

Forgiveness: A Philosophical Exploration

Charles Griswold



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Nearly everyone has wronged another. Who among us has not longed to be forgiven? Who has not struggled to forgive? Charles Griswold has written the first comprehensive philosophical book on forgiveness in both its interpersonal and political contexts, as well as its relation to reconciliation. Having examined the place of forgiveness in ancient philosophy and in modern thought, he discusses what forgiveness is, what conditions the parties to it must meet, its relation to revenge and hatred, when it is permissible and whether it is obligatory, and why it is a virtue. Griswold argues that forgiveness (unlike apology) is inappropriate in politics, and analyzes the nature and limits of political apology with reference to historical examples (including Truth and Reconciliation Commissions). The book concludes with an examination of the relation between memory, narrative, and truth.

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