

Music Helps Injured Brains Recall Memories

Written by Greg Moskovitch on 15th December, 2013



In a pioneering study conducted by doctors Ameer Baird and Séverine Samson, popular music has been used to help patients with severe acquired brain injuries (ABIs) recall personal memories, detailing their research in a recent issue of the *Neuropsychological Rehabilitation* journal.

The study, which covered a relatively small number of cases, examined music-evoked autobiographical memories, or MEAMs, in patients whose brain function is impaired by acquired injury, rather than in those with neurological decline like Alzheimer's Disease, or in healthy patients.

For the study, Baird and Samson played extracts from Billboard Hot 100 #1s that spanned the subjects' life since age five, in random order to five patients, with the songs also played to five control subjects with no brain injury. The subjects were then told to record their reaction to a track.

The subjects were asked to write down how familiar they were with a particular song, whether they liked it, and what memories the song invoked. Baird and Samson found that the frequency of MEAMs was similar for patients and controls, scoring 38-71% and 48-71% respectively.

Although one of the four ABI patients studied recorded no MEAMs at all, the highest number of MEAMs in the study was recorded by an ABI patient. MEAMs were most often positive and of a person, people or a life period, with songs triggering MEAMs noted as more liked and familiar.....

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<http://musicfeeds.com.au/news/music-helps-injured-brains-recall-memories/>