

Reason and less: Non-cognitive factors modulate human reasoning

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Reasons are causally necessary mediators between goals, beliefs, and actions (in normal circumstances). Much of psychological and neuropsychological research on reasoning has focused on giving a cognitive account of this inferential process. However, only a moment's reflection is needed to remind us that that many non-cognitive factors — emotions, appetitive factors (hunger, sex drive, etc.), instinctual biases (e.g. dominance cues), hormonal factors, pathology — modulate or adulterate real-world reasoning. I will discuss these issues in the context of emotions, present data from behavioural, imaging and patient studies, and speculate on broader implications for theories of reasoning.