

CRIME PREVENTION

A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

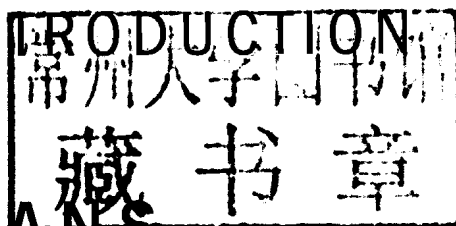
KAREN EVANS



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KAREN EVANS



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Introduction

Much previous work on crime prevention has remained quite narrowly focused and limited to a discussion of the prevention and management of those crimes which are perceived to affect 'ordinary people' going about their daily business, addressing what Shaftoe (2004) has termed 'locational crimes' and ignoring or marginalising those crimes which appear more removed from our everyday lives. This book however, following from the work of such authors as Crawford, Gilling and Hughes, is concerned with the political nature of crime prevention, subjecting its normative frameworks to critical attention. It contends that crime prevention practices cannot be understood when divorced from the political contexts and ideological frameworks and theories which create and sustain them. To this end the following chapters subject crime prevention policies in the UK, and in particular the New Labour project on preventing crime, to a close and critical scrutiny. In doing so, the book reveals the intensely ideological nature of the 'fight against crime' and how this has played out in recent decades to form the crime prevention and control landscape which we currently see before us. It reveals that major transformations have taken place in the practice of law and justice in Britain, some of which have been much debated and critiqued, but others which have slowly, subtly but irredeemably affected our relationship to the law and the forces of the state.

It has become generally accepted over recent years that crime and its control serve a number of political ends. This has been highlighted and discussed in the academic literature most recently in terms of the discussion around the governance of security and safety (Crawford 2002, Garland 2001, Hughes and Edwards 2002, Johnston and Shearing 2003) and by the major political players in Britain, who, for the last thirty years, have embraced a crime agenda and given it particular prominence in their party policies and pronouncements. During this period their increasingly politicised agenda has developed in range and scope. Thirty years ago the prevention of crime was predominantly localised and based at the level of neighbourhood and street but this can no longer be said to be the case. As the story outlined in this volume unfolds, the focus on the local and the community is not replaced, but is joined by bigger questions of 'race', migration, war and human rights. The agenda of crime prevention and control at the local level has been clearly impacted by wider national and super-national issues and a truly 'glocalised' (Hughes 2007) agenda has developed in which practices formed and

delivered at the local level influence and are in turn influenced by practices formed within national and global arenas. Today, for example, one cannot discuss race-hate crimes at the local level without reference to international state agendas, war-mongering, Islamophobia and the increasing numbers of insecure and unsafe nation-states across the globe. Community safety, previously a concern to address local economic and social conditions as a partnership between local state and community actors, has become professionalised and driven by requirements to reduce 'signal' crimes and to manage risks defined at a national level and delivered through top-down structures and strategies. The net of control has been cast wider to encompass numerous arenas which were not previously considered crime matters and redefined them as such. As a result crime prevention practices have found their way into a whole range of social policy issues and the number and range of 'suspect' populations has grown.

As social control and discipline has been further dispersed and state functions passed over to the private sector these practices have also leaked into many commercial and market-organisations which are much harder to hold to account. In our dealings with the state, public and private sector organisations we are all now subjected to risk assessments and impacted by policies created to manage criminality, whether we are forced to undergo finger-printing and full body-scans at airports or to submit evidence of nationality and residence when opening a bank account or delivering a seminar at a university. How this has happened, how the prevention of crime has moved from a localised and specialised activity to encompass a whole range of practices which threaten human rights and privacies can only be understood in the context of political and ideological drivers of change. This book aims, through a close reading of the New Labour project in the UK in its particularity, to uncover some of the wider forces, political perspectives and engrained ideologies which have driven this significant move. What has happened in the UK in this specific period has a broader significance and affects landscapes of crime control outside of these national boundaries and will continue to have effect beyond the current period. The construction of 'problems' and 'risks' which have been evident within UK policy are also becoming more evident across Europe and many advanced capitalist economies and the economic and social circumstances within which such ideas flourish are present outside UK borders and worsening in depth. So the solutions to these 'problems' presented across different nation-states, I would argue, are likely also to coalesce.

This book consists of nine substantive chapters each of which aims to explore one facet of the crime prevention agenda as it has been presented largely in the UK context, and then offers a conclusion which brings together the themes that have become prominent and made clearer throughout this step-by-step analysis. While each chapter can be read on its own as a synthesis of policy and direction in that particular policy area, the directions and themes presented in each are closely linked to the rest and the trajectory of change which has occurred over the last thirty years can only be really understood when the book is read as a whole.

Changing policing agendas and the increasing privatisation of policing services which has taken place alongside the granting of further powers to police officers are introduced and discussed throughout the volume. The transformations which have taken place in this area are so closely linked to wider changes in policy and practices that they could not be discussed in a standalone chapter. Chapter 1 outlines the state of affairs in crime prevention as it was understood by theorists in the twentieth century and covers the different perspectives which competed with each other as crime prevention grew as a subject for academics and policy-makers in the last half of that century. The resulting legacy of the debates and discussions which took place forms the basis for an understanding of the ascendancy of a reactionary and de-radicalised approach to crime prevention which was never seriously countered by the New Labour project. Chapter 2 demonstrates how the seemingly radical and progressive approach taken by the Blair government of 1997 rapidly demonstrated its ideological commitment to policies inspired by an attachment to neo-liberal economic discourses. It charts how, while giving limited space to projects to combat and reverse social exclusion, the government could not detach itself from the old ideas of individual responsibility, cultural deficit and blaming so beloved of previous administrations. Chapter 3 considers how the communitarian ideals which informed much of New Labour's thinking justified government shifting from playing the role of provider to that of enabler and thenceforth to enforcer. Couched in terms of a giving up of state power to the individual and the community the eventual outcome of the embracing of communitarian ideals resulted in a moral authoritarian approach to community which demanded individual and collective responsibility but which closely prescribed the terms in which this responsabilisation was to be permitted. Chapter 4 continues to chart the rise of the authoritarian agenda looking at New Labour's flagship legislation on crime and the agenda set by the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Beyond this obvious turn to intrusive measures of social control, however, the chapter demonstrates how this agenda was forced downwards through the use of managerial tools and a centralisation of criminal justice policies and practices. In so doing any remaining radical voices and alternative perspectives were gradually squeezed out of the debate. Chapters 5 to 8 explore contradictions and inconsistencies in policy aimed at young people, minority and migrant populations and the tensions between welfare and criminalising discourses are presented. These discussions reveal the extent to which the control agenda came to pervade social interventions in what were perceived to be 'problem' areas. Criminalising discourses and practices tended to construct these groups as an 'enemy within' and government policy towards them became heavily tinged with social control, risk management, monitoring and surveillance. As the state produced a particular knowledge of these groups based on discourses of separation and difference these were reproduced within local communities, cities and regions producing fractures and segregation within them while at the same time community cohesion and mutual respect were preached from above.

Chapter 8 details ways in which Labour's Respect Agenda, although ostensibly concerned with rebuilding trust in policing and justice systems actually served to undermine the rule of law and due process with the extension of many summary police powers and demonstrated a withdrawal of trust in community by government. Chapter 9 continues this theme explaining how, under New Labour minor transgressive acts could be redefined as crime and dealt with accordingly, ratcheting up the response to more serious infringements of the law. At the same time the over-policing and targeting of certain groups was more in evidence; fears of urban youth were reformulated in political and media panics around urban youth gangs and black culture and political protestors redefined as 'domestic extremists'. The concluding chapter summarises many of the consequences of governing through crime and fear, of placing responsibilities before rights and of extending social controls outside of previously accepted boundaries.

As I complete this introduction in May 2010 the New Labour project in Britain appears to have reached its end and a coalition of Conservative and Liberal Democrats have taken charge of government and divided out ministerial offices among these two parties. While much has been promised in terms of 'change' in the terms and perspectives of the new government formation the manifestos and promises of the two governing parties do not offer much hope for a different thinking on crime and its prevention to emerge. True there is a commitment in the coalition document to reverse the erosion of civil liberties which has taken place under the previous Labour administrations. It is promised that plans for ID cards and biometric passports will be scrapped and intrusive databases collecting and storing personal information will be scaled down. However, so many consistencies can also be detected with the attitudes and perspectives which have shaped the trajectory of policy around crime prevention and social control over the last decades that there is much cause to believe that crime prevention policy will continue in the current vein. Deep cuts in welfare provision will create the conditions under which social provision will be further privatised, local authorities' ability to provide for its local populace will remain seriously eroded and there will be further calls for the individual and family to extricate themselves from dependence on the state and to build independent structures of support. The refrain of 'Broken Britain', taken up with some zeal by Conservative leadership and echoed by their partners in government will ensure that attention will continue to be drawn away from the state and its inability to achieve security for its population and that the singling out of suspect populations and the blaming of groups who are seen to lie outside accepted boundaries of behaviour will continue apace.

1

Crime prevention in the twentieth century

The problem of crime has become much more complex in recent years. Rates of reported crime have appeared to stabilise but reports of some crimes are still increasing; changes in social relationships and technological breakthroughs have allowed new forms of crime to emerge; national security has emerged as a key priority and the fear of crime has become as important a measure of well-being as the experience of crime itself. The reduction of crime and the promotion of security have become key political priorities while at the same time the terrain on which crime is 'fought' has been anything other than stable. The economic cycle has seen slump turn to boom and back again; significant cultural changes have radically altered social norms and values; global changes have impacted on lifestyles and eroded the ability of nation-states to regulate their citizens and new forms of social harm, such as climate change, have been identified which have yet to enter the lexicon of crime and criminality. In attempting to understand and explore the impact of these changes, the discipline of criminology has had to develop much more sophisticated theoretical insights and tools with which to examine current trends and to predict future developments.

The study of crime, of crime prevention and of safety is a very different concern today than it was three decades ago when a British prime minister first swept into power on a 'law and order' ticket. The Conservative party, led by Margaret Thatcher, used the problem of crime, policing and order as a tool to aid their election to government, introducing a significant political agenda which is still current today (Reiner 2007). Looking back on those days, the Conservatives' agenda on crime seems crudely fashioned and peculiarly naïve. Crime was caused by permissive social relations, a liberal agenda in education and a legacy of the welfare state which offered a something-for-nothing culture (this refrain was later taken up by subsequent Labour administrations). Through Thatcher's terms of office (she resigned in 1990 to be replaced by John Major until Labour took office in 1997) to the turn of the century the problem of crime was largely perceived as a domestic concern by government, academics and policy-makers alike and was tackled

accordingly. Yet by the time Labour had won their second consecutive election in 2001 the problem of crime was taking on a distinctly different flavour and was beginning to be linked to strong globalising and transnational forces. New enemies needed to be fought with new weapons and the Labour government set about constructing a modern crime prevention framework fit for twenty-first century crime. In truth, however, and as outlined in subsequent chapters, the legacy of Thatcher's neo-liberal political project informed a great deal of new Labour's thinking.

This chapter will look more closely at some of the key transformations which have underpinned the shifting agenda of crime prevention in western democracies from the early 1970s when crime first became a political issue in the UK to the point at which New Labour took office. The chapter will relate the political turn in crime prevention to a series of changes which first became apparent within the United States but which soon began to affect other western liberal democracies. In doing so I do not wish to ignore the vast majority of the world's population which has lived under a different set of political and material experiences, but for the purpose of this work it is necessary to take a more western-centric view in order to highlight the particular preoccupations which have beset and upset the affluent 'west' and which have driven their particular policies and perspectives on the prevention of crime. While the preoccupation with crime remained a problem for domestic policy and primarily an issue of the internal workings of the nation-state, the crime policies of the western nations did not overly affect the world outside. However, as will be uncovered in later chapters, as the problem of crime 'globalised', this can no longer be said to be the case.

The politicisation of crime

Although crime rates had been rising since the mid-1950s they did not become a party political issue until the early 1970s when a Conservative government under Edward Heath expressed its commitment to establishing 'law and order' across the UK (Waiton 2006). The 'crimes' and disorder which Heath's government faced were profoundly political as well as social in nature. Growing civil rights movements (such as lesbian and gay activism, black power and feminism) were organising to challenge old-established ways and to push more progressive agendas on to the state and law-makers. Trade union militancy was at its height with the miners' strikes of 1972 and 1974 in particular attributed with playing a major part in the eventual downfall of Heath's government. Both Heath and Thatcher, as newly elected leader of the opposition in 1974, turned to the law and order agenda partly to counter growing political unrest but also as a consequence of growing social unrest which the economic crisis of the 1970s had thrown into the mix. In doing so they disrupted a cross-party consensus which had stressed rehabilitation rather than retribution and a welfare rather than crudely punitive approach to offenders

(Garland 2001: 34–9). Under Conservative leadership formal social control mechanisms were championed as the way to bring disordered populations into line. The story of the ‘authoritarian turn’ in state responses to crime, as demonstrated by the adoption of more aggressive policing styles in particular, has been skilfully told by Hall et al. (1978) in *Policing the Crisis*. This heavy-handed response to crime was allied to a racialisation of the crime agenda whereby inner-city youth, i.e. young black males, were targeted as ‘the enemies within’, blamed for disrupting peaceful Britain through their enjoyment of a ‘strange’ and ‘alien’ culture (Hall et al. 1978).

A heavy-handed and ‘military style’ of policing black youth persisted into the early 1980s when a number of inner-city neighbourhoods exploded into violence in 1981 (Cowell et al. 1982) and again to a lesser extent in 1984. The free rein which had been given to the police to patrol de-industrialised neighbourhoods, to stop and search predominantly black youth but also more generally the poor and the unemployed victims of Thatcher’s neo-liberal economic and social policies, was partially halted by the findings of the Scarman Report. Lord Scarman had been charged with chairing an enquiry into the violent outbursts in Brixton, London in 1981. While falling short of accusing the police of institutional racism Scarman called for a greater community input into policing strategies and for the police to build closer links to local authorities and neighbourhood organisations. A patchy framework of police and community consultation groups was set up so that different organisations and individuals could comment on policing priorities and practices in their local area (Fielding 1991: 172).

While on the one hand policing after Scarman moved slowly towards a more consensual style in which some attempts were made to rebuild shattered police–community relations, the formal mechanisms of social control were once more brought down heavily in the policing of the miners’ strike which lasted a full twelve months from March 1984. Police forces were brought in to mining areas to restrict the movement of miners out of their villages, to prevent the demonstration of solidarity between pits, to break up picket lines and to ensure that strike-breakers could get in to work. Those active in the solidarity movement for the miners will remember the images of uniformed police waving ten pound notes at miners brought to penury by months of strike action. Their behaviour demonstrated quite clearly how the government could, and did, use the police and the law for their own political ends.

Successive Conservative and Labour governments from the 1970s to the 1990s gradually reached a consensus over the need to utilise crime and its prevention as a political tool. All this was done in the name of bringing order back in to streets, communities and, at times, even working class organisations. This move to incorporate the prevention of crime into the remit of the state brought with it a level of central intervention into the organisation and control of neighbourhood and locality. As we will see throughout this work, this interventionist stance has certainly not diminished although in changing political and economic climates direct provision of crime prevention measures has been partially passed on to private

providers. The changing nature of social provision was both ideologically motivated and driven by fiscal considerations. As the welfare state came under attack consequent to the rise and then the domination of neo-liberal perspectives in government, swingeing budgetary cuts signalled an end to the state as the ultimate provider of public services (Fabricant and Burghardt 1992). While the government continues to 'steer' crime prevention policy setting its direction through the creation of policy and directing resources, it has allowed other organisations, both public and private to 'row' the boat and act as the deliverers of services on the ground (Osborne and Gaebler 1992).

The growth of the crime prevention industry

The backdrop to an increased interest in crime prevention policy and practices was the increase in recorded crime evident in much of the west during the latter half of the twentieth century. Debate rages as to the accuracy of crime statistics and how useful they might be in comparing changes in offending over time and between different nations – not only do the recording practices *within* national boundaries change over time but there are also major differences *between* the recording practices of different nation-states and definitions which different national crime control agencies use to identify and categorise actions as particular forms of crime. Despite these problems and difficulties, however, the extent and nature of recorded crime is a useful starting point as these statistics shape how the problem of crime is perceived and defined. It is to recorded crime statistics that governments and professionals turn when justifying new directions in policy and practice or proposing and designing solutions to the problem of crime.

Recorded crime data for the UK shows a fairly stable level of crime since police records began in 1876 up until the 1930s. After this point recorded crime began to slowly rise until the Second World War. After another brief period of stability, crime rates start on a more steeply rising trajectory from the mid-1950s. The general trend remains on this steep incline until its peak in 1995 after which crime rates begin to drop significantly for the next ten years, after which this fall levels out (Home Office 2009). In 1981 Britain introduced the self-report victimisation survey imported from the United States which became the British Crime Survey. This had no good news to tell, estimating in its first report in 1982, that the actual incidence of crime was four times that recorded through police records (Safe Neighbourhoods Unit 1986). This prolonged increase in recorded crime has been partly attributed to growing affluence in the west and the shift to a consumer-oriented capitalism which has meant that there are many more opportunities to commit crime while at the same time societal changes have meant that informal social controls which might have deterred the commission of crime have broken down (Bottoms and Wiles 1992). Whatever the reasons, Britain experienced roughly four decades of steeply rising rates of recorded crime and so steep was this

increase that the ten years between 1981 and 1991 saw a doubling in recorded crime rates.

Inequalities in the distribution of crime and crime prevention

Nationally recorded crime rates can only reveal so much about the nature and extent of crime within any particular country and can tell us little about how crime is distributed within national boundaries. As the 43 police forces of England and Wales recorded and published their crime data on a force-wide basis allowing some scope for comparing crime rates across force areas, this crude comparative tool could not distinguish differential crime rates within their regions. Furthermore, it was not until the first tranche of data from the British Crime Survey (BCS) that rates of crime across different areas could be directly compared. The British criminologist, Tim Hope, conducted secondary analysis of BCS data in 1994 which uncovered a striking relationship concerning victimisation in different areas which had hitherto lain undetected. Hope split the BCS data into ten groups (deciles) ranging from low to high-crime areas. He found that 'a gradual increase [in incidence of victimisation] across the majority of areas is dwarfed by the exponential increase in victimisation experienced in the minority of high-rate areas' (Hope 1996: 4). To put it more simply, areas with the highest rates of crime were suffering vastly more than any other areas – for property crime they suffered 25 times that of the second lowest area and twice the rate of the next highest area and for crimes against the person the highest crime areas suffered 76 times more crime than that suffered in the third lowest area and four times more than the next highest area. Crime was found to be highly concentrated amongst a minority of the population – those living in 'low status urban areas of poor quality housing with above average concentrations of children, teenagers and young adults alongside a preponderance of single-adult households' (Hope 1996: 7). Confounding previous expectations it seemed that the poorest populations were most at risk of becoming victims of crime.

Compounding this problem of the concentration of crime within certain areas, Farrell and Pease (1993) discovered another key element to victimisation – that those who are victimised once are more likely to be so again. They named this phenomenon 'repeat victimisation' and their research was extremely influential in targeting crime prevention projects on those who had already had experience of crime. The Kirkholt Burglary Project served as an exemplar for this type of targeted crime prevention. Those households which had been burgled were offered a whole raft of security measures for their home as well as the practice of 'cocooning', that is social ties were strengthened with immediately adjacent houses putting in place informal surveillance measures over the burgled property. In their evaluation of the Kirkholt project, Farrell and Pease detected a significant drop in rates of burglary as well as a reduced fear of crime in the area. Farrell, Pease and

Hope's work led to a targeting of interventions to reduce crime which Hope warned, although effective, might in the end prove to be socially-divisive – suggesting that low crime neighbourhoods might resent the extra money spent on high-crime neighbourhoods or that high-crime areas might be type-cast as 'landscapes of fear' (Taylor 1995) beyond redemption and lying outside normal values and moralities.

The targeting of crime prevention policies came of age with the use of Geographical Information Systems, developed in the 1990s, to map the incidence of crime within local areas and regions. The occurrence of each crime could be plotted on a street map and crime 'hotspots' identified which revealed the streets, parks or even buildings where particular crimes were concentrated. These crime maps were constructed and held by the police but were shared with local authorities where strong partnerships had been established between the two organisations. With the advent of the Crime and Disorder Audits and Partnerships required by the Crime and Disorder Act of 1998 (more of this in Chapter 2) crime maps were more widely used and shared and formed the basis for many more closely targeted interventions (Hirschfield et al. 2001). Through these processes the 'problem of crime' became more closely linked to problematic areas.

The fear of crime

Growing public concern and attention to the increase in crime rates has meant that crime is now perceived as a major social problem. Very few people can have escaped any kind of victimisation and fewer will know of no one who has been a victim of crime.¹ This shared experience of crime and its effects has led to an increasing fear of crime adding to a crisis in 'ontological security' among the populations of the west (Giddens 1990). This crisis is not solely related to a fear of crime but links into numerous social changes which people have lived through in recent decades. Some of these changes, especially when linked to increased prosperity and opportunity that a rising economy can bring, will have been positive and strengthening influences but present too are many risks associated with living in present-day consumer capitalism: the loss of security in employment; rapidly changing social relationships; the need to compete against others to get ahead and the experience of facing a longer working life in difficult and changing circumstances. Added in recent years have been concerns of more global significance relating for example to the realities of climate change, almost constant wars, the impacts of economic and banking collapse and loss of many taken-for-granted certainties in life. All this has led sociologists to comment on the high risks associated with living under late capitalism and the increasing lack of control which individuals have over forces more powerful than themselves which can impact very negatively on their current and future plans (Beck 1992). Giddens (1984) has suggested that late modernity swept away old knowledge systems and behaviours based on long-standing

traditions and social relationships and that in their stead we are forced to constantly reinvent ourselves anew, acquiring information relevant to our present circumstances. In addition this information must be constantly replaced as the environments in which we function and in which we make personal decisions remain volatile and changeable. We are left not knowing who or what to trust and under such stress the fear of crime can take on unimaginable proportions (Evans et al. 1996). Why, it is asked, when crime has been falling for an extended period, does the fear of crime not diminish? Are we the 'worried well' (Farall et al. 2009)? The fear of crime, however, can act as a proxy for many other fears linked to lack of economic stability, control over our futures and undermining of established knowledge bases which are certainly not diminishing and are most probably on the increase. In addition once victimised the damage that this experience can wreak on an individual and their close friends and family may shatter what little sense of security that they possess and victimisation may not be easily or rapidly overcome.

It could be argued that it does not suit the governing bodies and organisations of social control to accept the true nature of our fears which are amorphous, ever-present and growing in stature and range. After all there is no easy way to control the volatile economic and social forces of neo-liberal capitalism once they have been unleashed and largely left unregulated. Instead it is easier for government and law-makers to identify one or more social groups or 'types' which can function as the endpoint of our fears, anger and frustrations. In the United States in the 1960s and 1970s the black, inner-city poor were framed in this way – and to a great extent still are – but still more 'dangerous others' have been constructed and join them in this category. In Britain 'black inner-cities' have been used to this end, especially in the 1970s, and were joined from the 1980s and 1990s by the, often white, indigenous 'underclass' and in the latter years of the twentieth century by migrants and asylum seekers and then, around the turn of the century, with the rise of Islamophobia this became the fate of Muslim populations worldwide (Fekete 2009).

What has been tried in crime prevention?

Offender-centred strategies

The oldest strategies to prevent crime are centred on the offender themselves. The criminal justice system was formulated to deter offenders through conviction and punishment ensuring that the victim of crime receives justice but is also constrained in their behaviour. Incarceration was considered in liberal terms as offering a space in which to rehabilitate the individual, allowing the prisoner time to reflect on their behaviour and gain the support necessary to improve their future prospects. In more progressive and modern criminal justice systems imprisonment is considered a last resort and punishment and rehabilitation take place within community settings, including measures such as contact with probation, diversion

from crime and, more recently, including restorative work to begin to make good some of the damage caused by offending. All of these strategies are based on the belief that the cause of offending behaviour lies within the individual. Barring the use of life sentences or the death penalty, these are measures which also suggest that a person can be persuaded to behave differently or can be supported in different ways to help them desist from committing crime in the future.

There are many diverse theories which attempt to explain why the individual commits crime. Pre-modern understandings suggested that crimes might be committed by people who were in some way possessed by evil forces which had to be driven from them through the use of extreme physical punishments, sited on the possessed body and designed to drive the possessor out. With the advent of more enlightened ways of thinking, classical criminology, following the works of Jeremy Bentham and Cesare Beccaria, considered the 'criminal' to be a rational actor possessing free will who could be deterred from crime through a system of punishments 'fitted' to the crime in their level of severity and the individual's loss of freedoms. With the development of positivist and science-based explanations for human behaviours, popular in the nineteenth century, classical criminology's explanations were challenged by a view that individual pathology led to criminality with, in the late nineteenth century, the Italian criminologist Lombroso famously proposing that people might be born criminal due to genetic predisposition (Gibson and Hahn-Rafter 2006).

A medical and psychological approach to criminality prevailed until the middle of the twentieth century under which it was proposed that offending could ultimately be treated by utilising medical knowledge. Only after the introduction of social welfare provision following the Second World War did the state step in to provide medical models of treatment as a part of its commitment to offer support to those in need and fostering a 'correctionalist penal-welfare' stance (Garland 1994 in Hughes 1998: 43). In 1974, however, research based in the United States (Martinson 1974) claimed that there was little evidence to demonstrate the efficacy of such treatment-based practice, this model of crime prevention was perceived as fundamentally flawed and that in truth 'nothing works'. His work fuelled and was often quoted by the proponents of an already growing anti-welfare agenda which spawned a return to the philosophy of deterrence and punishment which had preceded welfarism.

Right realism and situational crime prevention

With the collapse of the 'correctionalist penal-welfare' stance and with it the idea that people could be changed and helped out of their offending, alternative measures for controlling crime had to be sought. While a 'punitive turn' proved popular it was a reactive approach which had most impact and intervention after an offence had been committed and an offender caught rather than proactively

focusing on stopping crime being committed in the first place. Police detection rates, however, are notoriously low, at around 24 per cent of recorded crimes in the 1970s and falling to around 20 per cent by the end of the 1990s (*Daily Telegraph* 2001a) and the search to find methods by which to prevent crime could not be abandoned. Policy-makers turned to more practical and less idealistic solutions to the prevention of crime, embracing instead what has been termed 'right realism'. Rejecting explanations of crime which looked to economic and social structures as major factors in shaping criminality, this approach, drawing on routine activities theory (Cohen and Felson 1979), focused instead on disrupting the conditions in which crimes could occur – the coming together of potential offenders, opportunities for crime and the absence of a capable guardian to protect the target of crime – and seeking to control crime and criminality rather than to eliminate them. Thus a long-standing support, continuing to this day, for situational crime prevention measures was born (see for example the work of Ronald Clarke, Gloria Laycock, and J.Q. Wilson). Crime prevention measures adopted as a consequence of this approach were based on the principles of cost-benefit analysis and considered the offender as a rational, calculating individual who would weigh up the costs and consequences of being caught with the rewards and benefits achieved through the commission of crime (Akers 1990, Clarke and Cornish 1985). The practice of 'target-hardening' grew out of this work in order to limit the opportunities for crime to take place. It proposed that where a crime is seen as more difficult or risky to commit then this reduces the attractiveness of the criminal act and the potential offender will turn away from it. So potential targets were protected or made physically harder to attack – cars were built with integrated alarm systems, windows locked and shuttered and open spaces fenced and gated in order to deter offenders.

In the 1970s a perspective emerged which considered the impact which physical environment could have on the offender and urban environments themselves were studied as places which appeared criminogenic (Bottoms and Wiles 1992: 11). Researchers looked for ways in which various urban environments could be adapted and controlled so that they were less conducive to crime. In the United States, Oscar Newman's (1972) work on 'defensible spaces' proved particularly influential, followed in 1985 by British academic Alice Coleman's complement to Newman's work on 'designing out crime'. Both Newman and Coleman argued that the physical layout of areas could be manipulated in order to lessen crime in the neighbourhood. Newman argued that residents would be more prepared to defend and watch over their own private spaces than they would public spaces. Coleman applied Newman's theories to the built environment typically found in Britain to argue that poorly designed environments could actually instil and normalise criminogenic responses in young people routinely subjected to them. As a result of their work local authorities set about a large-scale redesign of their estates; houses and flats were given private gardens to the front and back and communal spaces were removed or given extra security measures. Public areas were fenced off and gated