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Character Diagnosis- What's Eating Gilbert Grape

What's Eating Gilbert Grape is a movie about what some would call a dysfunctional family. The mother Bonnie is very obese and she doesn't leave the house, she suffers from depression after her husband killed himself in the home. Gilbert is the oldest son who is more like the father figure and provider in the home. He really keeps up with and watches out for his little brother Arnie, who has some form of autism or intellectual disability. The oldest sister Amy is basically like the mother of the house since their mother can't do much. Then finally there is the youngest sister Ellen.

The character I want to focus on is Arnie, and he is played by Leonardo DiCaprio. Arnie loves his family, he has a few meltdowns in the movie, and he loves to climb the town's water tower. Although it is dangerous he does not understand just how dangerous it really is. This is one of my reasons why I believe Arnie may have intellectual disability. According to the text someone with an intellectual disability may have "difficulty with cognitive tasks such as reasoning, making plans, thinking in the abstract, making judgements, and learning from formal studies or from life's experiences" (2017). The author also notes that they may have trouble or problems with communication, social interactions, and practical living skills. A very similar diagnosis is Autism Spectrum Disorder also known as ASD. It is defined as a "heterogeneous neurodevelopmental disorder with many degrees and manifestations that have genetic and environmental causes" (2017). It can be detected in childhood, and it has signs and symptoms up through the person's adult life. Why I feel as if Arnie could be diagnosed with ASD instead of an intellectual disability is because he has many of the symptoms listed under ASD.

1. The author breaks down the communication aspect of the disorder. It is noted as "the way the person speaks may be delayed by many years, their deficits vary in severity and scope, some people with ASD may have difficulty speaking at all, or may only be able to speak in short phrases, or certain patterns, it is also noted that the person may talk very loudly, or may not be able to use or understand the use of body language, they may lack the understanding of a sense of humor, and they may ask the same questions over and over" (2017)

2. The next symptom listed is socialization, the author notes that a person with ASD might be slow to grasp the concept of social interactions, and they may develop social skills in phases that may happen out of the ordinary sequence, as infants the baby may not make eye contact, or smile, and may move away from the person who is trying to engage them in a smile or a hug or even make eye contact with them, they may have delayed responses to being separated from their parent, they may often have tantrums, or show signs of aggravation or even aggression, they may not show interest in being around or playing with other children (2017)

3. The last social skill noted in the text is motor behavior, and the person with ASD meet their motor milestones when they are expected to do so, and this can include but is not limited to compulsive or a form of a ritual such as rocking, shaking, head banging, or even odd body postures, they can sometimes find interest in things that are not common to play with such as different parts of an object, they don't really care for change and tend to work better with a

routine, they may have delays to expressing pain, and they may like to touch objects a lot or even smell them, or put them in their mouths, it is also noted in the text that some people with ASD pick at their skin, and have even hurt themselves from banging their heads (2017)

Just as I mentioned before ASD and Intellectual Disability share some of the same characteristics and symptoms, the author notes that the diagnosis between the two disorders can be a little difficult. As people with either disorder likely have sensory issues, such as sensitivity to loud sounds and really bright light, and even the texture of things such as toys, or even food (2017). Arnie shows a few of these characteristics as well, which is leading towards thinking he actually may have ASD. In the movie Arnie loves to climb the water tower in town and eventually makes it to the top of the tower and gets arrested, but to him it is just a game and is all fun, as he does not see the danger in climbing the tower. Arnie is protected by his family, and they care for him and nurture him. Gilbert is usually Arnie's primary care giver and helps him bathe and things of that nature, and one night Gilbert thought Arnie would be able to handle bathing alone and he leaves him in the tub, and he finds Arnie still in the tub the next morning.

After that incident Arnie becomes afraid of water and refuses to wash. As a result of being afraid to wash, Gilbert tried to make Arnie go take a bath as a form of what I believed to be a punishment, after eating his birthday cake before he was supposed to, and it led to Gilbert hitting Arnie and he left in anger. Becky helps take care of Arnie in Gilbert's absence and they form a bond. After Gilbert hits him, he goes to Becky for security, and what I think he knew as a safe place. Becky found a way to help Arnie overcome his fear of water and eventually gets him comfortable enough to get in the lake, and feel safe. The night of Arnie's party was a sad night for the Grape family, their mother dies after she goes upstairs for the first time in a long time, and it is Arnie who finds her. He tried to awake her but he was unsuccessful, and he does not have the ability to truly understand what is going on, but he does know that something is not right, and he becomes very upset and he has to be comforted by his sisters after they realize what is going on, and that their mother has passed away. Gilbert and his sisters did not want their mother to be the center of the towns attention, and they decide to clean out the house and Gilbert sets it on fire with her body still in the house so no one could mock or make fun of her in her death. After that Arnie seems to live a normal life, he is not removed from his normal lifestyle and he is still surrounded by people he knows which I think helped him cope with life after the death of their mother. I would have to come to the conclusion that Arnie suffers from ASD, based on the behaviors, lack of speech, and the many other characteristics he shows of a person with ASD.

Character Diagnosis- A Beautiful Mind

A Beautiful Mind is a movie about a really smart man named John Nash played by Russell Crowe, who was a bright student in math. He loved numbers some even believed more than he loved or liked actual people. He attends Princeton University as he has received the Carnegie Prize for mathematics which is a prestigious award. After he gets to the school he learns that he has a roommate whose name is Charles and they become best friends. Along with Charles, John also befriends a few other students like, Martin, Bender, Sol and Ainsley.

John takes a big interest into his thesis paper after he gets rejected, and he starts working on his theory in mathematical economics. He later takes a job at MIT, and he teaches a math class

there. John goes back to Princeton for a visit and he sees his old friend Charles. It is during this time that he meets Mr. Parcher and Marcy who is the niece of Charles. Parcher tells John about the plan to crack the encryptions of the Soviets, and that it is being done at the Pentagon at a secret US Department of Defense building, and he actually does break the encryptions. Parcher later gives him a different job and he wants him to reveal the Soviets plan, and he has to keep track of his findings and provide them to him in a secret location. John becomes more and more anxious and paranoid after a shootout. John's wife Alicia becomes concerned for her husband and his paranoia and unusual behavior. She reaches out to the psychiatric hospital for help and they later get John after he gives a speech at Harvard. They get him to the psychiatric hospital and he believes he was kidnapped by the Soviets for the work that he has been doing.

It is at this point in the movie where I believe he is hallucinating and being a little delusional. These are common signs of Schizophrenia. According to the textbook, Schizophrenia is observed by a person being delusional and having hallucinations, which John showed characteristics of both. With his wife by his side and wanting to help him get better and understand what is going on with him, she goes to the secret mailbox and brings back the documents he's been leaving there. It's at this point that he now believes he has been hallucinating, and he's been being delusional, even to the part of Mr. Parcher not existing. He also later understands that neither Charles nor Marcy ever existed either, or at least not in reality, and they are all in his mind. Now that he understands that he is sick, and his wife Alicia is very aware of just how sick he is, and they have a baby as well, he decides to fight and take down the demons in his head. He did not like the way the medicine would make him feel, so he stops taking it, and he falls back into the psychosis that he's been working to get away from.

One day while going back through his psychosis, he wanders off and leaves the baby in the tub, and when his wife confronts him about it, he tells her that Charles was with the baby, it is at this time that Alicia realizes that something is not quite right again, and she goes to call the psychiatric hospital again for help. While she is going to make the call, Parcher appears to John and tries to talk him into killing Alicia, but he can't do it, but he does unintentionally push her down after he tries to get away from Mr. Parcher. As his wife tries to leave it is then that he finally realizes that Marcy and Charles are really not real, he told his wife that "Marcy never got older", and he sees that she is just in his head and she is not real, just like Charles and Mr. Parcher. It was because he was not taking his medication as he should have been he started to suffer from the hallucinations and delusions again. The text defines hallucinations as "a false sensory perception that occurs in the absence of a related sensory stimulus, and they are mostly always abnormal and can affect any of a person's senses". It is because of the hallucinations and delusions that I will have to say that I would have to diagnose John Nash with Schizophrenia.

After his last episode at home with Alicia, he said his final goodbye's to Charles and even told him thank you for being his friend, and letting him and Marcy know that he would never speak to them again, as well as Mr. Parcher. These were all figments of his imagination, that caused him to hallucinate and be delusional, and he vowed that after he said those goodbye's it would be goodbye forever. He still had some hallucinations but he and his family were able to live a pretty normal life, and he didn't really bother with many of the issues he suffered with from the psychosis. Mr. Nash was able to return to teaching math like he used to and he received the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics for his outstanding work in mathematics and on the game theory.