

# BERNARD J. BAARS, PhD

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[Bernard J. Baars](#) is an acclaimed author in psychobiology, a preeminent theoretician working in the field today, and one of the founders of the modern science of consciousness.

Dr. Baars is the recipient of the 2019 Hermann von Helmholtz *Life Contribution Award* by the International Neural Network Society. *Life contribution awards* recognize outstanding individuals whose scientific life contribution to the field of neural networks was proven to be paradigm changing and long lasting. Dr. Baars worked with Nobel Laureate Gerald M. Edelman for more than a decade as a Senior Fellow in Theoretical Neurobiology at The Neurosciences Institute in La Jolla, CA. Baars is best known as the originator of the Global Workspace Theory (GWT) and global workspace *dynamics*, a theory of human cognitive architecture, the cortex, and consciousness. GWT is a widely used framework for the role of conscious and unconscious events in the functioning of the brain, a set of explicit assumptions that can be tested, as many of them have been in the last twenty years. Global Workspace Dynamics (GWD) is the most current version of GWT – attempting to take into account the complexities of the living brain.

A cognitive scientist by training, Baars became deeply committed to understanding the fundamental questions of consciousness, volition, and self. Consciousness is a core question of life. Making progress in understanding therefore has an endless number of benefits – philosophical, scientific, medical, and practical. His current work might be called the psychobiology of the (un)/conscious brain. He's learned a great deal from Walter J. Freeman's Neurodynamics and Robert Kozma, and has long worked with Stan Franklin, the guiding light for LIDA / GWT at the Cognitive Computing Research Group at the University of Memphis. He previously served as a professor of psychology at the State University of New York, Stony Brook where he conducted research into the causation of the Freudian slip, and as a faculty member at the Wright Institute.

A comprehensive update of Global Workspace Theory came out in 2013 in a Frontiers paper, now integrated into [On Consciousness: Science & Subjectivity – Updated works on Global Workspace Theory](#), Baars' latest collection of fully updated works on GWT, from 1988 through 2013. In his upcoming book for Oxford University Press, Baars explains this historic wave of brain and psychological findings on those topics in more depth than ever before.

Dr. Baars' many acclaimed books include his latest 2019 publication, *On Consciousness: Science & Subjectivity*; as well as *A Cognitive Theory of Consciousness*; *The Cognitive Revolution in Psychology*; *In the Theater of Consciousness: The Workspace of the Mind*; *Fundamentals of Cognitive Neuroscience (1st & 2nd Editions)*; *Cognition, Brain, and Consciousness: Introduction to Cognitive Neuroscience (1st & 2nd Editions)*; *Experimental Slips and Human Error: Exploring the Architecture of Volition*; *Cognition and Language: A Series in Psycholinguistics*. He has published over 162 scientific papers, chapters, essays, and articles in esteemed science journals, garnering over 20,000 citations to date [[PubMed](#) [GoogleScholar](#)]. Baars has also published on animal consciousness, volition, and feelings of knowing, and an approach to “higher” states, as defined in the meditation traditions, since new brain recording methods continue to reveal unexpected evidence on those topics.

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Dedicated to communicating excellent science and promoting its understanding for both academic communities and the general public, Baars currently hosts the audio & video podcast “[On Consciousness with Bernard Baars](#)” alongside neuroscientist David Edelman - featuring open-minded discussions on new ideas about the scientific study of consciousness & the brain, with live-streamed [seminars](#) planned in fall 2020. This first season is widely distributed on networks including [YouTube](#), [Spotify](#), [PodBean](#), [ApplePodcasts](#), [aCast](#), [GooglePodcasts](#), [iHeartRadio](#), [Stitcher](#), and others.

Decades of outreach include co-founding the [Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness](#) (ASSC) and the [Society for MindBrain Sciences](#) where he served as founding President for both. Co-founder of the Academic Press journal *Consciousness & Cognition: An International Journal*, which he also edited with William P. Banks for more than fifteen years, he currently serves on the ASSC’s Editorial Board for the journal *Psyche*.

His recent textbook, *Fundamentals of Cognitive Neuroscience: A Beginner's Guide, 2nd ed.* (Nicole Gage and Bernard Baars, Academic Press) has been awarded the 2019 Textbook Excellence Award by the [Textbook & Academic Authors Association](#) (TAA), which recognizes excellence in current textbooks and learning materials.

## More on the accomplishments of Bernard J. Baars

“One of my favorite thinkers and researchers on this topic is Bernard Baars. Baars fundamentally changed the scientific study of consciousness over 30 years ago and he has done it again in a stimulating update on consciousness called *On Consciousness: Science & Subjectivity — Updated Works on Global Workspace Theory*. In his new book he proposes novel predictions and draws on the latest research in cognitive science. This magnum opus is really incredible and should be on the bookshelf for anyone seriously interested in wrestling with the paradoxes and mysteries of human consciousness. In this interview with Baars, we discuss his new book and his latest thoughts on the scientific study of consciousness.” — [By Scott Barry Kaufman | Scientific American | May 26, 2020](#)

“Brilliant! Consciousness will not become acceptable to science without three things: empirical evidence that overcomes the consciousness deniers, a satisfying account of subjectivity, and a global understanding of the mind's staggering complexity. Bernard Baars is perhaps our most important voice on all three fronts, and "On Consciousness: Science & Subjectivity" raises a high bar for all future exploration in the field.” — *Deepak Chopra, MD, author of METAHUMAN (Harmony)*

"The works of Bernard Baars collected in *On Consciousness* are among the foundational texts of the scientific study of consciousness. Their influence in cognitive science and philosophy of mind is enormous, and their impact on my own thinking has been profound." — *Murray Shanahan, PhD, Professor of Cognitive Robotics, Dept of Computing, Imperial College London; Senior Researcher, DeepMind*