

From: Phillip Saperia
Sent: Wednesday, January 28, 2009 11:11 AM
To: voicers@edit.nydailynews.com
Subject: Letter to the Editor - People with Mental Illness

We are troubled by the editorial policy of the Daily News that promotes and perpetuates stigma against people with mental illness. Your headlines, editorial bias in news articles and choice of letters to publish, for the most part are yellow journalism at its worst.

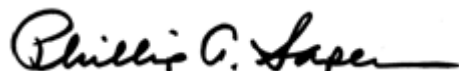
Calling names in print like “wacko” and “crazy” do not educate the public about the facts that the majority of people of mental illness are more likely to be victims of crime than perpetrators. It is a fact that people with mental illness commit fewer crimes than the general population, that the vast majority of them live peaceful and productive lives in neighborhoods of our city, work, go to school and participate in programs that assist them in their recovery.

The City/State Panel Report on Mental Health and Criminal Justice, which you indirectly praise, made policy suggestions and directions to help those few who come into contact with the criminal justice system. Efforts are being made to close whatever gaps that exist and to provide treatment to those who need it.

Violence happens all over this city. Rarely is such violence committed by people with mental illness, although you seem to keep a roster of those acts that are. We wonder if you keep a roster of names of perpetrators of crimes of violence by other residents of our city who have no contact with the mental health system.

We would be glad to put you in contact with thousands of people living with mental illness—as well as providers of service in every community, family members, loved ones—who would be glad to talk to you about their treatment, rehabilitation and recovery. That is the common path of people who have mental illness. We wish the Daily News would tell the whole story!

Sincerely,



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