

NOVA scienceNOW



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NOVA scienceNOW TACKLES THOUGHT-PROVOKING TOPICS ON PEOPLE'S MINDS IN SIX THEMED EPISODES ON ANIMALS, CRIME, HUMAN NATURE, INTELLIGENCE, FOOD & THE FUTURE

***Renowned Tech Guru DAVID POGUE Hosts
Sixth Season, Beginning October 10, 2012, 10pm ET/PT on PBS***

Series Airs in New Weekly Time Slot on Wednesdays Following NOVA

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August 7, 2012 — NOVA scienceNOW, the critically acclaimed science magazine series, sheds light on some of the biggest questions on people's minds — with a new host to guide viewers through topics ranging from animal intelligence and the science of food to what the future will be like, and a new primetime perch on Wednesday nights, following the flagship NOVA series.

Beginning October 10, 2012, 10pm ET/PT on PBS (check local listings), David Pogue, popular technology reporter for *The New York Times*, takes the helm for Season 6 of the WGBH Boston-produced series, taking viewers on a six-week journey of provocative, themed episodes that feature the latest scientific breakthroughs that could contribute to a better understanding of ourselves and our place in the world.

Each week, **NOVA scienceNOW** tackles a new theme with four intriguing stories on every topic. In "How Smart Can We Get?" Pogue finds out how the anatomy of his brain measures up to Albert Einstein's; "What Are Animals Thinking?" finds the tech-savvy host racing against homing pigeons without the aid of his iPhone's GPS; and Pogue tries to outsmart a polygraph in "Can Science Stop Crime?"

Other stories follow Pogue as he discovers how much Neanderthal DNA he's carrying; tag along as he meets the inventors and engineers working to create mind-reading machines and thought-controlled video games; venture with him into secret kitchen labs to uncover the hidden truths behind the mouth-watering flavors

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and textures we take for granted each day; and much more.

“David literally donates his body to science as he tirelessly treks around the country subjecting himself to experiments, asking questions and revealing the latest breakthroughs and discoveries on an array of tantalizing topics,” said Paula Apsell, senior executive producer of NOVA scienceNOW and NOVA. “Together with lead-in NOVA sister series, the evening creates a one-two knockout punch of powerhouse prime time programming that illuminates, inspires and entertains viewers on the science and technology transforming our lives.”

WHAT MAKES US HUMAN?

Wednesday, October 10, 2012, 10pm ET

Scientists have struggled for centuries to pinpoint the qualities that separate human beings from the millions of species that have evolved on this planet. David Pogue explores the traits we once thought were uniquely ours — language, tool-making, even laughter — to uncover their evolutionary roots. As he traces some of the crucial steps that transformed cave men into accountants, he’ll investigate the fate of our close cousins the Neanderthals. Not only will Pogue be transformed into a Neanderthal before our eyes, he’ll discover why Neanderthal genes live on today and find out if any are hidden in his own DNA. Then, **NOVA scienceNOW** profiles Ethiopian anthropologist Zersenay Alemseged, who struggled against all odds to make one of the biggest recent discoveries in human origins: the fossil bones of Selam, a 3.3 million-year-old human ancestor.

CAN SCIENCE STOP CRIME?

Wednesday, October 17, 2012, 10pm ET

What’s the secret to stopping crime? Host David Pogue gives the third degree to scientists pushing the limits of technology — not only to solve horrific murders, but also to try to prevent crimes. Pogue learns the latest techniques, from unraveling the clues embedded in a decomposing corpse to detecting lies by peering directly into a suspect’s brain to tracking the creation of a murderer’s mind. Viewers will also meet computer scientist Tadayoshi Kohno, a genius crime-stopper who’s made some troubling discoveries, including how easy it is for criminals to highjack — not just your laptop, but your kids’ toys, medical devices and even some cars.

HOW SMART CAN WE GET?

Wednesday, October 24, 2012, 10pm ET

How do you get a genius brain? Is it all in your DNA? Or is it hard work? Is it possible that everyone’s brain has untapped genius — just waiting for the right circumstances so it can be unleashed? From a man who can match any date in history (or the future) to its day of the week to a “memory athlete” who can remember strings of hundreds of random numbers, David Pogue meets people stretching the boundaries of what the human mind can do. Pogue also puts himself to the test: after high-res scanning, he finds out how the anatomy of his brain measures up against

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the greatest mind of the century — Albert Einstein. Viewers will meet researchers who are currently seeking out the neurological roots of genius in Einstein's brain, scientists who are searching for the biological source of intelligence and Sian Beilock, a cognitive psychologist who is discovering how we can overcome fear and pressure and maximize a brain's performance.

CAN I EAT THAT?

Wednesday, October 31, 2012, 10pm ET (repeats 11/21/12)

What are the secrets behind your favorite foods? Why are some treats — like chocolate chip cookies — delectable, while others — like cookies made with mealworms — disgusting? You might think you understand what makes something sweet, salty or bitter, but David Pogue gets a taste of a much more complicated truth. Not only is our perception of taste far more complex than we imagine, involving all our senses and even our memories, but once we master the secrets of flavor, it's easy to fool unsuspecting taste buds. Could food scientists help us enjoy our food more — without packing on the pounds?

NOVA scienceNOW explores the neuroscience of taste to discover how the “flavor magicians” perform tricks on our senses. Pogue will also venture into America's Test Kitchen, where a Thanksgiving dinner is diced, sliced, dissected and put under the microscope. Viewers will meet Nathan Myhrvold and his team of chefs, who are using advanced lab equipment to cook up dishes that look and taste like nothing else, revealing in dazzling visual detail the physical and chemical changes that take place in food as it cooks.

WHAT ARE ANIMALS THINKING?

Wednesday, November 7, 2012, 10pm ET

Have you ever wondered what's going on inside an animal's head? How does an animal see the world — and us? Is your dog really feeling guilty when it gives you that famous “guilty look?” Do pigeon brains possess “superpowers” that allow them to find their way home across hundreds of unfamiliar miles? Is it possible that swarms of bees communicate in patterns similar to human brain cells? Pogue meets — and competes — with a menagerie of smart critters that challenge preconceived notions about what makes “us” different from “them,” expanding our understanding of how animals really think.

NOVA scienceNOW also profiles Yale scientist Laurie Santos, who is studying a unique community of more than 900 rhesus macaques, who live in a community that is eerily similar to human society. Can Santos' research reveal the evolutionary roots of the qualities that make us human?

WHAT WILL THE FUTURE BE LIKE?

Wednesday, November 14, 2012, 10pm ET

Mobile phones that read your mind? Video games that can cure cancer? Wearable robots that give you the strength of Ironman? David Pogue predicts which technologies will transform daily life for you — and your grandkids. They're already taking shape in laboratories around the world — and gadgets that once were purely science fiction are on the verge of becoming a common reality. Pogue visits with the innovative engineers and computer scientists working to create thought-controlled video games, robotic

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exoskeletons and virtual reality that seamlessly integrates with the real world through lifelike 3D holograms that will not only respond to touch, but *feel* like real objects. What technological hurdles must engineers and computer scientists overcome before robots, mind-readers and holograms are all around us? And what will it mean to us as humans if we become even more entrenched in a 24/7 digital world? Then, computer scientist Adrien Treuille describes how his groundbreaking games can harness the combined efforts of video gamers around the world to help cure diseases. One program, FoldIt, turns protein-folding — a biological mystery that's difficult for even the most powerful computers to solve — into a puzzle that gamers can master easily, and they're already making medical breakthroughs.



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