

Part 2, Position Paper

Introduction

It is theoretically possible to create a drug that replicates the photographic memory effect? By taking a pill, a person could become “smarter.” In some cases, it might be better to forget a certain event, or “erase” a particular memory. In the case of PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder) a drug called propranolol has recently been used to decrease physiological responses in patients when asking them to recall the traumatic event. It helped them to make the “memory” less stressful. But what are the ethical implications of using such drugs?

You will use the *Genes to Cognition Online* (www.g2conline.org) as well as other Internet resources to research a controversial topic in neuroscience dealing with neuroethics. Neuroethics is a field that has emerged as a result of the study of the brain. The ethical, social, and legal implications of manipulating and controlling the brain has led scientists to form The Neuroethics Society. Many controversial topics are arising as a result of what we learn from the study of neuroscience. It is important to be able to read and evaluate the new information the media reports every day. Are the sources reliable? Is the information accurate? Do you understand the technical vocabulary used in the article? You will be writing a position paper which supports your point of view regarding the following controversial statement:

“People should be permitted to take drugs to enhance their own mental performance.”

Position Paper

Use the Internet to find five supporting and five refuting arguments on the topic of drug enhancement. Write these on the appropriate pages. Be sure to include a source for each. Then use the information you collected for the supporting and refuting arguments to write a four paragraph paper.

Paragraph #1

Describe the controversy that exists that qualifies this as a neuroethical issue. Identify the scientific terms needed to understand the underlying issues. Clearly identify the position of the paper in the third person.

Paragraph #2

Describe at least three arguments to support the position of the paper. Make sure the arguments are clearly defined.

Support the arguments with the sources of information you used to build your argument. Give specific examples for each argument.

Paragraph #3

Refute the main argument for the opposing viewpoint in the same way you did in paragraph two.

Paragraph #4

Summarize your position and suggest future action.

What additional research must be done to strengthen your arguments or that would demonstrate weakness in the opposing arguments.

Describe a similar situation to which your argument can be applied. Be sure to give a specific example.

What government laws or regulations are needed to support your position?

Supporting Arguments

Argument
Source:
Argument
Source:
Argument
Source:
Argument
Source:
Argument
Source:

Refuting Arguments

Argument
Source:
Argument
Source:
Argument
Source:
Argument
Source:
Argument
Source:

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