

# A Brain Quotation That May be Just Right for You

I thought I could make it easy for you. I went looking for a definition of the brain that would capture its essence and its function without being too scientific or too complex. No such luck.



The perfect  
brain  
definition  
not found

Even my own brain started to get stuck in the quagmire of defining terms. So I thought maybe there was a quotation that could sum up this elusive but critical mass of neuron networks. As they say, ... *a funny thing happened on the way to* ... (in my case) finding a quotation. I discovered quotations from both men and women that were **insightful as well as interesting gender perspectives**.

*The quotation selections are my own and the female and male quotations are paired at my own discretion. Both of which I admit reflect my own overt and subconscious biases.*

So, read on and you may find a brain quotation that's just right in helping you to understand your own brain.

**Also note that I can't resist making comments!**

**Susan Blakemore (from "Meme, Myself, I", *New Scientist*, March**

13, 1999)

- In proportion to our body mass, our brain is three times as large as that of our nearest relatives. This huge organ is dangerous and painful to give birth to, expensive to build and, in a resting human, uses about 20 per cent of the body's energy even though it is just 2 per cent of the body's weight. There must be some reason for all this evolutionary expense. **{Comment: Give this woman a prize. She's the first to acknowledge the pain of giving birth to the brain and putting it in the context of evolutionary expense!}**

**David Bainbridge** (from *The Strange Anatomy of the Brain*, *New Scientist*, January 26, 2008.)

- The modern geography of the brain has a deliciously antiquated feel to it – rather like a medieval map with the known world encircled by terra incognita where monsters roam. **{Men it seems have a thing for monsters from the deep.}**

**Sharon Begley** (from *In Our Messy, Reptilian Brains*, *Newsweek magazine*, April 9, 2007)

- With modern parts atop old ones, the brain is like an iPod built around an eight-track cassette player. **{Hmmm, a woman who puts it in simple terms a parent of a teenager can understand.}**

**Isaac Asimov** (from the foreword to *The Three-Pound Universe* by J. Hooper and D. Teresi, 1986)

- The human brain, then, is the most complicated organization of matter that we know. **{Famous science and science fiction writer sums it up in one word – “complicated.”}**

**Diane Ackerman** (from *An Alchemy of Mind. The Marvel and Mystery of the Brain*, 2004)

Shaped a little like a loaf of French country bread, our brain is a crowded chemistry lab, bustling with nonstop neural conversations.{Ah... the Julia Child of neuroscience.}

**Jose M.R. Delgado (from *Physical Control of the Mind*, 1969)**

The brain, or cerebrum, is a material entity located inside the skull which may be inspected, touched, weighed, and measured. It is composed of chemicals, enzymes, and humors which may be analyzed. Its structure is characterized by neurons, pathways, and synapses which may be examined directly when they are properly magnified. **{A male left brain description in facts, analysis, structure and organization.}**

If these quotations don't satisfy you, more can be found at [Neuroscience for Kids – Brain Quotes](#) .

By Joyce Hansen