., & Shapiro, R. Y. (1992). *The Rational Public: Fifty Years of Trends in American's Policy Preferences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press pp 90-97; Scammon, R. M., & Wattenberg, B. J. (1970). *The Real Majority*. New York City: Conrad-McCann. pp 35-44; Mason, R. (2004). *Richard Nixon and the Quest for a New Majority*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. pp 5-36

⁴ Tonry, M. H. (1995). *Malign neglect: Race, crime and punishment in America*. New York: Oxford University Press; Western, B. (2006). *Punishment and inequality in America*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation; Western, B., Kleykamp, M., & Rosenfeld, J. (2006). Did falling wages and employment increase US imprisonment? *Social Forces*, 84(4), 2291-2311; Western, B., & Pettit, B. (2005). Black-white wage inequality, employment rates, and incarceration. *American Journal of Sociology*, 111(2), 553-578.

⁵ For a popular and many would say biased treatment of a fascinating case study on this see Sasha Abramsky (*The Nation*, July 19, 2004) “Incarceration, Inc.”

Garland's argument is macro-level. He speaks about complex societal transformations which have taken place, he suggests, in both the US and the UK. The transformations involve political, economic, demographic, and cultural factors. Shifting relationships between government agencies and political forces are central to his argument. You want to be sure you understand those shifts. He speaks of societal transformations resulting in a period of "late modernity" and issue clusters like "the crime complex." You want to understand these.

Garland is basically making an extended argument. You want to understand the steps in those arguments, the evidentiary basis for each step, and to understand the technical terms he uses. Those terms are listed on the question page.

I also strongly recommend that you examine an extended critique of Garland's work. Savelsberg, a sociologist trained in Germany and working in US for several decades has argued that Garland is over-generalizing, and had he looked at how matters had developed in other European countries like Germany, he would have seen very different relationships between politicians, law makers, key personnel working in criminal justice, and scholars.⁶ That article is on the Blackboard site under documents.

⁶ Savelsberg, J. J. (2002). Cultures of control in contemporary societies. *Law and Social Inquiry-Journal of the American Bar Foundation*, 27(3), 685-710.