



Paper presentation

Abstract title: Trust Building as a Social Technology in Advanced Liberal Crime Control

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Abstract:

This paper analysis the relationship of 'trust' to crime prevention, power and criminal justice policy and examines the calculated instrumentalisations of trust in the service of current governmental strategies of crime control. The characteristics of liberal crime control are investigated, and it is argued that advanced liberal problematics of government are dependent upon social technologies of trust seeking to enhance societal trust and social cohesion at a local level and promote relations of trust between governing agencies, local communities and 'at-risk youth'.

A Foucauldian governmentality approach is applied, directing our attention to the various forms of non-state or extra-state governance that seem to be of growing importance in contemporary crime control. The current crime and violence prevention efforts in Oakland, California are taken as an empirical case of advanced liberal crime control, and the empirical basis for the analysis of these efforts consists of strategic plans, needs assessments and evaluation reports as well as semi-structured interviews with 17 program managers, community organisers and senior police officers in Oakland, conducted in the spring of 2011.

The paper shows how the instigation of relations of trust serves as a central social technology in advanced liberal crime control. This involves the promotion and



institutionalisation of trusting relationships between members of local communities as a long-term crime prevention strategy as well as the instigation of trust between 'at-risk youth' and case managers that take on the role as 'caring mentors'.

It is argued that 'trust' comes to be of interest for political power since it provides the basis for cooperation between self-governing local community members and the foundation for police-community crime prevention partnerships. Furthermore, relations of trust provide opportunities for the agency of 'at-risk youth' and ex-offenders to be worked upon, producing the self-managing citizen central to neo-liberal forms of government.

The paper concludes that a critical power perspective on 'trust' is necessary in order to grasp contemporary transformations in the exercise of political power. It is argued that the rise of community crime prevention is not just a slight adjustment to political technique, but rather a significant revision of the very notions of who is governed, who governs and how governance is shaped.