

JESSE S. SUMMERS

DUKE UNIVERSITY, BOX 90432, DURHAM, NC 27708

EMPLOYMENT

DUKE UNIVERSITY

Director of University Initiatives, The Purpose Project (2021-present)
Senior Fellow, Kenan Institute for Ethics (2017-present)
Adjunct Associate Professor of Philosophy (2021-present)

Senior Research Scholar, Divinity School (2021-22)
Adjunct Assistant Professor of Philosophy (2017-21)
Assistant Academic Dean of Trinity College of Arts and Sciences (2017-21)
Post-Doctoral Fellow, Kenan Institute for Ethics (2012-17)
Lecturing Fellow, Thompson Writing Program (2012-17)

RICE UNIVERSITY

Visiting Assistant Professor (2011-2012)

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

Ph.D. in Philosophy (2011)
MA in Philosophy (2007)

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

M.Phil. in Philosophy (2004)

INSTITUT D'ÉTUDES POLITIQUES, UNIVERSITÉ DE STRASBOURG III

Certificat d'Études Politiques Européennes (2002)

INSTITUT CATHOLIQUE DE PARIS

non-matriculated (1998-99)

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

BA (with distinction; Phi Beta Kappa) in Philosophy (honors), Political Science (honors), French (2001)

PUBLICATIONS

- Book* *Clean Hands?: Philosophical Lessons from Scrupulosity* (with Walter Sinnott-Armstrong). New York: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Sole And First Author* "Scrupulosity and Moral Responsibility" (with Walter Sinnott-Armstrong). In *Moral Responsibility & Mental Disorder*. Edited by Matt King and Joshua May. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022.
- "Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc: Some Benefits of Rationalization." *Philosophical Explorations* 21, sup. no. 1 (2017): 21-36.
- "Explaining Irrational Actions." *Ideas y Valores* 66, sup. no. 3 (2017): 79-94.
- "Rationalizing Our Way Into Moral Progress." *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 20, no. 1 (Feb, 2017): 93-104.
- "Scrupulous Characters and Mental Illness" (with Walter Sinnott-Armstrong). In *Questions of Character: Perspectives from Philosophy and Psychology*, 283-296. Edited by Iskra Fileva. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- "Scrupulous Treatment" (with Walter Sinnott-Armstrong). In *Philosophy and Psychiatry: Problems, Intersections and New Perspectives*, 161-179. Edited by Daniel Moseley and Gary Gala. New York: Routledge, 2016.
- "What is Wrong with Addiction." *Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology* 22, no. 1 (2015): 25-40.
- "Addiction by any Other Name." *Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology* 22, no. 1 (2015): 49-51.
- "Scrupulous Judgments" (with Walter Sinnott-Armstrong). In *Oxford Studies in Normative Ethics*, 129-150. Edited by Mark Timmons. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- "Scrupulous Agents" (with Walter Sinnott-Armstrong). *Philosophical Psychology* 28, no. 7 (2015): 947-966.

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PUBLICATIONS, *continued*

- Second/Other Author* “Mental Disorders as Failures of Attention” (with Walter Sinnott-Armstrong and Laura Soter). In *Critica*, 2024
- “Cognitive Enhancement and Social Mobility: Skepticism from India” (with Jayashree Dasgupta, Georgia Lockwood Estrin, and Ilina Singh). In *AJOB Neuroscience*, 2022.
- “Which Biopsychosocial View of Psychiatry?” (with Walter Sinnott-Armstrong). In *Psychiatry Reborn: Biopsychosocial Psychiatry in Modern Medicine*. Edited by Will Davies, Julian Savulescu, Rebecca Roache, and Pierre Loebel. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- “Defining Addiction: A Pragmatic Perspective,” (with Walter Sinnott-Armstrong). In *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy and Science of Addiction*, 123-131. Edited by Hanna Pickard and Serge Ahmed. New York: Routledge, 2018.
- Non-Academic* “Putting Purpose in its Place,” *Virtues & Vocations*, spring 2024
- “What I’ve Learned from Having Cancer is Nothing,” *Slate*, August 29, 2022
- “Why won’t the sin wash away? When thinking ethically goes awry,” *Psyche*, July 8, 2020
- Reviews* of Joshua May, *Regard for Reason in the Moral Mind*, in *Utilitas*, 2020
- of Hagop Sarkissian and Jennifer Cole Wright, *Advances in Experimental Moral Psychology*, in *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews* (ndpr.nd.edu), 10/24/2014.
- of George Graham, *The Disordered Mind*, in *Philosophical Psychology* 25, no. 6 (2012): 941-44.
- of Jonathan Wolff, *Why Read Marx Today?* in *Philosophy Today* (Society for Applied Philosophy, London) 16, no. 43 (2003).

PRESENTATIONS

- *refereed; °invited
- “The Challenges of Living an Ethical Life (Ethics for Assholes)”
UNC-Wilmington (2024)°
- “College Reorientation: Turning Transactional Consumers into Liberal Learners” (Katherine Jo, Jesse Summers)
American Association of Colleges & Universities, Washington, DC (2024)*
- “The Importance of Teaching Earnestness: An Overlooked Virtue for Students and for Faculty” (Katherine Jo, Jesse Summers)
North American Association for Philosophy & Education (2023)*
- “Attention Grabbing Mental Illness” (Jesse S. Summers, Walter Sinnott-Armstrong)
Carolina Seminar on Philosophy, Ethics and Mental Health, UNC-Chapel Hill (2023)°
- “Cultivating a Liberal Arts Ethos Across the Disciplines” (Katherine Jo, Jesse Summers)
American Association of Colleges and Universities, San Francisco (2023)*
- “Teaching on Purpose: Forming Future Faculty as Educators of Undergraduates” (Katherine Jo, Jesse Summers)
Jubilee Centre for Character & Virtues (U.Birmingham), Oriel College, Oxford (2023)*
- “Virtue, Sainthood, and Anxious Morality”
Jubilee Centre for Character & Virtues (U.Birmingham), Oriel College, Oxford (2022)*
- “Anxious Morality”
Parr Center for Ethics, UNC-Chapel Hill (2021)°
- “Logic and Critical Thinking”
Summer Seminars in Neuroscience and Philosophy, Duke University (annually 2016-22)°
- “Exploring ethical issues around use of cognitive enhancement drugs for children in low resource settings” (Jayashree Dasgupta, Georgia Lockwood Estrin, Jesse Summers, Ilina Singh)
Society for Neuroscience, Chicago (2019)*
- “The Obligation to Know Thyself”
Central APA, Denver (2019)*
North Carolina Philosophical Society, Appalachian State University (2016)*

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PRESENTATIONS, *continued*

*refereed; °invited

- “Political Polarization and the Illusion of Explanatory Depth” (Joshua August Skorburg, Aaron Ancell, Jesse S. Summers, Jordan Carpenter, Walter Sinnott-Armstrong)
Society for Philosophy and Psychology, University of Michigan (2018)*
Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress, University of Colorado, Boulder (2018)*
- “Ethical Issues in the Treatment of Religious OCD”
Health and Humanities Exchange, UNC-Chapel Hill (2017)°
- “Addictive Compulsion, Ethical Compulsion, and Rational Self-Guidance”
Clinical Ethics Network of North Carolina, Winston-Salem, NC (2017)°
Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Moral Responsibility, Utah Valley (2015)*
Philosophy and Psychiatry Research Group, UNC-Chapel Hill (2012)°
Pacific APA, Seattle (2012)*
North Carolina Philosophical Society, Elon University (2012)*
- “How Poverty Diminishes Moral Agency”
Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress, University of Colorado, Boulder (2016)*
South Carolina Society for Philosophy, Furman University (2014)*
- “Anxiety Causing Beliefs”
Society for Philosophy and Psychology, University of Texas, Austin (2016)*
- “Reasons, Reasons, Every Where”
University of Reading (2016)°
- “*Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc*: Some Benefits of Rationalization”
Northwestern University, Society for the Theory of Ethics and Politics (2016)*
Workshop: False but Useful Beliefs (Project PERFECT), Regent’s University, London (2016)*
Symposium: Eastern APA, Washington, D.C. (2016)*
VU University, Amsterdam (2015)*
Kenan Institute for Ethics, Duke University (2015)°
Philosophy and Psychiatry Research Group, UNC-Chapel Hill (2014)
Society for Philosophy and Psychology, University of British Columbia (2014)*
North Carolina Philosophical Society, UNC-Chapel Hill (2014)*
Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress, University of Colorado, Boulder (2013)*
- “Explaining Behavior as Action, or Making Mountains Out of Molehills and Love Out of Nothing at All”
Elmhurst College (2015)°
- “Explaining Irrational Actions”
North Carolina Philosophical Society, NC State (2015)*
- “Scrupulosity”
Invited Workshop (with Walter Sinnott-Armstrong), University of Arizona (2014)°
Moral Psychology Research Group, Duke University (2014)°
- “Scrupulous Judgments” (Jesse S. Summers and Walter Sinnott-Armstrong)
Arizona Workshop in Normative Ethics, University of Arizona (2014)°
- “Scrupulous Characters” (Jesse S. Summers and Walter Sinnott-Armstrong)
Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Charleston, South Carolina (2014)*
- “Scrupulous Agents” (Jesse S. Summers and Walter Sinnott-Armstrong)
Invited Symposium: Agency and Pathologies of the Self, APA–Pacific Division Meeting (2013)°
Character Workshop, UNC-Chapel Hill (2013)°

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- “What Happens When J. David Velleman Acts?”
North Carolina Philosophical Society, East Carolina University (2013)*
Central APA, Minneapolis (2011)*
Pacific APA, San Francisco (2010)*
- “Is Anything Wrong with Addiction?”
Loyola University, Chicago (2012)^o
Rice University, Philosophy Seminar Series (2011)^o
Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. (2011)*
Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress, University of Colorado, Boulder (2010)*

OTHER PRESENTATIONS

- STAT’s *First Opinion* podcast interview with Torie Bosch, “Living in Cancer Limbo,” (November 22, 2023)
- “The Internet Gave Rise to ‘Cancel Culture OCD’” (source) by Eleanor Cummins, *WIRED* (January 30, 2022)
- “Clean Hands? Scrupulosity and COVID-19” for the Kenan Institute for Ethics (2020)
- Examining Ethics* podcast interview with Christiane Wischart on Scrupulosity (2020)
- Imperfect Cognitions* blog post on rationalization (2016)
- Brains Blog* Neuroethics symposium, commentary and response (2016)
- Arming the Donkeys* podcast interview with Dan Ariely about Scrupulosity (2015)
- “Explaining Irrational Actions,” McNair Scholars Award Banquet, University of Kansas (2013)

COMMENTS

- on William O’Shea, “Maladaptive functions and social norms: When norms go awry”
Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Cincinnati (2024)
- on Arthur Krieger, “Addiction as Compulsion”
Central APA, Chicago (2022)
- on Federico Burdman, “Addictive Desires and Reasons-Responsiveness”
Tulane University, New Orleans Workshop on Agency and Responsibility (2021)
- on Mathieu Doucet, “Must We Regret Weakness of Will?”
Northwestern University, Society for the Theory of Ethics and Politics (2014)
- on Edward Hinchman, “Rational Requirements and ‘Rational’ Akrasia”
Northwestern University, Society for the Theory of Ethics and Politics (2012)
- on Ian Stoner, “Anger: Sometimes Appropriate, Never a Virtue”
Central APA, Chicago (2012)
- on Joshua May, “What in the World is Weakness of Will?”
Pacific APA, San Francisco (2010)

TEACHING

^o add’l times	Challenges of Living an Ethical Life (Ethics Certificate gateway) ^{oooo}	2018, 23-24
*top 5% of all evals	Freedom and Moral Obligation ^{oooooo}	2018-24
	Teaching on Purpose (interdisciplinary graduate seminar) ^{ooo}	2022-24
	What We Owe to Each Other/Altruism and the Ethics of Giving ^{oooo*oo}	2016-23
	Reason and Argument ^{oooo}	2013-17
	Rationalization and Confabulation	2017
	Addiction, Self-Medication, and Cognitive Enhancement ^{ooo}	2016
	Neuroethics (with Scott Huettel)	2016
	Drugs and Addiction (Ethics Certificate capstone; with Walter Sinnott-Armstrong)	2015
	How to Make Mistakes ^{oooo}	2013-15
	Reasoning and Irrationality ^{oooo}	2014
	Varieties of Compulsion ^{ooo}	2013
	Addiction and Responsibility ^{oo}	2012

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TEACHING, *continued*

Moral Psychology (Rice University)	2012
Metaethics (Rice University)	2012
Social and Political Philosophy (Rice University)	2011
Graduate Seminar: Reasons and Morality (Rice University)	2011
Philosophy of Addiction (UCLA Collegium of University Teaching Fellows course)	2011
Medical Ethics (UCLA)	2010
Introduction to Philosophy (tutorial, University College London)	2003

SELECTED SERVICE

Certificate Program Director, Ethics Certificate, Kenan Institute for Ethics	2023-present
Constellations Committee, Arts & Sciences, Duke University	2024-present
Provost's Committee on Assessment of Educational and Administrative Support	2019-present
Faculty Advisor, undergrad groups: Effective Altruists; Inside Joke; Duke Chabad	2015-present
Papers editor for <i>Philosophy of Action: Compulsion and Addiction</i> , PhilPapers.org	2012-present
Sophomore Spark Steering Committee, Duke University	2019-24
Senior Thesis committees, Philosophy	2019, 21, 22
Director, Arts & Sciences Courses Committee, Duke University	2017-21
Strategic Planning, Trinity College Academic Affairs, Duke University	2018-21
Director, Arts & Sciences Curriculum Committee, Duke University	2019-21
Program Advisory Committee, North Carolina Philosophical Society	2015-17
Assistant Director, Writing in the Disciplines, Duke University	2015-16
Conference co-organizer, "Faster, Higher, Smarter? Neural and Ethical Aspects of Cognitive Enhancers," Duke University	2015
Winter Forum faculty facilitator, Duke University	2015
Faculty Search committee, Thompson Writing Program, Duke University	2014-15
Course Curriculum Committee, Thompson Writing Program, Duke University	2012-14
Graduate Student Representative to the philosophy faculty	2009-10
USC-UCLA graduate conference coordinator	2009-10
Albritton Society (works-in-progress group) coordinator	2008-09
Department Representative, UCLA Graduate Student Association	2007-09
Humanities Council treasurer, UCLA Graduate Student Association	2007-09

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Intellectual Humility in Public Discourse (co-PI), Templeton Foundation (\$225,000)	2017-19
Bass Connections (PI), Duke University (\$30,000)	2017-19
"How to Ask Questions" (project on political polarization)	
Recent Work on Free Will, Templeton Foundation (PI), (\$30,000)	2017
Bass Connections (PI), Duke University (\$30,000)	2014-15
"Moral Judgments About and By Stimulant Users"	
Fellowship, Free Will Summer Seminar, Florida State University	2012
Fellowship, Neuroscience Boot Camp, University of Pennsylvania	2011
Collegium of University Teaching Fellows (20 chosen university-wide), UCLA	2010
Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellowship, UCLA	2005
Overseas Research Student Award, University College London	2003
Javits Fellowship (alternate)	2002
Phi Beta Kappa	2000
Ronald E. McNair Fellowship, University of Kansas	1997
University Scholar (20 selected), University of Kansas	1996
Summerfield Scholar, University of Kansas	
University of Kansas Honors Program	

updated 8/20/24