

# ...with Dean Burnett

Neuroscientist, comedian and *Guardian* blogger

## One person who inspired you

Worryingly, Susan Greenfield. I first got into neuroscience after reading one of her books. Given what she gets up to these days, I imagine this is what die-hard *Star Wars* fans felt like when watching *The Phantom Menace*.

## One favourite joke

Susan Greenfield!

## One moment that changed the course of your career

When I lacked media awareness, I was featured in a newspaper, pictured in a cowboy hat and scarf, splashing in puddles with an insane grin on my face. 'Serious academic' was no longer an option after that.

## One journal article that you think all psychologists should read

Any journal article that I've managed to get an author's credit on. I need to stay credible somehow, and they're both good papers.



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## One challenge of blogging on psychology

Getting people to appreciate that psychology is a legitimate science, and can be more complex and messy than others at times.

## One challenge you think psychology faces

The intangible nature of much of what's covered by the field may mean it always struggles to get deserved recognition.

## One regret

That newspaper picture (see above).

## One nugget of advice for aspiring psychologists

Just because an article is published, that doesn't

automatically mean it's correct.

## One cultural recommendation

*Black Books*. No real reason, I just really like it.

## One alternative career path you may have chosen

I pretty much do all my desired alternatives as it is.

## One hero from psychology past or present

Patient H.M. Gone, but not forgotten (ironically).

## One great thing that psychology has achieved

Stopped a lot of people dying, in a number of ways.

## One problem that psychology should deal with

People are too easily misled by those with confidence. Sort it out!

## One hope for the future of psychology

Some sort of system to rein in pop-psychologists speaking guff for money.

## One amusing psychology experiment

I'm always bemused by the Bobo Doll experiment. Social Learning aside, I think Bandura just hated clowns.

## One proud moment

Getting my PhD despite my examiner's best efforts.

## One psychological superpower I'd like to have

I'd enjoy being able to spell rude words on my neocortex while in an fMRI scanner.

## One final thought

You don't have to be serious to be smart (I hope).

### resource

My blog 'Brain Flapping' at The Guardian (see [www.guardian.co.uk/science/brain-flapping](http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/brain-flapping)). I'm genuinely proud of it, I feel it shows you can keep the humour without losing the science if you combine the two.

### coming soon

Articles on quitting smoking, the connected brain, political violence and youth, and much more...

Send your comments about *The Psychologist* to the editor, Dr Jon Sutton, on [jon.sutton@bps.org.uk](mailto:jon.sutton@bps.org.uk), +44 116 252 9573 or to the Leicester office address

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