Focus of Dissertation

My dissertation is going to explore the "Ethical, Legal and Societal Implications of Neuroscience and Technology Research and its Impact on Public Policy."

The central research question to be addressed in this study is how neuro S/T research addresses significant societal barriers to its public distribution and use.

Specifically, several interrelated questions will be addressed:

- What types of ethical questions does the science involving translational neuroscience research raise for the public [and who raises these questions?]
- What types of legal ramifications do these ethical questions raise and how public policy addresses these ramifications?

The main focus of this study is to determine the nature and quality of significant societal barriers currently being faced and addressed by neuro S/T research. The programs at DARPA, and NIH will give insight into the societal and ethical impact of neuro S/T research.

To conduct this study I have selected two programs from DARPA, and NIH. The programs selected were based on their development of neuro S/T that can be translated into use by the general public in the future.

In the current phase of my research, I am in the process of interviewing, agency personnel who are administrators, policy makers and/or science/technology specialists at DARPA, and NIH. Interviews that are being conducted with agency personnel, are to understand strategies for implementation of initiatives and allocation of funding. These interviews should assist in establishing ethical and legal dimensions in public policies associated with neuro S/T research. Along with, institutional participants at DARPA, and NIH, interviews are being conducted with scientists and researchers conducting the neuro S/T research. These interviews should assist in establishing ethical and legal dimensions in public policies associated with neuro S/T research.

At the conclusion of this research study, the proposed hypotheses will either be accepted or rejected. Potentially, the data collected from this study can assist in drafting of guidance documents, policies, and educational material, about neuro S/T. These documents can assist in educating the general public, specifically the key demographics directly affected by this research about the actual efforts that are going into development of these technologies and the work of the agencies and researchers to mitigate the ethical, legal and societal implications of neuro S/T.