

“Schizophrenia” in the Australian print and online news media

DOI:10.1080/17522439.2013.764349

Belinda Cain, Roseanne Currie, Eleanor Danks, Fiona Du, Erica Hodgson, Jennifer May, Kirsty O’Loughlen, Yen Phan, Jennifer Powter, Nayab Rizwan, Shazmi Shahim, Dominique Simsion, Steve Loughnan & Nick Haslam

01 Mar 2013, Psychosis: Psychological, Social and Integrative Approaches

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17522439.2013.764349>

Abstract

Australian online and print news media stories citing “schizophrenia” over a 1-year period (N = 630) were coded for the presence of stigmatizing coverage and for story attributes that might contribute to it. Violence featured in 47.3% of stories and 46.0% were adjudged to be stigmatizing. People identified as “schizophrenic” were disproportionately reported as male and as perpetrators rather than victims of violence. Logistic regression analysis indicated that more stigmatizing stories tended to appear in tabloid sources, to refer to foreign events and substance use, and to represent people diagnosed with schizophrenia as young and male. A small minority of stories (13.0%) misused the term “schizophrenia” in a metaphorical manner. Implications for the continuing public perception of psychotic individuals as violent and dangerous are discussed.