

# CLBB News

A newsletter from the Center for Law, Brain & Behavior

January 8, 2020

## CLBB in the Classroom: Spring 2021

CLBB leadership and affiliated faculty are offering classes in the intersections of neuroscience, law and ethics this semester. Read below for more information on these exciting opportunities to learn from the country's leading thinkers in law and neuroscience.

*Law and  
Neuroscience Seminar at  
Harvard Law School*

Spring 2021 seminar  
W 5:15pm - 7:15pm

*Law and Neuroscience* is CLBB's flagship seminar, open to Harvard Law School students and to students from other schools (by petition and subject to enrollment size). Law and Neuroscience is taught by [Judge Nancy Gertner \(Ret.\)](#), Senior Lecturer on Law at Harvard Law School and CLBB Managing Director. The seminar features a world-class roster of CLBB affiliated faculty and guest scientists to help explore core topics in law and neuroscience. CLBB Co-Director [Dr. Judith Edersheim, JD, MD](#) and CLBB Executive Director [Dr. Francis Shen, JD, PhD](#), will be in class each session to provide medical and legal perspectives.

Course Type: Harvard Law School Seminar (2 credits)  
Meeting Time: Wednesdays, 5:15 - 7:15 pm, fully remote on Zoom  
Instructor: Judge Nancy Gertner (Ret.)

**Description:** What's going on inside the minds of criminal defendants? And what about the judges, jurors, and attorneys who adjudicate them? Are addicts responsible? Can violent offenders be rehabilitated? Do we have free will? How can neuroscience inform criminal sentencing? This seminar on law and neuroscience explores questions such as these through the innovative lens of modern neuroscience. The seminar features guest lectures by world-leading experts in neuroscience, and explores how criminal law's ancient assumptions about human decision-making, emotions, and memory are increasingly being challenged by modern neuroscience through novel evidence and innovative legal arguments. Students will explore the legal implications of the neuroscience of hate, love, memory, lying, trauma, stress, violence, addiction, false confessions, adolescence, juvenile justice, and much more. We will look critically at efforts to use neuroimaging in court, and this will necessarily lead us to consider the relationship between law and science, more generally, and neuroscience in particular. The seminar will develop legal writing skills, as well as prepare students for engagement with expert testimony, criminal law and procedure, and complex litigation involving science and law.

**Confirmed guest speakers include:** [Dr. BJ Casey, PhD](#), Professor of Psychology, Yale University; [Dr. Octavio Choi, MD, PhD](#), Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Stanford Medical School; [Professor David Faigman, JD](#), Chancellor and Dean, John F. Digardi Distinguished Professor of Law, University of California, Hastings College of the Law; [Dr. Judith Edersheim, JD, MD](#), Co-Founder and Co-Director, Center for Law, Brain & Behavior at Massachusetts General Hospital; [Dr. Yasmin Hurd, PhD](#), Ward-Coleman Chair of Translational Neuroscience and Director of the Addiction



Institute at Mount Sinai; [Professor Owen Jones, JD](#), Glenn M. Weaver, M.D. and Mary Ellen Weaver Chair in Law, Brain, and Behavior, Professor of Law Professor of Biological Sciences, Director, MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Law and Neuroscience, Vanderbilt University; [Dr. Robert Kinscherff, JD, PhD](#), Faculty in the Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology and Associate Vice President for Community Engagement, William James College; [Dr. Read Montague, PhD](#), Virginia Tech Carilion Research Professor, Director, Center for Human Neuroscience Research, Virginia Tech; [Dr. Kerry Ressler, MD, PhD](#), Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School; [Dr. Daniel L. Schacter, PhD](#), William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of Psychology, Harvard University; [Dr. Francis Shen, JD, PhD](#), co-author of the first casebook on Law and Neuroscience; and [Dr. Gideon Yaffe, PhD](#), Wesley Newcomb Hohfeld Professor of Jurisprudence, Yale Law School.

Enrollment in this seminar is available for Harvard Law School students. Interested students not at HLS should [email Judge Gertner's](#) Faculty Assistant, [Alyssa Lary](#).



## *Bioethics, Bias and Justice at Harvard Medical School*

Spring 2021 seminar

M 7-8:30 pm, Jan 25 - March 12 (virtual via Zoom)



Course Type: Harvard Medical School, Masters in Bioethics Program (2 credits)  
Instructor: Dr. Francis X. Shen, JD, PhD

**Description:** Bioethics scholarship and scholarly engagement with practitioners has often overlooked issues of racial bias, economic inequality, and social justice. Through direct engagement with emerging voices in the fields of bioethics and neuroethics, this seminar will provide students an opportunity to critically re-examine theoretical and applied bioethics from multiple disciplinary perspectives.

Weekly special guests will allow students to thoughtfully explore topics such as race and gender bias in digital mental health during COVID-19; the role of bioethicists in addressing systemic racism; intersectionality in clinical medicine; racial discrimination in responses to COVID-19; lack of representativeness in biomedical research; bioethics in the time of Black Lives Matter; and ethical concerns about the role of neuroscience and neurointerventions in the criminal justice system. Students will be required to submit weekly discussion postings, engage in seminar discussion, and complete two short writing assignments.

**Confirmed guest speakers include:** [Dr. Timothy Emmanuel Brown, PhD](#), Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of Philosophy, University of Washington; [Dr. Justin Chen, MD](#), Medical Director of Ambulatory Psychiatry Services and Co-Director of Primary Care Psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital; [Dr. Nicole Martinez-Martin, JD, PhD](#), Assistant Professor of Pediatrics (Biomedical Ethics), Stanford Center for Biomedical Ethics; [Dr. Camisha Russell, PhD](#), Assistant Professor of Philosophy, University of Oregon; and [Dr. Yolonda Wilson, PhD](#), Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Howard University.

Interested students should [email Dr. Shen](#).

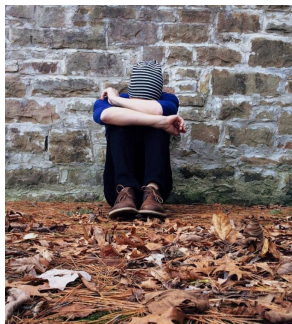


## *Mass Incarceration and Sentencing Law at Harvard Law School*

Instructor: [Judge Nancy Gertner \(Ret.\)](#)  
Spring 2021 course  
T 1:00pm - 4:00pm

This course will first put 20th century sentencing law in sociological and historical context. It will examine the history, philosophy, and administration of the criminal sentencing process, the causes of growth in the US penal population, the historical roots of that growth from the mid 20th century to the present, and the impact of those policies on communities of color and the crime rate. We will then examine more closely the legal framework that enabled those policies, including the war on drugs, emphasis on retribution over rehabilitation, the changes in sentencing law and the structure of sentencing decisionmaking. Particular attention will be devoted to substantive sentencing standards (the insights of neuroscience, evidence based lessons from diversion programs) in addition to the procedures governing those decisions. The course will explore different kinds of sentencing regimes-state guideline systems, international models on which sentencing standards have evolved from common law decision making or judge-imposed guidelines (Australia, Israel, England), in addition to the federal sentencing guidelines. We will consider the interplay between principles of proportionality, severity, and parsimony on sentencing law.

## Courses on Neuroscience, Law and Ethics from CLBB Faculty



### [Bad Genes, Bad Parents, Bad Behaviors](#)

Instructor: [Joshua Buckholtz](#)  
Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
2021 Spring  
T 6:00pm - 8:45pm

This class will explore the biology of criminal behavior and violence. We will examine the construct of "anti-sociality" and unpack clinical and diagnostic issues surrounding its diverse manifestations, such as psychopathy. A strong emphasis will be placed on biological mechanisms. A particular focus will be on understanding how genes and environments act and interact to predispose antisocial behavior by shaping brain function and development.



### [Brains, Identity, and Moral Agency](#)

Instructor: [Steven Hyman](#)  
Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
2021 Spring  
T Th 10:30am - 11:45am

Advances in brain science have the potential to diminish many forms of human suffering and disability that are rooted in disordered brain function. But what are the ethical implications involved in altering the structure and function of human brains? What's at stake when we have the ability to alter a person's narrative identity, create brain-computer interfaces, and manipulate social and moral emotion? In this course, you will ask and attempt to answer these questions, and discuss the implications of mechanistic explanations of decision-making and action for widely-held concepts of moral agency and legal culpability. This course will prepare you to be a thoughtful citizen of a world characterized by rapidly emerging understandings of human brain function, and by new technologies intended to repair or influence human brains.



### [Evolving Morality: From Primordial Soup to Superintelligent Machines](#)

Instructor: [Joshua Greene](#)  
Harvard Faculty of Arts & Sciences  
2021 Spring  
M W 1:30pm - 2:45pm



In this course we'll examine the evolution of morality on Earth, from its origins in the biology of unthinking organisms, through the psychology of intelligent primates, and into a future inhabited by machines that may be more intelligent and better organized than humans. First, we ask: What is morality? Many people believe that morality descends from above, as divine commands or as abstract, timeless principles akin to mathematical truths. Here we take an empirical approach to morality, viewing it as a natural phenomenon that rises up from below-born of the strategic interactions among lifeforms and societies struggling to exist.

Across diverse topics, this course explores the implications of a single idea: that the wonder we see around us, and ahead of us, is the product of competition and cooperation at increasing levels of complexity.



### [Social Psychology](#)

Instructor: [Fiery Cushman](#)  
Harvard Faculty of Arts & Sciences  
2021 Spring  
M W 12:00pm - 1:15pm

An introduction to social psychological research and theory regarding everyday behavior, incorporating methods from the life sciences (neuroscience, genetics, evolutionary biology). Topics include: attitudes and social influence; obedience to authority; stereotyping, prejudice, and intergroup relations; emotion; interpersonal attraction; morality and prosocial behavior; and errors of everyday human judgment.



### [Laboratory on Complex Thought and Cooperation](#)

Instructor: [Joshua Greene](#)  
Harvard Faculty of Arts & Sciences  
2021 Spring  
Th 1:30pm - 2:45pm

In this hands-on lab course, students have the opportunity to participate in all aspects of psychological research, including experimental design, data collection, and data analysis. Each student will work closely with a graduate student or post-doctoral mentor. Topics of research are divided across cognitive and social psychology. Cognitive projects focus on the neuroscience of complex thought: Humans can understand and reason about an effectively infinite number of different ideas. How do our brains accomplish this? Social projects are applied work focused on promoting cooperation, conflict resolution, and improved social decision-making. Methods include fMRI, neural network modeling, and online and in-lab behavioral experiments.

## **[CLBB is Hiring!](#)**

### [Summer 2021 Research Assistants](#)

As the intersection of law and neuroscience rapidly evolves, the Harvard MGH Center for Law, Brain & Behavior seeks to hire full-time, paid Research Associates and Undergraduate Research Assistants for the summer 2021 academic term (June - August 2021).

Research Associates and Research Assistants will play an integral role in exciting Center initiatives concerning the developing brain, the aging brain, and many additional topics. Research Associates may be hired at the post-bac, graduate, or post-doc levels. Current undergraduates are eligible for the Research Assistant positions. Compensation will be based on experience, and start/end dates are flexible. Research Associates and Research Assistants will report to Dr. Shen; will work with CLBB Co-Directors Dr. Judith Edersheim and Dr. Bruce Price, as well as with CLBB affiliated faculty in both law and neuroscience; and will support research in the [Project on Law and Applied Neuroscience](#), a joint program with the Petrie-Flom Center for Health Law Policy, Biotechnology, and Bioethics at Harvard Law School. Summer RAs must be available for at least 10 weeks of the summer to be eligible.

All inquiries should be sent to [CLBB Project Manager, Emily Rehmet](#) at [erehmet@mgh.harvard.edu](mailto:erehmet@mgh.harvard.edu). Applications will be reviewed starting on February 1, and on a rolling

basis thereafter.

[Apply Here](#)

## CENTER FOR LAW, BRAIN & BEHAVIOR



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