

Folie à deux, Media Framing, and Journalist's Dilemma in The Narratives of *June and Jenifer*

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Keywords: Agency, Ethical Challenges, Framing, Idioglossia, Isolation, Journalism, Shared Perception

Article Information			
Received	16 th Jun 2026	Accepted	17 th Aug 2026
Published	30 th Sep 2026		

Abstract

This work titled *Folie à deux*, media framing, and the journalist's dilemma, examines how a purposively sampled core journalistic narrative about June and Jenifer mediates a co constructed shared perception and the ethical stakes of its public translation. Drawing on a population of 12 public narratives and a single information rich case, the study synthesizes clinical literature on shared psychosis and media framing scholarship to interrogate mechanisms of relational reinforcement, journalistic selection, and stigma production. Three major findings emerge: (1) the twins' shared perception is relationally produced through idioglossia, mirrored agency, dependency and social isolation; (2) journalistic framing operates as a hybrid clinical-human interest-exoticizing frame that alternately individualizes and pathologises; (3) reporting generates ethical dilemmas around consent, sensationalism, confidentiality, and attribution of agency. Quantitatively, the study's population comprised 12 narratives, the sample was n=1 core feature, and the empirical review referenced over 30 clinical dyads and 216 media items in comparative studies, situating the case within broader patterns. The paper concludes with three targeted recommendations for clinical teams, newsrooms, and interdisciplinary partnerships to align therapeutic, editorial, and public interest responsibilities, arguing that only coordinated narrative repair, harm minimizing framing, and co-produced storytelling can mitigate epistemic injustice and reduce stigma; implementation metrics and pilot evaluations should be embedded to measure impact, reported publicly.

Introduction

Human societies have always wrestled with the instability of perception and the fragility of what is taken as "reality." Across disciplines, from philosophy to psychiatry, scholars have observed that belief is rarely an isolated cognitive act; rather, it is socially mediated, reinforced, and sometimes distorted through interaction. Classical epistemology already warned against the dangers of subjective certainty detached from empirical validation, a concern later echoed in modern psychological studies of delusion and cognitive bias. Within this intellectual tradition, the study of abnormal or distorted shared beliefs offers a particularly illuminating window into how reality itself can be co-constructed rather than independently verified.

One of the most compelling clinical formulations of this phenomenon is *Folie à deux*, a condition in which two individuals come to share the same delusional system. First described by Charles Lasègue and Jean-Pierre Falret, the disorder demonstrates how proximity, emotional dependence, and isolation can produce a closed circuit of belief, resistant to external correction (Arnone et al., 2006). While traditionally treated as a rare psychiatric anomaly, subsequent studies have shown that its underlying logic, shared conviction sustained by mutual reinforcement—extends beyond the clinic into everyday social life, where individuals and groups may construct and defend alternative realities.

It is precisely within this expanded understanding that the contemporary relevance of shared perception becomes evident. In an age defined by rapid information flows and competing narratives, the line between private conviction and public truth is increasingly blurred. Individuals no longer encounter reality directly; they encounter interpretations of reality, often mediated, curated, and strategically framed. What begins as a personal belief can, through repetition and reinforcement, assume the force of collective certainty. Thus, the phenomenon once confined to the intimacy of two minds now finds echoes in broader communicative spaces, where narratives are not only shared but amplified.

Against this broader canvas emerges the case of June and Jenifer, whose intertwined narratives form the empirical heart of this study. Their story presents more than a mere coincidence of perspective; it suggests a convergence of interpretation so pronounced that it invites interrogation. Whether their shared outlook is to be understood as psychological alignment, experiential convergence, or a form of mutually sustained conviction, it raises critical questions about how individuals come to inhabit the same interpretive world. More importantly, their case does not remain confined to their private interaction; it is brought into the public domain through the intervention of a journalist, thereby transforming a shared experience into a mediated narrative.

The presence of the journalist introduces a decisive layer of complexity. In translating the experiences of June and Jenifer for a wider audience, the journalist does not merely report; he selects, arranges, and subtly interprets. The narrative that reaches the public is therefore not a neutral mirror of events but a constructed account shaped by choices of emphasis, language, and context. This mediating role raises pressing questions: To what extent does the journalist validate or challenge the shared perspective of the subjects? Does the act of reporting reinforce their alignment, or does it subject it to critical scrutiny? And at what point does responsible storytelling risk becoming inadvertent amplification of a potentially distorted reality?

It is within this tension, between shared perception and mediated representation, that this study is situated. By examining the narratives of June and Jenifer alongside the interpretive role of the journalist, the research seeks to illuminate the delicate boundary between belief and reality, experience and narration. In doing so, it moves from the general problem of shared conviction to the particular dynamics of a lived case, interrogating how meaning is constructed, sustained, and communicated. The study, therefore, is not merely about two individuals or a single narrative; it is an inquiry into the processes through which realities are jointly formed and publicly framed in the contemporary world.

Statement of the Problem

The convergence of perception between June and Jenifer, suggestive of dynamics akin to *Folie à deux*, presents a complex interpretive challenge at the intersection of psychology, communication, and journalism. While shared belief systems may emerge within intimate relational contexts, their transition into the public sphere through journalistic mediation introduces additional layers of selection, framing, and interpretation that can reshape their meaning. In the absence of a coherent analytical framework for understanding how such shared realities are constructed, represented, and evaluated, journalism risks either uncritical amplification of potentially distorted perceptions or premature dismissal of subjective experiences that may hold contextual validity. This tension generates a methodological and ethical dilemma concerning how truth is negotiated in mediated narratives. Consequently, there is a need to critically examine how the intertwined perceptions of June and Jenifer are transformed through media framing and what implications this has for journalistic responsibility and public understanding.

Aim and objectives of the Study

To examine how shared perception between June and Jenifer is constructed and mediated through journalistic framing, and its implications for truth and representation. Specifically, the objectives were:

1. To analyze the nature of the shared perception between June and Jenifer.

2. To examine how the journalist frames and presents their narratives.
3. To evaluate the ethical implications of mediating such narratives in journalism.

Research Questions

1. What characterizes the shared perception between June and Jenifer?
2. How does the journalist frame their narratives for public understanding?
3. What ethical challenges arise in reporting narratives that reflect shared but contested realities?

Review of the Literature

❖ Historical–Critical Narrative Analysis of *Folie à deux*

Recent psychiatric scholarship continues to conceptualize induced or shared psychotic phenomena within the diagnostic category of *Folie à deux*, now more formally described as “induced delusional disorder” in contemporary diagnostic systems. The American Psychiatric Association (2022) maintains that such conditions involve the transference of delusional beliefs between closely associated individuals under conditions of emotional dependency and social isolation. However, recent clinical reinterpretations have shifted emphasis away from rigid nosological classification toward relational and environmental explanations, highlighting trauma bonding, identity fusion, and epistemic enclosure as central mechanisms (Menculini et al., 2021; Aziz & Nadeem, 2022; WHO, 2023).

Within this evolving clinical discourse, the case of June Gibbons and Jennifer Gibbons remains one of the most frequently analyzed dyadic narratives in both psychiatric and cultural literature. Recent psychological studies of extreme twin dyads suggest that intense sibling interdependence, especially under conditions of social exclusion and racial marginalization, can produce self-contained communicative systems that function as closed symbolic worlds (Segal, 2020; Davis & Brown, 2022). In this reading, the Silent Twins are no longer interpreted solely as clinical anomalies but as cases of relational identity consolidation in which linguistic, emotional, and imaginative boundaries become mutually reinforced.

Contemporary narrative psychology further reframes such phenomena by emphasizing the role of meaning-making in identity formation. Recent extensions of Bruner’s narrative theory argue that individuals construct “coherent but closed narrative worlds” when external validation is absent or hostile, leading to internally consistent but socially isolated belief systems (Herman, 2021; McAdams, 2023). Similarly, constructivist approaches in clinical psychology stress that reality perception is continuously shaped through relational feedback loops, especially in emotionally intense dyads (Neimeyer, 2021; Gergen, 2022). These perspectives complicate earlier psychiatric interpretations by suggesting that the Gibbons twins’ communicative withdrawal may represent not only pathology but also adaptive narrative enclosure under conditions of social rejection.

In communication and media scholarship, recent empirical work on framing has significantly expanded classical models. While Goffman (1974) and Entman (1993) established framing as a process of selection and salience, more recent studies demonstrate how algorithmic and participatory media environments intensify framing effects, particularly in the representation of psychological deviance (Scheufele & Iyengar, 2021; Chong & Druckman, 2022). Digital media research further shows that emotionally charged narratives tend to be amplified within networked platforms, reinforcing simplified interpretations of complex psychological realities (Bennett & Livingston, 2021; Chadwick, 2023). This has direct implications for cases like the Silent Twins, where media representations oscillate between clinical pathologization and aestheticised tragedy.

Recent journalism studies further complicate this interpretive terrain by emphasizing the inherently constructed nature of news narratives. Carlson (2022) and Zelizer (2021) argue that journalism now operates within “interpretive infrastructures,” where meaning is co-produced by journalists, audiences, and platform systems rather than transmitted unilaterally. This aligns with Schudson’s (2020) updated formulation of

journalism as structured interpretation under institutional constraint. In such contexts, narratives involving ambiguous psychological states—such as those attributed to the Silent Twins—become sites of epistemic negotiation rather than straightforward reporting.

More recent interdisciplinary scholarship (2023–2025) has further extended the concept of shared belief systems beyond psychiatry into cognitive and media ecology. Emerging studies suggest that phenomena structurally similar to *Folie à deux* may occur in digitally mediated environments through feedback loops of reinforcement, emotional validation, and epistemic closure (Dohnány et al., 2025; Lipińska & Brosnahan, 2025). While the Gibbons twins predate digital ecosystems, retrospective analyses increasingly interpret their case as an analogue model of closed communicative systems, where dyadic reinforcement substitutes for external reality testing.

In synthesis, the literature converges on a contemporary understanding that transcends strict disciplinary boundaries. The Silent Twins case cannot be adequately explained through classical psychiatric frameworks alone, nor reduced to purely sociocultural metaphor. Instead, recent scholarship positions it at the intersection of relational psychology, narrative identity theory, and mediated framing processes. This interdisciplinary repositioning reflects a broader shift in 21st-century scholarship toward continuum-based models of cognition, where shared perception, identity formation, and mediated reality are understood as dynamically co-constructed processes rather than fixed pathological categories.

Empirical Review

Silveira and Seeman (1995) conducted a critical clinical review on shared psychotic disorder, aimed at synthesizing diagnostic and behavioral patterns of *Folie à deux*. The study was grounded in psychodynamic relational theory and employed a systematic clinical literature review design. The population consisted of published psychiatric case reports of induced delusional disorder across Europe and North America. A purposive inclusion strategy was used, selecting clinically validated dyadic cases. The study did not report a single sample size but synthesized over 30 documented clinical dyads. Major findings revealed that shared perception emerges in emotionally isolated dyads with strong dependency and limited external social contact. The conclusion was that shared delusions are sustained through relational reinforcement rather than independent psychotic onset, and the major recommendation was early relational intervention rather than isolated psychiatric treatment.

Kendler, Masterson, and Davis (1986) examined the clinical structure of induced psychotic disorder with the aim of identifying diagnostic consistency across cases. The theoretical framework was biopsychosocial psychiatry. The study used a comparative case-series design involving psychiatric hospital records. The population included documented dyadic psychotic cases from inpatient psychiatric institutions. A purposive sampling method was used based on confirmed clinical diagnosis. The sample size comprised multiple case dyads (exact aggregated clinical series across hospital records). Findings showed that shared perception is characterized by dominance-submission dynamics, emotional dependency, and isolation from external reality testing. The conclusion emphasized that *Folie à deux* is best understood as a relational transmission disorder, recommending family-based therapeutic intervention.

Mentjox and colleagues (1993) investigated the mechanisms underlying shared delusional systems. The aim was to identify relational and cognitive mechanisms sustaining shared perception. The theoretical basis was cognitive-Behavioural psychiatric theory. The design was a retrospective clinical case analysis. The population consisted of hospital-documented dyadic psychiatric cases in Europe. Sampling was purposive based on diagnostic confirmation. The sample size included multiple dyads extracted from psychiatric archives. Findings indicated that shared perception is maintained through selective reinforcement, social isolation, and cognitive narrowing of reality testing. The conclusion emphasized that treatment must address both individuals simultaneously, and not separately.

Entman (1993) aimed to clarify the concept of media framing in communication theory. The study is grounded in constructivist communication theory and used a conceptual analytical design synthesizing communication literature. The population consisted of political and media communication texts in US media systems. Sampling was theoretical selection of framing instances across media reports. Sample size was not numerical but conceptual corpus-based analysis of framing cases. Findings showed that framing operates through selection, emphasis, exclusion, and salience building. The conclusion was that media framing shapes perception of reality by defining problems and moral judgments. Recommendation emphasized systematic awareness of framing bias in journalism.

McCombs and Shaw (1972) examined how media influences public perception. The aim was to determine the relationship between media salience and public opinion. The theoretical framework was agenda-setting theory. The design was a quantitative survey correlation study during a US election. The population included voting public in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Sampling was stratified random sampling of registered voters. The sample size was 100+ respondents combined with media content analysis units. Findings showed a strong correlation between media emphasis and public issue salience. The conclusion was that media does not tell people what to think, but what to think about. Recommendation emphasized media responsibility in issue prioritization.

Scheufele and Tewksbury examined the cognitive effects of media framing. The aim was to integrate framing with agenda-setting and priming theories. The theoretical framework combined cognitive psychology and communication theory. The design was a theoretical synthesis supported by empirical meta-analysis of framing experiments. The population included published experimental communication studies across decades. Sampling was systematic literature review. Sample size was dozens of empirical studies aggregated. Findings showed that framing significantly influences interpretation and attribution of meaning. Conclusion emphasized that media framing actively structures cognitive processing. Recommendation was for ethical framing transparency in journalism.

McGinty, Kennedy-Hendricks, Barry, & Niederdeppe (2016) examined how news media frame mental illness in relation to violence, with the aim of determining how journalistic representation influences public stigma and policy attitudes. The study was grounded in stigma theory (Link & Phelan, 2001) and framing theory (Entman, 1993). A quantitative content analysis design was employed. The population consisted of news articles from 14 major U.S. media outlets between 1997 and 2012, with a systematic random sampling strategy selecting a 25% sample of relevant reports. The study analyzed hundreds of coded news stories ($n > 400$) focusing on mental illness–violence associations. Findings revealed that journalists disproportionately framed mental illness through the lens of dangerousness rather than structural or therapeutic explanations, particularly after mass violence events. The study concluded that such framing produces sustained public stigma and distorts understanding of psychiatric conditions. The major recommendation was that journalists adopt contextualized, non-associative framing practices that decouple mental illness from violence narratives.

Masinga et al. (2022) investigated how schizophrenia is framed in South African print media, with the aim of assessing whether journalistic representation reinforces or mitigates stigma. The study was grounded in framing theory (Entman, 1993) and social representation theory (Moscovici, 1984). A retrospective quantitative–qualitative content analysis design was adopted. The population consisted of 216 newspaper articles drawn from 20 South African newspapers over an 11-year period (2004–2014). A systematic sampling technique using the SABINET media archive was employed. The sample size comprised 216 coded news stories. Findings revealed that schizophrenia was predominantly framed through causation narratives linked to substance abuse and cultural deviance, with limited biomedical or recovery-oriented framing. The study concluded that South African journalism tends to reproduce stigmatizing explanatory models that reinforce social exclusion of persons with psychotic disorders. The authors recommended stronger collaboration

between journalists, psychiatrists, and public health communicators to improve epistemic accuracy in mental health reporting.

Kristofco and Moore (2023) examined how different media frames influence audience perceptions of mental illness, with the aim of identifying ethical implications of narrative construction in journalism. The study was grounded in framing theory and attribution theory of media effects. A controlled experimental design was used. The population consisted of university-based participants exposed to manipulated news stories involving celebrity mental health disclosures. A random assignment sampling method allocated participants into positive, negative, and neutral framing conditions. The sample size included multiple experimental groups ($n \approx 150\text{--}300$ participants across conditions, depending on frame exposure groupings). Findings showed that negative framing significantly increased perceptions of dangerousness, unpredictability, and social distance, while positive framing reduced stigma and increased empathy. The study concluded that journalistic framing is not ethically neutral but actively shapes moral judgement and stigma formation. The major recommendation was that journalists should adopt ethically guided framing standards that prioritize harm reduction and representational balance in mental health reporting.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on an interdisciplinary theoretical synthesis drawing primarily from Erving Goffman's theory of framing and social constructivist epistemology, with conceptual reinforcement from the clinical understanding of *Folie à deux*. Goffman's framing theory provides the analytical lens for understanding how reality is organized, selected, and made meaningful through communicative structures, particularly within journalistic mediation. Complementarily, social constructivism posits that reality is not merely discovered but actively produced through intersubjective processes of meaning-making, thus allowing for the interpretation of shared perception as a socially sustained phenomenon rather than an isolated psychological anomaly. The clinical notion of shared psychosis is not applied in a diagnostic sense but as a metaphorical and analytical heuristic for examining how closely bonded individuals may converge in perception under conditions of emotional reinforcement and narrative closure. Together, these frameworks allow the study to interrogate how the narratives of June and Jenifer are constructed, stabilized, and re-presented through journalistic discourse, while also accounting for the epistemic tensions between lived experience and mediated truth.

Research Design

The population of the study comprised twelve (12) publicly accessible journalistic and digital narratives on the June and Jenifer case, drawn from print, online, and broadcast commentaries that have engaged with or interpreted the story. From this population, a non-probability purposive sampling technique was adopted, guided by the principle of information richness and analytical relevance rather than statistical representation. The sample was one (1) core journalistic narrative, deliberately selected because it provides the most comprehensive, internally coherent, and detailed account of the interactions between June, Jenifer, and the mediating journalist, thereby serving as a bounded case suitable for intensive qualitative interrogation. This selection is methodologically justified within qualitative case study tradition, where a single, information-rich unit can adequately sustain deep interpretive analysis and achieve analytical saturation in relation to framing, narrative construction, and mediated representation.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Research Question 1 — Shared perception between June and Jenifer

Observed Dimension	Evidence from core narrative
Mutual exclusivity of speech	Spoke only to each other; withdrew from others.
Private communicative code	Rapid, idiosyncratic speech interpreted as private language.
Mirrored identity and agency	Behavioral mirroring; joint creative authorship.
Shared pact and interdependence	Reported pact dynamics shaping life choices.

The core narrative documents a deeply enmeshed dyadic world in which both sisters prioritized their shared code and mutual recognition over external social ties; this produced a collective subjectivity where identity and agency are co constructed rather than individuated. The account emphasizes idioglossia/cryptophasia and mirrored behavior as mechanisms that sustained their shared perception and protected them from hostile external environments.

Research Question 2 — Journalist framing for public understanding

Framing Device	Manifestation in the article
Clinical/psychiatric frame	Use of hospitalization, diagnosis, and institutional language.
Tragic human-interest frame	Narrative arc emphasizing suffering, pact, and death.
Exoticizing/othering frame	Focus on “silent twins” label and private language as spectacle.
Agency vs pathology tension	Alternates between portraying them as authors and as patients.

The journalist constructs a hybrid frame that blends clinical explanation with melodramatic human interest, which makes the story accessible but risks simplifying complex interpersonal dynamics into pathology or spectacle. This framing strategy increases reader engagement but can obscure structural factors (racism, social exclusion) that the narrative also references.

Research Question 3 — Ethical challenges in reporting shared but contested realities

Ethical Issue	Concrete concern in the narrative
Consent and voice	Whose voice is represented; posthumous interpretation of Jennifer's death.
Sensationalism	“Silent twins” label; emphasis on pact and death for dramatic effect.
Confidentiality vs public interest	Clinical records and institutional details disclosed.
Attribution of agency	Risk of stripping subjects of agency by over-medicalizing.

Reporting this case raises ethical tradeoffs: the public's right to know versus respect for vulnerable subjects, the temptation to sensationalize intimate pacts, and the difficulty of representing co constructed identities without imposing individualizing or pathologizing frames. Responsible reporting would foreground contextual causes (bullying, racism, institutional responses) and prioritize consent, nuanced language, and avoidance of reductive labels. The purposive single case approach yields rich, bounded data showing that the twins' shared perception is relationally produced; journalistic framing shapes public meaning but introduces ethical risks that require careful, context sensitive reporting.

Discussion of Findings

The present single case narrative corroborates and deepens clinical accounts that locate shared perception in emotionally enmeshed, socially isolated dyads while also complicating the clinical idiom by showing how identity and creativity are co-produced rather than merely “transmitted.” As the empirical review itself notes, *“Major findings revealed that shared perception emerges in emotionally isolated dyads with strong dependency and limited external social contact.”* This study agrees with Silveira and Seeman (1995), Kendler et al. (1986), and Mentjox et al. (1993) on the centrality of dependency, dominance–submission dynamics, and narrowed reality testing, but it pushes back on a unidirectional clinical model: rather than a dominant inducer and a passive induced, the June–Jenifer case shows reciprocal mirroring, joint authorship, and an idioglossia that functions as both shelter and meaning system. Where clinical reviews emphasize intervention to break transmission, the present analysis, grounded in social constructivism and Goffmanian framing, reads the twins' shared world as an internally coherent frame that organizes experience, resists external reframing, and therefore requires interventions that attend to narrative, identity, and social context simultaneously.

The journalist's hybrid frame (clinical + tragic human interest + exoticizing spectacle) reproduces Entman's mechanism of selection and salience while enacting the very exclusions Goffman warns about. The empirical review summarizes framing theory: *“Framing operates through selection, emphasis, exclusion, and salience*

building.” Consistent with Entman (1993), Scheufele & Tewksbury, and McCombs & Shaw (1972), the article selects institutional and pathological cues (hospitalization, diagnosis) and emphasizes pact and silence to make the story cognitively and emotionally legible. Yet this study finds tension and slippage: McGinty et al. (2016), Masinga et al. (2022), and Kristofco & Moore (2023) warn that such frames amplify stigma and attributions of dangerousness; the core narrative alternates between agency (creative authorship) and pathology (silent, institutionalized patient), producing a double bind for readers, empathy mixed with exoticism. The present case therefore confirms framing theory’s predictive power but interrogates journalistic ethics: which elements are selected and why, and how do those selections reconfigure public understanding of relational phenomena into individual pathology?

Ethical tensions in the article mirror the theoretical and empirical warnings across the literature but reveal new, practical dilemmas when reporting co constructed identities. The empirical review catalogs harms of stigmatizing frames and misattribution (McGinty et al., 2016; Masinga et al., 2022; Kristofco & Moore, 2023), and the present study documents concrete manifestations: sensational labels (“silent twins”), disclosure of clinical details, and posthumous narrative closure that may occlude consent and voice. Where clinical studies (Silveira & Seeman; Kendler et al.; Mentjox et al.) recommend simultaneous relational treatment, the journalistic practice observed here tends to individualise and medicalise, thereby undermining relational explanations and obscuring structural contributors (racism, bullying, institutional failure). Ethically, this produces three interlocking problems—misrepresentation of agency, potential re traumatization through sensationalism, and epistemic injustice by privileging institutional records over lived meaning—demanding reporting practices that foreground consent, contextualization, and collaborative storytelling with affected communities.

Juxtaposing clinical case literature, framing theory, and the single case journalistic analysis exposes both convergence and productive dissonance: clinical work explains mechanism (dependency, isolation, reinforcement), framing theory explains public translation (selection, salience, priming), and the present study shows how those processes interact to produce mediated realities that can either flatten or illuminate complex relational subjectivities. The studies in the empirical review collectively predict many of the patterns observed here, but the present case complicates their prescriptions: breaking a shared perception is not only a clinical task (Silveira & Seeman; Kendler; Mentjox) nor solely a journalistic ethics problem (Entman; McGinty; Kristofco & Moore), it is a narrative politics problem, how stories are told, by whom, and with what moral grammar. Goffman’s framing and social constructivism together show that journalists do not merely report a preexisting pathology; they participate in re framing the twins’ lived frame into public knowledge. Practically, this means interventions should be interdisciplinary: clinical teams must attend to narrative repair, journalists must adopt harm minimizing framing practices, and scholars must keep interrogating how media selection amplifies or attenuates structural explanations.

Conclusion

From the tailorbird that skillfully weaves its nest to the parrot whose remarkable ability to mimic human speech continues to fascinate observers, the natural world is replete with mysteries and phenomena that often appear extraordinary. Yet, such realities are not necessarily magical, nor are they beyond human understanding; rather, their seeming inexplicability is frequently a reflection of the limits of knowledge, context, and scientific inquiry at particular moments in history. What appears mysterious in one age may become comprehensible in another as human understanding advances. Consequently, communicators, especially journalists, must move beyond the mere task of breaking news to the more demanding responsibility of breaking into the unspoken worlds that lie beneath events, beliefs, and experiences. This requires a commitment to critical inquiry, cultural sensitivity, and intellectual curiosity, enabling them to uncover deeper truths, challenge simplistic explanations, and illuminate the complex realities that shape human existence across time and place.

Recommendations

- Mental health services and clinical teams should implement integrated relational, narrative focused interventions that assess and treat the dyad together—mapping idioglossia and co constructed identity while creating supported pathways for social reintegration.
- Newsrooms and editors should adopt and enforce harm minimizing framing protocols—mandatory editorial checklists and language guidance that avoid sensational labels, contextualize structural factors, and verify clinical claims before publication.
- Public health agencies, media organizations, and clinical institutions should form standing interdisciplinary partnerships to co-produce ethically governed storytelling, provide rapid advisory support, and operationalize community centered consent processes for reporting contested relational cases.

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Article Information and Declarations

Declarations

Author's Contribution:

- Conceptualization, and intellectual revisions, Data collection, interpretation, and drafting of manuscript
- The author agrees to take responsibility for every facet of the work, making sure that any concerns about its integrity or veracity are thoroughly examined and addressed

Conflict of Interest: NIL

Funding Sources: NIL

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How to Cite:

Folie à deux, Media Framing, and Journalist's Dilemma in The Narratives of June and Jenifer. (n.d.). Wah Academia Journal of Global Religions, 2(3), 7-17. <https://doi.org/10.63954/y97ws348>

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