

Law & Neuroscience: Hope or Hype?

Prof. Stephen Morse (UPenn)



A Primer on Criminal Law and Neuroscience, that I edited with Adina Roskies

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The discovery of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), which permits non-invasive imaging of brain function, was an immense scientific breakthrough that seemed to create the possibility of previously unimaginable understanding of the relation between brain function, mind and behavior. Legal academics and lawyers, especially within criminal law, were quick to embrace this new technology. Some thought new discoveries might cause profound changes in legal doctrine and practice and perhaps even revolutionary reforms. This talk addresses the current state of law and neuroscience and suggests that legal changes based on neuroscience have been few to date and that contributions for the foreseeable future will be modest.

Prof. Stephen J. Morse is the Ferdinand Wakeman Hubbell Professor of Law and Professor of Psychology and Law in Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

Morse works on problems of individual responsibility and agency. He has published numerous interdisciplinary articles and chapters and has co-edited collections, including (with A. Roskies) *A Primer on Criminal Law and Neuroscience* and (with L. Katz & M. Moore) *Foundations of Criminal Law*. He is working on a new book, *Desert and Disease: Responsibility and Social Control*. Morse was Co-Director of the MacArthur Foundation Law and Neuroscience Project.

He is a Diplomate in Forensic Psychology of the American Board of Professional Psychology; a past president of Division 41 of the American Psychological Association; a recipient of the American Academy of Forensic Psychology's Distinguished Contribution Award; a member of the MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Mental Health and Law; and a trustee of the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law.