



Department of Psychology
The University of Hong Kong

香港大學心理學系

Departmental Seminar

12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m. | July 21, 2016 (Thursday)

Rm 813, 8/F, The Jockey Club Tower | Centennial Campus | The University of Hong Kong

Nightmares and Well-being: Epidemiological Perspective



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Abstract

Nightmares are intensive dreams with negative emotional tone. Occasional nightmares are common and harmless, but frequent nightmares can constitute a serious clinical problem. In addition to their clinical significance, nightmares are theoretically interesting special case of dreaming with clear connection to wellbeing. As studying dreams is studying the content of consciousness, research of nightmares also inherits the myriad philosophical problems concerning study of consciousness, a fact often overlooked in clinical research. In this talk I will describe our empirical research project which investigates prevalence, risk factors and consequences of frequent nightmares among Finnish adult population and veterans of the Second World War. The project consists of four epidemiological studies on nightmares unified by the theme of nightmares and well-being. Results of the studies, limitations of the study of dreams as well as possible future directions for empirical research on nightmares will be discussed.

Dreaming as World-simulation



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Abstract

Dreaming is our second global state of consciousness, yet relatively little is known about this remarkable phenomenon. Theories of dreaming have recently converged towards a view of dreaming as an immersive simulation of a world. This view considers dreams to be akin to a virtual reality, created internally with minimal sensory input from external reality. Could our understanding of waking consciousness, then, benefit from the study of dreams as a (semi-isolated) model state? Further, the simulation *form* of dreaming suggests a *function*: Why are dreams like this? Some theories have tried to reach a view on the function of dreams from an evolutionary standpoint. This talk will outline the main proponents of the theories that view dreams as simulations, review their strengths and weaknesses, and suggest a possible way to reconcile their differing viewpoints.

~All are Welcome~

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