

chapters in Part V examine the distinctive features of Antarctic policy making in four selected countries — Australia, Chile, Norway and the United States — and examine whether those features affect the ability of the Consultative Parties as a group to cope with differences among themselves as well as external pressures.

*Governing the Antarctic* presents a wide ranging and comprehensive argument on the effectiveness and

legitimacy of the Antarctic Treaty System. The book traces the change in focus of the central principles of the ATS from peaceful use to environmental protection. The focus on Australia's central role in the ATS and the insights into Australia's foreign and domestic policy making on Antarctica provide added interest to a valuable study of the effectiveness and legitimacy of the Antarctic Treaty System.

**MARK BEAUFOY**

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## Measuring Immorality Social Inquiry and The Problem of Illegitimacy

*by Gail Reekie; Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1998; 215 pp; \$29.95 softcover.*

While the titles of so many books promise much and deliver far less, this title holds true to the book's content. In this scholarly text, Gail Reekie identifies a need for an unravelling and repositioning of illegitimacy. In her view, the persistent negative reaction by politicians, moral crusaders, the media and the public, to out-of-wedlock pregnancies is in conflict with current more liberal sexual and reproductive views and practices. These many voices of authority associate single parenthood with a plethora of social ills that include the breakdown of the family unit, the rise of crime, juvenile delinquency and spiralling welfare costs. The author sees social-scientific discourse, through its historical accreditation, as being responsible for these distorted views.

*Measuring Immorality* explores the many layers of illegitimacy drawing on psychological, ethnographic, economic, historical, sociological, and eugenic conceptualisations that have existed from the Middle Ages to the present day. In the first four chapters Reekie traces the discourse of illegitimacy as a social phenomenon encased in immorality. This moves from the attachment of moral meanings to official illegitimacy statistics in France during the 19th century, through the assertions of the demographic significance of illegitimacy by population growth theorists, to the assumed connections between racial inferiority and illegitimacy.

Having identified the historical positioning of illegitimacy within social inquiry as 'socially destructive', the author moves to deconstruct this location and in the remaining six

chapters attempts to expose the supposed truths. Some of the more popular perceptions of the causes and effects of this social phenomenon are examined in this second half of the book. These include the social acceptance of out-of-wedlock childbearing within white working class communities, that infants born out-of-wedlock are at a much greater risk of death or physical harm, that unmarried teenage motherhood denotes low intelligence and immaturity, that two parent families with the father continually present are essential to social wellbeing and that white, middleclass and mature women who choose to bear children out-of-wedlock are selfish.

Although the author concludes that the depth and diversity of disparaging voices within the discourse is 'powerfully cumulative' and leaves little room for dissent, this does not exclude the need for a redefining of illegitimacy if those within the social sciences gave different shape and meaning in their analysis of out-of-wedlock births. The voices they have employed in the past have unequivocally contributed to the perpetuation of an ideal legitimate culture, which favours particular classes, genders, races and sexualities. Reekie argues that a repositioning would serve to deflect the use of social science facts to support the 'illegitimacy equals immorality' conclusion fostered by politicians, bureaucrats and others.

*Measuring Immorality* provides a very convincing illustration of how, through the measuring of immorality, these 'truths' have become ingrained within the social sciences. If readers are expecting to ultimately be rewarded

with a blueprint for the separation of immorality from out-of-wedlock births in future debate then they will be disappointed. The book's ultimate value is in its consolidation of an extensive range of theoretical material postulated on the subject of illegitimacy. While the language style and theoretical content is often very dense, this book is intended by the author to be a scholarly exposé of illegitimacy and as such is probably more suited to an academic audience.

**AINSLEY HARPER**

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## Turnaround How America's Top Cop Reversed the Crime Epidemic

*by William Bratton; Random House 1998; \$49.95 hardcover.*

Bratton is famous for being put in charge of the New York subway system and introducing a policy of 'zero tolerance'. His success in 'cleaning up the subway' led to him becoming a media personality and later (after a short stint in charge of the Boston Police) being put in charge of the New York Police. He was forced to leave that job after a fight with Republican Mayor Giuliani.

In America, crime is no longer seen as a social problem. It is seen as phenomena brought about by the greed or evil of criminals. The answer to crime, according to the authorities, is to have tough laws and tough police. Moreover, criminals deserve no compassion. Compassion should be reserved for the victims.

Bratton's approach to policing the New York subways has been regarded as a shining model for what is known as 'zero tolerance policing'. Although statistics show the incidence of crime fell in New York when Bratton ran the Police Department, other possible causes include a decrease in unemployment and a fall in drug use. Nevertheless, it would seem that Bratton was responsible for achieving some positive reduction in crime.

*Turnaround* is in its own way fascinating. This is not because the book is especially well written or because Bratton is necessarily someone to admire or even to take seriously. However, the book remains an exposé of how things work in America, though a

good deal of the revelation is unintentional.

Bratton apparently wanted to be a police officer from an early age. He enlisted for the Vietnam War and worked as a military policeman. On returning to the States, he was accepted into the Boston Police Department (BPD) just before it was sued by a number of people for unlawful discrimination in hiring policy. Because of the litigation, the BPD was not able to hire people for a number of years. To add to its problems a citizen referendum was passed which limited State taxes and, over a couple of years, the BPD had to reduce its numbers by half. Consequently, things became chaotic in Boston.

Bratton speaks frankly about problems in the BPD, including widespread corruption, laziness and management failures. Faced with the problems he describes, it is no great surprise to learn that Boston had a crime problem.

Bratton's response to the BPD corruption is interesting. It is clear from his book that he did nothing about it. He seeks to rationalise this by contending that it was not his job but the province of the Internal Affairs Department to detect and catch corrupt officers. He goes on to plead in his defence that an essential element of policing is that the officers trust each other, because police need their comrades to cover their backs. His proposition is that police cannot afford to make enemies by reporting corruption or other matters, as this might result in a lack of support from other officers when it is needed. This is probably an honest explanation of what is known as the 'brotherhood culture' where, for example, police look the other way while another officer bashes a prisoner or uses excessive force in an arrest.

The most interesting part of *Turnaround* is Bratton's description of his involvement in the 'clean up' of the New York subway system. It is a fascinating contrast that Bratton is calm about police corruption in Boston, but is impassioned about and horrified by low-level crime in trains and stations. He appears to fervently hate those who hang around on street corners to clean windcreens, as well as beggars, and people who avoid payment of fares, run petty scams and urinate in the street. His obsession occurs despite his making the point that the risk of robbery and other such serious crimes in most American cities is not that great.

Despite Bratton's disproportionate view of the seriousness of crime, it would appear from his book that the subway system was running close to economic collapse. Indigent people would block turnstiles as part of a scam whereby gates would be broken open so that commuters could be induced to pay entrance fees. In addition, a large number of beggars occupied the subway system, defecation and urination in the rail cars and stations was not uncommon, and robbery and other crimes of violence were frequent. These factors resulted in middle class people avoiding rail use.

Bratton has analysed the morale problems of those charged with dealing with law enforcement in the subways. He found that the subway police transit cars were inferior to those used by other police departments as were their uniforms, equipment and guns. In addition, officers considered their actions in arresting people were pointless as the tickets issued to fare avoiders were relatively unenforceable. For that reason most police stopped arresting people and just hung around. The number of officers in the Department was also too low to cover all stations. As the police presence strategy led to no measurable change in crime patterns, a further downward spiral in morale occurred.

When Bratton was appointed he insisted that each time the police caught an offender they arrest them rather than give them a ticket. However, it took around 10 hours to arrest and charge a person as after arrest the person had to be presented at court. Single arrests were therefore not cost effective. Bratton therefore had his officers handcuff suspects to the station railing till they had around 20 to arrest and charge as 20 took the same amount of time as one. Such an approach naturally enough caused some backlash because minor offenders were being arrested, handcuffed, chained to fences and then deprived of their liberty for considerable periods.

This policy led to a tremendous boost in the morale of the transit police. They felt they were like real police, using handcuffs, putting people in vans and appearing in court. Bratton also demanded that each person arrested be searched for weapons and drugs and that there be a warrant check. As a result the police found that one in twenty people arrested had outstanding warrants or were carrying illegal weapons. This led to more arrests of

serious offenders and gave the police the impression they were doing something important.

Other consequences included a fall in the number of serious offenders using the transport system and people travelling on the subway system left their weapons at home due to the consequences of carrying weapons. The absence of weapons and the removal of more serious criminals led to a huge fall in the number of robberies and crimes on the subways. The combination of increased safety and the absence of beggars led to more people using the subway system.

The subways of New York are not, however, the sort of experience on which to build a theory of police action. It is hard to comprehend the breathtaking incompetence of the transit police prior to Bratton's arrival. Most Australian police would be amazed that a police force could be that bad. If there is no enforcement of a law it is not surprising that there is a low level of compliance. It is therefore predictable that if law is enforced crime will fall.

Bratton's recipe for success in New York relied on a series of strategies to use police in a more efficient way and to free up resources. This included the use of computers for booking, and the development of plans whereby local police monitored levels of crime and developed strategies. In a country like Australia the police seem reasonably responsive to changing patterns of crime and will react. Apparently in New York this was all new. But Australia is a far less violent country than America. It would seem that our police forces are better run and more responsive than those of America and that people such as Bratton have little to say that will help us.

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