Are stereotypes, such as the 'headclutcher', in stock images for mental illness stigmatizing?

Laura Orton[a],

[a]Affiliation name: Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

*Corresponding author e-mail: laura.orton@mmu.ac.uk

Abstract: Public perception and attitudes of mental illness are heavily influenced by mass media, so it is important the visual communication delivered into society is responsible and not unintentionally damaging. Stereotypes are used frequently in visual communication for speed of understanding. However, stereotypes are often based on unfounded assumptions, and these assumptions can cause stigma towards the stereotyped group. This study questions what stereotypes, if any, are present in stock images of mental illness and discusses what effect they may have on stigma. There have been previous calls for images such as the 'headclutcher' to not be used to represent mental illness as many believe them to be an inaccurate depiction. The results of this study provides recommendations for media outlets, and encourages other researchers and organisations to pay consideration to the imagery they use for communication about mental illness, to ensure no unintentional stigma is caused.

Keywords: visual communication; mental illness; stock images; stigma

1. Introduction

The public perception and attitudes of mental illness are heavily influenced by mass media (Armani, 2017; Klin & Lemish, 2008) such as traditional newspapers or more modern social media and online sources. Therefore, it is important that the communication individuals and organisations deliver into society via these media outlets are responsible and don't cause unintentional damage. This paper sets out to examine the way mental illness is portrayed using stock images which are a common form of visual communication used by the media.

There are already recommendations as to how the media should report about mental illness. The Independent Press Standards Organisation states that the press must avoid prejudicial or pejorative reference to an individual's mental illness (IPSO, 2021) but don't offer any spe-

cifics on what could be considered prejudicial or pejorative, and there is no mention of imagery within their code of conduct at all. There have been various studies that have critically examined articles about mental illness within the media. (Chen & Lawrie, 2017; Goulden et al., 2011; Stout et al., 2004) The results of which show that text based reporting on mental illness is improving and a reduction in negative and stigmatising articles has been recorded. However, these studies have no mention of imagery that accompanies these articles despite most media sources now being a combination of text and images. Visual images permeate our lives. There has been a notable shift in social media from text based to more visual platforms (Muñoz & Towner, 2017) which may be unsurprising given that images can be more memorable, attention grabbing and emotive than text (Bucher & Schumacher, 2006). As the saying goes, 'a picture speaks a thousand words', so these stock images that are used to represent mental illness, need to form part of the conversations about how mental illness is portrayed and be party to the same research that critiques health-related discourse (Harvey & Brookes, 2018).

There has been limited professional discussion about imagery of mental illness to date. Time To Change - a mental health charity within the UK between 2007 and 2021 - wrote some guidance on responsible media reporting of mental illness. Within this guide, there are a couple of short references towards imagery. They stated that stereotyped images such as head- clutching, outdated treatments / hospitals and fictional movie images (e.g. One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest) could be considered negative and stigmatising (TTC, 2021). Therefore, their recommendation was to avoid these styles of image. However, Time To Change did not offer any supportive evidence base or critical evaluation for these claims about imagery.

Therefore, this study appears to be the first to critically examine the visual discourse of stock imagery used within the media when the broad subject of mental illness is being discussed.

Hypothesis: Given the lack of regulation and critical examination of image use in media, it is believed that if stereotypes are found in heavily used stock images, this has the potential to add to the stigma towards people with mental illness.

 The research questions are:

1. What stereotypes, if any, are present in stock images of mental illness
2. What effect may this have on stigma towards those with a mental illness

This study is modelled upon previous studies that look specifically at stock images of dementia (Harvey & Brookes, 2018) and schizophrenia (Svensén, 2020). It sets out to critique popular stock images and establish what messages they are portraying about mental illness.

1.1 Stock images

Stock images refers to the supply of previously created images, predominantly photographs, which are licensed and can be purchased for personal or commercial uses. They are often used to accompany editorial text articles to enhance the effectivity and the impact of the piece quickly and cheaply. An article with an accompanying image is 94% more likely to be read (Gillett, 2014). Stock images are used as a representation of moods and concepts (Machin, 2004) and therefore they are a snapshot of the themes and emotion of the text they are accompanying.

'Image banks' are companies which sell stock images. This study will look at the largest image bank, Getty Images, who claim having over 400 million pieces of content available for license. Based in the US, Getty Images is used worldwide. Clients in the UK include the BBC and all of the top 10 UK newspapers by circulation. Image banks work using keywords or tags to identify the suggested themes and scenarios the image is supposed to represent. The user searches for a term they are looking for, and the website will generate a list of all images that have a tag which matches their search term. The user can then select the desired image, make a payment and then use the images as they wish.

As businesses, image banks hope to sell as many images as possible. One way of doing this is to make the range of uses for any given image to be wide. As a result, photographs become more generic by removing specifics like locations, times and scenarios. They become multi-purpose, generic and symbolic rather than bearing witness to true events (Machin, 2004). These multipurpose generic images can then be sold in higher volumes, thus creating more profit for the image bank. This anonymising of the images has created a symbolic system (Harvey & Brookes, 2018) which is full of clichés and stereotypes (Machin, 2004).

Getty Images were approached for permission to use the images discussed in this academic study, but have refused due to copyright restrictions. As such, sketches have had to be used throughout but the originals remain on their website www.gettyimages.co.uk, which can be searched for using the #reference number or image caption under each sketch (written by the image producer).

1.2 Mental illness

The majority of people will use the media as a primary source of their knowledge on mental illness (Armani, 2017) and in this context, mental illness is used as a blanket term to describe a wide variety of conditions such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia and bi-polar disorder. Mental illness is a complex, contentious issue that has evolved over the years and therefore, there is a lot of generalisation, misunderstanding and disagreement as to what it actually is (Kendell, 2001). The American Psychiatric Association (APA) define it as;

> "A syndrome characterized by clinically significant disturbance
> in an individual's cognition, emotion regulation, or behaviour that reflects

a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or developmental processes underlying mental functioning." (APA, 2013:61)

It is argued that 1 in 4 people will be affected by a mental illness in each year in the UK (Mental Health Task Force, 2016) and that 792 million people worldwide are affected by mental illness (Ritchie & Roser, 2018). Mental illness was on the rise in 2021 while we were within the COVID-19 pandemic where common mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety are reported by an increasing number of people (Rea, 2021) and so it is likely that while this is ongoing and once these figures are re-evaluated in the coming years, they have the potential to be significantly higher. There is an estimated 15-20 year mortality gap between those with a mental illness and those without (Jones et al., 2008) and stigma towards mental illness is cited as being one of the key reasons people avoid seeking help (Bharadwaj et al., 2017). It is therefore key to assist people with mental illnesses to improve their experience as best as possible without them having additional issues that stigma (by the public and by themselves) can bring making things worse (Rüsch et al., 2005).

With no easy or guaranteed cures for mental illnesses, there is a need to look at our societies understanding and treatment of those with mental illness to make their experiences a little easier. Given how prevalent mental illness is, it is frequently written about in the media and stock images are used to accompany these articles. Machin (2004) states that stock images are used because they are cheaper than photojournalism plus they have been staged to look good, and media is created to be sold. In addition to this, Harvey and Brooks (2018) highlight that there is an ethical issue that makes obtaining images of 'real' people with mental illness difficult, whereas stock imagery is easy to obtain making it more convenient.

2. Method

Having reviewed the context of this research, what follows is an analysis of relevant stock images and how it relates to mental illness. The data in this study was obtained by completing a search on Getty Images for the term "mental illness". The results were then ranked by "most popular" and the top 50 images (out of a total of 13,811, as of 5th May 2021) were extracted from the website. This ranking was chosen to highlight the most prominent images in the discussions around mental illness with the widest reach within society. The search term "mental illness" was used rather than specific diagnoses to mirror the discourse in media that often refers to a general term of mental illness.

It is important to note that "mental illness" is just one tag that these images had been given. Each image has multiple tags and so other terms such as emotions, specific illnesses, moods and situations are also suggested. Tags are only suggestions by the creator to allow the images to be found, so it is possible that the images are being selected for other uses. It is only once an image has been selected and placed in a context, likely alongside text, that it then

anchors it to a particular meaning or interpretation. It is acknowledged that this is a limitation of this study, however this is the temporary context of how these images appear to the people conducting their own searches on image banks, before they make a decision about what image best fits their usage.

The analytical approach of Harvey and Brookes (2018) was followed in this study. That is that stock images are viewed as 'visual texts' that are a "system of deliberate and motivated design choices made by their producers". The analysis is two tiered: to "document the visual choices evident in the design of the stock images" and then to interpret these choices.

The documentation of visual choices was conducted by asking the following questions;

1. Participants (who is depicted?)

2. Settings (where are they depicted?)

3. Gaze (where is the participant(s) eye gaze directed? Do they engage the viewer or other represented participants or look elsewhere?)

4. Angle of interaction (from what angle or perspective do we view the participant(s)?)

5. Colour (what choices are made in terms of brightness, saturation, purity, differentiation and hue?)

These concepts are deemed by the author to be most relevant to the composition of these photographs.

Following this classification, an interpretation of these choices was conducted, comparing them with the stereotypes of mental illness. Of note - not every person will 'read' the images as they have been interpreted below - their own culture and personal experiences will have a large influence of their interpretations and this is something to bear in mind throughout and therefore it is a limitation of this study that these results are based on the author's interpretations. Further widening of this research is recommended to allow for other opinions and cross checking.

There are three common stereotypes about people with mental illnesses. These are permanency, dangerousness and incompetence (Sheehan et al., 2016) and this analysis will establish if these stereotypes are present within the images. This two-tiered approach matching that of Harvey and Brooks (2018) and Svensen (2020) analyses the denotation and connotation of each image.

3. Analysis

Of the Getty 50 top mental illness stock images, 35 are photographs of people with mental illnesses (assumed models or actors) and 15 are abstract images, illustrations or distorted photographs.

There are some clear, reoccurring categories that emerge that the majority of these images can fit within;

- 23/50 images are of lone people who appear to be in a distressed emotional state.

- 14/50 are of two (or more) people where the dynamic appears to be that of patient and healthcare worker.

- 6/50 contain a metaphor of a shattering 'broken brain'

- There are a further 5 images which contain different visual metaphors and then three images which don't fit into any of these four categories and are harder to categorise.

These first three reoccurring and prominent features will now be looked at in more detail as they form the majority of this visual language of mental illness.

3.1 Lone people in a distressed emotional state

The images of individual people who are in a distressed emotional state, are the most common type of stock image with a tag of "mental illness" (23/50) and therefore are the loudest part of the visual conversation on mental illness.

The setting of these images of individual people are all either indoors in a domestic setting, signified by furniture, soft furnishings or wall decorations (11/23) or they have a background which is obscured for example by cropping, staging or blurring (11/23), with the exception of one outdoor image.

Figure 1. Sketch of #1212848372 "African-American woman holds hands to forehead"

The original photograph which Figure 1 is drawn from appears to be set in a living room. Like the other domestic settings, this is a private place. In the context of mental illness (as the image has been tagged) this puts the illness behind closed doors and creates an impression that this is a private issue, creating a clear separation and barrier between the viewer and the subject. This suggestion that people with mental illness suffer alone and in private is a step towards an 'us' and 'them' mentality. The separation of us and them is one of the first steps towards stigma as it distinguishes and labels human differences to which stereotypes can begin to be linked (Link & Phelan, 2001).

The individuals in the pictures are seen as passive, static and unable to function. For example, in the stock image depicted by figure 1 the female is wearing pyjamas. This, despite the light colours suggesting a daytime image, portrays the stereotype of incompetence as it is suggested as she is unable to do whatever tasks her day should have consisted of.

The images which have obscured backgrounds, such as the image which figure 2 is drawn from place the individual in a 'void' which creates a further feeling of isolation. They are completely decontextualised of setting or location making them a generalised example rather than a specific person (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2005). It makes it harder for the viewer to connect with the individual.

Figure 2. Sketch of #680693460 "Woman Depressed And Alone."

Within this category, the most common pose is that of the person with their head in their hands (13/23). Figure 1 is one example of this familiar image - a woman in a domestic setting, alone, sitting with her head in her hands.

When considering this common image dubbed 'the head-clutcher', although the exact emotion isn't clear, and is dependent upon the context the image is placed in, the emotion it is conveying is likely to be one that is in the negative / passive quadrant of the Scherer wheel of emotion (Scherer, 2005) where emotions such as sadness, loneliness, worry, depression and insecurities all sit.

The 'head-clutcher' image reduces the personhood of the subject in the image. Their face becomes covered by their hands preventing that human connection and the main way we 'read' each other's emotions. "The absence of eye contact between us viewers and the woman makes it difficult for us to enter in any kind of symbolic personal relation with her." (Harvey & Brookes, 2018:993). This lack of connection adds to the idea of separation of 'us' and 'them'. Eye contact was missing in all but one image of a lone person in this category.

3.2 Two or more people in a patient / care giver dynamic

Within the top 50, there are 14 images which involve two or more people in a dynamic that appears to imply one person has a mental illness and the other is a health care professional or carer in some capacity.

Figure 3. Sketch of 1026611056 "Depressed young woman talks to therapist."

This relationship is made out by a number of present elements, such as doctors coats, steth-oscopes etc on one individual, and the expression or pose of the second individual. As is shown in the photograph depicted by Figure 3, one individual has their head in their hands, the other has a compassionate hand on her shoulder and is holding what appears to be a clipboard and pen.

Figure 4. Sketch of # 165997999 "Senior woman receiving help on care home"

Within this group of images, the person depicted as having a mental illness is passive, again with a negative emotion. Figures 3 and 4 represent photographs that show the women as despondent and depressed. As with the images of sole individuals, a similar trait of these images with two or more people, is the lack of eye contact. None of the subjects look directly at the camera. In addition to not having eye contact with the viewer, they also don't have eye contact with each other in 9 out of 14 images and in the remaining 5, two have been disembodied and have no heads and in 1 the focus of the photograph is on the medical professional so the gaze of the person with the mental illness cannot be seen. This leaves only two images where the two participants are looking at each other. So, whilst there is a close physical proximity to each other, there is a barrier of a lack of eye contact that causes disengagement between the subjects and therefore a disengagement between the viewer and them.

As we, the viewers are placed behind the shoulder of the health care professional in both these examples, this perspective does two things. Firstly, their body both acts as a further barrier between the viewer and the person with mental illness (increasing that separation) and secondly it makes the viewer take the perspective as the person with power in the dynamic, which evokes the stereotype of incompetence.

Unlike the images of individuals being set in private places, the images of two people are predominantly set in healthcare facilities. This is signified by the bright, clinical lighting,

bland walls, office backgrounds such as files, desks and more formal chairs. The colour palettes while bright are generally of beige or grey tones which feels clinical and lacking of any warmth.

3.3 Broken brains

The visual metaphor of a broken brain appears in 6 of the 50 images. A visual metaphor presents two ideas and makes a comparison between them, by stating that one term is figuratively like the other (Phillips, 2003). Metaphors are a useful tool to convey difficult and complex thoughts and ideas. Visual metaphors can arouse curiosity and are shown to increase the chances that the viewer will think more about the message being conveyed (Jeong, 2008). They can yield great power to how we see and understand the world around us. Visual metaphors are shown to be effective in communicating about complex health topics and can assist in reducing associated stigma (Lazard et al., 2016). They can also oversimplify and exaggerate points which could be detrimental.
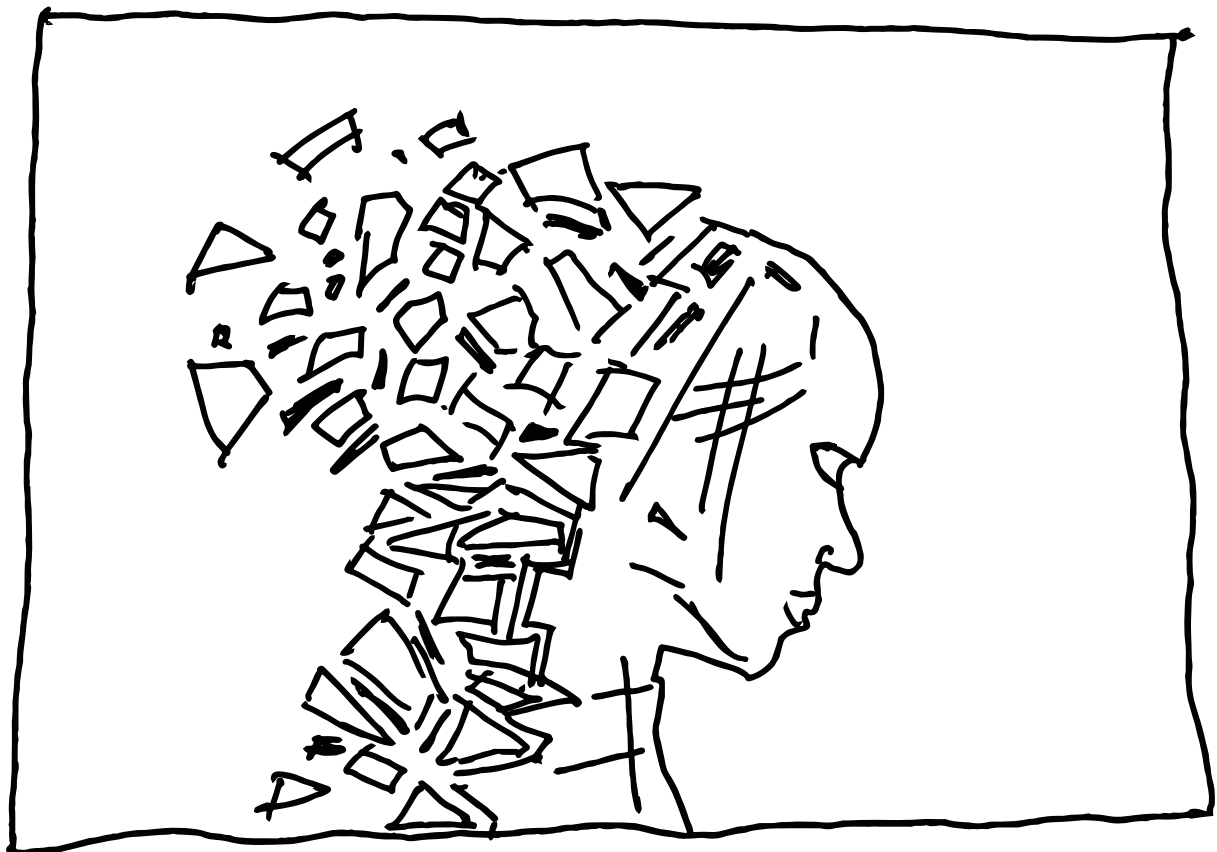
Figure 5. Sketch of #184591777 "dissolving fractured head"

The images within this category, such as Figure 5, are a metaphor of a person with a mental illness having a broken brain. This suggests there are two states a brain can be in – broken or

whole which can be extended to believing there are two types of people – those with broken brains and those without. It is another visual device that separates 'us' from 'them'.

These broken brain images show an erosion of the head, and in turn, the person. The person is disappearing. Given the disordered way in which the erosion is happening in figure 5, with tiny, fragmented pieces, it suggests it is not likely nor intended for the pieces to ever be put back together in the right place again. This gives the impression of permanency, one of the main stereotypes of mental illness.

This is the same narrative that Harvey and Brookes (2018) found with their analysis of stock images used for dementia, where jigsaw puzzles with missing pieces are often used as metaphor, suggesting "the absence of one piece of the jigsaw render[s] it irrevocably faulty" and therefore the subject of the image is rendered as "irredeemably deficient, a puzzle that cannot be solved" (Harvey & Brookes, 2018, p. 997). They found that this metaphorical style of image can invite a response of fear and revulsion from the viewer.

4. Discussion

The analysis has found some significant findings;

There are three reoccurring themes that are observed in the top 50 images labelled as "mental illness" on Getty Images. They are;

1. Lone people in a distressed emotional state

2. Two (or more) people where the dynamic appears to be that of patient and healthcare worker.

3. Visual metaphor of a 'broken brain'

A stereotype is created when a specific image or story is conveyed over and over again. When repeated, it becomes a generally accepted belief about members of a specific group. Having these simple repetitive narratives of mental illness in stock images does perpetuate stereotypes.

Within each of these larger themes there are additional repeated features, e.g. lone distressed people predominantly being indoors, behind a glass window or in an obscured void. These design choices are also important in the discussion of stigma, as they can contribute towards the separation of 'us' and 'them'. This labelling, stereotypes and separation of 'us' and 'them' are the first stages of stigma occurring (Link & Phelam 2001).

This analysis is useful to improve the use of visual communication because images are able to attract attention more than text alone (Bucher & Schumacher, 2006). Therefore, due to time and cost restraints, media articles about mental illness may need stock images to attract the attention of the reader. Mental illness campaigners typically agree that the subject needs more open discussion in our society, so attention grabbing images could be a positive thing to keep the discourse going. However, this doesn't justify using deficit orientated images.

Amongst the 50 most popular Getty Images there were zero images which depicted an individual living a meaningful or happy life. Instead, all had an element of negativity. As per the findings of Harvey and Brookes (2018) and again by Svensén (2020) when examining stock images of dementia and schizophrenia respectively, we learn very little, if anything, about participants in these stock images—"other than that they tend to suffer and are looked after by others" (Harvey and Brookes, 2018).

All three of the common narratives found have links to the stereotypes which can be harmful to the efforts to reduce stigma towards people with mental illness. The images of the 'lone individuals in a distressed state' and of the 'groups of two or more in a patient / care giver dynamic' both perpetuate the stereotype of incompetence (that people with mental illness can't make their own decisions, they can't live or work independently or that they are a burden). This stereotype leads to stigma because there is a significant uneasiness from the general public to have people with mental illness in positions of authority, be that in management or as public officials for example (Pescosolido et al., 2013) The incompetence stereotype leads to those with mental illnesses having those around them take on a paternalistic role and begin to unnecessarily control them, reducing their autonomy (Sheehan et al., 2016).

The metaphorical images of the 'broken brain' perpetuate the stereotype of permanency. Permanency means that once you have a mental illness, you will always have it. However, that is simply not the case for all mental illnesses. Various studies show a range from 15% - 65% of people diagnosed with a serious mental illness were able to recover (Salzer et al., 2018; Slade & Longden, 2015). In the UK it is reported that over 50% of people referred to talking therapies for common mental illnesses recover every month (NHS, 2018). This stereotype is damaging because it is possible that there is less emphasis on treatment and recovery and when people see it as something unchangeable, they are more likely to treat those individuals with mental illness differently, displaying stigma towards them (Sheehan et al., 2016).

The stereotype of dangerousness (that those with mental illness are violent or unpredictable) was absent from the images analysed in this study. This is positive as individuals with mental illness "do not pose any increased risk of violence over the general population" (Rueve & Welton, 2008, p.:15:15). However, this differs from the results of Svensen (2020) who followed a similar analytical approach but looked at stock images specifically labelled as

"schizophrenia" rather than this label of "mental illness" which would cover multiple diagnoses.

This research is a starting point for the analysis of images used to depict mental illness. There are known limitations in that this is just one image bank that has been scrutinised, and only the top 50 most popular out of almost 14,000 images tagged as mental illness. Future research could scale up the number of images and image banks used or look at the same stock images within the context they are used, rather than from the image bank website without a surrounding narrative. For example, when a reverse image search is completed on Google for the image depicted in figure one, it is found to be used in articles about anxiety, depression, COVID 19 challenges, hoarders, severe migraines, suicide, alcoholism, PTSD and forced marriages. This highlights both how the meaning of an image can change dependent upon the context it is placed in but also how general this stock image is to be capable of this. Guidance should also be written as to how images should be used.

5. Conclusion

Link and Phelan (2001) state that stigma exists when elements of "labelling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination co-occur in a power situation that allows them." The stock images examined in this research show the first three elements of stigma.

The ability to fit 43 of 50 images into these three categories suggests a severe lack in variety of images being used. A greater diversity of images published could begin to break through this basic narrative of mental illness and stop perpetuating these stigmatising stereotypes.

There were already suggestions that the 'headclutcher' is a stigmatising image. In 2015, charity Time To Change launched a campaign called Get The Picture, where they aimed to stop the use of the head-clutcher image when discussing mental illness (Hawkins, 2015). They had Stephen Fry as the face of the campaign and they offered alternative images that they felt were more appropriate for media to use. However, there is no known data for the outcomes of the Get The Picture campaign and if any reduction in use was observed. Given their prevalence in the top 50 popular stock images, the impact was minimal.

The danger of media continuing to use stock images with these narratives is that the stigma is being perpetuated. Therefore, those editors in charge of publishing these stock images alongside their articles should be required to be aware of the consequences of their choices, and test images before publication. However, they also need to be provided with an alternative that shows mental illness in a less contrived, more positive light with more variety and more connection with the viewer.

Despite their heavy prevalence within society, there is little critical attention given to stock images. More research is required to examine the current imagery used in public representations of mental illness. Stock images are an under researched area of data which should be explored more thoroughly to better understand how they contribute to public attitudes and

beliefs. This paper joins the growing call for the critical examination of stock imagery depicting concepts around health and wellbeing, such as mental illness.

6. References

Armani, S. K. (2017). Coexisting definitions of mental illness: legal, medical, and layperson understandings paving a path for jury bias. *Southern California Review of Law and Social Justice*, *26*(3), 213.

Bharadwaj, P., Pai, M. M., & Suziedelyte, A. (2017). Mental health stigma. *Economics Letters*, *159*, 57-60. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econlet.2017.06.028

Bucher, H.-J., & Schumacher, P. (2006). The relevance of attention for selecting news content. An eye-tracking study on attention patterns in the reception of print and online media. *31*(3), 347-368. https://doi.org/doi:10.1515/COMMUN.2006.022

Chen, M., & Lawrie, S. (2017). Newspaper depictions of mental and physical health. *BJPsych Bulletin*, *41*(6), 308-313. https://doi.org/10.1192/pb.bp.116.054775

Gillett, R. (2014). *Why We're More Likely To Remember Content With Images And Video (Infographic)*. FastCompany.com. Retrieved 16th April from https://www.fastcompany.com/3035856/why-were-more-likely-to-remember-content-with-images-and-video-infogr

Goulden, R., Corker, E., Evans-Lacko, S., Rose, D., Thornicroft, G., & Henderson, C. (2011). Newspaper coverage of mental illness in the UK, 1992-2008. *BMC Public Health*, *11*(1), 796. https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-11-796

Harvey, K., & Brookes, G. (2018). Looking Through Dementia: What Do Commercial Stock Images Tell Us About Aging and Cognitive Decline? *Qualitative Health Research*, *29*(7), 987-1003. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732318814542

Hawkins, K. (2015). *Mental health and the death of the 'headclutcher' picture*. bbc.co.uk. Retrieved 6th May 2021 from https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-ouch-32084441

IPSO. (2021). *Editors Code Of Practice*. Independant Press Standards Organisation. Retrieved 28th April 2021 from https://www.ipso.co.uk/editors-code-of-practice/#Discrimination

Jeong, S. H. (2008). Visual Metaphor in Advertising: Is the Persuasive Effect Attributable to Visual Argumentation or Metaphorical Rhetoric? *Journal of Marketing Communications*, *14*(1), 59-73. https://doi.org/10.1080/14697010701717488

Jones, S., Howard, L., & Thornicroft, G. (2008). 'Diagnostic overshadowing': worse physical health care for people with mental illness.

Klin, A., & Lemish, D. (2008). Mental disorders stigma in the media: review of studies on production, content, and influences. *Journal of Health Communication*, *Jul-Aug;13(5)*, 434-449.

Kress, G., & Van Leeuwen, T. (2005). *Reading Images : The Grammar of Visual Design*. Routledge.

Lazard, A. J., Bamgbade, B. A., Sontag, J. M., & Brown, C. (2016). Using Visual Metaphors in Health Messages: A Strategy to Increase Effectiveness for Mental Illness Communication. *Journal of Health Communication*, *21*(12), 1260-1268. https://doi.org/10.1080/10810730.2016.1245374

Link, B. G., & Phelan, J. C. (2001). Conceptualizing Stigma. *Annual review of sociology*, *27*(1), 363-385. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.27.1.363

Machin, D. (2004). Building the World's Visual Language: The Increasing Global Importance of Image Banks in Corporate Media. *Visual Communication*, *3*(3), 316-336. https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357204045785

Mental Health Task Force, U. (2016). Five year forward view for mental health for the NHS in England. Retrieved 11 January 2021, from https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Mental-Health-Taskforce-FYFV-final.pdf

Muñoz, C. L., & Towner, T. L. (2017). The Image is the Message: Instagram Marketing and the 2016 Presidential Primary Season. *Journal of Political Marketing*, *16*(3-4), 290-318. https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2017.1334254

NHS. (2018). *NHS welcomes record high recovery rate for common mental illness*. National Health Service. Retrieved 20/01/21 from https://www.england.nhs.uk/2018/02/mental-illness-recovery/

Pescosolido, B. A., Medina, T. R., Martin, J. K., & Long, J. S. (2013). The "backbone" of stigma: identifying the global core of public prejudice associated with mental illness. *American journal of public health*, *103*(5), 853-860.

Phillips, B. J. (2003). Understanding Visual Metaphor in Advertising. In L. M. Scott & R. Batra (Eds.), *Persuasive imagery: A consumer response perspective* (pp. 297-308). Routledge.

Rea, D. O. (2021). Mental Health Impacts From COVID-19 and the Necessary Public Health Measures. *Clinical nurse specialist*, *35*(1), 18-22.

Ritchie, H., & Roser, M. (2018). *Mental Health*. Our World in Data. Retrieved 11 January 2021 from https://ourworldindata.org/mental-health

Rueve, M. E., & Welton, R. S. (2008). Violence and mental illness. *Psychiatry (Edgmont (Pa. : Township))*, *5*(5), 34-48.

Rüsch, N., Angermeyer, M. C., & Corrigan, P. W. (2005). Mental illness stigma: Concepts, consequences, and initiatives to reduce stigma. *European Psychiatry*, *20*(8), 529-539. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eurpsy.2005.04.004

Salzer, M. S., Brusilovskiy, E., & Townley, G. (2018). National estimates of recovery-remission from serious mental illness. *Psychiatric services*, *69*(5), 523-528.

Scherer, K. R. (2005). What are emotions? And how can they be measured? *Social Science Information*, *44*(4), 695-729. https://doi.org/10.1177/0539018405058216

Sheehan, L., Nieweglowski, K., & Corrigan, P. W. (2016). Structures and types of stigma. In W. Gaebel, W. Rossler, & N. Sartorius (Eds.), *The stigma of mental illness - end of the story?* (pp. 43-60). Springer.

Slade, M., & Longden, E. (2015). Empirical evidence about recovery and mental health. *BMC psychiatry*, *15*, 285-285. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-015-0678-4

Stout, P. A., Villegas, J., & Jennings, N. A. (2004). Images of Mental Illness in the Media: Identifying Gaps in the Research. *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, *30*(3), 543-561. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.schbul.a007099

Svensén, T. (2020). Do we still fly over the cuckoo's nest? : Stock images and the reinforcement of stigma. In (pp. 24): University of Hertfordshire.

TTC. (2021). Guidelines: Media and Mental Health. In T. T. Change (Ed.), (pp. 4). Online: Time To Change.

About the Authors:

Author 1 Laura is a graphic designer, research assistant and PHD student at Manchester Metropolitan University. Her practice based PHD is investigating how visual communication can affect stigma towards mental illness.