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## Inside the New Science of Neuroengineering

Posted by [timothy](#) on Tuesday March 03, @10:02AM  
from the [your-jar-is-due-to-be-changed](#) dept.

[palegray.net](#) writes "*Wired brings us a [look into the world of neuroengineering](#), the science of hacking the brain to improve its function. Dr. Ed Boyden is the director of [MIT's Neuroengineering and Neuromedia Lab](#), focusing on innovative methods of physically altering neuroanatomy for various purposes. As useful as discoveries in the field may be, the work certainly raises moral and ethical questions. From the article: "If we surgically or electrically modify someone's personality... that raises many questions about personal identity, (of) who we are at our core," says Dr. Debra Matthews of The Berman Institute of Bioethics. "We place ourselves in the mind and therefore the brain. (Mood-altering surgery) feels like fundamentally modifying who a person is."*"



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[Firehose:Inside the New Science of Neuroengineering](#) by [palegray.net \(1195047\)](#)

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### [Boring question \(Score:2\)](#)

by [Thiez \(1281866\)](#)

> "If we surgically or electrically modify someone's personality... that raises many questions about personal identity, (of) who we are at our core,"

Wouldn't altering someone's personality by altering their brain imply that 'we are our brain' (which is of course influenced by chemicals produced in other parts of the body, so in a way one could also say 'we are our bodies'), thus answering this boring question?

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### ● [At what point... \(Score:1\)](#)

by [Bruiser80 \(1179083\)](#)

...is somebody changed enough to make them a different person?

If somebody elects to have a procedure done to permanently alter the way their brain works, are they still the same person?

I wonder how effective this would be - even after this mood alteration is done, won't the patient still have memories from their past on how they used to act. It's interesting what kind of stress that would

put on somebody's psyche to have an abrupt change in how they act, how they think and how a patient would react to

○

● [Interesting, but call back in 20 years \(Score:1\)](#)

by [Felgerkarb \(695336\)](#)

As interesting as this article was -- especially as he got into this from studying the neuroscience of bird song, something I was involved with years ago -- I think it's a stretch to call this 'engineering'.

It is an interesting take on an old technique. Instead of using direct electrical stimulation to stimulate the brain, he uses virally-transcoded neurons to respond to different wavelengths of light....then pipes a fiber optic cable into a mouse brain. To do what? To make it run in circles.

It's a pro

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● [Why about psychiatric drugs? \(Score:2\)](#)

by [WetCat \(558132\)](#)

Aren't they change personality too?

Like Prozac, Paxil for example - the SSRI(Selective Serotonin Reuptake inhibitors).

People using that drugs are "on" that drugs, they have a changed personality, with no depression, but they are chemically altered - their serotonin reuptake in the brain is inhibited.

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"We are on the verge: Today our program proved Fermat's next-to-last theorem." -- Epigrams in Programming, ACM SIGPLAN Sept. 1982

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