

Philosophy 312
Neuroethics

Spring 2018
MW 10:25-11:40,

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Advances in neuroscience allow us to understand the brain and its functions more completely now than ever before. From these findings, new medical techniques and technologies are being developed that will allow us to peer into the working of others' minds and to alter our cognitive functions, our memory, and our moods, raising fundamental questions about free will, about the basis for our identity as persons, and about morality itself. For these reasons, neuroscience may pose a deeper set of moral issues than any other science and this course will seek to explore the ethical issues that it raises.

Required Texts:

Patricia Churchland, *Braintrust* (Princeton)
Readings on Blackboard

Course Requirements:

Class participation is worth a significant portion of your grade. The class is based on student discussions, not on lectures. You are expected to come to class, and you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings – if only to ask relevant questions about them. Most of your class participation grade is based on regular, substantive participation in class discussions.

Reflection papers. Five times during the semester, you will be expected to write a brief one-page reaction paper to the upcoming week's reading, due generally on Sunday nights at 9:00 p.m. Please email them to me. These papers should respond to some specific arguments or position in the readings by explaining why you agree or disagree with it. For the reflections, I have divided the class into two groups: Group A for students whose last name starts with A-K and Group B for L-Z. Please consult the schedule to determine when reflection papers are due for your group

Paper assignments. The major assignments in this course will be done using a tutorial system. I will give you a series of questions about particular texts, and I will ask you to respond to them in a paper of 6-8 pages. You and another student will meet with me in my office during the week set aside for that purpose. Together, the three of us will discuss each of your papers. While attending a tutorial is required, you will be graded only on what is in your paper. I will explain the tutorial method in more detail later.

For your final assignment, you will have a choice: you may either write a third tutorial of 7-10 pages on a topic I will give you, or you may write a 7-10 page paper on a topic of your own

choosing. This latter option will give you the opportunity to explore an issue of particular interest to you at greater length. Note that the paper must be a *philosophy* paper: it should explain and evaluate a line of argument that concerns neuroscience or neurological practice. I will be happy, however, to help you develop your topic. In any case, if you choose to write a paper, you *must* consult me.

The course grade is divided into 540 points, apportioned as shown:

First tutorial	Feb 14	120 points
Second paper	Mar 26	120 points
Final assignment	May 2	135 points
Reaction papers		50 points
Participation		115 points

Schedule of Readings:

This schedule is tentative (especially for topics later in the course). However, any changes will be announced on Blackboard, and an up-to-date copy of the syllabus can always be found on Blackboard. All readings, except those in the required books for the class, are on Blackboard.

- Jan 17 Introduction
Hilary Putnam, "Brains in a Vat"
Oliver Sacks, "The Lost Mariner," *New York Review of Books*, February 16, 1984
- Jan 22-24 The Brain and Identity
Reflection paper due, Group A, January 21, 9 p.m.
Bernard Williams, "The Self and the Future," *Philosophical Review* 79 (1970):
161-180
Derek Parfit, "Personal Identity," *Philosophical Review* 80 (1971): 3-27
Martha Farah and Andrea Heberlein, "Personhood and Neuroscience:
Naturalizing or Nihilating?," *American Journal of Bioethics* 7 (2007): 37-
48
- Jan 29-31 Brain Death
Reflection paper due, Group B, January 28, 9 p.m.
Ad Hoc Harvard Committee on Brain Death, "A Definition of Irreversible
Coma," *JAMA* 205 (1968): 337-40
Benedict Carey and Denise Grady, "At Issue in Two Wrenching Cases: What to
Do After the Brain Dies," *New York Times*, 9 January 2014
James Bernat, "A Defense of the Whole Brain Concept of Death," *Hastings
Center Report* 28.2 (1998): 14-24.
Jeff McMahan, "Brain Death, Cortical Death, and Persistent Vegetative State," in
A Companion to Bioethics, ed. Helga Kuhse and Peter Singer (Oxford:
Blackwell, 2001), 250-60.
Don Marquis, "Are DCD Donors Dead?," *Hastings Center Report* 40.3 (2010),
24-3

- Feb 5-7-12 The Self and Advance Directives
Reflection paper due, Group A, February 4, 9 p.m.
 John Paul II, "Life-Sustaining Treatments and Vegetative State"
 David Fischer and Robert Truog, "When Bright Lines Blur: Deconstructing Distinctions Between Disorders of Consciousness," in *Neuroethics: Anticipating the Future*, ed. July Illes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 305-35
 Allen Buchanan, "Advance Directives and the Personal Identity Problem," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 17 (1988), 277-302
 Ronald Dworkin, "Death and Life" and "Life Past Reason," in *Life's Dominion* (New York: Random House, 1993), 199-208, 218-37
 Agnieszka Jaworska, "Respecting the Margins of Agency: Alzheimer's Patients and the Capacity to Value," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 28 (1999): 105-38
 Paul Menzel and Bonnie Steinbock, "Advance Directives, Dementia, and Physician-Assisted Death," *Journal of Law, Medicine, and Ethics* 41 (2013): 484-500.
- Feb 14 *First tutorials (No regular class meeting)*
- Feb 19-21 Ethical Issues in Neuroimaging
Reflection paper due, Group B, February 18, 9 p.m
 Joseph Stromberg, "The Neuroscientist Who Discovered He Was a Psychopath," *Smithsonian Magazine*, 22 November 2013
 Geoffrey Aguirre, "Functional Neuroimaging: Technical, Legal, and Social Perspectives," *Hastings Center Report* 44.2 (2014): S8-S18.
 Martha Farah, "Brain Images, Babies and Bathwater: Critiquing Critiques of Functional Neuroimaging," *Hastings Center Report* 44.2 (2014): S19-S30
 Jeremy Gray and Paul Thompson, "Neurobiology of Intelligence: Science and Ethics," *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 5 (2004): 471-82
 Turhan Canli and Zenab Amin, "Neuroimaging of Emotion and Personality: Scientific Evidence and Ethical Considerations," *Brain and Cognition* 50 (2002): 414-31. Read only section 3.
- Feb 26-28-
 Mar 5 Neuroscience and Law
Reflection paper due, Group A, February 25, 9 p.m
 Michael Gazzinga, "My Brain Made Me Do It," in *The Ethical Brain* (New York: Dana Press, 2005), 87-102
 Joshua Green and Jonathan Cohen, "For the Law, Neuroscience Changes Nothing and Everything," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London B* 359 (2004): 1775-85.
 David Wasserman and Josephine Johnson, "Seeing Responsibility: Can Neuroimaging Teach Us Anything about Moral and Legal Responsibility?" *Hastings Center Report* 44.2 (2014): S37-S49.

Richard Boire, "Neurocops: The Politics of Prohibition and the Future of Enforcing Social Policy from *Inside the Body*," *Journal of Law and Health* 19 (2005): 215-57.

Mar 7 No class

Mar 12-14 *Spring break (no classes)*

tMarch 19-21 Ethical Issues in Deep Brain Stimulation

Reflection paper due, Group B, March 13, 9 p.m

Felicitas Kraemer, "Authenticity or autonomy?: When Deep Brain Stimulation Causes a Dilemma," *Journal of Medical Ethics* 39 (2013): 757-60

Matthis Synofzik, Thomas Schlaepfer, and Joseph Fins, "How Happy is Too Happy?: Euphoria, Neuroethics, and Deep Brain Stimulation," *AJOB Neuroscience* 3 (2012): 30-36

Nir Lipsman and Walter Glannon, "Brain, Mind, and Machine: What are the Implications of Deep Brain Stimulation for Perceptions of Personal Identity, Agency and Free Will," *Bioethics* 27 (2013): 465-70

Eran Klein, et al., "Engineering the Brain: Ethical Issues and the Introduction of Neural Devices," *Hastings Center Report* 45.6 (2015): 26-35

Mar 26 *Second tutorials (No regular class)*

Mar 28 Memory and Mood Manipulations

President's Council on Bioethics, "Happy Souls," in *Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness* (2003), sections I-II
"Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," Time TBA

Apr 2-4 *Reflection paper due, Group A, April 1, 9 p.m*

President's Council on Bioethics, "Happy Souls," in *Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness* (2003), sections III

Carl Elliott, "Pursued by Happiness and Beaten Senseless: Prozac and the American Dream," *Hastings Center Report* 30.2 (2000): 7-12

Peter Kramer, "The Valorization of Sadness: Alienation and the Melancholic Temperament," *Hastings Center Report* 30.2 (2000): 13-18

Apr 9-11 Neuroenhancements

Reflection paper due, Group B, April 8, 9 p.m,

Anjan Chatterjee, "The Promise and Predicament of Cosmetic Neurology," *Journal of Medical Ethics* 32 (2006): 110-13

Michael Sandel, "The Case Against Perfection," *Atlantic* 293.3 (2004): 50-62

President's Council on Bioethics, "Happy Souls," section III

Ingmar Persson and Julia Savulescu, "The Perils of Cognitive Enhancement and the Urgent Imperative to Enhance the Moral Character of Humanity," *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 25 (2008): 162-77

Saskia Nagel, "Too Much of a Good Thing?" Enhancement and the Burden of Self-Determination," *Neuroethics* 3 (2010): 109-19
(optional) Richard Dees, "Better Brains, Better Selves?" *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 17 (2007): 375-99

Apr 16-18

Transhumanism

Nick Bostrom, "Why I Want to Be a Posthuman When I Grow Up," in *Medical Enhancement and Posthumanity*, ed. Bert Gordijn and Ruth Chadwick (New York: Springer, 2008), 107-37 (typescript version)

Nicholas Agar, "What Is It Possible to Enhance Moral Status and Why is Doing So Wrong?," *Journal of Medical Ethics* 39 (2013): 67-74

Fred Baumann, "Humanism and Transhumanism," *The New Atlantis* (Fall 2010): 68-84

(optional) Raffi Khatchadourian, "The Philosopher of Doomsday," *The New Yorker*, 23 November 2015.

Reflection paper due, Group A, April 15, 9 p.m.

Apr 23-25

Neuroscience on ethics

Reflection paper due, Group B, April 22, 9 p.m.

Patricia Churchland, *Braintrust*, chs. 1-5 (pp 1-117)

Apr 30

Churchland, *Braintrust*, chs. 6-8 (pp. 118-204)

May 2

Third tutorial/Final assignment due (No regular class)