

# Great Myths of the Brain (Great Myths of Psychology)

By Christian Jarrett


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**Great Myths of the Brain (Great Myths of Psychology)** By Christian Jarrett

*Great Myths of the Brain* introduces readers to the field of neuroscience by examining popular myths about the human brain.

- Explores commonly-held myths of the brain through the lens of scientific research, backing up claims with studies and other evidence from the literature
- Looks at enduring myths such as “Do we only use 10% of our brain?”, “Pregnant women lose their mind”, “Right-brained people are more creative” and many more.
- Delves into myths relating to specific brain disorders, including epilepsy, autism, dementia, and others
- Written engagingly and accessibly for students and lay readers alike, providing a unique introduction to the study of the brain
- Teaches readers how to spot neuro hype and neuro-nonsense claims in the media

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## **Great Myths of the Brain (Great Myths of Psychology) By Christian Jarrett Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"THESE days you can't go to a children's birthday party without one of the adults making a knowing comment about the excited scamps being "high on sugar". In fact, there's no evidence that sugar makes children hyperactive. But the remark illustrates the way false beliefs about how our brains work permeate most aspects of life – as does the burgeoning of buzzwords like neuromarketing or neuroleadership. Such "neurobollocks", to borrow the title of a popular science blog, is ably and entertainingly demolished by Christian Jarrett in *Great Myths of the Brain*. As a journalist in this field, I thought I would know most of these myths, but there was plenty here that was new and interesting to me." (*New Scientist*, December 2014)

"The book is also very impressive in its scope, covering things like the historical notion that the heart was actually the source of consciousness, to modern-day problems like how fMRI scans are believed to be far more powerful than they actually are. The writing is often very clear but without compromising accuracy or thoroughness, which is an impressive feat in its own right." (*The Psychologist*, Autumn 2014)

“Christian Jarrett’s **Great Myths Of The Brain** is the sort of book that every amateur brain enthusiast should have on his or her shelf. The book is an effort to assemble all the common and not-so-common myths about the brain, past and present, and explain why they’re all wrong using genuine neuroscience.” (*BBC Focus Magazine*, January 2015)

"*Great Myths of the Brain* is a kind of primer that teaches neuroscience by debunking neurononsense, beginning with ancient ideas like “Thought Resides in the Heart.” You’ll learn that much of the neuroscience you hear is trivial or wrong, and also see the useful research threads to follow. The word “brain” isn’t entirely giving us false hope. A neuroscientist-turned-writer, Christian Jarrett is editor of the British Psychological Society’s *Research Digest*, a blogger, and the father of baby twins. His elegant, enthusiastic prose doesn’t shy from controversy." (*The Weekly Standard*, April 2015)

“As you can tell from the length of this review, there is a lot to be learnt from this book. I certainly learnt a few things even if I wasn’t always taken in by some of the myths out there. The brain is a remarkable organ and clearing away the myths to see what is really there will show its true strengths and if you use in your fiction, make for better up-to-date stories. Read, digest, learn and dispel those myths.” (*SFCrownsnest.org.uk*, 1 November 2014)

#### Review

The more we are interested in the brain and how it explains our behaviour, the more important it is that we rid ourselves of untruths and half truths. Myth buster extraordinaire, Christian Jarrett, is an engaging and knowledgeable guide who spring cleans the cobwebs of misinformation that have accumulated over recent years. You will be surprised at some favourite beliefs that turn out to be scare stories or wishful thinking. Yet, Jarrett conveys a strong optimism about fresh approaches that will result in new knowledge. All claims are well substantiated with references. It will be fun to learn from this book.—**Professor Uta Frith, UCL Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience**

Christian Jarrett is the ideal guide to the fascinating, bewildering and often overhyped world of the brain. He writes about the latest discoveries in neuroscience with wonderful clarity, while cleanly puncturing myths and misinformation.—**Ed Yong, award-winning science writer, blogger and journalist**

Great Myths of the Brain' provides an incredibly thorough and engaging dismantling of neurological myths and misconceptions that abound today. For anyone overwhelmed by copious bogus neuroscience, Christian Jarrett has generously used his own mighty brain to clear this cloud of misinformation, like a lighthouse cutting through the fog.—**Dr Dean Burnett, Guardian blogger, Cardiff University**

Lots of people cling to misconceptions about the brain that are just plain wrong, and sometimes even dangerous. In this persuasive and forceful book, Christian Jarrett exposes many of these popular and enduring brain myths. Readers who want to embrace proper neuroscience, and arm themselves against neurononsense will enjoy this splendid book, and profit greatly from doing so.—**Elizabeth F. Loftus, Distinguished Professor, University of California, Irvine**

Christian Jarrett, one of the world's great communicators of psychological science, takes us on a neuroscience journey, from ancient times to the present. He exposes things we have believed that just aren't so. And he explores discoveries that surprise and delight us. Thanks to this tour de force of critical thinking, we can become wiser—by being smartly skeptical but not cynical, open but not gullible—**David G. Myers, Hope College, author, Psychology, 11th Edition**

A masterful catalogue of neurobollocks.—**Dr Ben Goldacre, author of Bad Science and Bad Pharma**

In this era of commercialized neurohype, Christian Jarrett's engaging book equips us with the skills for spotting the authentic facts lost in a sea of brain myths. With compelling arguments and compassion for the human condition, Jarrett teaches us that the truth about the brain is more complicated, but ultimately more fascinating, than fiction.—**The Neurocritic, neuroscientist and blogger**

Christian Jarrett has written a wonderful book that is as entertaining as it is enlightening. When it comes to brain science, a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Jarrett has done us all a great service by peeling back the layers of hype to reveal what we really do know - and don't know - about how the brain functions.—**Prof Christopher C French, Goldsmiths, University of London**

From the Back Cover

The brain has never been subject to such intense scrutiny, barely a day passes without a newspaper splashing the results of the latest brain scan study purporting to reveal the neurological location of happiness, love, rage, or any number of human emotions. Yet for all of the gains in our understanding of brain function credited to scientific research, there is a growing body of hype and misinformation about how the brain works.

*Great Myths of the Brain* presents a comprehensive examination of myths surrounding the function of the human brain. Cognitive neuroscience expert Christian Jarrett takes on well over 50 myths associated with brain function—from those based on falsehoods or partial truths to ones cloaked in scientific language. Jarrett first explores general myths, such as the idea that we only use 10 per cent of our brains, or that adults can't grow new brain cells. He then goes on to address a variety of more contemporary issues, including technological myths (can brain scans really read your mind?); structural myths, including the recent hype around mirror neurons; perceptual myths, including the idea that you perceive the world as it really is; and a variety of contemporary myths swirling around brain disorders—including epilepsy, autism, and dementia. Illuminating and insightful, *Great Myths of the Brain* takes some of the mystery out of the most mysterious

and complex organ in the human body.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Edna Kissel:**

Within other case, little folks like to read book Great Myths of the Brain (Great Myths of Psychology). You can choose the best book if you like reading a book. Given that we know about how is important the book Great Myths of the Brain (Great Myths of Psychology). You can add information and of course you can around the world by way of a book. Absolutely right, mainly because from book you can recognize everything! From your country right up until foreign or abroad you will end up known. About simple matter until wonderful thing you could know that. In this era, we can open a book or searching by internet system. It is called e-book. You need to use it when you feel bored to go to the library. Let's examine.

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The book Great Myths of the Brain (Great Myths of Psychology) can give more knowledge and also the precise product information about everything you want. Why then must we leave the great thing like a book Great Myths of the Brain (Great Myths of Psychology)? A number of you have a different opinion about guide. But one aim that book can give many info for us. It is absolutely suitable. Right now, try to closer with the book. Knowledge or data that you take for that, you may give for each other; you can share all of these. Book Great Myths of the Brain (Great Myths of Psychology) has simple shape but the truth is know: it has great and large function for you. You can appearance the enormous world by available and read a book. So it is very wonderful.

#### **Daniel Downey:**

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#### **Melanie Young:**

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