Disorders

In Disney’s Beauty and the Beast there are multiple psychological disorders outlined throughout the piece. In this section I will make examples of a few of these. The first will be Belle.

A) Stockholm Syndrome - Belle

After her father was captured Belle knew something had to be done so she played the heroine and asked if she could take her fathers place. The beast accepted this. At first, like all prisoners would be Belle hid away and refused to come out of her room. She later left her room due to hunger and adventured throughout the castle where she noticed that the rest of the castle were enchanted and only the beast were mean and scary. She begins to think about the beast in a different way, maybe there is something there.

Belle then examines the forbidden west wing and notices the rose. When Beast learns of this he flies into a fury because the curse was such a traumatic event that it conditioned the beast to be horrified and in fear of the rose. This moment scared Belle so much that she chose Flight over Fight like she had been. Running into the woods she encountered wolves that would have
killed her were it not for her captor, Beast, rescuing her. At this moment Belle becomes extremely emotionally attached and Stockholm Syndrome has taken full effect on Belle.

B) Narcissitic Personality Disorder - Gaston

Gaston believes he is the best in town. In the quote from the film located in the song “Gaston” located below, you will find that everyone holds Gaston on a pedestal, including himself:

“There's no man in town as admired as you
You're ev'ryone's favorite guy
Ev'ryone's awed and inspired by you
And it's not very hard to see why
No one's slick as Gaston
No one's quick as Gaston
No one's neck's as incredibly thick as Gaston's
For there's no man in town half as manly
Perfect, a pure paragon!”

In order to diagnose NPD however a few things are required. “an overwhelming need for admiration, and usually a complete lack of empathy towards others.” Both of these are exhibited Gaston throughout the show. The song “Gaston” itself shows multiple cases where Gaston has an
overwhelming need for admiration and when Maurice comes in to ask for help rescuing Belle from the horrifying beast Gaston just belittles him with the towns people and shows absolutely no empathy for this man. Gaston even treats his best friend, LeFou, like garbage. A clear sign of NPD.

C) Severe Depression - Beast

Not shown throughout the entire movie, the beast faces depression when he lets Belle leave. He mopes around doing absolutely nothing. When the staff asks him what they should do because the castle is under attack he says it doesn’t matter. Without Belle he doesn’t see a point of continuing in life. He has lost his love, and his chance at being human again. Even when Gaston comes in and shows the Beast that he will be firing an arrow at him he doesn’t fight back. Beast has accepted death and Gaston is just a way it can happen. When Belle returns however this depression goes away as quickly as it onset. This shows that not only was he extremely depressed but he has conditioned himself to only feel happiness from Belle. Belle is like a drug to the beast and when he faces withdrawals, he cannot find happiness until he finds Belle again, which is quite tragic.

Personalities:

Gaston:
Gaston’s personality was shaped a large amount from nurture instead of nature. This is illustrated because the others idolize him. He claims these great feats except instead of being a great brute which is never shown in the video. Instead he is shown to be deceitful and bribe others to get what he wants as well as waiting for the sneaky moment in order to attack the beast after losing the original fight with the beast.

Gaston is purely a creature of ID. He goes after Belle because he deserves the best and because Belle is the most beautiful maiden of the land. It has nothing to do with personality it is all centered around lust which is attributed to the ID. Gaston’s Locus of Control is internal. In his mind the world literally does revolve around him and he gets absolutely anything that he wants.

One part that I find a small amount confusing though, is self esteem. Because normally when you put others down you have a low self esteem, although it seems like he has a high self esteem he just seems to think that nobody is worthy of his presence and puts others down because of that. Although he could be secretly hiding his self esteem because it is shown that he has to be sneaky to achieve the things that are his, ie. bribing the man from the asylum and sneak attacking the beast after losing the fight.

Belle:

Belle’s personality is dynamic and changes throughout the movie on the continuum. However I argue that it doesn’t entirely change, she just doesn’t have a chance to express herself in the beginning of the film. In the beginning of the film Belle is not very Open and is quite the
**Introvert.** She keeps her nose in a book as she goes around town and only stops to sing to some sheep.

Belle is the opposite of Gaston and she uses all of Freud’s personality principles and not just ID. Belle thinks before she leaps and judges the consequences her actions may have before doing them. Belle is a happy center of **Ego** and **SuperEgo**.

Although Belle is constantly put down it can be assumed that she has an extremely high self esteem but not in the terrible way Gaston does. Belle is successful in everything she does and it does not get to her head. Belle does not put others down whatsoever, she helps all the creatures and even some of the furniture.

Although for Belle the **Locus of Control** is hard to see, it is external. She does;t believe her actions directly control what happens and instead the Beast’s actions control what happens. It isn’t until the near end of the film that she flips this continuum and then goes back to the beast to warn them of Gaston and confess her love that she feels like she is in control of her life, and even then she may not believe she’s in control because she is cleaning up her own mess innately caused by Beast.

**Substance Abuse:**

After being rejected by Belle Gaston being unsure of what he should do goes to the tavern to drown his problems in alcohol. The number one sign of an alcoholic is the dependency on it in
order to be happy. When Gaston is unhappy the fact that he goes to the tavern and begins to
drink is a fairly large red flag of addiction.

**Conditioning:**

The beautiful enchantress the placed a spell or curse upon the castle that in order to be broken
Beast, Prince Adam, must love someone and be loved in turn. This spell transformed the prince
into a hideous beast, and the staff of the castle into various items found throughout the castle.
This one moment in time was traumatic enough to instantly condition them all to associate any
human girl with hope. So when Belle comes in they are frantic and in disbelief. Which then leads
to...

**Self Fulfilling Prophecy/Hindsight Bias:**

The staff of the castle is so hopeful that a girl will come and break the spell that the moment they
see belle they believe she will be the girl that will break the spell. They have absolutely no idea
that Belle will indeed break the spell, they only have hope and such a traumatic event that
conditioned them to see girls as hope, because luckily Adam was straight.

**Motivation:**
Belle:

Belle’s motivation originally is to escape the land which she does so by the use of books. Later on when she meets the beast, she is motivated by love in order to set her father free and then motivated by hunger, one of the best motivators, to leave her room.

In the hierarchy of needs Belle has the bottom few, but falls short at belonging and love. She is ostracized by the community that she lives in because she is so odd. She is so ready and open to love that she could fall for anyone. The desire to be loved, as well as the desire for self actualization along with curiosity motivates after the initial excursion to find food.

Gaston:

Gaston’s motivation are purely pleasure. He pursues Belle because she is beautiful, and he wants the best. He is entirely focused on primal ideals and is a creature of the ID.

Beast:

The motivation of the beast is one of the trickiest in this film. His main motivation is to become human and abandon his hideous form, however partially through this movie he discovers that his
motivation was false. It wasn’t because of the curse that he was doing these things, it was because of other things. Belle gave him feelings he had never discovered before and that confused him.

Near the end of the film when Belle sees that her father is sick and needs help the Beast lets her go. This is when the beast realized that he has all the main needs he has and that belonging and love is his next step. He disregards the fact that he may be a hideous beast forever because this girl isn’t bothered by his ghastly appearance.