

I'm Gregory Berns, a neuroscientist at Emory University. I'm here to talk about my work to understand how dogs and other animals think. AMA!

Gregory Berns¹ *and* ScienceAMAs¹

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Abstract

Hi, Reddit! I started out with a medical career in psychiatry but then shifted my focus to studying the cognition of dogs — man's oldest and best friends. Five years ago, my lab became the first to train awake, alert dogs to voluntarily enter an fMRI scanner so that we could capture actual canine thought processes. We have since conducted studies such as how dogs react to praise from their owners versus food, how capable dogs are of self-restraint and what's going on in a dog's brain when it smells the scent of its owner. I want to understand the dog-human relationship, from the dog's perspective. I have a new book, "What It's Like to Be a Dog: And Other Adventures in Neuroscience," published by Basic Books. It describes my canine-cognition research, as well as a project called the Brain Ark. I am using diffusion tensor imaging (DTI) to study the brains of a range of mammals after they have died. Many megafauna are in danger of extinction, and the Brain Ark is an attempt to catalog and study the brains of as many species as possible before they are gone. I've mapped the neural networks of dolphins, the Tasmanian devil and — using brain specimens from museum collections — the extinct Tasmanian tiger, AKA the thylacine. I'll be back at 12 pm ET to answer your questions, ask me anything! Here are links to my web sites: <http://www.neuropolicy.emory.edu/> <http://gregoryberns.com> <http://brainark.org> And are links to recent interviews I did: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/08/science/gregory-berns-dogs-brains.html?smprod=nytcore-ipad&smid=nytcore-ipad-share> <http://esciencecommons.blogspot.com/2017/09/whats-it-like-to-be-dog-cognition.html>

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GREGORY_BERNS [R/SCIENCE](#)

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Here are links to my web sites: <http://www.neuropolicy.emory.edu/> <http://gregoryberns.com> <http://brainark.org>

And are links to recent interviews I did: [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/08/science/gregory-berns-dogs-brains.html?](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/08/science/gregory-berns-dogs-brains.html?smprod=nytcore-ipad&smid=nytcore-ipad-share)

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