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THE COMPORTMENTAL LEARNING DISABILITIES OF EARLY FRONTAL LOBE DAMAGE

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Abstract

Two adult patients are described who suffered bilateral prefrontal damage early in life and who subsequently came to psychiatric attention because of severely aberrant behaviour. A battery of developmental psychology paradigms (not previously used to assess neurologically impaired

individuals) showed that social and moral development of these 2 patients was arrested at an immature stage. In comparison with other types of brain damage which disrupt cognitive development, frontal damage acquired early in life appears to provide the neurological substrate for a special type of learning disability in the realms of insight, foresight, social judgement, empathy, and complex reasoning.

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