

# Puppy Love

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Your Dog  
Really  
Does  
Love You!

It's true! Gregory Berns, a neuroscientist, and a team of researchers from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia conducted new research that validates what dog owners knew all along ~ dogs do in fact experience feelings of love and affection. While conducting their research the scientists discovered that a part of the brain associated with positive emotions in dogs is similar to that of humans.

Initially, the test dogs went through a serious training program that taught them to lie quietly in a MRI machine and to learn appropriate responses to specific hand signals. Once this training was complete the testing began with the primary goal being to understand what a dog is thinking rather than infer it from their behavior.

When using hands signals to indicate the dogs were about to receive a food treat the team was able to show on an MRI that the same reaction to positive emotions in the dogs' brain was similar to that of humans. Following these findings the next part of the research included scientists analyzing brain scans for dogs offered treats by different methods, including strangers and machines.

In the past, scientists have asserted that it is all about getting the food and their reactions to receiving food would be the same no matter who or what is offering them food. However, Berns and his team disagree with this position.

Berns asserts that, "dogs love us for things far beyond food, basically they love us for the same things that humans love us for, like social comfort and social bonds."

Berns' research indicates that dogs do indeed empathize with human emotions and experience friendships in a similar way to humans. His findings are published in his book titled, *How Dogs Love Us: A Neuroscientist and His Adopted Dog Decode the Canine Brain*.



It's a marvelous thing that dogs can enjoy life by just watching little things, and that people can enjoy life by just watching dogs.



The  
Power of  
Love ~  
a  
911 Hero

On Sept. 11, 2001, Omar Eduardo Rivera, a blind computer technician, was working on the 71st floor of the World Trade Center with his guide dog, Dorado. "Following the attack I thought I was lost forever, the noise and the heat were terrifying, but I wanted Dorado to escape. I unclipped his leash, ruffled his head, gave him a nudge and ordered Dorado to go." Dorado was swept downstairs by the mass of evacuating people, but a few minutes later Rivera felt the dog nuzzling his legs, Dorado had come right back to his side. Dorado and a co-worker then helped Rivera climb down 70 flights of stairs, which took nearly an hour. Soon after they escaped the tower, the building collapsed, and Rivera says he owes his life to his faithful dog.