

May 23, 1997

Editor
Canadian Jewish News
Fax: 416-391-0829

re Schizophrenia ad

Editor:

The "Schizophrenia" in The Jewish Community" ad in the May 22/97 edition (p.35) of the Canadian Jewish News is extremely misleading and offensive, if not antisemitic or racist. The ad perpetuates the myth of "schizophrenia", an alleged "mental illness" or "mental disorder" whose existence has never been scientifically proved. After over 90 years of research, there is still no independent diagnostic test of "schizophrenia", there never will be because "schizophrenia" does not exist as a disease. The so-called "signs" or "symptoms" of "schizophrenia" are in fact examples of alienation or dissident behaviour.

The ad also perpetuates the myth that the main cause of "schizophrenia" is biological or genetic. There is not one shred of credible or compelling scientific evidence to support the alleged genetic basis or familial inheritance of "schizophrenia". The genetic cause of "schizophrenia" was originally propagated by Ernst Rudin, a prominent psychiatrist in Nazi Germany who with many other high-ranking German doctors and psychiatrists supported the mass murder of thousands of "schizophrenics" and other psychiatric patients ("useless eaters", "life unworthy of life")--the infamous "euthanasia"/T-4 program, a prelude to The Holocaust. Hitler gave Rudin a special medal, and this Nazi is still cited in the biological psychiatry literature!

Despite the fact that there is no credible scientific evidence to support the claim that Jews are particularly susceptible to "schizophrenia", the ad asks "Ashkenazi Jewish families with TWO or MORE LIVING SIBLINGS who have a

diagnosis of schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder" to volunteer for the study. This is outrageous and morally offensive and reminds me of the notoriously unethical, barbaric and deadly twin studies of Mengele at Auschwitz. I hope no CJN readers volunteer.

As a psychiatric survivor who once was falsely labelled "schizophrenic", forcibly treated with subcoma insulin shock and incarcerated for over a year, I find this ad - submitted and paid for by Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland - not only misleading but extremely offensive. As a direct result of being labelled "schizophrenic", millions of people in Canada, the United States and Europe have been seriously abused, stigmatized, marginalized and discriminated against in society, and sometimes permanently harmed by brain-damaging psychiatric "treatments" such as the neuroleptic drugs ("medication") and electroconvulsive brainwashing ("electroconvulsive therapy").

"Schizophrenia" is the most pejorative and stigmatizing label in psychiatry. These statements by Dr. Thomas Szasz, prominent psychiatric critic, are worth quoting: "'Schizophrenia' is the greatest scientific scandal of our scientific age. ...'Schizophrenia' is a strategic label, like 'JEW' was in Nazi Germany. ...It meant 'gas him!', 'take him away', 'get him out of my sight!'" [interview in The New Physician(1969), Schizophrenia: The Sacred Symbol of Psychiatry(1976)]

I ask that you immediately withdraw this ad and write a letter of complaint to Johns Hopkins.

Don Weitz
#802-38 Orchard View Blvd.
Toronto, Ontario M4R 2G3
tel: 416-545-0796, e-mail: dweitz@interlog.com