

Punitive damages

Introduction : the first conviction for punitive damages in the USA

→The first punitive damage case in the United States is often cited as the case of "Parsons v. Bedford" from 1830.

→The court awarded punitive damages to Parsons → principle that punitive damages could be awarded in addition to compensatory damages to punish the defendant for egregious conduct and to deter similar behavior in the future. → This case set a precedent for punitive damages in the American legal system.

I- What are punitive damages ?

Punitive damages in US law are additional monetary awards imposed on defendant as punishment for particularly egregious conduct, beyond compensation for the plaintiff's losses.

Compensatory damages are intended to compensate for actual losses, while **punitive damages** aim to punish the defendant



III- Case study: Alex Jones condemned to pay 965 million dollar

→ In 2012, a young man armed killed twenty-eight people + children at the Sandy Hook school in Newtown, Connecticut

→Alex Jones, owner of Infowars, claimed the victims were "actors" + that children were still alive.

→A Connecticut jury ordered Infowars founder Alex Jones to pay \$965 million in damages to the families of eight victims of the Sandy Hook shooting for the suffering caused by years of lies that the massacre was a hoax.

II - What is the purpose behind punitive damages ?

The purpose behind punitive damages in US law is to punish a deter similar behaviors in the future. They go beyond compensating the plaintiff and aim to discourage wrongful actions by imposing additional financial consequences on the defendant.

IV-Conclusion

→Punitive damages go beyond compensating the aggrieved party. They were conceived as a means to punish defendants whose conduct is considered grossly negligent or intentional.

→In the rest of the world, (ex: Italy) : private lawsuits should only have one goal : compensation for a loss and punishments only in criminal lawsuits