

Merging soldiers and machines: Inside the quest to weaponize the brain

What lies beyond bionics? [DARPA director Justin] Sanchez described his work as trying to “understand the neural code,” which would involve putting “very fine microwire electrodes”—the diameter of a human hair—“into the brain.” When we do that, he said, we would be able to “listen in to the music of the brain” and “listen in to what somebody’s motor intent might be.”

...

He explained, “With all of this knowledge, what we’re trying to do is build new medical devices, new implantable chips for the body that can be encoded or programmed with all of these different aspects.

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DARPA has dreamed for decades of merging human beings and machines. Some years ago, when the prospect of mind-controlled weapons became a public-relations liability for the agency, officials resorted to characteristic ingenuity. They recast the stated purpose of their neurotechnology research to focus ostensibly on the narrow goal of healing injury and curing illness. The work wasn’t about weaponry or warfare, agency officials claimed. It was about therapy and health care. Who could object? But even if this claim were true, such changes would have extensive ethical, social, and metaphysical implications. Within decades, neurotechnology could cause social disruption on a scale that would make smartphones and the internet look like gentle ripples on the pond of history.

Most unsettling, neurotechnology confounds age-old answers to this question: What is a human being?

Read full, original post: [The Pentagon’s Push to Program Soldiers’ Brains](#)