

My Brain Development

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Introduction

This is a paper detailing my experiences with my brain and cognitive development, intended to be read by people interested in the above, ranging from simple enthusiasts to professional psychologists/neuroscientists/et cetera who are interested in somebody my age (currently 15 as of January 24, 2026; my birthday is in January) detailing and documenting their own brain and cognitive development. Another reason why I am writing this article is because it is not common for people my age to be this interested in their own development, and thus not really detail/describe theirs. As such, I have taken the initiative to do so and write about mine, especially when it is considered that my own brain/cognitive development is extremely noticeable for me.

Background

I am an autistic (with no other neurodivergencies/conditions) 15-year-old who has special interests in academic fields, especially in mathematics and the humanities, chosen because of the lack of material goods to engage with them. I am also rather introverted, and interact with other math/philosophy nerds, mainly on the internet. Because of my background, I will focus on how my brain developing affects me intellectually first and foremost in this article. I will go in chronological order and explain what my cognition “felt” like during the timespans mentioned, and I will also mention my interests and miscellaneous features of my cognition during whatever timespans I feature in this article.

Age 10

At this age, I was into electronics (as in electrical circuits), as well as chemistry (which appeared later in this age). Although I was into quantum mechanics at this age, I was only interested in the popularized content of it. Examining online, say, texts and messages was very hard for me; I thought in a black-and-white manner, sorting ethical issues into strict boxes rather than a gray continuum. I also found humanities-related fields and subjects to be pretty hard to understand; there was this English course that I took online, and I found it pretty hard to

understand what was going on when I was 10. Later on in the year (2021), I got into cardiology; I thought that I had heart problems as during that time, I had many heart palpitations. What I found most interesting about cardiology was its “structure”; if this happens, then something must be wrong. This was the same thing for my interest in chemistry; if this happens, then this thing must be in the solution.

Other than the sciences and diving into the previous topic of my interest in the humanities, I got into politics at this age. I was an “anarchist communist”; essentially one who believes that full communism can only be achieved by abolishing all types of government and most hierarchies. However, when it came time for me to read Marx, I could not understand even a single word in the Communist Manifesto. My political opinions were also almost entirely based off of online forums, as I couldn’t really form my own. Forming my own opinions and positions was rather difficult for me, especially in such a radical ideology.

Age 11

I was interested in electronics and chemistry at this age too, although those interests were declining in favor of mathematics, as well as an interest in weather. This time, however, I was not interested in popularized content in any of those fields; after the failures of seeing my popularized interest in quantum mechanics, I decided to only turn to strictly academic and rigorous forms of my interest, not popularized ones. As I wanted to continue studying quantum mechanics rigorously, I decided to buy an actual book on it. But I could not understand the math. So I bought a calculus book in order to understand the math. It was not hard to understand at all; it felt formulaic in the same way that my previous interests were. The humanities, however, were still difficult for me. It was rather difficult for me to write/judge/read a piece of literature. I also tried to advance to other areas of mathematics (such as Real Analysis), but this failed miserably; I could not, for the life of me, understand the concepts presented there (although formal logic did come as somewhat intuitive to me).

Age 12 (Zero to Six Months)

At this age, my interests shifted away from math and into politics, as my previous venture into math was unsuccessful. I also began to enjoy the humanities a little bit more (especially in my English class), although I was still very far from actually understanding it. My interests in politics were about micronationalism and government at first, but I could only grasp the presented material at a surface level, and pure understanding was very difficult for me. Expanding on my interest in micronationalism: I had watched multiple videos on starting one’s own nation/country, as well as seeing “outlandish”-sounding/seeing/naming countries in the video game *Rise of Nations* on Roblox. I then sought to do the same; create my own country with

me as the leader with its own currency, flag, economy, etc. Because of this, I had created the country of Malers (officially the Malersian Democratic Republic) in my house and surrounding areas. Its form of government was a parliamentary republic with an executive presidency. However, with very little background knowledge or intuition of how governments and politics work, as well as the concept of nationalism (and probably 100+ other things), I resorted to paraphrasing the constitutions of the United States, France, and Poland (I “mixed” them together). I additionally had sizable knowledge gaps in my notion of government and politics; I remember using the phrase “parliament meeting” to describe a meeting of parliament members in my hypothetical nation’s parliament. My teacher then asked me what a “parliament meeting” was. I couldn’t explain it, so I resorted to stammering about “parliament meetings” on television.

Here are some more (in-hindsight, I did not realize them until my brain literally developed enough) “errors” that I made while creating this micronation:

1. Malersian Civic Nationalism – At the age of 12, I had a very limited understanding of what makes a nation a nation, how nations and countries are developed and created, and how nationalism and national forces all contribute to, say, a certain people group (like an ethnic or religious group) seeking the creation of a nation-state for themselves. My type of nationalism (and why I wanted to secede) relied on *civic nationalism*, which is important to remark as this new country was already located inside *civic nationalist* territory (the USA). Basically, the entire national identity was “if you believe in liberalism, then you are a Malersian”, but this identity was already surrounded by the American (as in “if you believe in liberalism, then you are an American”) civic national identity! With a minimal understanding on how nations evolve and form, I resorted to promising very broad and vague claims of “freedom” and “democracy” to other students at my school, even though this experiment was located in “freedom and democracy” territory.
2. A lack of a willing population to join this micronation, although this is generally inevitable with no micronations.
3. A very limited understanding of laws and how historical development shapes a nation; without them, one is stuck wondering what “makes” their nation.

Age 12 (Seven to Twelve Months)

One night, while I was busy writing my nation’s constitution, I had “discovered” that the best way to improve the rights of my workers was via socialism. This effectively canceled the nation-building project, and I (again) went into socialism. But this was more-so anarchist communism. After I discovered some reasons as to why it wouldn’t be a good system, I eventually became a Marxist-Leninist, all-the-while not having read a single piece of political theory. Indeed, during my time as a socialist, reading political theory for me was just as hard as it was when I was 11, although later on in the year I did eventually start picking up on it. Most of

my views were, again, merely mimicked from online forums and were held with high emotion, as I was biologically unable to think said political material through.

I also re-discovered my interest in mathematics, and decided to study some set theory. This was very elementary (literally just on the axioms of set theory), but it got the ball rolling with regards to my mathematical studies and future cognitive development. I additionally downloaded Linux on my computer, which was somewhat hard from my end.

Age 13 (First Quarter)

I started off the new year mainly playing video games. I also had finally mustered up the courage to read the Communist Manifesto for the first time and to actually understand it. My brain development finally took off right around here; I went from passively absorbing information and struggling to understand abstract concepts, especially those in the humanities, to actually understanding them and making connections. It felt like a gradual “click”; everything that one has read in which they couldn’t comprehend before suddenly making sense now. It started in my interest in politics, in which I had multiple epiphanies about the theory that I was reading (such as Marxian history really being just a chain of implications from material “axioms”). At around this time, I stopped being a communist after seeing empirical evidence of it not working.

After I stopped being a communist, I began to “pour in” my focus into studying math. I chose Real Analysis (printed a textbook on it), as well as Set Theory (bought an undergraduate-level book on it). Suddenly, I noticed that it became much easier to understand those subjects; again, it felt like it finally “clicked” instead of it being very hard to understand. Of course, it was not like a switch turned on in my brain that said, “okay, you can understand these now!”, but more-so collecting more and more understandings of certain subjects until a “breaking point” was reached. In my case, this really started with political theory, but was later generalized to mathematics.

My school’s humanities subjects became even easier; English felt very easy, and History even more-so (although the phenomenon of English getting easier and easier may just be because of a good teacher). At around this time, I began to moderately dislike the sciences in favor of the humanities.

Age 13 (Second Quarter)

This was the zenith of my brain’s development. I went from struggling with even a basic Real Analysis text at 12 to reading “Principles of Mathematical Analysis” at 13 (Second Quarter). If one word could be used to describe my cognitive evolution during this phase, it would be the word “understanding”, or possibly “epiphany”. I also went from struggling to

detect sarcasm or any kind of nuance in an online comment to being able to read an introductory philosophy book on the philosophy of mathematics (although I struggled with this too (._.)). Finding myself gaining this ability to grasp *very* abstract concepts felt like acquiring a superpower.

Age 13 (Third Quarter)

Mathematical “production” continued to be at a record high; I was constantly linking ideas between new and other ones, and so forth. And on the humanities, especially on the subject of reading political theory, I had fully disassociated myself from communist ideology and begun to explore politically conservative ideology. The plan to do so was incredibly successful; not only was it convincing, it was also made possible with my newly-gained powers that my cute little autistic brain gave me (love you so much, my brain!).

From now on, I will only sparsely list my mathematical/academic achievements, and focus on cognitive/brain development only, as to avoid turning this article into a life story.

Ages 14+

With regards to cognitive development purely, not *too* much happened, as most of the improvement was just refinement of existing skills (such as thinking abstractly and being able to understand more things). However, here are three gifts that my developing brain gave to me while it was developing:

1. Increased ability for nuance – I remember that on a plane trip between some islands in the Philippines, I looked out of a window. Suddenly, I had the ability to grasp nuance, and to see situations, moral dilemmas, and problems in a gray matter rather than in a black-and-white manner. This was very important for me, as before June 2025, I could not, even if I had to save my life, see things in a more “everything-is-gray” manner than in a black-and-white one. There are many examples of me exhibiting this behavior in the past, but I will list four:
 - a. I remember that when I got Linux for the first time, the distro (essentially “flavor”, type of Linux) in question wanted to collect telemetry and was experimenting with this, although this would be an explicitly opt-in telemetry rather than an opt-out telemetry. I still rejected this intensely; I thought that any type of telemetry, even if it were opt-in rather than opt-out, was bad and would inevitably lead to surveillance of the entire operating system in general.

- b. As I got most of my opinions from online forums before 13, this led to very crazy/erratic views without adequate backing; for example, I rejected electoralism entirely in favor of, say, protests, even though electoralism can (and is) very useful, especially with the help of peaceful demonstrations.
- c. When I was 11, I saw a YouTube comment about it not being good at all to send civilians to space, and instead only scientists must be sent up there, with the justification being that only scientists “deserve” to be sent to space (as it is for actual research purposes as opposed to commercial or monetary reasons). I responded to this in a very furious manner, because I believed that all space travel must be good, regardless of the intent, motive, or overall benefit to humanity. *I did not have the capabilities yet to understand that a “generally” morally good action can sometimes be detrimental.*
- d. During my “commie” phase, I thought that all capitalists and liberals (those who advocate liberal democracy and capitalism, so for instance the Republicans and Democrats are both liberals) were inherently evil and nothing good can come out of them, but obviously this is not the case.

2. The ability to hold two conflicting views in your head – This is actually a *very* new phenomenon for me (as of January 24th), and it developed literally 3 months ago and in a very rapid rate; it boils down to being able to argue for your opponent’s side of the argument without “losing” your original views.
3. An increased ability to link two second-order concepts together, with “second-order” essentially meaning “concepts of concepts”.

And last but not least, there is also the development of a passion for anything remotely intellectually stimulating or academic: before 13, my interests were still *somewhat* on the academic/intellectual side, but after 13, almost all of my interests are on this side.