



## Medieval Crime and Social Control (Medieval Cultures)

By Barbara A. Hanawalt

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Crime is a matter of interpretation, and never was this truer than in the Middle Ages, when societies faced with new ideas and pressures were continually forced to rethink what a crime was -- and what was a crime. This collection undertakes a thorough exploration of shifting definitions of crime and changing attitudes toward social control in medieval Europe.

These essays reveal how various forces in medieval society interacted and competed in interpreting and influencing mechanisms for social control. Drawing on a wide range of historical and literary sources -- legal treatises, court cases, statutes, poems, romances, and comic tales -- the contributors consider topics including fear of crime, rape and violence against women, revenge and condemnations of crime, learned dispute about crime and social control, and legal and political struggles over hunting rights.

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#### **About the Author**

Barbara Hanawalt is Professor of History at the University of Minnesota. She is the author of *The Ties That Bound: Peasant Families in Medieval England* and *Crime and Conflict in English Communities, 1300-1348*.

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David Wallace is the Judith Rodin Professor of English Literature at the University of Pennsylvania. His books include *Chaucerian Polity: Absolutist Lineages and Associational Forms in England and Italy* (1997); *Giovanni Boccaccio, Decameron* (1991); *Chaucer and the early writings of Boccaccio* (1985); *Bodies and Disciplines: Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England* (ed. with Barbara A Hanawalt).

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