

Ethics and Neuroscience

Syllabus

Block I: Enhancement

- 4/24 *Emotional Enhancement: A Threat To Authenticity?*
— Carl Elliott (1998), "The Tyranny of Happiness: Ethics and Cosmetic Psychopharmacology," in *Enhancing Human Traits: Ethical and Social Implications*, ed. E. Parens, 177-188.
— David Degrazia (2000), "Prozac, Enhancement, and Self-Creation," *Hasting Center Report* 30 (2), 34-40.
- 5/08 *Enhancing Authenticity, Enhancing Autonomy*
— Neil Levy (2011), "Enhancing Authenticity," *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 28 (3), 308-18.
— G. Owen Schaefer, Guy Kahane, Julian Savulescu (2014), "Autonomy and Enhancement," *Neuroethics* 7 (2), 123-136.
- 5/15 *Cognitive and Moral Enhancement*
— Julian Savulescu, Ingmar Persson (2008), "The Perils of Cognitive Enhancement and the Urgent Imperative to Enhance the Moral Character of Humanity," *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 25 (3). 162 – 177.
— J. Adam Carter, Emma C. Gordon (2015), "On Cognitive and Moral Enhancement: A Reply To Savulescu And Persson", *Bioethics* 29 (3), 153-161.
- 5/22 *Post-Humans, Post-Persons and The Possibility of Enhancing Moral Status*
— Allen Buchanan (2009), "Moral Status and Human Enhancement," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 37 (4), 346-381.

Block II: Moral Intuitions

- 5/29 *Can Neuroscientific Findings Undermine Deontological Intuitions?*
— Greene, Joshua D. (2014), "Beyond Point-and-Shoot Morality: Why Cognitive (Neuro)Science Matters for Ethics," *Ethics* 124 (4), 695-729.
- 6/05 *Philosophical Skepticism About The Normative Relevance of Neuroscientific Findings*
— Selim Berker (2009), "The Normative Insignificance of Neuroscience," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 37 (4), Sections 1-2, 4-6 (293-305, 314-329).
- 6/12 *Methodological Desiderata for Empirical Studies of Normative Intuitions*
— Guy Kahane, Nicholas Shackel (2010), "Methodological Issues in the Scientific Study of Moral Judgement," *Mind and Language* 25 (5), 561-582.

Block III: Experiments on Free Will and Moral Responsibility

- 6/19 — Benjamin Libet (1999), "Do We Have Free Will?," *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 6 (8-9), 47-57
- 6/26 — Alfred R. Mele, "Testing Free Will," *Neuroethics* 3 (2), 161-172.
- 7/03 — Nahmias (2014): *Is Free Will an Illusion?*, *Moral Psychology, vol. 4: Freedom and Responsibility*, edited by Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, MIT Press.
- 7/17 **Wrap-up / Essay preparation / Argument Exercise**

Course Requirements

- (1) Regular Attendance
- (2) 8 brief comments on/questions concerning the papers discussed in the course.
 - a. Max. 1 comment/question per text.
 - b. Each comment/question must be submitted (via e-mail, simon.gaus@hu-berlin.de) until **Thursday, 6.30 pm** of the week in which the paper will be discussed.
 - c. The comment/question should not exceed ¼ of a standard document page and may be considerably shorter.
 - d. It's perfectly okay to simply express your problems with understanding or making sense of a specific point in the text, however, the problem should not be of the sort that is easily resolvable by ten minutes of googling or reading up in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.
- (3) A philosophical essay of about five pages addressing some of the issues discussed in the course or related issues. Deadline: **12 October 2015**.

Moodle

Course Name: **Tutorial: Ethics and Neuroscience**

Password: **TutEthNeu**

Contact Information

Simon Gaus -- simon.gaus@hu-berlin.de

Office hours: by arrangement (just talk to me after class or write an e-mail and we'll set a date)

Literature and other resources

All texts listed in the syllabus as main texts will be available on moodle. Below are a few websites that are good starting points for getting deeper into Neuroethics.

- The PhilPapers section (a database for philosophy papers) on neuroethics: <http://philpapers.org/browse/neuroethics>
- The Website of the Center for Neuroscience and Society of UPenn: <http://neuroethics.upenn.edu/> (see especially their "Online Learning Center" for videotaped lectures and their "Teaching Resources" for very good syllabi and bibliographies)
- The philosophy journal *Neuroethics*: <http://www.springer.com/social+sciences/applied+ethics/journal/12152>
- The website of the Int. Neuroethics Society: <http://www.neuroethicssociety.org/resources>
- The website of the Oxford Centre for Neuroethics: <http://www.neuroethics.ox.ac.uk/>