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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Figures and Tables -- Introduction -- Chapter 1: Showing the Poor a Good Time -- Chapter 2: Worthy Poor, Worthy Rich -- Chapter 3: Tightening Control -- Chapter 4: Meeting the Bottom Line -- Chapter 5: The Wheel Keeps Turning -- Chapter 6: Baroque Piety and the Qualità of Mercy -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Acknowledgments -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	Renaissance Italians pioneered radical changes in ways of helping the poor, including orphanages, workhouses, pawnshops, and women's shelters. Nicholas Terpstra shows that gender was the key factor driving innovation. Most of the recipients of charity were women. The most creative new plans focused on features of women's poverty like illegitimate births, hunger, unemployment, and domestic violence. Signal features of the reforms, from forced labor to new instruments of saving and lending, were devised specifically to help young women get a start in life. Cultures of Charity is the first book to see women's poverty as the key factor driving changes to poor relief. These changes generated intense political debates as proponents of republican democracy challenged more elitist and authoritarian forms of government emerging at the time. Should taxes fund poor relief? Could

forced labor help build local industry? Focusing on Bologna, Terpstra looks at how these fights around politics and gender generated pioneering forms of poor relief, including early examples of maternity benefits, unemployment insurance, food stamps, and credit union savings plans.

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