

# Girl, interrupted and borderline personality disorder

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BorderlinePersonalityDisorder remains a very misunderstood psychological condition. This is unfortunate because it is a very serious condition that requires proper and effective treatment to reverse. Thankfully, there have been inroads made in providing clear presentations of the condition to the public. One such way the condition was brought to the public's attention was through Angelina Jolie's performance of a character suffering from BPD in the film *Girl, Interrupted*. In a way, the title of the film is very appropriate.

When someone suffers from BPD, their entire life becomes interrupted. While the film infers interrupted represents the interruption of life due to a stay in a mental hospital, the character's life has always been interrupted. This is due to the extremestress that BPD places on a person's life and how it interferes with the ability to create positive relationships. In particular, the Lisa Rowe character that Angelina Jolie plays displays the worst traits of severe mental illness.

Rowe is extremely belligerent, unresponsive to treatment, and seemingly has an anti-authority attitude. This, ultimately, undermines any progress she may otherwise achieve through her psychiatric treatment. In a way, Lisa uses her condition as a perverse form of empowerment. She is diagnosed a sociopath and this would infer that she has little care what others think of her. Of course, it would also infer she does not worry about the feelings of others. This is why she acts in such a belligerent manner towards other members of the staff.

While her actions do nothing towards improving her condition, it does allow her life to be a little easier in its own somewhat demented way. One of the most interesting aspects of this character is the bizarre "love/hate"

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relationship she has with the institution. While she repeatedly escapes the institution, she consistently returns to it. Granted, it is not always be her own choice but it would seem that at certain times she prefers residing in the institution. Now, why would this be?

It would seem that while Lisa resents her captivity, she enjoys the semblance of security that it provides. Lisa suffers from a serious psychiatric condition. And, true, her condition is made worse due to her own actions. She knows she cannot survive in the “ real world” so she only experiences it in small doses. This is why she is repeating entering and exiting the institution. While this may provide her with short term relief, it thoroughly undermines any potential progress she could achieve if she ceased her errant and erratic behavior.

Yet, she continues her cycle of independence mixed with dependence that does little for improving her condition. In a way, she is the person who is interrupting her own life with her own egregious behavior. Of course, Lisa’s mental illness is clearly the reason for her erratic behavior. However, it is her responsibility to take the necessary steps to seek to improve her condition. However, she refuses to do this and opts instead to partake in essentially anarchist behavior that does nothing to improve her condition.

As such, it becomes difficult to sympathize with her plight since she is so self-centered and self-absorbed. In light of this, there is certain sympathy present with the character. However, such sympathy can only go so far if she is unwilling to do what is necessary to help herself. In actuality, only she can improve her condition and through the bulk of the film she seems resistant to do this. Bibliography Mangold, James, Dir. Girl, Interrupted. Perf Winona  
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