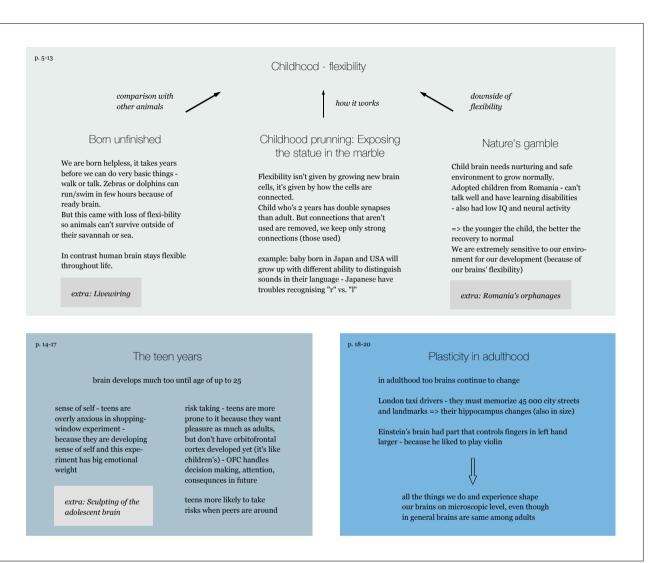
#### David Eagelman - Brain - chapter 1 - Who am I?

Brain changes based on experiences throughout one's life, which are individually unique. Identity is a moving target, always in process.

Brain is heavy wrinkled jelly and if it gets damaged it changes who we are. What it does comes from patterns of how neurons fire.







p. 20-22

another type of change of brain

## Pathological changes

Charles Whitman in Texas out of clear blue sky kills 13 people and his family - because he suddenly feels like it - he had brain tumor and it pressed on amygdala. => change in brain changed who he was

illnesses or drugs can change behaviors - some types of epilepsy make people religious, Parkinsons medication makes people gamble p. 29-3

what I do affects my brain (thus personality)

## The aging brain

Alzheimer's or Parkinson's destroy brain tissue - they change who people are

"Priests and nuns" long study - some have Alzheimer's but don't show cognitive loss - those who exercised brain with crosswords, reading and new skills + active social life and physical activity were in better shape

brain as toolbox metaphor - ratchet can be the best tool for task, but if its not there, you can use wrench, and if thats not there you use pliers

# Who am I?



D. 22-29

# Am I the sum of my memories?

since all body cells exchange every few years, is memory core of our identity? person sitting in park with versions of self in teen, late 20's, 50's and 70's - they share same memories but it's

different people - because memory is not accurate

- immutable video recording

  it's not as rich as we think, we aren't sure about details we have finite number of neurons to remember things and new memories take place of older memories which
- + new information changes how we interpret old memories (e.g. birthday party) present colors the past

fade away bit by bit



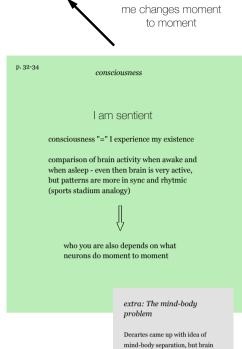
# The fallibility of memory

experiment - people watch videos of car crashes - accounts of people changed based on wording of question (e.g. How fast did cars smash into each other?)

- experiment with made-up memories of being lost in shopping mall people still said they remembered it => then they even came up with colorful details from those made-up memories (old lady was wearing crazy hat) = implanting old memories
- => our identity is ongoing mutable narrative

extra: Memory of the future

Person without hippocampus (and other parts of brain) can't create new memories and imagine future (e.q. what going to beach could be like => can only think of "blue").



affects personality. We don't know

about relation between brain and

consciousness much vet.



p. 34-

my life affects how I see world

### Brains are like snowflakes

brains are unique

- meaning of things *to us* is based on associations based on our life history and experiences
- => we perceive objects less as they are but much more as we are (example with Nazi flag)