



## Knowing the Suffering of Others: Legal Perspectives on Pain and Its Meanings

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In *Knowing the Suffering of Others*, legal scholar Austin Sarat brings together essays that address suffering as it relates to the law, highlighting the ways law imagines suffering and how pain and suffering become jurisprudential facts.

From fetal imaging to end-of-life decisions, torts to international human rights, domestic violence to torture, and the law of war to victim impact statements, the law is awash in epistemological and ethical problems associated with knowing and imagining suffering. In each of these domains we might ask: How well do legal actors perceive and understand suffering in such varied domains of legal life? What problems of representation and interpretation bedevil efforts to grasp the suffering of others? What historical, political, literary, cultural, and/or theological resources can legal actors and citizens draw on to understand the suffering of others?

In *Knowing the Suffering of Others*, Austin Sarat presents legal scholarship that explores these questions and puts the problem of suffering at the center of thinking about law. The contributors to this volume do not regard pain and suffering as objective facts of a universe remote from law; rather they examine how both are discursively constructed in and by law. They examine how pain and suffering help construct and give meaning to the law as we know it. The authors attend to the various ways suffering appears in law as well as the different forms of suffering that require the law's attention.

Throughout this book law is regarded as a domain in which the meanings of pain and suffering are contested, and constituted, as well as an instrument for inflicting suffering or for providing or refusing its relief. It challenges scholars, lawyers, students, and policymakers to ask how various legal actors and audiences understand the suffering of others.

## Contributors

Montré D. Carodine / Cathy Caruth / Alan L. Durham / Bryan K. Fair / Steven H. Hobbs / Gregory C. Keating  
/ Linda Ross Meyer / Meredith M. Render / Jeannie Suk / John Fabian Witt

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