

small or speculative, suffices to justify virtually any increase in risk for criminal offenders” (196).

In an era in which crime in general, and violent crime in particular, has been falling, more people are incarcerated for longer sentences, in harsher conditions, with less likelihood of being paroled and greater likelihood of being barred from exercising their civil rights, as well as from college loans and public housing. Prisons have in short become “waste management systems,” overcrowded, boring, unsafe, unhygienic and with little regard to the people incapacitated through them. And that is just the way they are meant to be. After two hundred years of humanitarian reforms of the penal system, populist politics have turned prisons into holding pens, especially for ethnic minority males. These populist politics show a weariness of “experts” who are seen to “privilege the criminal” and of a judicial system “unwilling to protect the people,” have stressed a “simple system of rules” that eliminate the possibility of anyone exercising their discretion in managing criminals. The success of this new is measured not in terms of recidivism rates, deterrence of crime, or production of any other social good, but (in keeping with the logics of the new penology) in terms of the efficiency of the system in removing people from the streets, or, in the words of California governor George Deukmejian, removing “an additional 52,000 convicted felons from neighbourhoods to send them to state prison” (158). This populist logic has been embraced by governors, presidents, lawmakers and courts, who have implemented 3-strikes laws, zero tolerance, an incarceration binge and a general vulnerability of all sectors of society to a crime control mentality that leaves no room for more measured perspectives on the characteristics of security. And this is what Simon deplores in this book, pleading for a return of another politics, another style of family and school life, a new social movement “ready to break the hold of crime on American governance” (282).

Governing through crime does not focus on the lives of the poor, huddled masses either within the penal system or without it that fears the criminal – this he has done previously. In fact, the narratives offered in this book are not altogether new or surprising, but Simon has put together an unremitting wealth of detail concerning institutional, cultural and private life-world changes. Some of the editing has been inattentive (quite a few references are missing from the bibliography), sometimes the tone is a little moralising, some of the arguments could have benefited from more pith, but all in all this is a fascinating perspective on the new American order. **Rebecca Pates**

### **Jennifer Wood/Clifford Shearing: Imagining Security. Col-lompton, UK: Willan Publishing 2007.**

“*How should security be governed at the beginning of the twenty-first century?*” (1) This is the question that Jennifer Wood and Clifford Shearing seek to answer in *Imagining Security*. They thus follow an explicitly political agenda, built on an analysis that relies on an account of ‘nodal governance’ – a concept that the authors have developed over recent years. Although much of what they present does not seem to be especially new or even groundbreaking at first sight, and although there is good reason to criticize several inconsistencies in the structure of their argument, the application of a ‘nodal governance perspective’ presents a fresh and surprisingly viable approach to analyzing governance processes in ways that take the empirical role of state agencies in governance

seriously, while avoiding methodological state-centricism. Also, it leads to some thought-provoking, albeit controversial proposals regarding the governance of security, mainly because it takes the authors' own assumptions seriously and does not rely on state authorities to ensure democratic mechanisms in the field of production of security.

In the first three chapters, the authors develop the concept of 'nodal governance' and apply this perspective in a review of literature in different fields of security discourses and security governance. The last two chapters consist of "*an explicitly normative discussion of how a nodal governance perspective might inform efforts to enhance the power of weak actors [...] in reshaping the security field towards possibly new and different ends, both in instrumental and normative terms*" (96). Thus the analytical first half of the book serves as the basis for the development of the normative program.

In developing their concept of 'nodal governance', Wood and Shearing begin from the observation that, especially in the field of security, it is not only state authorities but a wide array of different non-state actors that engage in the governance of security, be it at the local, national or international level (3).

However, Wood and Shearing are skeptical of accounts which see this tendency towards a privatization of security issues as a pure effect of a neoliberal project that follows a program of 'responsibilization' (David Garland) and 'ruling at a distance' (Bruno Latour), and within which 'the state' delegates the 'rowing' (i.e., the realization of certain tasks) but stays with the 'steering' competences (i.e. the formulation of political programs); rather, they see processes of mutual 'enrolment,' in which state and non-state actors are structurally equal in principle. "*Today, ways of imagining and realizing security governance in the business sector as well as the 'third sector' (e.g. community groupings, non-governmental organizations) shape and influence the thinking of state institutions and vice versa. This is the essence of nodal governance.*" (13) Thus, they claim, the picture of security from a nodal governance account is more ambiguous than a perspective informed by a critical account of neoliberalism would suggest: "*What one has in practice is not a single model of governance, but a complex of hybrid arrangements and practices in which different mentalities of governance as well as very different sets of institutional arrangements coexist*" (21).

The idea of enrolment goes back to a concept Wood and Shearing borrow from Bruno Latour: an actor is powerful only to the degree to which she is able to enlist others in order to carry out her projects.<sup>1</sup> This is possible only by alignment and persuasion (which might include the use of pressure or force, but cannot be built exclusively on coercion nor is coercion a necessary component), and entails a process of 'translation': while carrying out their tasks, the enrolled actors 'translate' their part in the governance project according to their own goals and logics of operation – which, more likely than not, changes the nature of the whole process. Governance, from this perspective, becomes the art of alignment. Powerful actors manage to impose their logics onto those they enroll, and/or they manage to enroll a large number of others, thus forming governing nodes: "*Nodes are sites of knowledge, capacity and resources that function as governance auspices or providers. These sites are often institutional (expressed in an organizational form), but can also be located within informal groupings*" (27).

1 Latour, B. (1986) The powers of association. In: Law, J. (ed.), Power, action, and belief. A new sociology of knowledge? London: Routledge.

The strength of the nodal governance perspective lies in this combination of a broad but clear concept of governance, on the one hand, and a conceptual openness that avoids *a priori* assumptions about where governing nodes are to be found, on the other hand. It easily avoids methodological state-centricism, and neither does it assume *a priori* that certain other forces (money/the business sector) are the ‘real powers’ behind the scene, ruling the world. Rather, it remains an empirical question where governing nodes lie and who or which groups are part of them and dominate them.

Following this conceptual outline (backed up by some empirical examples), the reader might expect an application of the approach. This expectation is only partially fulfilled in the rest of the book. The second chapter concentrates on a classical discourse analysis of various waves of thinking in policing at the level of communities. The authors show that different waves of thinking in the field of policing have influenced each other and, over time, have been combined in several ways. Wood and Shearing then go on to jump to another plane: that of *practices* of nodal governance. Here, they don’t make their analysis explicit, but simply claim (as those working with a ‘governmentality approach’ generally do) that what they have shown for “waves of thinking” (i.e. at the level of thought, or concepts) translates into actual governing arrangements and practices. More exactly, the authors state that throughout all of these waves, at least since the middle of the twentieth century, police agencies have attempted to establish partnerships with others – be it with community groups, individual residents, other public authorities or private for-profit actors – and that the governance of security increasingly has become a field of nodal governance, while police have made sure to remain the central player. A more detailed description of such nodal arrangements would have strengthened the argument considerably.

Another field of security discourses that, according to the authors, have a strong nodal governance character and have been heavily influenced by non-state actors (both non-profit and business-oriented) are human security approaches. “A *human security approach seeks to decentre the state as referent object while examining security threats that arise from nodes and networks of people and activities that defy traditional state boundaries. From this standpoint, coercive capacity exercised by or on behalf of states is simply one among a plethora of capacities required in securing people.*” (63–64)

Departing from this assumption, an examination of human security discourses (and governing nodes and networks arranged through and around such approaches) makes perfect sense in the context of a nodal governance account. Unfortunately, in dealing with this the authors become somewhat inconsistent with regard to their first object of examination, community security. While with respect to the latter they concentrate on *discourses* and *mentalities* of governing crime and (almost casually) the governing nodes and networks that emerge out of that, when it comes to human security the authors repeatedly leave this plane and talk about what they perceive as the actual threats to human security. These threats, the argument goes, arise from actors that are organized in networks and de-centered nodes have thus a polycentric, network-like structure. Wood and Shearing refer here to very different threats, from terrorist networks over Kaldor’s ‘new wars,’ to the private provision of military services, human rights violations in Argentina and post-Apartheid South Africa, and economic want (while in the context of community policing it seems to be taken for granted that the imagined threats are more or less of the same nature for all waves of policing discourses). Accordingly, they describe reactions and strategies that aim at these diverse perceptions of human security threats. This is logical considering the broadened meaning of ‘security’ in human security discourses, but it also leaves the impression that the choice of subjects that are discussed here is quite arbitrary.

rary. A good example is in the chapter on community security, where the nodal governance account is applied in a fairly superficial way, without taking full advantage of its conceptual strengths. Rather, the accounts on human security seem primarily to serve the purpose of proving that the heterogeneous and decentralized security threats call for polycentric governance structures that need not necessarily be dominated, or even exclusively carried out, by actors of the international state system. The examples suggest that local knowledge as well as political, democratically organized participation of citizen groups are an adequate and at the same time effective means of dealing with issues of crime and (in-)security.

The basic assumption is therefore that nodal, polycentric governance arrangements carry the potential for new solutions to old problems of imbalance in power relations and representations, and that a nodal account of governance helps to better detect ways and strategies for weak actors who want to influence and shape governance practices. Wood and Shearing can make this assumption precisely because they have a more optimistic view on de-centered governance and ruling-at-a-distance than many critics of so-called neoliberal governance strategies: At least theoretically, their conception of power (as based on enrolment) and governance (as polycentric and concentrated in nodes) allows weak non-state actors to assume an active role in governing security and shaping policies in this field. This becomes especially clear when they talk about their research on Community Peace Centres in South Africa – community groups that engage in security issues: *“As the police have sought to enrol the Peace Committees, the latter have, in turn, used their power to enrol the police in furtherance of their governance objectives. [...] The Community Peace Centre project is not simply a neo-liberal partnership where the police are ‘responsibilizing’ community members to do their bidding”* (102 f.).

Building heavily on the work of John Braithwaite and complementing this with examples from their own empirical research, Wood and Shearing go on to propose a number of principles which might be summed up as the idea that ‘weak actors’ should concentrate on their abilities and assets (local or otherwise specific knowledge, manpower, persuasive power) and organize themselves in existing nodes of governance or – even better – build their own nodes. Thus, according to Wood and Shearing, they gain bargaining power, are able to set agendas, and form policies, i.e. to take a ‘steering’ position.

The question of how weak actors gain greater bargaining power has to be separated from the question of how this bargaining, or the attempts to influence governance projects, is to be regulated in a way that assures compliance with certain ‘democratic values’ (which the authors take for granted as something most people agree on, without specifying further the contents of such values). In contrast to many writers concerned with issues of social justice and political equality, Wood and Shearing do not blindly confide in ‘the state’ as the appropriate instance to assure such democratic rules. They do not postulate *a priori* *“that the best or exclusive way to respond to the problems we have identified is to create better Leviathans either at state or supra-state levels [...] there may well be other, and perhaps better, ways of creating both effective and democratic governance”* (99).

Accordingly, their answer to the problem of ‘governing governance’ rests in a hybrid mix of checks and balances (115). In chapter 5, they present some possible strategies, which they take from control mechanisms in public and private policing, and show that a traditional perspective limited to questions of (legal and political) accountability fails to see a whole range of other technologies of regulating governance, including licensing (both in the commercial sense and in the sense of a political ‘branding,’ as done in human rights or ecological campaigns), contracts, rules for insurance markets and self-

governance, generally based on a ‘marketization’ of security goods, which needs to be shaped in a way that that these markets produce socially just results. If this is successful, it presents what Wood and Shearing call “smart regulation” (136) and which they see happening in several fields where actors from the ‘third sector’ such as human rights activists, ecological non-profit-organizations or poor neighborhood groups manage (via shaping public discourses) to shape the behavior of corporations or public administrations.

In other words: the authors, like so many others, pin their hopes on actors based in civil society. In their view, non-state nodes “*possess or have the potential to possess the requisite knowledge, capacities and resources to monitor, and even to create, normative standards that guide them in their mix of governance functions. The virtue of the global civil society perspective, which we see in action with human rights NGOs, is its emphasis on local actors and their situated knowledge of regulatory nodes and networks. In simple terms, what seems to matter in the design of optimal regimes for the governance of governance is the right mix of ‘upwards’, ‘downwards’ and ‘horizontal’ processes (Scott 2000) that links up the activities of state and non-state nodes in ways that compensate for the weaknesses of each process on its own (see Goodin 2003<sup>2</sup>)*” (142).

The *really* interesting point would be: what would these governance designs look like? From what the authors have presented, it is clear that the answer to this question always has to be tailor-made to a specific situation. Wood and Shearing give some examples, or tentative answers, and generally demand that “appropriately deliberative structures” be implemented to allow for equitable and open articulation of normative goals. This is the logical consequence of the approach, but unsatisfying for the reader. The problem lies in the clash of the nodal governance perspective and the global analyzes of security discourses Wood and Shearing present: the very account of nodal governance argues that it doesn’t make sense to draw global pictures and look for global solutions. If they had followed their own thinking in this point, Wood and Shearing would have stuck to some concrete examples, analyzing them in detail and taking lessons from it, and would not have tried to draw the big picture – developing the argument in this way may very likely have served their purpose better than the sometimes arbitrary looking accounts on human security and communal policing discourses they give in ‘Imagining Security,’ which do not make full use of the potential the nodal perspective on governance processes provides. **Anne Dölemeyer**

2 Goodin, R.E. (2003) Democratic accountability: the distinctiveness of the third sector. In: European Journal of Sociology 44(3): 359–396.