

Prepared by the  
Neuroethics research unit  
at the IRCM

Préparé par l'unité de  
recherche en neuroéthique  
de l'IRCM

# BRAINSTORM

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

**Literature Update - January 15<sup>th</sup> 2016/15 janvier 2016**

Brainstorm

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2016

**Happy New Year**

From John, Dearbhail, and Eric, the Brainstorm editorial team!

Thank you for your support in 2015, the year we gave our newsletter a much-needed and well-received new look, and launched the International Neuroethics Forum! As we move into 2016 and begin our 9th volume of Brainstorm, we will continue to generate and aggregate the content you know and love (events, announcements, profiles, and neuroethics literature), while publishing original and thought-provoking content in the INF, and striving to find new ways to keep our international audience connected and engaged.

If there's something you'd like to see in Brainstorm, please contact us at [neuroethics@ircm.qc.ca](mailto:neuroethics@ircm.qc.ca) — we're always open to new ideas! As always, please continue to share with us any events, announcement, or literature you think would be of interest to your colleagues working at the intersection of ethics, neuroscience, and society.

Finally, if you're interested in contributing to the Forum, please send us a short email detailing your proposed topic and piece, keeping in mind that we're especially interested in topics and perspectives that may not receive much attention in the published literature. Our goal remains to provide you with smart, accessible content on a wide range of relevant issues.

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



## Announcements | Annonces

**Call for Abstracts:** Does Neuroscience Have Normative Implications? April 15-16, 2016, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, USA

**Submission Deadline:** February 1, 2016, [click here for more info.](#)

**Call for Abstracts:** 2016 CAHSPR Conference—A Learning Healthcare System: Let the Patient Revolution Begin! May 09-12, 2016, Toronto, Canada

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

**Call for Abstracts:** 13th World Congress of the International Association of Bioethics, June 14-17, 2016, Edinburgh, Scotland

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

**Call for Abstracts:** Rudolf-Carnap-Lectures 2016, Prof. Patricia S Churchland “Neurophilosophy 30 years on”, March 7-10, 2016, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany

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

**Call for Papers:** Designing Moral Technologies—Theoretical, Practical and Ethical Issues, July 10-15, 2016, Ascona, Switzerland

**Submission Deadline:** January 31, 2016, [click here for more info.](#)

## Events | Événements

**Montreal Neuroethics Network Seminar:** “The Current Relevance of Pragmatism for (Neuro)ethics and Society” — John Shook, Ph.D., University of Buffalo, USA

**Date:** January 21, 2016, 12:00pm-1:00pm

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

**St Cross Special Ethics Seminar, Governing Life:** Is It Wrong to Intervene in Biological Processes?

**Speaker:** Virginie Tournay

**Location:** St Cross Room, St Cross College, Oxford, UK

**Date:** 28 January 2016, 5.30-7.00pm, [click here for more info.](#)

**MSU Bioethics Brownbag and Webinar Series:** A New Foundation for Psychiatry?

**Speaker:** Robyn Bluhm, PhD

**Date:** January 21, 12-1pm

**Location:** In Person— C102 Patenge Rm, East Fee Hall, Online— [msubioethics.clickwebinar.com/brownbag](http://msubioethics.clickwebinar.com/brownbag), [click here for more info.](#)

## Announcements | Annonces



### Postdoctoral fellowship or graduate student scholarship\*

Area of research: Vulnerability and mental health research ethics

Neuroethics research unit – Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal (IRCM)  
Supported by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)

\*This offer could be transformed into a scholarship for a graduate student supervised at the IRCM

We are seeking a postdoctoral fellow or graduate student to join the Neuroethics research unit ([www.ircm.qc.ca/neuroethics/](http://www.ircm.qc.ca/neuroethics/)) to lead research examining ethical and social issues in mental health research. Our project will investigate the theoretical assumptions and practical implications of the concept of "vulnerability" in research with psychiatric patients. Outcomes of this project would include novel and original work examining how the concept of vulnerability affects research ethics policies and practices. This position is funded by a grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. This is a 12-month position with possible renewal.

#### REQUIREMENTS

- PhD training in bioethics or social science or philosophy or health sciences/mental health (undergraduate degree for candidates to the graduate student scholarship)
- Interest in pursuing theoretical and empirical research in neuroethics
- Very good communication and interpersonal skills
- Publication and scientific communication experience
- Organization skills and proficient time management
- Interdisciplinary teamwork experience an asset
- Ideally, experience in action research or stakeholder research

#### DEADLINES

Position remains open until filled.  
Start date: as soon as March 1, 2016

#### APPLICATIONS

Submit a resume (CV), cover letter and two reference letters to **Eric Racine**, PhD, Director of the Neuroethics research unit, by email at [neuroethics@ircm.qc.ca](mailto:neuroethics@ircm.qc.ca). Please specify whether you are applying for postdoctoral fellowship or graduate scholarship. Only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

# Announcements | Annonces



## Bourse postdoctorale ou bourse d'études supérieures\*

Domaine de recherche : vulnérabilité et éthique de la recherche  
en santé mentale

Unité de recherche en neuroéthique - Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal (IRCM)  
Avec l'appui des Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada (IRSC)

\*Ce poste peut être transformé en bourse d'études pour un étudiant au 2e ou 3e cycle supervisé à l'IRCM

Nous sommes à la recherche d'un(e) stagiaire postdoctoral(e) ou d'un(e) étudiant(e) diplômé(e) souhaitant se joindre à l'unité de recherche en neuroéthique (<http://www.ircm.qc.ca/neuroethics>) pour mener un projet recherche portant sur les enjeux éthiques et sociaux en recherche sur la santé mentale. Le projet évaluera les suppositions théoriques et les implications pratiques entourant le concept de « vulnérabilité » dans la recherche avec des patients en psychiatrie. Le résultat pressenti est un travail original et novateur, examinant en quoi le concept de vulnérabilité affecte les politiques éthiques de la recherche et les pratiques qui y sont associées. Ce poste est offert grâce à une subvention des Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada. Il s'agit d'un poste de 12 mois avec possibilité de renouvellement.

### EXIGENCES

- Études doctorales en bioéthique ou en sciences sociales ou en philosophie ou en sciences de la santé ou en santé mentale (diplôme de 1er cycle pour les candidats visant la bourse d'études supérieures)
- Intérêt à poursuivre de la recherche théorique et empirique en neuroéthique
- Très bonnes habiletés interpersonnelles et de communication
- Habiletés organisationnelles et gestion efficace du temps
- Expérience de publication et de communication scientifiques
- Expérience de travail dans le cadre d'une équipe interdisciplinaire un atout
- Idéalement, expérience en recherche-action ou recherche de terrain

### DATES LIMITES

Le poste demeure ouvert jusqu'à ce qu'il soit comblé.  
Date d'embauche : dès le 1er mars 2016

### CANDIDATURES

Faites parvenir votre CV, une lettre de motivation et deux lettres de référence à l'attention d'**Eric Racine**, Ph. D., directeur de l'unité de recherche en neuroéthique, par courriel à [neuroethics@ircm.qc.ca](mailto:neuroethics@ircm.qc.ca). Nous ne communiquerons qu'avec les personnes dont la candidature aura été retenue.

# Announcements | Annonces



## Postdoctoral Fellowship or Graduate Student Scholarship\*

**Area of research: Ethical, legal and social aspects of brain-computer interfaces (BCI)**

**Neuroethics research unit – Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal (IRCM)**

With the support of the: Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé (FRQ-S) & NEURON-ERANET

\*This offer could be transformed into a scholarship for a graduate student supervised at the IRCM

We are seeking a postdoctoral fellow or graduate student to join the Neuroethics Research Unit ([www.ircm.qc.ca/neuroethics/en/](http://www.ircm.qc.ca/neuroethics/en/)) to lead research examining ethical and social issues in the use of brain-computer interfaces (BCI). In partnership with European research centers, this project aims to pursue online survey research and novel translational ethics and social science research approaches on BCI. The outcomes of this project will include, for example, a policy brief for decision-makers and the creation of a video podcast informing the public about ELSA aspects of BCI. This position is funded by a grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé. This is a 12-month renewable position.

### REQUIREMENTS

- Ph.D. training in social science or bioethics or relevant health sciences\*
- Interest in pursuing theoretical and empirical research in neuroethics
- Very good communication and interpersonal skills
- Publication and scientific communication experience
- Organization skills and proficient time management
- Interdisciplinary teamwork experience an asset
- Ideally, experience in online survey research and novel knowledge translation methods

### DEADLINES

Position remains open until filled.  
Start date: as soon as March 15, 2016.

### APPLICATIONS

Submit a resume (CV), cover letter and two reference letters to **Eric Racine**, PhD, Director of the Neuroethics research unit, by email at [neuroethics@ircm.qc.ca](mailto:neuroethics@ircm.qc.ca). Please specify whether you are applying for a postdoctoral fellowship or graduate scholarship. Only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

\*Undergraduate degree for candidates to the graduate student scholarship

## Announcements | Annonces



### Bourse postdoctorale ou bourse d'études supérieures\*

Domaine de recherche: Aspects éthiques, légaux et sociaux des interfaces cerveau-ordinateur (ICO)

#### Unité de recherche en neuroéthique - Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal (IRCM)

Avec l'appui des Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada (IRSC), du Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé (FRQ-S) & NEURON-ERANET

\*Ce poste peut être transformé en bourse d'études pour un étudiant au 2e ou 3e cycle supervisé à l'IRCM

Nous sommes à la recherche d'un stagiaire postdoctoral ou d'un étudiant gradué souhaitant se joindre à l'Unité de recherche en neuroéthique (<http://www.ircm.qc.ca/neuroethics>) pour mener un projet de recherche portant sur les enjeux éthiques et sociaux associés à l'utilisation des interfaces cerveau-ordinateur (ICO). En partenariat avec des centres de recherche européens, ce projet vise à réaliser une recherche par sondage en ligne ainsi que mettre en œuvre de nouvelles approches de recherche translationnelle en éthique et en sciences sociales au sujet des ICO. Cette recherche inclura, entre autres, la rédaction d'un document d'orientation destiné aux décideurs politiques ainsi que la création d'un podcast visant à informer le public des enjeux éthiques, sociaux et légaux des ICO. Ce poste est offert grâce à une subvention des Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada et des Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé. Il s'agit d'un poste de 12 mois avec possibilité de renouvellement. affecte les politiques éthiques de la recherche et les pratiques qui y sont associées. Ce poste est offert grâce à une subvention des Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada. Il s'agit d'un poste de 12 mois avec possibilité de renouvellement.

#### EXIGENCES

- Études doctorales en bioéthique ou en sciences sociales ou en sciences de la santé\*
- Intérêt à poursuivre de la recherche théorique et empirique en neuroéthique
- Très bonnes habiletés interpersonnelles et de communication
- Habiletés organisationnelles et gestion efficace du temps
- Expérience de publication et de communication scientifiques
- Expérience de travail dans le cadre d'une équipe interdisciplinaire un atout
- Idéalement, expérience en recherche par sondage en ligne et dans les nouvelles méthodes d'application des connaissances

\*Diplôme de 1er cycle pour les candidats visant la bourse d'études supérieures

#### DATES LIMITES

Le poste demeure ouvert jusqu'à ce qu'il soit comblé.  
Date d'embauche : aussi tôt que le 15 mars 2016.

#### CANDIDATURES

Faites parvenir votre CV, une lettre de motivation et deux lettres de référence à l'attention d'**Eric Racine**, Ph. D., directeur de l'unité de recherche en neuroéthique, par courriel à [neuroethics@ircm.qc.ca](mailto:neuroethics@ircm.qc.ca). Nous ne communiquerons qu'avec les personnes dont la candidature aura été retenue.

# International Neuroethics Forum

## Neuroethics, Mental Health, and Prisons: What Does Race Have to Do with It?

Tim Brown, University of Washington

At this year's International Neuroethics Society Annual Meeting, Alan Heshner led [an excellent panel](#) on neuroethical issues related to mental health disorders in prisons; however, I noticed that none of the panelists mentioned the intersection between mental health and race. During the Q&A, I reminded the panelists that blacks and hispanics are [over-represented](#) in US prisons. I asked: 'If deep-brain stimulation (DBS) systems are used to treat prisoners, wouldn't they be used disproportionately on blacks and hispanics? What are the ethical problems with testing these technologies in a place where these racial disparities exist?' Two panelists responded that any responsible investigator would make sure that their sample represents the country's population rather than the average prison's population. They were more concerned with how to conduct responsible research in prisons, where I was more worried that neurotechnologies as 'treatment' could perpetuate the racial disparities endemic to the US criminal justice system.

But there is a problematic intuition implicit in their response: if a person has behavioral problems that keep them from functioning how they want to (or ought to), and if we can find ways of testing and alleviating that person's problems, we needn't say much about race at all. The question, then, is: *what does race have to do with mental health in US prisons?* My answer is that we cannot tell a coherent story about mental health in prisons without telling a story about racial disparities. Without these stories, we cannot say much about how neurotechnological treatments will impact US prison populations. If we don't talk about racial disparity now, we will not understand how neurotechnology can make racial disparities worse (or, perhaps, better) in the future.



Here is a condensed story we can tell about how the US criminal justice system treats blacks. Blacks are more likely to be imprisoned because their behaviors are perceived in uncharitable and implicitly biased ways. Black children, for example, are diagnosed with childhood disorders (e.g., oppositional defiant disorder) [more than their white counterparts](#). The prejudice black children experience may even cause psychiatric problems. Black children are also [disciplined in school for misbehavior](#) and [incarcerated](#) more often than whites. Some inmates develop mental health problems because of the conditions of prison life and [the stigma that follows them](#) once released.

# International Neuroethics Forum

There are two ambiguities here. First, are young blacks imprisoned because they commit crimes, because they have mental disorders, or because of biases against them? Second, do young blacks act in ways consistent with diagnostic criteria because they've faced discrimination, or does the presence of certain disorders cause discrimination? Given these ambiguities, it is hard to know what treatments are appropriate or helpful; after all, it seems that black prison inmates can be coerced into undergoing treatment for conditions they perhaps never had in the first place (and were diagnosed with erroneously), and/or conditions they were *given* by being targeted by an unjust criminal justice system.

If we think about how neurotechnology might be used in prisons to treat mental illness, the problem becomes more complicated. Several groups are testing [Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation](#) (tDCS) and [Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation](#) (TMS) for depression, anxiety, and other conditions with mixed results. If these treatments ever become viable, we could see them used in prisons as inexpensive alternatives to pharmaceuticals. As such, inmates could use them just to look better in the eyes of parole boards, so they can act in ways more acceptable to American society (a society that [thinks blacks are too aggressive](#)), or even just to cope with the conditions of prison life. If there are neuroethical problems with enhancement using tDCS and TMS — and [I take it that there are](#) — these issues become even more prominent if people of color feel pressured to undergo treatment to [“enhance” their personalities](#) for the sake of acceptance, integration, or even survival.

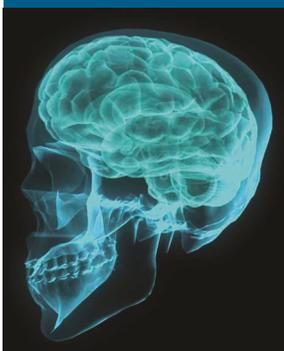
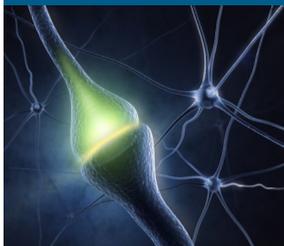
People of color in prisons, then, will most likely come face-to-face with tough neuroethical issues. These issues apply even if we think of mental illness functionally, because it's hard to separate metrics of normal functioning from the culture that devises those metrics. These issues apply even if we control for race, because every black person incarcerated in the United States has been a victim of oppression of one sort or another. Any person of color who participates in such a study will likely be up against systems of oppression that color their choices black and brown. These issues apply even if tDCS, TMS, or other technologies are effective and safe to use. Mental illness and oppression are linked together for people of color — it is not clear if stimulation is a treatment for mental disorders, a way of “normalizing” people of color, or somewhere in between.

So: what does race have to do with it?

In all likelihood, it has everything to do with it.

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*Tim Brown is a PhD student at the University of Washington studying philosophy. His research explores neuroethical issues in the use of deep-brain stimulators (DBS) — in particular, how these devices affect their user's sense of autonomy and identity.*  
[@keyofnight](#)



# Literature | Littérature

## ARTICLES

[Noninvasive Brain Stimulation in Pediatric Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder \(ADHD\): A Review.](#)

Rubio B, Boes AD, Laganiere S, Rotenberg A, Jeurissen D, Pascual-Leone A. J Child Neurol. 2015 Dec 10.

[Palliative Care: A Core Competency for Stroke Neurologists.](#)

Creutzfeldt CJ, Holloway RG, Curtis JR. Stroke. 2015 Sep; 46(9): 2714-9. Epub 2015 Aug 4.

[Communicating Concern about Early Signs of Autism to Parents.](#)

Graf WD. AMA J Ethics. 2015 Apr 1; 17(4): 310-7.

[The myth of the normal brain: embracing neurodiversity.](#)

Armstrong T. AMA J Ethics. 2015 Apr 1; 17(4): 348-52.

["Brain death," "dead," and parental denial - the case of Jahi McMath.](#)

Paris JJ, Cummings BM, Moore MP Jr. Camb Q Healthc Ethics. 2014 Oct; 23(4): 371-82.

[Do-it-yourself brain stimulation: a regulatory model.](#)

Maslen H, Douglas T, Cohen Kadosh R, Levy N, Savulescu J. J Med Ethics. 2015 May; 41(5): 413-4.

[The challenge of crafting policy for do-it-yourself brain stimulation.](#)

Fitz NS, Reiner PB. J Med Ethics. 2015 May; 41(5): 410-2. Epub 2013 Jun 3.

[Ethical use of the media by psychiatrists: towards an antipodean formulation of the "Goldwater Rule".](#)

Robertson M, Walter G, Bloch S. Australas Psychiatry. 2015 Dec 10. [Epub ahead of print].

[Neuroethics scope at a glance.](#)

Rabadán AT. Surg Neurol Int. 2015 Dec 7; 6: 183. eCollection 2015.

[Locked-In Syndrome: Case Report and Discussion of Decisional Capacity.](#)

Maiser S, Kabir A, Sabsevitz D, Peltier W. J Pain Symptom Manage. 2015 Dec 7. [Epub ahead of print]

[At the cross-roads of participatory research and biomarker discovery in autism: the need for empirical data.](#)

Yusuf A, Elsabbagh M. BMC Med Ethics. 2015 Dec 15; 16(1): 88.

[The Least Bad Option: Unilateral Extubation after Declaration of Death by Neurological Criteria.](#)

Bliss SE, Macauley RC. J Clin Ethics. 2015 Fall; 26(3): 260-5.

## NEWS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

[When PTSD Is Contagious](#)

Reuben A. The Atlantic. December 14, 2015.

[Combating neurohype](#)

Costandi M. The Neuroethics Blog. December 15, 2015

[My 'smart drugs' nightmare](#)

Zand B. BBC Victoria Derbyshire. January 05, 2015.

[What Aphasia Feels and Looks Like](#)

Baggaley K. BrainDecoder. January 07, 2015.

[An interesting time for the study of moral judgment and cognition](#)

Dubljevic V. iCog. January 12, 2015.



## 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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