# Journal Week 11

## Monday 4/7

### Choosing your Braids.

Chosen Neuroscience. Chosen Ontology.

### Timed Writing:

I arrived at the hospital. A nurse meets me and takes me to the back and instructs me to change into disposable surgical equipment. “Here are the pants, here are the shirts, and here is the head and shoe covering” he said to me as he pointed to individual boxes. After I had changed, he led me to heavy metal doors. I walked through, and was told to clean my hand thoroughly. In the sterile brightness of the operating room, consciousness pulses gently beneath my gaze. The surgeon makes a precise incision on the patient’s temple. A tool, resembling a paint scraper, separates skin from skull, the fibers beneath resisting like Velcro being torn apart. The surgeon’s hand moves steadily, confidently. Beneath his fingers lies a universe of neurons, hidden for now by bone. The drill whirrs, a sharp mechanical cry echoing through sterile silence. Dust blooms, and with it, a smell permeates the room—formaldehyde mingled with something primal, unsettling. I remember this smell most vividly, imprinting itself on my memory as the surgeon penetrates the skull’s parietal section. The bone yields, opening like a fragile lid over the delicate interior. Greyish-white dura mater envelopes the darker, pulsing mass beneath—the brain itself. It moves rhythmically, steady, like a quiet heartbeat. Blood vessels stretch across its surface, an intricate network more complex than any human highway system. Beneath this complex vascular web is a clear and undeniable pathology—a large, pale meningioma the size of two golf balls pressed insistently against the delicate tissue, tethered stubbornly to the dura. The patient’s brain pulses visibly, vulnerable and exposed. Inside that pulsating tissue, housed within billions of interconnected neurons quietly firing, exists an entire identity—dreams, memories, fears, and motivations—encoded in cells communicating in a silent, ongoing symphony we recognize as consciousness.

Ontology defines a being as the fundamental essence of existence, categorizing reality into neat divisions, mainly particulars and universals, concrete and abstracts. particulars are singulars, irreplaceable entities, like the patient on the table, her life tangible, irreplaceable. Universals are broader, shared repeatedly qualities like the concept of health, pain, identity, or even consciousness itself. Yet ontology itself falters when we stand in the operating room, witnessing a consciousness laid bare, laid to rest, but not permanently. Where does consciousness fall between particular and universal? Is it concrete? Is it abstract? These distinctions blur beneath the stark fluorescent lights illuminating human vulnerability in all of its essence both physically and consciously.

Neuroscience attempts to unravel the intricate relationship between the physical organ - the brain - and the intangible experience we call thought, emotion, identity, and experience. In the operating room, I was witnessing neuroscience;s questions enacted in stark, uncompromising detail. How does a physical anomaly, a tumor pressed against the soft delicate tissue of the neural tissue, alter the intangible realms of personality, memory, experience, and self-awareness? Neuroscientists understand consciousness as emerging from neuronal interactions. Electrical signals firing in rhythmic patterns produce what we experience as thought and experience. Electrochemical pulses send neurotransmitters to communicate at astonishing speeds, leaping synaptic gaps, communicating information. But science’s meticulous detail still struggles with the mystery of subjective experience. How do these tangible interactions yield intangible thought?

Ontology classifies reality into substances, properties, relations, and states of affairs. Substance is the brain itself, concrete and tangible. Properties are its grey-pink gue, its soft texture. Relations are formed by the neurons linking and communicating, creating states of affairs such as consciousness or awareness of self. But standing there, the limitations of those categories become apparent. They fail to explain how subjective experience arises from mere physical matter. Consciousness does not fit into ontology’s tidy classifications. It resists definitions, and encapsulation, spilling over boundaries set by philosophers attempting to catalog existence. Consciousness transcends the clear lines we’ve drawn between matter and thought, between biology and identity.

## Wednesday 4/9

### Brainstorm - ways you could play with chronology and associated to structure an essay out of your own “I remmebers”

1. Linear Timeine with strategic jumps
2. Reverse Chronology
3. Spiral Notebook
4. Seaonal chronology rather then year
5. Geographic map
6. Sensory and Chronological memory sorting - lining up each memory with an associated sensation.
7. Structure based on emotional intensity
8. Time-lapse of life into one 24-hour clock

### 20 minute writting time:

I am thinking of doing the 24 hour time lapse thingy. This would not be a full 24 hours since im not dead, it would probably end at like 8/9am if it started at 6am. I think ill do an outline and then later ill fill this in or just scrap it if I think the idea sucks later. Outline:

# Title

## 6.00am - Birth / childhood?

* Living with my siblings.
* Being an only child
* Life before i went to school

## 6:30 am - Early adolences

* first going to school, the friends i made
* My first career aspiration (anthropology)
* my first crush
* my first experiences of isolation and social rejection

## 7:00 am - Preteenage

* middle school
* entering highschool

## 7:30am - teenage

* highschool
* My first girlfriend
* Graduating and applying for colleges
* Visiting colleges
* Working in hospital
* Hiking, loving nature, coding, my friends.

## 8:00am - 18 - adulthood

* Going to college
* Joining a fraternity
* Taking my first classes
* Traveling

## 8:30am - 20

* Fraternity president
* Facing graduating and the real world.
* Applying to medical school

## Friday 4/11

I was absent and sick :(

### Journal

On friday I was sick and made very little progress with my paper. I was unable to do the exit ticket :(