

Movie paper: i am sam essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

We live in a society where media portrays a great deal of information on a daily basis. Movies, TV shows, videos, internet etc. all accommodate with portraying the information all around the world. The advantage of media is that it can educate viewers with all the different kind of information but it can also portray false delusions especially when dealing with people with some kind of disability. For this movie paper, I chose the movie I am Sam. It's a wonderful film about a mentally challenged man who has the power to teach others that love is really all you need. The Diagnosis

Many diagnoses are being portrayed in this film such as, mental retardation and autism. Sam Dawson the protagonist of the movie is man who has a mental disability who has a mind of a 7 year old. He is a single father to his daughter Lucy; the mother was homeless and abandoned Sam and Lucy right after she was born. Despite his mental challenge, Sam was able to implement a loving and caring environment for Lucy with the help of his neighbor Annie. However, when Lucy turned 7 her capacity of knowledge was much greater than her fathers and she was taken away by child services and is put to a foster home. This ended up being a custody battle in the court, Sam fought hard to get custody for his own daughter. Due to the fact that he works at star bucks, he couldn't afford a lawyer, however he still managed to find an attorney who will represent him " pro bono" (free of charge).

There are many dysfunctions shown throughout the movie. As Sam's daughter Lucy was getting older, she was assigned harder books to read with words that Sam couldn't read. Therefore, Lucy pretended as if she can't read those words as well because she doesn't want to be smarter than her dad.

She knew that he was different, and not like other dads. Sam and Lucy have a tradition to go to IHOP Wednesday nights, when they decide to change it up a bit and go to a different place; Sam causes a disturbance because he cannot get the French pancakes that he is used to having at IHOP, something a child would do. During trial he couldn't be serious and really showed that his intellectual capacity is of a 7 year old. He also suffered from autism and his speech was very limited and he had absolutely no abstract thinking. Sadock and Sadock states that the diagnosis for autism are deficits in language development and difficulty using language to communicate (Sadock & Sadock, 2010).

I believe that the movie described the disorder very accurately, it was clear for the viewers to see that Sam suffered from a developmental disability. The way he talked, laughed, and acted was all evidence to his disability. The way he communicated with his daughter as if they were two kids. All his friends around him were also suffering from a mental disability as well. There was a scene in the movie when Lucy ran away from child services to her father and told him that they let her go to the park with him, only an individual with a disorder can actually believe that.

The factual information does match the fiction in the film very closely. Sam had most of the dysfunctions and symptoms that an individual with a developmental disability would have. Research has shown that people with mental disabilities come across stressful situations that led to emotional impairment. They deal with problems such as employment, financial issues and interpersonal concerns (Nezu, 1994). Sam worked in star bucks where he only cleaned tables; they didn't let him to make coffee for customers due

to his disability. He also had financial problems throughout the movie. All his friends were with him and they all chipped in a couple dollars to help him out, so Lucy can have the shoes. In the movie Sam had impaired cognitive functioning and his IQ score was under 70. That was exactly how he portrayed himself to be in the movie.

The media has a large impact on society that can either be negative or positive when it comes to mental illness. The negative images can show the society that people with mental challenges are violent and are limited to completing basic every day activities. Some movies can even portray them as unpleasant. When it comes to the movie I am Sam, one positive affect is the love that Sam was able to show to others. He was able to love and understand the meaning of a true relationship. Throughout the movie he managed to teach the true meaning of love to other characters in the movie.

Personal Reaction

The first time I saw the movie I am Sam was in my psychology class a few years ago. It was a beautiful movie that touched my heart. The fact that I had a chance to write about this movie was a great opportunity. I had a chance to re watch the movie. As I was re watching many scenes were very emotional and brought tears to my eyes. The worst thing any individual (healthy or unhealthy) can experience is losing someone that brings meaning to your life. Despite Sam's disability, he tried extremely hard being both a mother and a father to Lucy.

When they took her away from him he didn't give up and did everything possible to try and get her back. He ended up showing his attorney, the true

meaning of love, family and relationship. Although he lost the case, on getting his daughter back, Lucy's new adopted parents realized that both Sam and Lucy need each other. In the end of the movie, they reunite. I am thrilled that the movie ended in a way that they get to be together because every time a tear came down my eye was when they took his daughter away from him. Just because he was mentally challenged doesn't mean that he has a challenge to love and sometimes love is all you need. I enjoyed watching this movie, ignoring its emotional effect on me.

In conclusion, I am Sam is a great movie to watch if someone is interested in learning about developmental disability or autism. The main actor and protagonist of the movie played an excellent role of being mentally challenged. His actions throughout the whole movie were accurate and believable, hence his dysfunctions. His love for his daughter was unbelievably strong and inspiring. As I watched this movie for the second time, I learned the importance of love and family. The relationship that Sam and Lucy had was a great example showing the true meaning of family. They did everything in their power to stay together. Me, myself share the same values as Sam and Lucy, to me family is everything and love is all you need.