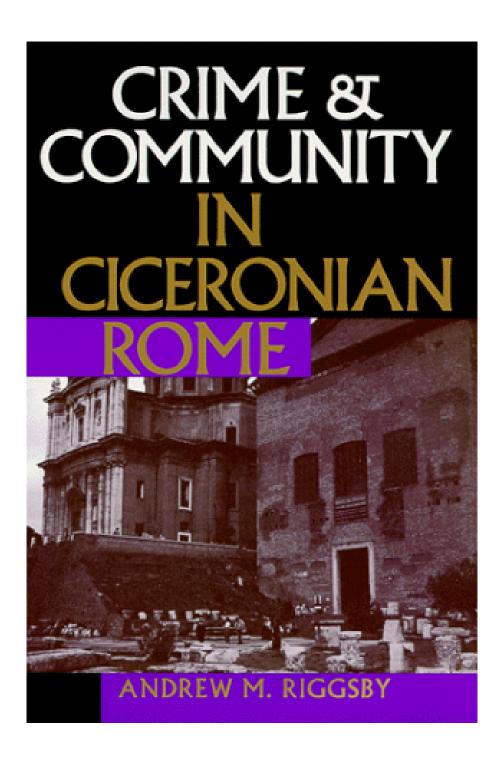


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Review

"This is an extraordinary work of scholarship.... By examining in detail the arena where general discussions about 'crime' would be most likely to occur, Riggsby can make a strong argument that the general concept of 'crime,' so frequently discussed in our own society, is simply insignificant in Cicero's world. This is a new, penetrating, and fundamental insight for our understanding of Roman society in this period." (Christopher P. Craig, author of Form and Argument in Cicero's Speeches)

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From the Back Cover

In the late Roman Republic, acts of wrongdoing against individuals were prosecuted in private courts, while the iudicia publica (literally "public courts") tried cases that involved harm to the community as a whole. In this book, Andrew M. Riggsby thoroughly investigates the types of cases heard by the public courts to offer a provocative new understanding of what has been described as "crime" in the Roman Republic and to illuminate the inherently political nature of the Roman public courts.

Through the lens of Cicero's forensic oratory, Riggsby examines the four major public offenses: ambitus (bribery of the electorate), de sicariis et veneficiis (murder), vis (riot), and repetundae (extortion by provincial administrators). He persuasively argues that each of these offenses involves a violation of the proper relations between the state and the people, as interpreted by orators and juries. He concludes that in the late Roman Republic the only crimes were political crimes.

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