She loves me, she loves me not: an atypical case of De Clèrambault syndrome

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Introduction: The De Clèrembaut syndrome (DCS) or erotomania is a rare disorder characterized by a delusional conviction of being loved. Because of its rarity it is difficult to study and its classification as a nosological entity has been a matter of disagreement. According to the available knowledge the course of DCS is chronic and the prognosis is poor with severe impairments to the patients and families.

Objectives: The purpose of this work is to review the available literature about DCS published in the last decades and to present a case followed in our hospital.

Methods: A systematic review of DCS was carried out by searching the database Medline/PubMed comprising the articles published since the first description of this form of pathological love. An atypical case report is described and analyzed based on the reviewed literature.

Results: A 23-years-old man, with no previous history of psychiatric or medical history and no history of alcohol or substance abuse. He was admitted in our urgency for a psychiatric assessment because of a stalker behavior to a girl of the same social status that he believed to be loved by, despite the fact that she had done nothing to sustain that belief. No other psychiatric comorbidities were presented at admission or during the time of follow-up. The delusional system was intense and remained untouchable after 3 hospitalizations with psychotherapy and pharmacotherapy interventions. At the time of the last observation he was still symptomatic.

Discussion/Conclusions: This case shows an atypical presentation of the disorder and states the need for further studies in order to promote a better understanding of the disorder and to offer a satisfactory treatment for affected patients.

Supplementary material: Complete presentation available at http://ijcnmh.arc-publishing.org