Personality Disorders

DSM-IV Criteria: enduring, inflexible patterns of behavior that deviate markedly from societal expectations. Behavior that seems odd, unusual or peculiar to others. To individual, experience is so ingrained that it is ego-syntonic (doesn't bother them, seems comfortable)

Organized into Clusters, based on common symptoms

- rarely diagnosed in children
- don't diagnosed when behavior results from transient situational factors (repeat auditing by IRS)
- gender differences: some more common in men (antisocial & narcissistic); some more common in women (borderline, histrionic, dependent)

I. Cluster A Disorders: odd or eccentric behavior

A). Paranoid Personality Disorder
- isolated and suspicious
- convinced that others are talking about them behind their back
- scrutinize behavior of others for intent to harm
- overtures of friendship perceived as manipulative or part of a plot
- have few or no friends
- misinterpret casual remarks to make them fit into their belief structure

EX: Joseph in Amelie; Ben Stiller in Royal Tennenbaums

B). Schizoid Personality Disorder
- little interest in and avoids close interpersonal relationships
- likely to be describes as a loner w/out meaningful ties to family or community
- unlikely to display strong emotions or tenderness to others
- appear apathetic, diffident, indifferent
- most often have little or no interest in sex; rarely marry

EX: Bartleby (with Crispin Glover)

C) Schizotypal Personality Disorder
- "schizophrenia-like" characteristics, but don't meet diagnostic criteria for schizophrenia
- hold odd or peculiar beliefs, thoughts, behaviors (odd speech; constricted affect)
- often superstitious
- unusual perceptual experiences
- suspicious and paranoid

EX: Eli (Owen Wilson) in Royal Tennenbaums

II. Cluster B Disorders: dramatic, emotional, erratic
- attention-grabbing, conflicted, manipulative, charming
A). Antisocial Personality Disorder

- break the law
- can be physically aggressive
- manipulate others, lie
- little or no sense of remorse
- violate rights of others; experience distress only when behavior results in punishment
- impulsive; problems in planning behavior or anticipating consequences
- frequent substance abuse
- multiple sex partners, without concern for partner; charming beforehand, distant and aloof after encounter

EX: Ed Norton in 25th Hour; Hayden Christopher in Shattered Glass

Psychopathic Personality Disorder: not an actual diagnosis, but frequently used term

- Global Antisocial Traits: manipulative, rule-breaking, irresponsible
- Sociopath or Psychopath: features present to an extreme degree
  aggressive; lethal; no conscience; narcissistic

Sociopath Examples: Christian Bale in American Psycho; Alex in Clockwork Orange; Dennis Hopper in Blue Velvet
B). Narcissistic Personality Disorder
- intense need for admiration
- self-centered
- exaggerated sense of their own worth
- spent lots of time fantasizing about success or power
- feel entitled to special treatment
- expect others to automatically comply with their expectations

- features present in sociopaths: Eric Harris & Dylan Klebold; Cho Seung Hui Chad in *In the Company of Men*: "'Let's hurt someone"

C). Borderline Personality Disorder
- unstable but intense interpersonal relationships
- labile, erratic moods
- become over attached very quickly; partners apt to feel smothered by intensity of relationship; perplexed by wild swings between affection and anger
- impulsive behavior
- excessive dependence
- inappropriate adulation of therapists or others
- suicidal gestures (10% success rate); self-injury are common, usually as attention-seeking behaviors (20 Valium, then calling 911; superficial cuts)
- self-mutilation
- three times as common in women
- symptoms overlap with Bipolar
- treatment may include antidepressants or lithium

EX: Alex Glenn Close) in *Fatal Attraction*

D) Histrionic Personality Disorder
- dramatic attention-seeking
- self-centered, preoccupied with own appearance
- need to be "center-stage"
- can quickly turn emotion on and off
- resent attention directed at others, will engage in excessive behavior to refocus on them

EX: Annette Bening as Carol in *American Beauty*

III. Cluster 3 Disorders: fearful, anxious, overly rigid

A) Avoidant Personality Disorder
- fear of being exposed as inadequate or inferior
- hypersensitive to criticism
- shape lives around fear of rejection and disapproval
- spend much of their time at home, alone out of concern that deficiencies will be revealed in public
- overlaps with social phobia
-common pattern is for self-sacrifice: devoting oneself to helping others, losing sight of self
-differs from schizoid in that avoidant person craves intimacy lacking in real life

EX: Audrey Tatou in *Amelie*

**B). Dependent Personality Disorder**
-extreme difficulty in making decisions
-submissive, look to others for structure, meaning, direction in own life
-passive and clinging
-submit to verbal and physical abuse by spouses
-fear loss of approval if they express own beliefs
-invest lots of time and energy in maintaining relationship with person upon whom they depend

EX: Claire (Rene Zellweger) in *White Oleander*

**C). Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder**
-perfectionism, orderliness, excessive need for control
-exacting attention to detail
-differentiated from OCD: OCD has recurrent thoughts, images, impulses (obsessions) and repetitive behaviors (compulsions); extremely maladaptive- person can't function

EX: Felix (Jack Lemmon) in *The Odd Couple*