



Shen Neurolaw Lab

Every story is a brain story.

www.fxshen.com

What We Do: From Lab to Law

Every story is a brain story, and every day these stories become richer as labs across the world make advances in how we understand and treat the human brain. The potential implications are stunning. Brain science might allow us to one day reverse dementia, prevent addiction, reduce interpersonal violence, detect lies, and much more. But whether this promise is realized depends critically on the path that is forged from lab to law.



The world is our lab: Dr. Shen studying legal decision-making at the Minnesota State Fair.

That's where we come in. The mission of the Shen Neurolaw Lab is to translate advances in brain science into better law and policy. We recognize that the promise of brain science must be balanced against the perils of premature and inappropriate uses. We thus conduct research to better enable lawyers, courts, and policymakers to understand what, precisely, neuroscience can (and cannot) offer.

“Every day we learn more about how our brains work. Our mission is to translate those advances into better law and policy.” - Lab Director Francis Shen

We study big problems such as the ways in which neuroscience can affect: **mental health** services; sentencing in the **criminal justice** system; treating **sports concussions**; providing **educational services**; developing **early childhood interventions**; litigating **brain injury** and **pain**; assessing **brain death**; brain-based **lie detection**; the regulation of **brain-machine interface** and **neuromodulation**; and the ethics of **cognitive enhancement**. Neuroscience has the potential to revolutionize law and policy. But only if there are enough voices calling for change.

Please join the conversation by sharing *your* brain stories.

Contact: Francis X. Shen, University of Minnesota McKnight Land-Grant Professor; Associate Professor of Law; Executive Director of Education & Outreach for the MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Law and Neuroscience

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Who We Are

Dr. Francis X. Shen, Director of the Neurolaw Lab, is a McKnight Land-Grant Professor and Associate Professor of Law at the University of Minnesota. He also serves as Executive Director of Education and Outreach for the MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Law and Neuroscience. Dr. Shen received his B.A. from the University of Chicago, his J.D. from Harvard Law School, and his Ph.D. from Harvard University. During graduate school he was a doctoral fellow in the Harvard University Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality & Social Policy, supported by the National Science Foundation.



From left to right: Tom Pryor, Brian Zurovski, Hallie Hillerman, Weiwen Leung, Aubrey Strenger, Professor Shen (back, right)

Professor Shen teaches Criminal Law, Evidence, Law and Neuroscience, and Education Law. Previous to Minnesota, he taught at Tulane Law School, Vanderbilt Law School, and Harvard University. **Publications** from Lab members include the first [Law and Neuroscience](#) coursebook, as well

as [articles](#) on a variety of neurolaw topics.

Lab members have diverse backgrounds. Current and previous lab members include Senior Research Scientist [Adam Steiner](#) (Ph.D., Neuroscience); economists Weiwen Leung and Brian Zurovski; lawyer and political scientist Tom Pryor; law students Morgan Carlson, Aubrey Strenger, and Ryan Pesch, and undergraduate psychology students Geordin Crist, Yihan Wu and Wanbing Zhang. We also have collaborators from beyond Minnesota, including Deniz Cataltepe (Harvard, History of Science).

We hope to expand, and we are always open to new collaborations. Please contact us if you are interested in learning more about the work we do.

Members of the Shen Neurolaw Lab come from diverse backgrounds, including law, neuroscience, public policy, economics, psychology, and philosophy.

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