

“Unearthing an extraordinary and sometimes riveting visual and material archive, Anuradha Gobin leads readers through the spaces, apparatuses, instruments, and display of the criminal body in the Dutch Republic. With probing and deft analysis of prints, drawings, paintings, and sculptures, Gobin demonstrates their manifold functions and the distinctive evidence visual imagery yields, how it solicits interaction in diverse places, fostering debate and a plurality of publics.”

BRONWEN WILSON, Director of the Center for 17th- and 18th-Century Studies and William Andrews Clark Memorial Library and Professor of Art History, University of California, Los Angeles

“In contrast to the secretive modern penal system, norms of early modern justice as social control insisted on keeping criminal bodies visible before, during, and even after their punishment. Gobin draws upon an amazing array of sources – archives and literature, print culture and architecture, and paintings from the famous to the anonymous – to reveal to us the visual fate of the criminal body in the Dutch Republic. A fascinating contribution to the history of law and justice as well as the history of art.”

ELIZABETH A. HONIG, Professor of Northern European Renaissance Art, University of Maryland

“Gobin’s pioneering study of the visual and material culture of the criminal body is a fascinating exploration of the afterlife of the cadaver and its attendant imagery. By training her sights on the visceral and at times gory imagery of the gallows and executed bodies, her research unearths how physical punishment was not only showcased as public spectacle but also capitalized on as a well-spring for artistic and medical knowledge throughout the early modern period. *Picturing Punishment* marks an important contribution to scholarship on art of the Dutch Golden Age, the medical humanities, and the history of crime in the West.”

JUSTINA SPENCER, Assistant Professor of Early Modern Studies, University of King’s College

PICTURING PUNISHMENT

The Spectacle and Material Afterlife of the Criminal Body in the Dutch Republic

ANURADHA GOBIN

Picturing Punishment examines representations of criminal bodies as they moved in, through, and out of publicly accessible spaces in the city during punishment rituals in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. Once put to death, the criminal cadaver did not come to rest. Its movement through public spaces indicated the potent afterlife of the deviant body, especially its ability to transform civic life.

Focusing on material culture associated with key sites of punishment, Anuradha Gobin argues that the circulation of visual media related to criminal punishments was a particularly effective means of generating discourse and formulating public opinion, especially regarding the efficacy of civic authority. Certain types of objects related to criminal punishments served a key role in asserting republican ideals and demonstrating the ability of officials to maintain order and control. Conversely, the circulation of other types of images, such as inexpensive paintings and prints, had the potential to subvert official messages. As Gobin shows, visual culture thus facilitated a space in which potentially dissenting positions could be formulated while also bringing together seemingly disparate groups of people in a quest for new knowledge.

Combining a diverse array of sources including architecture, paintings, prints, anatomical illustrations, and preserved body parts, *Picturing Punishment* demonstrates how the criminal corpse was reactivated, reanimated, and in many ways reintegrated into society.