

Cats and dogs of politics

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Article

TORONTO - Your cat hates you.

You've always suspected this, but now science proves it.

Dogs exhibit a whopping 57.2% jump in oxytocin, the "love hormone," after interacting with their masters. Cats, a feeble 12%. I can't say your cat seethes with actual hate — but it sure doesn't like you much.

Yikes, 12%. Five times less love. Sorry, cat people, but at least now you know why the damn thing won't fetch your slippers.

The pet study was conducted for a British documentary called Cats v. Dogs.

I wonder if the researchers are available. Now that they've resolved one age-old debate, perhaps they can fire up their oxytocin-meters and tackle other pressing dilemmas.

(I hasten to add, oxytocin is not OxyContin, the banned painkiller. If your schnauzer experiences a 57.2% jump in OxyContin, get him to the vet, pronto.)

Oxytocin, writes study author Dr. Paul Zak, is "one of the chemical measures of love in mammals.

"Humans produce the hormone in our brains when we care about someone. For example, when we see our spouse or child the levels in our bloodstream typically rise by 40-60%."

An oxytocin test is like a love lie-detector. Imagine what it would reveal about, say, Leafs fans vs Habs fans. Cyclists vs car owners.

Or liberals vs conservatives. Which is more affectionate? In my experience, liberals, especially Liberals and those who comment on newspaper columns, are very low on oxytocin. Not a trace, some of them.

Sadly, it is just not in the nature of lefties to be loving, like dogs. They are way too busy loving themselves.

They are the self-absorbed, snooty cats of the political world. They dye their hair pink, read self-help books, preen on Twitter, pierce their nose, blame Bush, Harper and Harris for everything — anything to make themselves feel better about themselves.

Look at Prime Minister Trudeau, or his dad for that matter. What do you see? Exactly. Cats.

Conservatives, Stephen Harper notwithstanding, are dogs. They have boundless affection, often spiked by religious fervour, so much so that sometimes you have to shoo them off your leg.

Right-wingers are far more generous than liberals. It's a fact. The top 17 American states for charity donations all voted for Republican Mitt Romney in 2012. The bottom five supported the Democrat, Barack Obama.

Need more proof? Binghamton (N.Y.) University researchers found that while Democrats have sex more often, Republicans have it better. A cynic might ask how they can tell, when the lights are always off. Still, though it seems counterintuitive, 53% of conservatives reported regular orgasms, compared to 40% of liberals.

The authors suggested that when conservatives — being more dogged — find something that works, they stick with it.

As the Jian Ghomeshi trial demonstrates, sex does not always involve affection, but it's usually a strong clue of who's the most loving.

So are conservatives the face-licking, tail-wagging champions of politics? Or do they simply wag the dog, like any politicians.

Don't forget us libertarians. True, the Unabomber was not very cuddly. But every political barrel has its bad apples. Most of us are better groomed — and not in jail.

Libertarians are fiscally less-government conservative, socially liberal. We're the best of both cats and dogs. We're "dats." Or "cogs," in the wheel of politics.

I bet if they did a study, we'd be nearly as high on the oxytocin meter as a dog, with slightly less drooling.

Strobel's column usually runs Monday to Thursday. Hear him at 94.9 The Rock FM Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

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