

Johan W.S. Vlaeyen – brief Biosketch –October 2017

**Affiliations:**

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Research Interests:

Pain and Fear learning; Conditioning; Goal pursuit; Aversive bodily sensations; Unpredictability; Avoidance behavior and Reward seeking.

Johan W.S. Vlaeyen, PhD is full professor at the Universities of Leuven (Belgium) and Maastricht (Netherlands). His main research interests/expertise are the behavioral, cognitive and motivational mechanisms leading to disability, and the development and evaluation of customized cognitive-behavioral management strategies for individuals suffering chronic bodily symptoms (pain, fatigue, tinnitus). His experimental work includes research on the acquisition of pain-related fear through direct experience, observational learning, and verbal-symbolic learning. He studies the role of unpredictability on the generalization of bodily symptoms and illness behaviors, with a special attention to the competition between avoidance versus reward seeking tendencies. Johan Vlaeyen highly values translational research, and he and his team have developed fear-reduction treatments and utilized replicated single-case experimental designs to evaluate the effects of behavioral interventions for patients with chronic bodily symptoms such as chronic pain and bothersome tinnitus. Johan W.S. Vlaeyen is on the editorial board of the journal *Pain*, *Clinical Journal of Pain*, *Scandinavian Journal of Pain*, *Cognitive Behaviour Therapy*, and *Translational Behavioural Medicine*. He is principal author of the book *"Pain-related Fear: Exposure-based Treatment of Chronic Pain"* (IASP Press 2012), co-editor of the book *"Fordyce's Behavioral Methods for chronic Pain and Illness republished with invited commentaries"* (IASP Press 2014). He received the *Pain Award* of the Dutch Chapter of IASP, has been awarded *Distinguished International Affiliate* of the American Psychological Association, for "unusual and outstanding contributions" to health psychology in 2015, he has an adjunct research professorship at the University of South Australia (Adelaide Australia), and obtained an *honorary doctorate* at the University of Örebro (Sweden) for his scientific contributions in the area of health psychology. In 2015, he received a prestigious Methusalem structural research funding from the Flemish Government (Belgium), for the research program "Asthenes: from acute aversive sensations to chronic bodily symptoms".