



Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University

**A Critical Discourse Analysis Investigating how Newspapers Contribute to the Public's Stigmatisation of Schizophrenia**

By Lauren Jade Neile  
13116257

Supervisor: John Griffiths

**Report Title: A Critical Discourse Analysis Investigating how Newspapers Contribute to the Public's Stigmatisation of Schizophrenia**

## ABSTRACT

This investigation aimed to look at the existing stigmas that surround schizophrenia and how newspapers are contributing to them through their choice of language and imagery. A critical discourse analysis was conducted on newspapers dated between 1990- 2016 from a range of sources. Whilst looking at these papers three stigmas were prominent above the rest: violence and danger, incorrect diagnosis, public lack of understanding and symptom misunderstandings and family blame. However, as research by Cross (2014) had previously suggested there was a difference in representations of schizophrenia between broadsheet and tabloid newspapers. Broadsheets were more progressive in their representations of schizophrenia. Although they suggested that they still exist, almost all articles had a 'turning-point' moment that emphasised the need for these stigmas to be abolished. On the other hand tabloid papers were less progressive in their perceptions of schizophrenia and almost all tabloids represented individuals with schizophrenia that had committed a crime. However, tabloids focused mostly on the violence associated with schizophrenia rather than incorrect diagnosis, public lack of understanding, symptom misunderstandings and family blame. Yet it could be argued that their unsympathetic attitude throughout could be due to the journalist's lack of understanding of the illness. In future replications of this study, comparison could be made between papers prior to 1990-2016 and those papers to analyse how there is some progression in the twenty-first century.

<b>KEY</b>	SCHIZOPHRENIA	NEWSPAPERS	DISCOURSE	STIGMA	PERCEPTIONS
<b>WORDS:</b>					

## Introduction:

The word 'schizophrenia' Latin for 'split mind', was first used by Eugen Bleuler (1911) whose research was inspired by his mentally ill sister (Hoenig, 1983). Generally, schizophrenia is misunderstood because individuals diagnosed with the illness can range so dramatically in symptoms, making it difficult to define. However, Bleuler highlights the core aspects of schizophrenia (Holmes, 2010). He claimed that positive symptoms are caused by an 'organic illness'. On the other hand, negative symptoms are the more distant 'polymorph features of the illness' (Heckers, 2011: 1133) which can occur before the onset of an acute schizophrenic episode (NHS, 2014). Bleuler's positive and negative model of schizophrenia is still influential in today's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) (Heckers, 2011).

Despite there being only 3 in every 100 people diagnosed with schizophrenia in the UK (Mind, 2013) there is a large negative stigma surrounding it. Michel Foucault argues that this negative stigma of mental illness has developed with its historical discourses (Burr, 2015). Foucault was interested in the power of knowledge as a form of social manipulation within society (Burr, 2015). He argues in his book *The History of Madness* that the creation of the Hospital General of Paris and the York Asylum were not steps forward in generating a more positive attitude towards mental illness but they were steps back (Lakritz, 2009). He argues that these developments caused a moral panic and created stigmas towards the mentally ill from the public by their rural displacement. He also viewed these changes as a 'gigantic moral imprisonment' by placing the mentally ill in homes with criminals, political and religious dissenters, debtors and vagrants (Lakritz, 2009).

A study conducted by Domino (2003, cited in Owen, 2007) that focuses on schizophrenia shows that these public misconceptions about mental illness have continued to evolve as a result of its historical discourse. He found that 55% of 143 undergraduate students believed schizophrenia and bipolar disorder were the same, or an associated illness. Although, schizophrenia has similarities with bipolar disorder they are very different illnesses. A major similarity between schizophrenia and bipolar disorder is that they both respond to treatment through dopamine blockades.

However, there are more dissimilarities than similarities between bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. A vital difference is their separation in the DSM-5 into two sections, the 'schizophrenia spectrum and other psychotic disorders' and 'bipolar and related disorders'. This means that they are diagnosed under a different set of criteria (McCracken, 2014). For example, neurological evidence suggests that schizophrenia has significantly more obvious psychological and brain structure damage than bipolar disorder, making them easy to differentiate in neuroimaging tests (Murray et al, 2004).

Domino (2003, cited in Owen, 2007) also found that 69% of the students believed hallucinations and delusions were necessary for the diagnosis of schizophrenia. These two symptoms come under Criterion A, or the positive

symptoms of the schizophrenia diagnosis that occur later on in the development of the illness. However, there are other symptoms that are equally as prominent in the diagnosis of schizophrenia. These symptoms include social withdrawal, loss of interest in life and relationships and a lack of sleep. All of these are negative symptoms of schizophrenia that are less acknowledged by the public. Negative symptoms are also frequently mistaken for a 'phase' in individuals (Fernandez et al, 2006).

Furthermore, the most common misconception of schizophrenia is their apparent dangerousness and engagement in homicidal activity (Wahl, 1997). The DSM-5 specifies, in Criterion A, that an individual diagnosed with schizophrenia will display grossly disorganised and catatonic behaviour which the public mistake for reckless violence (Holmes, 2010). However, in reality only a small 5-8% of individuals with schizophrenia have been convicted of violent crime unless drugs and alcohol are used alongside the illness (University of Oxford, 2006). In a study conducted by Gunn and Taylor (1999:13) on the frequency of homicide rates during times of psychiatric change, he claims:

On average, every week someone in the UK wins the jackpot on the national lottery. About 54,999,999 people do not. On average, rather less than one person a week loses their life to an individual with mental illness...54,999,999 remain safe from this threat.

This misunderstanding of behaviour can leave a lasting effect on an individual with schizophrenia's ability to integrate into society. It also negatively affects their likelihood of employment after diagnosis (Aristegui et al, 2006).

Moreover, this investigation focuses on how the twenty-first century reliance on media has contributed to the stigmas of schizophrenia. The public now rely on the media as its source of knowledge (Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur, 1976). A study by Thornton and Wahl (1996, cited in Penn et al, 1999) investigated the affect that educating the public correctly about mental illness had on the offset of stigmas that they acquired through newspapers. They found that those who were given corrective information about the schizophrenia diagnosis were less fearful and more accepting of those diagnosed that had committed a violent crime than those who had received no corrective information (Penn et al, 1999).

Whether in the news, films, novels or websites writers often choose to focus on the unusual as these stories are more gripping to their audiences (Gunn and Taylor, 1999). However, mental health advocates have suggested that the images being portrayed of individuals with schizophrenia in the media are extremely inaccurate and adverse, forming barriers to their recovery (Wahl, 1997; Wahl, 1992). The media's contribution to the existing stigmas of mental illness was also highlighted in a meeting of the members of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill as it was frequently cited as a primary contributor (Wahl, 1992).

A study conducted by Owen (2012) analysed 41 movies between 1990 and

2010. He found that from these 41 movies, 42 of the characters displayed positive symptoms of schizophrenia, such as delusions and hallucinations but their characters often ignored any negative symptoms. Directors may choose to ignore negative symptoms because they are the less obvious or less 'interesting' symptoms (Owen, 2012). Newspapers are equally as likely to represent the positive symptoms in their headlines as film directors are in their movies. A gripping headline about a 'delusional' paranoid schizophrenic is going to grab the attention of a reader in the same way as someone suffering from hallucinations would in a film. This is reflected in Domino's (2003, cited in Owen, 2007) findings that students often believed hallucinations and delusions were necessary for a schizophrenia diagnosis.

The most common theme that is shown in the media regarding mental illness is their ability to be violent, dangerous and homicidal (Owen, 2012; Wahl, 1997). Novels such as *Wuthering Heights* and *Jayne Eyre* and films like *Silence of the Lambs* each represent mental illness as dangerous and violent through their language and imagery. All three of these novels gave movement to a new era of horror based on the mentally ill as the villains. In a different way, journalists use stories of the mentally ill who have caused disruption to represent them as dangerous or unstable. Cross (2014) argues that journalists often convey the message that the mentally ill are 'mad, bad and dangerous' and should be considered a threat to the public (Cross, 2014: 205). He makes an interesting connection between the portrayal of the mentally ill in broadsheet newspapers and tabloid newspapers. He claims tabloid papers are entertainment newspapers that are more discriminatory towards those with a mental illness than broadsheets, the more factual newspaper.

However, despite the representations in the media it would be incorrect to assume that every individual diagnosed with a mental illness is dangerous. Gunn and Taylor (1999) suggest that it is unlikely for an individual with a mental illness to be violent unless they also abuse drugs or alcohol. Although there are statistics that show the mentally ill can be dangerous, for example, a study of US State prisons showed that 56% of inmates suffer a mental illness (Kim et al, 2015). However, these results are taken from the prison population not the general population. Correlations between crime and the mentally ill would be significantly lower if this study was conducted within the general population.

Moreover, the negative stigma surrounding schizophrenia does not only affect those diagnosed with it but also their family members. People often believe a schizophrenia diagnosis is due to poor upbringing or neglect by the individual's parents (Owen, 2007). Evidence from twin and adoption studies suggests that genetics has a larger contribution to the onset of schizophrenia than environmental factors, accounting for 80% of the variance (McGuffin, 2004). According to McGuffin (2004) environmental factors such as dramatic life events and smoking cannabis can affect the liability of the illness, worsening symptoms rather than being the cause of it (McGuffin, 2004). The media, both in films and in the news, accentuates this stigma by highlighting the individual with schizophrenia's family dynamic and social situation rather

than highlighting the biological causes of the illness (Wahl, 1997). For example, in the 2013 series *Bates Motel* the main character is a young male who displays symptoms of schizophrenia. The series mentions no family history of mental illness, but rather focuses on a lifetime of poor family relations and poor levels of social interaction.

Furthermore, this investigation analyses how twenty-first century discourses of media are contributing to the existing stigmas of schizophrenia. Inspired by the work of Cross (2014) this investigation looks specifically at the contribution of newspapers to these stigmas, further investigating how they portray them as 'mad, bad and dangerous' (Cross, 2014: 205). Differences have been looked at between broadsheets and tabloids to distinguish any difference in representations based on the type of paper. This has been done using critical discourse analysis, a social constructionist approach. Details of language, imagery and inter-textual fonts have been analysed for information that could be leading readers to believe the existing stigmas of schizophrenia are true.

#### **Research Aims:**

- To analyse the existing stigmas surrounding schizophrenia.
- To investigate the media's contribution to the stigmas of schizophrenia.
- To see how newspapers specifically contribute to existing stigmas of schizophrenia using language and imagery.
- To analyse the different contributions of broadsheet newspapers and tabloid newspapers to the stigmas of schizophrenia.

#### **Methodology:**

##### **Design:**

This investigation uses qualitative analysis to investigate how newspapers contribute to the public's stigmatisation of schizophrenia. A study by Cross (2014) was the main inspiration for the design of this investigation. He also used a qualitative design to investigate how newspapers are contributing to existing stigmas of schizophrenia. Qualitative research is a broad term used to describe the methods of studying different social phenomena in a flexible yet in-depth way (Saldana, 2011). A qualitative design focuses on evaluating specific social phenomena using visual and textual data (Saldana, 2011). For this investigation qualitative research was chosen over quantitative research, as the data collected was not numerical. Qualitative also allows for more flexible analysis of data than quantitative research, which was important for this investigation as it did not aim to prove or disprove a hypothesis but rather aimed to investigate a concept that did not have a definite answer (Bryman, 2012).

##### **Data Collection and Corpus Building:**

Data was collected using a top down corpus building approach (Mautner, 2005). This choice of data collection was used to avoid time wasting whilst conducting the study that had to be completed on a specific time schedule. All papers gathered were dated between the 1990s and 2016 to ensure that opinions were modern. The papers were also gathered from a range of sources such as the: *Daily Mail*, *The Independent*, *The Guardian* and *The*

*Mirror*. This allowed a greater exploration of opinions represented in newspapers to be conducted and reduced the potential bias towards a single paper's opinion. Once data had been gathered the corpus was reduced by a process of elimination that was based on their relevance to this investigation. Papers with the most information and expressive opinions about schizophrenia were deemed the most relevant. This process of elimination was continued until the writing up of the analysis in which the most relevant were chosen to fit in with the most commonly found themes in all the papers gathered.

### **Data Analysis:**

Once the data was gathered it was analysed using critical discourse analysis. Discourse analysis when referred to by discursive psychologists is the dismemberment of language in written and spoken texts to see how the writer represents an event or person (Burr, 2015; Putnam, 2005). However, when used in a deconstructionist stance 'discourse' has a marginally different meaning. In this sense it not only focuses on language but also how it is used in social practice (Burr, 2015). This type of analysis looks at how writers use language to manipulate not only what the public think or say but also 'what we can do or what can be done to us' (Burr, 2015: 73).

Discourse analysis is a social constructionist method that 'insists we take a critical stance toward our taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world and ourselves' (Burr, 2015:2). Therefore it was useful for this investigation, as it has looked at how newspaper discourses have shaped our knowledge of schizophrenia, contributing to our existing stigmas of it. However, discourse analysis is an umbrella term for several types of analysis, for example, discursive analysis, Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory and critical discourse analysis (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002). Of these, this investigation uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA analyses the way individuals use the power of discourse to manipulate the representations of a social or political situation. It looks specifically at how writers use specific lexicon, syntax, and metaphors to give meaning to a social construct, encouraging the public to think in a specific way about an individual or event (Krzyzanowski and Wodak, 2008; Van Dijk, 2001; Ball-Rockeach and DeFleur, 1976).

As well as looking at language CDA also analyses the use of imagery, inter-textual fonts, colours and presentation in media. How an image or a word is presented can heavily influence what attitudes are provoked from the public. For example, if a disturbing image is used readers will immediately associate the story with a dangerous individual. In a similar way, if specific words are highlighted or in bold, readers will view those words subconsciously prior to reading the actual article as they stand out more. As a result the reader will have a pre-conceived idea of violence from the story.

Critical discourse analysis is particularly useful when analysing the media. In the 'media-saturated world' (Matheson, 2005: 1) that is the twenty-first century a significant amount of our social constructionist views are created by newspapers, books and films. As a result the media is able to write in an authoritative manner about the world in a way that influences how we think

about things (Matheson, 2005). Although most media based companies claim to have a neutral opinion on social phenomena, CDA can prove through the analysis of leading language that most use strategic language and imagery that has a bias opinion on the topic (Matheson, 2005).

Finally, inspired by Cross (2014) this investigation also makes comparisons between broadsheet and tabloid newspapers. This was to evaluate if there were any differences in representation of individuals with schizophrenia within these different standards of newspapers. This is because according to Cross (2014) broadsheets are often the more academic and factual newspapers whereas tabloids are more regularly purchased for entertainment purposes (Angermeyer, Dietrich and Matschinger, 2006; Cross, 2014).

### ***Ethical Considerations:***

Ethical considerations in this investigations were slim, however, there were some to consider. Discourse analysis is based on personal opinions of both the researcher and previous researchers of this topic. Therefore ethical consideration was taken when representing these opinions. Whilst writing this report sensitivity was taken whilst representing other researchers opinions, ensuring sensitive information remained disclosed and no discriminatory statements were written against them. Another ethical consideration that was considered whilst writing this report was to ensure that the individual's names and work mentioned in it were represented sensitively and appropriately without causing offence. The stories are often about real people and care must be taken to not offend them or others. Finally, special care was taken when analysing all literature including names of individuals with schizophrenia. It was ensured that the names used in research were open to disclosure and were represented in the work fairly and appropriately without discrimination.

## **Analysis and Discussion**

### ***Violence and Danger***

The most prominent theme in this analysis was the journalist's representation of individuals with schizophrenia as violent and dangerous. This corresponds with Cross's theory that the media largely categorises individuals with schizophrenia as 'mad bad and dangerous' (Cross, 2014). Each article uses leading language and imagery to do this. For example;

*Extract 1: Sydney Morning Herald, My Friend who killed her Daughter.*  
(Appendix 2)

The title of this article itself is leading in its language. *My Friend who killed her Daughter* is a gripping and frightening headline. Mothers are supposed to be naturally protective towards their children and for a mother to go against this and kill their own child it is extremely unnatural behaviour. This instantly leads the readers to believe that Sarah, the mother of the child, is out of the ordinary and violent. Therefore, later in the article when it is exposed that Sarah has a diagnosis of schizophrenia readers could blame her unnatural behaviour on her illness.



Throughout the article the journalist uses language that associates Sarah with danger such as 'lurking'. If someone is 'lurking' they are remaining hidden whilst waiting to ambush someone or something (Oxford English Dictionary, 2016). Writers often use this kind of description to describe a predator. Therefore it is an extremely negative and discriminatory statement to be made about an individual with schizophrenia. Similarly, the journalist writes:

'After she got home, her family saw small signs of the psychosis: an unexplained fear of Arlo, nights spent away from home, strange, vacant looks. But they were only seeing the surface ripples. What they didn't know was that just before the episode at the cafe, Sarah had become aware of "the rivers of energy" that flowed between people around her. She recalls seeing the way her mother's energy blocked her own, watching horrified as Arlo's mum sent a bolt of dark energy into a friend'.

To the reader this creates the impression that Sarah is unpredictable in her behaviour. By saying that her family is only seeing the 'surface ripples' of her illness it creates a sense of anticipation that there are worse things to come for Sarah and her family. By following this with the sentence about her looming 'dark energy' the writer is only further pushing the idea that at any moment Sarah could enter a frantic and potentially fatal rage.

#### Extract 2: *The Guardian, My Daughter the Schizophrenic. (Appendix 3)*

In a similar way, the father of a young girl diagnosed with schizophrenia in *The Guardian* uses several leading words about her behaviour. In this article the father describes his daughter's behaviour as 'endless violent explosions'.

He often uses dramatic lexicon when speaking about her episodes such as: 'scream' 'shriek' and 'thrashing' which are all words that would usually be associated with an aggressive outburst.

He also makes several references to her aggressive behaviour in a way that emphasizes that it is unnatural. For example;

'Janni's fist comes down on her back so hard I can hear the thud from across the room. I grab Janni and feel her fist slam into the side of my head. She is punching me as hard as she can... This explosion of violence subsides as quickly as it comes.'

Similarly to Wahl (1997) in his analysis of films in this article there are also connections made with schizophrenia and homicidal activity. On the first occasion Janni's Father explains how she felt as though she was 'going to hurt' her newborn brother because she wanted too. On the second occasion he found Janni in her bedroom with the sleeve of a shirt around her neck claiming that she wants to break her own neck. Although there is evidence to suggest this kind of behaviour is found in individuals with schizophrenia Janni is part of only a small 5-8% of schizophrenia patients with violent tendencies (Gunn and Taylor, 1999). However, this article's focus is mostly on Janni's violence and unpredictability.

Interestingly, both *Extract 1* and *Extract 2* have a turning point. In *Extract 1* the author wishes her and her friends family had been greater educated on Sarah's psychosis before the killing of her own daughter. The turning point is represented in a change of mood in the words used, such as 'love' 'support' and 'hugged'. These are all more understanding and affectionate words than that had previously been used. Similarly, in *Extract 2* Janni's father explains later in the article that her 'rages are largely gone' and positive lexicon are used such as 'smile' 'peace' and 'love' that represent a more sympathetic attitude to her aggression. Cross (2014) suggests this is because broadsheets are the academic papers, which although still show some signs of discrimination are more progressive in their attitudes.

*Extract 3: The Sun, Man almost killed in terrifying knife attack by psychotic neighbour despite 100 warnings to council. (Appendix 4)*

Contrastingly, this article begins with a large image of an elderly man with stab wounds to his face and hands. A male with schizophrenia caused these injuries. Straight away this differs to the broadsheets, as the images in both *Appendix 2* and *Appendix 3* are happy family images that create a sense of empathy towards the individuals with schizophrenia. This imagery on the other hand shows the extent of the damage caused by the male with schizophrenia, instantly fitting him into a negative and highly violent category. Journalists for rhetorical effect use images like this (Krzyzanowski and Wodak, 2008). By putting shocking images and following them with leading language journalists are easily able to indoctrinate the stigma of violent schizophrenics to the readers.

Following these images in bold letters the article goes on to say:

'Council chiefs failed to prevent a crazed resident nearly killing a neighbour in a terrifying knife attack - despite more than 100 warnings that he was a danger.'

The use of the words 'crazed' 'terrifying' and 'danger' all accentuate the level of violence the individual is capable of. The word 'crazed' is used frequently throughout. According to Granello and Gibbs (2016) repetition like this to readers of a specific word, or set of words within texts when associated with a specific event, or individual can lead to a lasting bias. This kind of colloquial language is highly influential on the public opinions of those diagnosed with schizophrenia (Coverdale, Nairn and Claasen, 2002).

*Extract 4: Mirror, A Killer feared ex-girlfriend was casting a magic spell on him before stabbing her to death in a shopping centre. (Appendix 5)*

Similarly, this article also uses a rhetorical image underneath their headline. This picture is of the male who has committed the offence. The picture is not dissimilar to a police headshot, instantly associating the individual with his criminality.

This image is followed by other techniques that create bias. There are inter-textual font changes to make specific words stand out to readers whilst they are reading. The lexicon that are highlighted in the text are 'stabbed,' 'when

he killed Mairead Moran,' 'murdering' and other leading words. Each word is associated with homicidal behaviour, making the man out to be nothing but a killer. Interestingly the word 'hospital' is also in red. By highlighting the word 'hospital' in red alongside 'murder' and 'stabbing' the readers could associate the man's mental illness with his violence and in the long term lead them to associate all those diagnosed with mental illnesses to violence.

*Extract 5: New York Daily News, Schizophrenic babysitter confesses to sexually abusing, killing Staten Island 16-month-old. (Appendix 6)*

Moreover, in this article a woman diagnosed with schizophrenia, Fields, has been charged with the murder of a 16-month old child. Throughout Fields is described in a particularly graphic way. She is referred to as 'sadistic', a 'pill-popping schizophrenic', a 'depraved woman' and a 'vile babysitter'. All of these statements are strongly associated with violence and danger.

However, Fields was said to have been using both 'heroin' and 'marijuana' whilst looking after the child. In a study conducted by Gunn and Taylor (1999) he found that patients with schizophrenia were unlikely to be violent unless drugs or alcohol are used alongside of it, particularly marijuana. This article makes no mention of this making it more likely that readers will associate schizophrenia in general with violence than those individuals who also abuse drugs.

The article shows an image of Fields being escorted out of court where she had pleaded guilty to the murder of the boy, a common picture taken and used by papers when someone has committed a crime. However, is it fair to categorise Fields in the same way as other criminals? In this case as Fields has a diagnosis of schizophrenia and could plead not guilty by reason of insanity, as it is a severe mental illness that can impair judgment (White, 2007). However, papers use the same kind of imagery and language as they would in a regular murder case.

### ***Incorrect diagnosis, public lack of understanding and symptom misunderstandings***

Following analysis there was evidence in the papers that represented family, public and professional misinterpretations of symptoms, severity of the illness and its affect on the individual's life. For example;

*Extract 2: The Guardian, My Daughter the Schizophrenic. (Appendix 3)*

This article exposes several of the stigmas associated with schizophrenia. For example, Janni's mother when visiting the doctor began to question the possibilities of causes for her daughter's behaviour. She exclaimed:

'I go terrified Janni will be diagnosed autistic and that that will derail her future'

Janni was not diagnosed with autism, however, her parents connected this diagnosis to her behaviour. As Domino (2003, cited in Owen, 2007) suggested in his study, schizophrenia is frequently misdiagnosed due to its similarity to other psychiatric disorders. Although there are several correlating

symptoms between autism and schizophrenia the major symptoms of it, for example, hallucinations and delusions are not present in autism (Palucka, Bradley and Lunsky, 2008).

Janni's Mother also highlights another stigma in this sentence; she claims that being diagnosed with 'autism' would 'derail her future'. This is a common misunderstanding in the public about mental illness. Although mental illness cannot be undiagnosed, most people recover enough to continue with daily life. For example, a study conducted by Bleuler (1979, cited in Whitacker, 1992) showed that from a large number of patients 50% fully recovered years after the onset of psychosis. This is not the only time Janni's parents doubted her ability to lead a normal life, her Father said:

'I can't accept Janni going into hospital. If we put her in one, I feel we will have crossed the point of return.'

Once Janni had recovered her Father still misunderstood that 'schizophrenia cannot be fixed' and he claimed that she would 'never be able to go to school or college' and she would 'never have a boyfriend or get married'. All of these statements are unlikely to be true. However, due to his lack of understanding Janni's Father felt her life was over.

However, this broadsheet newspaper attempts to be more progressive in its approach to schizophrenia, as Cross (2014) suggested. It has a turning point at the end of the article where Janni's Father admits that he and those around him have 'struggled to understand' her diagnosis. Now he has been educated on the illness and understands its difficulties he struggles to believe that in the twenty-first century, people like him and 'even doctors, have been so unwilling to identify or believe in child-onset schizophrenia'.

*Extract 3: The Sun, Man almost killed in terrifying knife attack by psychotic neighbour despite 100 warnings to council. (Appendix 4)*

In comparison to *The Guardian*, this article is much less sympathetic towards the individual with schizophrenia's violent outbursts. In a statement made by Mr. Marshall, the victim of an attack by an individual with schizophrenia documented by *The Sun*, he says:

'I know he will be released eventually and this terrifies me'.

According to a study conducted by Bleuler's (1979, cited in Whitaker, 1992), of a large number of patients diagnosed with schizophrenia, half of the patients are able to recover from their illness years after its onset given appropriate help. They are then able to re-integrate peacefully back into society

The article also documents the council's lack of interest in the male's illness. It claims that there were over 100 warnings made to them about the man's deteriorating health. However, they 'refused to admit he was sick' in a phone call documented by the paper from Mr. Marshall. He told the council 'I think that he is going to kill someone' but they told him that he was 'not a

psychologist' therefore had no right to say that. He felt that the council avoided the perpetrator's illness because it was 'more hassle than it was worth to move him'. This is often the case because so many people try to claim that their disruptive behaviour is caused by a mental illness. Making it difficult for those who are actually suffering to receive the treatment that they need to recover (White, 2007).

Interestingly this article has a small turning point in it directed towards the council's lack of help to the perpetrator. However, despite this he is still described in an extremely unsympathetic way, they depict him as violent and aggressive throughout.

*Extract 5: New York Daily News, Schizophrenic babysitter confesses to sexually abusing, killing Staten Island 16-month-old. (Appendix 6)*

In complete contrast to the more sympathetic broadsheet newspapers, in this article there is a total lack of care towards Fields' illness by the journalists. Only at the end of the article does it claim 'she was also schizophrenic'. The flippant use of language here shows that there is a huge misunderstanding by the journalists of the severity of the illness.

Although the crimes committed by Fields are undoubtedly tragic, prior to this attack the paper mentions she had been arrested nine times. In none of these arrests was there an attempt by police to have had her illness monitored by a mental health unit. Where the paper is inundated with violent language describing Fields, there is no criticism of the police for ignoring her illness or even more mention of the illness itself. When reading this article the public will have the image of nothing but a violent killer, only to later associate her illness with these acts.

### **Family Blame**

As Owen (2007) suggests there is a stigma surrounding schizophrenia that places the blame for its diagnosis on the individual's family. Where films often use this stigma to create interesting storylines, opposing to Wahl's (1997) findings, this investigation found that newspapers are more sympathetic towards them. For example;

*Extract 6: The Telegraph, Are You to Blame for your Child's Mental Health Issues? (Appendix 7)*

A journalist that is interviewing actor and author Oliver James writes this article. In James' opinion mental illness is 'not in your genes' but is due 'mostly to parental maltreatment'. James claims that in families 'there is a lot that goes on behind closed doors that nobody knows about' that can cause mental illness.

However, there are several indicators in this article that the interviewee does not have the same opinion as James. For example, he questions, as a parent himself, how someone who is also a parent, can believe that their 'long-suffering' is due to poor parental abilities. He also claims that James' book, *They F\*\*\* You Up*, is the most 'chilling' book he had ever read.

There is also simple lexicon that suggests the journalist is struggling to adapt to the opinion of James. For example the use of the words 'awful' 'vulnerable' 'controversial' also suggest that the author does not hold the same opinion.

This broadsheet paper shows that the stigmas suggested by Owen (2007) still exist. However, as Cross (2014) suggests it is trying to show a more progressive attitude towards mental illness and schizophrenia in its structure and language.

**Extract 2: The Guardian, *My Daughter the Schizophrenic*. (Appendix 3)**

In a similar way, this article also shows the family blame stigma still exists. However, it is not one person blaming another but it is the mother of a child with schizophrenia who is blaming her own family for Janni's illness. Her mother says whilst at the doctors for Janni's behavior:

'There was my Grandmother's Brother. He had schizophrenia. My Dad said he used to scream all the time... Could she have schizophrenia?'

Here Janni's mother is blaming long distance family for Janni's potential diagnosis. There is some evidence from studies of monozygotic and dizygotic twins that monozygotic twins are significantly more likely to acquire schizophrenia if their sibling has it than dizygotic twins. However, this does not account for a large majority of those diagnosed with schizophrenia that have no known relatives with the disorder (Insel, 2010). There are several other factors that contribute to the onset of schizophrenia, for example biological theories such as the dopamine hypothesis (Kendler and Schaffner, 2011). Yet due to a lack of understanding Janni's mother can only associate her families past as the cause of her behaviour.

However, this article similarly to *The Telegraph* also places an emphasis on family blame being unreasonable. At the 'turning point' moment at the end of this article Janni's father says 'nobody knows what causes schizophrenia' but currently 'the prevailing theory... is that it is a biochemical deficit in the brain, possibly degenerative neural disorder'. This would suggest that him and his family had been better educated on Janni's condition after her diagnosis when comparing to her mothers previous statement.

**Overall**

Despite Wahl's (1997) beliefs that all newspapers play a large part in contributing to the stigmas of schizophrenia, this investigation found that tabloids contribute more than broadsheet newspapers to these stigmas, similarly to the findings of Cross (2014). Tabloid papers are often about individuals with schizophrenia that have committed a crime, representing their focus on violence. They use language such as 'vile,' 'crazed' and 'terrifying' to describe the individual in a way that represents them as a regular criminal. Despite this, tabloids are less representational of misunderstanding diagnoses and portraying a lack of understanding. Yet it could be argued that in their descriptions of the individuals with schizophrenia they display a lack of understanding because of the abundance of unsympathetic and discriminatory language. It was also found that broadsheets in some ways are

guilty of contributing to the stigmas of schizophrenia. However, they are also the more academic and factual papers. They show this by instigating a turning point in the papers that show a moment of realization for the writer that the stigmas are incorrect and society must be more educated in order to be progressive. This caused a limitation in the study, as there was a significant amount of broadsheet papers found that were arguing against the stigmas of schizophrenia. Therefore, in future replications of this investigation researcher's may wish to look at older papers than from 1990-2016 as in this investigation. They could then compare how perceptions of schizophrenia are changing and how journalists are working towards the abolition of the existing stigmas.

### **Reflexive Analysis**

Whilst using critical discourse analysis it is imperative that the researcher is reflexive (Ballinger, 2003). This is because by adopting this type of method the researchers ideology becomes apparent at all levels of analysis (Yates, Taylor and Wetherell, 2001). Within this type of research reflexivity is defined as the recognition of the potential interference of personal opinions and views on their analysis (Fuhrman and Oehler, 1986).

Remaining completely objective in discourse analysis is near impossible due to the nature of the methodology. During analysis researchers are expected to extract meaning from their text (Madill et al, 2000), therefore, making it difficult for their own opinion not to interfere with analysis. When deciding on a topic for my final year report I chose to focus on the stigmas surrounding mental illness because I have a very close friend who suffers with depression and I myself have suffered from anxiety during my education. I believe strongly that the negative stigmas surrounding mental illness makes it difficult for the individual affected to accept their illness and to move forward. However, to reduce the bias in my report I chose to focus not on mental illness generally but to focus on schizophrenia. Although I find this equally as serious, I have no personal connection to schizophrenia. However, this meant that I needed to be greater educated on the topic prior to writing up this report.

Fairclough (1995) argues, that in discourse analysis interpretations cannot be made in the same way as physical observation, but can only be created through ones own self-consciousness. I found this to be very true in this investigation. When I began analysing the newspapers, I was certain that every paper I found would be discriminatory towards those with schizophrenia. However, this was not the case. At first, I found several attempts by the papers to make people aware of the stigmas surrounding schizophrenia making the process of elimination based on relevance more difficult.

## References

- Angermeyer, M. C., Dietrich, S. and Matschinger, H. (2006) 'Influence of Newspaper Reporting on Adolescents Attitudes Towards People with Mental Illness.' *Social Psychiatry + Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 41 pp. 318-322.
- Aristegui, M., Fernandez-Rivas, A., Gonzalez-Torres, M. A., Guiman, J. and Oroa, R. (2006) 'Stigma and Discrimination towards people with Schizophrenia and their Family Members.' *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 42(1) pp.16-24.
- Ballinger, C. (2003) 'Navigating multiple research identities: reflexivity in discourse analytic research.' In Finlay, L. and Gough, B. (ed.) *Reflexivity: A Practical Guide for Researchers in Health and Social Sciences*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 66-78.
- Ball-Rockeach, S. J. and DeFleur, M. L. (1976) 'A Dependency Model of Mass-Media Effects.' *Communication Research*, 3(1) pp. 30-21.
- Bryman, A. (2012) *Social Research Methods*. 4th ed., London: Oxford University Press.
- Burr, V. (2015) *Social Constructionism*. 3rd ed., New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Coverdale, J., Nairn, R. and Claasen, D. (2002) 'Depictions of mental illness in print media: a prospective national sample.' *The Australian and New Zealand journal of psychiatry*, 36(5) pp. 697-712.
- Cross, S. (2014) 'European Journal of Communication.' *Mad and Bad Media: Populism and Pathology in the British Tabloids*, 29(2) pp. 204-217.
- Fairclough, N. (1995) *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. New York: Longman.
- Fernandez, I., Fernandez, L., Garcia, A., Gracia, R., Henry, M. and Morera, A. L. (2006) 'Personality Disorders in a Sample of Schizophrenic Patients.' *European Neuropsychology*, 16(4) pp. 541-555.
- Fuhrman, E and Oehler, K. (1986) 'Discourse Analysis and Reflexivity.' *Social Studies of Science*, 16(2). pp. 293-307.
- Granello, D. H. and Gibbs, T. A. (2016) 'The Power of Language and Labels: "The Mentally Ill" versus "People with Mental Illnesses.'" *Journal of Counselling and Development*, 94(1) pp. 845-856.
- Gunn, J. and Taylor, P. J. (1999) 'Homocides by People with Mental Illness: Myth and Reality.' *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 174(1) pp. 9-14.
- Heckers, S. (2011) 'Bleuler and the Neurobiology of Schizophrenia.' *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, 41(5) pp. 187-193.
- Hoening, J. (1983) 'The Concept of Schizophrenia Kraepelin-Bleuler-Schneider.' *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 142(6) pp. 547-558.



- Holmes, D. (2010) *Abnormal Clinical and Forensic Psychology*. Galway: Prentice Hall.
- Insel, T. R. (2010) 'Rethinking Schizophrenia.' *Nature*, 1 p.187.
- Jorgensen, M. and Phillips, L. (2002) *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Kendler, K. S. and Schaffner, K. F. (2011) 'The Dopamine Hypothesis of Schizophrenia: An Historical and Philosophical Analysis.' *Philosophy, Psychiatry & Psychology*, 18(1) pp. 41-63.
- Kim, K., Becker-Cohen, M. and Serakos, M. (2015) *The Processing and Treatment of Mentally Ill Persons in the Criminal Justice System: A Scan of Practice and Backgrounds Analysis*. [Online] [Accessed 25th November 2015] Available from: [http://www.prisonpolicy.org/research/mental\\_health/](http://www.prisonpolicy.org/research/mental_health/)
- Krzyzanowski, M., Wodak, R. (2008) *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2008.
- Lakritz, K. (2009) 'Psychiatric Times.' *Michel Foucault's madness and civilization: a history of insanity in the age of reason*, 26(6). p 45.
- Madill, A. Jordan, A and Shirley, C. (2000) 'Objectivity and Reliability in Qualitative Analysis: Realist, Contextualist and Radical Constructionist Epistemologies.' *British Journal of Psychology*, 91(1) pp. 1-20.
- Matheson, D. (2005) *Media Discourses: Analyzing Media Texts*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Mautner, G. (2005) 'Time to get wired: Using Web-based Corpa in Critical Discourse Analysis.' *Discourse Society*, 12(6) pp. 809-828.
- McCracken, S. G. (2014) *DSM-5 Implications for Social Work Practice*. Chicago: The University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration. 37-page handout, distributed on the 16th October 2014.
- McGuffin, P. (2004) 'Nature and Nurture Interplay: Schizophrenia.' *Psychiatrische Praxis*, 31(2) pp. 189-193.
- Murray, R. E., Sham, P., Van Os, J., Zanelli, J., Cannon, M. and McDonald, C. (2004) 'A Developmental Model for Similarities and Dissimilarities between Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder.' *Schizophrenia Research*, 2(3) pp. 405-416.
- Mind. (2013) *Mental Health Facts and Statistics*. [Online] [24th November 2015] <http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/statistics-and-facts-about-mental-health/how-common-are-mental-health-problems/>

Owen, J. P. (2007) 'Dispelling Myths about Schizophrenia using film.' *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 37(1) pp. 60-75.

Owen, P. R. (2012) 'Portrayals of Schizophrenia by entertainment media: A content analysis of contemporary movies.' *Psychiatric Services*, 63(7) pp. 655-659.

Oxford English Dictionary. (2016) *Lurk*. [Online] [7th April 2016]  
<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/111320?rkey=eaZrPa&result=1#eid>

Palucka, A. M., Bradley, E. and Lunsky, Y. (2008) 'Mental Health Aspects of Developmental Disabilities.' *A Case of unrecognized intellectual disability and autism misdiagnosed as schizophrenia: are there lessons to be learned?*, 11 (2) p. 55.

Penn, D. L., Kommana, S., Mansfield, M. and Link, B. G. (1999) 'Dispelling the Stigma of Schizophrenia: II. The Impact of Information of Dangerousness.' *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, 25(3) pp. 437-446.

Putnam, L. (2005) 'Discourse Analysis: Mucking Around with Negotiation Data.' *International Negotiation*, 10(1) pp. 17-32.

Saldana, J. (2011) *Fundamentals of Qualitative Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.

University of Oxford. (2006) *Small risk of Violence in Schizophrenia unless drugs and alcohol are involved*. [Online] [Accessed 5th November 2015]  
<http://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2009-05-20-small-risk-violence-schizophrenia-unless-drugs-and-alcohol-are-involved>

Whitaker, L. C. (1992) *Schizophrenic Disorders: Sense and Nonsense in Conceptualization*. New York: Plenum Press.

White, T. (2007) 'Schizophrenia' In Fraser, V., Burd, L., Peterson, C. M., Liebson, E. and Lipschik, G. Y. (ed.) *Diseases and Disorders*. New York: Marshall Cavendish. pp. 755-759.

Wahl, O. F. (1992) 'Mass Media Images of Mental Illness: A Review of the Literature.' *Journal of Community Psychology*, 20 pp. 343-352.

Wahl, O. F. (1997) *Media Madness: Public Images of Mental Illness*. 2nd ed., New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

Van Dijk, T. A. (2001) 'Critical Discourse Analysis.' In Tannen, D., Schiffrin, D. and Hamilton, H. (ed.) *Handbook of Discourse*, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, pp. 352-371.

Yates, S., Taylor, S. and Wetherell, M. (2001) *Discourse as Data: A Guide for Analysis*. London: Sage Publication.