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The role of incentive learning and cognitive regulation in sexual arousal

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Stellingen behorend bij het proefschrift

The Role of Incentive Learning and Cognitive Regulation in Sexual Arousal

1. Appetitively conditioned sexual likes seem to be relatively more persistent than aversively conditioned sexual dislikes, but both learning effects are not completely insensitive to an extinction procedure (chapter four and five).
2. An extinction procedure does not seem to erase conditioned sexual associations in humans but instead involves new learning that is context dependent (chapters six and seven).
3. Men are not more receptive to sexual conditioning than women (this thesis).
4. Deployment of a cognitive down-regulatory strategy results in reduced activation within reward related brain structures during the processing of sexual stimuli in healthy men, and acute-stress may complicate successful down-regulation of sexual arousal (chapter ten).
5. In an appetitive sexual conditioning paradigm, D-cycloserine affects extinction's fundamental context specificity in healthy women (chapter seven).
6. More than other areas of research, sex research has had a harder time in controlling its own agenda.
7. Although neuroplasticity may be a culprit for the development of some maladaptive behaviours, including disorders in sexual motivation, at the same time it may also be the springboard to recovery.
8. Biology and environment are inextricably intertwined in the determination of sexual preference.
9. From an evolutionary perspective, ironically, pleasure may be the smallest part of sex; 'wanting' and expectancy make up most of the emotional experience.
10. From a learning perspective, hypersexuality or paraphilia are not fundamentally different from other unfortunate directions in psychological development.
11. In addition to Darwin's theory of evolution, courses in evolutionary psychology should be mandatory in high school.
12. Problems such as the publication bias, impact factor distortions, and incidents of scientific misconduct, are created because of faulty incentives and flawed reward systems that are set up to accomplish one thing but actually motivate people to do another, or even the opposite (*"The folly of rewarding A while hoping for B"* Steven Kerr, 1975).
13. Science is taking the romance out of romantic love.
14. Evolution was never very concerned about suffering.