



London's Criminal Underworlds, c. 1720 - c. 1930: A Social and Cultural History

Heather Shore

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This book offers an original analysis of the concept of the criminal underworld, breaking new ground with a sustained exploration of the idea of the underworld from the early eighteenth century. The evolution of print culture, the development of policing and law enforcement strategies, the relationships between overlapping networks, and considerations of urban space and territory, inform a series of chapters drawing on concerns about crime in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The core of the book consists of three detailed case studies that present reconstructions of historical criminal lives. These are complimented by chapters that draw on a broad range of primary source materials to focus on themes such as robbery, pickpocketing, swindling, street crime, youth gangs and gangsters. This book explores the 'criminal underworld' as both a social and cultural concept, and considers the evolving narrative of the underworld alongside the lives of plebeian and working-class Londoners who encountered the criminal justice system as offenders, victims and witnesses.

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