



Social Cognition and Developmental Psychopathology

By Carla Sharp

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Social Cognition and Developmental Psychopathology By Carla Sharp

Social cognition refers to the capacity to think about others' thoughts, intentions, feelings, attitudes and perspectives and enables us to engage in the activities that humans value most, such as family, friendship, love, cooperation, play, and community. These processes form such an essential and natural part of our functioning as human beings that it is easy to assume that all humans possess the capacity in equal measure. However, it has been shown by research over the last 20 years that children with a wide variety of psychiatric disorders have problems in social cognition. For instance, children with autism have clear deficits in thinking what others might be thinking. In contrast, children with psychopathic traits are very good at reading the minds of others, but may use this knowledge to manipulate or mistreat individuals.

This volume brings together for the first time leaders at the intersection of two academic fields: developmental psychopathology (which deals with child psychiatric disorders) and social cognition. By bringing together the two fields in this unique way, readers not only learn much about important disease mechanisms in childhood disorder, but also gain a better understanding about the treatments most likely to be effective. It is a must-have for all students, researchers and clinicians interested in both childhood psychiatric disorder and cognitive psychology.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Carla Sharp completed her training as a clinical psychologist at the University of Stellenbosch (South Africa) in 1996. After completing her Ph.D in Developmental Psychopathology at the University of Cambridge in 2000, she obtained an NHS Post-doctoral Fellowship at Hughes Hall, University of Cambridge where she completed her post-doctoral work in Developmental Psychopathology and social cognition. She was appointed Assistant Professor in the Menninger Department of Psychiatry, Baylor College of Medicine in 2004. Her published work reflects her interests in social-cognitive and affective processing as it relates to childhood disorder as well as her interest in psychometrics. Her current work reflects an expansion of her previous interest to include investigations into the neurobiological mechanisms and neural computations of social-cognitive-, affective-, and reward processing in the developing brain and how it relates to psychiatric disorder in children. Peter Fonagy, PhD, FBA, is Freud Memorial Professor of Psychoanalysis and Head of the Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology at University College London; Chief Executive of the Anna Freud Centre, London; and Consultant to the Child and Family Program at the Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Baylor College of Medicine. He is Chair of the Postgraduate Education Committee of the International Psychoanalytic Association and a Fellow of the British Academy. He is a clinical psychologist and a training and supervising analyst in the British Psycho-Analytical Society in child and adult analysis. His work integrates empirical research with psychoanalytic theory, and his clinical interests center around borderline psychopathology, violence, and early attachment relationships. He has published over 300 chapters and articles and has authored or edited several books.

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