

# The Life of Brian

Brian Cox is a man of many diverse talents. He has become the most popular presenter of science documentaries on UK TV, with his BBC series on The Wonders of the Solar System drawing record numbers of viewers. This series follows his previous trilogy of physics specials for the BBC Horizon programme. The first of these covered the subject of gravity, the second queried our understanding of time, and the third centred on the prospects for fusion power. For a more light-hearted review of his programme on Time, you might like to see Harry Hill's take on Brian's inability to actually know what time it is (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nptDP35Tb0>)! However, did you know that Brian was a semi-famous popstar and a professor in our School of Physics and Astronomy?



Brian in pensive mood during the filming of the Horizon programme on TIME

Brian started as an undergraduate student on our Physics course when he left the little-known pop group "Dare". He then went on to greater things in both fields, doing a PhD with our Particle Physics Group, and joining the much more high-profile group "D:Ream" whose most famous hit was "Things Can Only Get Better". Well they certainly did get better for Brian. He is now a Professor and a Royal Society Fellow in our School of Physics and Astronomy at Manchester; he was the main BBC anchor man for the launch of the Large Hadron Collider at CERN, and he is (according to the Guardian) one of the top 25 Brits who has intrigued, inspired and entertained us. He has also been voted one of the top 200 sexiest men in the world by "People Magazine" in the US. In his spare time, Brian plays football for the Manchester Particle Physics team, he was science advisor for the cinema blockbuster "Sunshine", and he has co-authored the popular book on Relativity "Why does  $E=mc^2$  (and why should we care)" which jumped straight up the US non-fiction book lists. He is currently working on a follow-up series, The Wonders of the Universe, for the BBC.