

Conferência 2

Nova Ciência da Atratividade Física: Pontos Fortes, Limitações e Relevância para a Imagem Corporal

The New Science of Physical Attractiveness: Its Strengths, Limitations, and Relevance to Body Image

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In the past decade, a large body of research influenced and driven by evolutionary psychology has renewed interest in the study of physical attractiveness. Specifically, some evolutionary psychologists have suggests that certain traits in humans evolved, not because they confer any survival advantage, but rather because they are related to fitness-enhancing benefits or because they are used in competition for access to potential mates. In this talk, I briefly review this literature, before focusing in particular on the hypothesis that a woman's waist-to-hip ratio (WHR) is a key indicator of her reproductive potential and, by extension, her physical attractiveness. Specifically, I argue that the WHR hypothesis exposes many of the limitations of the new science of physical attractiveness, including erroneous theoretical foundations and poor methodological rigour. I also suggest ways in which this body of work can be improved upon in the service of research on body image, particularly in relation to the measurement of body dissatisfaction and theories of negative body image.