

# Media Kit

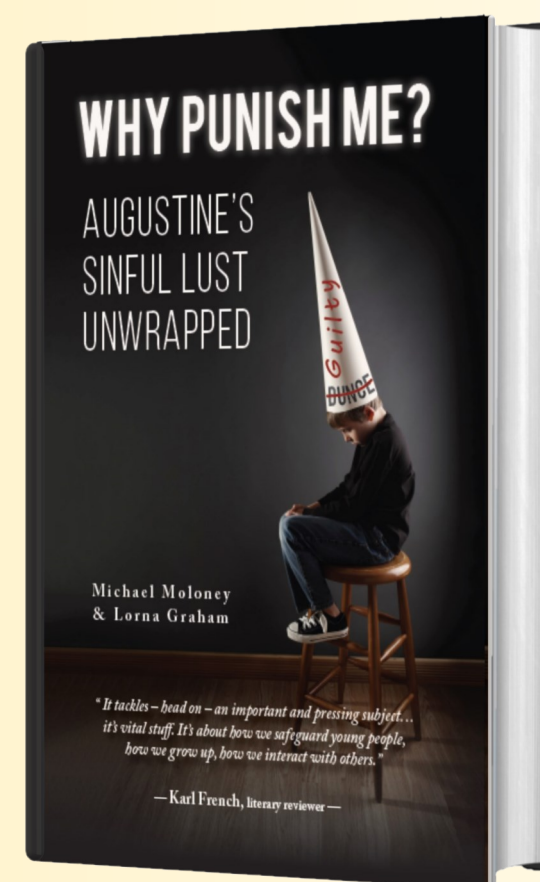
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Galley copies available for review, please enquire

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**Title:** Why Punish Me?  
**Author:** Michael Moloney  
**Word Count:** 55,000 words  
**BISG codes:** REL091000 / SOC039000  
**Print ISBN:** 978-1-8384816-0-5  
**Price:** £14.99  
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## Digital downloads

Downloadable files and photos are freely available online. Please visit our website Press Room at <https://mike-moloney.com/media>. Multiple types and formats are provided with your needs in mind.

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## Here’s what reviewers say

“This is potentially of interest to anyone concerned with how we grow up, how we are shaped, and how the way that young people are drawn into whatever religious faith into which they are born, how this supposedly, avowedly benign process is enacted can have deeply malign effects on the individual and so on society in general.” “It tackles – head-on – an important and pressing subject... it’s vital stuff. It’s about how we safeguard young people, how we grow up, how we interact with others.”

– Karl French, editor & literary reviewer

“Awesome how far Augustine’s tentacles of guilt and sinfulness reach. Alone among the world’s civilised nations, Britons are allowed to physically punish children because unelected bishops sitting in the House of Lords advocate it.”

– Carolyn Thompson, reader

“It takes us directly to a seemingly real situation with flesh and blood people. The menace in the good father’s every action is tangible, and what isn’t said adds to the sense of danger.”

– Alan Wilkinson, editor & literary reviewer

## Target Readership

The readership demographic for *Why Punish Me?* is similar to that for other works critical of religion, by Dawkins, Hitchens, Fry, etc. However, this new scrutiny of the effect of indoctrination on school children, adopts a novel child's-eye perspective.

No follower wants to hear criticism of their faith. *Why Punish Me?* avoids causing offence to believers by aiming criticism at the teaching of St Augustine, an already contentious figure from antiquity.

Intelligent young people, recent Christian apostates or those contemplating apostasy, will be responsive to a sincere critique from a church insider. Also, online and real world net-working indicate a strong

prospective audience of educated thinkers who have reached a reflective stage in life. This is a profile you may recognise as typical of your readership.

- Audience in ‘The God Debate’
- Other educated seniors, 50+.
- Questioning 17 – 24 year-olds.
- Open minded thinkers.
- Child protection workers and anyone involved in child minding or education.

The launch of this important new book is supported by a lively promotion effort. The National Secular Society and Humanists UK are both actively campaigning against faith schools.

## Little Known Facts

- Most subjects taught in Britain’s schools are regulated by statute. However, despite experience of sectarianism parts of the UK, there is no statutory curriculum for religious education. Guidance is provided, but schools are free to teach any religious beliefs they please (except teaching Creationism as a scientific theory).
- Alone amongst civilised nations, Britain allows children to be beaten in the home. In May 2004 Peter Forster, the 55-year-old Lord Bishop of Chester sitting in the House of Lords, spoke in favour of allowing the beating of children as ‘reasonable chastisement’. The 66-year-old Baroness Richardson of Calow agreed, on behalf of ‘a great many Christians across a wide range of Churches, particularly those which have come out in support in official statements, such as the Methodist Church, the United Reform Church, the Roman Catholic Church and many children’s charities’. Yet research shows that corporal punishment does not work and can lead to mental health problems for some children.
- All Britain’s schools are obliged to teach Christian beliefs. Since the Education Act of 1944 passed into law, state funded schools have been required to teach pupils the unhelpful ideas of St Augustine. Augustine held that all humans are innately evil. Yet British scientists show that people are naturally disposed to be good.
- The benefits credited to religious belief are often misrepresented in research studies of religiosity and health, perpetuating the cycle of misplaced approval accorded to Augustine’s teaching. In many such studies, participants are divided into ‘believers’ and ‘unbelievers’. Any health issues amongst unbelieving participants is held to be due to unbelief. However, the true reason might be related to any number of causes and quite possibly attributable to early proselytisation and not due to unbelief. For a proper study of the effects of religion on young people as they grow, it would be necessary to identify all the subjects who have been indoctrinated and later recanted, and classify them separately.

All claims made above are substantiated in the book *Why Punish Me?* by Michael Moloney

## Author Bio

Michael Moloney is the pen name of an acclaimed British writer. He served as altar boy and chorister while attending boarding schools in Ireland and England, where he faced abuse. With the Vatican decrying critics of the church as “Friends of the Devil”, he thought back to the drill and doctrine of his church schooldays.

The UK Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse reports more cases come to light today, yet nothing in literature explains this deviance credibly. The possible influence of Christian drill and doctrine, on the sexual abuse of children or the callous

neglect found in Ireland’s mother and baby homes, is unexplored.

Reading about the evasiveness of the churches in response to disclosures of child abuse, Moloney felt driven to record his life experiences and help throw light on the enduring consequences of a Christian education, for certain individuals.

In his new book, Moloney shows how Augustine’s darkness has ensnared us all. In the final chapters, Lorna Graham, a schoolteacher for 26 years, brings faith schools to life depicting the struggle to educate pupils openly and objectively.

## Synopsis

Most adults born in Britain were taught his ideas, by law. Augustine’s fourth century hair-shirt texts shape our society—our politics, our schools, and darkly, how we relate to ourselves and each other.

In school we learn values at odds with modern notions of decency and fair play. We are told to say sorry and cravenly beg forgiveness and mercy for wrongful actions, without regard for the wronged victim. According to polls, most of us reject religion later in life, but billions of neural connections made in our infant brains are not set free.

Tracing his religious background, the author recalls his daily prayers of self-censure and remorse, the penitential prayers still practised in some British schools. Having a sensitive nature is a positive attribute; it is what makes us human. But imaginative and impressionable children are susceptible to corrosive feelings of guilt and shame.

Following Augustine’s doctrine on penance, the Church of England service admits sin and begs forgiveness or mercy twenty-four times. Grace and

love are said twice. In faith schools today, infants are told to recite similar prayers, often by a cleric. Teachers do not set out to sexualise pupils, but an authority figure causing a child to feel guilt and shame is a known child sexual grooming technique.

The author suggests St Augustine’s teaching might play a more influential role in child sexual abuse and adult mental well-being than has generally been recognised in mainstream social science.

The possible influence of Augustine's teaching on the sexual abuse of altar boys and the callous neglect found in Ireland’s mother and baby homes, is unwrapped in these pages. Research papers endorsing religiosity are reviewed highlighting a lack of rigour. And here we discover why academics shun this field of study.

This thought-provoking book fills a gap in the shelf, opening a compelling new front in the current wave of popular religious critiques and revitalising the ‘God Debate’. The lucid descriptions of faith school drill and doctrine will stir readers who suppose Christianity is a benign influence, to think again.

Copy & paste from a choice of item lengths on the author’s website at: <http://mike-moloney.com/pressroom>