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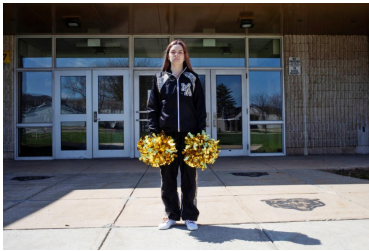
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
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CLBB News

A newsletter from the Center for Law, Brain & Behavior

June 11, 2021

CLBB Highlights

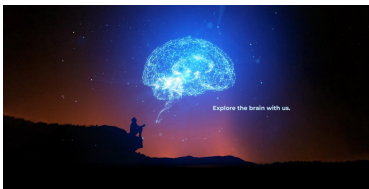


[CLBB Joins an Amicus Brief in Supreme Court Case Regarding Free Speech](#)

NBC News | April 26, 2021

The Center for Law, Brain and Behavior joined an amicus brief in a Supreme Court Case regarding the free speech of a high school student. The plaintiff, Brandi Levy, was suspended from her school's junior varsity cheerleading team after posting on snapchat about not making the varsity team. Levy, represented by the American Civil Liberties Union, argues that her use of snapchat off-campus as a form of student expression is constitutionally protected speech.

Highlight: "Young people's 'lack of maturity' and 'underdeveloped sense of responsibility' make them more prone to 'impetuous and ill-considered actions and decisions'... This contrast between the adult and adolescent brain is due, in part, to youths' lack of experience and having less efficiency in processing decisions. This difference in brain development further affects adolescents' ability to appreciate the benefits and consequences of their actions, as well as their ability to make reasoned, independent decisions about the best course of action."



[CLBB Executive Director Francis Shen Featured in the Dana Foundation's Podcast: Neuroscience & the Law](#)

Dana Foundation | May 6, 2021

Listen to the podcast [here](#).

CLBB Executive Director Francis Shen joined the Dana Foundation on the latest episode of its *Communicating Brain Science* podcast, to discuss how advances in neuroscience can translate to better law and policy. This is the first part of the Dana Foundation's Neuroscience & the Law series, a multi-part exploration of the overlap between brain science and the legal system.

Highlight: Francis Shen: "The things we do now [in law and neuroscience] are really going to have a major impact on the legal system for the years to come, and I'm excited to be part of that."

[Citing First Step Act, Judge Tosses Life Sentence for Man who Built Bomb that Killed Boston Police Officer](#)



in 1991

The Boston Globe | May 7, 2021

US District Court Judge William E. Smith voided the life sentence of Alfred W. Trenkler, finding an “extraordinary and compelling reason” under a sentencing reform measure passed in 2018. Trenkler, represented by **CLBB Managing Director Nancy Gertner**, had his sentence reduced to a fixed term of 41 years.

Highlight: "Nancy Gertner, a Harvard Law School professor and retired federal judge, welcomed Smith's decision to void the life sentence, but said she remains convinced that Trenkler is innocent and that he still faces life-threatening health challenges. 'This was a win, not the win we wanted, but this was a win,' said Gertner, who has represented Trenkler since 2011. 'There's an enormous difference between life imprisonment and a term of years, even a long term of years. That is a victory.'"



Youthful Offender's Mandatory Life Sentence Reduced to 30 Years

Bloomberg Law, District Court Southern District of New York | May 13, 2021

The United States District Court for the Southern District of New York held in *US v. Andrew Ramsay* that an offender's youth combined with society's understanding of the adolescent brain can constitute an "extraordinary and compelling circumstance" in sentence reductions. The defendant, Andrew Ramsey, had his mandatory life sentence reduced to 30 years.

Opinion: "In sum, Ramsay's wanton choice to fire into a crowd cries out for heightened punishment, but that cry is muted somewhat by an understanding of the developing brain... viewed in that light, Ramsay's youth at the time of the offense counsels against a life sentence."

Past Events



Dementia & The Law: Clinical Pearls on Testamentary Capacity and Undue Influence

Harvard Medical School | June 5, 2021

CLBB Founders and Co-Directors Dr. Judith Edersheim and Dr. Bruce Price presented at the "Dementia: A Comprehensive Update 2021" course at Harvard Medical School.

The spectrum of neurodegenerative diseases spans from very mild cognitive impairment to frank dementia. Alzheimer's disease (AD), the most common cause of dementia, is a devastating condition that affects patients and their whole family of caregivers at tremendous emotional and financial cost. Dementia: A Comprehensive Update was a three-and-a-half day, annual, review course designed by clinicians for clinicians.

The course was organized by Neurology faculty members of Harvard Medical School who specialize in the care of patients with cognitive and behavioral disorders at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, McLean Hospital, and Banner Sun Health Research Institute/Banner Health. The course took a practical and multidisciplinary approach to understanding and treating dementia and was designed for healthcare professionals involved in the diagnosis, management, and investigation of disease states causing dementia.

Scanning For Justice through Neurolaw: Complex Trauma - To - Prison Pipeline

The City of Boston
MAY 16TH TO MAY 22ND 2021
 Beloved Community: Social Engineers for Transformative Change

SECOND CHANCE AND REENTRY WEEK

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
 Photo Coming Soon!
 TBA
MODERATOR
 Diana Santill
 Founder, BeProximate

SCARIN SPEAKERS

SCHEDULE

17 MAY	RECKONING WITH OUR MORAL RESPONSIBILITY VIRTUAL 1:00 PM	19 MAY	GET CONNECTED VIRTUAL 1:00 PM
18 MAY	SOCIAL ENGINEERS FOR SECOND CHANCES VIRTUAL 1:30 PM	20 MAY	EDUCATION / RESOURCE FAIR VIRTUAL 1:00 PM
19 MAY	BELONG ARTS EXHIBITION VIRTUAL 2:00 PM	21 MAY	SCANNING FOR JUSTICE THROUGH NEUROLAW VIRTUAL 1:30 PM

ORGANIZER
 BeProximate Center for Beloved Community

PARTNERS

REGISTER: [HTTPS://BEPROXIMATE.TICKETLEAP.COM/](https://beproximate.ticketleap.com/)

BeProximate Center for People | May 21, 2021
 To view the recording, please click [here](#).

This panel discussion illuminated the debilitating effects of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), the symbiotic relationship between complex trauma and imprisonment, and the emerging intersection of neuroscience and law to transform the criminal justice system. Acknowledging the predisposition of trauma to transmit when adequate services are not rendered juxtaposed with the principles of neuroplasticity to help people recuperate, experts provided practical steps for coping and self-care during these unprecedented times.

Panelists:

- **G.W.**, Student at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department
- **Dr. Renee Boynton-Jarret**, Associate Professor of Pediatrics & Director of the Vital Village Network at Boston Medical Center/Boston University
- **CLBB Managing Director Judge Nancy Gertner**, Senior Lecturer of Law at the Harvard Law School; Former Federal Judge at the U.S. District of Massachusetts
- **CLBB Associate Managing Director Dr. Robert Kinscherff**, Professor, Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology at the William James College
- **Dr. Craig Haney**, Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of California (Santa Cruz); Researcher on the Stanford Prison Project

Faculty and Board Member News



[CLBB Faculty Member Leah Somerville Named Harvard College Professor](#)

The Harvard Gazette | May 11, 2021

CLBB Faculty Member Leah Somerville was Named Professor of Psychology and Director of the Affective Neuroscience and Development Laboratory at Harvard College. Dr. Somerville "directs research on adolescent brain development — specifically psychological changes in cognitive, motivational, social, and emotional behavior — using psychological and neuroscientific approaches."

Highlight: "When it comes to teaching, my job is made easier by having the privilege of teaching topics that are naturally relevant to undergraduates' identities, including 'The Adolescent Brain' and 'The Emotional Mind,' said Somerville. 'Students are especially excited to learn about emotional-regulation strategies along with empirical evidence about what works, for whom, and when. My most rewarding teaching moments involve lingering on these connections between science and our daily lives.'"



[CLBB Advisory Board Member Paul Butler Featured on The 11th Hour](#)

MSNBC | May 24, 2021

CLBB Advisory Board Member Paul Butler was featured on MSNBC's The 11th Hour regarding progress on policing in the United States and the Black Lives Matter protests.

Highlight: Paul Butler: "The best measure of progress is that Derek Chauvin is a convicted murderer. We other cops face trial for aiding and abetting. Even though the evidence of Chauvin's guilt was overwhelming, it could never be taken for granted that he will be prosecuted much less convicted. Most officers who kill black people are exonerated... Another sign of progress is that all four officers face federal prosecutions for

violating Mr. Floyd's civil rights. And 150 days the Biden administration has brought more civil rights investigations of police departments from the Trump administration did in four years."



[Looking Deeply At Crime, Punishment And Redemption](#)

WBUR | March 29, 2021

This WBUR program discusses a new study of Suffolk County criminal cases, which found that declining to prosecute some low-level offenses can actually lead to less crime. The program features commentary with Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins, who made this a central issue while running for the office in 2018, and legal analysis from **CLBB Managing Director Nancy Gertner**.

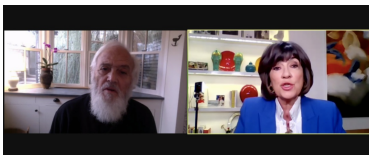


[The Big Question: Can Ivy League Schools Close the Opportunity Gap?](#)

Bloomberg | March 21, 2021

CLBB Advisory Board Member and National Education Equity Lab founder **Leslie Cornfeld** discusses how giving high schoolers access to elite college courses can boost low-income high achievers.

Highlight: Leslie Cornfeld: "We believe that while talent is evenly distributed in this country, opportunity and access are not. And that is what we aim to change. As more people learn about our model, it has been overwhelming to see how powerfully this concept has resonated across the country — from colleges and universities that have asked to be part of this equity effort; to the number of schools, students, families, principals, district leaders that have reached out to ask if they could be part of it; to the number of funders, from \$10 to multi-million dollars that have reached out to support our students. That's a really bright light in terms of what it says about institutions, about people and about leaders in our country. I think that it speaks volumes."



[CLBB Advisory Board Member Martin Garbus Discusses Free Speech and Information Reliability at Inaugural Kennedy Talk](#)

The Brown Daily Herald | February 23, 2021

CLBB Advisory Board Member and prominent First Amendment lawyer **Martin Garbus** discussed the meaning of free speech in America today and citizens' responsibility to determine the truth in information they consume at the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs's inaugural Kennedy Talks event, "Threats to the First Amendment: Social Media, Political Vitriol, and a President Impeached."

Highlight: "Garbus, who has 'represented people like (those) in Skokie,' believes times have changed since the ruling. 'This country is now in a very different place,' he said. Now, 'there has to be a different analysis' of free speech. He used to believe that the First Amendment was 'pure' and could not be misapplied 'by people in power,' Garbus said. 'We have to accept that (this idea) is wrong.' The bounds of free speech have often been 'decided by the more powerful people,' he added. Ultimately, he believes the First Amendment should be used to redress power imbalances."



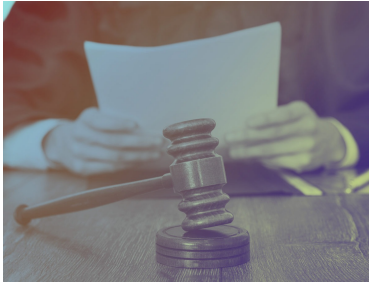
[The Genetics of Mental Health](#)

The Harvard Gazette | May 11, 2021

This article discusses **CLBB Faculty Member Jordan Smoller's** Cross-Disorder Group of the Psychiatric Genomics Consortium, which found that many distinct psychiatric diseases share a common genetic structure.

Highlight: "The genetic clues provided by studies like these are invaluable,

Smoller says. 'You get a window into the underlying biology. Individual genetic variants are not acting by themselves, but they're likely to be parts of biological networks or pathways. Despite the complexity,' he adds, 'we still think that genetics is going to point us in directions that could really change the way we think about therapeutics and develop new therapeutics, because each genetic finding is likely to implicate some biology.'"



[How Local Judges Shape The Criminal Legal System In Pennsylvania, Explained](#)

The Appeal | May 12, 2021

This article cited **CLBB Managing Director** and former Federal Judge **Nancy Gertner** as an example of a judge who "fairly and transparently address[ed] race and historical inequities in their decision-making."

Highlight: "Former federal Judge Nancy Gertner, for instance, reduced the sentence of a Black man below what was recommended based on the reality that 'his lengthy arrest record ... reflected a tendency by the police to stop [B]lack motorists more often than whites' to a lower sentence than was otherwise called for."



[North Carolina Prosecutor Calls Shooting of Andrew Brown Jr. Justified](#)

The New York Times | May 18, 2021

CLBB Advisory Board Member Paul Butler provided commentary in a *New York Times* article discussing the fatal shooting of Andrew Brown Jr. A North Carolina prosecutor argued that the shooting was justified, as Brown Jr. used his car as a "deadly weapon" while trying to evade arrest. Butler commented that prosecutors have wide latitude to claim that something is a deadly weapon.

Highlight: "'A deadly weapon can be anything... It could be a brick or a gun or a car. The point is it isn't unusual for prosecutors to charge various objects as deadly weapons.' Mr. Butler said of the Brown case, 'I think the most important question is whether Mr. Brown was trying to escape or was he trying to run over the officers?' He continued, 'it's certainly the case that it's possible he reasonably presented a deadly threat to the officers, but I don't think we have enough information to rely on the prosecutor's claim at this point.'"

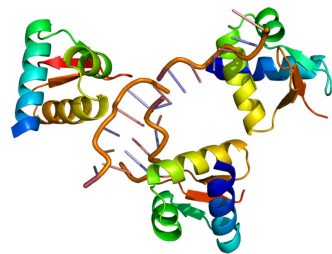


[Alzheimers Q&A: Is Absentmindedness Connected to Dementia?](#)

The Advocate | April 19, 2021

This article features the concept of absent-mindedness, an age-related memory problem based on **CLBB Faculty Member Daniel Schacter's** "The Seven Sins of Memory: How the Mind Forgets and Remembers."

Highlight: "Absent-mindedness, occurs when you're not paying close enough attention. Absent-mindedness is a normal part of aging. However, when it becomes chronic or lost objects no longer have meaning, it might be time to get an assessment from a physician. Absent-mindedness is one of the normal age-related memory problems described by Harvard Health Publishing and based on 'The Seven Sins of Memory: How the Mind Forgets and Remembers' by Daniel Schacter."



[Genetic Variants in Protein Target Sites May Contribute to Autism](#)

Spectrum | February 12, 2021

This article discusses a new finding that mutations that disrupt binding sites in RNA molecules may contribute to autism. Though promising, **CLBB Faculty Member Jordan Smoller** commented on the study, stating that

because Troyanskaya and Park's approach looks at all of the target sites for a particular RBP at once, there is still a long way to go toward understanding how RBP target site mutations shape the heritability of psychiatric conditions.

Highlight: "This resource could have a significant impact on psychiatric genomics, Smoller says. 'This may now become a standard component of the tool set that people consult to evaluate the functional genomic implications of risk loci for psychiatric disorders.'"

Opportunities



[Neuroethics Essay Contest 2021](#)

International Neuroethics Society

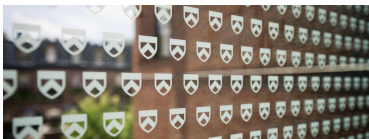
The International Neuroethics Society (INS) and the International Youth Neuroscience Association (IYNA) are pleased to announce a call for submissions for the Neuroethics Essay Contest in 2021. Now in its eighth year, the contest promotes interest in neuroethics among students and trainees around the world.

Three submission categories are available:

- IYNA-INS High School Neuroethics Essay Competition
- Academic
- General Audience

One winner from each category will be selected in August and receive a free 1-year INS student membership (\$30 value) and a \$250 prize. Winners who are able to attend the online 2021 INS Annual Meeting will also have their meeting registration fee waived (up to a \$100 value). All amounts are in U.S. Dollars and may be subject to transfer fees.

Essays must be submitted by July 2. Incomplete or late submissions will not be accepted. Please review all eligibility and submission requirements below.



[Call for Papers: Fourth Junior Faculty Forum on Law and STEM](#)

Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law, University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School, and Stanford Law School

The Northwestern, Penn and Stanford Law Schools are pleased to announce a Call for Papers for the Fourth Junior Faculty Forum on Law and STEM, which will be held at Penn on October 15-16, 2021. The Forum is dedicated to interdisciplinary scholarship focusing on the intersection of Law and Science-Technology-Engineering-Mathematics (STEM). Previous forums were held in October 2017 at Penn, September 2018 at Northwestern, and October 2019 at Stanford.

The forum is currently seeking submissions from junior faculty interested in presenting papers at the forum. The deadline for submissions is Friday, June 18, 2021.

A group of junior scholars will be chosen on a blind basis from among those submitting papers. One or more senior scholars, not necessarily from Northwestern, Penn, and Stanford, will comment on each paper. The audience will include the participating junior faculty, faculty from the host institutions, and invited guests. Participating junior faculty are expected to stay for the full duration of the Forum.

Our goal is to promote interdisciplinary research exploring how developments in STEM are affecting law and vice versa. Preference will be given to papers with the strong interdisciplinary approaches integrating these two areas of study.

We invite submissions on any topic related to the intersection of law and any STEM field. A jury of accomplished scholars with expertise in the particular topic will select the papers to be presented. Suggestions of possible commentators are also welcome.

In the News

General

[Jobs and Jail](#) | Harvard Magazine | May/June 2021

[Writing Laws for When Mind Meets Machine](#) | Innovation Aus | April 5, 2021

[Governor Cuomo Signs the HALT Solitary Confinement Act into Law](#) | New York State | April 1, 2021

[Out of My Mind: Advances in Brain Tech Spur Calls for 'Neuro-Rights'](#) | Thomson Reuters Foundation | March 29, 2021

[Mapping the Ethical Issues of Brain Organoid Research and Application](#) | AJOB Neuroscience | March 26, 2021

[Large-Scale Genome Analysis Identifies Differences by Sex in Major Psychiatric Disorders](#) | Science Daily | March 23, 2021

Juvenile Justice

[Volusia Sheriff Urges Juvenile Justice Reform After Runaway Children Shoot at Deputies](#) | Orlando Sentinel | June 3, 2021

['Emerging Adults' Shouldn't Be Serving Life Sentences](#) | The CT Mirror | June 3, 2021

[University of Denver Launches Program to Help Juvenile Justice-Involved Girls](#) | University of Denver | April 8, 2021

[Apply Brain Science to Plea Bargains For Developmentally Informed Approach](#) | Juvenile Justice Information Exchange | April 5, 2021

Elder Justice

[The Grandmother Who Won Her Elder Fraud Case Against Her Grandsons](#) | Forbes | May 28, 2021

[47 Attorneys General Press Congress to Pass Elder Financial Abuse Bill Aimed at Curbing E-Fraud](#) | Law Street | May 26, 2021

[South Carolina AG Supports Legislation to Help Protect Against Elder Fraud](#) | Aiken Standard | May 26, 2021

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