

SOCIAL COGNITION IN A CASE OF AMNESIA WITH NEURODEVELOPMENTAL MECHANISMS

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Introduction: Co-occurring impairments of episodic-autobiographical memory and theory of mind were described in several psychiatric and neuropsychiatric disorders. Despite sophisticated elaborations in theoretical domains, the relationship between episodic-autobiographical memory and social cognition remains unelucidated.

Objectives: This work's objectives are establishing greater recognition of the possible contribution of episodic - autobiographical memory to social cognition, by resorting to data from developmental amnesia (a condition with onset in early childhood, caused by relatively selective bilateral damage to hippocampi).

Aims: We describe a young adult with amnesia with neurodevelopmental mechanisms.

Methods: The patient was investigated medically, psychiatrically, with extensive neuropsychological methods and with neuroimaging.

Results: Neuroimaging revealed grossly reduced hippocampi volumes bilaterally. There was no evidence of pathology in the underlying parahippocampal region or other areas. Performance on tasks that tapped on various aspects of social cognition was non-uniform, ranging from within normal limits to moderate impairment.

Conclusions: According to our knowledge, this is among the first case reports about a comprehensive evaluation of social information processing in a patient with amnesia with neurodevelopmental mechanisms. This patient showed impairments in performance in some laboratory tasks for social cognition, but not in others. This suggests that various components of social cognition may have different neural correlates; their unraveling may aid understanding of when and how episodic-autobiographical memory contributes to social cognition. This study also emphasizes the need to employ various tasks to assess social cognition in patients with amnesia, which go beyond traditional laboratory paradigms.