

## Public Abstract

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Title:Photojournalism and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Understanding How Photographs Can Contribute to Stereotypes

This study analyzed the visual characteristics of 971 photographs of persons with post-traumatic stress disorder published in 14 major U.S. newspapers. The goal of this study was to determine whether certain characteristics were common among the photographs, and if these characteristics correlated with certain photographic moods and media frames that could be perpetuating stereotypes of PTSD and mental illness. Results found that a few media frames are being employed by photographers and photo editors, such as males and veterans being the most likely people to have PTSD. The study also suggests that the news media may be leaning slightly toward depicting persons with PTSD as depressed, but it also shows an increasing tendency to show human resilience. This study helps explain how the use of media frames could be causing photographers and photo editors to contribute to stereotypes of PTSD, and how these stereotypes could be detrimental to society. As a content analysis, the study contains details that could help inform journalists of exactly how they are employing these media frames. This research could also be used to help develop a scale on which visual characteristics correlate with certain photographic moods.