

with diverse peoples and organizations. Indeed, in light of the recent protests in Seattle, Washington, DC, Prague, Québec, Gothenberg, and Genoa, Hart's book ought to be received as a welcomed voice in discussions concerning the globalization of justice.

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*The Spiritual Roots of Restorative Justice.* Edited by Michael L. Hadley. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001. ISBN 0-7914-4852-5. Pp. 264.

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This interdisciplinary study is the collaborative effort of fourteen authors associated with the University of Victoria's Centre for Studies in Religion and Society. This project, directed by Michael Hadley, explores what major religions say in text, tradition, and current practice about criminal justice in general and restorative justice in particular. The traditions explored include: Aboriginal spirituality, Buddhism, Chinese religions, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism. The fourteen contributors discuss how faith-based principles of reconciliation, restoration, and healing could be implemented in pluralistic multi-cultural societies.

In many ways, the relationship between spirituality and restorative justice in society has been largely overlooked both in academic scholarship and in the popular press. An important message of this book is that religious traditions can help us to reform and to even to change the dominant, "retributive" approach to criminal law in North America today. Religious spiritualities can help us to challenge dominant political and social forces, raising questions about the claims of retributive justice and its adversarial process driven by prosecution and defense. Today, North America politicians discuss the need for laws that are "tough on crime" and which make sure that criminals "do their time," or even face the death penalty. This book helps us to cut through such rhetoric of the political right, and to consider an alternative to our current practices in the justice systems.

From this book, the reader learns that restorative justice is neither a program nor a method (9). "Restorative justice, with its principles of repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation, is instead a deeply spiritual process. It is never the easy way out; neither for the offender, the victim, nor the community. It requires all of us to come to grips with who we are, what we have done, and what we can become in the fullness of our humanity. It is about doing justice as if people really mattered; it addresses the need for a vision of the good life, and the common good" (9). This book presents examples of creative approaches to criminal-justice based on reconciliation, rather than retribution. These examples include: the Community Holistic Circle Healing (the Hollow Water Project), the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge, Victim Offender Reconciliation Programs (VORP), family conferencing and circle sentencing. From these

examples, the reader learns about the inherent link between the theory and the practice of restorative justice.

This project's research approach resembles the "correlational method" developed by Paul Tillich. Like Tillich, the authors initiated a conversation between the issue at hand; criminal law, and the wisdom of each religious tradition. This correlational method shows the relevance of religious wisdom for the contemporary world. Each essay reveals the fresh and creative answers that religion can provide for social problems. The correlational method also shows us that religious studies is an interdisciplinary endeavor. Scholars of religion need to work with specialists in sociology, economics, jurisprudence, science, and many other academic disciplines. If religious studies is to participate in public policy, it must be open to learning from other disciplines.

Of course, inter-disciplinary projects like this one can be criticized for being unrealistic. Too often, the realities of academic specialization undermine the collegiality of such a project. Just consider the challenges that this kind of team research project poses to academia. First, it requires that each scholar learn the technical terms and methods of the other disciplines. Second, there must some consensus among the group if the research topic is to be studied in a clear and organized manner. If we consider these difficulties, its no wonder that this kind of approach is rare. Yet, this book successfully demonstrates that it is possible to assemble an international group of scholars, justice professionals, former victims and offenders, for the common purpose of creatively applying the wisdom of religious traditions to ethical issues associated with criminal justice. In light of the challenges posed by a plurality of different backgrounds that comprise this research team, the quality of this book's scholarship is simply remarkable.

It is important to emphasize that this interdisciplinary project is not one of value-free scholarship but one committed to social reconstruction by critical political involvement. The reflections on crime and punishment offered in this book deserve to be well received by the academic community. This book will be of particular interest to those scholars involved with practical theology. The recent renaissance in practical theology is in need of a team research model similar to that found in this multi-faith study of restorative justice. Also, the hopeful vision of social justice presented by Hadley's book will re-affirm the work of many practical theologians. Just like the members of Hadley's team, practical theologians believe that religious traditions offer a powerful form of resistance against forces of social domination.