

# A study on schizophrenia disorder as depicted by ron howard in, a beautiful mind

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



## **Schizophrenia and A Beautiful Mind**

The movie, *A Beautiful Mind*, is a biographical piece that portrays the life of John Nash, a man with schizophrenia. As portrayed in the movie, John Nash meets the criteria for schizophrenia perfectly. The movie opens with John Nash heading to college for a mathematics program. The first thing to notice about John is his hesitance towards social situations. He is slow to introduce himself to others and has a hard time connecting with people and making friends; these can be seen as negative symptoms. As the movie progresses we see him experiencing delusions surrounding his work and what he believes he does. He has what can be considered grandiose delusions evidenced by his belief that he is working for a top-secret mission within the government. His belief that the Russian government is trying to kill him can be classified as a persecutory delusion. Along with these delusions, John also has 3 major hallucinations: an imaginary roommate, the roommate's niece, and a man who he believes he is working for on this top-secret mission. An additional symptom of his schizophrenia is his paranoia that comes with these delusions and hallucinations. In his mind, these symptoms are reality and he believes so until many years later when he is admitted into a psychiatric ward and becomes aware of his disorder.

Although the movie does not delve into John's life before schizophrenia and what may be the causes, we can infer from environmental influences that there could be a correlation between his lack of human interaction and his schizophrenia. John often expressed that he had no friends and that nobody liked him. In many scenes he is alone and consumed by his work and his

thoughts. The movie's plot exhibits the onset and progression of the disorder. His prodromal symptoms begin when he arrives at college and possibly even before that time. His acute symptoms begin at college and become more severe when he graduates and begins his work.

Once his colleagues recognize his abnormal behavior, he is taken to a psychiatric ward and diagnosed with schizophrenia. He begins treatment right away with insulin shock therapy. He continues treatment for ten weeks and upon completion is sent home with a daily prescription. While taking these pills, he begins to enter his residual state and experiences a spike in negative symptoms such as anhedonia and psychomotor retardation. He experiences a significant decrease in sex drive and becomes increasingly disinterested in family and friends. He finds himself struggling to complete the mathematical work that has always been his strong suit. He considers his negative symptoms to be worse than his positive symptoms and because of this, John stops taking his medication. His hallucinations persist but as he grows older, he learns to cope by ignoring the imaginary people. By managing his disorder in this way, he is able to thrive in his mathematical work and regain his life focus.

Despite the fact that Hollywood uses creative license to make movies more interesting, *A Beautiful Mind* does a phenomenal job portraying not only John Nash's life, but also schizophrenia disorder. According to the diagnostic criteria in the current DSM, John Nash would have definitely been diagnosed with schizophrenia.