

CHRISTIA MERCER
Curriculum Vitae- Short

Gustave M. Berne Professor of Philosophy
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HIGHER EDUCATION

Princeton University, PhD, Philosophy, 1989
Universität Münster (Münster, Germany), Fulbright Scholar, 1984-85
Gregorian University (Rome, Italy), Latin, 1980-81
Rutgers University, Art History and Philosophy, 1978

PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

Gustave M. Berne Professor, Department of Philosophy, Columbia University, 2004-present.
Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, Columbia University, 1999-2004.
Chair, Literature Humanities, Columbia University, 2010-14.
Director, Institute for Research on Women and Gender, Columbia University, 2000-01.
(Visiting) Professor, Department of Philosophy, Oslo, Norway, Spring, 1998.
Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Columbia University, 1991-1997.

TEACHING AWARDS

Mark van Doren Teaching Award, 2012.
Great Teacher Award, Society of Columbia Graduates, Columbia College, 2008.

ACADEMIC AWARDS AND HONORS

Radcliffe Institute Fellowship, 2018-19 (also awarded Fellowships at Stanford Humanities Center, Princeton Institute for Advanced Studies, and American Academy in Berlin).
Funds from the Marc Sanders Foundation, which “recognizes excellence in philosophy,” to create the Marc Sanders Justice-in-Philosophy Initiative.
Visiting Professorship, Harvard University, Villa I Tatti, Fiesole, Italy, Fall, 2015.
American Council for Learned Societies, Fellowship, 2015-16.
Folger Library Fellowship, Folger Library, Washington D.C., Spring 2016.
2015 Public Voices Thought Leadership Fellowship Program
Visiting Professor, Research Project in the History of Philosophy and History of Ideas 600 BC-1800 AD, University of Oslo, 2012-15; <http://www.hf.uio.no/ifikk/english/research/projects/history-of-philosophy/index.html>
Guggenheim Fellowship, 2012-13.
Senior Fellowship, Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Germany, 2012-13.
Resident Fellow, American Academy, Rome, Italy, Spring, 2013.
Fellowship, National Humanities Center, Research Triangle, Fall, 2012.
Sovern/Columbia Affiliated Fellowship, American Academy, Rome, Italy, May, 2011.
North American Editor, *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 2002-present.
Guest Professor, Centre Alexandre Koyré, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, December 2003, November 05, December 07.
Ernst Cassirer Lectures, Ernst Cassirer Guest Professorship, Philosophy Faculty, University of Hamburg, Spring 2006.
Guest Professor, Seminar für Geistesgeschichte und Philosophie der Renaissance, University of Munich, Munich, Germany, 2003.
National Endowment for the Humanities, Fellowship, Spring 2002.

Herzog August Bibliothek, Fellowship, Wolfenbüttel, Summer 2002.
 Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst, Fellowship, Fall 2001.
 American Council of Learned Societies, Fellowship for Recent Recipients of the Ph.D., 1990-91.
 Fulbright Scholarship, Leibniz Archives, Münster, West Germany, 1984-85; and Fulbright Scholarship
 Extension, Fall, 1985.

CURRENT AREAS OF RESEARCH

Early modern philosophy, Leibniz, the history of women in philosophy.

Main Current Projects:

General editor, *Oxford Philosophical Concepts*. For more on the series and the volumes, see
<http://www.oxford-philosophical-concepts.com>

Oxford New Histories of Philosophy. Book series with Oxford University Press that has begun to publish
 collections of primary materials and collections of critical essays on topics and figures that have gone
 unstudied in the history of philosophy. <https://oxfordnewhistoriesofphilosophy.wordpress.com>

The Philosophy of Anne Conway, monograph on the philosophy of the English Seventeenth-century, Anne
 Conway. Will appear in *Oxford New Histories of Philosophy*.

New translation and edition of Anne Conway's *Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, with
 Andrew Arlig, Marcy Lascano, and Jasper Reid. Will appear in *Oxford New Histories of Philosophy*.

Feeling the Way to Truth: Women, Reason, and the Development of Modern Philosophy, monograph arguing that core
 assumptions about seventeenth-century philosophy need to be reconsidered and that the writings of medieval
 and early modern women play a much more significant part in the history of philosophy than has been
 recognized.

Platonisms in Early Modern Thought, monograph the diversity of Platonisms that form the background to early
 modern thought and identify the range of Platonist assumptions underling early modern philosophy,
 theology, and art.

PUBLICATIONS: OP-EDS

Interviewed on NPR about the importance of books in prisons.
<http://www.wbur.org/onpoint/2018/02/20/criminal-justice-reform-this-year>

“Reading gives people in prison hope. But some states want to take their books away,” NBC News
<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/reading-gives-people-prison-hope-some-states-want-take-their-ncna840806>

“Descartes is Not Our Father,” New York Times
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/25/opinion/descartes-is-not-our-father.html>

“Gender, Class, and Incarceration,” MS Magazine
<http://msmagazine.com/blog/2016/09/16/gender-class-and-incarceration/>

“Never mind a second chance. Our incarcerated women need a first one,” Guardian
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/aug/17/us-women-prison-population-crime-rates>

CBS News Report about higher education in prison focused on my class:

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/new-york-state-prisons-expanding-higher-education-program-for-prison-inmates/>

“Update, A Response to CCA’s Request for Corrections: Really?”

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2015/07/15/columbia-university-divesting-from-private-prison-companies-why-other-schools-should-too/>

“Columbia University divesting from private prison companies. Why other schools should too,” Washington Post

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2015/07/15/columbia-university-divesting-from-private-prison-companies-why-other-schools-should-too/>

“The Lessons of Juneteenth still matter 150 years later,” Washington Post.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2015/06/18/the-lessons-of-juneteenth-still-matter-130-years-later/>

“Radical Pop-Up Schools: A new way to reach educationally disadvantaged communities,” Washington Post.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2015/06/16/radical-pop-up-schools-a-new-way-to-reach-educationally-disadvantaged-communities/>

“Philosophy’s Gender Bias,” Washington Post.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2015/04/28/philosophys-gender-bias-for-too-long-scholars-say-women-have-been-ignored/>

“I Teach Philosophy at Columbia but the best students I have are inmates,” Washington Post.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2015/03/24/i-teach-philosophy-at-columbia-but-the-best-students-i-have-are-inmates/>

“Sorry, Fox: Obama Was Right About Christianity’s ‘Terrible Deeds,’” Essay against Islamophobia, Talking-Points Memo.

<http://talkingpointsmemo.com/cafe/sorry-fox-obama-was-right-about-christianitys-terrible-deeds>

“Hard Truths about Prison Sexual Violence, *Takepart*

<http://www.takepart.com/article/2015/03/05/op-ed-hard-truths-about-prison-sexual-violence>

Recent PUBLICATIONS, ARTICLES /CHAPTERS

Early Modern Philosophy: Mind, Matter, and Mechanism, co-edited with Eileen O’Neill, Oxford University Press, 2005.

Leibniz’s Metaphysics: Its Origin and Development, Cambridge University Press, 2001, 528 pp; paperback edition: 2006.

“The Silent Revolution in Early Modern Philosophy: New Methodological Categories for a New Time,”

Journal of the History of Philosophy, forthcoming.

“Conway’s Response to Cartesianism,” *Oxford Handbook of Descartes and Cartesianism*, eds. Steven Nadler, Tad M. Schmaltz, and Delphine Antoine-Mahut, forthcoming.

“Anne Conway’s Metaphysics of Sympathy,” for *Feminist History of Philosophy: The Recovery and Evaluation of Women’s Philosophical Thought*, eds. Eileen O’Neill and Marcy Lascano (New York: Springer), forthcoming.

“Descartes’ Debt to Teresa of Ávila, Or Why We Should Work on Women in the History of Philosophy,” *Phil Studies*, August, 2016.

“Seventeenth-Century Universal Sympathy: Stoicism, Platonism, Leibniz, and Conway,” *Sympathy: A History*, ed. Eric Schliesser (New York: Oxford University Press), 2015, 108-39.

“The Methodology of the Meditations: Tradition and Innovation,” *Cambridge Companion to Descartes’ Meditations*, ed. David Cunniff, CUP, 2014, 23-47.

“Prefacing the Theodicy,” *Essays on the Theodicy*, eds. Larry Jorgensen and Sam Newlands, OUP, 2014, 13-42.

“Knowledge and Suffering in Early Modern Philosophy: G.W. Leibniz and Anne Conway,” *Emotional Minds*, ed. Sabrina Ebbersmeyer, De Gruyter, 2012.

“Platonism in Early Modern Natural Philosophy: The Case of Leibniz and Conway,” *Neoplatonic Natural Philosophy*, eds. Christoph Horn and James Wilberding, Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 103-26.

“The Platonism at the Core of Leibniz’s Metaphysics: God and Knowledge,” *Platonism and the Origins of Modernity: The Platonic Tradition and the Rise of Modern Philosophy*, ed. S. Hutton, Ashgate Press, 2008.

“Leibniz on Mathematics, Methodology, and the Good: A Reconsideration of the Place of Mathematics in Leibniz’s Philosophy,” *Journal of Early Science and Medicine*, issue on mathematics and rhetoric, ed. by G. Cifoletti, October, 2006.

“Leibniz’s Platonism and Theory of Expression,” *Forms of Platonism: From the Heritage of Ficino to the Cambridge Platonists*, *Journal of Istituto Nazionale de Studi sul Rinascimento*, Florence, 2007.

“Leibniz,” *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Donald Borchert, ed., 2nd edition. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2006.

“Material Difficulties: Matter and the Metaphysics of Resurrection in Early Modern Philosophy,” *Matter and Materialism in the Aristotelian Tradition*, *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, Vol. 26, No. 2, 2005, pp. 123-135.

INVITED PAPERS, PROFESSIONAL AND PUBLIC

“How Women Changed the Course of Philosophy,” Dutch Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, May 2018.

“God’s Absence, Or Why Life Needs to Suck Sometimes,” Bombay Beach Biennale, March 2018.

Crossing Boundaries Lecture Series, Michigan State University, February 2018.

“Crossing Boundaries/Rethinking Justice: The U.S. Prison Industrial Complex and Its Undermining of Democracy;” “Crossing Boundaries/Rethinking the History of Philosophy, or How Women Changed the Course of Philosophy.”

“Descartes’ Demons and Debts, or The Importance of Studying Women in the History of Philosophy,”

- Philosophy Department, University of California, Berkeley, October 2017
- “Affective Metaphysics: Women and the Development of Philosophy,” Minorities and Philosophy Lecture, University of Texas, Austin, September 2017
- “How Women Changed the Course of Philosophy, 1300-1700,” Brooklyn Public Philosophers, Brooklyn Public Library, April 2017.
- “Suffering and Truth,” Bombay Beach Biennale, Bombay Beach, CA, April 2017.
- “Criminal Justice, Mass Incarceration and the Undermining of Democracy,” 55th annual Frank Fraser Potter Lecturer, School of Politics, Philosophy, and Public Affairs along with the Thomas S. Foley Institute for Public Policy and Public Service at Washington State University, March 2017.
- “Philosophy and Incarceration,” Conference, Yale University, February 2017.
- “Agency and Suffering: Women Then and Now.” Three lectures: (1) “Meditating on Truth: How women changed the course of philosophy 1300-1600 and laid the groundwork for Descartes’ *Meditations*,” (2) “Early modern women, suffering and agency: The Case of Anne Conway (1631-79);” and (3) “Race, Gender, and Suffering in the Prison Industrial Complex.” Capen Lectures, State University of New York, University at Buffalo, October 2016.
- “The Prison Industrial Complex and the Undermining of American Democracy,” Public Lecture, Democracy and Public Philosophy, Villanova University, April 2015.
- “Conway and Happiness,” Conference on Happiness in Early Modern Philosophy, University of Madison, March, 2016.
- “Conway and Seventeenth-Century Philosophy,” Invited Symposium, American Philosophical Association, Chicago, March, 2016.
- “Rethinking Rationalism and Early Modern Philosophy,” Department of Philosophy, Indiana University, February, 2016.
- “There’s No Excuse: Philosophy Courses Can Easily Be More Inclusive,” Workshop on Diversifying the Canon, Princeton University, February, 2016.
- “Feeling the Way to Truth, The Real Story about the Development of Early Modern Philosophy,” The Inaugural Margaret Dauler Wilson Occasional Lecture, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, February, 2016.
- “A God In and For All Creatures: Anne Conway’s Radical Notion of Divinity,” Twelfth NYU Conference on Issues in Modern Philosophy, “God,” NYU November, 2015.
- “Feeling the Way to Truth: Late Medieval Women and the Development of Early Modern Philosophy,” Department of Philosophy, Kontanz, October, 2015.
- “Methodology in the History of Philosophy,” Keynote Speaker, History of Philosophy Society, De Paul University, Chicago, May, 2015.
- “How Women Changed the Course of Philosophy, 1300-1700, Sprague & Taylor Annual Lecture, Brooklyn College, April 2015.
- “Early Modern Women Philosophers,” Symposium, APA, Pacific, April 2015
- “Sympathy: Conway, Leibniz,” Seminar, Society for Yearly Modern Philosophy at Yale, March, 2015.
- “Rethinking Early Modern Rationalism: The Lessons of Anne Conway's Philosophy,” *Symposium on Women in Modern Philosophy*, APA, Pacific Meeting, April, 2015.
- “Conway and Cartesianism,” Descartes Society, APA, Eastern Division Meeting, December, 2014.
- “Conway on the Identity of Individuals,” Symposium on Substantial Unity: Conway, Locke and Leibniz,” APA, Eastern Division Meeting, December, 2014.
- Workshop on the History of Philosophy, Keynote Speaker, University of Tromsø, Norway, December 2014.
- “Feeling the Way to Truth: Women, Reason, and the Development of Early Modern Rationalism,” Philosophers Speak Lecture Series, Seton Hall University, November, 2014.
- “Feeling Our Way to Truth: Women, Reason, and the Real Story about Early Modern Rationalism,” Sue Weinberg Lecture, SWIP, City University of New York, October, 2014.
- “Reconsidering Early Modern Rationalism,” Seminar, University of Oslo, Norway, May, 2014.

- “Radical Rationalism in Seventeenth Century Philosophy: The Case of Anne Conway,” Colloquium, Temple University, May, 2014.
- “Suffering, Sympathy, and Meditation: A Reconsideration of Seventeenth-Century Rationalism,” Colloquium, University of Notre Dame, April, 2014.
- “Suffering and Reason in Early Modern Philosophy,” Colloquium, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, March, 2014.
- “Suffering, Sympathy, and Ultimate Truths,” Colloquium, Texas A & M, February, 2014.
- “Wollstonecraft,” Lecture, Core Curriculum, Columbia University, February, 2014.
- Seminar on Anne Conway’s Radical Rationalism, Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem, Israel, January, 2014.
- “Creating Women *ex nihilo* or Why It’s So Hard to Do feminist History of Philosophy: The Case of Anne Conway,” Invited participant for Panel on Feminist History and Philosophy of Science, Society for Analytic Feminism, American Philosophical Association, December 2013.
- “Recruiting and Retaining Black Philosophers,” Invited Participant, Panel Discussion arranged by Committee on the Status of Black Philosophers, American Philosophical Association, December 2013.
- “Meditating and Seventeenth-Century Philosophy,” University of Oslo, November, 2013.
- “Knowledge, Evil, and the Rationalists,” Lecture, University of Helsinki, November, 2013.
- “The Philosophy of Anne Conway,” Lecture and Seminar, University of Helsinki, November, 2013.
- “The Epistemological Problem of Evil,” Graduate Conference, University of Oslo, November, 2013.
- “Evelyn Fox Keller’s *Reflections on Gender and Science*,” Discussion with E.F. Keller, Institute for Research on Women and Gender, Columbia University, October, 2013.
- Panel Discussion on The Role of the Humanities in Higher Education, *Many Minds, Many Stripes*, University Wide Conference, Princeton University, October 17-19, 2013.
- “Suffering and Sympathy: Three Lectures,” All Souls Unitarian Church, All Souls, Unitarian Church, Series of 3 lectures, September, 2013.
- “The Ecstasy of Knowledge: Reason and Passion, Rome and Beyond,” American Academy of Rome, May 2013.
- “Knowledge and Evil,” The Hebrew University, March, 2013.
- “Ultimate Knowledge and How to Get It: Descartes and Leibniz,” Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, March, 2013.
- “The Epistemological Problem of Evil,” University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway, January 2013.
- “Rationality, Rationalism, and the Place of Passions in Anne Conway,” Workshop on (Ir)Rationality and the Passions in Early Modern Thought, Princeton, December 2012
- “Evil and Knowledge,” Duke University, November 2012.
- “Anne Conway’s Metaphysics of Sympathy,” Discussion in Alan Nelson’s Seminar, University of North Carolina.
- “Sympathy in the History of Philosophy,” North Carolina State, October 2012.
- “Sympathy in Early Modern Philosophy,” Workshop for *Sympathy: A History*, Virginia, June 2012.
- Commentator, “Symposium: Early Modern Women Philosophers,” American Philosophical Association, December 2011.
- “Leibniz, Spinoza, and the Epistemological Problem of Evil,” Philosophy Department, University of Texas, Austin, October, 2011.
- “Activity and Nature: Ficino, Mechanism, and Early Modern Philosophy,” Princeton-Penn-Columbia Graduate Conference in the History of Philosophy, Keynote Speaker, April 2011.
- “Leibniz and Your Divine Perfection,” Public Lecture, St. John’s College, Santa Fe, April 2011.
- “Leibniz’s Activity,” Keynote Speaker, Workshop on Early Modern Philosophy, Fordham University, February, 2011.
- “Spiritual Spaces: Philosophy, Theology, and Architecture,” All Souls, Unitarian Church, Series of 3 Lectures, January, 2011
- “Women Philosophers in the Curriculum,” Conference in Honor of Sue Weinberg, CUNY Graduate Center,

- October, 2010.
- “Leibniz on Discovering God in Nature,” International Symposium, *300 Years Since Publication of Essais de Théodicée*, Reception and Transformation, Berlin/Potsdam, October 8-11, 2010.
- “Knowledge and Suffering in Early Modern Philosophy: G.W. Leibniz and Anne Conway,” International Conference on *Emotional Minds: Passions and the Limits of Pure Inquiry in the Seventeenth Century*, University of Munich, Munich, October 14-16, 2010.
- “Leibniz and the Epistemological Problem of Evil,” *Leibniz’s Theodicy: Context and Content*, University of Notre Dame, September 2010.
- “Galileo on Reality and Science,” Italian Academy, Public Lecture, February 11, 2010.
- “Platonism and the Spiritual Quest,” All Souls, Unitarian Church, Series of 3 lectures, January, 2010.
- “Seventeenth-Century Platonists and the De-Partitioning of the Soul,” Conference on Partition of the Soul in Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy, TOPOI, Humboldt University, Berlin, October, 2009.
- “Losers: Good Examples of Bad Scientist, Café Humanities, Public Lecture, June 15, 2009.
- “Mental Gymnastics: How Minds Rescued the ‘New’ Philosophy,” New England Conference in Early Modern Philosophy, Harvard University, May 29-30.
- “Core Moments: Intersection of Philosophy, Literature and Art,” Mini-Core Course, Three Seminars, February-March, 2009.
- “Leibniz and Spinoza on Epistemological Optimism,” Zeno Lecture, Zeno Lecture Series in Philosophy, Universities of Leiden and Utrecht, The Netherlands, April 2009.
- “Sympathy as a Core Ingredient in Early Modern Philosophy: Leibniz and Conway,” Funky Causation Workshop, Leiden Institute of Philosophy, April 2009.
- “Divinity, Power, and Nature: Marsilio Ficino and Early Modern Philosophy,” John-Hopkins University, March 23 2009.
- “You ARE God: The Beauty and Weirdness of Leibniz’s Philosophy,” St. John’s College, Annapolis, Maryland, February 2009.
- “Anne Conway’s Metaphysics of Method,” New York/New Jersey Research Group, December 2008.
- “Ultimate Knowledge and How to Get It,” Colloquium for First Year Class, Quest University, Vancouver, B.C., September 2008.

(Recent) ACADEMIC SERVICE (2010-16)

- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Editor of Women in the History of Philosophy, 2018- present
- Decarceration Subcommittee, Just Societies Initiative, Columbia University, 2018.
- Executive Committee, Institute for Research on Women, Gender and Sexuality, 2016-18.
- Teacher at Taconic Correctional Facility, Spring 2015 - Spring 2017 and in Metropolitan Detention Center, Fall 2017; Created and maintained Mini-courses at MDC, Justice-in-Education, Center for Justice, Columbia University.
- Member, EPPC Committee on Innovative Teaching and Learning, 2016-17.
- Faculty Adviser, Students’ Audit, Columbia University, 2015-present.
- NEH Fellowship Committee, 2016.
- Organizer, Conference, “Philosophy’s Past, 1300-1850,” February, 2017.
- Organizer, Conference, “Exploring the Philosophy of Émilie Du Châtelet,” June 1-3, 2016
- Villa I Tatti, Short-Term Fellowship Reader, 2016.
- Whiting Fellowship Committee, 2016.
- National Humanities Center, Selection Committee, February 2014.
- Chair, Literature Humanities, Core Curriculum, Columbia University, 2010-12; 2013-14
- Developed with Columbia College Students new Core Curriculum Website
- Executive Committee, American Philosophical Association, 2012-15.
- North American Editor, *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 2003-present.

- Chair, Literature Humanities: Masterpieces of Western Literature and Philosophy, 2010-12, 2013-14. This is an interdisciplinary course that all first-year Columbia College students take. There are roughly 1200 students and 60 instructors. The chair oversees interdisciplinary lectures and discussions, selects preceptors, and sets intellectual standards.
- Curator, Student Projects, *Homer in Harlem*. This is a year-long series of events celebrating the work of the Harlem artist, Romare Bearden, especially his collages, *Black Odyssey*.
- “Recruiting and Retaining Black Philosophers,” Invited Participant, Panel Discussion arranged by Committee on the Status of Black Philosophers, American Philosophical Association, December 2013.
- Workshops for books in Oxford Philosophical Concepts: *Space: A History*, *Faculties: A History*, *Health: A History*, *Evil: A History*.
- Developed an interdisciplinary website for Literature Humanities and the Core Curriculum of Columbia College including artworks, music, comics, literature, and dance. See <http://www.college.columbia.edu/core/lithum>.
- Member of Search Committee for the College Dean, Spring, 2012.
- Conference on *Evil, Evil to the Core Curriculum of Columbia College* and related Workshop for contributors to the *Evil* volume, eds. Andrew Chignell and Scott MacDonald, *Oxford Philosophical Concepts*, OUP, April 2012.
- Organized conference, *The Reinvention of Space, 1400-1800*, Mellon Interdisciplinary Conference, December, 2010.
- Organized Workshop for editors of *Oxford Philosophical Concepts* volumes on Space, Time, Occasionalism, Propositions, Memory, Consciousness, Perception, and Eternity, December 2010.
- American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Advisory Committee to the Program Committee, 2010-13.
- Vice-President, Leibniz Society of North America, 2010-12.