



Resentment's Virtue: Jean Amery and the Refusal to Forgive (Politics History & Social Chan)

Thomas Brudholm

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Most current talk of forgiveness and reconciliation in the aftermath of collective violence proceeds from an assumption that forgiveness is always superior to resentment and refusal to forgive. Victims who demonstrate a willingness to forgive are often celebrated as virtuous moral models, while those who refuse to forgive are frequently seen as suffering from a pathology. Resentment is viewed as a negative state, held by victims who are not "ready" or "capable" of forgiving and healing.

Resentment's Virtue offers a new, more nuanced view. Building on the writings of Holocaust survivor Jean Améry and the work of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Thomas Brudholm argues that the preservation of resentment can be the reflex of a moral protest that might be as permissible, humane or honorable as the willingness to forgive. Taking into account the experiences of victims, the findings of truth commissions, and studies of mass atrocities, Brudholm seeks to enrich the philosophical understanding of resentment.



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