



After Evil: Responding to Wrongdoing

By Geoffrey Scarre

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Evils, both large and small, are a constant feature of human life. This book is about responding to them and in particular about responding to moral evils, that is, those produced by the deliberate acts of human beings. Prominent in our repertoire of responses to moral evil are forgiveness and punishment, and these, with the numerous conceptual and moral problems they raise, are at the heart of the study in this book. After discussing the idea of evil, Scarre turns to the meaning of forgiveness and the conditions for granting it. He defends a broadly utilitarian approach that stresses the role of forgiveness in repairing the damage that has been caused by injurious or offensive behaviour. Scarre then considers the controversial virtue of mercy and the propriety of revengeful behaviour and resentful attitudes. Finally, he deals with the purpose and justification of judicial punishment, paying particular regard to the appropriate treatment of war criminals. In this timely and sensitively written book, Scarre pays close attention to the existing literature and appraises both contemporary and classical contributions to the debate. This book makes an original contribution to an area of ethical thought that has been attracting an increasing amount of attention from philosophers, jurists and political thinkers.

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Editorial Review

Review

'... a clear, readable and thorough account of the very considerable quantity of work recently published on those topics, in particular on forgiveness.' Philosophical Investigations

About the Author

Geoffrey Scarre is a Reader and Head of Department of Philosophy at the University of Durham, UK.

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