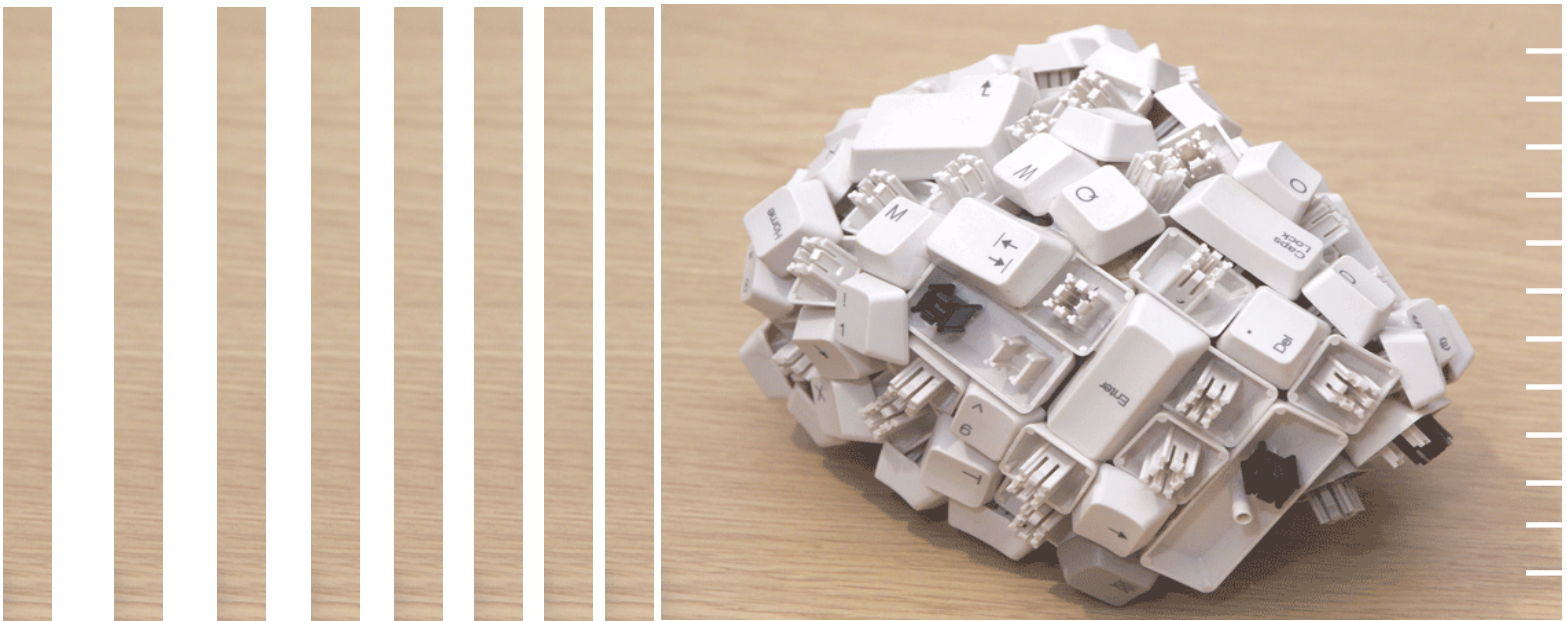


Transcending and Enhancing The Human Brain

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Suppose you could radically enhance various key cognitive capacities. Should you embark upon this journey? Here, there are age old philosophical questions that have no easy answers. For in order to understand whether you should enhance, you must first understand what you are to begin with. But what is a person? And, given your conception of a person, after such radical changes, would you yourself continue to exist, or would you have ceased to exist, having been replaced by someone else? If the latter is the case, why would you want to embark on the path to radical enhancement at all? In this paper Professor Schneider considers the case for radical enhancement in light of the metaphysics of personal identity, arguing that given a leading conception of persons that many cognitive scientists and philosophers adopt, including transhumanists, radical, and indeed, even mild, enhancements are unjustified (assuming, that is, that one cares about survival). Ironically, it may be easier to justify radical enhancement if one believes persons have souls.

Friday, April 17, 3:30pm
Wardlaw College, Room 126

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