

January, 2026

Curriculum Vitae

Steven Sverdlik
Southern Methodist University
Dallas, TX 75275

Education

Ph.D. Columbia University, 1981
Dissertation: Contractarianism and Moral Theory

B.A. Harvard University, cum laude, 1972

Academic and Professional Honors

Editorial Board, History of Philosophy Quarterly, 2013-

Godbey Series Author Award (SMU), 2012

Inducted into SMU Phi Beta Kappa, 20012

Perrine Award—SMU Phi Beta Kappa, 2009

Editorial Board, American Philosophical Quarterly, 1994-6

NEH Summer Seminar 1993 – Stanford University
(Action Theory—Michael Bratman)

SMU Rotunda Teacher of the Year Award, 1991

NEH Summer Seminar 1988 – Syracuse University
(Consequentialism – Jonathan Bennett Director)

NEH Summer Seminar 1983 – University of Wisconsin – Madison
(Justification and Proof in Ethics – Marcus Singer, Director)

Whiting Fellowship – Columbia University, 1980-1981

Presidential Fellowship – Columbia University, 1977-1978

Employment

Professor of Philosophy Emeritus, Southern Methodist University 2017-

Professor of Philosophy, Southern Methodist University, 2012-17

Associate Professor of Philosophy, Southern Methodist University, 1988-2012

Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Southern Methodist University, 1982-88.

Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Virginia Commonwealth University, 1981–82.

Area of Specialization

Philosophy of Criminal Law, Ethics, Moral Psychology,

Area of Competence

History of Modern Moral Philosophy, Action Theory, Moral Responsibility

Scholarly Publications

“The Logic of Desert,” The Journal of Value Inquiry, 1983.

“Distributing Ackerman’s Manna,” Reason Papers, 1983.

“The Nature of Desert,” The Southern Journal of Philosophy, 1983.

“Counterexamples in Ethics,” Metaphilosophy, 1985.

“Sidwick’s Methodology,” Journal of the History of Philosophy, 1985.

“Justice and Mercy,” Journal of Social Philosophy, 1985.

“Hume’s Key and Aesthetic Rationality,” Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, 1986.

“Collective Responsibility,” Philosophical Studies, 1987

“Crime and Moral Luck,” American Philosophical Quarterly, 1988.

Reprinted in Controversies in Criminal Law, eds. Michael J. Gorr and Sterling Harwood. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1992.

Reprinted in Moral Luck, ed. Daniel Statman. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1993.

Translated in Revista de Derecho Penal y Procesal Penal, July, 2015.

“Punishment,” Law and Philosophy, 1988.

“Pure Negligence,” American Philosophical Quarterly, 1993

“Motive and Rightness,” Ethics, 1996.

“Intention, Intentional Action and Moral Responsibility,” (with Alfred Mele),
Philosophical Studies, 1996.

“Consistency among Intentions and the ‘Simple View’,” Canadian Journal of Philosophy,
1996.

“Compassion and Sympathy as Moral Motivation,” Cary Maguire Center for Ethics,
Occasional Papers No. 8, 1999.

“Compassion and Responsibility: A Response to Kass,” The Ethics of Giving and
Receiving, ed. William F May and A. Lewis Soens, Jr.; Dallas: Southern
Methodist University Press, 2000.

“Kant, Non-Accidentalness, and the Availability of Moral Worth,” The Journal of Ethics,
2001.

“Unconscious Evil Principles,” Philosophy, Psychiatry and Psychology, 2002.

“Intentionality and Moral Judgments in Commonsense Thought about Action,” Journal of
Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology, 2004.

Motive and Rightness, Oxford University Press, 2011.

“The Origins of ‘The Objection’,” History of Philosophy Quarterly, 2012.

“Punishment and Reform,” Criminal Law and Philosophy, 2014.

“Giving Wrongdoers What They Deserve,” The Journal of Ethics, 2016.

“Consequentialism, Moral Motivation and the Deontic Relevance of Motives,” in Moral
Motivation, ed. Iakovos Vasiliou, Oxford University Press, 2016.

“Desert as a Limiting Condition,” Criminal Law and Philosophy, 2018.

“Kantianism, Consequentialism and Deterrence,” in Consequentialism: New Directions,
New Problems?, ed. Christian Seidel. Oxford University Press, 2019.

“Public Policy and Philosophical Accounts of Desert,” in Routledge Companion to
Moral Epistemology, 2019.

“Bentham on Temptation and Deterrence,” Utilitas, 2019

Bentham’s An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation: A Guide,
Oxford University Press, 2023

“Bentham’s Project of Applied Ethics, circa 1780: A Penal Code. Part I: Offenses,”
Journal of Bentham Studies, 2024

“Bentham’s Project of Applied Ethics, circa 1780: A Penal Code. Part II: Punishment,”
Journal of Bentham Studies, 2025

Book Reviews

Michael Slote, Beyond Optimizing, Philosophia, 1991.

Richard Double, Metaphilosophy and Free Will, Ethics 1998.

Gideon Yaffe, Attempts, Jurisprudence, 2012.

Neil Levy, Hard Luck, Mind, 2012.

Mathew Coakley, Motivation Ethics, Journal of Moral Philosophy, 2020

Other Publications

“People Watching” The Philosopher’s Magazine 2012. An art review

“Deterrent Punishment in Utilitarianism” Philpapers. A guide for students

“Bentham and Criminal Law”. Utilitarianism.net. An article for students

Papers Delivered

“The Nature of Desert,” Southwestern Philosophical Society, November 1983.

“The Nature of Desert,” American Philosophical Association, March 1984.

“Justice and Mercy,” American Philosophical Association, April 1985.

“Hume’s Key and Aesthetic Rationality,” American Philosophical Association, May
1986.

“Hume’s Key and Aesthetic Rationality,” Hume Society Conference, August 1986.

- “Thomson, the Trolley and Respect for Persons,” North Texas Philosophical Association, April 1987.
- “Why Not the Second Best?” American Philosophical Association, Central Division, April 1989.
- “Negligence and Responsibility,” University of Oklahoma, September 1990.
- “Negligence and Responsibility,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division, April 1991.
- “The Simple View and Bratman’s Video Game,” American Philosophical Association. Eastern Division, 1995.
- “Acting from Duty and Self-interest,” Central States Philosophical Association, October 2003.
- “Acting from Duty and Self-interest,” American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, March, 2004.
- “The Senses of Duty,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division, April 2004.
- “Kant, Korsgaard and Intrinsically-Motivated Actions,” Central States Philosophical Association, October 2005.
- “Motives, Maxims and Deontic Relevance,” American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, March 2006.
- “The Availability of Motives,” American Philosophical Association, Central Division, April 2007.
- “Hurka on the Intrinsic Value of Attitudes,” Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference, Boulder, Colorado, August 2008.
- Author Meets Critics Session on Motive and Rightness. Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference, Boulder, Colorado, August 2012.
- “The Permissibility of Deterrence,” Conference on Consequentialism. University of Erlangen, Germany. September, 2013.
- “The Permissibility of Deterrence,” University of Texas School of Law. Austin, Texas. October, 2013.
- “Desert as a Limiting Condition,” Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference, Boulder, Colorado, August 2017

“Desert as a Limiting Condition,” American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division, January 2018.

“Bentham on Temptation and Deterrence,” International Society of Utilitarian Studies, July 2018.

Papers Commented Upon

“Conditional Obligation and Detachment,” American Philosophical Association, December 1983.

“Prima Facie Obligations,” North Texas Philosophical Association, April 1984.

“Acts and Consequences,” North Texas Philosophical Association, April 1985.

Commentator on two papers on motivational internalism (Christian Miller and Jakob Elster), American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division, March 2005.

“The Trouble with Kant’s Humanity Formula,” Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference August, 2009

“Moral Responsibility and Merit,” Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference August, 2010

“On the Doctrine of Double Effect and the Insignificance of Intention,” Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference August, 2011

“The Moral Evaluation of Past Tragedies: A New Puzzle,” Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference August, 2013.

“On the (Obscure) Relation between an Agent’s Blameworthiness and her Reasons,” Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference August, 2014.

“Moral Worth and Moral Luck,” Rocky Mountain Ethics Conference August, 2018.

Professional Organizations

International Society of Utilitarian Studies

Refereeing

Oxford University Press, Mind, Ethics, Social Theory and Practice, Legal Theory, Synthese, History of Philosophy Quarterly, American Philosophical Quarterly, Criminal Law and Philosophy, Philosophical Studies, Dialectica, Philosophia