

## A Renaissance of Violence

Based on a close examination of more than 700 homicide trials, *A Renaissance of Violence* exposes the deep social instability at the core of the early modern states of North Italy. Following a series of crises in the early seventeenth century, interpersonal violence in the region grew to frightening levels, despite the efforts of courts and governments to reduce social conflict. In this detailed study of violence in early modern Europe, Colin Rose shows how major crises, such as the plague of 1630, reduced the strength of social bonds among both elite and ordinary Italians. As a result, incidents of homicidal violence exploded – in small rural communities, in the crowded urban center and within tightly knit families. Combining statistical analysis and close reading of homicide patterns, Rose demonstrates how the social contexts of violence, as much as the growth of state power, can contribute to explaining how and why interpersonal violence grew so rapidly in North Italy in the seventeenth century.

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# A Renaissance of Violence

## *Homicide in Early Modern Italy*

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Colin Rose

Brock University



Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-49806-7 — A Renaissance of Violence  
Colin Rose  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,  
New Delhi – 110025, India  
79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108498067](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108498067)  
DOI: 10.1017/9781108627948

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First published 2019

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd. Padstow Cornwall

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

ISBN 978-1-108-49806-7 Hardback

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To Sarah Blanshei, *Maestra in Archivio*

Pieter Spierenburg, whose influence on my work is deep and abiding, unfortunately passed away during the production of this work. Though I met him only once, I will remember his kindness to me as a graduate student challenging his research. I regret that he will not be able to review this book. I hope it can stand as a testament to his foundational research into the problems of early modern violence, upon which a large community of scholars has depended for many years.

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## Acknowledgments

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I would like to thank the many people who aided and abetted the writing of this book, from its beginnings as my PhD dissertation at the University of Toronto through to its present form.

The research for this project was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation via a Distinguished Achievement Award to Edward Muir in 2010. Both the University of Toronto and Brock University contributed money for trips to the archives. I am grateful for the support of these organizations.

While working in the very pleasant archives in Bologna, I was privileged to work with the archivists and staff of the *Archivio di Stato di Bologna* and the *Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio*. Many thanks in particular to Giancarlo and Laborio at the ASBo. Long may North Americans receive such kind welcomes in your care. Grazie anche a Prof. Giancarlo Angelozzi.

Thanks indeed to my colleagues at Brock University for welcoming me to faculty life and providing mentorship and advice as I have begun my teaching career.

Thanks to the community of *bognisti* whom I have encountered along the way, and who have always been generous with ideas and friendship.

Many, many thanks to Dr. Edward Muir and Dr. Regina Schwartz, along with the entire membership of the Academy for the Advanced Study of the Renaissance, 2014 edition, for their friendship, generosity and critical readings of various stages of this work.

To many colleagues and friends at the University of Toronto, especially fellow Italianists Vanessa McCarthy and John Christopoulos, and dissertation committee members Paul Cohen and Mark Meyerson, and my “Internal External” examiner Ken Bartlett: thank you all for supporting this project at an early phase.

Thanks to the scholars at the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies in Toronto, especially Amyrose McCue-Gill and Natalie Oeltjen, for providing a welcome home away from home to this day.