

## Abbreviated curriculum vitae

### Peg O'Connor

Department of Philosophy  
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#thesoberphilosopher

#### EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy, 1996, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

**Dissertation:** *Back to the Rough Ground! Wittgensteinian Moral Realism*  
Co-advisors: Douglas Lewis and Naomi Scheman

Master of Arts, 1993, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

Bachelor of Arts, 1987, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT

**Areas of Specialization:** Metaethics, Normative ethics, Applied ethics, and Wittgenstein

**Areas of Competence:** Feminist philosophy, Social and political philosophy, and Addiction Studies

#### PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

2024-	Raymond and Florence Sponberg Professor of Ethics
2011-15, 2016-18	Chairperson, Department of Philosophy, Gustavus Adolphus College
2007-	Professor of Philosophy and Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies
2004-2005	External Fellow, University of Connecticut Humanities Institute
2003-2007	Associate Professor of Women's Studies, Gustavus Adolphus College
1999-2004, 2005-2011	Director, Women's Studies Program, Gustavus Adolphus College
2000-2003	Assistant Professor of Women's Studies, Gustavus Adolphus College
1996-1999	Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Gustavus Adolphus College
1995-1996	Instructor of Philosophy, Moorhead State University
1994-1995	Instructor of Philosophy, University of Minnesota
1992-1994	Teaching Assistant, University of Minnesota
1988-1990	Production Assistant, Wesleyan University Press

#### PUBLICATIONS

##### Single Author Books:

*Recovering Character: Knowing How to Belong to Yourself* (New York: Morgan James) forthcoming fall 2026/spring 2027

*The Sober Philosopher Workbook for Exploring Addiction and Creating Recovery* (Boston, MA: Wildhouse Publications 2023.

*Higher and Friendly Powers: Transforming Addiction and Suffering* (Boston, MA: Wildhouse Publications) 2022.  
Finalist Next Generation Indie Book Awards

*Life on the Rocks: Finding Meaning in Addiction and Recovery* (Las Vegas, NV: Central Recovery Press) 2016.

*Morality and Our Complicated Form of Life: Feminist Wittgensteinian Metaethics* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press) 2008.

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*Oppression and Responsibility: A Wittgensteinian Approach to Social Practices and Moral Theory* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press) 2002. Nominated for the Biennial Book Award of the American Philosophical Association.

**Edited Books:**

*Feminist Interpretations of Ludwig Wittgenstein*, co-edited with Naomi Scheman (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press) 2002.

*Oppression, Privilege, and Resistance: Theoretical Perspectives on Racism, Sexism and Heterosexism*, co-edited with Lisa Heldke (New York: McGraw-Hill) 2005.

**Journal Articles and Book Chapters:**

“Whippet Good? William James, Nitrous Oxide, and Igniting the Yes Function,” *The Palgrave Handbook of Psychoactive Drug Use*, ed Robert Lovering (New York: Palgrave) 2025.

“Substance Use Disorder and Toxic Relationships,” *Toxic Love Disorder: The Psychology of Toxic Relationships*, ed. Linda Greyman (Kolkata, India: The Minds Journal) 2023.

“Women Overdosing in the Pandemic,” *International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics* Vol 15, no 1: 106-109.

“Philosophy and Addiction: Understanding and Transforming Suffering,” *Philosophy for the Real World: An Introduction to Field Philosophy with Case Studies and Practical Strategies*, eds. Evelyn Brister and Robert Frodeman (New York: Routledge) 2020.

“Power in the Counseling Relationship: The Role of Ignorance,” with Izaak Williams. *Journal of Human Services: Training, Research, and Practice* Vol 4, No 2, Article 3. <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/jhstrp/vol4/iss2/3> 2019.

“Our Stories, Our Knowledge: The Importance of Addicts’ Epistemic Authority in Treatment,” *The Routledge Handbook of the Philosophy and Science of Addiction*, eds. Hanna Pickard and Serge Ahmed (London: Routledge) 2018.

“The Fallacy of the Hijacked Brain,” *The Stone Reader*, eds. Simon Critchley and Peter Catapano (New York: Norton/Liveright) 2015.

“In the Cave: Philosophy and Addiction,” *The Stone Reader*, eds. Simon Critchley and Peter Catapano (New York: Norton/Liveright) fall 2015.

“The Cartesian Mind in the Abused Body: Dissociation and the Mind Body Dualism,” *Dimensions of Pain*, ed. Lisa Kall (New York: Routledge) 2012.

“Just Food” in *The Spirit of Service: Integrating Service Learning, Spirituality and Social Justice*, eds. Carolyn O’Grady and Brian Johnson (Bolton, MA: Anker Press) 2006.

“Swimming Against the Mainstream Gay and Lesbian Political Agenda,” in *New Political Philosophies: Labor, Social Movements and Intervention*, ed Greg Moses (Radical Philosophy Review, Supplementary Volume)

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2006.

"Moving to New Boroughs: Transforming the World by Inventing Language-games," in *Feminist Interpretations of Wittgenstein*, eds. Scheman and O'Connor (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press 2002: 432-449).

"Warning! Contents under Heterosexual Pressure," *Hypatia* (Summer 1997) vol. 12, no. 3: 183-88.

"Locke's Challenge to Innate Practical Principles Revisited," *The Locke Newsletter* 25: 41-51.

"When Docile Bodies Dance," *Sinister Wisdom* (Spring/Summer 1993): 26-33.

"Clarence Thomas and the Survival of Sexual Harassment," *Locating Power: Proceedings of the Berkeley Women and Language Conference* (Berkeley, CA: The Berkeley Women and Language Group, 1992): 463-468.

#### **Book Reviews:**

*Reading Wittgenstein with Anscombe, Going on to Ethics* Cora Diamond *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 58:2 (2020): 412-413.

*Wittgenstein & Natural Religion* Gordon Graham *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 53:4 792-793.

*Women in Philosophy: What Needs to Change?* Hutchinson and Jenkins, eds. *Notre Dame Philosophical Review* 2014

*Ludwig Wittgenstein on Race, Gender, and Cultural Identity* Bela Szabados. *University of Toronto Quarterly* 82:3.

*Wittgenstein's Account of Truth* Sara Ellenbogen. *The Review of Metaphysics* 58:3

*Line Drawings: Defining Women Through Feminist Practice* Cressida Heyes. *Hypatia* 20:2

*Wittgenstein: A Feminist Interpretation* Alessandra Tanesini. *Hypatia* 21:3 207-210.

#### **Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy:**

Co-author of "Topics in Feminism" <http://www.plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-topics/>

#### **Springer Encyclopedia of Food and Agricultural Ethics:**

"Alcohol Abstinence and Sobriety" <http://www.springerreference.com/docs/html/chapterdbid/309513.html>

"Food Addiction" <http://www.springerreference.com/docs/html/chapterdbid/318269.html>

#### **Opinion Pieces/Guest Columns:**

##### **Minneapolis Star Tribune:**

"Could AA Help More People If It Weren't Christian-centric?" <https://strib.gift/pvx9lwfpj>

##### **USA Today:**

"Not your Grandma's Weed: Why Potency Limits Must Be Part of Any Push to Legalize Cannabis" <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/policing/2022/08/04/legal-marijuana-needs-potency->

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**The Daily Herald (syndicated by Darik News):**

“Involuntary Treatment Labels Addiction as a Moral Failure” <https://www.heraldnet.com/opinion/comment-involuntary-treatment-labels-addiction-as-moral-failure/>

**Dallas Morning Herald:**

“Spiritual But Not Religious?” [Spiritual, not religious? Here’s how that could help or hurt \(dallasnews.com\)](#)

**MinnPost:**

“We Need Federal Cannabis Regulation” <https://www.minnpost.com/community-voices/2024/04/we-need-federal-cannabis-regulation/>

“Deaths of Despair Are Deaths of Exploitation” <https://www.minnpost.com/community-voices/2024/01/deaths-of-despair-are-really-deaths-of-exploitation/>

“Stimulant Misuse: There’s a Storm Brewing on Every Campus” <https://www.minnpost.com/community-voices/2015/10/stimulant-misuse-there-perfect-storm-brewing-every-college-campus/>

**The New York Times:**

“No Quick Fix or Simple Approach Will Do” <http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/02/10/what-is-addiction/no-quick-fixes-or-simple-approach-to-addiction>

“The Double Bind” <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/09/06/the-double-bind/?ref=opinion>

“The Light at the End of Suffering” <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/04/07/the-light-at-the-end-of-suffering/>

“The Fallacy of the ‘Hijacked Brain’” <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/10/the-hijacked-brain/>

“In the Cave: Philosophy and Addiction” <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/01/08/out-of-the-cave-philosophy-and-addiction/>

**Magazine Articles:**

“Are You Deceiving Yourself,” in *Psychology Today* January/February 2022: 40-41.

“Empathy over Ambush,” in *Psychology Today* May/June 2021: 34-35.

“Two Words to Stop Saying,” in *Psychology Today* July/August 2015: 19.

“Why Do Addicts Need a Sense of Authority over Their Own Narratives,” in *Psychology Today* January/February 2015: 42-43.

“Searching for the Self and Other Unicorns,” in *Psychology Today* November/December 2014: 50-51.

**Television:**

“Healthy Living Program,” The Christian Broadcasting Network September 6, 2022.

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<https://www1.cbn.com/video/show/2022/09/5/healthy-living-september-6-2022>

“Gay at the Games: Russia, Rainbows, and Repression,” *The Agenda with Steve Paikin*, February 10, 2014.  
<http://theagenda.tv.org/episode/200258/gay-at-the-games>

“Putting Yourself out There: Addiction and Public Life,” *The Agenda with Steve Paikin*, May 13, 2013.  
<http://ww3.tv.org/video/191254/addiction-and-public-life>

“Aiming at Addiction,” *The Agenda with Steve Paikin*, April 3, 2012. <http://feeds.tv.org/tvo/TxZN>

#### **Radio:**

“Drugs and Consciousness,” Free Thinking BBC Radio, October 9, 2018  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0000nll>

“A Philosophical Look at Addiction and Recovery,” Minnesota Public Radio with Tom Weber, May 27, 2016  
<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2016/05/27/life-on-the-rocks>

“Study Drug Use Driven by Misperception,” Minnesota Public Radio with Tom Weber  
<http://www.mprnews.org/story/2015/11/23/bcst-study-drug-use-driven-by-misperceptions->

#### **Audio Podcasts (Selected):**

“Emotional Sobriety,” <https://pod.link/1566814637/episode/4b794ff8a6334b3f1075fef52d9244ff>

“Inspired Minds,” <https://pod.fo/e/15488c>

“Cracking Addiction,” <https://podcasts.apple.com/dk/podcast/higher-and-friendly-powers/id1579789505?i=1000583962707>

“Flourishing after Addiction,” <https://player.fm/series/flourishing-after-addiction-with-carl-erik-fisher/transforming-addiction-and-suffering-with-philosophy-with-prof-peg-oconnor>

“Addiction and the Family,” <https://addictionandthefamily.fireside.fm/31>

“Beyond Belief Sobriety,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oWlAnBC8oKI>

“Soberpod,” <https://www.soberpod.com/podcast/2022/9/30/higher-and-friendly-powers>

#### **Online Column:**

“Philosophy Stirred, Not Shaken,” on *Psychology Today* <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/philosophy-stirred-not-shaken> (2,367,000 total views)

#### **BOOK MANUSCRIPT**

“Hindering the Essential Arts of Personhood: The Moral Crisis of Childhood Trauma” (completed draft)

#### **AWARDS, GRANTS, AND FELLOWSHIPS**

A.A. Heckman Endowed Fellowship, Hazelden Foundation 2012

Faculty Scholarship Award, Gustavus Adolphus College 2010

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University of Connecticut Humanities Institute (\$40,000 stipend) 2004-2005  
 Research, Scholarship, and Creativity Grant, Gustavus Adolphus College 2015-16; 2011-12; 2008-09; 2004-2005;  
 2001-2002; 1998-1999  
 Community Service Learning Grant, American Philosophical Association Fall 2002  
 HECUA (Higher Education Consortium of Urban Affairs), Fellow Fall 2001

### **SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND COMMENTARIES (since 2015)**

#### **Refereed International, National and Regional Conferences:**

“Fractured Persons: Wholeness and Unity in Survivors of Sexual Violence,” Philosophy of Psychiatry and Lived Experience Conference, March 2025

“Hindering the Essential Arts of Personhood,” Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, March 2025

“Drug Use and Addiction Are Politic-level Phenomena Requiring a Different Kind of Care. Presented at:

- Feminist Ethics and Social Theory Conference, October 2022
- Relations of Care across and after Worlds, May 2021.

“Why First Person Stories Are So Important in Recovery from Addiction” Humanities in Medicine Symposium at the Mayo Clinic, October 2017.

#### **Selected Invited Presentations:**

“The Many Guises of Self-Deception,” Reach for Resilience, North Dakota Department of Human Services and Substance Abuse Mental Health Services of America (SAMHSA), December 2022.

“Addiction: A Hallmark of the Times?” Downeast Colloquy, August 2020.  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1O0N9KfY7Q3WuIpk6TtcF50jfxESwn6Dp/view?usp=sharing>

“Philosophy and Addiction: Helping to Make Sense of Suffering.” Public Philosophy Network Conference, Michigan State University, October 2019.

“The Moral Crisis of Childhood Trauma.” Keynote address at Philosophical Engagements with Trauma Conference, University of North Carolina Asheville, March 2019.

“Fatalism, Indifference to Self, and Relapse: Not Caring if You Live or Die.” Program in Cognitive Science, Princeton University, September 2018.

“Shame and Addiction: Feeling as if You *Must* Use.” Invited Symposium at the Society for Psychology and Philosophy, University of Michigan, July 2018.

“Our Stories, Our Knowledge: The Importance of Addicts’ Epistemic Authority in Treatment.” University of Colorado/Denver, Haber Lecture, April 2017.

“Living in the Cave: Addiction and Shame.” Presented at:

- Arlington Street Church, Boston, MA April 2017
- Department of Philosophy, University of St. Catherine, St. Paul, MN November 2016.