



Controlling Crime, Controlling Society: Thinking about Crime in Europe and America

Dario Melossi

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How did anxieties about crime and deviance emerge in the modern world, first in Europe and then in America? How did they come to occupy centre-stage in the ongoing drama played out in public discourse? And how have theories of crime and deviance related to the actual practices of social control and punishment, and to the main currents of social conflict?

In this illuminating new book, Dario Melossi addresses these crucial questions, and at the same time offers an engaging survey of the theories of social control, crime and deviance. From the early work of Beccaria and Lombroso, via the pioneering sociology of 1920s Chicago, to 60s radicalism and the subsequent emergence of a “culture of fear”, the book covers the full range of theoretical thinking in this area, including more recent assessments of mass imprisonment in post-9/11 America. In a sharp and lucid style, Melossi argues that two orientations have always been battling each other in society, one in which the control of crime is paramount, and the other in which controlling crime becomes secondary to the exercise of wider social control.

Conceived and written by a scholar who has been active for many years both in Europe and the United States, the text will be an invaluable aid to advanced students and scholars of sociology and criminology on both sides of the Atlantic.

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