

# Diagnosing charles manson essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Born into a life of poverty, despair, and recklessness, Charles Manson did not have the greatest upbringing. His mother was a sixteen year old prostitute who was unsure of who was Charles' father. He did not have a father figure in his life whatsoever. His mother was an alcoholic all his life who never sought treatment for herself. Alcoholism has been deemed a "family disease" for a reason...because those dealing with family members who are alcoholics tend to have harsh emotional problems. This can lead to destructive behavior throughout a person's life, especially if neglected as a child.

This was Charlie's case. He was neglected at such a young age and his behavior spiraled out of control. According to The Biography Channel online, Manson spent time living with his grandparents after his mother went to jail ("Charles Manson," 2011). He was not used to their strict ways, seeing how he had all the freedom he did when he was living with his mother. He began to behave poorly and started causing trouble. Around age twelve, he raped another boy his age. Denying that he was gay, people did not understand at the time.

Contemporary times say that he is in fact not gay, he just loved the power over other individuals. Manson was constantly in and out of detention centers until he served time in a penitentiary around age nineteen. That time he served was because he scammed a girl out of \$700 and drug-raped her roommate. He was released around 1967 and traveled to San Francisco. He met up with a group of hippies who eventually became his followers. They called themselves the "Manson family." Charlie felt like a God to them, he could manipulate these people, who were mostly females.

Manson enjoyed the power and used it to the best ability he could. He loved control. The group of hippies and “cult” became very large. It was estimated that the group had grown to 144,000 at its peak. They would travel together, commit crimes, preach, and live in unison. They slaughtered five adults, including the famous and pregnant at the time, Sharon Tate. The murders were said to be gruesome and at the crime scene there were purposeful traces and messages that relate to the Manson cult and their philosophy (“Charles Manson,” 2011).

After years of torture and crime, Manson and a few others in the cult were tried in 1970. Manson was found guilty of murdering adults. He has been in prison but did not receive the death penalty. Since being in prison, Manson’s story became well-known and swept the nation. Almost everybody has heard of him or what he had done. He left a mark, not only because of his horrific crimes but also because of his abnormal way of thinking. While in prison, a close eye was kept on Manson. He was seen talking to himself quite frequently, claiming to see people or hear things that were not there.

He would often have spastic attacks and would not be able to control his speech. When being interviewed, one was not able to understand what he was saying. He would not make sense, he would mumble, and he would laugh often at himself when nothing appeared humorous. When an interviewer mentioned the murders and crime he committed he did not ever appear remorseful and even chuckled with a smirk. There may be many mental illnesses that could pertain to Charles Manson.

According to the current version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (4th ed. , text rev.; DSM-IV-TR; American Psychiatric Association, 2000) these symptoms are those of a person living with paranoid schizophrenia. The way he would laugh at inappropriate times, make no sense when he spoke, hallucinate, and just his way of thinking in general, leads us to believe he was in fact a paranoid schizophrenic (Lewine). Also, because Manson was so narcissistic and believed himself to be a God to his “ family,” I would also diagnose Charlie Manson with Delusional Disorder. As defined by the DSM, delusional disorder is a mental disorder pertaining to schizophrenia.

This is when a person has “ delusions of inflated power or worth,” such as when Manson thinks he is God to his cult. Because of the information and research I have thus far, I could definitely associate Charles Manson with yet another diagnosis of a mental disorder. Using the DSM again, it shows that the diagnostic criteria for Antisocial Personality Disorder is met by Manson. The symptoms of this disorder are those such as failure to conform to social norms, conning others, impulsivity, aggressiveness, recklessness, irresponsibility, and lack of remorse.

All of these can basically be made into adjectives that describe Manson perfectly. He never conformed to the “ norms” of society because he was always an outcast. He partook in abnormal behaviors. As mentioned previously, he conned a woman out of \$700, so conning people is another criteria met for this disorder. While in prison, Manson would regularly attack prison guards and other prisoners so aggression is met as well. He was obviously reckless and irresponsible considering he was a murderer. When <https://assignbuster.com/diagnosing-charles-manson-essay/>

interviewed about his murders he showed no signs of remorse and even laughed inappropriately.

These are all symptoms of Antisocial Personality Disorder. The other criteria for this disorder is that one must have been acting in such manner since age of fifteen, at least be eighteen at time of diagnosis, and these symptoms must be present at all times, not just in schizophrenic episodes (4th ed. , text rev. ; DSM-IV-TR; American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Considering Manson's past, he started the abnormal behaviors around age nine, and he is older than eighteen, so the criteria for this disorder is without a doubt, fulfilled.

If I were to choose treatment for Charles Manson, I would most likely start with studying the biological aspect of the disorder. For the schizophrenia diagnosis, I would start with the biological approach to investigate the role of genetics and background of the illness. The biological treatment would be to use antipsychotic drugs to help control the symptoms such as hallucinations (McMurrich). Another approach I would use would be the cognitive approach. This might help to cope with the disorder.

With cognitive approach, I would use psychotherapy. This would help treat voices, or at least get these hallucinations under control. When Charlie hears a voice, he would be asked to focus on the voice while being told that the voice is part of their mind process and it's in their head but it is not reality. By controlling thought processes instead of uncovering unconscious conflicts, the patient will feel less insecure about bringing up past conflicts such as childhood, and more in control about controlling his mind.

There is no cure for schizophrenia but with antipsychotic drugs and therapies, the symptoms can be further more controlled by the patient which will help them cope with the disorder. Diagnosing Charles Manson of paranoid schizophrenia with delusions of grandiosity and antisocial personality disorder has been made easy because of continuous research and the use of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. All criteria has been met which aids the diagnosis and support of the diagnosis via symptoms and episodes has been noted.