



Chapter 6: Consciousness

Module 6.3: Sleep, Part 2

Psychology 100

Introduction to Psychology

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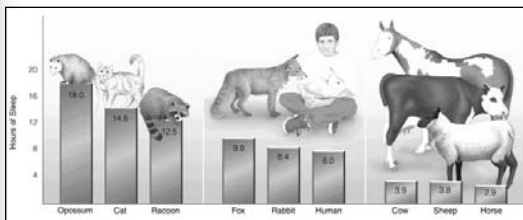
Why Do We Sleep?

- No one knows the exact function of sleep
- Several hypotheses:
 - Repairing/restoring: "Down time" helps repair normal wear and tear on body and brain
 - However: Little relationship between amount of activity/exercise and sleeping patterns
 - Survival value: Stops people from going out when low light puts us at risk for predators
 - Consider: Relationship between sleep patterns of animals and risk for attack by predators

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Fig. 6.8



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Sleep Deprivation

- In humans:
 - Severe sleep deprivation hurts virtually all aspects of functioning
 - Complex tasks are particularly affected
- In animals:
 - Internal functions such as temperature can't be regulated; weight loss; immune system and organ failure
 - Death may result

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What is the Function of REM Sleep and Dreaming?

- REM deprivation causes only some increase in irritability, but lost REM tends to be made up the next night
- Traditional view: Wish fulfillment
 - Associated with Freud
 - Way to symbolically act out wishes, desires
 - Manifest content versus latent content
 - However: Little evidence for this view, and symbolism can be very subjective

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Alternative Views of Dreaming

- Activation-synthesis hypothesis: Dreams are the brain's attempt to make sense of random patterns of neural activity generated during sleep
 - Explains physiological basis for bizarre dream imagery; difficult to test, however
- Other hypothetical functions of dreams:
 - Problem-solving
 - Practice responses to threats from the environment
 - Note that both are highly speculative

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Sleep Disorders: Dissomnias

- **Insomnia:** Difficulty initiating or maintaining sleep lasting for at least one month
 - Can be caused by many things, including stress, alcohol use, learned patterns
- **Hypersomnia:** A chronic condition marked by excessive sleepiness
 - Can be caused by genetic condition, infectious diseases, sleep apnea
- **Narcolepsy:** Rare disorder characterized by sudden extreme sleepiness
 - Person suddenly falls into sound sleep

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Sleep Disorders: Parasomnias

- **Nightmares:** Frightening and anxiety-arousing dreams that occur primarily during REM sleep
 - Cause unknown, but frequent ones may signal a psychological disorder
- **Night terrors:** Condition in which the sleeper awakens suddenly in an extreme state of panic
- **Sleepwalking:** Condition in which sleeper rises during sleep and wanders about
- **Night terrors and sleepwalking:**
 - Mainly affect children and tend to go away with age
 - Are not associated with dreaming, or with disorders

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