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Dissociations registered in different behavioral channels may point at conflicting wantings and their corresponding likings rather than at liking without wanting and wanting without liking.

Abstract:

The concepts of liking and wanting refer to two (or better four) phases in a typical action control loops (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 2002). In such a loop, wanting and liking go together: we like what we want and we want what we like. Two questions arise: (1) Can wanting and liking become decoupled? (2) Are the cases that are given as examples of a decoupling really cases of decoupling? Before reverting to the conclusion that dissociations on a behavioral/phenomenological level point at dissociations on a hidden/mechanism level, we should examine the alternative that they point at different conflicting goals (one leading to approach plus liking and the other to avoidance plus disliking), and for which the end states are at different psychological distances (short-term/long-term).