



# Honor and Revenge: A Theory of Punishment: 104 (Law and Philosophy Library)

*Whitley R.P. Kaufman*

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This book addresses the problem of justifying the institution of criminal punishment. It examines the “paradox of retribution”: the fact that we cannot seem to reject the intuition that punishment is morally required, and yet we cannot (even after two thousand years of philosophical debate) find a morally legitimate basis for inflicting harm on wrongdoers. The book comes at a time when a new “abolitionist” movement has arisen, a movement that argues that we should give up the search for justification and accept that punishment is morally unjustifiable and should be discontinued immediately. This book, however, proposes a new approach to the retributive theory of punishment, arguing that it should be understood in its traditional formulation that has been long forgotten or dismissed: that punishment is essentially a defense of the honor of the victim. Properly understood, this can give us the possibility of a legitimate moral justification for the institution of punishment.?

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