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BRAINSTORM

A newsletter about ethics, neuroscience, and society
Un bulletin sur l'éthique, les neurosciences et la société

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Brainstorm

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Profile | Profil



Dr. Karen Davis is a Professor at the Department of Surgery and Institute of Medical Science, and is Head and Senior Scientist of the Division of Brain, Imaging and Behaviour – Systems Neuroscience at Toronto Western Research Institute. She obtained her PhD from the Department of Physiology at the University of Toronto and completed a post-doctoral fellowship at John Hopkins University. At the University of Toronto, she served as Graduate Coordinator (2002-8) and Associate Director (2009-2012) of the Institute of Medical Science. Dr. Davis is founding member of the University of Toronto Centre for the Study of Pain and currently sits on its Executive Committee. Over the last

20 years, her lab has used a variety of novel and innovative structural and functional brain imaging techniques to the mechanisms associated with pain, plasticity and the impact of traumatic injuries. This has culminated in over 140 highly cited papers (H-index=53), 160 invited lectures, and a TED-Ed video “How does your brain respond to pain?” viewed over 580,000 times. Dr. Davis has been inducted into the John Hopkins Society of Scholars, served as section editor for the journal Pain, and was a Mayday Pain and Society Fellow. Dr. Davis has a strong interest in mentorship, research ethics, created a graduate student oath (published in Science), and in neuroethics pertaining to brain imaging. She is currently Vice-Chair of the CIHR Advisory Board for the Institute of Neuroscience, Mental Health and Addiction, and a Councilor of the International Association for the Study of Pain.

Statement on neuroethics: "One issue neuroethics needs to address is the adoption of neuroimaging for the diagnosis of pain and other types of brain decoding."

Sample Publications:

Davis KD, Racine E, Collett B. Neuroethical issues related to the use of brain imaging: can we and should we use brain imaging as a biomarker to diagnose chronic pain? Pain. 2012 Aug;153(8):1555-9

D Seminowicz, A Pustilnik, S Rigg, A Davis, KD Davis, H Greely. Panel 1: Legal and Neuro scientific Perspectives on Chronic Pain. Journal of Health Care Law and Policy 18 (2), 207-235.

If you would like to post any events, announcements, or news of interest please contact us at neuroethics@ircm.qc.ca (subject line: Brainstorm Events and Announcements)



Announcements | Annonces

Call for Papers: Second workshop on “Improving Ourselves as Moral Agents” – Ethics and Neuroscience of Self-Control cluster group, University of Turku, April 1, 2016

Submission Deadline: March 4, 2016, [click here for more info.](#)

Call for Proposals: American Society for Bioethics and Humanities 18th Annual Meeting, October 6-9, 2016, Washington, D. C.

Submission Deadline: March 4, 2016, [click here for more info.](#)

Call for Papers: Brain Computer Interfaces—Special Issue on Ethics in Brain-Computer Interface Research and Development

Submission Deadline: March 15, 2016, [click here for more info.](#)

Job Posting: Assistant Professor in Philosophy (expertise in Ethics and/or Moral Philosophy), Trinity College Dublin

Closing Date: 12 noon on Tuesday 29th March, 2016, [click here for more info.](#)

Call for Abstracts: The Ethics of Disorder, hosted by the Centre for Professional Ethics at Keele University, UK, 25 May, 2016

Submission Deadline: 4 April, 2016, [click here for more info.](#)

Summer Course: Ethics in Dementia Care, 6-8 July, 2016, Leuven, Belgium

Early Bird Deadline: May 16th, 2016, [click here for more info.](#)

Events | Événements

Montreal Neuroethics Network Seminar: “The neuroethics of fMRI-based ‘pain-o-meters’ for diagnostic, medical-legal, and insurance purposes” - Karen Davis, PhD

Date: March 3, 2016, 12:00pm-1:00pm

Location: 110, avenue des Pins Ouest, Room André-Barbeau, Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal (IRCM)

The Healthcare Ethics Consortium (HEC) and the Emory University Center for Ethics 2016 Annual Conference: Are We Hearing Our Patients’ Voices? Georgia, USA

Date: March 17-18, 2016

Location: Evergreen Conference Center, Stone Mountain, Georgia, [click here for more info.](#)

The University of Gothenburg and the Gothenburg Responsibility Project — Workshop on Agency and Responsibility

Date: May 5-6, 2016, Gothenburg, Sweden, [click here for more info.](#)

International Neuroethics Forum

'Is Professional Football Ethical?'

Moheb Costandi

The subject has come under increasing scrutiny in the past few years, in light of accumulating scientific evidence linking sports-related head injuries to a neurodegenerative condition now referred to as chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE).

In November, for example, the family of [Frank Gifford](#), a legendary American football who was involved in one of the most brutal collisions in the National Football League's history, and who had died several months earlier, suffered from the condition.

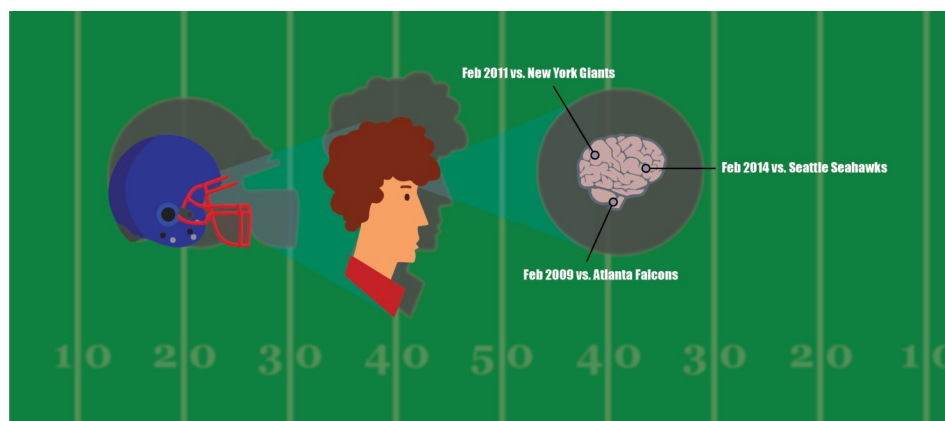


Illustration by Kaylee Sohng

The link between CTE and sports-related head injuries was first established in the late 1920s, when the pioneering forensic pathologist Harrison S. Martland described the damaging neurological effects of repeated head trauma in a group of former boxers.

Harrison's early clinical description of '[punch drunk](#)' syndrome (or dementia pugilistica) is now recognized as one form of CTE, which itself has been extended to include the neurological injuries seen in other contact sport athletes and former military combat personnel.

Until now, though, the research has been limited to case reports. While neurologists now seem to agree that American football players, boxers, and military veterans, as well as hockey players and wrestlers, are at increased risk of developing CTE, it is still not clear that sports-related head injuries are linked with athletes' suicides, as some now claim.

In 2009, it emerged that [the NFL attempted to cover up scientific research](#) into the potential detrimental effects of repeated sports-related injuries, and then tried to

International Neuroethics Forum

discredit the researchers involved. Since then, more than 4,500 former football players have sued the NFL for concealing the dangers of concussion, and in 2013 the League agreed to pay \$765m in settlements.

The NFL and other sporting organizations are multi-billion dollar industries that potentially put not only professional players, but also large numbers of high school children, at risk. As such, they have a responsibility to make their sports as safe as possible.

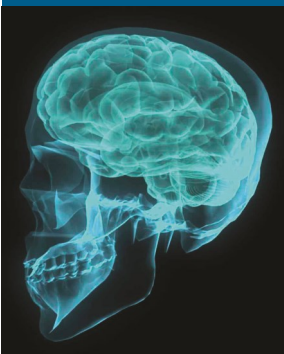
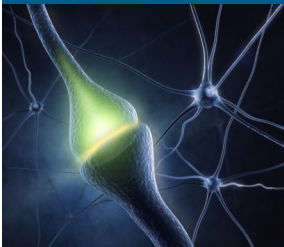
As well as introducing new rules that limit head injuries, they should also take it upon themselves to fund systematic longitudinal scientific studies into the causes, mechanisms, consequences, and treatment of CTE, and contribute whatever they can to the development of better protective equipment for their players.

Growing numbers of retired American football players are trying to raise awareness about these issues, and are donating their brains to science to help researchers learn more. But current players also have a responsibility to minimize the risk to themselves. All contact sports involve physical domination of one's opponent, and so are pervaded by a machismo that encourages aggressive behavior and compels injured players to continue playing.

Such machismo is damaging, as it is very likely that returning to the playing field too soon after sustaining any such injury would exacerbate any neurological damage done. Thus, players must do everything in their power, to both play in the safest way possible, and to remove this macho culture from their sport. Their very lives may depend on it.

Moheb Costandi trained as a developmental and molecular neurobiologist and now works as a freelance writer specialising in neuroscience. His work has appeared in Nature, New Scientist, Science, and Scientific American, among other publications, and he also writes the Neurophilosophy blog, hosted by The Guardian. Costandi is the author of 50 Human Brain Ideas You Really Need to Know, published by Quercus in 2013, and his second book, Neuroplasticity, is due to be published in 2016 by MIT Press.

@mocost



Literature | Littérature

ARTICLES

[Using the brain criterion in organ donation after the circulatory determination of death.](#)

Dalle Ave AL, Bernat JL. J Crit Care. 2016 Jan 9. [Epub ahead of print].

[Medical, legal, and ethical challenges associated with pregnancy and catastrophic brain injury.](#)

Burkle CM, Tessmer-Tuck J, Wijdicks EF. Int J Gynaecol Obstet. 2015 Jun; 129(3): 276-80.

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[Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder: reconsidering blame](#)

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Literature | Littérature

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du Toit J, Miller F. Bioethics 2016; 30(3): 151-8.

[Why is Pain Still Under-Treated in the Emergency Department? Two New Hypotheses](#)

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[How to Communicate Clearly about Brain Death and First-Person Consent to Donate.](#)

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[Justifications for coercive care in child and adolescent psychiatry, a content analysis of medical documentation in Sweden.](#)

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[Ilya Mark Scheinker: Controversial Neuroscientist and Refugee From National Socialist Europe.](#)

Zeidman LA, Ziller MG, Shevell M. Can J Neurol Sci. 2016 Feb 4: 1-11. [Epub ahead of print].

[Prescription Psychostimulant Use Among Young Adults: A Narrative Review of Qualitative Studies.](#)

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NEWS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

['Mild' concussion could triple risk of suicide, study suggests](#)

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[When the Hospital Fires the Bullet](#)

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[We All May Be on an 'Attention-Distractibility' Spectrum](#)

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[Neuroscience and the premature death of the soul](#)

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['I hold my head in my hands and weep': What it's like to lose a patient to suicide](#)

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[A plea for "slow science" and philosophical patience in neuroethics](#)

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Resources | Ressources

[University of British Columbia, National Core for Neuroethics](#)

[Neuroethics at the University of Pennsylvania](#)

[International Neuroethics Society](#)

[Neuroethics Research Unit / L'Unité de recherche en neuroéthique](#)

[Journal of Ethics in Mental Health](#)

[Novel Techethics](#)

[Neuroethics at the Stanford Center for Biomedical Ethics](#)

[Berman Institute of Bioethics' Program in Ethics and Brain Sciences](#)

[Centre interfacultaire en bioéthique et sciences humaines en médecine](#)

[The Neuroethics Blog](#)

[Emory Program in Neuroethics](#)

[American Journal of Bioethics Neuroscience](#)

[Neuroethics Women \(NEW\) Leaders](#)



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