

# 15 Disney Princesses Who Suffer From Some Kind Of Mental Disorder

In Disney's animated movies, some of their princesses have also exhibited signs of mental illness.

BY GEORGE  
VOUTIRITSAS

PUBLISHED JUN  
20, 2017



The film industry has existed in the United States for exactly 100 years now. And over the course of that century, movies themselves and the way they are made have changed in incredible ways. At the beginning, movies were

a great deal shorter, could only be viewed in black and white, and came with virtually no sound. It was not until the 1990's that CGI came into the picture, which allowed movies to become what they are today. As an industry, Hollywood now makes well over \$10 billion a year, and a big reason for that is because there are usually several major blockbusters released every year, most of which are installments in very popular franchises or universes.

Disney happens to be one of the largest movie studios in the world; and just last year, they made over \$7 billion in movie revenue alone. The main reason behind its huge success is because it has been making quality movies since the late 1930's. Disney was able to build its entertainment empire around the success of their animated movies—films that revolved around princesses who often had to face off against an evil human or magical nemesis before being able to live happily ever after. These princesses have always connected with audiences—specifically young girls and women—because they always reflected how real women acted in real life depending on what decade their movie was released. Real women, though, sometimes have

to deal with mental disorders of varying severity—disorders that can be properly diagnosed based on their symptoms—and in Disney's animated movies, some of their princesses have also exhibited signs of mental illness. The purpose of this list is to identify 15 of those princesses.

---

---

15

## Mulan: Atelophobia



Mulan made her debut on the big screen in 1998, and the movie was actually praised because it featured a female character trying to save her homeland from an evil army. However, what many people may not realize is that Mulan does possess certain characteristics associated with the mental disorder, Atelophobia. Someone with Atelophobia suffers from the fear of never being good enough and believes that everything they do is wrong. Normally, such a person will also set huge goals for himself/herself that he/she knows he/she will never actually achieve. Mulan sees herself as an outcast for not wanting to be a submissive wife, so she sets out and joins the army to help save her home from the Huns and regain her family's honor. Throughout the movie, Mulan constantly fumbles and goes out of her way to say and do the right thing. But by the end of the movie, none of her accomplishments really matter because in her culture, she was still just a woman.

---

---

14

## Anna: ADHD



Nearly 4 years ago, Disney released *Frozen*, an animated

movie that took the world by storm. And for a movie that dealt mainly with the love shared between two sisters, it performed incredibly well at the box office, making over \$1 billion. Anna is the youngest of the sisters, and unlike her sibling, she does not possess ice magic and is far more outgoing and lovable. But, she also likely deals with having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Someone with ADHD is known for making quick decisions without thinking, for being unable to sit still, and for being unable to properly focus on one thing. Anna exhibits such behaviors throughout the movie. For example, she trips constantly, she gets excited over boring things like salad plates, she jumps on couches, she speaks incredibly fast, and she agrees to marry a prince who she only met a few hours earlier.

---

---

## 13

## Alice: Schizophrenia



There is an entire generation of people who only associate the *Alice in Wonderland* franchise with the terrible Johnny Depp movies, but Disney has actually owned the franchise since before the 1950's, which is why we have the 1951 animated movie. In the movie, Alice discovers a doorway to another dimension, where her body grows and shrinks

in size, where she speaks to a talking caterpillar and a floating cat, and where there is an evil queen who really wants to have her decapitated. In truth, the entire movie feels like one big hallucination, the kind that can only happen if someone is high on some pretty powerful drugs, or if they suffer from something like Schizophrenia. To be a schizophrenic, a person will be plagued with either paranoid delusions (like a queen trying to kill you), abnormal motor functions, and/or hallucinations. What makes this diagnosis even more probable is the fact that Alice truly believed that Wonderland and all the people there were real.

12

## Meg: Borderline Personality Disorder







Greek mythology is filled with tons of different stories that feature dozens of well-known gods and other mythical creatures. It is because of the mythology's popularity that Hollywood has adapted several stories into feature-length movies. One of those movies was Disney's 1997 film, *Hercules*, which followed the legendary son of Zeus as he tried to stop Hades from taking over Mount Olympus. Along the way, Hercules meets Megara, otherwise known as Meg, who starts off serving Hades, but eventually falls in love with our hero. Meg likely suffers from what is known as Borderline Personality Disorder, which means she may have to deal with self-image issues, mood swings, and possibly hurting herself. But, someone with this disorder also fears being abandoned. The fact that Meg is scared that Hercules might leave her is proof enough, but she is also easily annoyed and was abandoned in the past.

---

11

## Aurora: Major Depressive Disorder



In 2014, Disney released *Maleficent*, a live action movie which retold the story of their 1959 animated film, *Sleeping Beauty*. Both movies dealt with princess Aurora falling victim to a curse that placed her in an eternal sleep. Now, of all the disorders on this list, this one may be the hardest to believe, but there are indeed some signs that point to Aurora possibly suffering from what is known as Major Depressive Disorder. So, in the movie, Aurora goes for a walk in the woods, where she stumbles upon Prince Philip who she instantly falls in love with and wants to marry. But shortly after their acquaintance, she learns that she must marry someone else who she has never even met, which essentially breaks her heart. Now, people who suffer from MDD oftentimes lose all their energy, and they do not want to do any kind of work or activity. Plus, they do not want to see or hear anyone—symptoms that she exhibits after learning about her betrothal. People with MDD can also suffer from hypersomnia, which causes them to sleep for prolonged periods of time.

# Merida: Antisocial Personality Disorder



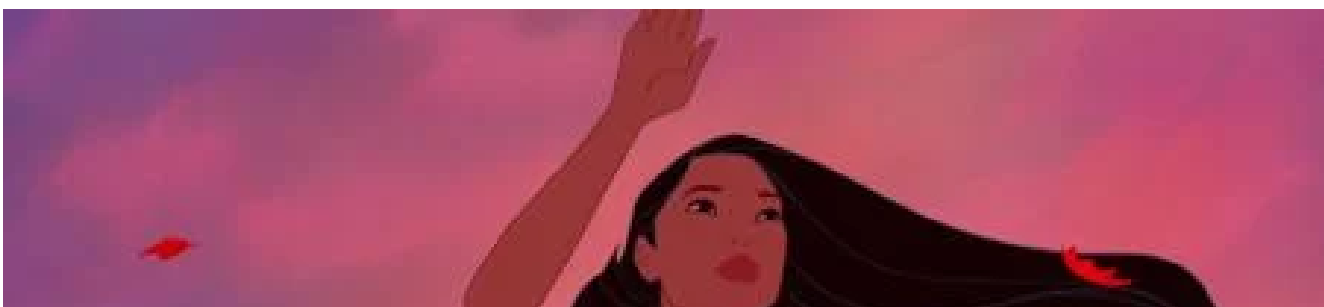
In 2012, Disney released *Brave*, a movie which focused on a Scottish Princess named Merida, who throws her entire kingdom into chaos because she does not want to follow her people's custom of women having to be betrothed to a man. At the time, *Brave* was highly praised by both critics and feminists because it was the first Disney princess movie to not include a male love interest and instead focused entirely on developing Merida as a character. The premise of the movie would explain why Merida does not want to get betrothed. But from a psychological point of view, her reluctance could in fact be attributed to what is known as Antisocial Personality Disorder. Someone

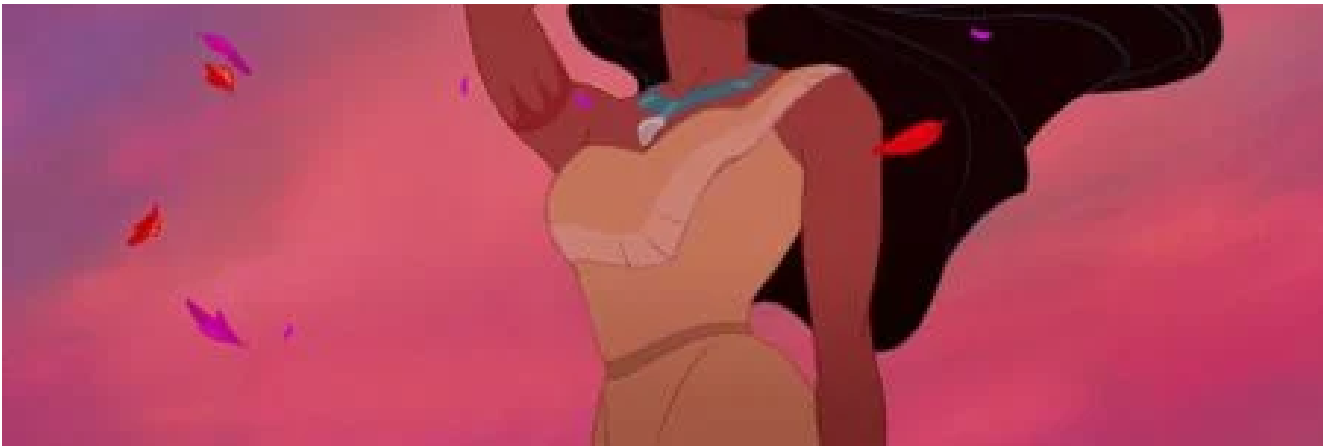
dealing with this disorder fails to accept cultural norms. They also do not follow rules and rarely respect other people's rights and feelings. Such a disorder usually occurs in young teenagers, which would explain why Merida gradually distances herself emotionally from her parents as she gets older and why she is so determined to remain single.

---

9

## Pocahontas: Histrionic Personality Disorder





In 1995, audiences were given *Pocahontas*, an animated interpretation of the first interactions between Native Americans and the Jamestown settlers. And despite the historical inaccuracies, the film was a box office success. As far as Disney princesses go, Pocahontas is still considered to be one of the best because of how she dealt with her people's conflict with the English. But, as bada\*s as she is, she too suffers from a mental disorder. When a person is diagnosed with Histrionic Personality Disorder, it means that he/she has a constant need to be noticed and will oftentimes try to gain people's attention by acting in a dramatic or inappropriate way. People with this disorder also happen to be able to make others do what they want. Pocahontas exhibits this disorder throughout most of the movie as she not only throws herself onto Englishman, John Smith, every chance she gets, but she also causes love

triangles and convinces her entire tribe to do whatever it is she wants.

8

## Ariel: OCPD



*The Little Mermaid* was a hit when it arrived in theaters in 1989. As the name would suggest, the film does in fact center around a young mermaid princess; except, she is a mermaid who dreams about becoming human and living on land. All of Ariel's fellow mermaids consider her to be sort of odd, and there is a perfect explanation for that

because throughout the movie, Ariel does exhibit signs of Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorder. Her entire relationship with Prince Eric can be viewed as a symptom of OCPD because she essentially becomes obsessed with him from the moment she sees him. In fact, she becomes so obsessed that she agrees to lose her voice just to get a chance to meet him. She also suffers from a fear of getting rid of things which sometimes accompanies OCPD, and this disorder is on display after her father destroys her collection of items from the surface.

---

7

## Tiana: Zoophilia







Here we have Tiana, the first black princess who starred in Disney's 2009 animated film, *The Princess and the Frog*, a story based off of an old fairy tale written by the Brothers Grim. The basic plot of the movie is this: Tiana is a waitress who wants her own restaurant. She then comes across a frog who is actually a prince who was transformed into a frog as a result of evil voodoo. She then kisses the frog and turns into one herself. After being turned into a frog, Tiana and the prince go on a quest to change her back before time runs out. During their journey, she falls in love with him. At this point, they are frogs, so romantic feelings

should not really be an issue. But, it actually is an issue because Tiana still mentally identifies herself as a human which means that she falls into the Zoophilia category, otherwise known as having a taboo attraction to animals.

## 6 **Rapunzel: Stockholm Syndrome**



In 2010, Disney released *Tangled*, a movie based on "*Rapunzel*," an old German fairy tale written by the Brothers Grim, except the movie made a few changes in order to make the story more relevant to modern-day youths. In the movie, Rapunzel is a princess who possesses

long, magical hair, who is kidnapped as a baby by Mother Gothel (a very old and vain woman), who raises the child as her own in order to use her hair's powers to keep her young. Gothel keeps the princess locked up in a secluded tower for years. And over that time, not only does she emotionally abuse her 'daughter', but she also consistently treats her in a passively aggressive manner. Rapunzel, though, genuinely cares for Gothel, which shows that she suffers from what is known as Stockholm Syndrome, a mental disorder in which a person becomes emotionally bonded with their kidnapper/captor; and even when Rapunzel learns the truth, she still expresses love and grief for Gothel when she dies.

---

---

## 5

## Elsa: Avoidant Personality Disorder



With this entry, we will be revisiting the world of *Frozen*, which is not all that surprising seeing as the movie did feature two princesses. This time, we will be focusing on Elsa, whose mental disorder is far worse than her sister's. Elsa deals with Avoidant Personality Disorder, which means that she constantly feels inadequate and incompetent. It also means that she tries to keep herself isolated from others. For most of the movie, Elsa demonstrates these signs seeing as for most of her life, she locked herself in her own room in order to distance herself from her sister as well as everyone else living/working in her family's castle because of an accident that caused her

to fear her own ice powers. Later on, when she does unleash her power, she leaves her home and briefly decides to live in isolation atop a mountain in a castle made of ice because she believes she will never be a good enough queen in the eyes of her subjects.

## 4 **Cinderella: Dependent Personality Disorder**



In 1950, Disney released *Cinderella*, a movie that proves that it does not pay to be unnecessarily cruel to your stepdaughter just because she happens to be better-looking than your own daughters. When the movie was released, women were looked at differently, as they were more or less expected to stay home where they were supposed to clean, make food, and provide children. At the time, women were also far more submissive, docile, and unassertive, which would explain why women like Cinderella were far more dependent on others. But, in her case, it is quite possible that she may have suffered from what is known as Dependent Personality Disorder. This disorder can be described as constantly needing to be taken care of, and it usually occurs with children who have dealt with some sort of separation anxiety. In the movie, Cinderella did lose her father. This diagnosis makes sense because Cinderella never packs her bags to leave despite her stepmother treating her like trash. Then, she requires help from her Fairy Godmother who functions as a caregiver. And by the end of the movie, she marries the Prince who then begins to take care of her.

3

## Belle: Stockholm Syndrome

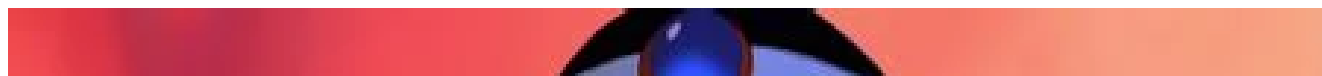


Rapunzel became an official Disney princess in 2010, and

we have already mentioned on this list that she suffered from Stockholm Syndrome. But, she was not the first princess to deal with that disorder. In 1991, Disney released the original *Beauty and the Beast*, a movie which focused on the relationship between a prince who was transformed into a beast because of his arrogance and a girl who he imprisons in his castle. If you were to look up Stockholm Syndrome, then Belle would be the perfect picture to associate with the term because she literally develops romantic feelings for a person who is keeping her as a prisoner. The Beast lacks proper etiquette, essentially keeps slaves, has a bad temper, and appears to have an abusive nature—all of which are negatives that greatly outweigh his few redeeming qualities, which is why it is quite odd that Belle falls in love with him. Some have even said that Belle's feeling were simply a coping mechanism, one that she created because she believed she would never leave the castle.

## 2

# Jasmine: Bipolar Disorder







In its history, Disney has produced 56 animated movies. But out of all those movies, there are only a handful that have managed to truly capture the hearts of audiences. *Aladdin* is one of them. The movie follows a street urchin named Aladdin, who finds a magic lamp and genie and helps to save his city from the evil Grand Vizier. During his adventure, he meets and falls in love with princess Jasmine. As it turns out, Jasmine may in fact suffer from Bipolar Disorder which is a manic-depressive illness that causes people to have unusual mood shifts in a cyclical pattern. A bipolar person is usually impulsive and partakes in risky behavior, which Jasmine exhibits when she runs away from home, steals an apple, and goes on a

joyride with a stranger on a magic carpet. These people also get annoyed pretty easily and feel hopeless when they get depressed. This shows when Jasmine harasses possible suitors and when she cries fairly often.

---

1

## **Snow White: Narcissistic Personality Disorder**





We end this list with Snow White, the original Disney princess. And if it were not for her and her movie, it is quite possible that Disney would have not gone on to become the entertainment behemoth that it is today. Snow White was born a princess and ended up living with an evil stepmother after her parents died. And because her stepmother was jealous of her beauty, she essentially turned her into a maid, until the time came when she wanted her dead. She may be the first princess, but Snow White is no angel as she clearly suffers from Narcissistic Personality Disorder, which is used to describe someone who needs to be the center of attention, who takes advantage of others, who overreacts to things, who has unrealistic fantasies, and who thinks he/she is the most important person in the room. Snow White covers all of

these things, as she overreacts to everything, takes over the dwarfs' home, flirts with everyone, and also appears to enjoy the fact that everyone seems head over heels for her.

