Tremendous advances in neuroscience have sparked heightened focus on the promises of brain research. New windows have been opened to understanding brain disorders such as depression, addiction, and dementia, and hope for new interventions realized. But these advances have raised profound ethical questions about the implications of new methods and discoveries for individuals, society, and culture: How can we protect the privacy of individuals with mental health disorders in an expanding information age? What guidelines are needed to manage staggering increases in the use of medicines for children diagnosed with mood disorders? What policies are needed to respond to a diversion of already scarce medical resources from quality care for the elderly and to predictions of brain disease for which a cure remains elusive? How can we best empower Canadians of all cultural backgrounds to make good choices about their brain health as personalized medicine replaces physician-directed clinical practice? At these junctures of neuroscience, ethics, and human values, neuroethics plays a critical role.

LEADERSHIP

Dr. Judy Illes is Canada Research Chair in Neuroethics, Professor of Neurology, and member of the Brain Research Centre at the University of British Columbia (UBC). A neuroscientist-turned-neuroethicist, she earned her PhD degree at Stanford University, where she co-founded the Stanford Brain Research Center and pioneered the field of Neuroethics: “The advances are tremendous – predicting disease, creating new ways to treat addiction, finding genetic codes for how we think and feel. These developments reach deeply into who we are. Everyone deserves a voice in these developments – the scientists at the bench, the doctors who will use them, policy-makers who will have to regulate them, and Canadians for whom they have to be meaningful. We are bringing all these voices forward and making them heard.”

The UBC National Core for Neuroethics, directed by Dr. Illes, is a federally and privately funded world-leading centre devoted to complex ethical, legal, social, and policy challenges at the intersection of modern brain science and biomedical ethics. The Core has distinguished itself by listening to the concerns and enthusiasms of multiple communities – experts, patients, and the population at large – and by translating ideas into policy proposals that incorporate the best of thought from leaders in the field and the public.

Dr. Peter Reiner, Professor of Psychiatry and a member of the Brain Research Centre, co-founded the Core with Dr. Illes in 2007. He is an expert in cellular and molecular neuroscience and former President and CEO of Active Pass Pharmaceuticals. Today, Dr. Reiner investigates the ways in which advances in the neurosciences impact everyday lives and personal well-being, including how we seek to improve our cognitive selves and the effects of modern neuroscience on society at large.

Dr. Lynn Beattie, Professor Emerita, Division of Geriatric Medicine and Director of the Clinic for Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders at UBC, co-leads the Core with Drs. Illes and Reiner. She is a world-renowned force in clinical care and research related to brain diseases like AD that progressively strip people of their cognitive and motor abilities, personalities, and identity.

Drs. Illes, Reiner and Beattie train dozens of outstanding graduate and post-graduate students from a wide range of disciplines in the sciences and humanities, and mentor them to positions of leadership in academia, medicine, biotechnology, and policy. In the past year, the team at the National Core for Neuroethics has provided leadership to the discipline, garnering awards for scholarship, publishing in the academic literature and engaging in extensive outreach to the public. We are pleased to share our past year’s accomplishments with you.
AWARDS AND KEYNOTE LECTURES

Dr. Judy Illes was elected to the Royal Society of Canada.

Dr. Judy Illes was elected a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences.

Dr. Judy Illes was awarded the Louis Hanson Marshall Special Recognition Award from the Society of Neuroscience for exceptional service to women in neuroscience.

Dr. Peter Reiner was the Keynote Lecturer at the conference From Neuroselves to Neurosocieties: Cross-disciplinary conversations around the neurosciences and society.

Dr. Judy Illes gave the Margarete Wuensche Memorial Lecture at the Hotchkiss Brain Institute at the University of Calgary.

Drs. Julie Robillard and Louise Whiteley, as well as graduate students Daniel Buchman and Roland Nadler received Young Scholars Awards to attend the Brain Matters II Conference in Montreal.

Chris Scott received a UBC international tuition support award from the Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Program.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The National Core for Neuroethics hosted a public conference as part of Brain Awareness Week entitled “Rights Come to Mind: Narratives, Neuroethics, and Disorders of Consciousness”.

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Joseph Fins (Columbia Univ.)

Panelists: Dean Mary Ann Bobinski (UBC Law), Dr. Gladys Maestre (University of Zulia), Dr. Eric Racine (ICRM, Montreal) & Dr. John Harris (Manchester Univ.)

Dr. Judy Illes was among a group of panelists who addressed issues of ethics, wisdom and more at Sam Sullivan’s Public Salon.

Drs. Judy Illes and Julie Robillard wrote an op-ed for the Vancouver Sun entitled “A Meeting of the Minds on Brain and Law”.

Dr. Nina Di Pietro was featured in a Vancouver Sun front page article entitled “The Puzzles of Autism”, written by our 2010-2011 Journalism Intern Rebecca Cheung.

Dr. Marleen Eijkholt presented a webinar information session hosted by Spinal Cord Injury BC entitled “Stem Cell Ethics: What’s all the fuss?”.

Dr. Julie Robillard presented a webinar information session hosted by the Canadian Dementia Knowledge Translation Network entitled: "Dementia Research and Care in Social Media: Creating New KT Opportunities".

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS


GRANTS

Dr. Judy Illes received funding from the Stem Cell Network for a project entitled “Translation Challenges, Science Policy, and Stem Cell Research”.

Dr. Judy Illes received funding from CIHR for a project entitled “Neuroimaging for Disorders of Consciousness: Charting the Canadian Ethics Landscape”.

Dr. Peter Reiner received a grant from the Mind Foundation of BC for a project entitled “Reducing Stigma”.

Drs. Judy Illes, Brian Kwon and Marleen Eijkholt received a grant from the Stem Cell Network for a project entitled “Risks and Resolutions: Stem Cells for Spinal Cord Injuries”.

Dr. Nina Di Pietro was awarded an Exploratory Workshop Grant from the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies for a project entitled “Deliberations on the Ethical Use of Antipsychotic Medications in Children”.
CORE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

Rémi Quirion, Ph.D., O.C., F.R.S.C., C.Q., Chief Scientist of Québec.

Mary Anne Bobinski, Ph.D., Dean, Faculty of Law, University of British Columbia.

Max Cynader, Ph.D., O.B.C., F.S.C., F.C.A.H.S., Director, Brain Research Center, University of British Columbia.

Howard Feldman, M.D., F.R.C.P., Professor of Neurology and Executive Associate Dean, Research, Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia.

Joseph J. Fins, M.D., F.A.C.P., E. William Davis Professor of Medical Ethics & Chief, Division of Medical Ethics, Weill Cornell Medical College.

Anthony Phillips, Ph.D., F.R.S.C., Director, Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health, Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Art Caplan, Ph.D., Emanuel and Robert Hart Professor of Bioethics & Director, Center for Bioethics, University of Pennsylvania.

Gladys Maestre, M.D., Ph.D., Professor, Department of Neurosciences, School of Medicine, University of Zulia, Maracaibo, Venezuela.

Barbara Sahakian, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Cambridge.

Michael Burgess, Ph.D., Principal, College for Interdisciplinary Studies and Professor, Center for Applied Ethics, University of British Columbia.

FACULTY AFFILIATES

Andrew Baron, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of British Columbia.

Adrian Owen, Ph.D., Professor and Canada Excellence Research Chair in Cognitive Neuroscience and Imaging, University of Western Ontario.

Timothy Caulfield, LL.B., LL.M., Professor and Canada Research Chair in Health Law and Policy, Faculty of Law and the School of Public Health, University of Alberta.

Jennifer Chandler, LL.B., LL.M., Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa.

Eric H. Chudler, Ph.D., Executive Director, Center for Sensorimotor Neural Engineering, University of Washington.

Susan Cox, Ph.D., Associate Professor, W. Maurice Young Centre for Applied Ethics, University of British Columbia.

Gidon Felsen, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Physiology and Biophysics, University of Colorado School of Medicine.

Dan Goldowitz, Ph.D., Canada Research Chair in Developmental Neurogenetics, Senior Scientist at the Centre for Molecular Medicine and Therapeutics, Scientific Director of NeuroDevNet, University of British Columbia.

Anita Ho, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, W. Maurice Young Centre for Applied Ethics, University of British Columbia.

Wendy Hulko, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Social Work, Thompson Rivers University.

Michelle LeBaron, LL.B., Professor, Faculty of Law, University of British Columbia.

Eric Racine, Ph.D. Director, Neuroethics Research Unit, Institut de Recherches Cliniques de Montréal.

Urs Ribary, Dr.sc.nat. Professor and LEEF Leadership Chair in Cognitive Neuroscience in Childhood Health and Development, Department of Psychology, Simon Fraser University.

Michael Krausz, M.D., Ph.D., F.R.C.P., Professor of Psychiatry, Epidemiology and Public Health, University of British Columbia.

Edie Rasmussen, Ph.D., Professor and Chair of the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, University of British Columbia.

Elizabeth M. Simpson, Ph.D., Professor, Departments of Medical Genetics and Psychiatry, University of British Columbia.

David Silver, Ph.D., Chair in Business and Professional Ethics, W. Maurice Young Centre in Applied Ethics and the Sauder School Business, University of British Columbia.

Lawrence Ward, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Psychology, University of British Columbia.

Jehannine C. Austin, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of British Columbia.

C. Laird Birmingham, M.D., Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of British Columbia.

David Li, M.D., Professor, Department of Radiology, University of British Columbia.

Hendrik F.M. Van der Loos, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Division of Mechanical Engineering, University of British Columbia.

Allan Schatzberg, M.D., Professor and Chairman, Department of Psychiatry, Stanford University.

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORS, ADVANCES IN NEUROIMAGING (NIH/NIMH)

Mildred Cho, Ph.D., Professor and Associate Director Stanford Center for Biomedical Ethics, Stanford University.

Gary H. Glover, Ph.D., Professor of Radiology and Director, Radiological Sciences Laboratory, Stanford University.

Hank Greely, J.D., Professor, School of Law, Stanford University.

Joachim Hallmayer, M.D., Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Stanford University.

David Magnus, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Pediatrics and Director, Stanford Center for Biomedical Ethics, Stanford University.

Allan Schatzberg, M.D., Professor and Chairman, Department of Psychiatry, Stanford University.
RESEARCHERS AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

James A. Anderson, Ph.D., Research Associate
Marcel Arcand, M.D., 2011-2012 CDKTN Visiting Fellow
Emily Borgelt, M.Sc., M.A., Research Assistant
Elana Brief, Ph.D., Consulting Research Fellow
Adrian Byram, M.Sc., Honorary Research Associate
Daniel Buchman, B.A., M.S.W., R.S.W., Doctoral Student
Noah Castelo, Research Intern
Eugene Chong, Research Intern
Nina Di Pietro, Ph.D., Senior Research Fellow
Marleen Eijkholt, Ph.D., Postdoctoral Fellow
Nicholas Fitz, B.A., Research Assistant
Thomas Wade Johnson, B.Sc., Research Intern
Grace Lee, Ph.D, Postdoctoral Fellow

Jennifer Mackie, B.Sc., M.Sc., Research Assistant
Selina Mak, Interim Administrator
Praveena Manogaran, Research Intern
Janice Matautia, Administrator
Danny Medelshohn, M.D., M.Sc., Neurosurgery Resident
Ania Mizgalewicz, B.A., Research Assistant
Roland Nadler, B.A., Master’s Student
Anita Pop, Research Intern
Julie Robillard, Ph.D., Postdoctoral Fellow
Keith Rozendahl, Ph.D., Journalism Intern
Osamu Sakura, Ph.D., University of Tokyo, Visiting Scholar
Christine Stables, M.D. Neurology Resident
Christopher Thomas Scott, B.A., M.L.A. Doctoral Student

OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

CIHR
IRSC
CDKTN
Genome British Columbia
NORTH GROWTH FOUNDATION
vanouver foundation
Mitacs
Ethics for the real world
American Academy of Neurology
National Institutes of Health
The Dana Foundation
NeuroDevNet
Canada Foundation for Innovation