

Fighting fires for one-night stands: The evolved psychology of firefighters and its relation to health and well-being

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Firefighting is a high-risk occupation that has been associated with a variety of negative health and well-being outcomes. Anecdotally, “a desire to help people” has been cited as the #1 reason for choosing such a dangerous job, although little evidence has been produced to support this. The current study was designed to test a new hypothesis, informed by evolutionary theory, related to men’s firefighting service.

Specifically, we propose that motivations relevant to a career in firefighting are related to mate value relevant individual difference characteristics. In other words, the things that make men good firefighters are the same things that make men attractive to women, particularly as short-term partners. Unfortunately, these are also the characteristics that make men particularly susceptible to negative health and well-being outcomes.

Thesis Adviser: Dr. Valerie Starratt

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12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

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