



An Evolutionary Psychology of Sleep and Dreams

Patrick McNamara Ph.D.

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Challenging existing claims concerning the functions of Rapid Eye Movement sleep and the purported meaninglessness of dreams, this text offers a complete and up-to-date survey on the anatomy, physiology, ontogeny, and phylogeny of REM sleep as well as the cognitive neuroscience of dream phenomenology and dream content. The text underlines the importance of looking at how REM interacts physiologically with NREM sleep, in order to understand the potential functions of REM. The findings support and extend claims that the functions of REM involve memory consolidation and regulation of emotional conflicts and expression.

Analyses of evolutionary relationships include sleep in reptiles, birds, marsupials, and mammals. Chapters explore interactions of REM and NREM and effects of these interactions on anabolic hormone release as well as the effects on dream content, the effects of genes and genomic imprinting on sleep, and theories of dream formation and content.

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