



The European Dana Alliance For The Brain

165 Queen's Gate, London SW7 5HE
www.edab.net

NEUROETHICS REPORT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL NEUROETHICS NETWORK November 2008

The Science Museum's **Dana Centre** in London is a purpose-built venue where doctors and scientists can get together with the public to discuss current issues in science and medicine. EDAB's events on the theme of neuroethics include:

- Expanding the Mind – A talk by Gary Lynch (Univ of California) on cognitive enhancers.
- Dangerous sport: Boxing Clever – a discussion on the risks and ethics of sport, focusing on boxing.
- Strokes of Good and Bad Luck – Nancy Rothwell talked about animals in research.
- God be in my Head – Colin Blakemore chaired a discussion on religion and science.
- Addict – panel discussion on drug addiction and related research.
- How Happy Are You – a panel discussion to reflect the themes in a Government report on mental capital and well-being.

www.danacentre.org.uk

The **EuroScience Open Forum** was held in Barcelona in July. EDAB's session was on brain imaging: Looking Inside Your Brain. Pierre Magistretti (Lausanne) gave a talk on brain imaging technology and then chaired a discussion on the uses – medical and non-medical – of brain imaging, and the related ethical issues.

www.esof2008.org

At **FENS** in Geneva, a press conference on Neuroscience and Human Culture was held in advance of a symposium on the same theme, which included neuroethics, presented by Judy Illes.

<http://fens2008.neurosciences.asso.fr/abstracts/sess/sess171.html>

During **Brain Awareness Week**, 10 – 16 March, more than 2,200 institutions and organisations in 76 countries held events. Some were on neuroethics, for example:

- A round-table discussion on embryonic stem cells in brain repair at the Institute of Cellular Physiology and Biology in France.
- A science-café event hosted by the Dutch Neurofederation on neuroethics and brain doping.

http://edab.dana.org/baw/index_en.cfm

Nature journal has a popular series of podcasts, **Neuropod**. Neuropod is recorded in *Nature's* London office, and is sponsored by the Dana Foundation. The programmes cover research, and many include topics related to neuroethics:

- September 2008: The psychology of the credit crunch; drugs versus cognitive therapy for depression
- August 2008: fairness and egalitarianism in children
- July 2008: virtual reality drug dens
- June 2008: New genetic mutations and schizophrenia; the genes that maketh man.
- May 2008: A monkey model of Huntington's disease; the challenge of free will.
- April 2008: Risky decision-making; the genetics of stress and anxiety; and the teenage brain.

<http://www.nature.com/neurosci/neuropod/>

At the **Cheltenham Science Festival**, UK, in June, EDAB's Colin Blakemore took part in a discussion on intelligence and, Pierre Biology talked about free will. Mark Lythgoe (Director of the Festival) chaired an event on 'Image of a Troubled Mind' about schizophrenia. (Other talks also covered neuroethics subjects but were not given by EDAB speakers.)

During the year, **EDAB members** took part in a number of events on neuroethics, for example:

- Elena Cattaneo, Italy, gave talks on ethical issues in stem cell research.
- Marina Chernisheva, Russia, organised a conference for children on The Probability of Brain Transplants.
- Albert Gjedde (Denmark) was featured in a national newspaper in an article on Can Brain Scanners Read Your Thoughts?
- Alex Ribeiro, Portugal, gave a lecture on Neuroethics, Intervention Medicine and Society.
- Steven Rose (UK) published an article in *The Lancet* on Brain-based Ethics.

- Jerzy Vetulani, Poland, gave public lectures on the Neurobiology of Morality.
- Colin Blakemore, UK, with Catholic Archbishop hosted a discussion on Science, Ethics and Faith to debate potential legislation of the creation of and research into human-animal embryos.

Elaine Snell is also on the Board of **Y Touring**, a youth theatre company that dramatises issues in medicine and science. In 2008, productions that have a strong neuroethics theme are: Every Breath (animal research), Nobody Lives Forever (stem cell research) and Starfish (clinical trials).

<http://www.ytouring.org.uk/>

In addition to the above, there were events on 'science and society' themes throughout the year.

It should be noted that there are many more events etc in the UK that cover neuroethics, organised by other organisations. The issues appeal to public audiences.