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A mind to go out of: Reflections on primary and secondary consciousness

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Abstract

Dreaming and waking are two brain-mind states, which are characterized by shared and differentiated properties at the levels of brain and consciousness. As part of our effort to capitalize on a comparison of these two states we have applied Edelman's™ distinction between primary and secondary consciousness, which we link to dreaming and waking respectively. In this paper we examine the implications of this contrastive analysis for theories of mental illness. We conclude that while dreaming is an almost perfect model of organic psychosis, it is less so for schizophrenia and major affective disorder where it must serve a primarily heuristic role helping us to model hallucinations and delusions but not the diseases themselves.



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Keywords

Dreams; Consciousness; Psychosis; Schizophrenia; Affective disorder; Hallucinations; Delusions; REM sleep

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