



From Neuroscience to the Classroom

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On the Prevalence and Persistence of “Neuromyths”

Abstract:

Nothing infuriates neuroscientists and psychologists more than a movie or advertisement that is based on the claim that “we only use 10% of our brainpower.” This is just one of several common “neuromyths,” which are beliefs about the mind and brain that are widely circulated but not backed by any scientific consensus. In this talk I will present data from two surveys (weighted to be representative of the United States population demographics; total N = 2820) about the prevalence and correlates of beliefs in neuromyths, and I will discuss some possible reasons why neuromyths are so persistent. In addition to the “10% myth,” I will address the myth that people are either left-brained or right-brained, as well as misbeliefs about attention, perception, memory, learning, intuition, and intelligence.

About:

Christopher Chabris is Professor at Geisinger Health System in Pennsylvania, Associate Professor of Psychology at Union College in New York, and Visiting Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse, France. He received his Ph.D. in psychology and A.B. in computer science from Harvard University. His research focuses on attention, intelligence (individual, collective, and social), behavior genetics, and decision-making. His work has been published in leading journals including *Science*, *Nature*, *PNAS*, *Psychological Science*, *Perception*, and *Cognitive Science*. Chris is also co-author of the book *The Invisible Gorilla: How Our Intuitions Deceive Us*, which has been published in 19 languages.