

# BENJAMIN S. YOST

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Department of Philosophy  
Providence College  
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## ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

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### **Providence College, Department of Philosophy**

Assistant Professor, 2008–2011; Associate Professor, 2013–; Chair, 2016–

### **Cornell University, Sage School of Philosophy**

Visiting Associate Professor, 2019–2020

Postdoctoral Associate, Program on Ethics and Public Life, 2011–2013

### **Harvard University, College Writing Program**

Lecturer, 2006–2008

Areas of Specialization: Kant, Normative Jurisprudence, Philosophy of Punishment, Levinas

Areas of Competence: Social/Political Philosophy, Phenomenology

Affiliations: Causes, Consequences, and Future of Mass Incarceration Project, Institute of the Social Sciences, Cornell University, 2015–present

## EDUCATION

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Ph.D. **University of California, Berkeley.** Rhetoric

M.A. **Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven** (Belgium). Philosophy (*magna cum laude*)

B.A. **Goshen College**

## BOOKS

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*Against Capital Punishment* (Oxford University Press, 2019)

*Philosophers on the Movement for Black Lives*, coedited with Michael Cholbi, Brandon Hogan, and Alex Madva (Oxford University Press, under review)

## PAPERS

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“Kant’s Theory of Motivation: A Hybrid Approach” *Review of Metaphysics* 71.2. (2017)

“What’s Wrong with Differential Punishment?” *Utilitas* 29.3. (2017)

“Kant’s Demonstration of Free Will, or How to Do Things with Concepts.” *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, 2.2. (2016)

**PAPERS, CONTINUED**

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“Punishment, Desert, and Equality: A Levinasian Analysis.” *Death and Other Penalties: Philosophy in a Time of Mass Incarceration*, eds. Adelsberg, Guenther, and Zeman (Fordham UP, 2015)

Review. *Kant on Moral Autonomy*. ed. Sensen, in *Philosophical Review*, 123.4. (2014)

“The Irrevocability of Capital Punishment.” *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 42.3. (2011)

“Responsibility and Revision: a Levinasian Argument for the Abolition of Capital Punishment.” *Continental Philosophy Review*, 44.1 (2011)

“Kant’s Justification of the Death Penalty Reconsidered.” *Kantian Review*, 15.2. (2010)

“Freedom and Death.” *Law and Peace in Kant’s Philosophy: Proceedings of the 10<sup>th</sup> International Kant Congress*, vol. 3 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008)

“Rule of Law Abolitionism.” *Studies in Law, Politics, and Society*, 42 (2008)

**SELECTED AWARDS AND HONORS**

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Interdisciplinary Faculty Seminar, “Relationships,” Providence College, 2011

North American Kant Society Travel Grant, 2005

One of two awarded to graduate papers at the 10<sup>th</sup> International Kant Congress

American Philosophical Association Graduate Student Travel Grant, Central Division, 2003

Belgian American Educational Foundation Fellow, 2001-2002

Pew Charitable Trust (Younger Scholars Program) Graduate Fellow, 1998-2004

Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Humanistic Studies, 1997-98

National Endowment for the Humanities Younger Scholar, 1995

**TEACHING AWARDS**

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Nominated for the Providence College Joseph R. Accinno Teaching Award, 2016

UC Berkeley Teaching Effectiveness Award, 2005

Awarded to fewer than 1% of the graduate student instructors at Berkeley

Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor, UC Berkeley, 2003

**SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED LECTURES**

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- “What’s Wrong with Differential Punishment?” *Bowling Green Workshop on the Ethics of Policing and Prisons*, March 2016
- “What’s Wrong with Differential Punishment?” *American Philosophical Division, Central Division, Main Program*. Chicago, March 2016
- “What’s Wrong with Differential Punishment?” Guest lecture, Binghamton University, February 2016
- “Kant’s Demonstration of Freedom in Its Legislative Aspect.” *North American Kant Society, Eastern Study Group*, Philadelphia, May 2014
- “Kant’s Demonstration of Freedom in Its Legislative Aspect.” *American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, Main Program*. San Diego, April 2014
- “Kant’s Demonstration of Freedom in Its Motivational Aspect.” *American Philosophical Association, Central Division, Main Program*. New Orleans, February 2013
- “The Irrevocability of Capital Punishment.” *American Philosophical Association, Central Division, Main Program*. Minneapolis, April 2011
- “The Irrevocability of Capital Punishment.” Invited Lecture, Philosophy Department Colloquium, George Mason University, April 2010
- “Kant’s Justification of the Death Penalty Reconsidered.” *UK Kant Society*, Lancaster University, August 2009
- “Responsibility and Revision: a Levinasian Argument for the Abolition of Capital Punishment.” *Levinas Research Seminar*, University of Toronto, June 2009
- “Kant’s Justification of the Death Penalty Reconsidered.” *American Philosophical Association, Central Division, Main Program*. Chicago, April 2008
- “Should I Not Kill? Could I Not Kill?: Levinas on Murder, Shame, and the Death Penalty.” *American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, Main Program*. Portland, March 2006
- “Toward a Levinasian Abolitionism.” *Centennial Conference on Levinas and Law*, McGill University, Montreal, September 2006
- “Freedom and Death.” *10<sup>th</sup> International Kant Congress*, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, September 2005

**SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED LECTURES, CONTINUED**

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“Meaningless Law.” *Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy*, Salt Lake City, October 2005

“On the Necessity of the Death Penalty in Kant’s Moral and Political Philosophy.” *American Philosophical Association, Central Division, Main Program*. Cleveland, April 2003

“How to Stop an Execution: Performativity in Emmanuel Levinas.” *Addressing Levinas*, Emory University, October 1999

“Is Levinas Postmodern?” Goshen College, January 1999

“The Painfulness of Pain: Toward an Abolitionist Theory of Human Dignity.” *Law, Culture, and the Humanities*, University of Connecticut, March 2004

“Abolitionism and the Problem of Kant.” *Law, Culture, and the Humanities*, New York University, March 2003

**SELECTED TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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**Providence College**

Social/Political Philosophy  
Philosophy Honors Seminar  
Free Will  
Law and Morality  
Current Problems in Ethics: Political Violence  
Early Modern Philosophy  
Ethics and the Common Good  
General Ethics  
Introduction to Philosophy  
Development of Western Civilization (team taught)  
    17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Century  
    19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> Century

**Auburn Correctional Facility**

Social/Political Philosophy

**Cornell University**

Kant and Constructivism (graduate)  
Law, Society, & Morality  
Philosophy of Law

**SELECTED TEACHING EXPERIENCE, CONTINUED**

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**Harvard University, College Writing Program**

To What Question Is Law the Answer?

**UC Berkeley**

War and 'Human Nature'  
What Is an Argument?

**AREAS OF TEACHING INTEREST**

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Kant's Practical Philosophy, Levinas, Philosophy of Law, Ethics (introduction and advanced), Applied Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Punishment

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

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American Philosophical Association, North American Kant Society, Levinas Research Seminar, Association for Law, Culture, & the Humanities

**ACADEMIC SERVICE**

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Referee: *De Ethica*, *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, *Journal of Law, Culture & the Humanities*, *Journal of Moral Philosophy*, *Journal of Social Philosophy*, *Kantian Review*, *North American Kant Society Biennial Meetings*, *Philosophical Papers*, *Philosophy and Public Issues*, *Social Theory and Practice*

Secretary, Levinas Research Seminar, 2007-present

Associate Editor, *Qui Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2000-2005

**Providence College**

Department Chair, 2016 - present

Promotion and Tenure Appeals Committee, 2014 - 2016

Philosophy Department Representative, Faculty Senate, 2014 - 2016

Ethics Bowl coach, 2014 - 2015

Search Committee, Ancient Logic, 2013-2014

Search Committee, Contemporary Analytic Philosophy, 2010-2011

Department Meeting Secretary, 2010-2011

Departmental Committee on Standardized Evaluations, 2009

Departmental Committee on Student Evaluations, 2008

**Cornell University**

Convenor, interdisciplinary research workshop on mass incarceration, 2012-2013

**LANGUAGES**

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French: reading - proficient; speaking - proficient

German: reading - good; speaking – basic