

CLBB News

A newsletter from the Center for Law, Brain & Behavior

October 27, 2020

CLBB Highlights



[TED MED Talk: Every Story Is A Brain Story](#)

Boston, MA | September 2020

CLBB Executive Director Francis Shen's TED MED 2020 talk -- *Why Every Story is a Brain Story* -- is now available for viewing online. In this talk Dr. Shen explores how neuroscience can transform the law. TED MED 2020's theme was "Make Way for Wonder" and Dr. Shen commented: When I make way for wonder, **I see the law and the legal system not as they are, but as they can become.**



[The Psychologist Rethinking Human Emotion](#)

The Guardian | September 25, 2020

CLBB Chief Scientific Officer Dr. Lisa Feldman Barrett is featured in this article for her pathbreaking work on how the emotions and the brain.

Highlight: "Barrett argues that the universal components of human experience are not emotions, but changes on a continuum of arousal on the one hand, and pleasantness and unpleasantness on the other. The term for this is "affect". It is a basic feature of consciousness, and people in different cultures learn to mold this raw material into emotional experiences in different ways. So you can have high arousal and high pleasantness, and your brain might construct 'ecstasy', or low arousal and high unpleasantness and you might create 'misery'."

Upcoming CLBB Events

Detecting Dementia Technology, Aging Brains, and the Law

Wed., April 1 | 12:00pm | Harvard Law School | Wasserman Hall, Milstein East C



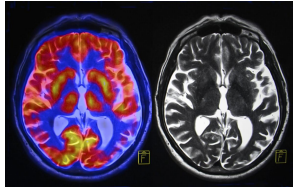
[Detecting Dementia: Technology, Access, and the Law](#)

November 16, 2020, 12:00-1:00 pm EDT

Advances in neuroimaging, genetics, and mobile health apps are creating unprecedented opportunities to detect subtle brain changes that may predict the onset of Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia. But how much trust should we have in these new technologies, who will have access to them, and how should the law respond when litigants proffer novel evidence of their brain states? This panel will explore technological innovations in dementia detection, and their ethical, social, and legal implications.

This event is part of the [Project on Law and Applied Neuroscience](#), a collaboration between the Center for Law, Brain & Behavior at Massachusetts General Hospital and the Petrie-Flom Center for Health Law Policy, Biotechnology, and Bioethics at Harvard Law School.

Additional Related Events



[The Neuroscience of Real Life Monsters: Psychopaths, CEOs, and Politicians](#)

Thursday, October 29, 2020, 7:00 pm Pacific / 10:00 pm EDT

Why do some people live lawful lives, while others gravitate toward repeated criminal behavior? Do people choose to be moral or immoral, or is morality simply a genetically inherited function of the brain? Research suggests that psychopathy as a biological condition explained by defective neural circuits that mediate empathy, but what does that mean when neuroscience is used as evidence in criminal court? How can understanding neuroscience give us an insight into the actions and behaviors of our political leaders? [Forensic psychiatrist Dr. Octavio Choi](#) will explore how emerging neuroscience challenges long-held assumptions underlying the basis- and punishment-of criminal behavior. The event is free, but [online registration is required](#).

Faculty Research and News



[We Need Truth and Reconciliation](#)

CommonWealth Magazine | September 27, 2020

Massachusetts Juvenile Court Judge and **CLBB Faculty Member Jay Blitzman** details the dangers of the school-to-prison pipeline and its impact on the enduring systemic racism within Massachusetts and the United States at large. He cites the recently released Harvard Criminal Justice Policy Program study, which demonstrated that black and Latinx defendants routinely face more serious charges and serve longer sentences than white defendants.

[He'd Waited Decades to Argue His Innocence. She Was a Judge Who Believed in Second Chances. Nobody Knew She Suffered from Alzheimer's](#)

ProPublica | October 12, 2020



CLBB Executive Director Francis Shen was quoted in this article about Judge ShawnDya Simpson: "Francis Shen, executive director of Harvard's Center for Law, Brain and Behavior, said the issue of cognitive decline among judges is both considerable and complicated. To take the bench, federal judges are required to undergo a medical exam that includes mental health measures. Once appointed, though, they are never required to receive what Shen calls a 'brain health' exam. 'We just have no good system for assessing a judge's cognitive health,' said Shen, who recently produced a 90-page study titled '[Aging Judges](#).'"

Student Opportunities

FACEBOOK

[Research Intern, BCI Bioethicist \(PhD\)](#)

The Brain-Computer Interface (BCI) team at Facebook Reality Labs is developing a noninvasive, wearable, optical BCI for human-computer interactions. This internship will embed an ethics trainee into a team of BCI engineers and research scientists who are committed to and proactively engaged in responsible innovation. During this internship, you will have the opportunity to both learn about and participate in BCI research and development while working on related neuroethics projects. A scientific background is not required in order to be successful in this role.

In the News

General

[Neuroscience Has A Whiteness Problem. This Research Project Aims To Fix It](#) | NPR | Sep 24, 2020

[New York City Uses 'Nudges' to Reduce Missed Court Dates](#) | ScienceMag | Oct 8, 2020

Juvenile and Emerging Adult Justice

['The Doors Don't Lock' in DC Jail Program for Young Adults](#) | The Crime Report | Oct 5, 2020

[California Just Passed Common-Sense Criminal Justice Reforms. Really.](#) | The Dispatch | Oct 7, 2020

Trauma, Immigration, and Asylum Justice

[He Sought Asylum After MS-13 Tried to Kill Him. Amy Coney Barrett Sent Him Back Into Danger](#) | The Intercept | Oct 9, 2020

Elder Justice

[Elder Abuse and Ageism During COVID-19](#) | Psychiatric Times | Sep 29, 2020

[Having Dementia Doesn't Mean You Can't Vote](#) | The New York Times | Oct 14, 2020

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MGH Center for Law, Brain & Behavior, Dept. of Psychiatry, Bulfinch 351,
55 Fruit St., Boston, MA 02114

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