

Neurosurgeon Sergio Canavero proposed the HEAVEN procedure - i.e. head anastomosis venture - several years ago, and has recently received approval from the relevant regulatory bodies to perform this body-head transplant (BHT) in China. The BHT procedure involves attaching the donor body (D) to the head of the recipient (R), and discarding the body of R and head of D. Canavero's proposed procedure will be incredibly difficult from a medical standpoint. Aside from medical doubt, the BHT has been met with great resistance from many, if not most bio- and neuroethicists. Given both the known challenges and unknown outcomes of HEAVEN, several important neuroethical and legal questions have emerged should Canavero be successful, including: (1) What are the implications for transplantology in the U.S., inclusive of issues of expense, distributive justice, organizational procedures, and the cost(s) of novel insight(s)? (2) How do bioethical and neuroethical principles, and legal regulations of human subject research apply? (3) What are the legal consequences for Canavero (or any other surgeon) performing a BHT? (4) What are the tentative implications for the metaphysical and legal identity of R should they survive post-BHT? These questions are analyzed, issues are identified, and several solutions are proposed in an attempt to re-configure HEAVEN into a safe, clinically effective, and thus (more) realistically viable procedure. Notably, the permissibility of conducting the BHT in China fosters additional, important questions, focal to (1) whether Western ethics and professional norms be used to guide the BHT - or any neuroscientific research and its use - in non-Western countries, such as China; (2) if the models of responsible conduct of research are identical, similar, or applicable to the intent and conduct of research in China; and (3) what economic and political implications (for China and other countries) are fostered if/when such avant garde techniques are successful. These questions are discussed as a further impetus to develop a globally applicable neuroethical framework that would enable both local articulation and cosmopolitan inquiry and oversight of those methods and approaches deemed problematic, if and when rendered in more international settings ¹⁾.

¹⁾

Suskin ZD, Giordano JJ. Body -to-head transplant; a “caputal” crime? Examining the corpus of ethical and legal issues. *Philos Ethics Humanit Med*. 2018 Jul 13;13(1):10. doi: 10.1186/s13010-018-0063-2. PubMed PMID: 30005672.

From:

<https://neurosurgerywiki.com/wiki/> - **Neurosurgery Wiki**

Permanent link:

<https://neurosurgerywiki.com/wiki/doku.php?id=transplantology>

Last update: **2024/06/07 02:57**

