

# CURRICULUM VITAE

Dr. Wendy Weiger

## Current Work

- Author, *Heaven Beneath Our Feet* (I am seeking a publisher). My book is a guide to renewing our intimacy with nature, for our own health and the health of the Earth. An excerpt from an early draft was published in the September 2014 issue of *Down East* magazine. Essays adapted from my current manuscript appear in *A Dangerous New World: Maine Voices on the Climate Crisis* (Littoral Books, 2019) and in *Senior Hiker Magazine* (Issue 10, 2020). In November 2020, I self-published *Living Every Season*. This shorter book pairs my photos with text to guide readers on a mindful journey through a year in the Maine Woods. It incorporates several key concepts explored more fully in *Heaven Beneath Our Feet*.
- Founder, Achor Earth Ways, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit incorporated in 2017. Its purpose is to guide people into deeper, more joyful connection with nature, through mindful experience of the wild – fully engaging our hearts, minds, spirits, and senses. The goals of deepening our connection with nature are two-fold: to renew our health and well-being on all levels – spiritual, emotional, physical – and to inspire us to work toward healing the wounds we are inflicting on the Earth. Achor Earth Ways offers programs that teach the nature connection practices I describe in my book. In the spring of 2019, I hiked the American Discovery Trail from the Delaware coast to West Virginia, blogging and teaching en route. I am spending the winter of 2020 in a remote, off-the-grid cabin in the Maine Woods, sharing my experience through blogging, social media, and a video documentary in progress.
- Manager of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Monson A.T. Visitor Center (2017-2021). The center serves as an educational resource for long-distance and day hikers on the A.T. and other trails in Maine's North Woods. I offer guided hikes with nature study that accommodate a broad spectrum of age and ability (in 2019, participants ranged in age from 3 to 81).

## Education and Academic Research Experience

I began my research career as an undergraduate chemistry major, studying the fundamental nature of matter through theoretical quantum mechanics. For my doctoral research, I moved on to the electrical and chemical workings of the brain and how these basic physical processes translate into the complex phenomena of emotion and behavior. My post-doctoral research focused on ways in which we seek healing and well-being when confronted with the challenges of serious illness.

- Harvard College, AB in Chemistry *summa cum laude*, 1984
- Harvard University Sheldon Traveling Fellow (medical anthropology in India and Nepal), 1986-1987
- Harvard Medical School MD-PhD Program:
  - Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology, MD 1997
  - Program in Neuroscience, Division of Medical Sciences, Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, PhD 1997
- Internship in Internal Medicine, Boston Medical Center, 1997-1998
- Research Fellow, Division for Research and Education in Complementary and Integrative Medical Therapies, Osher Institute, Harvard Medical School, 1999-2002
- Research Associate, Division for Research and Education in Complementary and Integrative Medical Therapies, Osher Institute, Harvard Medical School, 2002-2005

## Areas of Expertise

### • Research and teaching:

- **Clinical medicine:** At Harvard Medical School's Division for Research and Education in Complementary and Integrative Medical Therapies (1999-2005), I led a team of researchers in a systematic review of complementary and alternative therapies commonly used by patients with cancer. We distilled available evidence into guidelines to assist conventional physicians in providing compassionate, science-based advice to patients. This work was published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* in December 2002, along with a companion piece for lay readers that appeared in *Newsweek*. Extensive national press coverage included a front-page article in *The Boston Globe* and an article in *The Washington Post*, as well as an interview on National Public Radio's *Here and Now*. I subsequently served as a lecturer, breakout session leader, and panel discussant in undergraduate and graduate medical courses at Harvard Medical School on this topic.

- **Basic science:** At Harvard Medical School's Department of Neurobiology (1987-1995), I conducted laboratory research on the biological basis of aggressive behavior, using lobsters as a model system. I published this work in the *Journal of Neurophysiology*. I also published reviews synthesizing other scholars' work in this field in *Biological Reviews* and the *Journal of Psychiatric Research*.
- **Nature-based skills:** I have been licensed since 2005 as a Registered Maine Guide by the state's Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. My skill areas include four-season survival, canoeing (flatwater and whitewater), backpacking, snowshoeing, backcountry skiing, birding, mammal tracking, and identification of edible and poisonous plants. As noted above, I work seasonally as a hiking educator and guide for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (2017-2021). In 2019, I offered a mindful hike as part of Greenville, Maine's annual Thoreau Wabanaki Trail Festival. I have led birding excursions for the Natural Resource Education Center in Greenville and have served as an instructor in their youth outdoor skills program (2015-2017). I have also served as a workshop leader for the Maine Canoe Symposium (2013), the workshop coordinator for the Maine Wilderness Guides Organization Annual Rendezvous (2007-2008), and as a canoe trip leader for the Sierra Club (2007). In winter 2011, I led two Harvard College undergraduates on a three-day backcountry snowshoeing excursion as part of Harvard's "January Experience" program.
- **Environmental advocacy:** The Maine Woods are the largest undeveloped area east of the Mississippi, populated with wildlife ranging from lynx and moose to boreal birds and wild native brook trout. In 2005, Plum Creek Timber, the nation's largest private landowner, submitted a massive rezoning application for Moosehead Lake, Maine's largest lake and the southern gateway to the Maine Woods. In response, I joined a small band of citizens who formed the Moosehead Region Futures Committee: the only independent, locally-based organization to achieve status as a full legal intervener in the state's evaluation of Plum Creek's proposal. I served on the Moosehead Futures Steering Committee (2005-2015), as Coordinator (2006-2008), and as Executive Director (2008-2009). I published opinion pieces about this issue in the *Portland Press Herald*, *Lewiston Sun Journal*, *Kennebec Journal*, and *Bangor Daily News*, and was interviewed for articles in *The Boston Globe* and *Down East Magazine*. During four weeks of technical hearings in December 2007 and January 2008, I coordinated the testimony of eight volunteer witnesses and conducted cross-examination of witnesses supportive of Plum Creek. After the hearings, I represented our group at state deliberative sessions. Moosehead Futures' intervention contributed to significant improvements to conservation components of Plum Creek's plan.

### Selected Publications

- Weiger, W. *Living Every Season: A Mindful Year in the Maine Woods*. Achor Earth Ways Publications, 2020.
- Weiger, W. The Hardest Mile: A Night in Mahoosuc Notch. *Senior Hiker Magazine*, Issue 10, 2020.
- Weiger, W. Death of a Catbird. *Split Rock Review*, Issue 15, Fall 2020. <https://www.splitrockreview.org/wendy-weiger>.
- Weiger, W. Womb of Ice: The Maine Woods in Winter. In *A Dangerous New World: Maine Voices on the Climate Crisis*. Littoral Books, 2019.
- Weiger, W. How I Found Self-Healing and Wholeness by Trekking into the Wild. *The Covey*, June 2019. <https://www.coveyclub.com/found-self-healing-wholeness-nature>. (The Covey Club is a resource for women at midlife who want to continue learning, growing, and developing more authentic lives.)
- Weiger, W. Vision Quest: The Maine Woods at Summer's End. *Down East*, September 2014. <https://downeast.com/essays/vision-quest/>.
- Weiger, W. Balancing the public and private rights of landowners. *Sun Journal* (Lewiston, Maine), July 23, 2006.
- Weiger, W. All Mainers have stake in Plum Creek as public caretakers. *Portland Press Herald / Maine Sunday Telegram*, May 7, 2006.
- Weiger, WA and Eisenberg, DM. Cancer: Easing the treatment. *Newsweek*, December 2, 2002.
- Weiger, WA, Smith, M, Boon, H, Richardson, MA, Kaptchuk, TJ, and Eisenberg, DM. Advising patients who seek complementary and alternative medical therapies for cancer. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 137:889-903; 2002.
- Weiger, WA. Serotonergic modulation of behaviour: A phylogenetic overview. *Biological Reviews* 72:61-95; 1997.
- Weiger, WA and Ma, PM. Serotonin-containing neurons in lobsters: Origins and characterization of inhibitory post-synaptic potentials. *Journal of Neurophysiology* 69:2003-2014; 1993.
- Weiger, WA and Bear, DM. An approach to the neurology of aggression. *Journal of Psychiatric Research* 22:85-98; 1988.

## Selected Articles and Interviews About My Work

- Fleming, D. Spending the winter in an off-the-grid cabin in the Maine woods. *Portland Press Herald / Maine Sunday Telegram*, March 7, 2021. <https://www.pressherald.com/2021/03/07/spending-the-winter-in-an-off-the-grid-cabin-in-the-maine-woods/>.
- Barstow, MF. A conversation with Wendy Weiger: A woman who lives in the woods. Cover story, *Maine Seniors*, March 2021. <https://www.meseniors.com/2021/04/01/2667/>.
- Fleming, D. These women prefer to go it alone on the trails. *Portland Press Herald / Maine Sunday Telegram*, September 6, 2020. <https://www.pressherald.com/2020/09/06/these-women-prefer-to-go-it-alone-on-the-trails/>.
- Russell, J. Is this any place to build a home? Ambitious development plan for a remote area of Maine generates interest, divides residents. *The Boston Globe*, December 2, 2007.
- Reynolds, T. Keeping up with alternative medicine: Researchers offer evaluation criteria. *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* 95:96-98; 2003.
- Boodman, SG. Science validates few alternative treatments for cancer. *The Washington Post*, December 10, 2002. [Articles based on this report appeared in various other newspapers in the United States and Canada.]
- Smith, S. Cancer study offers guide to alternative treatments. *The Boston Globe*, December 3, 2002. [An article based on this report appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* December 4, 2002.]
- Brooks, A. Alternative therapy for cancer patients [broadcast interview of WA Weiger]. *Here and Now*, National Public Radio, December 3, 2002.

## Selected Awards and Honors

- Outstanding Volunteer Award, Maine Chapter of the Sierra Club, 2007
- Sackler Scholarship in Psychobiology (Harvard University), 1991-92
- John Parker Scholarship (Harvard University), 1989-90
- Harvard University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Merit Fellow, 1989-90
- Albert J. Ryan Fellow (Harvard University), 1988-95
- Harvard University Sheldon Traveling Fellow, 1986-87
- National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke Exceptional Summer Employee Award, 1984
- Sophia Freund Prize (awarded to the highest ranking graduate(s) each year at Harvard College), 1984
- Palfrey Exhibition Prize (awarded to the most distinguished scholar in the senior class at Harvard who has received financial aid), 1984
- Phi Beta Kappa, 1982
- John Harvard Scholar, 1979-84

## Volunteer Community Service

- Photographer, Natural Resources Council of Maine (statewide environmental advocacy organization; I provide nature photographs for the website, annual calendar, and advertising), 2011-2021
- Soprano soloist, Union Church Choir (Greenville, Maine), 2005-2021, and Moosehead Community Chorus (Greenville, Maine), 2014-2019; member, Arlington Street Church Choir (Boston, Massachusetts), 1999-2002
- Lay minister, Chesuncook Village Church (Chesuncook Township, Maine), 2009-2016, and Charles A. Dean Nursing Home (Greenville, Maine), 2008-2017
- Board of Directors, Project Only A Child (organization to aid Guatemalan street children), 2000-2010
- Prudential Committee (Board of Directors), Arlington Street Church (Boston, Massachusetts), 2002-2003
- Arlington Street Church Capital Campaign Cabinet, 1999-2002