

Memorial Notice:

Anita Silvers (1940-2019)

Ásta Sveinsdóttir

San Francisco State University



Photo Courtesy of Department of Philosophy, San Francisco State University

Professor Anita Silvers was an institution in professional philosophy. She was Professor and former Chair of the Philosophy Department at San Francisco State University and a nationally recognized advocate for disability rights. Disabled by polio as a child, Silvers was a leading advocate for equality for persons with disabilities. On the faculty at SF State since 1967, Silvers worked to make access and disability services available on California college campuses. In 1980, she was appointed by President Jimmy Carter to serve on the National Council on the Humanities, the governing board of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

She served for 26 years as Secretary-Treasurer of the American Philosophical Association (Pacific Division). Silvers received the inaugural California Faculty Association Human Rights Award in 1989 and served as a Senior Fulbright Scholar in New Zealand in 2005. In 2009 she was awarded the Quinn Prize for service to the profession by the APA, in 2013 the Lebowitz Prize for Philosophical Achievement and Contribution by Phi Beta Kappa and the APA, and in 2017 she received the Wang Family Excellence Award for extraordinary achievements in the California State University system.

Silvers's groundbreaking scholarship helped to establish disability rights as an important subfield of philosophy; she is regarded as an authority on medical ethics, bioethics, disability theory, social philosophy, aesthetics, and feminism. As a teacher and mentor she changed the lives of countless students, scholars, and activists. She will be deeply missed by her students, colleagues, and the many people she inspired. A memorial will be announced at a later date.

The ASA Newsletter welcomes memorial statements from members for publication in the August 2019 issue. These should be submitted no later than August 1.