

Movie: *Saw* (franchise)

Synopsis

In 2004, *Saw*, the initial installment of James Wan's horror franchise, premiered in US theaters. The film depicts two men who awake in a decrepit bathroom and discover that they must overcome both physical and psychological challenges to save themselves and the ones they love. The story unfolds through a series of flashbacks and twists which ultimately explains their connection and the reason for their predicament.

How it relates to the field of psychiatry

Saw (2004)

Saw (2004) provides a foundation for the teaching of the cluster B personality disorders including Antisocial Personality Disorder (APD) through character analysis of its main villain, John Kramer. Kramer's "alter ego," Jigsaw, displays behaviors that are clinically significant and illustrate a pervasive pattern of reckless disregard for and violation of other's right. He fails to conform to social norms as evidenced by his multiple abductions and tortuous killings. Interestingly, it is one of his victims, Amanda Young, who allows for a more detailed review of DSM nosology. From Billy (doll):

Hello Amanda...think of this as similar to the therapy you love so much.
Most people take their health and their life for granted, but not you...anymore.

It is well-established that Amanda is afflicted with Opioid Use Disorder and a co-occurring mental illness that is vaguely defined (the above discourse discloses psychotherapy). Given her role in the miscarriage of Kramer's son and consequent divorce from his wife, Kramer abducts Amanda. The former nurse beats John's game and from then on, Amanda's life changes drastically. She manages to overcome her drug addiction, but engages in self-harm as a way to deal with her negative emotional states¹. Given that Amanda shows evidence of a pre-existing condition that exacerbates the cessation of a substance, it is reasonable to assume that opioids were self-medicating a mental disorder that manifested with suicidal behaviors and gestures upon abstinence from opioids. Further evidence of Amanda's most likely diagnosis is revealed in the franchise's two sequels.

Saw II (2005)²

Because I was a f'ing junkie. But the funny is, I pass the little test.
(If you passed the test, why you are back here?)
I was mean with myself..I started in jail...Possesion.

Saw III (2006)³

In the end, she will be the closest I've ever come to a connection, to being understood.
But her emotion is also her... weakness.

Amanda's demise in *Saw III* results from the impending death of John Kramer and her subsequent reactive fear of abandonment. Taken with evidence of self-destructive behavior ("mean with myself"), Amanda is most likely afflicted with Borderline Personality Disorder with co-occurring Opioid Use Disorder in full, sustained remission.

References

1. [https://sawfilms.fandom.com/wiki/Amanda_Young_\(Movies\)](https://sawfilms.fandom.com/wiki/Amanda_Young_(Movies))
2. http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/s/saw-2-script-transcript-ii.html
3. https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=saw-iii

Anthony Tobia, MD,. Copyright © 2020 Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. tobiaat@rwjms.rutgers.edu All rights reserved.