Neighbourhoods Mobilise the Troops[1] - Community Organising, Violence and Governmentality

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Abstract

The article reflects on the difficult relation between community work against domestic violence and local crime prevention under the conditions of the neoliberal state that cuts down on social benefits and promotes self-help, active citizenship and self-responsibility instead while at the same time restoring the punishing state with its strict regime of law-and-order. The author describes a project Tarantula - she started herself while being a social worker in Hamburg, Germany. Tarantula was aimed at strengthening social networks and the neighbours' willingness to get involved in favour of affected women. Although conceptualized as an emancipatory approach referring to community organizing in the tradition of social movements it is questionable whether and how this can really work in the current situation. At present, the field of crime control is being reconfigured as a result of political and administrative decisions, which, for their part, are based on a new structure of social relations and cultural attitudes. The demolition of the 'welfare state' means the re-coding of the security policy that facilitates the development of interventionist techniques that govern and control individuals through their own ability to act.

1 Introduction

"You are the eyes and the ears of the police", San Francisco's deputy police told a group of citizens who had been activated within the framework of community organising and who had been invited for a meeting at police headquarters as community representatives.[2] For me, the deputy's words triggered unpleasant associations of a 'big brother'-like state and an informer culture. I did not, however, make the connection with a project I myself hat initiated within the framework of community organising in Hamburg's district of St. Pauli-Süd. We are talking about Tarantula, a community-oriented project for the prevention and reduction of violence against women that, amongst other things, was aimed at strengthening social networks and the neighbours' willingness to get involved in favour of affected women.

The impetus for this paper was given by my growing scepticism towards this approach. One of the reasons is the fact that, as far as subject-matter and methodology are concerned, Tarantula fits in quite well with the paradigm shift from social policy to law-and-order policy. Security has become an incredibly popular topic. Moreover, crime policy increasingly counts on ties to the community and citizens' involvement as methods towards effective crime control. These developments find their expression in security conferences and

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[1] On the one hand, this title refers to a book by Uwe Painke (2001) about 'Neighborhood Safety' in the USA and, on the other, it hints at the sometimes militant use of language in the area of local crime prevention, where 'well-fortified' neighbourhoods that are 'ready to defend themselves' are conjured up, cf. Niedersächsisches Innenministerium 2003, 6, 8, 40.

[2] The author was present as a guest.

neighbourhood-watch schemes in the districts, video cameras everywhere and the criminalisation of subcultural and poverty-related behaviour.

Moreover, my scepticism is grounded in the fact that there has been a parallel development in the popularity of 'social space orientation', of self-help – or personal responsibility – and civic participation on the one hand and a decrease in and a privatisation of benefits and services from the state on the other. It is not the Keynesian welfare state but the neo-liberal competitive state that determines the conditions of community work. During the 1970s and 80s, the orientation towards the community linked up left-wing state criticism with the criticism of a citizen-unfriendly bureaucracy and an incapacitation of the citizens, whereas in the 1990s, the discourse was influenced by more conservativ,idealistic and moral ideas like, for example, in the communitarism debate (Stövesand 2002).

In the following text, the Tarantula project will be the starting point for outlining a series of problems in connection with community organising and in dealing with issues like security and crime prevention in this context.

2   Flashback

In a Hamburg women's refuge at the beginning of the 1990s. Hatice[3,] who, with her five children, has found shelter there from her husband's violent behaviour, tells me that she definitely wants to return to her flat. This is unusual; most women who split up with the person who maltreated them then go on to look for a new apartment. They do not want to be found that easily and they hope for anonymity – for fear of a continuation of the violence and out of shame about what happen to them. Hatice, however, does not want to have her home taken from her. The reason for this is her neighbourhood. As she says, she has many friendly contacts there and can rely on people's support. There is even a telephone chain which has already mobilised help in several threatening situations. She has come to the women's shelter in order to get some new energy and to be safe while the law suit against her husband for the surrender of the flat is ongoing.

She wins the suit, moves back and she and her children can keep their social contacts and the environment they are used to. Together with her neighbours, their children's school and a community organising centre she keeps away her husband who turns up regularly for weeks and rampages about outside her front door. One day, he just doesn't turn up anymore.

This story motivates the commitment for *Tarantula*. Neighbourhood and community as resources – a concrete utopia: neighbours do not turn up the volumes of their TV sets anymore when they hear screams from the flat next door but they activate other neighbours and get involved together. Women do not scurry down the staircases wearing sunglasses out of shame for their maltreatment anymore, but they handle the situation openly and self-confidently. They know they will be met with understanding and support and not with helplessness, let alone mindless comments. Women and girls walk through public spaces, sit in parks and squares even after dark; where there was gender monotony once, there is now a lively, balanced mix.

And then a woman from the newly founded *Tarantula* group actually tells us how friends, neighbours and shop assistants from the supermarket around the corner met at her flat and

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[3] The name has been changed.

helped her to break away from a violent relationship. Local social networks as a means for survival – a piece of utopia come true.

3   The community organising centre St.Pauli-Süd proudly presents: *Tarantula*

The *Tarantula* concept was based on the assumption that women's shelter work would have to be supplemented by measures that took place in the community, where violence actually happened. Although domestic violence was at the centre of the project, men were not just seen as perpetrators or potential perpetrators but also as possible allies in the community.

The aims of the project were: firstly to initiate a 'climate change' in the neighbourhood, so that violence would no longer be ignored and tolerated; secondly, to raise consciousness of gender roles among men and women, girls and boys and to support a broadening of people's scope of action and thirdly, to promote neighbours' involvement and practical solidarity with the victims, so that women (and children) would not have to flee from their home and their neighbourhood. The community organising approach seemed well suited, as the fewer social ties to the community women have and the more anonymous the neighbourhood is, the more endangered they are. Isolation and the loss of social ties often go hand in hand with an intensification of violence. And a community that is careless or helpless cannot offer support. Community organising promotes the development of neighbourly contacts and networks, of an individual and a mutual ability to act and it stresses the importance of raising public awareness and of collective learning processes. Moreover, an old-established community work centre already existed, and with it the personal, spatial and technical resources. Its staff did not need much convincing in view of a dramatic situation that was known to them through their work in the neighbourhood as well as through various studies.[4] With two work-placement staff and myself as a full-time project worker, *Tarantula* could kick off. The project consisted of several building blocks:

- A survey with professionals in the neighbourhood (doctors, the police, advice centres, schools) about their experience with and their assessment of the existence of domestic violence against women. Apart from information gathering, the aim of this survey was also raising awareness and public relations work for the issue.

- The establishment of a counselling slot for women only in the GWA St. Pauli-Süd's community centre Kölibri. The topic of violence was expressly mentioned when informing about the project in doctors' surgeries, shops etc

- A school project for girls and boys that focused in class on the gender-specific differences in the perception of our environment

- Holding self-defence classes for women and girls

- The establishment of a neighbourhood women's group with the aim of taking the issue into the communities and of encouraging people to get involved in cases of violence.

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[4] Attacks against women and girls are the most frequent violation of human rights world-wide (cf. Heiliger 1997, Schmidt-Heuer 2000). According to estimates from the Bavarian Ministry of Social Affairs, 4 million women in the western German federal states are mistreated by their husbands every year, acts of violence are committed in three out of ten marriages (BMJFFG, 1987). Every year, about 45,000 women and children flee to German women's refuges (cf. Kavemann u.a. 2001). According to estimates, seven out of ten women have become the victims of sexual harassment or rape at least once in their lives (Brückner 2002). In most cases, the perpetrators are part of the victims' family circle or circle of acquaintances. This kind of violence happens in all social strata.

This group of five to eight women, who met regularly over the course of two-and-a-half years, was at the centre of the project and ran various campaigns over the years. They organised film screenings and readings at the *Kölibri* centre, designed and distributed information leaflets, stickers and posters all across the neighbourhood, set up information stalls and organised a resident survey. In this poll, men and women talked about their experience with violent situations, their helplessness, their fears and their coping strategies and they asked for behavioural strategies and for institutions that would be able to help them.

Highlight of these activities was a large exhibition in the nearest shopping precinct, the topics of which were female vengeance fantasies and violence against women. The exhibition received local press coverage on several occasions. According to our count, a total number of about 3.000 passers-by specifically looked at the exhibition. Over and over again, discussion groups formed on the street. Complete strangers who felt inspired or provoked by the images engaged in lively discussions with each other. The list of commentaries in our guest book grew by the hour and our information stall was always surrounded by people interested in the project. In order to be able to realise the exhibition, *Tarantula* had mobilised a group of 30 voluntary helpers, had agreed with the shopping centre's general manager that the exhibition pieces could be stored in the centre over night, had mobilised security personnel for mounting and dismounting the exhibits and had received help from the districts women's committee. The project team had indeed spun a net and brought together various kinds of people.

Across the duration of the project, *Tarantula* managed to reach a wide audience in the community and provided a good many opportunities for discussion and also food for thought. For a period of time, the beginning of a kind of climate change could be felt. Whether the project actually motivated neighbours to change their behaviour on concrete occasions, i.e. to get involved and show solidarity was never surveyed and can therefore not be assessed. As things go, at some stage the group dissolved and there was a lack of resources to ensure continuation on an institutional level. This is a different topic, however, and will not be pursued in the course of this paper.

4   Local crime prevention: competition or twin to community organising?

At the end of the 1990ies and more so after the horrible attack on the World Trade Centre security and 'public safety' became a number one theme in the media and as an and electoral issue. Freedom was played out against security – and seemed to loose. With its concern for crime prevention and the demand for more safety for women, Tarantula was positioned right in the centre of the wide stream of the crime-fighting discourse. Without having made a conscious connection, the project's approach was well compatible with concepts of local crime prevention that had been booming since the beginning of the 1990s. There is a considerable overlap of the principles and procedures set out in these concepts with the idea of social work and particularly with the community organising concept. Therefore, we must ask ourselves: Are law and order an issue for community work, too?

In their analysis of a federal project on "Crime Prevention and Fighting Violence in the Communal Social Space" that was carried out in nine different cities in 1996/96, Bohn et al set out the following principles for successful crime prevention (Bohn/Kreft/Segel 1997, 57):

- Lebenswelt ('life-world') orientation. This is marked by an orientation towards people's everyday lives, taking into account the entirety of their frames of reference and putting the services and activities on offer into the context of their immediate problems, wishes and interests; decentralisation, i.e. providing local opportunities for

counselling, leisure activities etc; integration in the sense of not excluding people and groups commonly seen as problematic; participation in the development of people's Lebenswelt, as multipliers at anti-violence training courses, for example; help in coping with everyday life through co-operation with parts of the youth welfare service and employment, social, health and town planning authorities.

- making use of existing resources through networking and co-operation,

- Empowerment: working with a focus on strengths, not deficits

- promoting self-responsibility, extending social competencies. Concentrates on peer groups in order to foster co-determination, the assumption of responsibility and appreciation

- Working in a gender-specific way. Proneness to violence and violent behaviour and its reasons, background and manifestations should be looked at in a gender-specific way. We should reflect on the differences in the way girls and boys use and conquer their environment. It is necessary to raise the professionals' sensibility for gender issues.

- Support during crises, Counteracting desolidarisation, promoting moral courage, establishing more confidence in people's actions by working with victims or through theatre workshops, for example

- developing PR activities

The central results of Bohn et al's research can be found in the following quote:

"Following the experience with the model regions for the programme, activities for communal violence prevention must be oriented towards the inhabitants' interests, must enable their participation and motivate them to put into practice activities for the prevention of violence [...]. In a neighbourhood where the inhabitants participate in the development of their living space and can translate into action a mutually responsible co-existence, violence and crime will be reduced. Consequently, the requirement for communal violence prevention is to give responsibility to the inhabitants, to establish their identification with their social space and to motivate them to develop their own living conditions and/or Lebenswelt" (ibid, 25).

Obvious similarities between community organising and local crime prevention schemes have also become apparent in research about various Berlin community projects. The Kiez, i.e. the part of an urban district that is perceived as a unity by its inhabitants, has become the focal point of community work measures. Behn et al introduce the term 'social prevention' (Behn/de Vries 1999 and Behn/Brandl/de Fries 2000) that is aimed at a general improvement of people's circumstances and includes work with specific target groups on concrete issues and therefore spans the first two of the three classic levels of crime prevention.[5]

Core elements of this preventive approach are the activation and involvement of the inhabitants, networking across authorities and the concentration of existing resources in the neighbourhood. In practice, this usually implies the founding of crime prevention panels,

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[5] The tertiary level comprises measures that set in after a criminal offence and that are meant to help avoid subsequent offences (Painke 2001, 414).

security partnerships and round tables that have mushroomed in all German federal states in recent years. In Lower Saxony alone there are 120 crime-preventing bodies whose activities receive legal backup through the Ministry for the Interior's security partnership decree. An important partner who is always involved is the police, of course, but the key to success is generally thought to be the "network-like co-operation of local participants" (Niedersächsiches Innenministerium 2003, 46) , the citizens are the first in line here.

In the USA, there has already been a long tradition of neighbourhood-focused, citizen-oriented crime control within the framework of neighbourhood safety programmes and community policing. Originally, this approach developed in the 60s and 70s following criticism of the police's centralistic structure, violent police action and widespread racism amongst police officers. There was a demand for "more citizen participation in the implementation of legal norms and (...) better possibilities for making the police accountable in the case of infringements" (Painke 2000, 65). Community policing was seen as a possibility to control police beats from the bottom up. Over the years, supporters and actors have changed, however, and many conservative advocates of a law-and-order policy have joined them.

Besides informal street patrols, the so-called 'beat meetings', open forums between the city government and its citizens that are usually chaired by local police, are an important element of community policing. "Get involved in your neighbourhood. Go to court when the riff-raff you're complaining about is being tried and let the judge know you want tougher penalties. Round up your district association, show presence. Get together neighborhood watches and patrol the streets".[6]

In Chicago, the city has employed additional personnel for the development of close ties to the community. In the neighbourhoods, city staff go from door to door, invite the inhabitants to the beat meetings and motivate them to participate actively in police projects, deliberately keeping an eye open for key people who can be trained. In order to create incentives, the city promises preferential treatment in administrative matters to citizens who participate actively (Klingenberg 2001). Although public safety is the actual issue, questions surrounding the quality of life in the districts in general are being discussed. These meetings seem to supersede other forms of neighbourly networks and compete with meetings of community groups and citizens' committees.

There are similar developments in this country. Fundamentally, security conferences bring together the same target groups as neighbourhood conferences within the framework of social neighbourhood development. And indeed, the connection with programmes of social city development is one that has been consciously made. The common denominator is an upgrading of living quarters and an improvement in inhabitants' living conditions. Enabling encounters and communication and involving inhabitants in planning and development measures is meant to strengthen their identification with their neighbourhood, social contacts and, in the end, social control, which is the be-all and the end-all of crime prevention.

Social control is understood to be all measures aimed at achieving compliant behaviour, increasing its scope and preventing and/or reducing deviant behaviour (Lamnek 1997, 216). In the case of the Tarantula project, too, the focus, amongst other things, was on motivating people to exert social control over their female neighbours' violent partners. This presents the

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[6] Chicago police officer, as quoted in Klingenberg, Le Monde Diplomatique 2/01.

danger, however, of promoting a development towards an increasing blurring of the boundaries between social and order policy and towards an establishment of "crime policy as meta policy" (Lindenberg 2001, 54).

5   Which security for whom?

These days, measures and programmes are developed less with a view to the needs of the people in the communities but rather under the auspice of law and order. Every measure of social or urban development, be it midnight basketball or the setting up of tenant's vegetable patches has become an element with crime-fighting tendencies[7] and therefore also receives public funding. Security goes down well with the general public, social neediness does not. In this context, 'security' does not refer to issues of social security like the being able to rely on good health insurance, humane living conditions in one's old age, affordable accommodation, education and perspectives for one's children or also healthy air, clean water and the diminution of military conflicts. "It is not exclusion from society and a growing loss of perspectives for the future that are the starting point for security conferences but rather the non-conformity of certain groups of people that get pushed into the foreground through the emphasis on a restricted security aspect " (Lindenberg 2001, 54). Legnaro puts the ubiquity of the topos of "urban insecurities" and the new strategies in crime policy into context with economical restructuring in post-Fordism, the discussion about a new urban underclass and the social and economic exclusion of whole groups of the population as well as the governmental techniques of a developed market economy (Legnaro 2000, 39). It is characteristic for the current development that deviant looks and behaviour, certain social and youth-cultural practices, like graffiti spraying, listening to music in public on 'ghetto blasters' or 'loitering' in the public space are being increasingly penalised by the police[8]. As manifestations of social disorder and amplified through phenomena like increasing amounts of garbage in the neighbourhoods or the dilapidation of buildings, they have an impact on the citizens' 'subjective feeling of security', it is often said. Although this is purely subjective and differs from person to person, does not underlie any transparent criteria and is of no legal relevance whatsoever, the "perceived security amongst the inhabitants (...) therefore plays an increasing role as a criterion political programmes and practical measures on a communal scale (...) are oriented towards" (Niedersächsisches Innenministerium 2002, 16). The dominant security discourse constructs an inherent connection between the 'disorder' phenomenon that has just been named and the increase in crime. As a consequence, a low-tolerance, uncompromising course of action is being propagated (Wilosn/Kelling 1996, 121).[9] The increased presence of security services and the police, the installation of surveillance cameras in train stations, on underground trains, in streets, in public spaces and the orders to move on directed at homeless people and junkies by the police must be seen in connection with this. Young migrants are affected particularly frequently. It is not poverty or drug addiction that are being fought here but the poor, the 'foreigners' and the consumers of illegal drugs. The punishing state seems to supersede the helping state. In a sweeping statement, the above-named social groups, i.e. the target groups and users of social work are being declared

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[7] Cf. the papers from the hearing of the GAL party in the Hamburg city parliament, Hamburg, 2000.
[8] This is particularly true for the city's so-called 'visiting cards', i.e. the city centre, train stations and other points of interest for tourists.
[9] Their paper provided important arguments for the German debate and for the legitimisation of the above-mentioned measures.

a security risk[10] that needs to be held in check by the police, vigilant citizens and environmental design.

A few spotlights to illustrate this point:

Scene A: A gathering of the business people's association in St. Pauli. The head of the local police station has been invited to give a speech. Although not normally known for his liberal attitude, he soon becomes an advocate for law and democracy in the face of the massive demands from the audience to drive "the riff-raff" (meaning begging poor and/or homeless people) from the high street and to resort to more drastic measures. With great regret, the people present take note of the fact that there is freedom of movement in Germany has been abolished. Instead, stories go round, told in a heroic manner, about how one already resorted to self-help by pouring a nice bit of water on the 'loiterer's' heads from above. Recommended as an example.

Scene B: Tenants' meeting in St. Pauli. Inhabitants of a block of flats are informed by the housing association about the installation of a doorman's office. Although in the future there will now be somebody who can keep a watch on who enters the house and when, many tenants do not think this sufficiant. They demand video cameras for the entrance, the lift, the staircases, the corridors. At this point in time at least, the representative from the housing association is unwilling to accommodate the wishes of the tenants.

Scene C: The leaflet Safe living quarters. A good neighbourhood recommends to aim, via the territoriality approach, for a zoning of the living environment "that creates barriers for strangers and facilitates social control for the inhabitants" (Niedersächsisches Innenmisnisterium 2002, 6). The commitment of the occupiers is seen as an important component of crime prevention and I read on: "A neighbourhood can only be 'well-fortified' and 'ready to defend itself' if the inhabitants know how to 'defend'. There is an increase in quality of life if you can trust your neighbours and rely on the fact that they will be just as vigilant in watching the goings-on in the neighbourhood as you are yourself" (ibid, 40).

Despite the inverted commas that probably indicate remaining scruples about the 'route of march', the message is clear and we have come full circle with the introductory quotation from San Francisco.

6   Crime policy rules

It is the aim of community-oriented crime prevention to turn citizens, associations and local institutions into active allies of government strategies and to shape and promote mechanisms of self-regulation.

"Community policing, crime prevention panels, Safer Cities programs, crime prevention through Environmental Design projects, Business Improvement Districts, Neighbourhood Watch, city management authorities - all of these overlapping and interconnecting activities combine to produce the beginnings of a new crime control establishment that draws upon the new criminologies of everyday life to guide its actions and mould its techniques" (Garland 2001, 17).

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[10] A collection of German newspaper articles and official papers can be found at www. lichter-der-grossstadt.de

These measures cross the border between public and private, not any more are they an exclusive prerogative of professionals and specific state-run institutions; the concept of crime prevention has been extended. The measures stand for a de-centralisation of the state bodies responsible but also of the political and criminological rationality they are based on. The concept of the punishing state with its strategies of locking away and excluding people is being supplemented by continuous, low-threshold measures for the development of social control mechanisms within neighbourhoods and communities which include promoting the assumption of police behaviour by the people in order "to encourage communities to police themselves" (ibid).

These new strategies are part of a significant change in society's reaction to crime. In the following, I would like to give an outline of some of the changes that, in my opinion, are relevant for the assessment of the general conditions and the possibilities for action of a kind of community work that deals with issues of local crime prevention or has been challenged by the current development to position itself with regard to it.

The current mechanisms of crime control are mainly determined by two aspects: the specific social organisation of late modernity and the socially conservative policies that are market-economy oriented. The new kind of crime control provides arguments for the legitimisation of a policy that is directed against the welfare state and for the portrayal of the poorer strata of the population as an incapable underclass. There is a coexistence a of law-and-order policy and preventive crime-fighting approaches, a co-existence of formal control through state institutions and informal, social control that is grounded in the everyday activities of civil society. This reflects the public's ambivalence. The awareness for these problems has not just been conjured up by the media, nor can it be put down to political rhetoric. It is also rooted in people's experience from their daily lives. The taking over of strategies like community policing in the shape of 'citizen-friendly police work' (Polizei Hamburg 1997, 1-3) are dependent on the public's support and on the dissemination of preventive and controlling ways of behaviour. The changing cultural attitudes are of great importance for the developments in crime policy. While historically the period between 1890 and 1970 is characterised by a process of rationalisation and civilisation in the penal system, seemingly anti-modern concepts of retaliation and expressive gestures of punishment have been making a reappearance as of late.[11] These changes in the ways of crime control must be analysed within the framework of societal restructuring processes and of the institutions that are responsible for the production of order. At present, the field of crime control is being reconfigured as a result of political and administrative decisions, which, for their part, are based on a new structure of social relations and cultural attitudes.

The decline of the ideal of rehabilitation and the renaissance of the punishing state are indicative of a profound change in this field. The trust in progress in the field of crime prevention and in a rational penal justice system, in the values of humaneness, dignity and compassion for the less fortunate members of society have lost their meaning. Independently of fluctuations in the actual crime statistics, the fear of crime has increased strongly and is

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[11] Even if the situation in Germany still is far removed from that in the USA, there are clear tendencies in that direction like, for example, the reintroduction of closed institutions for young offenders, cutbacks in pedagogical measures for inmates, the demonstrative dismantling of syringe machines in prisons, the proposition to reduce the age of criminal responsibility or the reduction of day leave. Hamburg's senator for justice Kusch's informational visit of sheriff Arpaio in Arizona, who is known for particularly tough measures for prisoners, indicates the raised interest in punishing instead of rehabilitating approaches in the justice system.

being treated as a problem in its own right. Consequently, there are debates about measures that do not reduce the crime rate but the fear of crime. Criminal offences are increasingly dramatised and demands for protection through the state are taking the place of the protection of the public from the state. Concerns about a violation of civil rights seem to be less grave than those about an early release of criminals, for example. Public safety has become an important electoral issue, while an increasing similarity in the demands and concepts of the different political parties can be observed. The 'voice of the people' is gaining new authority while facts and expert opinions lose credit in the public debate, unless they support the populist rhetoric. The prison, an institution that had fallen into disrepute in the 1970s, is mostly seen as an indispensable pillar of society today. Through risk management techniques, monitoring systems and other measures for increasing efficiency and cost reduction, economical thinking is making its entry into crime control. What used to be the state's tasks are being passed on to private security firms and thus commercialised.

In the post-war period, the reasons for criminality were seen to be individual deviancy and individual inability due to social inequality, neediness and being disadvantaged. Hence, the solution was seen to lie in approaches towards individual correction, support for families and improvements in the educational sector and on the job market and corresponded to the rationality of the welfare state.

Today, criminal actions appear to result from a lack in control of rationally behaving actors. Dominating themes are social control, situational control and self-control. The image of man is characterised by the assumption that all individuals have a tendency for anti-social, criminal behaviour and that its realisation depends on opportunities and control through the family, neighbourhood or the state. Following this logic, the victim, too, becomes somebody who creates opportunities for criminal behaviour. Criminal offences are seen as an inevitable part of modern societies and offenders as normal people, as rational-choice actors who weigh up the costs and benefits of their actions. Societal backgrounds and biographic factors hardly matter anymore. The actors are seen to be acting in a self-responsible manner and hence can be attributed the blame for their actions. The focus has shifted from the offender to the reduction of criminogenic situations. These strategies can be called 'post-social' and 'symptom managerial' (Ziegler 2001, 27).

The strategies of crime control and the accompanying concepts that have just been described are not applied because it is indisputable that they can solve the problems at hand but rather because they articulate and deal with problems in a way that fits in with the dominant culture and underlying power structures. The above-mentioned developments are not homogeneous, some of them are even contradictory. They proceed on different levels and they are interconnected with the restructuring of further dimensions on a social and economic scale and with the emergence of a new political reality of neo-liberal character.

7   Govern yourself
The last few years have seen the rise of governmentality studies in the Anglo-American area. Based on Foucault's concept of governmentality, they can, in my opinion, provide important impulses and theoretical tools for the categorisation and analysis of the above-mentioned processes and practices (cf. Burchell et al.1991, Barryet al..1996, Cruikshank 1999, Dean 1998/1999, Garland 1997/ 2001, 0'Malley 1992, Miller/Rose 1994, Rose 1999/ 2000). In this country, too, there has been an increase in publications and debates on the approach (cf. Bröckling u.a. 2000, Honneth u.a 2003, Krasmann 1999, Lemke 1997, Ziegler 2001).

At the centre of Foucault's concept of governmentality is the notion of government, which he draws up as the mutual constitution of power techniques and forms of knowledge. According to him, power techniques cannot be analysed without referring to the political rationality that governs them. The concept includes far more than just the political form of government. It takes up earlier meanings of the term like self-control, heading the family, running the household, guiding the soul. 'Government' therefore also relates to different fields and forms of action that are aimed at guiding and controlling individuals and collectives and that contain techniques of both external governance and self-government. It is also described as the 'conduct of conducts'. This refers to a versatile balance between techniques of exerting pressure and processes of self constitution. In this way, the interconnection between government and self techniques, between power and subject, comes into view. Power relations are not external to the subjects. The subjects are permeated by them, actively develop them and are therefore part of these relations. In his study on liberal and neo-liberal political reality, Foucault points out how the "ability for self regulation of individuals and groups is tied up with economic profit maximisation and sociopolitical aims" (Lemke 1997, 9). In neo-liberalism, the social and the economic component are amalgamated; the border that used to exist between them is dissolved. The neo-liberal state privatises and individualises the risks of societal upheavals. This does not mean the end of the social component but rather a change in its topography. The crisis of Keynesianism and the demolition of the 'welfare state' do not mean a return to early liberal policy modes but the re-coding of the security policy that facilitates the development of interventionist techniques that govern and guide individuals without being responsible for them. "Neo-liberalism encourages individuals to give their lives a specific entrepreneurial form" (ibid, 253-254). The state increasingly acts as a 'government from a distance'. The practices of government are being relayed to actors outside the traditional apparatus of the state, which means that the role of not state-run, 'autonomous' social actors – individuals as well as various organisations – is being revalued. This does not constitute a relinquishment of power by the state but is characteristic of neo-liberal governmentality.

Neo-liberal governments work with the individuals' freedom of action and agencies and indirect means of surveillance and regulation of those actions. On the one hand, contracts are made, partnerships negotiated and entered into, the ability to act, options and the freedom of individuals and associations is being promoted by means like empowerment, for example. On the other hand, norms and standards are set up and benchmarking and quality controls are introduced in order to measure and assess forms of behaviour. The abilities and resources of individuals, associations, movements and groups are being operationalised. Advanced liberal practices are reflexive in the sense that, at first, they advertise the genuine human ability to act for oneself, to 'govern' oneself, only to then use this ability in order to govern. "Where the political and cultural movements sought a utopian vision of the emancipated self, however, the neo-liberal critiques of the welfare state sought to redeploy the 'free subject' as a technical instrument in the achievement of governmental purposes and objectives" (Dean 1999, 155). Foucault's approach enables us to analyse the field of crime control as a field of power relations and of subjectivations. The new economic rationality generates new forms of subjectivation that are taken on by individuals and organisations, like, for example, 'homo prudens', the security-conscious, crime-preventing subject.

We can observe a responsibilisation of individuals, families and certain groups of the population that are given the responsibility for dealing with risks like illness, unemployment, poverty in old age or poor school-leaving certificates. The responsibility for risk minimisation

becomes part of the choices that households, individuals and communities have to make as consumers, clients and users of services. O'Malley calls this combination of risk techniques with contemporary forms of government 'new Prudentialism' (1992). In contrast to 19th-century Prudentialism, however, the areas of risk management have now multiplied. The risks present a continuum rather than a rupture, they never disappear. The population disintegrates into risk-prone groups, low-risk and high-risk groups. The categories for high-risk groups correspond to certain categorisations according to social class. In other words, "the vocabulary of risk might be better be thought of as reinscribing and recoding earlier languages of stratification, disadvantages and marginalization" (ibid, 167).

A rift has emerged between active citizens, i.e. those citizens who are able to regulate their own risks, and disadvantaged groups who constitute the risk or are strongly risk-prone. Following this way of thinking, victims have failed to manage their own risk as an individual or as a neighbourhood. They therefore need empowerment, are meant to form support groups, articulate their political voice, reconquer dangerous places, make their neighbourhoods safer through surveillance cameras and neighbourhood watch schemes. 'Community' is a key term within this development. Certain groups are being empowered or enter into partnerships with professionals, bureaucrats or service providers. They are reminded to manage their own communities as, for example, gay men, ethnic groups, consumers of drugs or victims of domestic violence. For professionals like social workers, teachers and doctors, new educational, preventive and assessment functions have arisen. Instead of a unified welfare state, we are faced with a succession of fragmented and discontinuous institutions that deal with certain target groups. They work at transforming risk groups into active citizens who manage themselves rationally. Whoever denies their co-operation must prepare for sanctions on the part of the activating state, as the support for the individual is connected to clear demands for the assumption of certain ways of behaviour. All in all, it can be said that from the perspective of governmentality studies, government takes place through both freedom practices and supremacy, both subjugation and subjectivation and through both coercion and consensus.

8   Community work – it's what you make it

The conditions for community work have changed over the last thirty years. Approaches and principles that used to be progressive have been embedded in neo-liberal strategies and are losing their emancipative substance. Community work is not intrinsically good, progressive and worth emulating. With its credo of activation and participation, it could – in my view – be regarded as a neo-liberal governmentality technique that mediates between the subjective level of individuals in their Lebenswelt and the government objectives within the framework of an activating state.

Nevertheless I still support the principle of community work and I consider it essential for social work.

With regard to gender-specific anti-violence work, I consider the community work approach as a whole as innovative and productive. Strengthening women in the community through a network of neighbours and professionals who are empowered and show solidarity is an important prerequisite for giving women affected by violence the courage to stand up against their abusers. Only when they feel relatively protected and safe will they have the courage to make use of the new legal possibilities of, for example, the law for the protection from

violence.[12] I think that it is intolerable for women and children to have to flee their home for fear of their partner or father instead of being able to keep their flat, social contacts and the resources connected with it. So as not to get into the dangerous grounds of repressive security policies and to account for the changed political conditions and rationalities, I would finally like to phrase the following requirements for community work:

1. If it is true that all areas of society are subsumed increasingly under the primate of the profit logic and that the propagation of the citizens' voluntary commitment and self-responsibility is intended to compensate for the dismantling of benefits and services from the welfare state, then the theory and practice of community work will have to be reflected on in a much more critical way than is the case at present. The fact that other disciplines are taking on principles and elements of community work can be interpreted as a success story. On the other hand, it can also be proof of my above-mentioned hypothesis.
It would be the aim of the above-mentioned reflection to extend the professional scope of action and thinking, so as not to become an unwitting part of the neo-liberal restructuring programme. It is about enabling a certain form of criticism that breaks up the taking for granted of terms and methods like 'activation', 'self-responsibility', 'participation' or 'social control'. This way, a space could open up that would enable us to think about how things could be done differently, to show up the points where it would be necessary to contradict and to change and to point out the difficulties in connection with this. We are therefore dealing with the attempt to gain more clarity about the conditions we think and act in in community work today. When the promotion of self-responsibility and the activation of the inhabitants of disadvantaged living quarters become standard phrases in academic texts, in term papers and dissertations and when the way they are phrased implies that the concentration of poor people is the problem and not poverty itself, then the stigmatisation of its own client-base and the legitimisation of the lean and punishing state is being taken on by academia itself. However: structural changes in societal fields are slow to progress. They are not the consequence of inevitable or mystic processes but the result of iterative actions of the respective actors of a certain field. "A new configuration does not finally and fully emerge until it is formed in the minds and habits of those who work this system" (Garland 2001, 25). This is where the influence of teaching and research comes in, and with it a particular responsibility.

2. Which practices and discourses are successful is a matter that has always been fought over and that depends on societal and political power relations. Community work should position itself clearly, which means, as Oelschlägel has repeatedly demanded, it must become political. In particular, there is a need to fight for the basic principle of a society that shows solidarity and that guarantees social rights, and to strive for equal opportunities for its members, not only culturally but also on a material scale. Foucault's term of the 'conduct of conducts' implies that the person who is being governed is acting at the

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[12] The law for the protection from violence that was passed in 2002 enables endangered women to temporarily ban their violent partners from the flat and it facilitates the procedure for the surrender of the joint flat (cf. Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend. 2002).

same time. His or her actions are not completely observable to the rulers and thus also contain a momentum of freedom. Power is not understood as a static concept but as a dynamic power play. Therefore there is no power without the potential for disobedience or upheaval (Focault 1994, 92).

3. It is necessary to take a stand against the dominance of the security discourse and the law-and-order policy that criminalises and/or proclaims as 'dangerous classes' whole target groups of social work. There should not be any osmotic processes between social and police work. I consider the extraposition of welfare work from the jurisdiction of the police one of the most important achievements of the Enlightenment. On the other hand, social work should not leave the concept of security to domestic policy or the judiciary. It must not ignore people's need for security with regard to crime policy and also in a wider sense. The challenge for social work is to deal with topics like domestic violence without promoting repressive, discriminating practices.

4. If social work wants to contribute to the reduction of domestic violence against women through the community organising approach, it will have to define its notion of 'security' and its attitude towards interventions into privacy. In times of security directives, legalised bugging operations, increased video surveillance and the installation of doormen's offices in blocks of flats, demands for involvement in incidents within the domestic sphere remain ambivalent.

With all of these objections and prerequisites I do not intend to provide new arguments for the justification of the traditional taboo surrounding violence in the private domain. I am in favour of taking up the security issue without taking on its shortcomings; of standing up for strengthening the significance of social work in its own right, for sharpening its professional profile and for establishing a clear delimitation with regard to criminal policy.

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