

BENJAMIN S. YOST

Sage School of Philosophy
Cornell University
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ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Cornell University, Sage School of Philosophy

Professor of Philosophy, Adjunct 2019–
Postdoctoral Associate, 2011–2013

Providence College, Department of Philosophy

Assistant Professor, 2008–2011; Associate Professor, 2013–; Professor 2019–2020;
Chair, 2016–2019

Harvard University, College Writing Program

Lecturer, 2006–2008

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

Areas of Competence: Social & Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Race

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

EDUCATION

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

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

B.A. **Goshen College**

BOOKS

Against Capital Punishment (Oxford University Press, 2019)

· Reviewed by *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*; review essay in *Criminal Justice Ethics*,
39.3. (2020); named a *Choice* “Essential Reading”

The Movement for Black Lives: Philosophical Perspectives, coedited with Michael Cholbi,
Brandon Hogan, and Alex Madva (Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2021)

PAPERS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

“Sentencing Leniency for Black Offenders.” *The Movement for Black Lives: Philosophical Perspectives*,
eds. Cholbi, Hogan, Madva, and Yost (forthcoming 2021)

PAPERS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS, CONTINUED

“The Death Penalty.” *1000 Word Philosophy: An Introductory Anthology*. <http://bit.ly/32BiH2S>

“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)

“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. Oliver Sensen. *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 10th 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

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

North American Kant Society Travel Grant, 2005

One of two awarded to graduate papers at the 10th 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

UC Berkeley Teaching Effectiveness Award, 2005
Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor, UC Berkeley, 2003

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED LECTURES

- “Racism and Racial Identity.” Coalition Z Racial Injustice Webinar, August 2020
- “A Procedural Plea for Leniency.” Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress (RoME), August 2019
- “An Irrevocability Argument against the Death Penalty.” *North American Society for Social Philosophy*, July 2018
- “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

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED LECTURES, CONTINUED

“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.” *10th International Kant Congress*, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, September 2005

“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

Cornell University

Kant and Constructivism (graduate)

Law, Society, & Morality

Philosophy of Law

Philosophy of Punishment

Philosophy of Race

Social & Political Philosophy

FWS: Borders, Immigration, and Citizenship

SELECTED TEACHING EXPERIENCE, CONTINUED

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
Ethics
Introduction to Philosophy
Development of Western Civilization (team taught)
 17th to 19th Century
 19th to 20th Century

Auburn Correctional Facility

Social & Political Philosophy

Harvard University, College Writing Program

To What Question Is Law the Answer?

AREAS OF TEACHING INTEREST

Kant's Practical Philosophy, Philosophy of Punishment, Philosophy of Law, Philosophy of Race, Ethics, Applied Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy, Levinas

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

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

ACADEMIC SERVICE

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*, *Public Affairs Quarterly*, *Social Theory and Practice*, *Journal of Applied Philosophy*

American Philosophical Association, Committee on Academic Career Opportunities and Placement, 2020-

Secretary, Levinas Research Seminar, 2007-present

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

Cornell University

Presentation to *Logos*, the Cornell Undergraduate Philosophy Club – “Punishment and Disadvantaged Offenders,” 2020

Senior thesis advisor and tutor – Jeff Fineout (Bard Prison Initiative), 2020

Cornell Prison Education Program Instructor – Social & Political Philosophy, 2016

Senior thesis advisor – Lynexa Owens, 2013

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

Providence College

Department Chair, 2016 - 2019

Promotion and Tenure Appeals Committee, 2014 - 2016

Faculty Senator, 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

LANGUAGES

French: reading - proficient; speaking - proficient

German: reading - good; speaking – basic