

## **Responding to Moral Wrongdoing: Moral Blame and Moral Forgiveness**

### **FIL 4300 – høst 2021**

**Christel Fricke**

#### Course Description

We are all familiar with the experience of being victimized, the experience of suffering harm and being (morally) wronged. This experience commonly goes along with some kind of sentimental response from the side of the affected victim and from that of uninvolved bystanders. These responses, spontaneous as they often are, are based on insufficient factual knowledge as well as on biased sentiments. Where these responses inform moral judgments about the apparent wrongdoer, the respective judgments are poorly justified and cannot claim general authority.

We shall proceed in four steps: first, we shall try and understand what distinguishes the suffering of harm (misfortune) from the experience of being wronged (injustice); then, we shall look more closely into the experience of being wronged and into the particular kinds of moral wounds this experience leaves in the victims. In a third step, we shall look into the nature and normative constraints of moral blame; and finally, we shall inquire into forgiveness.

Underlying this course plan is the claim that responding to moral wrongdoing should not end with individual and spontaneous more or less sentimental responses; indeed, in response to an occurrence to apparent wrongdoing and victimization, people should engage in a collective process which aims not only at justifying a particular moral judgment (a judgment about an apparent wrongdoer's moral blameworthiness) but also at aligning collective normative standards, at forgiveness and moral repair – should moral wrongdoing indeed have occurred.