



The Origins of Criminology: A Reader

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The Origins of Criminology: A Reader is a collection of nineteenth-century texts from the key originators of the practice of criminology – selected, introduced, and with commentaries by the leading scholar in this area, Nicole Rafter.

This book presents criminology as a unique field of study that took root in a context in which urbanization, immigration, and industrialization changed the class structure of Western nations. As relatively homogenous communities became more sharply divided and aware of a bottom-most group, the 'dangerous classes', a new segment of the middle class emerged: professionals involved in the work of social control. Tracing the intellectual origins of criminology to physiognomy, phrenology, and evolutionary theories, this book demonstrates criminology's background in new attitudes toward science and the development of scientific methodologies applicable to social and mental phenomena. Through an expert selection of original texts, it traces the emergence of 'criminology' as a new field purporting to produce scientific knowledge about crime and criminals.

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