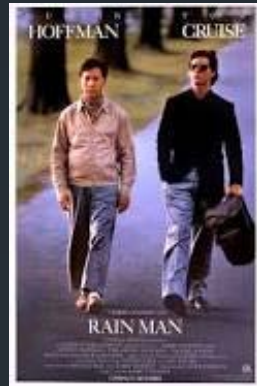
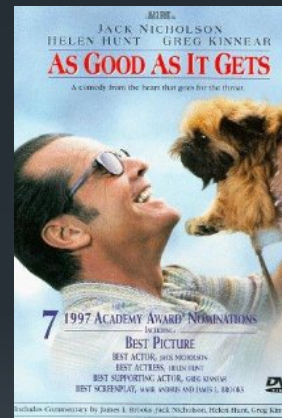


Media depiction of specific psychiatric disorders



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Previous findings on media depictions of mental illness

- Primarily films, TV, and newspapers
- Findings:
 - Negative depictions far outnumber positive ones
 - Association with violence and crime
 - Frequent use of stigmatizing slang (“schizo,” “psycho,” etc.)
 - Little evidence of successful treatment or recovery
 - In children’s media, as well as adult media
 - In news, little inclusion of perspectives of people with lived experience of mental illness

Need for studies of individual disorders

- Most media presentations do not specify the disorders being discussed or depicted.
- Those presented tend to have severe and psychotic mental illnesses.
- So previous studies of the depiction of “mental illness” are mostly describing depiction of psychosis, not of all forms of mental illness.
- It is possible that some disorders fare better in their portrayal, but this is lost when all disorders are lumped together in the general category of “mental illness”



So it may be useful to ask....

- **Have there been studies that look at the depiction of specific disorders?**
- **If so, what have they found?**

Studies published involving empirical assessment of the portrayal of specific disorders--since 2000.

- Searched PsycInfo library database using keyword combinations
 - Media depiction and _____
 - Media and _____
 - Films and _____; Movies and _____
 - Television and _____; TV and _____
 - Newspapers and _____
- Disorders put in blank =
 - Depression
 - Schizophrenia
 - Bipolar Disorder
 - Obsessive-compulsive disorder; OCD)

Available studies

- 21 studies identified across the five disorders (including two dissertations).
- The majority (16) were studies of news content.
- Only 5 studies looked at entertainment media.
- The most common disorder studied was schizophrenia, with 15 studies (two with the same sample media sample).
- Number of articles for other disorders:
 - OCD—3 (1 dissertation)
 - Depression—2
 - Bipolar disorder—1 (dissertation)



Results for schizophrenia news coverage

News media from 10 different countries
examined

- United Kingdom (3)
- United States (2)
- Brazil (2)
- Australia
- Belgium
- Canada
- Italy
- Norway
- South Korea
- Turkey

Results for schizophrenia news coverage

- **Studies looked at many different things**
 - **There was frequent consideration of metaphorical use of the terms schizophrenia and schizophrenic (11 studies)**
 - Use ranged from 11% to 52% of articles
 - Metaphorical uses were in fashion, weather, sports, politics, and arts
 - **Schizophrenia Headline:** "Our Christmas Schizophrenia"
 - **There was also consideration of overall positive vs. negative (or stigmatizing) references (7 studies)**
 - Negative-rated articles were common but not the majority (14-46%), although in one article 80% of metaphorical uses judged to be negative
 - **And frequent notation of connection with violence (9 studies)**
 - Ranged from 20% to 47% of articles
 - **Schizophrenia Headline:** "Psychologist says Lanza likely a schizophrenic"

Schizophrenia news-- comparisons

- **Chopra & Doody (2007) compared UK newspapers from a high crime area with those from a lower crime area**
 - And found no differences in types of number of negative stories)
- **Clement & Foster (2008) compared UK 1996 stories with 2005 stories**
 - And found no differences in use of stigmatizing descriptors when type of publication was taken into account
- **Park et al. (2012) compared South Korean articles from 2000-2004 with those from 2005-2010**
 - And found an increase in negative references
- **Vahabzadeh et al. (2011) compared U.S. articles from 2000 to those from 2010**
 - And found fewer articles in 2010 and a lower percentage of articles connected with crime
- **Duckworth et al. (2003) compared metaphorical use of term cancer (or cancerous) with metaphorical use of schizophrenia or schizophrenic in U.S. papers**
 - And found far more use of metaphorical use of the latter (1% vs. 28%)
- **Thys (2013) compared Belgian coverage of schizophrenia with coverage of autism**
 - And found many more negative articles for schizophrenia (42% to 10%).

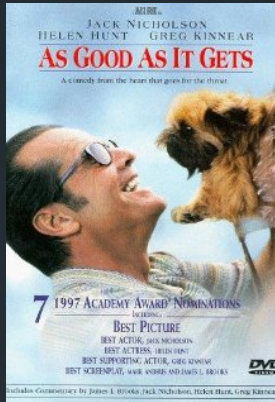
Results for schizophrenia-- Entertainment media (film)

- Owen (2012)
 - Keyword search of internet and print databases for English language commercial movies between 1990 and 2010
 - Movies were included if a character's behavior was attributed to schizophrenia OR if a main character met DSM-IV criteria for schizophrenia
 - 42 characters from 41 movies were identified
 - Names of the films were not provided
 - Delusions were the most frequently shown symptom (67%).
 - 35 (83%) of the characters displayed violent behavior.
 - About one in four committed suicide.
 - One quarter of the films implied traumatic life event as a cause.
 - Psychotropic drugs were the most common treatment shown.

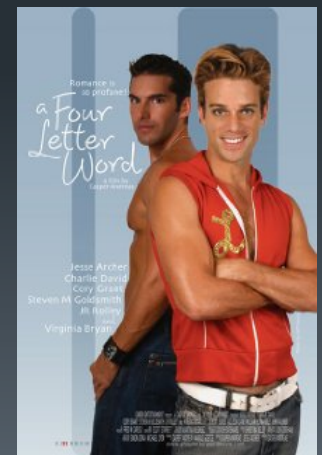
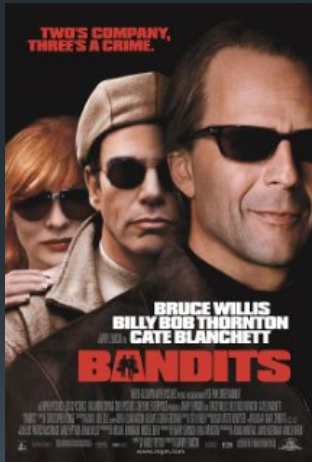
Results for OCD

- **Three studies**
 - All U.S. studies
 - One dissertation
 - All involved entertainment media.
- **One Hoffner & Cohen (2012) was a study of fan responses to the TV series, *Monk*, focusing on viewer reactions to the character rather than on the character himself.**

Fennell & Boyd, 2013



- Looked at films from 1970s to 2000s plus Monk
- 39 characters studied in 34 films (list of films not provided)
- Most (98%) showed abnormal thoughts and urges
- Most were relatively well-functioning (e.g., had good grooming, held jobs)
- Over half did not utilize professional treatment
- Most common treatments were therapy and medication
- More than half acted aggressively toward others and/or engaged in a criminal act
- Most of the characters (88%) were disparaged or ridiculed by others



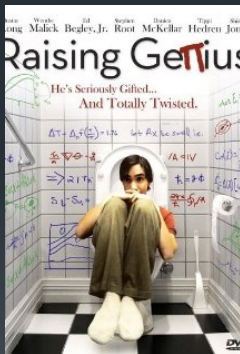
Siegel, 2012 (dissertation)



- 11 films between 2000 and 2010 Identified through IMBD search, google confirmation, and pre-screening

- Findings:

- Racial skew: All Caucasian
- Symptoms relatively accurate—compulsions and obsessions shown
 - But also inaccuracies, with symptoms including hallucinations, tics, and anger control difficulties (36%)
- No indication of etiology for most
- Most (8) received no treatment; for those who did, it tended not to generate improvement
- More positive traits for and positive reactions to characters than negative ones.
- But more than half (6) shown as violent



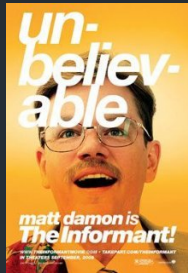
Results for depression

- **Only two studies--one in Australia, one in Sweden**
 - **Both focused on news media**
- **Bengs et al. (2014)**
 - **Looked at gender differences in portrayal of depression in 2002 Swedish newspapers**
 - **And found support for gender stereotypes**
 - **E.g., few explanations offered for men's depression, but two thirds of articles about women offered explanations such as biological factors or external stress**

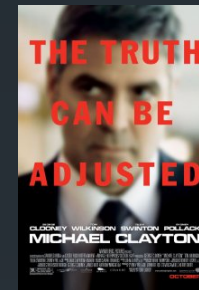
Results for depression

- **Francis et al. (2005)**
 - **Looked at Australian non-fiction media for items relating to mental illness and specific disorders**
 - **Depression was second largest category of articles (after unspecified), with 19% of all articles (vs. 5% on schizophrenia)**
 - **Causes of depression were described more frequently (33%) than symptoms (13%) and most judged accurate**
 - **Treatment information was found in less than one quarter of depression articles (22%) but one third of those judged inaccurate (e.g., herbal supplements).**

Bipolar Disorder (Corbett, 2012)



- English language theatrical films 2000-2009
 - IMBD search plus plot summary, Google search, and pre-screening confirmation
 - 7 films, eight characters



- Main findings:
 - Characters all Caucasian.
 - Emphasis on manic symptoms; rarely includes depressive symptoms.
 - Most characters (7) received treatment, but only one showed lasting recovery
 - More than half (5) were violent toward others.



FINDINGS ACROSS STUDIES

- **Violence and aggression are associated with all mental disorders, not just schizophrenia or psychosis**
- **Successful treatment and recovery tend not to be depicted**
- **There is some accuracy in presentation of symptoms characteristic of the individual disorders, but also a good deal of inaccurate information about symptoms and behaviors shown in addition to the defining ones.**
- **In entertainment media, there is little representation that mental illness occurs among minority populations.**
- **In news media, there is limited inclusion of the voices and perspectives of people with lived experience of mental illnesses.**

GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

- There are few studies that provide direct comparisons of one disorder's depiction with another's or of different media.
- There are relatively few studies of entertainment media.
- There are relatively few studies for any disorders other than schizophrenia. Depression and bipolar disorder, especially, are understudied.
- More consideration is needed of changes over time.
- More consideration of far-reaching media other than news and films is needed—e.g., TV and internet.