

CURRICULUM VITA

RAFF DONELSON

Associate Professor of Law
Penn State Dickinson Law
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Academic Appointments

Pennsylvania State University, Dickinson Law

Associate Professor of Law, Summer 2021 – present
Assistant Professor of Law, Summer 2020 – Spring 2021

Louisiana State University

Assistant Professor of Law and Philosophy, Fall 2017 – Spring 2020

Primary Areas: Constitutional Law, Criminal Procedure, Jurisprudence, Moral Philosophy

Secondary Areas: Criminal Law, Law of Evidence, Race & Law, Political Philosophy

Education

Northwestern University, 2011-2017

JD 2017

PhD in Philosophy 2017

Thesis: “When We Ask What Law Is”

Committee: Brian Leiter, Kyla Ebels-Duggan, Sandy Goldberg

University of Chicago, 2009-2010

MA in Humanities/Philosophy 2010

Williams College, 2005-2009

BA in Philosophy (with honors), Political Science, French 2009

PUBLICATIONS

Book Chapters

1. *The Rorty-Dworkin Debate*, in *THE ETHICS, EPISTEMOLOGY AND POLITICS OF RICHARD RORTY* (Giancarlo Marchetti, ed. Routledge forthcoming 2021)
2. *Commentary on Daly v. Daly*, in *FEMINIST JUDGMENTS: REWRITTEN FAMILY LAW OPINIONS*. 162-170 (Rachel Rebouché, ed. Cambridge University Press 2020)
3. *Fuller and the Folk: The Inner Morality of Law Revisited* (with Ivar Hannikainen), in *OXFORD STUDIES IN EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY, VOL. 3*. 6-28 (Tania Lombrozo, Joshua Knobe & Shaun Nichols, eds. Oxford University Press 2020) (peer-reviewed) (lead chapter) [[ssrn](#)]
4. *The Nihilist*, in *THE PRAGMATISM AND PREJUDICE OF OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, JR.* 31-47 (Seth Vannatta, ed. Lexington Press 2019) [[ssrn](#)]

Journal Articles

1. *The Pragmatist School in Analytic Jurisprudence*, 31 PHIL. ISSUES __ (forthcoming 2021) (invited)
2. *Natural Punishment*, 100 N. C. L. REV. __ (forthcoming 2021) [[ssrn](#)]
3. *The Real Problem with Katz Circularity*, 65 ST. LOUIS U. L. J. __ (symposium) (forthcoming 2021) [[ssrn](#)]
4. *Reparations, Responsibility, and Formalism – A Reply to Carnes*, 49 PHILOSOPHIA 643 (2021) (peer-reviewed) [[ssrn](#)]
5. *Describing Law*, 33 CAN. J. L. & JURIS. 85 (2020) (peer-reviewed) [[ssrn](#)]
6. *Legal Inconsistencies*, 55 TULSA L. REV. 15 (2019) [[ssrn](#)]
7. *Three Problems with Metaethical Minimalism*, 34 SW. PHIL. REV. 125 (2018) (peer-reviewed)
8. *Who are the Punishers?* 86 UMKC L. REV. 259 (2017) (lead article) [[ssrn](#)]
9. *Blacks, Cops, and the State of Nature*, 15 OHIO ST. J. CRIM. L. 183 (2017) (peer-reviewed) [[ssrn](#)]
10. *Rorty's Promise in Metaethics*, 14 CONTEMP. PRAGMATISM 292 (2017) (peer-reviewed)
11. *Ethical Pragmatism*, 48 METAPHILOSOPHY 383 (2017) (lead article) (peer-reviewed)
12. *Cruel and Unusual What? Toward a Unified Definition of Punishment*, 9 WASH. U. JURIS. REV. 1 (2016) (lead article) [[ssrn](#)]

Book Reviews

1. *Review of The War on Neighborhoods: Policing, Prison, and Punishment in a Divided City*, CRIM. L. & CRIM. JUST. BOOKS (2019)
2. *Review of The Age of Culpability: Children and the Nature of Criminal Responsibility*, 22 METAPSYCHOLOGY no. 52 (2018)
3. *Review of Facts and Values: The Ethics and Metaphysics of Normativity*, 22 METAPSYCHOLOGY no. 2 (2018)
4. *Review of Practicing Philosophy as Experiencing Life*, 13 CONTEMP. PRAGMATISM 445 (2016)

WORKS-IN-PROGRESS

Books

1. ETHICS WITHOUT CHICANERY (book proposal in development)

Articles & Book Chapters

1. *Legal Essentialism: Cross-Cultural Evidence* (with Ivar Hannikainen et. al) (under review)
2. *Moral Stability and Pragmatism*
3. *Forbidden Purposes*
4. *Legal Philosophy: Its Aims and Methods* (with Michelle Dempsey) in THE STANFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PHILOSOPHY (forthcoming 2021) (invited)
5. *An Armchair Defense of Experimental Approaches to General Jurisprudence* in ADVANCES IN EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY OF LAW (Stefan Magen & Karolina Prochownik, eds. Bloomsbury forthcoming 2021) (invited)
6. *Experimental Philosophy of Law* in COMPACT COMPENDIUM OF EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY (Alexander Max Bauer & Stephan Kornmesser, eds. de Gruyter forthcoming 2021) (invited)

PRESENTATIONS & CONFERENCES

2020 – PRESENT

1. *Hobbes and America's Police Problem*, IHS Seminar on Policing and Political Philosophy, George Mason University, Oct 2021

2. *TBA*, Constitutional Law and Jurisprudence Conference, Dartmouth University, Oct 2021
3. *Blacks, Cops, and the State of Nature*, IHS Seminar on Unnecessary Evils: Laws, Judging, and Policing in an Overcriminalized World, George Mason University, July 2021
4. *Pragmatism, Truth, and Lies*, “Philosophical Perspectives on Freedom of Speech in a Liberal Democracy,” SEALS 2021, Amelia Island, Florida, July 2021
5. *Privacy When You Least Expect It: On Police Searches and Expectations of Privacy*, Invited Session on Policing and Police, APA Pacific Division Conference, Portland, OR, Apr 2021
6. *Natural Punishment*, ACS Constitutional Law Scholars Forum, Barry Law School, Mar 2021
7. *Reparations, Responsibility, and Formalism*, Iowa Legal Theory Reading Group, Feb 2021
8. *Blacks, Cops, and the State of Nature*, Guest Lecture, Princeton University, Jan 2021
9. *A Question of Trust? Hard vs. Soft Law in the Context of the Covid-19 Pandemic*, Invited Webinar Panelist, University of Salford, Jan 2021
10. *Critical Race Theory and the Police War on Black Bodies*, Northwestern Critical Theories of Law Program, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law, Nov 2020
11. *Katz Should Only Have One Step*, Childress Symposium, SLU Law, Oct 2020
12. *Race and Policing*, Invited Panelist, Clarke Forum for Contemporary Issues, Dickinson College, Sept 2020

2017 – 2020

(LSU)

13. *The Rorty-Dworkin Debate*, Richard Rorty Society Meeting, Penn. State Univ., Nov 2019
14. *Moral Stability and Pragmatism*, Tokyo Forum for Analytic Philosophy, Univ. of Tokyo, Oct 2019
15. *Fuller and the Folk*, New Frontiers in Experimental Jurisprudence, Univ. of Chicago Law School, Oct 2019
16. *Legal Inconsistencies*, Colloquium, Penn. State Dickinson Law School, Oct 2019
17. *Moral Stability and Pragmatism*, Colloquium, Mississippi State Univ., Oct 2019
18. *Natural Punishment*, Chicagoland Junior Scholars, Loyola-Chicago Law School, Sep 2019
19. *Legal Inconsistencies*, Colloquium, Chicago-Kent Law School, Sep 2019
20. *Natural Punishment*, John Mercer Langston Writing Retreat, Howard Law School, Jul 2019
21. *Natural Punishment*, Crim Fest, Brooklyn Law School, Jul 2019
22. *Legal Inconsistencies*, Junior Criminal Law Theory Workshop, Univ. of Toronto Law School, Jun 2019
23. *Describing Law*, Plenary Speaker, South Carolina Society for Philosophy, Univ. of South Carolina, Mar 2019
24. *Inconsistent Justifications*, Keynote, Faculty Workshop, Univ. of Arizona Law School, Jan 2019
25. *Inconsistent Justifications*, New Voices in Criminal Justice, 2019 AALS, New Orleans, LA, Jan 2019
26. *Inconsistent Justifications*, Colloquium, Tulane University Law School, Oct 2018
27. *Inconsistent Justifications*, Junior Faculty Works-in-Progress Conference, Marquette University Law School, Oct 2018
28. *Moral Stability and Pragmatism*, Colloquium, Yonsei University, Sept 2018
29. *Moral Stability and Pragmatism*, Colloquium, Ohio State University, Aug 2018
30. *Inconsistent Justifications*, “The Rule of Law,” 2018 SEALS, Fort Lauderdale, FL, Aug 2018
31. *Inconsistent Justifications*, Crim. Law Theory Workshop, Northwestern Univ. Pritzker School of Law, June 2018
32. *Moral Stability and Pragmatism*, Guest Lecture, Loyola University of New Orleans, Apr 2018
33. *Who are the Punishers?*, Colloquium, Mississippi Law College, Apr 2018

34. *Describing Law*, Oxford Jurisprudence Discussion Group, Oxford University, Mar 2018
35. *Describing Law*, Edinburgh Legal Theory Research Group, Edinburgh Law School, Mar 2018
36. *Inconsistent Justifications, Rule of Law, and Due Process*, Louisiana Law Scholars' Symposium, Loyola Univ. of New Orleans Law School, Feb 2018
37. *Who are the Punishers?*, Colloquium, University of Connecticut School of Law, Nov 2017
38. *Three Problems with Metaethical Minimalism*, Southwestern Philosophical Society Conference, Baylor University, Nov 2017
 Winner of the President's Prize: best paper by junior scholar
39. *Moral Stability and Pragmatism*, Philosopher's Cocoon Philosophy Conference, University of Tampa, Oct 2017
40. *Reasons and Considerations*, Pittsburgh Area Philosophy Colloquium, Washington and Jefferson College, Sept 2017
41. *Describing Law*, Australasian Society of Legal Philosophy Conference, University of Auckland, Jul 2017

2010 – 2017

(GRAD SCHOOL)

42. *Rorty's Promise in Metaethics*, APA, Eastern Division Conference, Baltimore, MD, Jan 2017
43. *Who are the Punishers?*, Guest Lecture, Lake Forest College, Nov 2016
44. *Describing Law*, Central States Philosophical Association Conference, University of Nebraska, Oct 2016
45. *Blacks, Cops, and the State of Nature*, Ethics Lecture Series, University of Wisconsin-Parkside, Oct 2016
46. *Rorty's Promise in Metaethics*, Richard Rorty Society Conference, Hamilton College, Sept 2016
47. *Cruel and Unusual What?*, Northeastern Illinois University, Mar 2016
48. *Practical Deliberation without Practical Reasons*, Philosopher's Cocoon Philosophy Conference, University of Tampa, Nov 2015
49. *Those Magic Changes*, Annual Graduate Conference in Philosophy at UN-Reno, Oct 2015
50. *Racist Jury Nullification*, Black Graduate Student Association Annual Conference, Northwestern University, Apr 2015
51. *The US Ban on Human Organ Sales: Why We Have It & Should Get Rid of It*, Ethics Lecture Series, University of Wisconsin-Parkside, Nov 2014
52. *Aristotle's Conception of Justice*, Guest Lecture, Chicago State University, Sept 2014
53. *Rational Hate*, Social Equality Conference, University of Cape Town, Aug 2014
54. *Practical Deliberation without Practical Reasons*, Atlantic Region Philosophers' Association, Dalhousie University, Oct 2013
55. *Against Brewer's Critique of Desire*, Annual Graduate Philosophy Conference at UIUC, Mar 2013
56. *Ethical Pragmatism*, International Conference on Applied Ethics, Hokkaido University, Oct 2012
57. *Ethical Pragmatism*, Pittsburgh Area Philosophy Colloquium, Washington and Jefferson College, Sept 2012
58. *Ethical Pragmatism*, Seoul Philosophy Graduate Student Conference, Yonsei University, May 2012
59. *Rational Hate*, Queertopia 3.0, Northwestern University School of Law, May 2010

CONFERENCE COMMENTARY

1. Stephen Smith, *TBA*, Constitution Day Lecture, LSU Law Center, Sept 2021
2. Jalila Jefferson-Bullock, *Returning to Retribution: A More Dignified Approach to Drug Sentencing*, OSU Virtual Workshop, June 2021
3. LUKE HUNT, *THE RETRIEVAL OF LIBERALISM IN POLICING*, Author Meets Critics, APA, Central Division Conference, Chicago, IL, Feb 2020
4. Maybell Romero, *Rural Spaces, Communities of Color, and the "Progressive Prosecutor,"* Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology Symposium, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law, Feb 2020
5. Michael Arjun Banerjee, *No-Trial Executions*, John Mercer Langston Writing Retreat, Howard Law School, Jul 2019
6. Ekow Yankuh, *Punishing the Polity*, Mass Incarceration and Racial Justice Conference, Saint Louis University, Mar 2019
7. Aaron Wolf, *On Saying Something Normative by Ruling Out*, APA, Central Division Conference, Denver, CO, Feb 2019
8. Aaron MacLeod, *The Jury in the Age of Public Rights*, Voegelin Institute Lecture, LSU Law, Jan 2019
9. Leigh Vicens, *Agentive Phenomenology & Moral Responsibility Agnosticism*, Southwestern Philosophical Society Conference, Univ. of Colorado-Denver, Nov 2018
10. Invited Commentator, "Beyond Social Contract Theory" Symposium, APA, Pacific Division Conference, San Diego, CA, Mar 2018
11. Joshua Blanchard, *How to be an Angry Realist*, Philosopher's Cocoon Philosophy Conference, University of Tampa, Oct 2017
12. Invited commentator-at-large, Workshop on Language & Law, Wellesley College, Mar 2017
13. Hillary Nye, *Does Law Exist?*, Legal Philosophy Workshop, Queens University, Jun 2016
14. Thomas Kiefer, *Moral Realism: An Evolutionary Defense*, Chicagoland Graduate Philosophy Conference, University of Chicago, Apr 2016
15. Matthew Flummer, *Ownership and Responsibility*, Philosopher's Cocoon Philosophy Conference, University of Tampa, Nov 2015
16. Trevor Hoppe, *Punishing Sex*, Sexualities Project at Northwestern Workshop, Northwestern University, Apr 2015
17. Nicholas Tebben, *Naturalism and the Agent's Perspective*, Central States Philosophical Association Conference, Northwestern University, Oct 2014
18. Alex Worsnip, *Cryptonormative Judgments*, NUSTEP Conference, Northwestern University, Mar 2014

HONORS, AWARDS, RECOGNITION

Research Grants

LSU ASPIRE Summer Grant, Apr 2019

\$1,000 grant to hire undergrad research assistant for "Natural Punishment"

LSU Manship Summer Research Grant, May 2018

\$5,000 grant to work on "Fuller and the Folk"

Travel Grants

LSU Junior Faculty Travel Grant, Sept 2018

\$750 to present "Moral Stability and Pragmatism" at Yonsei University

LSU Junior Faculty Travel Grant, Sept 2017

\$1,000 to present “Describing Law” at Oxford & Edinburgh
APA Travel Assistance Fund for Philosophers of Color, Dec 2016
\$500 to present “Rorty’s Promise...” at the 2017 Eastern APA
Sexualities Project at Northwestern Grant, Aug 2014
\$400 to present “Rational Hate” at University of Cape Town
Center for Applied Ethics and Philosophy Grant, Oct 2012
¥30,000 to present “Ethical Pragmatism” at Hokkaido University
Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy, May 2012
\$850 to present “Ethical Pragmatism” at Yonsei University

Other Honors & Recognition

Police, Privacy, and Searches, May 2021
Invited to author a post on the Blog of the American Philosophical Association
Interference: Democracy at Risk, Oct 2020
Appeared in documentary as legal expert on US constitutional law & elections
[Ipse Dixit Interview](#), Aug 2020
Interviewed for legal scholarship podcast
President’s Prize, Southwestern Philosophical Society Conference, Nov 2017
\$150 prize for “Three Problems with Metaethical Minimalism”
[Legal-Phi Interview](#), Sept 2017
Interviewed for series on new scholars in legal philosophy
Law and Humanities Fellowship, 2013-2017
Full tuition scholarship with stipend to attend Northwestern Law

TEACHING & SERVICE

Teaching Experience

Penn State Dickinson Law (Fall 2020-present)
Constitutional Law I; Constitutional Law II; Criminal Procedure; Jurisprudence

LSU (Fall 2017-Spring 2020)
Admin. of Criminal Justice I; Constitutional Law Seminar; Philosophy of Criminal Law; Philosophy of Law; Metaethics (grad seminar); Epistemology; Philosophy of Rawls; Intro to Political Philosophy; Ethics

Northwestern University, Dept. of Philosophy (Fall 2012-Spring 2017)
Intro to Political Phil. (2x as TA, 1x as instructor); Intro to Ancient Phil. (as TA)

Illinois Humanities (*college-level program for low-income adults*) (Spring 2016)
Philosophy of Religion

Northwestern Univ., Center for Talent Development (*gifted high school*) (Summer 2016)
Critical Discourse (moral philosophy course); US Law & Politics Honors

Duke University, Talent Identification Program (*gifted h.s.*) (Summer 2014)
Philosophy of Knowledge

Johns Hopkins Univ., Center for Talented Youth (*gifted h.s.*) (Summers 2011-2013)
Ethics; Bioethics (all as TA)

Student Research Supervision

(* indicates I am/was the director or co-director)

In Progress—PSU

*Harison Citrawan, SJD '23

Completed—LSU

*Mary Grace Richardson, JD '19 (“License, Registration, and State Funding, Please’:
Overhauling Louisiana’s Traffic-Ticket Funding Scheme of Public
Defenders”)

*Caroline McCaffrey, JD '20 (“Fairly Exposed: A Proposal to Improve the
Reasonableness Standard for Digital Forensic Searches at the Border”)

Pol Pardini, MA in Phil. '19 (thesis on Sidgwickian ethics)

Christopher Petersen, MA in Phil. '19 (three essays on naturalism)

*Eli Minor, MA in Phil. '19 (three essays on political and personal agency)

Grant Heller, MA in Phil. '20 (three essays on normativity)

*Cameron Simmons, BA in Phil. '20 (thesis on Rawls and unreasonable people)

*Quentin LeBlanc, BA in Phil. '20 (“Collateral Damage & Legitimate Punishment”)

Refereeing

Presses: SUNY University Press

Journals: *Canadian Journal of Law & Jurisprudence*, *Critical Philosophy of Race*, *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, *Journal of Legal Philosophy*, *New Criminal Law Review*, *Social Epistemology*, *Southwestern Philosophy Review*

Conferences: Central States Philosophical Association; Southwest Philosophical Society

Professional Memberships

Member, American Philosophical Association, 2016-present

Member, Richard Rorty Society, 2016-present

Member, Southwest Philosophical Society, 2017-present

Public Service

Commissioner, Truth & Reconciliation Commission, Carlisle Borough, PA, 2021 - present

Institutional Service

Pennsylvania State University

Civil Rights Certificate Advisor, Dickinson Law, 2020-present

Dickinson Law Review Committee, Dickinson Law, 2020-present (chair 2020-present)

Appointments Committee, Dickinson Law, 2020-present
Honor Code Committee, Dickinson Law, 2020-present
1L Faculty Working Group, Dickinson Law, 2020-present
Dickinson Law Representative (Alternate), AALS, 2020-present
Dickinson Law Faculty Senator (Replacement), Fall 2021
Board Member & Dickinson Law Rep., MidPenn Legal Services, 2021-present

Louisiana State University

Associate Director of Undergraduate Study, Philosophy Department, 2017-2020
Shirley Award Committee, Philosophy Department, 2017-2020; (chair 2018-2020)
Advisor for Undergrad Philosophy Club, Philosophy Department, 2017-2020
Student Educational Policy Committee, Law Center, 2017-2020
Faculty Scholarship Committee, Law Center, 2019-2020
Advisory Board, LSU Institute for Ethics, 2017-2020
Recruitment, Philosophy Department, 2017-2018