

CONFERENCE

"Law and Biology: Impact on the Courts"

Co-sponsored with the National Judicial College and the International Foundation for Research in Experimental Economics (IFREE)

Dartmouth, NH,
August 6-7, 2004.

In August, 2004, the Gruter Institute joined The National Judicial College and the International Foundation for Research in Experimental Economics (IFREE) in conducting a two-day judicial training workshop on "Law and Biology: Impact on the Courts." The workshop was hosted by the Rockefeller Center for Public Policy and the Social Sciences at Dartmouth College, and featured several Dartmouth scholars among its faculty. Approximately 25 judges joined with scholars drawn from law, economics, philosophy, and neuroscience to explore issues such as neuroeconomics, sentencing, apology, contracts, decision making, and adolescent thought and behavior.

A particular highlight was the opportunity for a hands-on tour of Dartmouth's state of the art brain scanning facilities, led by faculty members Scott Grafton, Abigail Baird, and Jonathan Fugelsang. In a practical demonstration, two of the judges were scanned – everyone heaved a sigh of relief when both proved to have fully intact brains.

Faculty for the program also included Monika Cheney (Gruter Institute), E. Donald Elliott (Yale), Timothy Goldsmith (Yale), Oliver Goodenough (Vermont Law), Morris Hoffman (Colorado Superior Ct.) Kevin McCabe (George Mason), Erin O'Hara (Vanderbilt), Walter Sinnott-Armstrong (Dartmouth), Vernon Smith (George Mason), and Paul Zak (Claremont Graduate U.).

We are grateful to all who contributed to the success of the event – the participants and faculty, the other sponsors, NJC and IFREE, the Rockefeller Center and the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences at Dartmouth, New Hampshire Judge Jennifer Sobel who hosted a barbecue for the group, and particularly to Robin Wosje of the NJC, whose vision helped to bring the event about.