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Using Mixed-Method Approaches to Provide New Insights into Media Coverage of Femicide

Nechama R. Brodie

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Johannesburg, 2019

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

_____

(Signature of candidate)

_____day of _____20_____at_____

Abstract

South Africa has a femicide rate that is six times the world average. Over 2,500 women aged 14 years or older are murdered every year, the majority of these women killed by an intimate partner. Despite the prevalence of femicide, less than 20% of these murders are ever reported in South African news media.

Studies on news-media coverage of femicide reveal a subjective and obscure process of media selection and exclusion, which contribute to an archive of crime reporting that is not reflective of actual crime rates and which actively distort the nature and frequency of certain types of crime. This influences public perceptions and fear of violent crime, including notions of who is a suspect and who is most at risk.

This study uses mixed-method approaches to document and analyse the content and extent of commercial news media coverage of femicides that took place in South Africa during the 2012/2013 crime reporting year, through an original media database listing 408 femicide victims associated with 5,778 press articles. Victim and incident information is compared with epidemiological and statistical data, including mortuary-based studies and police crime statistics. Media data is explored through various media effects models, including a mixed-methods framing analysis, and is also examined by title, and by language. These analyses reveal how media constructs and depicts particular notions of gender, violence, race, and crime in South Africa.

Keywords: Data, Gender, Femicide, Homicide, Journalism, Mixed-methods, Media, Murder, South Africa, Violence, Women

Dedication

This work is dedicated to the women.

When a woman calls for help, listen to her.

Acknowledgements

There are no happy endings to femicide cases, but occasionally in my research I came across stories of great humanity. One that stood out for me was the investigation into the murder of a teacher named Nomathemba Conny Peach, who had been kidnapped and killed in June 2012. When I completed my first media survey, between 2014 and 2015, Ms Peach's case remained unsolved. In 2017, when I rebuilt my database, I discovered that in mid-2016 – four years after her death – Ms Peach's murderer had been caught, and convicted, through the extraordinary efforts and persistence of an Ikageng police officer named Captain Moses Morema, working together with Constables Kubu and Mothebe from Ikageng SAPS, and the head of detectives, Lt Col. Johan Scholtz. I would like to acknowledge and thank the many police officers who don't give up, despite being faced with what must feel, daily, like insurmountable odds.

Working with media sources gives me the relative luxury of only having to handle large amounts of violence second- or third-hand. Even this can be overwhelming at times. I would also like to acknowledge the gender and violence researchers who built up the incredible body of work that enabled my study to take place; and the court and crime reporters across South Africa, who are tasked with narrating some of the very darkest corners of human behaviour.

I would also like thank the Governing Intimacies project for providing funding for my PhD, and for enabling a welcoming and necessary space for me to conduct and to share my work.

And to my supervisors, Professor Shireen Hassim and Professor Scott Hazelhurst, thank you for giving me the academic learning experience I always imagined existed, but never dreamed I would experience myself.

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CHAPTER ONE: RECONCILING VIOLENCE

> We survive through amnesia, by being unable to remember what happened to us. We survive by not remembering the name of the woman who was in the newspaper yesterday, who was walking somewhere and was missing. What was her name? There are too many of them. I am sick to death of not being able to remember the names.
> (Dworkin, 1997: 116)

The violence meted out against women has long been distinct from the violence meted out between men. In his 1999 paper on the construction of violence in South African newspapers, Mohamed Seedat included a description of a study of injuries presented at hospitals across greater Johannesburg during the latter years of apartheid (Seedat's paper also discussed similar epidemiological data from Cape Town). Seedat (1999: 25) noted that, in Johannesburg, political violence made up only 10% of non-fatal injuries presented at hospitals. For the remaining 90% of male injuries, one-fifth were linked to attempted robbery (i.e. crime), and the other 80% "arose from the violence of everyday life, most often involving strangers and including poorly defined arguments and quarrels over money, women, and drunkenness." Seedat contrasted this with the injuries that women typically presented at hospitals, where "at least 40% of the female victims attributed the violent attack to an argument, most often with someone they knew" (Seedat, 199: 25). *This* is the "violence of everyday life" for women, and femicide is its most extreme form.

This chapter introduces the problem statements and analyses explored in my thesis on mixed-methods approaches to South African news-media coverage of femicide. Through a discussion of relevant literature and theoretical frameworks, I situate my research within the broader context of violence in post-apartheid South Africa and within specific areas of media and journalism studies. The chapter concludes with an outline of the organisation and structure of this thesis and offers a preliminary statement of the contribution this thesis makes to its areas of study.

Media coverage of violent crime shapes perceptions of violent crime

Numerous studies on the construction, affect, and effect of media reports of crime have shown that media reports a) very rarely match the reality of crime (McManus & Dorfman, 2003; Tiegreen & Newman, 2009; Wozniak & McCloskey, 2010; Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013); and

b) frequently perpetuate stereotypes, along lines of race in particular, positioning certain groups or individuals as violent perpetrators while simultaneously iterating others as "worthy" victims (Paulsen, 2003; Schildkraut and Donley, 2012; Petersen, 2016; Slakoff and Brennan, 2017). Further, exposure to certain types of news coverage of crime is related to elevated levels of fear of crime and perceptions of personal risk (Tiegreen & Newman, 2009; Lagos Lira & Toledo, 2014; Custers & Van den Bulk, 2013). Media coverage of crime contributes to this by both heightening and flattening the very representation of "crime". As Jewkes (2004b: 26) writes, "as far as the popular media are concerned, the predominant causes of crime must be reduced and simplified in order to be made meaningful for the target audience". The effect of this reduction and simplification is, further, that the popular media conflates the "causes of crime" with "current policies of discrimination" (Jewkes, 2004b: 27) and communicates both of these to the public in an uncritical manner.

Pillay (2008: 142) notes that it is "worth drawing a distinction between the actual incidences of violent crime, as it pertains to race and class, and the perception, or 'fear of violent crime'", adding that surveys by the South African Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) indicated that "so-called White and Asian respondents feel significantly more prone to the possibility of violent crime than Black African and 'Coloured' respondents (HSRC, 2008)". This despite the fact that white and Asian South Africans are statistically least likely to be victims of violence, and black and coloured South Africans are more likely to be victims of violent crime.

In 2013, I authored a report for the fact-checking organisation Africa Check, looking into widely circulating claims of an alleged "white genocide" in South Africa (Brodie, 2013a). My report found that the claims were incorrect and grossly exaggerated the level of killings of white South Africans while simultaneously ignoring the extremely high levels of fatal violence experienced by black and coloured South Africans.

Shortly after the Africa Check report appeared online, the Afrikaans-language newspaper *Rapport* ran a story on it, in which I commented that I believed inaccurate, racialised misinformation distracted us from addressing real crime threats, including that of intimate femicide. I told reporter Pieter-Louis Myburgh: "*'n Wit vrou het 'n groter kans om deur haar liefdesmaat vermoor te word as deur 'n onbekende swart man. Ons moenie die werklike probleme miskyk nie.*" ["A white woman has a better chance of being murdered by her lover or

partner than by an unknown black man. We should not overlook the real problem."] (Myburgh, 2013; translation via Africa Check.)

The following year, this statement resulted in a charge of hate speech being laid against me (together with Africa Check, the South African Medical Research Council, and gender researcher Lisa Vetten) at the South African Human Rights Commission (HRC) by 23 complainants, including the singer Steve Hofmeyr, *volk* activist and singer Sunette Bridges, and right-wing political party Freedom Front. Included in their complaints were that my statements had degraded the character of white men – not only in South Africa but worldwide – and they demanded that myself and Lisa Vetten (who had written a post defending my statement; see Vetten, 2013) publicly apologise to white South African men for suggesting that they perpetrated intimate partner violence. These events are discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven.

The charges were subsequently dropped by the HRC, but the encounter prompted me to revisit my own sources of information, including two autopsy-based studies conducted by the South African Medical Research Council (MRC), which clearly and consistently showed that the majority of female homicides in South Africa were perpetrated by the victims' intimate partners. When I looked for confirmation of this in South African media coverage, I observed what appeared to be an opposite narrative – coverage of intimate-partner violence was overshadowed by reports of women being killed by strangers.

When I began to research South African media coverage of femicide, the initial questions I was (roughly) hoping to answer were: What *was* news-media coverage of femicide (how many stories were there, who got covered, what information was included in these stories)? And would such information on media coverage go some way to explaining why so many white South Africans, in particular, had developed such entrenched – and unsubstantiated – beliefs about the nature of crime in South Africa?

As I looked at global studies into media coverage of femicide, the majority of reports and papers employed study designs that focused on qualitative aspects of the news stories or gave hermeneutic readings of narrow samples, often ignoring potentially interesting and relevant quantitative aspects within the same content. Furthermore, most of the studies I read had been conducted in North America, Europe, or the United Kingdom – so-called "first world"

countries with murder rates nowhere near those of South Africa, and with distinctly different population, media, and police/criminal-justice dynamics. Because of my own language limitations, I was unfortunately unable to search extensively for Spanish-language papers about media coverage of murder in Central/South American countries.

In order to more fully understand the scope of femicide media coverage, I believed that a broader and deeper approach to data collection was both possible and necessary (or, at least, useful), and that this approach would yield a much greater number of potential applications for the same data.

From this, I began to plan a database of South African commercial media coverage of femicide. I selected a specific crime year[1] (2012/2013) recent enough to have been mostly digitised (all my media/archive searches were done through online platforms), and where enough time had passed for the murders to have been reported in the press. This allowed a narrow enough search framework for the research to be feasible, but with enough data for it to be meaningful.

Using only formal media as a source (social media was specifically excluded), I believed I would be able to populate series of entries for individual femicides, capturing epidemiological information such as race, location, the relationship between victim and perpetrator, and information related to media coverage of the murder – i.e. how many stories were published for each femicide, where these stories were published, and, indeed, how many femicides overall were covered by the media. This data could then be compared with the outcomes of two national femicide studies conducted by the MRC (Mathews et al., 2004; Abrahams et al., 2012), which would highlight divergences and correspondences in the data.

The media data would also allow for a mapping of media coverage and an evaluation of multipliers and inhibitors within this coverage. As I began to build (and, later, rebuild) my database, using computer-aided manual methods (described in Chapter Six), I also began to explore methodological frameworks that would both improve and reflect the study's design, ultimately determining that a mixed-methods approach (see Chapter Two) was not only

[1] A police 'crime year' runs from 01 April to 31 March, in line with SAPS's financial reporting year.

suitable for, but would in fact enhance, the processes and outcomes of my research. The organisation and structure of the thesis is outlined in more detail later in this chapter.

Writing about states of violence in a violent state

It is not obligatory to live in a violent state to research or write about states of violence. Several of the criminologists cited in this thesis come from Scandinavian countries that record fewer murders in a single year than South Africa typically experiences in twelve hours.[2]

Any attempt to discuss representations of violence in South Africa must explicitly acknowledge that this is a country where violence has iterated in unique and extreme and persistent ways, and that our histories and the histories of violence are, in many ways, still being written. Butchart et al. (1998: online) describe violence in South Africa as an "ongoing phenomenon".

This thesis situates itself solidly in post-apartheid South Africa, 18 years after the first democratic elections of 1994. To read the narratives of violence that were constructed and largely accepted after this time, we need to look at the transition from apartheid violence to post-apartheid violence, and how this period in particular shaped contemporary understandings of violence, risk, and fear.

In a report written for the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation in 1997, Hamber and Lewis (online) describe crime statistics recorded for the previous year, noting that "the experience of being violently victimised in South Africa has become a statistically normal feature of everyday life in the urban and rural setting. South African Police Service (SAPS) figures indicate that in 1996 there were a total of 25 782 reported murders, 28 516 attempted murders and 12 860 car hijackings."

These figures were situated within what is described as a "culture of violence" in South Africa, "a society which endorses and accepts violence as an acceptable and legitimate means to resolve problems and achieve goals" (Hamber & Lewis, 1997: online).

[2] According to Statistics Norway, 28 murders were recorded in 2018. In South Africa, SAPS reported 20,336 murders during the 2017/2018 crime year, or more than 55 murders every day. Comparing these numbers directly is flawed, however, because it does not take into account each country's population (5,35 million in Norway versus some 57 million in South Africa); nonetheless, if one compares murder *rates* (number of murders/population x 100,000), Norway's murder rate (per 100,000 people) is around 0.5, while South Africa's is closer to 36.

Hamber and Lewis also refer to the socially constructed aspect of how we understand violence in post-apartheid South Africa, in that "acts of violence deemed as legitimate in one society or cultural group may be considered illegitimate or culturally unacceptable in another." This was particularly relevant as South Africa segued from political violence (during apartheid and during the transition period between 1990 and 1994) to criminal violence.

Political violence is a broad term with particular meanings and implications in the South African context. Chandré Gould (2014: online), of the Institute for Security Studies, writes that:

> During apartheid, not only were many of the laws unjust and intended to entrench white domination, but unfair laws were also applied unfairly. In addition, the security forces, particularly the police, were used by the state to ensure that all South Africans lived in fear of the state, regardless of their race.

Hamber and Lewis (1997: online) described political violence in different ways – there was the physical violence itself, mostly "orchestrated by the state" and "targeted at victims both inside and outside the borders of South Africa", together with a smaller proportion of "violence between rival political and social groupings". But for the authors, political violence also included the *fear or threat* of violence, the "continual stress of potential violence, either through acts of sabotage as the liberation movement resisted state control, or more often as was the case, living in dangerous, tumultuous, and tightly policed townships."

In the early 1990s, this fault line was exploited by malicious agents of the failed apartheid state (the so-called "third force"; see for example Ellis, (1998); or Hamber, (1998)) to incite and fuel one of the country's most deadly periods, which included widespread political assassinations, massacres on trains, and mass murders between hostels. Violence on top of violence; violence systematised by apartheid; violence that became so pervasive it "undermined the moral, interpersonal and social fabric of South African society" (Hamber & Lewis, 1997: online).

During this time, South African media coverage was dominated by reports of political violence, in part perhaps a legacy from the apartheid era, "when the press functioned under many legislative restrictions and tended to typify violence as a political issue" (Seedat, 1999:

121). Hamber and Lewis (1997: online) suggest that this narrative focus "may well have masked many other forms of violence", including domestic violence in particular, which they describe as "'hidden' forms of violence", "generally targeted towards women and children and the other more vulnerable sectors of society".

Seedat's paper made similar claims via the injury studies cited, which indicated that even for males, political violence was responsible for a smaller proportion of injuries than criminal violence, and that both of these categories paled in comparison to the problem of interpersonal violence.

So, during the late years of apartheid there was a disproportionate focus in the media (and in academic research) on political violence and a marked under-reporting of criminal and inter-personal violence. After 1994, the "problem" of violence shifted from being defined as a political issue to being framed as a criminal one (Seedat, 1999). This shift was accompanied by other transitions in sociocriminological approaches, which modelled epidemiologies of crime that were increasingly victim-focused (see Chapter Eight) and, also, tended to medicalise crime (Mitjavila & Mathes, 2016), extending "the eye of epidemiology [to] hospitals", "casualty wards, clinics, and mortuaries", which served as "observatories for monitoring the demographic, personal, and situational determinants of violence" (Butchart et al., 1998: online).

Butchart et al. (1998: online) also note that:

> This expansion in the sites from which violence could be scrutinised was to have a number of implications for formal policy. First, in extending the eye of epidemiology through the hospitals, it raised to visibility all those victims of violence which previously had not existed for a regime concerned only with high-profile cases of political violence.

And, that it:

> problematised the perception that because violence was according to the law a criminal act, the best point from which to view it was through the police and court statistics of the criminal justice system. Now, it could be recognised that far from all violence entered into the criminal justice system. (Butchart et al., 1998: online)

At the same time, the criminal justice system supposedly responsible for controlling this violence was itself in need of radical restructuring and transformation, because its "various institutions (e.g. security forces, correctional services)" had in the past been "instrumental in the creation and maintenance of systematic violence" (Butchart et al., 1998: online).

Gould (2014: online) describes how the apartheid state

> was deeply corrupt at all levels, and those who held positions of power, whether as politicians or functionaries, were very seldom called to account before a court for acts of corruption or the abuse of power. ... The situation was no different in relation to interpersonal violence and crime. Black men who murdered were more likely to face harsher sentences than white men who murdered, especially if the white murderer's victim was poor and black. Black women who were raped were less likely to have their cases investigated than cases in which white women were the victims. In this context, who could be expected to have much respect for the law, or the rule of law?

While Butchart et al. (1998: online) comment that "cognitively, at least, violence had by 1995 been radically transformed from a political and criminal issue into a sociological and public health problem", it could be argued that the latter transition happened primarily at a political/governance level. This did not necessarily translate to a similar shift in media coverage, which continued "to signify that violence primarily constitutes aberrant behaviour that is perpetuated by a criminal class and that may be contained through increased and spectacular police surveillance", and in its coverage conveyed "the idea that violence and criminality in the post-Apartheid era are intensifying and that civic order has deteriorated" (Seedat, 1999: 131–2).

These notions impacted media coverage of crime after the turn of the millennium but also, through the media, strongly influenced public opinion, directed the design of remedial or corrective prevention and intervention programmes (Seedat, 1999), and suggested the apparent roles that citizens, communities, and government were expected to play in order to mend the torn "social fabric" (Pillay, 2008) that South Africa's second democratically elected president, Thabo Mbeki, seemed to believe was both the root of and solution to the country's problems.

Writing and reading violence within the "Global South"

In her introduction to a special gender issue of Brazilian journal *Contexto Internacional*, Natália Maria Félix De Souza (2019: online) writes about the "comprehensiveness of the 'global South'" and describes the contribution of this collective as signalling "precisely to the persisting effects of colonialism not only in the open system of violences that affect the (gendered, racialized) bodies of the colonized, but also their/our minds (Nandy, 1983)." She adds that, "interrogating the 'global South' opens the possibility of understanding different articulations of power/resistance and invites multiple possibilities of being and resisting otherwise." (De Souza, 2019: online)

Rather than representing a literal territory, the collective described as the Global South is predominantly about shared hierarchies of power/disempowerment, and an exclusion from the history of ideas – although it can be understood to include Central and South America and the Caribbean, Africa, and Central and South Asia, including India. Mahler (2017: online) describes the Global South as a "deterritorial conceptualization" which can refer to "the resistant imaginary of a transnational political subject that results from a shared experience of subjugation under contemporary global capitalism."

Scholarship from the Global South responds and contributes to a number of features of contemporary academic (and social and political and economic) thought and knowledge. One is as a challenge to and a critique of the "unquestioning focus on European and North American material" (Connell et al., 2016: 22); and, as an extension of that, to: "develop empirical pictures of the making of knowledge in global South contexts" (Connell et al., 2016: 23). Both of these approaches are part of broader post-colonial and de-colonisation knowledge movements which are often informed by both "Northern sociologies of knowledge" and post-colonial thought (Connell et al., 2016: 23-24), but which embody a subjectivity and solidarity of the Global South (Mahler, 2017), locating research and knowledge *within* these regions rather than locating these regions within studies.

These positions present both a challenge and an opportunity when looking at or contextualising research into violence in the Global South. A challenge because much of the theoretical literature, and most of the empirical "knowledge" about violence is still collected within a broader lens of ethnographic-type studies of "developing states", often funded by international aid organisations including various branches of the United Nations, the UK's Department for

International Development (DFID), and so on. This frequently situates such studies within predetermined narrative pillars like the United Nations' seventeen Sustainable Development Goals, which are described as a "shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for all" (UN SDG Knowledge Platform, nd).

This is not intended as a critique of such objectives, which would be beyond the scope of this thesis, but more as an observation that when information on violence is collected in the context of programmes that also seek to address issues such as "no poverty" and "zero hunger", there is the potential for violence to be discussed as a "development issue" and an issue experienced by "developing states". This is in contrast to narratives of inter-personal violence in the "mature" North (North America, Britain, Europe, etc), which are not discussed or studied in "development" terms... unless the studies are situated within minority immigrant communities that originate from the Global South.

At the same time there is also an urgent need for knowledge about the phenomenon of violence in the Global South. A paper by Boyden et al. (2018), discussing drivers of violence affecting children, comments that, in "northern regions of the world, VAC [violence against children] has been researched for well over half a century, but it is only in the last decade that it has emerged as a mainstream focus of activity in the global South."

One of the ways that both the phenomenon and narratives of violence in the Global South can be researched and explored outside of the framework of aid and development agendas is through in-country media. The benefits of using media coverage of violence as a means to study not just media but also epidemiological aspects of violence is discussed in Chapter Five. In the context of research into violence the Global South, it has the added advantage of situating such research within local norms, including language (and language structures such as framing and so on), and offers a parallel opportunity to study or describe local media environments – which are also typically distinct from media landscapes in the North.

Within this aspect or iteration of the Global South (there are others, not discussed here), South Africa represents an important location for the research of violence. This is partly because of the country's extremely high rate of inter-personal violence, and because of relevant demographic features which include a mid-size population (53-million in 2012) that is highly urbanised (more than 63% by 2016) but which still has a substantial rural portion (Statistics

South Africa, 2013; Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2016) . In addition, South Africa has a well-established body of academic and epidemiological work on violence, particularly focused on violence under apartheid, violence during the transition from apartheid to democracy, and violence in the post-apartheid state. The scope and depth of this research provides a significant foundation for understanding violence as a phenomenon rooted in both the present and the past.

South Africa also boasts a mature, diverse and relatively free press (Reporters Without Borders, 2019 World Press Freedom Index), located within a relatively democratic society that has a strong Constitution and both freedom and protection of information laws (which is to say: it is much harder to use media as a source of information when that information is restricted by a punitive State rather than simply by society or commercial drivers).

This thesis does not assume that media coverage of violence in South Africa is the same as media coverage or violence in any other region or aspect of the Global South, but rather acknowledges that there may be more similarities between "our" media and our violence, than in the North, and that through the promotion of more studies of this nature from populous countries in this collaborative, there may be shared lessons including choices related to research methodology and method.

Theories of journalism and media effects

In *Reflexive Methodology*, Alvesson and Sköldberg (2018: 1), citing Steedman (1991), write that "knowledge cannot be separated from the knower". In the book's chapter on (post-)positivism, constructionism, and realism, Alvesson (2018: 27) writes about knowledge, institutional knowledge, and the legitimisation of knowledge that such knowledge is transmitted between individuals in a society, but also over time, between generations:

> More specifically, experiences and knowledge are stored as memory layers in and between individuals, or as Berger and Luckmann (1966: passim) say with a geological metaphor, inspired by Husserl, they are '*sedimented*'. Language, through its intersubjective transferring of meaning, is an important means for collective sedimentation. ... The sediments of knowledge in a society are legitimised, but these legitimations can differ from time to time.

Media narratives do not manifest in a vacuum. Even in the broad descriptions of changing representations of violence in South Africa, we can see that media coverage is directly affected

by societal, cultural, and political contexts, and that news reporting not only reflects and manifests dominant discursive truths (Monckton-Smith, 2012) but also "supports the dominant power structure by creating consensus that appears to be grounded in everyday reality and common sense rather than ideology" (Meyers, 1997: 19).

In *Media and Crime* (2004: 3), criminologist Yvonne Jewkes comments that there are "striking parallels ... between the efforts of criminologists and media theorists to understand and 'unpack' the relationships between crime, deviance and criminal justice on the one hand, and media and popular culture on the other", but it appears there is still much work to be done in this regard.

Sociologists and criminologists frequently describe a rather literalised valency, in which media coverage of violence affects audiences, and exposure to media produces specific or certain effects on the audience or individuals. Stanley Cohen probably best describes this in the updated (2002: xx) introduction to his classic 1972 work, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, stating that the "crude model of 'media effects' has hardly been modified[3] [since his original publication]: exposure to violence on this or that medium causes, stimulates, or triggers off violent behaviour."

Jewkes (2004a) similarly explores media effects as the degree to which media images bring about "negative effects" in their viewers, i.e. media as influencer, an external "cause" of a social or public "effect" (proto versions of this are often referred to as the "hypodermic needle" or "magic bullet" model), and which Jewkes situates within theories of mass society and behaviourism.

Jewkes (2004a: 11) identified a number of shortcomings in such media theories, which she says:

> cannot adequately address the subtleties of media meanings, the polysemy of media texts ... the unique characteristics and identity of the audience member, or the social and cultural context within which the encounter between media text and audience member occurs. It mistakenly assumes that we all have the same ideas about what constitutes "aggression", "violence" and

[3] Here Cohen is not suggesting that the pathway of moral panics has remained unchanged, more that the crude *model* of how it is understood remains at a very simplistic cause-and-effect level.

> "deviance", and that those who are susceptible to harmful portrayals can be affected by a "one-off" media incident, regardless of the wider context of a lifetime of meaning-making (Boyd-Barrett, 2002). It also ignores the possibility that influence travels the opposite way; that is, that the characteristics, interests, and concerns of the audience may determine what media producers produce.

Jewkes' comments are accurate; but for several decades (and, quite prominently, since the 1970s), media theorists have indeed developed significantly more sophisticated and integrated approaches to a parallel and much-expanded notion of "media effects", involving complex and interactive schema in which media messages are dynamically produced, shared, and processed, and which involve a range of actors not simply limited to a monovalent "media –> audience". These theories include priming, framing, and agenda-setting and are discussed in more detail below.

Media-effects theories – temporally associated with the advent of mass media in the first quarter of the 20th century – also emerged and evolved within broader sociological and ideological theoretical frameworks that, themselves, changed over time, and which could also be seen as schemas within broader movements such as positivism, post-positivism, social constructionism, critical realism, and so on (Alvesson, 2018).

In a work on news production, for example, Schudson (1989) includes media *behaviours* – the ways in which news is generated or produced – rather than simply their effects. Schudson starts in the 1950s, when the idea of media as "gatekeeper" took hold at both an ideological level, referring to the notion of the individual subjectivity of the journalist or editor or publisher, and also at a mechanical level, viz.: "The gatekeeper's job is ... quantitative, reducing the amount of information available to a sum that fits the size of a paper or length of a news show" (Schudson, 1989: 265).

As Schudson points out, however, the over-simplified notion of media as the "gatekeeper" of news and ideas assumed that "news" arrives both perfectly formed and somehow previously untouched, and did not acknowledge that "news items are not simply selected but constructed" (Schudson, 1989: 265).

Schudson traces how other models and approaches emerged from and within the landscape – these were not necessarily sequential and often existed in parallel, or even converged. This included Molotch and Lester's (1974) view that news was not just "socially constructed" but was an actual construction of reality, within which there were typologies of events through which media could be accessed: *routine*, *accident*, *scandal*, and *serendipitous events*, coverage of which in turn revealed information about the way society was organised.

The late 1970s also birthed the "political economy" model, which emerged from the much earlier works of Marx and then Gramsci (Jewkes, 2004a) and included considerations of media ownership (Klaehn & Mullen, 2010) to describe a mass media in which the media agenda was determined by what the "political elite" or "legitimated power holders" desired (Schudson, 1989). One of the best-known models in this field is Herman and Chomsky's (1988) propaganda model, contained in *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. Perhaps not coincidentally, this model emerged during the latter period of the Cold War and towards the end of Ronald Reagan's second term as president of the United States, an intersection between historical inter-bloc threat and suspicion and the economic policies of Reaganomics, which saw increased military spending and decreased social spending.

Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007: 10) describe the changes in theoretical approaches as paradigm shifts. For example, the "early hypodermic needle and magic-bullet models of the 1920s and 1930s were quickly replaced by a paradigm based on ... much more theoretically and methodologically sophisticated ideas" that acknowledged that media effects were "more complex in nature than previously assumed" and "depended heavily on people's homogenous networks and their selective informational diets, which reinforced existing attitudes rather than changed them."

A second paradigm shift involved the "return of powerful mass media" (Noelle-Neumann, 1974), which coincided with Gerbner's cultivation theory[4] (see Gerbner, 2000), both of which "assumed that mass media had strong, long-term effects on audiences, based on the ubiquitous and consonant stream of messages they presented to audiences" (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007: 10).

[4] Conceptualised by Gerbner in the 1960s and 1970s, and expanded by Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli in their Cultural Indicators project in the 1970s.

Another important contribution from the 1970s was McCombs and Shaw's (1972) landmark study, which gave birth to agenda-setting research and suggested an interactive valency with multiple agendas and hierarchical levels. McCombs and Shaw (in Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007: 11) describe agenda-setting as the idea that there is "a strong correlation between the emphasis that mass media place on certain issues (e.g., based on relative placement or amount of coverage) and the importance attributed to these issues by mass audiences."

Dearing and Rogers' (1996: 2) later work on agenda-setting identified three components: a media agenda, a public agenda, and a policy agenda, and they described an agenda as being a "set of issues that are communicated in a hierarchy of importance at a point in time." The degree to which an issue on the agenda was perceived as relatively important (or not) was defined as its salience. The agenda-setting model could be used to potentially explain why attention was given to some issues but not to others, and the increase and decrease of interest (in an issue) over time.

In the 1980s and 1990s, these models were overlaid with additional or supplementary approaches like priming and framing, which were "based on the idea that mass media had potentially strong attitudinal effects, but that these effects also depended heavily on predispositions, schema, and other characteristics of the audience that influenced how they processed messages in the mass media" (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007: 11).

Priming or priming effects were, initially, predominantly associated with political influence – specifically that, through subjective coverage, media stories could allegedly increase the salience of an issue (i.e. agenda-setting), which would in turn alter or influence the criteria used by the audience to evaluate political candidates. For example, if readers were exposed to newspaper articles about employment, this might become the benchmark issue against which they evaluated the performance of a politician (Hart & Middleton, 2014).

Framing (dealt with extensively in Chapter Eight) looks at an entirely different aspect and is "based on the assumption that how an issue is characterised in news reports can have an influence on how it is understood by audiences" (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007: 11).

Research approach

Creswell (2014: 20) describes a research problem as an "issue or concern that needs to be addressed (e.g., the issue of racial discrimination)", which comes from "a void in the literature, and conflict in research results in the literature, topics that have been neglected in the literature; a need to lift up the voice of marginalised participants; and 'real-life' problems found in the workplace, the home, the community, and so forth."

While much has already been written about femicide globally, and even femicide in the media, contemporary scholarship into news coverage of lethal violence against women has tended to be either narrow (deep but limited research questions posed against relatively small samples) or shallow (limited research objectives matched against very large text-based samples) and has focused predominantly on femicide coverage in Western countries.

My research into media coverage of femicide seeks to address these gaps by developing and validating methods that enable the construction and population of an original, extensive (deep and rich) database of South African news-media articles, from which both epidemiological-type data and media data can be read or derived, and through which criminological/statistical information and media effects theories (and others) can be explored, compared, or evaluated.

Different types of research problems, Creswell (2014) adds, require different research *approaches*. By this ("research approach"), Creswell means the intersection/interaction between the researcher's worldview or philosophical framework, the research design (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods), and the research methods. This description and distinction (between the research approach, method, and problem) is useful, as it allows for the discussion and integration of broader cognitive, philosophical, and methodological frameworks and assumptions within the development of a research design and the presentation and analysis of its outcome.

My study uses a mixed-methods approach, which involves not just the utilisation, but also the integration, of both qualitative and quantitative data in a way that "yields additional insight beyond the information provided by either the quantitative or qualitative data alone" (Creswell & Creswell, 2017: 4). This is discussed in detail in Chapter Two, together with a discussion of relevant philosophical frameworks (discussed again in Chapter Seven, which looks at issues of validity).

Research methods include questions, data collection, data analysis, interpretation, and validation (Creswell & Creswell, 2017: 5). For this study, the research methods can be broadly described as follows:

1. **Data collection:** South African commercial news-media text archives (digital or online clippings services and other archives) are surveyed for female homicide incidents that occurred between 01 April 2012 and 31 March 2013. Qualifying incidents are logged by victim, and all news media articles associated with the victim are identified and logged individually and against the victim/incident entry. Pre-determined information about the victim (for example age, race) and incident (location, mode of death, relationship with perpetrator) is gathered from news articles and collated on a spreadsheet.

2. **Data analysis:** Quantitative and qualitative data captured on the spreadsheet is collated and counted as necessary, integrating statistical analysis and text analysis of the spreadsheet contents. Contents might be converted to qualitative or quantitative data (see Chapter Two) to yield additional (open-ended) fields.

3. **Data interpretation:** Data and analyses from the media survey are integrated with relevant theoretical and philosophical frameworks (for example, media effects theories) *and* with epidemiological research (for example the two MRC femicide studies). The results are compared and discussed.

4. **Validation:** The sources, methods, and results of the media survey are discussed and compared against other sources, methods, and results to enable a broader discussion around validity, credibility, and legitimacy of the survey and its outcomes.

These stages may not be sequential and include simultaneous and convergent processes.

Research objectives

The aim of this study is to apply mixed-methods approaches to an original database of South African commercial news-media coverage of one year of femicides to gain meaningful and relevant insights into femicide and its associated media coverage.

The central (mixed-methods) question is: *what is the profile of femicide produced by South African media and how is this profile selectively produced?*

This question is explored and answered by, first, providing a (quantitative) media-based epidemiology of femicide; and then using this data to a) select and study (qualitative) salient frames that result from the compilation and dissemination of such media and; b) describe the mechanics of production of such media for analysis.

Within this, my thesis also explores the following questions:

- *How do we create data on media and how do we analyse it?*
- *What existing data methods are being used to look at crime and gender-based violence in the media?*
- *How do we define femicide and other concepts related to fatal violence against women?*
- *How do we create data on femicide, and what kinds of data are available?*
- *What is the statistical landscape of femicide in South Africa?*
- *How is femicide reported in South African online and print news media?*
- *How does media coverage of femicide compare with statistical data on femicide?*
- *What factors appear to influence (multiply or inhibit) the incidence and/or frequency of news reportage on femicide?*
- *How does the type, frequency, and content of news reports on femicide construct a particular notion of femicide in South Africa?*

Chapter outline

Chapter One introduces the study and broadly discusses fundamental/foundational concepts and contexts through which to read violence in South Africa, as well as providing the framework of different media-effects theories.

Chapter Two explores challenges within the survey and transformation of larger sets of qualitative media data and motivates for the decision to use a mixed-methods approach for this study, discussing research methods and limitations. It offers a detailed description of mixed-methods research and designs and explains why this study can be described as mixed-methods research.

Chapter Three reviews the history, evolution, and current iterations of the term "femicide" and explores it as a political, public health, and criminological term.

Chapter Four discusses epidemiological data on femicide and how data on femicide is obtained, measured, and reported across the globe. The chapter also looks at femicide data specific to South Africa.

Chapter Five considers global studies of media coverage of femicide, starting with a discussion about the value of media in the study of murder and violent crime. This is followed by a review of relevant studies and papers that look at media coverage of homicide and femicide.

Chapter Six looks specifically at femicide in South African news media and discusses the design, implementation, and results of my own, original news media survey and database.

Chapter Seven raises the problem of data validity or credibility and legitimation, first from a theoretical framework approach (particularly within a mixed-methods paradigm) and then through comparative data exercises that enable a discussion of the successes and limitations of my own media-survey database.

Chapter Eight employs a mixed-methods design to curate and analyse subsets of data within the broader media-survey database, which data is used as the basis for a framing analysis of selected news reports, looking at typologies of victims and perpetrators.

Chapter Nine uses a mixed-method design to explore what kinds of femicide stories (and what kinds of victims) are covered by individual South African news media outlets, including observations by coverage region and by language. The chapter features interviews with four editors and one journalist from the top-reporting papers or platforms identified in the study. The interviews investigate both newsroom and individual choices and processes that reflect notions of "newsworthiness".

Chapter Ten is the conclusion, and returns to the research problem to see how the study has addressed the central research question, and related sub-questions. This chapter looks at the value of the study, reviews the study's findings and its contribution to its field of research, and makes recommendations for further research.

Contribution and limitations

This study represents potentially the largest single media database on femicide to have been created and reported, globally, to date. It also represents the largest and most comprehensive media database on the coverage of femicide in South Africa. As the applied mixed-methods designs clearly demonstrate in Chapters Eight, Nine and Ten, the size and breadth of the database has enabled significantly broader *and* narrower studies of media coverage than ever before, and at the same time may offer a valuable contribution to filling the knowledge gaps that exist because of shortcomings in available data provided by the South African Police Service (SAPS) or due to the time gaps between available national epidemiological reports (such as the MRC studies, which have been ten years apart).

This study not only achieves something new and on an unprecedented scale, it also creates a working template for future research databases on media and crime using manual (human) curation rather than algorithmic detection (which, currently, is simply not up to this task; although the media survey in this study could provide a foundation on which to train future text-mining algorithms; see Chapter Two). Consequently, this research model is accessible to many more people than statistical research models, which often require complicated computer programmes or resources.

Despite these grand ambitions, this is a pilot study conducted by a single researcher, and as such there is potential for numerous human errors, including mistakes in comprehension, personal bias, data-entry errors, and even accidentally overlooking relevant entries or information. As my own chapter on validity shows, although my initial database is far more robust than other comparable sets, there is still a great deal of room for improvement. There are also obvious solutions, which include the integration of additional media-archive sources and additional human resources for the research stages.

Although the database, which is covered in Chapter Six, is imagined as a transparent and independently verifiable document that can be cross-checked against multiple other sources, I must, of course, acknowledge the possible effects of my personal involvement in the events that preceded it. The racist and dismissive statements of the complaints lodged at the HRC angered me, because they refused to acknowledge any other victims of violence than white women and simultaneously attempted to excuse white men from any role in violence. I appreciate that as much as this anger motivated me, it may also have introduced bias into my own study, which I have attempted to acknowledge and counter by making my information and research processes as transparent as possible. I also intend to make all of my raw data publicly available following the completion of my thesis.

Finally, I hope that making my research data completely open becomes one of my most important contributions to future research, so that the data can be used and shared by any researcher who desires to access it, at any time. Through transparency, and by potentially integrating and expanding resources, open data can strengthen all our research.

CHAPTER TWO: USING MIXED-METHODS APPROACHES IN MEDIA RESEARCH

This chapter considers some of the challenges associated with collecting, managing, and analysing different types of data from different types of qualitative media sources. A mixed-methods approach is suggested to create more robust and useful media-source databases and to provide a methodological paradigm and analytical framework within which better questions can be asked of this richer and more accessible data.

As discussed in this chapter, mixed-methods approaches are not themselves new but the formalisation of what constitutes a mixed-methods study, and related questions and discussions around methodologies and research paradigms, are still relatively new in comparison to similar work associated with qualitative and quantitative approaches. Mixed-methods paradigms are also still relatively uncommon within journalism and media studies – although many studies do in fact utilise quantitative and qualitative aspects, there is a general reliance on single-method approaches (Matsaganis, 2016) and an avoidance of overtly labelling work as "mixed methods".

Even as media research grapples with new technologies enabling new platforms and audiences, including digital media and social media[5] (related but distinct), the response to these is often: how can digital methods enable qualitative (e.g. content analyses) or quantitative (e.g. topic modelling) studies (Karlsson and Sjøvaag, 2016), with little inclusion or discussion of mixed-methods – which, this chapter argues, is perhaps the *most* suitable model for both data collection, collation and analyses from digital and non-uniform/heterogenous news content sources. .

Research methods for long, broad, and larger data

If we accept for a moment that there *is* value in studying the media coverage of violent crime (this is discussed further in Chapter Five) – whether to learn about crime itself or to learn about which crimes society fears and which victims it values more (and which victims it values less)

[5] This thesis does not attempt to include any substantial study of social media content for reasons discussed in Chapter Six. There are a small number of studies that discuss using mixed-method approaches for social media research, for example Snelson (2016).

– it begs the fundamental question as to *how* we should conduct these studies, not just in the present but also retrospectively. Media platforms are changing dramatically, with proliferation in some areas and shrinkage in others. We generate and have access to more media content than ever before but are simultaneously confronted with and confined by paywalls, state-led censorship, commercial content restrictions, and non-digitised archives that make certain types of information inaccessible to all but a few. While we can still learn from contemporary and historical media studies, we must also develop new ways to study media, so that new methods can be integrated into conventional approaches or can present entirely new modes of study.

These approaches should be applied not only to contemporary media, which is more accessibly digitised, but also to integrated and in-depth reviews or studies of historical media and media over time – what Arbesman (2013) refers to as "long" data, meaning data that has historical scope. Current media surveys do not, generally, address the real depth and breadth that is a feature of this kind of scale. In fact, a consistent shortcoming across many surveys of homicide in the media (see Chapter Five) is that the quantum or extent of the source data is frequently limited, in terms of the depth of the study's approach (e.g. a multi-decade study for the frequency of a single word), or the total number of articles reviewed, or the number of news publications or platforms included (frequently just one or two titles) and/or the geographic areas or regions included or represented in the survey (a single city or state).

These constraints are not difficult to appreciate, given that, in the not-too-distant past, media samples were manually extracted from archives of hard copies or microfilm systems with (if you were lucky) some basic library categorisation and key word listings (like press-clippings services). Even digitised clippings services, including scans of hardcopy news reports, can present a challenge when one or two researchers are expected to somehow process thousands, even tens of thousands of news articles.

But the default position, to closely study a few hundred reports, typically covering one city, one county, or one state, presents obvious limitations in terms of the external validity of such research (how/when/*is* this research relevant to other areas and other communities?). Taylor (2009: 29) specifically explains her then-innovative multi-year approach as responding directly to the limitations of previous studies: "Earlier content analyses of newspaper articles were based on small samples for relatively short periods of time (i.e. Chermak, 1995; Meyers, 1994). More recent work in the area of femicide news coverage includes larger samples, spanning

longer periods of time (i.e. The Berkeley Media Studies Group, 2003; Bullock & Cubert, 2002; Consalvo, 1998; Taylor & Sorenson, 2002).” Even so, Taylor’s content extended to just 292 articles from a single newspaper, gathered over a five-year period.

Another feature, in part related to the first, is how such sources are “read” and analysed. Media studies are often discursive and content- or narrative-based, looking at the intended or perceived meaning in latent and manifest narratives, language, choice of sources, use of images, and so on (e.g. Bullock & Cubert, 2002; Wardle, 2006 and 2007; Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013; Lloyd & Ramon, 2017; Slakoff & Brennan, 2017).

Such coding and analysis is best managed on reasonably sized source sets – a couple of hundred sources, rather than many hundreds or thousands. But these approaches may also limit the usability of the data – a narrow, deductive preliminary coding may mean that only some aspects of the collected articles are tabulated. Data collected for such studies are also infrequently integrated with other data/studies, because parameters such as dates, source types, etc. do not match closely enough to offer anything other than narrative comparison (i.e. it is not possible to compare like with like).

During the sample/data-gathering process for such studies, initial source subsets may comprise hundreds or possibly thousands of stories, but the collection may be stratified and separated in such a way that potentially useful sources are discarded because of the study's predetermined approach. So, for example, a newspaper archive may be canvassed for stories involving female homicides, but only those involving intimate-partner homicide are retained from an initial matched set. Stories about non-intimate female homicide are discarded and no information about those articles is documented or retained. Similarly, within the intimate-femicide sample, the study may focus on keywords, word clusters, word frequencies, or source types but may not document other manifest and latent data, such as information about the manner in which the victim was killed and so on.

The same stories and data are also rarely re-examined from different angles, or with a new approach of study. Even Gillespie, Richards, Smith and Givens’ studies (2011, 2013, 2014) of the media coverage of intimate partner and domestic violence, femicide, and femicide-suicide in North Carolina (see Chapter Five) are closely related readings of the same source material. While summaries or descriptions (aggregate data) are typically made available in published

papers, granular data are not usually explicitly shared for further study. Authors may share summarised information about their research, but they do not provide readers with the raw results (which may also be limited by copyright issues pertaining to the news sources and clippings services).

The narrowness of media enquiry may to some extent be because human and financial resources are limited, and it may not be feasible for one person or group to explore multiple aspects of the same information. Nonetheless, current practice limits our ability to do so – unless of course we recreate the data collection process or build new data sets out of entirely new sources. One of the possible solutions for these kinds of limitations is the advent of text mining, which is discussed in the next section, below.

Currently, we tend to make very deep studies of narrow selections, usually based on text or language – the application, appearance, or absence of single words, word clusters, syntax, etc. David et al. (2011: 331) describe "qualitative textual analyses" as being "usually based on a small sample of text, heavily interpreted and deeply investigated". But in this approach, we often leave vast areas of potentially useful, interesting, and relevant information – often in the same sets – unexplored.

As the size of media data sets increases, so too will this knowledge "gap". To effectively study media as a source, we will need more appropriate methodological mechanisms – and, ideally, paradigms – that are suitable for and responsive to not only the needs, but also the possibilities, that this medium-sized data present. By "medium-sized data", I mean data sets that are still small enough for humans to conceive of and engage with, but which contain a proportionally greater number of entries within which meaningful unique, linear, and even relational aspects can be explored. These kinds of data currently sit in the sometimes-uncomfortable gap between how much time we are willing to allocate to data collection and curation and how much of the work computers and machine-learning programmes are able to do – in a way that can still return genuinely meaningful results.

The problem of data

Two common assumptions may limit how we conceptualise the "problem" of data:[6] the first is that, in an age of increasing automation, manual information gathering is perceived as an inefficient use of time. In their paper on automatic keyword extraction, Thomas, Bharti, and Babu (2016: 1) write that, "manual extraction or annotation [of keywords] is a tedious process brimming with errors involving lots of manual effort and time", while Kobayashi et al. (2017: online) note that "reading and manually coding text is a laborious exercise".

Indeed, manual extraction of data *is* tedious, and there are risks of error at multiple stages, but manual classification is a long-established method of collecting reliable and relevant information. One only has to look at, say, astronomer Annie Jump Cannon's remarkable and revolutionary catalogue of the spectral patterns of stars, published in 1918, which involved the classification of 5,000 stars each month between 1911 and 1915 and resulted in the complete classification of 225,300 stellar spectra (Welther, 1978). Of course, there is still much potential value in a technique that "helps accelerate knowledge discovery by radically increasing the amount of data that can be analysed" (Kobayashi et al., 2016), but it is important to understand that such solutions come with their own limitations. Some of these are discussed below.

The second assumption, which reinforces the first, is that "computers" or computer programmes should be or are already able to perform these otherwise-tedious information-selection tasks and are able to perform them at least as well as humans, without significant error, and, of course, significantly faster. These assumptions are not always correct.

While text-mining and natural language-processing machine learning (and even deep learning) programmes are making great advances, they are not currently equivalent to skilled human identification/selection/comprehension skills; at least, not all at once (Gooding, 2013; Thompson et al., 2016; Westergaard et al., 2018). One reason for this is that language is complex; this will be addressed below. A second issue is that input forms of language (limiting our consideration to text for now) are not homogenous. The overwhelming majority of text-mining algorithms[7] require useable inputs, which is to say the text that is supplied to them *must*

[6] If we can, for the moment, set aside a broader concern about trust in data, which is not addressed in this thesis but is acknowledged.

[7] An algorithm is a set of instructions given to a programme, usually to solve a pre-defined problem.

somehow be readable by a machine – a particular challenge when working with diverse sources. In order to be readable by machine, archival analogue (paper) inputs such as old press clippings must first be selected and then either entered by hand or scanned and converted to digitally readable texts through processes including optical character recognition (OCR),[8] after which label data such as the publication name, page number, date, etc. may still need to be added (see, e.g. Allen & Schalow, 1999; Cheney, 2013, Farhat et al., 2018; Thompson et al., 2016; Westergaard et al., 2018).

As much as there is potential for error at different stages of manual (human) data collection, so it exists in machine-enabled data conversion. Certain typefaces and fonts are more or less easily readable by machine – and not just the fonts (Westergaard et al., 2018), but the tracking, too;[9] for example, a "c" and "l" tracked close together might be read as a "d" (Afli, Barrault, & Schwenk, 2016). Special characters may not be detected, reading or rendering as a space, or may not be detected correctly – an accented "é" might return as a glitch character rather than as an "e". These problems should be less of a challenge for more recent texts, which are usually available in digital format or a digitally accessible format and use more contemporary and computer-friendly fonts, but this is not always the case. Paywalls, non-searchable/non-scrapeable data formats (e.g. protected PDFs), and other digital diversity issues present both familiar and new challenges.

It is not only hard source types that are heterogenous. Kobayashi et al. (2017: online) comment that text mining "essentially entails a quantitative approach to the analysis of (usually) voluminous textual data", but data itself is not uniform. Chen, Argentinis, and Weber (2016: 689) write that the challenge in cognitive computing "lies in combining, interpreting, and analysing vast and disparate data types from different sources". Part of this challenge lies in the differential between what they describe as structured data, which includes "data contained in tables or data cells such as names or values", and unstructured data, which they broaden to include "information such as text where meaning is often derived from context. Other unstructured data types include images [and] x-rays" (Chen et al., 2016: 690). The authors add that "data variety is also often accompanied by data silos – where different data sets are kept in different repositories and not integrated."

[8] In OCR, a programme is designed to recognise printed, typed or typeset characters and convert them into digital text; this is not always seamless but is fairly effective and widely used.
[9] "Tracking" refers to the space between characters.

Another factor to be considered is that the overwhelming majority of such cognitive programmes are designed to deal with textual information in Roman script, and predominantly for English-language texts. This severely limits the inclusion of (in this example) news reports written in other alphabets and in non-English languages. So while text mining can be a useful tool, its physical constraints are more complex than is often considered.

Even if reading the physical text is a seamless process, identifying appropriate word matches (for search functions) poses additional challenges. Chen et al.'s (2016: 691) paper explains how the IBM Watson cognitive computing system could be "taught how to recognise and reconcile multiple names or synonyms for an entity into a single concept", including resolving/identifying chemical structures. In their paper, the authors explain this would allow the system to recognise over 100 synonyms for the drug Valium.

While a drug may have multiple synonyms, a pharmaceutical compound typically has finite and known chemical structures, and its synonyms are typically trademarked brand names or common names/word structures that occur in proximity to each other (e.g. "little yellow pill"). This level of word matching requires little lateral work in terms of relational identification, where combinations of words may yield similar or different meanings. Taylor (2009) used 29 different word combinations just to search for stories about domestic or intimate-partner violence in one newspaper. In a broader media content search, these terms and word combinations would have to have been significantly expanded to obtain meaningful results.

There are multiple ways to ascribe female gender. Not just "woman", but girl, mother, wife, grandmother, aunt, widow, niece, stepmother, sister, daughter, lady, fiancée, bride, pregnant, female, she, her... Any of these might be used in a story about violence against women. The permutations of words for violence are also frighteningly broad; not just synonyms, but also the common euphemisms and frequent hyperbole of news reporting. Many news stories – about violence, about homicide, about female homicide, about intimate femicide – never even use the word murder. If the press wants to dramatise violence, a victim is bludgeoned, strangled, stabbed, hacked, etc. In many stories about intimate-partner violence, the opposite is true. A

consistent finding across my readings is that violence is often replaced with euphemisms.[10] A woman may "fall" to her death (rather than being pushed out of a high-rise apartment building by a knife-wielding spouse); a husband and wife die in a "tragic shootout", with only a vague acknowledgement that the husband shot his spouse before turning the gun on himself. The persistent use of such euphemisms makes text mining challenging when attempting to identify stories about fatal violence against women.

Text-mining programmes typically look for individual words and often for word clusters or co-occurrences. Some programmes can identify "keywords", where a programme can not only "read" characters but also infer a vague level of meaning from them. This notion of "meaning" does not necessarily imply comprehension, however. It may simply rely on word frequency, identifying keywords as the most frequently repeated words in a text (excluding "and", "the", and so on), but this bears an additional danger of meaningless auto-generated categories (Bazeley, 2006).

In more advanced programmes, such as those using natural language processing, the dictionary meanings of words can be understood as well as the syntax and meanings of the relationships between the words. However, even regional and national variations in language use can impact the effectiveness of an algorithm. In a presentation about automated (algorithm-based) text extraction from online newspaper articles, Arulanandam, Savarimuthu, and Purvis (2014) found that the accuracy of their text-mining algorithm, developed using English-language news sources in New Zealand, dropped when applied to English-language news content in Australia and India.

There are bigger problems, too. Arulanandam et al. (2014: 37) attempted to identify what they called "crime hot spots" based on a total of 70 newspaper reports, and the authors state confidently that these data could be used to alert civilians and guide police and municipal responses to crime, including making "decisions about where to stay/live and which areas to avoid". Unfortunately for the authors of the paper, almost every single global study into media coverage of crime confirms that media coverage almost never accurately reflects crime (see

[10] While editing this chapter, I encountered eerily similar language in Andrea Dworkin's *Life and Death*, where she too wrote about the euphemisms of violence against women, stating that "when women are killed, it is almost never called murder" (1997: 108).

Chapter Five), something that the authors, concerned only with efficient text extraction, seemed to be entirely unaware of. Media coverage of crime, on its own, should almost certainly never be used as an exclusive basis for effective policing.[11]

This exposes another knowledge gap that, while beyond the scope of this paper, will certainly need to be addressed in the near future: the lack of basic and fundamental social science knowledge among many researchers working in the digital and data space will compromise the relevance of their data or, worse, encourage potentially adverse applications of data outcomes (visible already in algorithms claiming to predict criminal recidivism, sexual preference, and so on).

Reciprocally, a much deeper insight into social studies theories and frameworks would not only benefit quantitative studies but may be essential for their viability if they are to have any meaningful real-world context and external validity. Data "scientists" cannot study data on a thing without knowing what that thing is – its genealogy, the context in which it exists, what other pieces or systems interact with it, etc. Similarly, people who work within media studies and gender studies will benefit from an increased familiarity with quantitative data and its structures, and people who work with data will benefit from much-improved social sciences and humanities references in *their* frameworks.

Returning to the original problem of delegating cognitive data collection and analysis to computer programmes, additional problems arise. As Bazeley (2006: 66) writes, the advent of

> text-handling spreadsheets and databases and, in particular, of text analysis software, has heralded solutions to ... data management problems and opened up new possibilities for more rigorous and/or deeper analysis of ... data. [But t]hey have not necessarily solved theoretical issues which could arise when different forms of data are combined.

In support of mixed-methods studies

In Gooding's (2013) investigation into the impact of mass digitisation, the author describes the onset of large-scale mass digitisation initiatives as having the potential to create a digital Tower of Babel or, less prosaically, a "virtual rubbish dump" (425), in which quantitative and

[11] Neither should algorithms.

qualitative methods have conflicting needs. Gooding cites Lanier (2011:131) to describe an "alarmist" view of mass digitisation, with "quantitative researchers mining the past 'like salvagers picking over a garbage dump'" and suggests, as an interim solution, that this problem might be best addressed by "combining quantitative and qualitative techniques in a case study approach" (Gooding, 2013: 429).

In evaluating their study using text mining, Kobayashi et al. (2017: online) also ask whether they should adopt evaluative criteria from qualitative or quantitative research traditions, "or perhaps even both". Chakrabarti and Frye (2017: 1352), however, appear to be the first such researchers to specifically describe and adopt an "explicitly mixed-methods approach to the analysis of textual data".

At its simplest level, mixed-methods research involves "mixing qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis in a single study" (Creswell, 1999; Tashakkori et al., 2003; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007), which data may be "collected concurrently or sequentially, are given a priority, and involve the integration of the data at one or more stages in the process of research" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007: 165).

Many of the crime-in-media studies cited in the later chapters of this thesis (in particular in Chapter Five) involve at least some level of both qualitative and quantitative data, and a number of them specifically mention these aspects in their methodology (Richards et al., 2011; Gillespie, et al., 2013; Dayan, 2018). For any number of reasons, though, none of them bar Mason and Monckton-Smith (2008) overtly define themselves as mixed-methods studies.[12] This could be fallout from the so-called "paradigm wars", the schism between qualitative and quantitative approaches – although the "wars" have reportedly been in abeyance for the last decade or more (Bryman, 2007). Another issue could be that authors find the narrow conceptualisation of paradigms to be either unhelpful (Biesta, 2010, in Shannon-Baker, 2016) or too inconsistent within social science research (Shannon-Baker, 2016). It could also be a result of journal-article space and word-count constraints. Very few of the media studies

[12] Mixed-methods research may also variously be referred to as "blended", "integrative", "multimethod", "multiple methods", "triangulated studies", and "mixed research" (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007).

included here overtly discuss paradigms at all as part of their philosophical or related methodological framework.[13]

It may be particularly important for mixed-method studies to include deliberate discussion of paradigms and methodology. Mertens (2007: 212) writes that "all researchers should be cognisant of the philosophical assumptions that guide their work. However, because of the potential strength of mixed-methods research to provide a basis for social change, it is imperative that mixed-methods researchers understand their assumptions and the methodological implications of those assumptions."

Hesse-Biber (2005: 470) writes that "it is important at the analysis and interpretation stage in a mixed-methods research design to be aware of the question that each data collection component is answering. What does each design component play in the analysis and interpretation?" She continues that "it is also important to understand that each question is also rooted in a particular research methodology – that has its particular set of assumptions about the social world."

Understanding research assumptions and the methodological implications of those assumptions is important for a number of reasons. First, they may shed light on why we choose to study a chosen area of research, and, second, it influences the methods we might use to study our research questions. Hesse-Biber (2005: 467, citing Mann & Kelley, 1997) writes that "being reflexive means to interrogate one's values and attitudes by recognising that 'all knowledge is affected by the social conditions under which it is produced and that it is grounded in both the social location and the social biography of the observer and the observed'". Hesse-Biber asks: What biases, if any, does a researcher bring to and/or impose on their research; how do a researcher's specific values, attitudes, and theoretical perspectives enter the research process and influence the research style; and, "How does my agenda shape what I ask and what I find? How does my positionality impact how I gather, analyse, and interpret my data: from whose perspective?" (Hesse-Biber, 2005: 468).

[13] "Methodological" as opposed to "method". Giddings and Grant (2006: 5) expand neatly on this distinction, writing that "methodology is a more abstract term than methods and refers to the theoretical assumptions and principles that underpin a particular research approach ... Methods, in contrast, are much more concrete and practiced – they are the tools for collecting and analysing data."

Giddings and Grant (2006: 3) explain this in another way, reminding us that "the choices we make about methods are important because particular methods will close down or open up research possibilities in quite distinctive ways".

Morgan (2007:49, in Shannon-Baker, 2016: 321) conceptualises paradigms as "systems of beliefs and practices that influence how researchers select both the questions they study and methods that they use to study them." Shannon-Baker (2016: 321) writes that "paradigms can help frame one's approach to a research problem and offer suggestions for how to address it given certain beliefs about the world. Thus, I see paradigms as a guide that the researcher can use to ground their research."

Shannon-Baker (2016: 321) also makes a broader point that, for her:

> Arguments on what characterises a "paradigm" versus an "approach" have led us away from the more important issue of how a researcher can operationalise a paradigm. … I approach the paradigm issue asking not whether paradigms are useful but how paradigms can be intentionally used; which paradigm to operationalise then is at the researcher's discretion.

A robust discussion of paradigms has the potential to prompt deeper thinking about how our own beliefs or world views influence or compel us to ask certain questions (and not others), imparts notions of the knowledge we expect to find, and guides *how* we go about finding that knowledge. Intentional use of paradigms also enables us to operationalise different philosophies and tools if desired.

Johnson et al. (2007: 113) position paradigmism as "the primary philosophy of mixed research" and write that the "debate [around approaches to viewing the world] continues to affect how we view knowledge, what we look for, what we expect to find, and how we believe we are to go about finding and justifying 'knowledge'."

A further benefit of the explicit acknowledgement of paradigms is that it allows us to more easily share relevant information with others, viz.: "Being able to identify the characteristics of the study [that make it mixed methods] and giving the design a specific name conveys to readers the rigours of their study. It also provides guidance to others who merge quantitative and qualitative data into a single study" (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007: 162).

Characteristics of mixed-methods research

Johnson et al. (2007) state that qualitative and quantitative are two of three major research paradigms, with the third being mixed-methods research. In order to define "mixed methods", we must also define the methods we are mixing.

Quantitative research or information usually implies a study in which data is represented as, or can be analysed through, numeric representations and is often regarded as closed-ended (Hughes, n.d.; Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research or data is perceived as being more open-ended and typically collects non-numeric forms of information that can be examined in detail and "aims to achieve 'depth' rather than 'breadth'" (Blaxter, Hughes, & Tight, 1996:61, in Hughes, n.d.).

Historically, quantitative methods are associated with positivism, while qualitative methods are associated with interpretivism (Giddings & Grant, 2006; Johnson et al., 2007). Both have specific narrative and historical trajectories and convergences throughout the twentieth century, similar to the media theory frameworks discussed in Chapter One. Shannon-Baker (2016) suggests that pragmatism may be an appropriate paradigm or approach with which to characterise mixed methods.

Johnson et al. (2007: 113) point out that mixed methods is not a new form of research but "is a new movement, or discourse, or research paradigm (with a growing number of members) that has arisen in response to the currents of quantitative research and qualitative research."

Plano Clark (2017: 305) explains this response as a natural acknowledgement of the inherent limits of the qualitative or quantitative approach, writing that "quantitative research alone cannot explain the mechanisms behind predictors or provide insight into the experience … however, qualitative research alone cannot examine the prevalence or predictive power of [culturally situated meanings and experiences]". For example, "using qualitative methods as a follow-up to initial quantitative results in a sequential mixed method design, the researcher can address questions that ask what and why or who and how" (Plano Clark, 2017: 305).

Johnson et al. (2007) specifically sought definitions of mixed methods research from 19 "leaders in the field" and used their responses to identify common themes, which included

questions of intention (why is data being mixed?) and research structure (at what stage does mixing of data/methods occur?). Through this process, the authors also determined that mixed methods existed within a continuum in which both qualitative and quantitative forms were accepted as having value (Johnson et al., 2007).

Evaluation and applied research specialist Huey T. Chen (in Johnson et al., 2007: 119) submitted one of the most succinct responses, writing:

> Mixed-methods research is a systematic integration of quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study for purposes of obtaining a fuller picture and deeper understanding of a phenomenon. Mixed methods can be integrated in such a way that qualitative and quantitative methods retain their original structures and procedures (pure form mixed methods). Alternatively, these two methods can be adapted, altered, or synthesised to fit the research and cost situations of the study (modified form mixed methods).

As Chen explains, mixed-methods approaches frequently involve the conversion of one type of data into another, and this process can itself become a feature of the work and analysis, or even of the study design, and may be distinct from merging, blending, or combining. Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) describe the process of transforming qualitative data into a numerical form (as a sum or total count, a frequency count, or even as numeric coding of qualitative data) as *quantitising*. Similarly, the conversion of quantitative data "into data that can be analysed quantitatively" is described as *qualitising* (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Bazeley, 2006).

In a paper on the possible contributions of computer software to the integration of qualitative and quantitative data, Bazeley (2006: 71) writes that the "integration of analyses using conversion of data is useful in initiating fresh perspectives through exploratory studies". She adds that "such analyses bring the power of statistical analysis to an inductive project, particularly in exploring the structure of data, while retaining the freedom and power of the qualitative techniques to provide situated meaning."

Bazeley (2006: 71) cites Richards' (2005) description of "quantitative coding" (quantitisation) as "data reduction" and of qualitative coding as "data retention, in particular, the retention of links between ideas and the data that generate those ideas". Bazeley notes that one of the

problems associated with "the reduction of text to numbers" (quantitisation) is the potential decontextualisation of data, viz.: "Researchers cannot be sure that the meanings they attach to words on a survey and to the resulting statistical summaries are similar to those held by the respondents; the data have become decontextualised" (Rossman & Wilson, 1994, in Bazeley, 2006: 71). One could argue that this broken telephone of meanings might equally apply to qualitative interviews. (Can one be sure that the meaning interpreted by the researcher is the same as that intended by the respondent?) In any event, Bazeley's point is to argue that through the use of appropriate computer software, the link between the qualitative original source and its quantitative output can be better preserved, lessening this problem.

In order to more clearly identify not only the types of data being used, but also when and how they are used, integrated, mixed, transformed, and so on, several types of mixed designs have been identified (Hesse-Biber, 2005; Bazeley, 2006; Greene, 2006; Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006; Tunarosa & Glynn, 2017), including:

> **Concurrent designs:** Qualitative and quantitative data are collected separately at approximately the same time and do not interact with or inform each other until all the data has been collected and completed. Both sets (qualitative and quantitative) are analysed separately, and the *results* of these analyses are compared.
>
> **Sequential designs:** Data of one type informs the collection of data of another type, in linear or sequential progression. For example, quantitative health data might inform a decision on which subjects to interview. In addition to mixing qualitative and quantitative data, this may also involve mixing methodological approaches and theories and can be used at any or all stages, including data gathering, analysis, and inference.
>
> **Conversion designs:** One form of data is transformed into another (this process can be repeated for new data and be performed in any order, e.g. qualitative to quantitative or quantitative to qualitative, and can be *repeated*, e.g. qualitative to quantitative to qualitative).
>
> **Parallel mixed designs:** Similar to concurrent design, qualitative and quantitative data are collected separately at approximately the same time and do not interact with or

> inform each other. However, in a parallel mixed design, results from qualitative and quantitative data are not integrated at all – not even at the analysis or inference stages.

Onwuegbuzie and Johnson also describe "fully mixed research designs" (citing Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2005) or "fully integrated mixed research designs" (citing Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006), which involve "mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches in an interactive way at all stages ... such that at each stage, one approach ... influences the formulation of the other approach" (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006: 53).

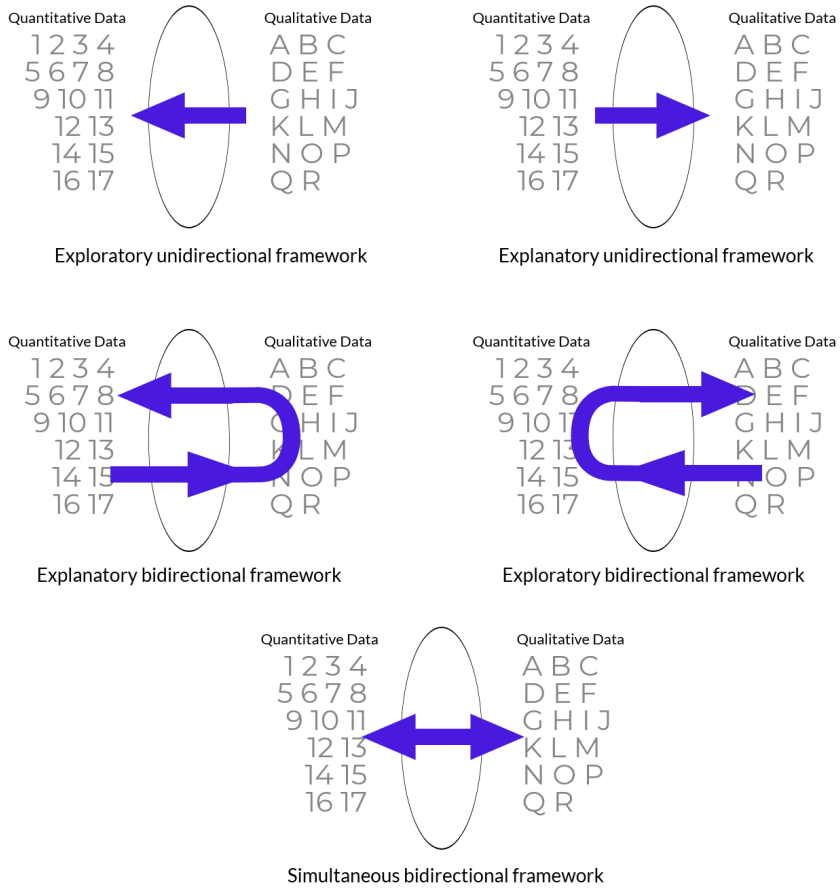
Fetters, Curry, and Creswell (2013), Guetterman, Fetters, and Creswell (2015), Creswell (2015), and Moseholm and Fetters (2017) adopt a parallel but not identical approach, describing three basic types of mixed design that look at the valency of the methods: exploratory sequential; explanatory sequential; and convergent designs. Exploratory designs begin with qualitative data, which are analysed and are followed by a quantitative phase. Explanatory designs do the opposite, beginning with quantitative data to inform a qualitative phase (O'Halloran et al. 2016). Convergent designs conduct "quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis at similar times, followed by an integrated analysis" (Guetterman et al., 2015: online).

Moseholm and Fetters (2017) propose three "modes" of data merging: relational, methodological, and directional. For the first (relational), they look at the relationship between the qualitative and quantitative data, or how the data talk to each other. For the methodological mode, they focus on whether there is a stronger emphasis on one of the two paradigms, i.e. is the study qualitatively driven or quantitatively driven, or do the two paradigms have "equal status" (citing Johnson et al., 2007), which Moseholm and Fetters (2017: 5) propose as "equivalently driven mixed-methods research". Finally, in the third mode, the direction of integration should be specified for greater clarity – i.e. a unidirectional framework features one conversion; in an exploratory (see above) unidirectional framework, qualitative data is converted to quantitative; in an *explanatory* unidirectional framework, quantitative data is converted to qualitative. A bidirectional framework involves two data transformations (this may be of new data or a reconversion), with the first conversion giving the function its name. So, in an explanatory bidirectional framework, data is transformed from quantitative to qualitative and back to quantitative. In an exploratory bidirectional framework the design converts data from qualitative to quantitative to qualitative. A simultaneous bidirectional

framework simultaneously involves "qualitative and quantitative frames" for merging (Moseholm and Fetters, 2017: 7)

Figure 2.1: Methodological dimensions of data merging

(From Moseholm & Fetters, 2017; figures used under CC BY-NC 4.0 license)



From Moseholm & Fetters, 2017; figures used under CC BY-NC 4.0 license

These various design structures offer many ways to plan and describe research that offer value to the researcher and to the reader and may be applied at any stage of the study. Yin (2006, in Greene, 2006: 95) argues that mixing should occur throughout a study, writing that "the more that a single study integrates mixing methods ... the more that mixed methods research, as opposed to multiple studies, is taking place."

This speaks to the broader ambition of mixed-methods designs and research – and why integration is so significant – that, in the end, the final product is "more than the sum of the individual quantitative and qualitative parts" (Bryman, 2006, in Tunarosa & Glynn, 2017: 225).

Tunarosa and Glynn (2017: 226) explain that "integration thus becomes a generative, relational process aimed at building a logical explanation rather than a logistical process aimed at mixing and matching methods." In theoretical integration specifically, the desired outcome is not "better predictive power per se but better explanation or understanding of the processes that underlie the focal phenomenon (DiMaggio, 1995; Sutton & Staw, 1995; Weick, 1995)" *and*/*or* which might be concerned with "reconciling different types (or even conflicting) theoretical explanations" (Tunarosa & Glynn, 2017: 229).

(Why) Is this a mixed-methods study?

In the *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research* (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003), Creswell et al. (2003) describe a particular case study and provide a list of features which, they argue, makes the selected study a *mixed-methods* study, even though it was not titled as such. These features include:

> • The collection of "mixed" forms of data "including quantitative survey data and qualitative open-ended interview data."
> • The title of a study contains "words suggestive of both quantitative and qualitative approaches."
> • A study's authors include a rationale for mixing methods and explain how the different types of data (qualitative and quantitative) influence or inform each other.
> • A study "report[s] two separate data analyses: first the quantitative results of the survey, followed by the findings from the qualitative interviews", and ends with a discussion that "compare[s] the quantitative statistical results with the qualitative thematic findings."

These qualifiers are not specifically proposed by the authors as the criteria for mixed-methods studies, but it is evident that my own study easily meets the first two points (the collection of mixed forms of data and a study title that references mixed methods), and that this chapter and the subsequent sections of this thesis address the second two points (rationale for mixing methods and the reporting and analysis of different types of data).

In a later presentation, Creswell (2013) suggests what would *not* qualify as a mixed-method study, including the collection of qualitative and quantitative data without mixing; multiple forms of qualitative or quantitative data (which he describes instead as multi-method); and transformation only of qualitative data into quantitative. Yin (2006) notes that neither aggregate data nor meta studies should be considered mixed-methods studies.

Beyond the question, "*Is* this a mixed-methods study/design?", it may be more significant to describe *what kind of mixed-methods design/study* it is. To frame responses to this, I will contextualise various aspects of the present study in terms of the frameworks above, including research design; data collection, collation, and conversion; data integration (including mixing and blending), analysis, and reintegration; and interpretation and discussion of both the results and the integration processes.

A mixed-methods design was chosen for my research because of the types of data that were to be collected – as stated, the majority of crime-in-media studies already, in some way, employ either multiple or mixed data and/or methods – but also, importantly, because of the *amount* of data that was gathered. Compared to previous studies on media coverage of crime (see Chapter Five) this work represents a substantially larger data set, and therefore required a particular, and perhaps new, approach to its structure and interpretation. Creswell (2003, in Andrew and Halcomb, 2009: 158) writes that "inevitably, mixed-methods research involves more extensive data collection than a purely quantitative or qualitative research project".

The mixed-methods approach is also very much about the questions to be asked of the data and not just about the data itself. The premise of this study was not only to quantify or tabulate news stories about female homicide in South Africa, nor was it an attempt to read those stories in a purely discursive manner. Rather, it was that data contained in the form of media stories were richer and broader than traditionally documented in similar media studies, and that these data could be read in multiple ways, through multiple lenses – provided sufficient data were captured.

It was, then, necessary to combine qualitative and quantitative methods to gain deeper insight into the data and their metadata – more than would be possible using a single methodological approach (Andrew & Halcomb, 2009). However, within that, the design of the study was

relatively unstructured or, at least, did not prescribe a specific research/analysis order after the collection and collation of the data. In this sense, my research could be considered to fall within the scope of pragmatism, which "emphasises creating shared meaning and joint action, and this emphasis points to the underlying belief in complementarity", as well as "connecting abstract issues on the epistemological level to the methodological level" (Shannon-Baker, 2016: 325). This is noted in the chapters of my thesis where the links between epistemology and methodology are made clear. In Chapters One and Two, theoretical (qualitative) frameworks are introduced. In the third chapter, a (qualitative) epistemology of femicide is presented, followed by a qualitative and quantitative discussion of how femicide is described and measured, in Chapter Four. Chapter Five takes a qualitative-dominant approach to reading media studies of femicide. Chapter Six presents my media survey results using quantitative and qualitative factors. Chapter Seven discusses the issue of validity through both theoretical (qualitative) and pragmatic (qualitative and quantitative) comparisons. Chapters Eight and Nine utilise mixed-method designs to perform and analyse subsets within the media survey database.

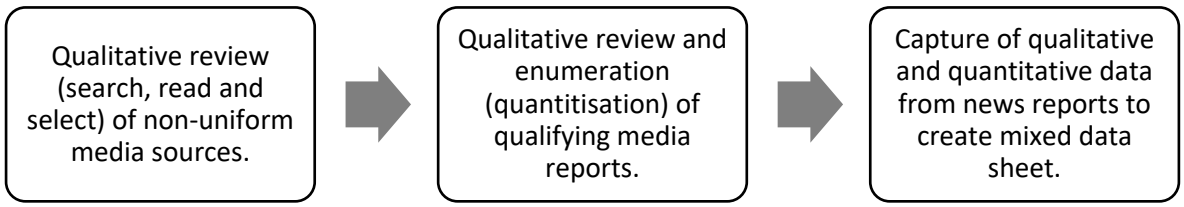
Feilzer (2010: 14) writes that pragmatists "do not 'care' which methods they use as long as the methods chosen have the potential of answering what it is one wants to know", before immediately cautioning that this should not be mistaken for "an excuse for sloppy research, and pragmatic should never be confused with expedient (Denscombe, 2008)". Shannon-Baker (2016) also uses pragmatism to explain connection and valency models of theory and data, discussing "abduction" as that which "moves back and forth between induction and deduction – first converting observations into theories and then assessing those theories through action" (Morgan, 2007, in Shannon-Baker, 2016: 325–326), e.g. determining patterns in the analysis of qualitative data and transforming them into quantitative data (Shannon-Baker, 2016).

The collection and collation (and/or curation) of data in the present study can best be described as, first, the identification and selection of qualifying incidents and news reports through a word-based (closed- and open-ended) content search (open-ended) of non-uniform sources.[14] This was followed by a manual review of the qualitative data (text-based news reports), from which a number of predetermined data fields – both qualitative *and* quantitative – were extracted and documented for both the incident and its media coverage.

[14] Perhaps this is preferable to heterogenous, as these were all news reports.

The duality of the media database content deserves consideration. The database itself contains a number of different entry types common to Excel spreadsheets. These include integers (numbers), dates, strings (a group of characters that is often, but not exclusively, comprised of words), and boolean entries (with one of two values, e.g. true or false, yes or no). In the current database, these fields can more accurately be described as "trilean" or boolean "but for three-valued logics (true/false/unknown)" (Stanford NLP Group, n.d.).[15] For example, the columns that tally the number of victims or the number of news entries are integers (quantitative); the names of victims and the location of their deaths are strings (qualitative); the date of the murder or of the news story is quantitative; and the column tracking whether the murder was an intimate-partner homicide is a boolean [or trilean] entry (yes, no or unknown) (qualitative). However, the female victim's age could be considered as quantitative or qualitative (descriptive, was she old or young?). Even at this stage of data collection, we can observe convergent and interactive processes of qualitising and quantitising, or even data conversion, in the different spreadsheet fields. For example, transforming qualitative inputs (text narratives) into a boolean entry (was it intimate femicide?) represents at the very least a mixing of data, if not full integration.

Figure 2.2: First stage of mixed-methods media study (Creating a qualitative and quantitative dataset)



The captured qualitative and quantitative data is analysed, integrated, reanalysed, and/or reintegrated in a number of ways:

i. Both quantitative and qualitative values are reported individually or discussed as mixed data where relevant – data types are mixed depending on abductive quantitative and qualitative clusters, themes, or narratives.

[15] https://nlp.stanford.edu/nlp/javadoc/javanlp/edu/stanford/nlp/util/Trilean.html

ii. Data extracted from news sources is extracted and converted (in line with Tashakkori & Teddlie (1998) and Bazeley's (2006) description of these processes) and captured in a central spreadsheet (the database). This is done so the data can be studied against/within itself, so that the data can be coded for analysis and comparison within the database and against other media data, and for comparison with statistical information such as SAPS data, population/census data, and various epidemiological studies on femicide, including those conducted by the Medical Research Council.

In the context of this particular database, the methods used at this stage (news source –> database) are specifically described as data conversions (ala Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998) within a mixed-methods study, rather than "coding".

In media and journalism studies, coding often implies the attribution of concepts and categories rather than enumeration and collection of embedded information-data. Saldaña (Sage Publications, 2015: 3) describes a "code" as "most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data". For example, Saldaña explains, a text discussing security measures on a property is meta-tagged "security", while one discussing emotions and value is tagged as being about "self-worth", with a symbolic key-word extracted. This type of attribution coding process can be seen clearly in Chapter Eight where narrative framing codes are assigned to each article.

In these examples, codes are used to identify key attributes about associated texts. When assigning codes to multiple or longer texts, patterns can also be identified in such attributions, including hierarchies, similarities, and differences. Themes, Saldaña says, are an outcome of coding.

Saldaña also states that coding can be used for categorisation, a process he describes as "codifying", which "permits data to be "segregated, grouped, regrouped and relinked in order to consolidate meaning and explanation" (Grbich, 2007, p. 21)." (Saldaña, 2015: 8)

While there are aspects of the conversion of data [to create the media database] that could be described as "coding" – in particular, designations like whether the victim-perpetrator

relationship meant the murder was an intimate femicide or not – the majority of the content on the database is not "coded" (i.e. assigned a value or attribution) but extracted from the news articles, and at scale. For example, incident data includes the victim's age, name, and the cause or mode of death (the latter category could possibly be considered to fall within a coding group). The media data captures the date and title of publication, and the name of the journalist. These are captured in such a way that the data can then be read individually and as a group of data – so the outcome (the ability to read the data as a group) is similar but not identical to the application of certain coding methods, but the input is not the same.

The data capture processes at this stage involve multiple forms of information conversion, including: enumeration (creating or maintaining a number count such as the number of stories, or being able to add the total number of victims/incidents and/or the individual and total number of news articles, and also being able to look at factors like frequency, proportion, and medians); the extraction of qualitative information (for example the name of the victim or the name of the perpetrator); and forms of "coding" or creating codes (including Boolean responses) that can be used to define categories, which can also inform subsequent readings such as themes or hierarchies.

iii. Quantitised data is compared with other quantitised datasets (for validity comparison) and discussed qualitatively, in terms of methodology and the quality and validity of data sources and data outcomes.

iv. The data is deductively quantitised (through predetermined categories, e.g. victim and perpetrator and victim–perpetrator relationship) to select focused data subsets for extraction, which are then examined quantitatively (frequency, proportion, etc.) *and*, within selected groupings, analysed using a qualitative framing analysis (see Chapter Eight).

v. The media article data is quantitised and arranged by total value to stratify news reporting by publication, author, and language, and to explore these factors in relation to the victims. Based on this stratification, high-performing journalists and editors were selected for (qualitative) discursive interviews to discuss the news-selection and production process (see Chapters Nine and Ten).

vi. Reports and analyses from all stages are integrated to form a central conclusion.

It is evident that multiple mixed-methods approaches can easily function and mix within the same study – some sub-sections involve parallel approaches, some are concurrent or convergent, some are sequential, some are exploratory, and some are explanatory – and are able to yield results that inform subsequent research stages or illuminate results from other stages when read together. Through this integration, a fully mixed, multi-directional mixed-methods study is enabled that is extremely functional and can further be used to test the study's validity or legitimacy (see Chapter Seven). This approach has yielded a large, rich data set that can be applied in a meaningful way that would have been impossible using an exclusively qualitative or quantitative approach.

Limitations and challenges to this approach are not dissimilar to the individual problems faced within qualitative and quantitative research. Firstly, the study format may be overly ambitious, and not every media-content researcher will want or even need to manually review thousands of articles and data entries. The quantity of data introduces the possibility of new margins for error, compounded by the multiple concurrent or convergent methods (where one step/set of data informs a subsequent set or step), which may lead to oversights or gaps during conversion or integration. Furthermore, in sequential designs, an error at an early stage of quantitative-data collection could become magnified in subsequent qualitative conversions.

Despite this, I believe this thesis makes a strong case for the broader application of mixed-methods research within media and journalism studies. In Chapter Seven, mixed-methods approaches to validity are used to test the robustness of data and of research questions. In Chapters Eight, Nine, and Ten, mixed data is used to perform narrower mixed-methods studies, which inform each other or add valuable context and insight to related research questions.

CHAPTER THREE: FEMICIDE IS

This chapter looks at the fairly recent emergence and evolution of the term "femicide" as an expression and categorisation of lethal violence against women that contains and conveys both broad and specific political, sociological, and criminological concerns, qualities, characteristics, or objectives.

Through an exploration of the applications and limitations of the term "femicide" in not only a political, but in a public health and criminological context, this chapter also motivates for the broader definition of femicide that is adopted and used throughout this paper, with an added rationale as to why such a definition may have specific implications for current and future research.

A short history of lethal violence against women

Deadly violence against women is not a new phenomenon. In a cluster of late-Holocene graves discovered beneath a shell midden in Saldanha Bay, on South Africa's west coast, archaeologists found the interred remains of an adult female dating back over 2,270 years (Dewar, 2010). The woman was estimated to be in her late thirties. She had been jammed into the grave at an unusual angle, her head bent up and lower back twisted, as if the grave was too small for her body. More significant was the apparent cause of her death – a 46-millimetre tooled bone point, lodged inside her chest cavity below her left clavicle, touching her sternum. The position of the bone point suggested the implement had penetrated the woman's body, and that her death had been both violent and deliberate.

A separate study, of an older site in Melkbosstrand (Pfeiffer et al., 1999; Pfeiffer, 2010), identified the 2,400-year-old skeletons of two females (one in her mid-teens to early twenties, the other estimated to be between the ages of 25 and 40) who had sustained severe and focused peri-mortem damage to their skulls, respectively consistent with "gashes caused by a linear instrument" and "a powerful blow delivered to the right side [of the woman's head] while the left side was resting on a firm surface" (Pfeiffer, 2010: 231).

Similar examples can be seen across the continent. In West Turkana, Kenya, there are ten-thousand-year-old graves that include the bodies of at least five adult female victims showing evidence of multiple fatal blunt and sharp force traumas to the face (Mirazón Lahr et al., 2016).

These studies and others provide gruesome evidence of the type and extent of interpersonal violence in early human communities, while the graves show that women have been dying violent deaths at the hands of others for at least as long as there have been women on the archaeological record[16]. It is only in the last forty years, though, that human society has begun to recognise a specific word for this very particular violence.

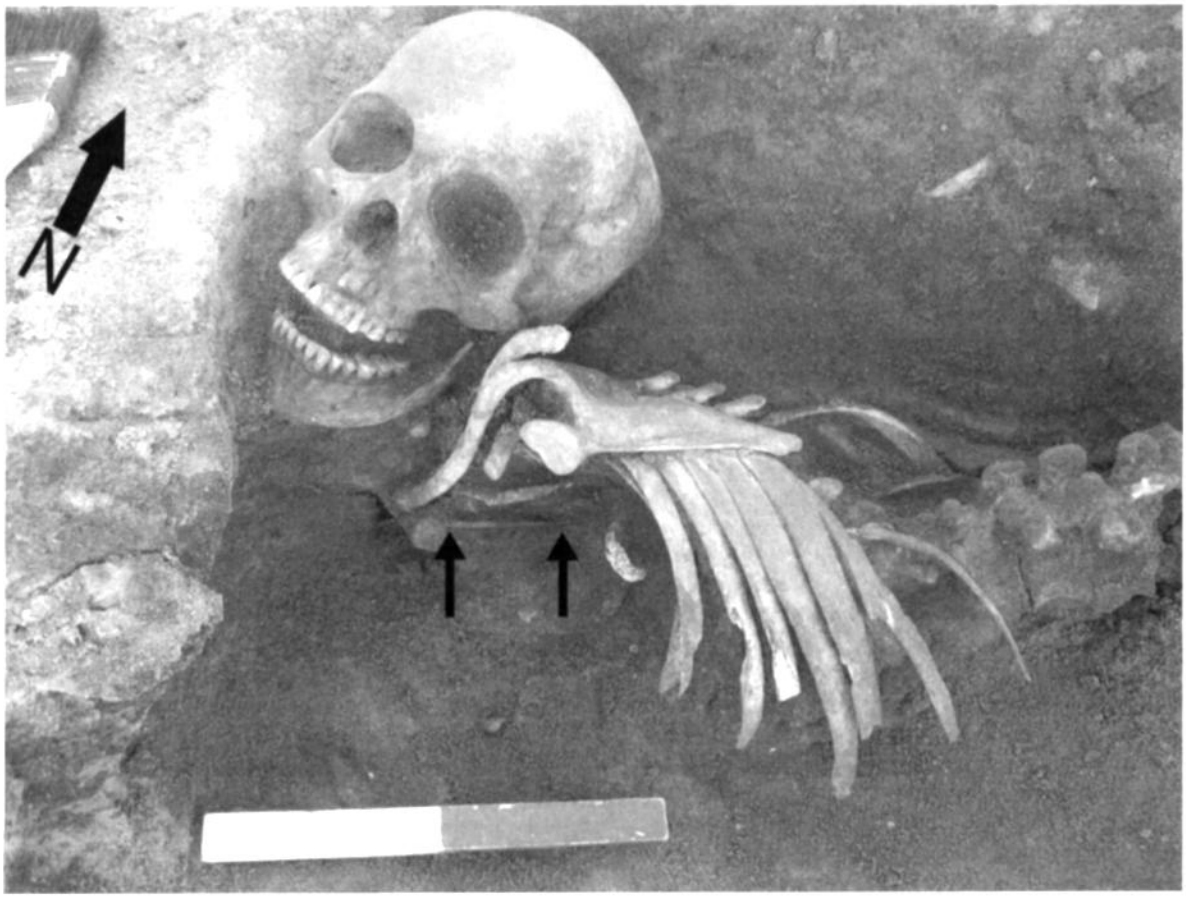


Figure 3.1: "Burial One", Diaz Street Midden (Saldanha Bay, Western Cape)
The 2,270-year-old skeleton of an adult female who was found with a 46mm bone point in her throat (Dewar, 2010). Image used with kind permission of the author.

[16] Rather obviously, so have men (and children). But the common catchword for the illegal killing of another person – homicide – has, etymologically (and politically), reflected the killing of men.

Femicide is political

The term "femicide" is a much more recent addition to human society, at least in terms of the lexicon of research, discussion, and policy around women, gender, feminism, and intersections with violence and crime and justice. Not a new phenomenon, then, but a neologism that encapsulates and expresses specific understandings of violence against women and, at the same time, affirms the need for a specific word to mark these distinctions.

Homicide can, broadly, be understood to mean the unlawful killing of a person (the legal definition may vary between territories and jurisdictions). In many territories, the phrase "murder" has a meaning distinct from homicide.[17] In this thesis, both terms are used interchangeably.

The first known use of the specific term "femicide" – from the Latin for woman (*femina*) and "killing" (*-cide*) – dates back to the early nineteenth century and was used simply to refer to the killing of a woman (Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability, n.d.). The current iteration of the term is a little over 40 years old. Feminist academic, author, activist, and sociologist Diana Russell used the phrase during her testimony at the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women, held in Belgium in 1976, to describe not only female homicide, but more specifically "to suggest that when women are murdered, their femaleness is not incidental to the crime" (in Vetten, 1995: 78).

Russell, in her own words, embraced the term "femicide" (which she, in turn, had heard from another author) as "a substitute for the gender-neutral word 'homicide'." Russell describes femicide as a hate crime against women – specifically, a "hate killing of females perpetrated by males". She later amended her definition of femicide to read: "the killing of females by males because they are female" (Russell, 2011: online).

This initial iteration of "femicide" suggested the existence of a specific type of murder that needed to be distinguished from the crime of homicide (Marcuello-Servós et al., 2016), and which was also directly suggested as a political category (Mujica & Tuesta, 2014). From its inception, the word "femicide" had an overt political purpose: "To produce changes in the

[17] In South Africa, for example, "murder" implies intentional homicide, while "culpable homicide" describes a negligent homicide.

social order which tolerated the violent death of women" and, further, to denote a "political intention [that] came to represent not only a feminist targeting of patriarchal hegemony, but also a significant global challenge of a major order" (Marcuello-Servós et al., 2016: 967).

These concepts were and are important – in this thesis and in any study of lethal violence against women – to understand how "femicide" transitioned from being a purely political term to become a necessary and useful analytical and criminological category *while still retaining the political and social qualities inherent in its inception*.

In this regard, Marcuello-Servós et al. (2016: 967, 969) contend that the word "femicide" is *more* than a neologism; for them it was a signifier of "death and violence. The term denotes a violent phenomenon; moreover, it designates murder with intent". However, the authors state, there remain problems of "consensual definitions in this connection, because there is no extant, internationally instituted canon on femicide". They continue that it is nevertheless "crucial to name this phenomenon, to theorise and to identify its circumstances, as well as the imaginaries and social contexts of this misogynous and criminal practice" (Marcuello-Servós et al., 2016: 969).

As the opening paragraphs of this chapter indicate, the murder of women is a phenomenon as old as modern humanity. Where, then (and, also, *when*), do we situate the contexts of this practice as being "misogynous" or even "criminal"? Perhaps an exploration of the latter might, in part, speak to the former – at least in so far as it demonstrates a consistent, deliberate, and particular history of legitimising certain types of lethal violence against women.

Although many ancient religious laws specifically proscribed acts like individual murder, there were caveats and exceptions: one could murder in self-defence or as a soldier committing an act of war, for example. "Thou shalt not kill" was only the sixth of ten commandments featured in the Hebrew Bible. Polytheism, idolatry, cursing, breaking the Sabbath, and dishonouring one's parents all made an appearance *before* the instruction not to kill another human. The seventh commandment was an injunction against adultery – which (together with murder and certain rights of slaves) seems to have been enough of an issue that it was specifically mentioned in the (even older) 4,000-year-old Sumerian legal codes of Ur-Nammu, which stipulated that if the wife of one man used her charms to entice another man to sleep with her, she should be slain, but the other male party should be set free (Finkelstein, 1968).

Until the introduction of the *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*, around 17 BCE, it was still considered quite acceptable under Roman Law for a husband to kill his wife should she be caught being unfaithful (the *Lex Iulia* allowed the husband to kill the male party to the adultery, but only under certain circumstances). In fact, the husband's right to kill his wife for adultery (there was no reciprocal right) was considered so important that it was reinstated by the Emperor Constantine in 331 CE, five years after he had executed his own wife, Fausta, for infidelity (Carnelley, 2013).

Fathers were also legally permitted to kill adulterous daughters, not just under Roman Law or in the expansive Roman Empire, but in many other regions. And not just for adultery; often, daughters could legally be killed for *any* type of sexual immorality or even for a perceived slight to the father's name or good standing. These so-called "honour killings" of women have long histories and can be found in almost every region of the world, from South America to Europe, in Africa, the Middle and Far East, and across the Asian subcontinent (Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law, n.d.). In many countries, such killings are still considered to be private or family matters rather than a matter for the State and may even go unreported to the authorities. While such killings of women typically fall under the respective countries' laws dealing with murder, so-called "crimes of honour" are often considered to have extenuating circumstances (for the male perpetrators, not the female victims) and may provide for significant reductions of penalties for the (male) murderers, if they are prosecuted at all (Luopajärvi, 2003).

Another lethal euphemism for this kind of violence against women is the so-called "crime of passion", which has been, and continues to be, treated as having special or extenuating circumstances, in which the (usually male) perpetrator is at least partially excused from culpability for his murderous act because of the perceived extreme provocation of a sexual infidelity. In fact, under some jurisdictional laws, infidelity is considered equivalent provocation to that of mutual combat or assault (Barret Broussard, 2012) – or, indeed, any sort of romantic or sexual betrayal, which might include the termination or simply the rejection of a romantic or sexual relationship. In *Life and Death*, Andrea Dworkin (1997:64) describes the "interesting and eloquent assertion of gender, implying as it does that it is natural for a man to use massive, grotesque violence against a woman, any woman, when he is upset."

One example of this was the murder of Francesca Gobbi, who was shot and killed in Hout Bay, in the Western Cape, by her ex-husband, Guiseppe di Blasi, in 1992. The judge presiding over the trial case described the murder as "a story of heartache and obsessive love which evokes much compassion". Di Blasi initially received just a four-year prison sentence[18] (Vetten, 1996: online).

These stories, consistent over centuries, are the literal embodiment of lethal patriarchy, where the father (*pater*) or the husband (who assumes the role of father-owner upon marriage) or another male proxy (son or family member) is not only permitted, but is actually instructed, to kill women who "belong to them".[19]

So, when Russell gave her testimony to the Belgian tribunal in 1976, the idea that lethal violence against women was a separate and distinct type of *crime* – and, more, that these crimes were inextricably enmeshed with and even caused by patriarchal and misogynistic societies – was a fairly new consideration. There was simply no widespread public acknowledgement of violence against women as it existed at a societal level; or that what occurred at a private level was a matter about which the State should be concerned. The archives of the *New York Times* (Willis, 2014) show that, before the 1980s, the term "domestic violence" was usually meant to refer to civil unrest such as protests or riots rather than violence within the home. The use and frequency of the term to refer to violence against women and children only really emerged after a series of US congressional hearings on the matter that were held in 1990.

Violence against women within women's rights and human rights movements

At a global level, institutional acknowledgement of the issue of violence against women (including the murder of women) was also a relative latecomer, even within the focus area of "women's rights". At the very first United Nations World Conference on Women, held in

[18] After an appeal by the Western Cape attorney-general, the decision was taken on appeal and the Supreme Court of Appeal overturned the original judgement and sentenced Di Blasi to 15 years in prison. The decision included a critique of the original trial judge's "insufficient regard to the respondent's moral blameworthiness as well as the interests of society and the crime" (S v Di Blasi (429/94) [1995] ZASCA 111; online). Di Blasi served a little over six years of his sentence before being released early on parole. Three years later he was arrested by the Italian authorities at his house in Sicily, and was once again tried for the murder of his wife. In 2002 he was convicted of her murder for a third time, and sentenced to 10 years in jail.

[19] It was also legal, under certain circumstances, to kill women who were not one's "property". Between the 16th and 18th centuries in Europe, as many as 45,000 people were executed for witchcraft (Leeson & Russ, 2018; Millar, et al., 2018), the vast majority of them women. Like many courts to this day, men made up 100% of the prosecutors, judges, and officials who condemned these women to their deaths.

Mexico in 1975, the agenda was on improving gender equality and ending gender discrimination. This led to the drafting of what became the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted by the organisation in 1979. Violence, however, was specifically *not* included in the CEDAW provisions, "as most government delegations considered violence against women a private matter" (Ertürk & Purkayastha, 2012: 143).

By the second UN Conference on Women, which was held in Copenhagen in 1980, delegates began to identify that, despite the adoption of principles defined by the CEDAW, there appeared to be some discrepancies "between legal rights and women's ability to exercise these rights" (UN Department of Public Information, 2000: online). Among the inhibiting factors identified were a lack of political will, not enough involvement from men, and insufficient support (such as financial support and day-care centres) for women. In addition, at the Copenhagen conference, a resolution was adopted on "battered women and violence in the family", which marked the first time that violence in the home was specifically acknowledged by the organisation – the Mexico conference had alluded rather to the need for "dignity", "equality", and "security" in the home (UN Information Note; Division for the Advancement of Women, n.d.).

It was only at the third Conference on Women (Nairobi, 1985) that violence against women, in those specific terms, was finally recognised as an obstacle to achieving the gathering's stated objectives of "equality, development, and peace". Within the context of broader discussions held at Nairobi, the organisation recommended the development of a set of measures to combat violence against women, culminating in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which was adopted in 1993 at the World Conference on Human Rights, and which in turn was situated within a broader process that had begun to position women's rights specifically as human rights. In 1994, the United Nations established the formal post of a Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, who would be tasked with seeking out information on such violence, its causes and its consequences, and who would also make recommendations as to measures to eliminate such violence and remedy its effects.

The fourth UN World Conference on Women took place in Beijing in 1995. The Beijing conference was important for a number of reasons: it formalised this transition from "women's rights" to "human rights" and, within that, shifted the focus from "women" to "the concept of

gender, recognising that the entire structure of society, and all relations between men and women within it, had to be re-evaluated" (UN, n.d.: online). Within the twelve platforms for action that emerged from Beijing, violence against women was featured specifically in two of them: general violence against women (VAW) and women in armed conflict. In the former, the platform for action determined three strategic objectives: to prevent and eliminate VAW; to study the causes and consequences of VAW; and to eliminate trafficking of women and provide assistance to victims of violence caused by prostitution and human trafficking (UN Division for the Advancement of Women, n.d.).

The South African context

This timeline of events has direct relevance to pilot studies on violence against women in South Africa. The Beijing conference marked the newly democratic South Africa's first participation in any of the World Conferences on Women (South Africa was readmitted to the organisation in 1994). The southern African region of Women and Law in South Africa decided to focus on femicide, and research was initiated in six southern African countries – including Lisa Vetten's (1995) pilot study on intimate femicide, which was funded by the South African NGO Secretariat for Beijing and was presented at the World Conference (personal communication with Lisa Vetten, 2018).

At the Beijing conference, South Africa signed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and ratified the terms of the CEDAW. These documents formed part of a much broader action within South Africa in the 1990s, both before and after Beijing, during which the legal rights and protections of women began to change.

One of the earliest of these was the removal, in 1993, of a provision that exempted husbands from being charged with rape by their wives (previously, marriage had not just implied but had specifically been *defined* as giving consent). The change was hotly debated among the then three houses of Parliament, and many opponents argued that criminalising rape within marriage would increase the country's divorce rate, and that it was "not appropriate to use criminal law in the family" (Kaganas & Murray, 1991: 289).

After 1994, a number of smaller and larger amendments and new Acts were introduced that aimed to improve gender equality. These included various amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act of 1977 (the Criminal Procedure Second Amendment Act 75 of 1995, the The

Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1997, and the Criminal Procedure Second Amendment Act 85 of 1997) which tightened bail guidelines and explicitly defined certain forms of violence against women and children, particularly rape, as serious offences, under which bail was regulated. The Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 broadened the scope of what was considered domestic violence and expanded the definition of abuse against women to include emotional, verbal, and psychological abuse, sexual abuse, economic abuse, damage to property, harassment, stalking, and entering the complainant's residence without consent (where the parties did not share the same residence). Under the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act 120 of 1998, women in customary marriages and/or polygamous unions were also given recognition.

None of this is to say, of course, that women's lives and safety suddenly improved anywhere other than on paper, but it marked a progression of the naming of the phenomenon of violence against women, including femicide.

From private matter to public health concern

Why is it so significant that violence against women was suddenly conceived of as a human rights issue rather than just, say, a criminal one? The shift that occurred in the early 1990s began to more directly acknowledge the causal link between "patriarchal hierarchies and other systems of subordination and inequality" and their *effects*: how such systems created "multiple layers of discrimination for women" (Ertürk & Purkayastha, 2012: 145).

Anderson (2008: 174), discussing harmful masculinities in the context of human rights laws, describes how "violence against women, by limiting the active role women can play in the broader community, 'impoverishes societies economically, politically and culturally'", adding that conceiving of violence against women as a broad feature facilitated "an understanding of these acts of violence as systemic or 'endemic to the social condition of women', rather than as singular random or deviant acts that lie outside the otherwise 'harmonious relationships between men and women'" (Websdale & Chesney-Lind, 1998, in Anderson, 2008: 179).

This expanded agenda, of violence against women as a social problem and a human rights issue, also "intrinsically challenges the conventional focus on individual perpetrators and victims of violence in private life to a focus on complex social, economic, and political structures that instigate violence" (Ertürk & Purkayastha, 2012: 144). Recognition – and,

indeed, observations – of violence against women began to occur in new spaces, where, before, the state had nominally remained uninvolved or was "unseeing". Ertürk and Purkayastha (2012: 145) wryly note that:

> While the apparatus of the state has always penetrated the most intimate spheres of life, such as its promotion of the hetero-normal model of matrimony as the basis of the family institution, its policy of non-intervention in the private sphere has often been the domain of male supremacy. Therefore, the separation of spheres, far from providing a realm of privacy, has served for the selective penetration of public state hegemony while allowing some autonomous space for the hegemony of the male head of the household.

Marcuello-Servós et al. (2016: 968) express similar sentiments:

> Traditionally, femicide in the home enjoyed something akin to the principle of non-intervention – families as independent republics – each home with its own rules; nobody had the right to comment or interfere. However, in many countries, the domestic space is no longer a zone free for privatising violent behaviours. Since femicide was named, there has ceased to be any place for the inviolability of the home. Femicide overrides the imagery of inviolability (McClain, 1995) and neutrality in the face of this violence.

Ertürk and Purkayastha (2012: 143) explain that the inclusion of violence against women strengthened "the women's human rights movement" and resulted in "transformative outcomes" in three areas, namely: expanding the understanding of human rights violations as existing beyond those perpetrated by mainly "state actors in the public sphere", including private and individual action within the responsibility of the state; and the recognition of categories "such as domestic violence, marital rape, stalking, etc." as formal crimes within the criminal justice system.

Femicide and motive

Within this new and expanded sphere, researchers sought to define and categorise "femicide". Many attempted to do so within Russell's motive-based framework, which had evolved to specify the killing of women by men, *because* the victims were female.[20] In 2008, the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women submitted a report in which a "femicide indicator"

[20] Russell herself includes the murder of female children as femicides, although many other definitions do not.

was suggested, which "would capture women's murder in the context of: intimate partner violence; sexual murder; killings of prostitutes; killings in the name of honour; female infanticide; and dowry deaths" (Ertürk & Purkayastha, 2012: 151).

When the Vienna Declaration on Femicide was signed four years later, in November 2012, it described categories of femicide as follows:

> Femicide comprises the killing of women and girls because of their gender, which can take the form of, inter alia: (1) the murder of women as a result of intimate partner violence; (2) the torture and misogynist slaying of women; (3) killing of women and girls in the name of "honour"; (4) targeted killing of women and girls in the context of armed conflict; (5) dowry-related killings of women; (6) killing of women and girls because of their sexual orientation and gender identity; (7) the killing of aboriginal and indigenous women and girls because of their gender; (8) female infanticide and gender-based sex selection foeticide; (9) genital mutilation-related deaths; (10) accusations of witchcraft; and (11) other femicides connected with gangs, organised crime, drug dealers, human trafficking, and the proliferation of small arms.
> (Vienna Declaration, UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, 2013: 2)

Other terms similarly used to describe the unlawful killing of women also emerged, including "feminicide" and "*femicidio*" or "*feminicidio*" (in Spanish-speaking countries), as well as uxoricide, a little-used and slightly archaic term that refers to the killing of a wife, usually by a husband (this term is commonly replaced with phrases like "partner homicide" or "intimate-partner homicide"). In some papers, the term "femicide" is used to refer specifically and exclusively to intimate-partner violence (although this is more commonly described as "intimate femicide").

In the Latin American context – a region with one of the highest rates of female homicides in the world – the use of "feminicide" and "*feminicidio*" are of particular interest, with or in contrast to "femicide".

The Latin American Model Protocol developed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for the investigation of gender-related killings of women (2014) put forward its

own list of “manifestations of gender-related killings of women” identified in the Latin American context. The classifications suggested in this protocol included:

> • Intimate femicide
> • Non-intimate femicide
> • Child femicide
> • Family femicide
> • Femicide because of association/connection
> • Systematic sexual femicide
> • Unorganised systematic sexual femicide
> • Organised systematic sexual femicide
> • Femicide because of prostitution or stigmatised occupations
> • Femicide because of trafficking
> • Femicide because of smuggling
> • Transphobic femicide
> • Lesbophobic femicide
> • Racist femicide
> • Femicide because of female genital mutilation.
>
> (Latin American Model Protocol for the Investigation of Gender-Related Killings of Women, 2014: 14-15)

The same protocol looks at and distinguishes between the use of the terms “femicide” and “feminicide” in the Latin American context. First, the paper explains that *femicide* emerged as an alternative to the neutral term “homicide”, with the political objective of recognising and making visible the “discrimination, oppression, inequality, and systematic violence against women that in its most extreme form culminates in death” (p13). It concludes that:

> In Latin America, the expression “femicide” has been defined in different ways, such as “the misogynist killing of women by men;” (Russell, 2006) “the mass killing of women committed by men based on their group superiority;” (Monárrez Fragoso, cited in Consejo Centroamericano de Procuradores de Derechos Humanos, 2006) or “the extreme form of gender-based violence, understood as violence inflicted by men against women in their desire to obtain power, domination, and control” (Carcedo & Sagot, 2000). These definitions signal the existence of broader patriarchal systems of oppressing women.
>
> (Latin American Model Protocol, 2014: 13)

In the same context, however, *feminicides* were viewed as killings determined to have additional and distinct qualities – specifically as a "state crime", i.e. where the killing of a woman was either caused or enabled by failures of the State. The phrase, in this use, was coined by Mexican researcher Marcela Lagarde, who:

> conferred on this concept a political meaning aimed at denouncing the lack of response from the state in these cases and the failure to fulfill its international obligations, including the duty to investigate and punish. ... It speaks to a "fracture in the rule of law that favours impunity" (Lagarde, 2006). The concept refers to the full set of facts that characterise the crimes and disappearances of girls and women in cases in which the response of the authorities is one of omission, inertia, silence, and a failure to act to prevent and eradicate these crimes.
> (Latin American Model Protocol, 2014: 13)

Another Mexican researcher, Julia Monárrez Fragoso, who has written extensively about femicide and serial femicide in Mexico, described feminicide as including "the progression of violent acts that range from emotional and psychological abuse, battery, verbal abuse, torture, rape, prostitution, sexual assault, child abuse, female infanticide, genital mutilation, domestic violence, and all policies tolerated by the State that cause the death of women" (Monárrez, 2005, in the Latin American Model Protocol, 2014: 13).

These categorisations provide rich and essential context within which to discuss the root causes of femicide; however, these same features become problematic when applying them to actual murders. The Latin American Model Protocol (2014: 35) suggests that:

> While all femicides can be classified as homicides under the terms of the current criminal legislation in the countries in the region, not all homicides of women are eligible to be classified as femicides. Even though the death of a woman may be violent, for example a traffic accident, the motive of the act may not be related to her condition as a female and not be gender-related. This might be the case for example when the killing of a woman results as a consequence of the theft of her vehicle.

Russell herself expressed a version of this when attempting to distinguish between "femicides" and "female homicides" – for example, in Russell's mind, a woman killed with her husband during the course of a supermarket robbery is not considered a femicide (Russell, 2011: online).

The Latin American Model Protocol (2014: 35) explains this approach in more detail, stating:

> In order to establish the criminal act with specificity, killings of women that have some indication of a motivation or context based in a culture of gender-based violence and discrimination must be treated as femicides.
>
> The factors that differentiate the crime of femicide from the homicide of a man, and even from the common homicide of a woman, reveal that the aim of the killing is to entrench and perpetuate the patterns that have been culturally assigned regarding what it means to be a woman: subordination, weakness, sentimentality, delicateness, femininity, etc. This means that the femicidal agent and his actions draw on cultural patterns rooted in the misogynist ideas of male superiority, discrimination against women, and disrespect toward her and her life. These cultural elements and systems of belief make the perpetrator believe that he has sufficient determinative power over the lives and bodies of women to punish them, and, ultimately, to preserve social orders of inferiority and oppression. These same cultural elements allow the perpetrator to feel reinforced in his manhood through this conduct.

By this protocol, in order to treat the killing of a woman as a femicide, we should be able to: a) identify a "femicidal agent" (the perpetrator/s) and b) determine whether and to what extent the "aim of the killing" was rooted in ideas or a context of misogyny, male superiority, oppression of women, and/or the reinforcement of his "manhood" through his actions (the "motive").

How, then, are we to treat killings where the perpetrator is unknown? In a survey of female homicides in South Africa in 2009 (Abrahams et al., 2012), the police had not identified a perpetrator in nearly 23% of the cases in their system. In addition, fewer than 40% of all cases resulted in convictions (Abrahams et al., 2012), which implies that the guilt of many alleged perpetrators was not conclusively determined. This leaves massive speculation as to not only the identity of the perpetrators or their relationship with their victims, but also what their motives might have been. In another study on fatal blunt force trauma patterns in Cape Town (Clark, 2015: 16), the author notes that a much greater proportion of female than male victims are murdered in private homes (42% compared to 32%) and writes that while this "could be indicative of signs of domestic violence", such violence is "affected by issues of under-reporting and is often difficult to identify retrospectively due to the lack of information regarding victim-perpetrator relationship in homicide data."

The determination of motive is even more ambiguous. How would one even begin to tease out or identify misogyny as a specific rather than an inherent feature of any violence against women? Writing about Marc Lepiné's mass killing of 14 women at the École Polytechnique in Canada in 1989, Andrea Dworkin (1997: 108) comments that the women were murdered "because they were women but also because they were engineering students; because they were learning a male science; because they wanted sacred male knowledge. They were trespassing on sacred male ground. They wanted to be engineers, and that was taken to be a militant act of aggression on their part." Perhaps this is true for women who "trespass" on other territories: women who have jobs outside the home; women who drive, women who stand up or who speak out…

In a court of law, how would one prove "misogyny" as opposed to a more generic misanthropy? This is not, sadly, a rhetorical question, and has led to some genuine and some (perhaps) deliberate misunderstandings of the distinctions.

In a rather depressing misreading, or simply an extremely ill-informed over-literalisation of this theoretical framework, a recent Statistics South Africa report on "Crime against Women in South Africa" (Stats SA, 2018a: 7), repeated Russell's definition of femicide, namely "the killing of females by males because they are females", before going on to assert that, by this "narrow definition", the brutal corrective rape and murder of lesbian soccer player Eudy Simelane, killed in KwaThema in 2008, would somehow "not count as femicide".

This is a patently absurd statement. Simelane was targeted for rape and murder precisely because she was a woman, and because she was a lesbian (Brodie, 2015). This points to a massive gap in the very understanding of violence against women by the statisticians' office, which is repeated in multiple subsequent statements in the report, which asserts, for example, that the central problem of femicide is "the level of crime in the country rather than crime against women" and that "men have been victimised more than women" (Stats SA, 2018a: 22). While the latter is statistically correct (men are the victims of and also responsible for the vast majority of homicides), it completely misrepresents the nature of gender-based violence and violence against women from a societal and criminological perspective.

The authors of the Stats SA (2018a: 22) paper conclude their thoughts on femicide by deducing that "femicide is a term that is often misused by activists and the media" and that the "killing of females simply because they are females is a rare phenomenon in South Africa". The report adds that the alleged "misuse" of the term femicide occurs "while the incidence of female homicide resulting from domestic violence or violence emanating from broken relationships is unacceptably high." This implies that, in the view of the statistician's office, the murder of a woman as a result of domestic or intimate-partner violence is somehow not gender-related and therefore not a femicide. It is quite frankly bizarre, incoherent, and damaging.

Poorly informed and irresponsible official statements such as these are unfortunately not unusual, nor are clumsy attempts to deflect from genuine gender issues through simplified word definitions or proxies. The mode of this strategy may in part date back to the presidency of Thabo Mbeki and the Aids crisis and denialism of the early 2000s, which coincided with a peak in South Africa's rates of violent crime.

In 2004, Mbeki (who, during his term, refused to concede that HIV caused Aids, blocked the rollout of ARVs at the height of the Aids crisis, and, as recently as 2017, still publicly questioned how a "virus" could cause a "syndrome") publicly attacked a handful of white female writers and activists for various statements on crime, rape, and Aids in South Africa, which, he claimed, were premised on racist views about African men rather than the statistical reality.

At the heart of this was a deeper and broader narrative, later described or attributed to an "oversignification" of black men within the context of a broader post-apartheid "crisis of masculinity" (Moffett, 2006; Dube, 2016). As an example of how this was played out, Mbeki (falsely) accused journalist and rape survivor Charlene Smith of describing black men as "rampant sexual beasts, unable to control our urges, unable to keep our legs crossed, unable to keep it in our pants" (Quintal, 2004). In context, Mbeki's denialism around HIV and around crime (in addition to blocking the rollout of anti-retroviral drugs, he placed a moratorium on crime statistics between 2000 and 2001) can be seen as direct responses to perceived critiques of black masculinities that persist to this day.

In many senses, though, parts of Mbeki's response were justified – Seedat (1999: 117) noted how the primary construction of violence in South African media portrayed "violence as a

criminal-cum-political and public phenomenon that mainly involves young African men." What can perhaps be better seen in retrospect is that, in the above contexts, black men were oversignified *relative to men of other races*. However, that should not be conflated as saying that black men were not culpable of the violence that was being committed.

Femicide in the context of race and sexuality

The spectre that is most often invoked to "justify" the truism that a "black man is always a suspect" is that of a vulnerable or violated white female body. This is the premise of multiple historical refrains of the so-called "Black Peril", which directly signified "the threatened rape of white women by black men" (and which indirectly rationalised "white men's fear of sexual competition from black men") but could also imply any sort of apprehension related to the "Native Question", including actual rebellion against the colonisers (Cornwell, 1996: 441). After the killing of Reeva Steenkamp, Margie Orford (2014: online) described the imaginary "third body" that was seamlessly inserted into killer's familiar narrative of domestic violence, that of "nameless and faceless … armed and dangerous black intruder."

In her work *Rape: A South African Nightmare*, Pumla Dineo Gqola (2015) suggests a different counterpoint within this schema: that colonisation and, later, apartheid not only conceived and encouraged the idea of the "black male rapist" but simultaneously created the "unrapable" black woman. "Unrapable" because, in this scheme, black women were "excessively sexual and impossible to satiate" (Gqola, 2015: 43) and were therefore "legitimate targets of sexual violence" (Nicholson, 2016: 122). This made them "impossible" to rape (in the same way, Gqola explained at a book launch,[21] as it was once "impossible" for a husband to rape his wife; meaning not that the physical act was impossible, but that the act could not be thought of as rape).

Gqola further situates this violence against women within not just a patriarchal culture but, more specifically, a heteropatriarchal culture – where the only "approved" form of femininity is one where women are cisgendered heterosexual subjects, have relationships with heterosexual men, and aspire to "reproductive marriage" (Gqola, 2016: 123). Even under the powerful constitution of the new South Africa, women's "empowerment", Gqola (2007: 116)

[21] Reported on at Books Live: http://jacana.bookslive.co.za/blog/2015/09/30/pumla-dineo-gqola-unpacks-unrapeable-constructs-and-rape-culture-at-the-launch-of-rape-a-south-african-nightmare/.

explains, “only really applies to women while they are in the official ‘public space’: in the workplace. A completely different set of rules … continues to govern the ‘private’ world of the home, and other spaces in between: public transport, the streets, clubs, restaurants, shebeens, etc.”

When we talk about gender in South Africa, all of these schemas and these narratives must be seen as occupying at least some of the same space, all the time. At the same time, though, allowing the discussion of gender to only be about race is also problematic. Helen Moffett (2006: 132) argues that while “sexual violence in post-1994 South Africa is fuelled by justificatory narratives rooted in apartheid discourses … discourses of race, including accusations of racism, have stifled open scrutiny of the function of rape as a source of patriarchal control.”

Sexual violence is of course not directly analogous to murder, but, in addition to being associated with fatal violence against women, it is, as Moffett writes, primarily “an instrument of gender domination” – as is femicide.

Moffett (2006: 135) states that:

> These common discursive responses to rape reveal alarming trends about the post-apartheid South African society and its inability to discuss openly issues of gender: any discussion of rape is invariably subsumed in narratives about race or class, not gender; these assumptions concerning rape, race and class are held at the highest political and intellectual levels; and the aetiology of sexual violence, while a serious concern, is almost never directly addressed.

In the continuum of the “unacknowledged gender civil war” (Moffett; 2006: 129) in South Africa, we must also acknowledge that narratives around either normalisation or deviancy are particularly complex in the context of South Africa, and “more wide-ranging … than those identified in western feminist discourses of the 1970s and 1980s, which did not take fully into account the acute and complex forms of ‘othering’ present in societies with a history of extreme racial/ethnic conflict” (Moffett, 2006: 131).

The notion of masculinity also needs to be situated in the context of South Africa, and particularly the masculinity of black African men. Kopano Ratele (2014: 118) describes African hegemonic masculinity as an "impossibility", and says that even though:

> generally speaking, African men do dominate women, and some men dominate other men, studies of African men suggest that when countries undergo rapid change in the political and economic realm, accompanied by a reconfiguration of social relations, significant groups of men increasingly find it harder to achieve what historically might have been seen as successful masculinity (see, e.g., Silberschmidt 2001).

This is not to suggest, though, that research into femicide or violence against women should only be viewed from the point of the perpetrator. While there are valid concerns about how existing racist narratives tend to "paint black men into a corner",[22] far more significant for this thesis is that this othering serves to continue to entrench the invisibilisation of black women as victims of this violence. In her work on gender and race in American media, Marian Meyers (2004: 95) describes how, even in news media coverage of violence against African-American women, the "convergence of gender, race, and class oppressions minimises the seriousness of the violence [against black victims]", portraying these victims as "stereotypic Jezebels whose lewd behaviour provoked assault, and absolves the perpetrators of responsibility."

Femicide is killing women

Marcuello-Servós et al. (2016: 968) write that distinguishing femicide from homicide is not simply a "gender or a feminist issue: words permit us to perceive and understand the world and our daily life; we similarly require accurate conceptualisation to relate to and develop scientific findings."

Mujica and Tuesta (2014) ask a different question: What are the most important characteristics of a femicide; and to what end was the category developed?

Because the perpetrator and motive are not always immediately (and, often, never) known, this question requires a more pragmatic approach and a broader definition of femicide in public

[22] This was a comment made in one of the questions that were raised following my presentation of a paper on ideal victims and super predators, at a symposium "On Suspicion and the Contemporary" which was held at the University of the Witwatersrand in April 2018.

health and criminal/justice research. In this case, the definition of "femicide" is often expanded to include *all* murders of women, "without regard to motives or status of the perpetrator" (Campbell & Runyan in Mujica & Tuesta, 2014: 5). This is motivated by "a large body of studies that suggest the impossibility of inferring a priori motivations for criminal acts" (Mujica & Tuesta, 2014: 5), and which acknowledge the "difficulties in establishing motive and understanding of what would be 'femicidal' offences" given the lack of "consensus on gender-based indicators" (Dawson, 2016: 997).

Gender-based indicators are a key outcome of the last forty years of both quantitative and qualitative research – they are, in theory, actual measures of gender quality or inequality and perceptions of the same, which provide valuable points of reference, cross-reference, and comparison. However, many of these indicators are still challenging to use for comparative purposes, because, if they exist at all, they tend to reflect iterations of specific spaces, places, and assumptions that are not always universal. For example, dowry killings, honour killings, and killings resulting from female genital mutilation are common in certain areas and cultures (India, Pakistan, and Somalia, for example) and uncommon in others. In South Africa, too, there are sub-types of femicides that, while not exclusive to the region, have specific features and statistical prominence different to the profile/s of all other regions. These include, for example, family killings (where a female and her children are murdered by her intimate partner – who then often commits suicide following the murders) or the corrective rape and murder of black lesbians.

Gender-based indicators also typically are not ascribed specific legal status or recognition (this may vary by region). Within most legal frameworks, femicide is not recognised as a specific criminal offence[23] – and nor are femicides, by whatever definition, necessarily separately captured on crime statistics.

[23] In Latin America, a number of countries have introduced laws that provide for stricter sanctions against femicide or feminicide, including defining it as a form of aggravated homicide. These countries include: "Costa Rica (2007); Guatemala (2008); Chile and El Salvador (2010); Argentina, Mexico, and Nicaragua (2012); Bolivia, Honduras, Panama, and Peru (2013); the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Venezuela (2014); Brazil and Colombia (2015); Paraguay (2016); and Uruguay (2017)." (UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2018: online).

Mujica and Tuesta (2014: 8) explain that "very few countries have a standardised record of femicides according to the classic definition" and, as a result, "any account of the global state of affairs depends on the general classification 'homicides'."

My own attempts to request femicide data from the South African Police Service revealed similar challenges, including problems with my own assumptions regarding language and definitions. Initially the SAPS research office stated that it was unable to provide me with any femicide data, because their definition of "femicide" deferred to Russell's – that the victim was killed *because* she was a woman – and they were not able to determine this type of motive from their statistical records. I was eventually able to obtain the relevant information by requesting data on all female homicides and disaggregating the victim set by age.

Alvazzi del Frate (in Alvazzi del Frate & Nowak, 2013: 188) writes that, over time, the definition of femicide "has expanded and is often [used to refer to] any killing of a woman". She continues that "while such an approach dilutes the political connotation of violence against women as women, it facilitates the comparability of trans-national data."

Even then, this data was rather sparse. Alvazzi del Frate and Nowak (2013: 188) state that, at the time of their writing:

> Disaggregated data is not yet available for many countries and often global data collection is made difficult by obstacles such as the use of different definitions, limited resources, and the lack of detailed statistical data. Moreover, in many countries the persistence of the crime of honour hides the statistical frequency of a good part of the crimes against women.

A map dated 2011 included in their paper shows that, at that time, there was simply "no information" on femicide in most African countries, most of the Middle East, and most of the Far East and Indonesia.

In early South African studies on female homicides, Mathews (2005: 7) similarly noted that:

> Globally few national intimate-femicide studies have been conducted. Where studies have been carried out, they have predominantly been in developed countries. Research methods used ranged from descriptive case studies, surveillance studies to case-control studies. Crime

> databases have predominantly been used in these studies, but they have limitations which include the misclassification of cases, incomplete information, and missing data, all threatening the reliability of findings (Dobash et al. 2004; Paulozzi et al. 2001).

A discussion of the availability and measurement of global femicide statistics is included in the following chapter.

This thesis uses the collective term "femicide" to refer to all female homicides of victims aged 14 years and older (the relevance of this particular age is discussed in Chapters Four and Five), irrespective of the perpetrator of the homicide and irrespective of their motive. In addition, this thesis includes news reports of three trans individuals who identified and presented as female for some or most of their time, as their femaleness is considered to be a factor in their murders.

In the next chapter, I will look at statistical studies on femicide in order to understand the challenges and limitations inherent in attempts to measure femicide, before reviewing and discussing several South African femicide studies and their findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: MEASURING FEMICIDE

Before any discussion of the media coverage of femicides can take place, it is important to establish and define what is and what is not known about femicide, not just in South Africa, but globally. This chapter provides an overview of how femicide data is (or, in many cases, is not) obtained, measured, tabulated, and researched in different regions and countries, and introduces and discusses key quantitative or statistical studies into femicide in South Africa, providing integrated summaries of their findings.

Recording violent deaths

Centralised death records are not quite as universal nor as centralised as one might imagine. Research published in *The Lancet* indicates "only about one third of the world's 55 million annual deaths are recorded through civil registration, and up to 80 percent of deaths that occur outside of health facilities are not counted" (Mikkelsen et al., 2015: online).

While murders are, perhaps, more likely to be reported than natural deaths, even this category may be subject to discrepancies between regions (Altbeker, 2005). Some countries, for example, count conflict-related deaths as murder, while others exclude them. The same applies to issues like abortion, or the murder of pregnant women (is it one murder or two?). There may be differences in reporting rates (to what extent people actually report crimes to the police) and recording rates (how accurately police forces record the crimes reported to them). These challenges may be further compounded by discrepancies in other data, for example whether or not accurate and recent demographic information is available for the area and whether data is recorded for comparable periods (a calendar year versus any other reporting block).

As explained in the previous chapter, "femicide" is not commonly a legal term, nor is there consensus on what crimes should be included or excluded within its definition. This and other considerations must be taken into account when using or reviewing any decentralised homicide and, more specifically, *female* homicide data, including annual information provided by organisations such as the World Health Organisation (which produced its most recent femicide report in 2012), the United Nations Global Database on Violence against Women (which, in late 2018, included a demographic survey from 2003 as supporting data), or the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The UNODC data portal[24] provides data on, among other issues "Homicide and other criminal offences", with "Intentional homicide victims by sex" more recently also available as a subset, including counts (total number of homicides) and rates (crimes per 100,000 population).

In turn, the UNODC obtains its homicide data from multiple sources, including participating countries' national police, government ministries, statistical agencies, the World Health Organisation, various UN missions, and even NGOs. Each – or even all – of these sources may have slightly different reporting and recording criteria.

South African homicide data is supplied to the UNODC by SAPS, but there are slight discrepancies between some of the total count figures published by the UNODC and those published in the SAPS annual crime statistics reports. There are also (different) discrepancies in the calculated crime *rates* (frequency of crime per 100,000 population), which may indicate the use of different population bases.

Comparing data across the subsets on murder by sex (their term) for South Africa, the UNODC only shows entries for the years 2006 to 2011 (inclusive), although, at the time of my last reading (2018), this data was updated to the year 2016 for all homicides. For other countries, this inconsistency manifests as an absence of entries prior to 2015 or the like. In short, there is data, but while some of it is useful, not all of it is directly comparable. The folly of attempting such comparisons without exercising caution around the data is illustrated in the Statistics South Africa (2018) report on "Crime against Women in South Africa" mentioned in the previous chapter. The StatsSA report initially used World Health Organisation estimates of femicide rates and compared them with data from its own Victims of Crime Survey (which used completely different methodologies) to inadvertently produce a 117% increase in femicide rates between 2015 and 2016/17. The claim was later removed by the statistical agency following an investigation by Africa Check (Makou, 2018).

The UNODC data does offer a snapshot of currently available data and the opportunity to validate or interrogate it on a case-by-case basis. Using this as a tool, for example, it is possible to identify and distinguish between countries that have an extremely high *rate* of female

[24] dataunodc.un.org

homicide – let's say higher than 7/100,000 (South Africa's rate is greater than 10), which includes the Central African Republic, Lesotho, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Jamaica, St Vincent, Belize, El Salvador, and Honduras.[25] One can also identify countries with high *numbers* or counts of female homicides, but where female homicide *rates* are not as high as the group above (typically this implies a larger overall population). These countries include Mexico, the United States, Colombia, and India. Distinguishing between these sets (rates versus counts) is important. According to the UNODC, Jamaica recorded a female homicide rate of 9.33/100,000 in 2016 – but the total murder count was only 135 victims. Compare this to India, which recorded over 17,000 femicides in the same year, but had a much lower female murder rate of 2.67. The reason for this is, of course, the large difference between each country's female population: 1,377,197 women in Jamaica in 2016, according to the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (online), versus more than 587 million women in India, according to the country's last census, in 2011 (Government of India; 2017).

Do other countries measure femicide?

Despite femicide's prevalence, reliable statistical information is available in less than half the countries in the world (Vives-Cases et al., 2016), and comparable femicide data is still not available on a global scale. Moreover, what femicide data is available tends to be concentrated in higher-income, Western countries, while poorer nations in the Global South or in Asia tend to be under-represented, despite crime indicators suggesting that these countries bear a significantly higher burden of lethal violence against women.

In a systematic review of data on intimate-partner homicide conducted jointly by the Gender Violence and Health Centre, the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the South African Medical Research Council (Stöckl et al., 2013), researchers were able to find and disaggregate female homicide data from 66 of the 169 countries listed with the WHO. This was achieved by combining data and estimates from journal articles published on selected databases, and from a survey of official sources in all 169 countries (of which 53 responded). Of the studies that were returned, "high-income" countries (as classified by the World Bank) made up the vast majority of countries represented (implying that they had available data, not that they had a

[25] In order to express crime relative to population, crime *rates* or *ratios* are typically used and are expressed per 100,000 people. To calculate this, the crime count (actual number) is divided by the relevant population number and then multiplied by 100,000.

high rate of femicides), while most other regions – including Asia, Africa, and South America – had a much smaller representation, with the "eastern Mediterranean" providing no data at all.

This is not to suggest that high-income countries are automatically easy to aggregate when it comes to femicide data. In a separate paper that looked at improving femicide data collection across Europe (Vives-Cases et al., 2016), the authors found large regional variations in female death rates "due to assault" – from 0.03 to 2.85 femicides per 100,000 inhabitants – but added that, even within Europe, these differences were difficult to contextualise because of the heterogeneity in the different countries' surveillance systems. Vives-Cases et al. (2016: online) write that "Despite the fact that many countries have sex-disaggregated data on homicides, and a few (e.g. Spain and France) collect intimate partner-related homicide data in particular, the availability of specific data on all forms of gender-based homicide against women is far less developed."

This is compounded by confusion about what role gender played in such crimes (is it a femicide or "just" a female homicide?) and by the limitations of homicide-monitoring systems that were, by and large, not well set up to capture information related to variable characteristics of the crimes, such as motives, methods, and the relationship between victims and perpetrators.

Aside from the problematic geographic limitations of available femicide data, related questions must be asked about which deaths are captured. At the time of writing none of the responding European countries were at war, for example. In many other countries and regions, however, war and conflict is an ongoing reality that affects many women. The "Gendered Analysis of Violent Deaths" report (Small Arms Survey, 2016: 1), which includes global death data up to 2015, provides an indicator that combines data on lethal violence in both conflict and non-conflict settings, which, significantly, includes sex-disaggregated data from countries that are experiencing armed conflict like Afghanistan and Syria. The survey tracks direct conflict deaths in 36 countries or territories and non-conflict violent deaths in 221 countries and territories – although, for "64 of [these], half of which are in Africa, only rough estimates are available". This represents data for 103 countries, which is a significant increase over the 69 countries reported on in the previous 2007–2012 period, covered by Alvazzi del Frate and Nowak (2013). Wisely, however, the authors counsel caution on cross-country comparisons of data, "as the sources may apply differing methodologies" (Small Arms Survey, 2016: 1).

That said, the unique and broader sources of data expose some important figures and contrasts not demonstrated in other studies. These include, for example, that the highest death rate in the world for females (by violence) was in Syria, as a result of the ongoing, intense conflict. The survey data also showed that in both Afghanistan and Syria, the proportion of female deaths had grown over time – i.e. the rate of increase in female deaths had outpaced the rate of male deaths due to conflict. Although the report indicates that most female victims were not specifically targeted, the authors also note increasing accounts of female victims who *were* (Small Arms Survey, 2016). For deaths in non-conflict areas, the survey made another surprising discovery. In most countries, men are by far the majority perpetrators *and* victims of lethal violence. In South Africa, the ratio of male to female murders is as high as or higher than six to one (Matzopoulos, 2015); some contributing factors are explained below. In certain high-income countries with low rates of violent death, however, the Small Arms Survey found that the ratio of female to male victims was reaching parity and, in some cases (including Switzerland, Austria, Hong Kong, and Japan) even exceeding the rate of male homicides. In other countries, including South Africa, the survey data found evidence that "decreases in male violent death rates" were happening at "comparable or greater magnitudes than those [decreases] seen for women and girls" (Small Arms Survey, 2016: 4).

Measuring mortality in South Africa

In various works on the "Biometric State", Keith Breckenridge (2005a; 2005b) discusses the political effects of official documentation and describes how, even within colonial and apartheid South Africa's attempts at biometric control and surveillance, the State's desire to define and control its subjects introduced and perpetuated paradoxes and blind spots about almost everyone except their white citizens.

Breckenridge (2005a, 2005b) describes the British Empire's extensive attempts, across their colonies, including South Africa, to capture analogue biometric data in the form of fingerprints – a method that had been created and honed to aid in the tracking of criminals and delinquents. These efforts were continued and expanded in South Africa after the passing of the Population Registration Act of 1950, where white, coloured, and Indian citizens of South Africa were newly recorded on one database managed by the Census Bureau, and black Africans in another, under a separate Central Reference Bureau (Breckenridge, 2005b). After the introduction of so-called Homeland States, these states, too, began to undertake their own population registrations. Breckenridge comments that by the end of apartheid, "over a dozen discrete yet

overlapping and duplicated population registers were in place" (Breckenridge, 2005b: 276), all of which were expected to somehow be integrated into a newly deracialised national register after 1994.

This biometric bureaucracy presented equal challenges for establishing lives and deaths. In their work estimating mortality rates between 1985 and 1990, Dorrington et al. (1999: iii) showed that, in mid-1980s South Africa, "only 56% of male and 44% female deaths were recorded for the Black population group", adding that even the estimates for "White, Coloured, and Asian population groups" were suspect.

Changes made to the Births and Deaths Registration Act 51 of 1992 were in part to address these deficits. However, the same changes "precluded entry of the external cause of death in the death register for injury cases" (MRC, 2012), which left a statistical gap between deaths due to violence (documented by the police) and due to transport accidents (motor vehicles, etc.), which were recorded, and the many other non-natural deaths (suicides, undetermined causes), which were not.

In 1999, the Medical Research Council established a National Injury Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS), which collected data from medico-legal laboratories and state forensic laboratories in order to provide more detailed information about the profile of fatal injuries in South Africa. Data from the NIMSS reports were also included in subsequent Global Burden of Disease studies for South Africa (e.g. Norman et al., 2007). As the name implies, NIMSS reports were initially provided for national data, but after 2005, coverage of this system became more limited, and the most recent NIMSS reports – for 2011 – are only available for Gauteng and Mpumalanga, with separate mortality and cause of death reports for the Western Cape.

To a greater or lesser extent, a number of other statistical reports contributed broad and specific information to our understanding of causes of death (including violence). Statistics South Africa released (and continues to release) annual reports on mortality and causes of death based on findings from death notifications, but it is challenging to extract meaningful homicide data from these reports, as murder falls within the broad section of "non-natural" deaths. Other deaths in this category include deaths due to traffic and other accidents, self-inflicted injury, and a sub-category defined as "assault". Between 2011 and 2018, Stats SA also produced annual "Victims of Crime" surveys (VOCS), which measured *perceptions* of crime rather than

actual crime. The survey report explains that it "is a household-based survey that examines crime from the point of view of the victims", where the "focus is on peoples' perceptions and experiences of crime" (StatsSA VOCS 2017/2018: online) – as such, it should only be used for contextual reading of crime data. From 2018, StatsSA will be replacing the VOCS with a Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey, which will have a different format and additional content.

Finally, the South African Police Service itself produces regular annual reports on crime statistics (with the exception of a period between 2000 and 2001 when then-president Mbeki placed a moratorium on such data), but these reports are usually only released for the previous crime year. They provide data by crime category, by province and by station, but do not provide this information disaggregated by age, gender, and so on. These reports can be found on the resource centre of the SAPS website (www.saps.gov.za). More detailed information can be requested from the SAPS research office, but this information is limited by the police services' own in-house data platform and capture fields and the compliance of entries that are submitted by individual police stations.

Violence against women in South Africa

Under apartheid, it was almost impossible – even illegal – to study or report many types of violence. But it is clear that the apartheid state deliberately incubated and exploited deep layers of inter-personal aggression and violence as a valuable by-product of, or a tool for, State violence. In the late 1980s, as the authority of the apartheid state appeared to be wavering – producing a notable escalation in violent conflict overall – researchers and activists pushed not only to expose, but also to understand, political violence. Organisations such as the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (originally launched in 1989 as the Project for the Study of Violence) emerged within this context.

At the same time, there was a stated awareness of the problem of violence against women as it existed within South Africa's changing landscape, and as an issue that required special attention during the broader economic and political planning that was taking place for a new, democratic South Africa (Vogelman & Eagle, 1991).

In a paper on endemic violence against women, Vogelman and Eagle (1991) outline numerous constraints facing South African women – particularly black women – at the time and explain

how oppression of and violence against women was premised on a patriarchal and racist society, one which would have to be fundamentally deconstructed to liberate women and make them safe. These concepts, which included legal constraints, political rights, family and relationship structures, and access to law enforcement, speak quite directly to many of the discussions in the previous chapter around the extent of femicide as an act motivated by misogyny and the pervasiveness of patriarchal structures.

If selections of news media articles are a guide, it can be noted that, at the time, the murder of women was perhaps not the most prominent issue, nor was female homicide high on the public gender agenda. Instead, the primary focus for many researchers and reporters was on sexual violence against women, particularly rape (Vogelman, 1990), which dominated the discourse – and perhaps correctly so, given its continued prominence in the South African criminal landscape. This was fuelled by parallel narratives, such as the massive public and official debate over marital rape and media stories of terrifying rape "trends", such as gang rapes in the townships that became known as "jackrolling" (Vogelman & Lewis, 1993).

"Every six days": Early South African studies on femicide

The first study to specifically look at female homicides in South Africa took place not long after South Africa's first democratic elections and in advance of the 1995 Beijing conference (see previous chapter) and was commissioned through People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA), an organisation set up in 1979, initially to provide referral services and shelters for women experiencing domestic abuse. Much like today, the intersection between domestic violence and fatal violence against women was a primary node and area of focus. In her introduction to the paper, Lisa Vetten (1995: 78) notes that there had previously been "little empirical, quantitative research on murder [in] South Africa," and suggests that this was "perhaps because media and academic interest has focused on politicised killings".

Vetten's pilot study focused on intimate femicide, which it defined as the "killing of women by their intimate male partners". It was based on the 1994 court inquest records from the Johannesburg magistrate's court and a content analysis of three English-language newspapers – the *Star*, the *Citizen*, and the *Sowetan* – which predominantly served the same region. From these, Vetten was able to identify 29 female victims from the court inquest records and 45 female homicide cases from the media sample. Vetten (1996) then authored a second report, which used the same newspaper titles but was extended to cover the two-year period between

1993 and 1994, yielding 118 results for intimate femicide (the total media sample was actually larger but included 11 cases that had occurred prior to 1993).

In her first paper, Vetten (1995: 79) found that 55% of the sample of murder victims drawn from the inquest had been "killed by men known to them". Within the media samples, Vetten indicates that motives could not be determined for as much as a third of media stories on female homicides, but "at least a quarter" of the murders appeared to have been motivated by the victim's decision to terminate her relationship with the murderer. Others (an unspecified number) were motivated by "sexual jealousy" and "arguments" of indeterminate cause. Vetten also notes that "eighty-three percent of the female murder victims were African, yet the amount of newspaper coverage given to their murders was disproportionately low in comparison to the coverage given to white female murder victims" (Vetten, 1995: 79). She also found that just under one third of the perpetrators mentioned in the media sample were policemen.

In the 1996 paper, Vetten notes that only a quarter of the identified inquest cases were covered in the news media. Within the larger media sample, Vetten identified a number of other trends within the sub-category of intimate femicide, e.g. nearly 20% of media-reported cases were said to have been prompted by the murderer's inability to deal with the ending of a relationship. Vetten (1996: online) also found that more than 10% of the victims in the newspaper sample were 20 years or younger (the youngest was 14) and comments that the "youth of these women is cause for concern, as it suggests that young women may become involved in abusive relationships while still adolescents." Vetten (1996: online) adds that research into violence within relationships should be expanded beyond "only long-term or marital relationships" and should consider that "young women start dating fairly early, often going out with men quite a few years their senior." (As noted in the previous chapter, the age range included in South African femicide studies specifically addresses this and makes explicit that there is an inherent risk factor for violence as soon as young women start to enter into relationships with men.)

Based on the data, Vetten (1996: online) noted that in Gauteng, "a woman was killed by her partner every six days during this two-year period" but also cautioned that "this figure needs to be treated as an underestimate".

Two years later, the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) began a campaign called "Justice for Women" (officially launched in 2001), that sought to compile

data on conviction and sentencing patterns in cases of spousal homicides. The campaign was provoked by the killing of a woman by her husband over a maintenance dispute in 1997, for which he received a sentence of just three years. The CSVR gathered data from between 1994 and 1998 about both male and female perpetrators of spousal murders heard in particular courts within the then-Transvaal province, eventually identifying 164 cases – of which 39 involved female perpetrators. Their research found that the "greatest proportion of men killed their female partners over their sexual choices and behaviour", while most women "killed their male partners in response to ongoing abuse [at the hands of their partner]" (Parliamentary Monitoring Group presentation, 2003: online). Of the male perpetrators, 15% killed additional victims, including children, the woman's mother or sister, or the woman's new partner. The CSVR's presentation on the campaign to the Parliamentary Monitoring Group also discussed the female perpetrators' actions in the context of what was seen as the State's failure to effectively implement new and improved domestic violence policies, such as the Domestic Violence Act of 1998.

Another important study is Lorna J Martin's Master's thesis (1999; cited in Molefe, 2016), in which she conducted a prospective study of identified potential rape-homicides in Cape Town and Johannesburg for the period 1 July 1996 to 31 December 1998 and analysed the epidemiology and injury patterns of these victims (Molefe, 2016).

As I move into a discussion of epidemiological studies into violence against women, there is a broader conversation that should be noted around the intersection of the problematic "medicalisation" of crime, with its roots in 19th and 20th century "hygienist" and sanitation bio-politics (Mitjavila and Mathes, 2016), and the consideration that crime (or at least violent crime) is a public health issue. This thesis does not directly address or resolve this concern but notes its relevance to the discussion.

Because of the large number and varied and intersecting themes and subjects in the studies below, I have opted to list them primarily chronologically, because in many instances earlier studies informed or were addressed by later ones. Where possible, I have also attempted to make explicit important themes that individual studies addressed, as these too speak to the broader narrative of a growing body of epidemiological literature around violence and violence against women. Except for where this is addressed in previous chapters, this section (and this

thesis) does not attempt to produce any similar summary of broader literature on violence against women or gender-based violence (including sexual violence) in South Africa.

1999: First national female homicide study

In 2002, a team of researchers (including Lisa Vetten and Lorna Martin) from the Gender and Health Group at the MRC began to work on what would be the first national female homicide study. The retrospective study compiled data on female homicide victims over the age of 14 years,[26] whose bodies were presented at a representative sample of 25 medico-legal laboratories between 01 January 1999 and 31 December 1999 (Mathews et al., 2004). Data were "collected from the mortuary file, autopsy report, police record, and during interviews with the police", which processes took place between March 2002 and December 2003 (Abrahams et al., 2008; Mathews et al., 2004). The delay between the date of the murders and the date of data collection ensured that sufficient time had elapsed for the cases to have been processed by the courts. The findings from the study were then weighted to create a nationally representative sample. Data from this study were used and published in a number of related retrospective studies published between 2004 and 2012 that examined specific aspects of the findings, such as rape-homicide, intimate-femicide-suicide, and the role of guns in gender-based violence (these are discussed later in this chapter).

This first national study of female homicide (Mathews et al., 2004) used the following terms:[27]

- **Intimate femicide** was "the killing of a female person by an intimate partner (i.e. her current or ex-husband or boyfriend, same sex partner or a rejected would-be lover);
- **Non-intimate femicide** was the "killing of a woman by someone other than an intimate partner"; and
- **"Female homicide"** was used to refer to both intimate and non-intimate femicide.

The total number of weighted cases in the study was 3,793,[28] for which dockets were missing in 6.4% of the cases and no cases could be traced in 6.9% of the cases, leaving a weighted

[26] Mathews (2005) explains that "the age category 14 years and older was used as the study aimed to determine the incidence of intimate partner homicide, as very little dating or few sexually intimate relationships occur before the age of 14."
[27] As a note, these included a number of important deviations from the standard definitions of "femicide" being put forward in other regions at the time and reflected a progressive and useful integration, such as the acknowledgement of same-sex partner violence.
[28] The original 2004 report listed this as 3,798.

sample of 3,296 cases for which data were collected (Mathews et al., 2004). It is perhaps worth pointing out that in a later paper on this data (Abrahams et al., 2009: 553), the researchers explained that missing dockets might be "more common with cases of murder where there was more police sympathy with the perpetrator, as is common with [intimate-partner violence]". In cases where there was no suspect, the authors further noted that it was their perception that "the deaths of African women were often not thoroughly investigated, nor were known perpetrators pursued. This reflects both historically based inequalities in public service resources in historically African areas as well as the low status of African women in the national race and gender hierarchy" (Abrahams et al., 2009: 554).

Based on the information that *was* obtained from the dockets, 40.5% of the cases in this study were designated as non-intimate femicides, 41% as intimate femicides, and in 18.6% of cases the relationship between the perpetrator and victim was unknown (because of this, the authors note that intimate femicide was likely under-represented). Vetten's finding, that a "woman was killed by her partner every six days", was, as she had suspected, an underestimate – and of some magnitude. According to the 1999 study, the rate was closer to four women a day, or one every six hours – and these were just the intimate femicides. An additional four women were murdered every day by a non-intimate or unknown perpetrator.

Based on this data, the rate of female homicide per 100,000 female population in South Africa was calculated at 24.7 (by comparison, the 2016 Small Arms Survey report on "A Gendered Analysis of Violent Deaths" estimated that in Syria in 2015 this figure (for women) was 25.7 per 100,000), while that of intimate-partner femicide was 8.8/100,000 – at the time, the highest figure(s) reported in research anywhere in the world. The initial paper suggested it would be useful to establish a centralised crime register for female murders and "highlighted a number of weaknesses in the management of female homicides ... by the police and judicial system", which included the need to build the "capacity of [police] officers to investigate female homicides" (Matthews et al., 2004: online).

The special case of femicide

Why would police need special training to investigate female homicides? Because, with weighted data for several thousand murders now available, the hypothesis suggested in the previous chapter – of femicide within a violent, patriarchal, and misogynistic society – was literally embodied and enumerated. In fact, those very attributes had been identified as playing

critical roles in predicting the risk of female homicide and aiding the search for and collection of evidence post-mortem (for example, forensic evidence) that might assist the effective prosecution of a homicide or attempted homicide.[29] As Mathews et al. (2004: online) concluded, "female homicide is different from other crimes".

This is not a uniquely South African distinction. The Latin American Model Protocol (2014: 3) states that although "diverse manifestations illustrate different interrelations between socio-cultural norms and practices, femicide is a global phenomenon", adding that "available reports reveal that gender-related killings of women show signs of disproportional violence before, during, or following the criminal act. This indicates a particular brutality and ruthlessness against the body of the woman. In many cases the killing is the final act on a continuum of violence." The Model Protocol specifically discusses femicide or female homicide as a type of aggravated homicide, which could have criminal, legal, and penal implications.

In her Masters thesis on intimate-femicide suicide in South Africa, Shanaaz Mathews (2005: 6-7) contextualises female homicide against male homicide as follows:

> International studies on homicide indicate that there is a gendered pattern, with the rate of homicide lower for women than for men (Goetting, 1998). This is supported by the National Injury and Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS) in South Africa, which reports that seven men were killed for one woman in 2000 (Matzopoulos, 2002). However, studies are showing that when women are killed they are more likely to be murdered by a man (Gartner et al., 2001; Mouzos, 1999). Perpetrators of female homicide are more often known to the female victim, whereas men are more likely to be killed by a stranger (Humphrey, 1981; Kellermann & Mercy, 1992).

The 1999 national female homicide study found that, of the cases where the relationship between victim and perpetrator could be identified, 50.3% of the victims were killed by an intimate partner. Based on this, many of the results discussed in the initial MRC Policy Brief (Mathews et al., 2004) focused on intimate femicides more than non-intimate femicides. The

[29] The point here is that female homicide typically has a different profile from male homicide, but (as the early femicide studies suggest) police investigations may not always treat these murders as different. Because of these assumptions, investigating officers may fail to look for or find/document/capture important forensic evidence that a) will be lost if not captured shortly after the crime and b) might play a critical role in both identifying and convicting the perpetrator, particularly intimate-partner and family-member perpetrators.

study found that, by race, coloured women were at the highest risk of intimate femicide (18.3/100,000), followed by African women (8.9/100,000) and Indian women (7.5/100,000), and that white women were at the lowest risk of intimate femicide (2.8/100,000).[30] A summary of data from this and subsequent related studies is contained in Annexure A.

According to the 1999 study, victims of intimate femicide were more likely than victims of non-intimate femicides to: be killed in their home; be younger; work as domestic workers; be killed by a legal firearm; be killed by blunt force; or be killed by perpetrators who have a problem with alcohol (Mathews et al., 2004). The perpetrators of intimate femicide by race [% of population in 1999 in brackets] were 76.4% African [76.6%], 17.7% coloured [8.8%], 3.9% white [10.9%], and 2% Indian [2.6%] (Mathews et al., 2004).

The average age of female homicide victims in this study was 30.4 years for victims of intimate femicide and 41.2 for victims of non-intimate femicide. The study mentioned that pensioners were more likely to be victims of non-intimate femicide and found that "perpetrators of intimate femicides were more likely to be blue collar workers, farm workers and security workers, while perpetrators of non-intimate femicides were more likely to be unemployed, students, self-employed or their occupation was unknown" (Mathews et al., 2004: online).

According to this study, 37% of the recorded female homicide cases ended in a conviction. This figure appears to be significantly higher than convictions obtained for general homicides during the same time period. A report published by the South African Law Commission looking at a random sample of reported murders during 1997/1998 found that just over 10.5% of murder cases resulted in convictions within two years of the murder – but more than 60% of murder cases did not even go to court during that time (South African Law Commission, nd).

Mathews subsequently conducted in-depth interviews with 20 men in the Western Cape who had been convicted and imprisoned for murdering their intimate partner in 1999. The synthesis of this research and the first MRC study was the basis for Mathews' PhD thesis (2010) and led

[30] These categories are based on apartheid-era race classifications and should be read both within and without that context. While there is some permeability between categories, and much greater permeability in terms of racial identification, "white" usually refers to what is often also called "Caucasian", African refers to "black African", and "coloured" refers to specific mixed-race communities (rather than inferring parents of different races). See pages 138-140 of this thesis for a broader discussion on race.

to two more papers – the first looking at the role of childhood adversity in shaping masculinities (Mathews et al., 2011) and the second looking at the interconnections between intimate femicide and expressions of masculinity (Mathews et al., 2015).

Following the initial publication of the female homicide study results (Mathews et al., 2004), a number of other additional or supplementary studies were published, working with the same data or subsets of the femicide-study data. These studies and subsequent papers provided important additional detail about the statistical data and examined and explained particular contexts and profiles typical of intimate-partner femicide in South Africa. Some of the key papers are discussed below.

Sub-analyses of the 1999 female homicide data: femicide-suicide, firearms, and rape-homicide

Intimate-femicide suicide:

Shanaaz Mathews'(2005) Master's thesis looked at male partners who committed suicide after murdering a female partner. Mathews' study was a sub-analysis of the data from the female homicide study and found that "19.4% of intimate femicide perpetrators also commit suicide within a week of the murder"[31] and that perpetrator suicide was "associated with the perpetrator being of White race; employed as a professional or white collar worker; and owning a legal gun" (Mathews, 2005: v–vi).

Mathews' findings were used in a subsequent cross-sectional study on intimate-femicide suicide in South Africa, published by the World Health Organisation (Mathews et al., 2008). Both papers showed that in intimate-femicide suicides, nearly 83% of the (female) victims were killed by a gun – in nearly 60% of cases, from a single injury. Interviews with police also showed that more than two-thirds of the perpetrators of intimate-femicide suicides legally owned a gun, indicating that "a large proportion of these deaths might have been prevented should gun ownership within this group have been restricted. The strong association found between legal gun ownership and intimate-femicide suicide suggests that access to legal guns in South Africa requires urgent attention" (Mathews et al., 2008: 556).

[31] The 2004 MRC Policy Brief stated this figure as 16.6%.

Firearm deaths:

Following this, the study's authors published a study on guns and gender-based violence (Abrahams et al., 2010: online), which found that a "gun in the home is more likely to be used against a family member than in providing protection" and that "gun availability is a major risk factor in intimate femicide (murder by an intimate partner)."

This study looked at the role of firearms in all female homicides, not just intimate-partner shootings, and found that, of teenage and adult women murdered in South Africa in 1999, 33.3% had died from gunshot injuries, and more than 60% of these injuries had occurred at home. For intimate femicides, as before, the proportion of gunshot deaths was nearly 83%, which the authors expanded on in chilling detail: "Of the women victims of [intimate-partner] gun homicide, 67.4% were killed with a single shot, most often to the head and face (63.7%)" (Abrahams et al., 2010: online).

Abrahams et al. (2010: online) made an unambiguous recommendation about the role of legal firearms in female homicides:

> The national female homicide victim study also showed that there was no room for complacency about legal gun ownership, finding that perpetrators who legally owned guns were far more numerous than those having them illegally. Licensed guns were used in 74.4% of murders, and unlicensed guns in 25.6%. While only 10% of the perpetrators of intimate femicide were security workers (police, armed forces, and security guards), they possessed 47.4% of all the licensed firearms. Legal gun ownership was also found to be associated with suicide secondly after homicide, increasing the risk of suicide seven times, even after adjusting for social and demographic factors.

Firearms were, at around the time of the first female homicide study, the leading cause of homicide across all groups and even across ages – affecting victims as young as five years old. A study of the NIMSS data from 1999 and 2000 found that "more than half (54%) of all homicides are firearm-related" (Norman et al., 2007: 697), while a separate paper reviewing 2003 NIMSS data stated that:

> Of the 6,167 firearm deaths recorded [that year], 87% were violence-related and the rest were mainly suicide-related, except for 20 unintentional deaths ... Gunshot injuries accounted for

> 53% of male and 41% of female homicides. The 46 recorded firearm deaths among children aged 0–14 years in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, and Pretoria/Tshwane were all violence-related except for one unintentional injury death in Johannesburg.
> (Matzopoulos, 2005: 31)

In 2000, new legislation on gun control was introduced in South Africa. The Firearms Control Act 60 of 2000 was drafted to replace the outdated Arms and Ammunition Act of 1969 and introduced measures to prevent the proliferation of illegal firearms, improve controls over legal firearms, and provide for the disposal of illegal firearms, among other things. The new Act was assented to in April 2001 but was only fully implemented as late as 2004 (Abrahams et al., 2013). The Act, broadly, introduced much stricter requirements for private and business (non-State) owners, including that each gun had to be licensed individually (and licenses had to be renewed every five to ten years); individual owners were limited to a single firearm for self-defence and a total of four firearms for self-defence and other uses (such as sports shooting and hunting); and gun owners had to complete competency certificates, which must be renewed every five years. Fully automatic firearms and certain types of modified firearms (e.g. sawn-off shotguns) were prohibited (Meek, 2002).

As later homicide studies would show, the implementation of the Firearms Control Act had a significant influence on South African firearm homicide rates, which had increased at an annual rate of 13% between 1994 and 2000 but declined by 15% from 2003 to 2006 (Matzopoulos et al., 2018). The specific impact of the Act on reducing femicides by firearms, and the impact of subsequent procedural and legislative amendments, is discussed later in this chapter.

Suspected rape-homicide:

Another important area of sub-analysis completed by Abrahams et al. (2008) was of the connection between suspected rape and homicide. The authors looked at cases in which indicators from either the post-mortem or the police suggested a sexual component to the crime. Because rape could not be verified through autopsy, the paper refers to "suspected" rape homicides and defined rape-homicide as "homicides occurring with a sexual component (not limited to the penetration of the genitalia by a penis)",[32] adding that the researchers "did not

[32] This is consistent with the introduction of the Criminal Law Sexual Offences Amendment Act 32 of 2007, which, among other things, expanded the definition of rape to include *any* act of sexual penetration without consent (Centre for Applied Legal Studies, 2008).

differentiate between the intent to rape with death as an outcome and the intent to murder with rape as a component" (Abrahams et al., 2008:135).

As with femicide, the term "rape-homicide" is not recognised as a specific forensic category by pathologists, nor is it legally defined in South Africa, so such data is not routinely collected outside of studies (Molefe, 2016). In the 2008 paper, Abrahams et al. found that rape-homicide was suspected in 16.3% of their sample and that rape-homicides were "more likely ... than other female homicides to be crimes where the perpetrator and victim were strangers, where the crime happened in public spaces and the victim [was] older than the perpetrator." Victims of suspected rape-homicides also "had larger numbers of injuries, and more often a mechanism of death due to strangulation asphyxiation, or blunt trauma, rather than gunshot" (Abrahams et al., 2008: 132).

Additional homicide (femicide) studies 1999–2009

In the period between the release of the first female homicide study (for the 1999 calendar year) and the second, which was conducted for the 2009 calendar year, a number of other South African homicide studies were published that included data on female homicides, but which were sourced or researched using other methods and data sources. A summary of findings from some of these studies is described below, as it may be possible to compare or add these data to the female homicide study data to create a richer or more nuanced perspective on specific aspects of femicides.

Strangulation: Suffla et al. (2008) looked at the homicidal strangulation of women in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria (Tshwane), and Durban (Ethekwini), as captured by NIMSS from 2001 to 2005. This study relied solely on data captured through the NIMSS reporting system and did not include interviews with police or reviews of police dockets. Among the findings of this study were that "the predominant crime scene [for strangulations] was linked to the domestic context" (Suffla et al., 2008:1) and that elderly female victims were at a disproportionately higher risk of strangulation.

Adolescent victims: A Johannesburg-based study on adolescent homicide victimisation (Swart et al., 2018) combined NIMMS data and police case records of homicides among adolescents (aged 15 to 19 years) in the city from 2001 to 2007. More than 80% of the victims in the sample of 195 cases were male. Females killed by a male (their definition of a femicide) accounted for

only 18%. Within this grouping, the (male) offenders were typically older than their victim and two-thirds of offenders were known to the victim (including intimate partners, family members, and friends or acquaintances).

Homicide-suicide: Jena et al. (2009: 1) published research that investigated homicide-suicide in the Pretoria region between 1997 and 2001, which suggested two particular profiles for femicide-suicide – "a younger, single, black male shooting his girlfriend and himself at home; and an older, married, Caucasian male shooting his wife and himself at home".

Roberts et al.'s (2010) study looked at homicide-suicide in Durban, within which femicides were identified as a specific sub-category. For this study, cases were identified from the city's central mortuary for the two-year period from January 2000 to the end of December 2001. From this, the authors identified 21 cases of homicide-suicide, defined as a suicide motivated by murder that occurred within a specific time frame after that murder. The study found that, "Of the 20 cases involving a male perpetrator, a female adult was the victim in each case, including two child killings. In the single incident where a woman was the perpetrator, she killed her child before killing herself" (Roberts et al., 2010: 886). Firearms were the most common murder weapon and were used in 84% of the cases. The authors referred to Mathews et al.'s (2008) study of intimate-femicide suicide but did not elaborate on or use the term "femicide" outside of this context. In Roberts et al.'s study, 88% of the sample (perpetrators and victims) were black or African and 12% were Indian. No other race groups were documented, which is perhaps indicative only of the catchment area of the mortuary and racial make-up of the city and highlights the limitations of a smaller geographic scope.[33]

Femicide involving police officers: In 2009, the Proactive Research Unit of the Independent Complaints Directorate (now the Independent Police Investigative Directorate, which is responsible for investigating complaints against SAPS and municipal police services) published its own report on femicide within the South African Police Service (Independent Complaints Directorate [ICD], 2009). The report was commissioned following what it described as a "significant" increase in the number of cases of femicide involving police

[33] Two additional postgraduate studies looked at English-language newspaper coverage of homicide-suicides between 1997 and 2001 (Osborne, 2001) and between 2002 and 2009 (Skead, 2010).

officers between 2004 and 2007 (ICD, 2009), during which time a total of 49 (femicide) cases were reported, of which 30 dockets were available for the ICD study.

Because this study was effectively commissioned by the employer of the victims and/or perpetrators, the study included questions about working conditions and access to or effectiveness of employee assistance programmes. The study noted the significant number of cases in which perpetrators used their service pistols to murder their intimate partners; the failure of SAPS interventions (e.g. to remove pistols from at-risk cops); and, related to this, the additional legal and financial risk to the State. At the time, the Minister of Safety and Security was being sued by a widow whose late husband (described in the report as being "trigger happy", "suicidal", and with a "drinking problem") had been allowed to keep his service weapon despite his wife's repeated requests that it be taken away from him. The police officer subsequently committed suicide.

The ICD report noted that the majority of murders in its study had been preceded by "lengthy reporting of the husband to the police" and that "most of the station commissioners [had done] nothing to protect and disarm the officers involved" (ICD, 2009: 2). This finding echoed that of an exploratory study conducted a decade earlier by Jennifer Nix at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, which commented that there was a:

> brotherhood and loyalty among police which is difficult to break through to lay a charge. Police culture is sexist and traditional in its views towards women. The survivors may be too scared of their partner or of his friends in the police service and may be convinced that nothing will happen if she complains or lays a charge. Sadly, this is often true. (Nix, 1998: online)

Of the 30 dockets covered in the ICD report, 76.6% of victims were killed in their own home, with the remainder killed at a neighbour's home, in a commercial place, or in a location not specified in the police docket. Of the women who were killed in their own home, more than half were married to their murderer; two of the victims were separated from the killer. The remainder were either cohabiting or "just boyfriend and girlfriend" (ICD, 2009: 14).

The ages of the victims ranged from 18 to 41 years of age. 80% of the victims were black, 13.4% were coloured, 3.3% were white, and 3.3% were Indian. Firearms were used in 90% of the murders and, of these, 80% of the weapons used were the perpetrator's service pistol. The

majority of the murders were committed by men who held the rank of Constable (37%) or Inspector (33%). Sergeants made up 13% of the perpetrators, with Captains and Superintendents making up 3% each. The researchers could not determine the rank of the perpetrator in 11% of the dockets.

The ICD paper attempted to broadly document and discuss a range of possible motives, including relationship issues, money problems, and problems related to work (including financial issues, the stress of police work, and so on) and concluded with a series of broad recommendations, such as promoting awareness of domestic violence at station level and removing members' access to firearms when off-duty.

Additional studies that relate to firearm deaths are discussed below.

2009: Second national female homicide study

A decade after the pilot (1999) female homicide study, the Gender & Health Research Unit of the Medical Research Council conducted a second retrospective study on female homicides, looking at the 2009 calendar year. The design of the 2009 study was the same as that of the 1999 study but drew data from a random sample of 38 mortuaries (compared to 25 in 1999) based on proportional allocation to calculate a sampling size (Abrahams et al, 2012). Using the same methodology, this 2009 study was expanded to also collect data on child homicide cases. As before, the data collection took place after the end of the study year, in this instance starting in late 2010 and finishing in 2011. Health data and police records were combined with information from interviews with police officers. The definitions (for adult female homicides) used for this study were consistent with those from 1999, with the addition of suspected rape-homicides, which were defined as homicides that occurred with a (suspected) sexual component.

For this second study, the total weighted sample was 2,363 cases, of which only 1.6% were not in the police system. By the conclusion of the study period, the perpetrators of the remaining 2,325 cases had been identified by the police in nearly 76% of the cases. Non-intimate femicides made up 42.9% of this sample, with 57.1% identified as being intimate-partner femicides. Based on their data, the researchers calculated that the "total female (14 years and older) homicide rate in 2009 was 12.9/100,000 population, nearly half the estimated rate for

1999 of 24.7/100,000", and that the "intimate femicide rate was 5.6/100,000 in 2009 compared to 8.8/100,000 in 1999" (Abrahams et al., 2012: online).

While the 37.7% decrease in female homicides overall was notable, homicides had in fact dropped by an even *greater* amount over that period, declining by 44% between the 2003/2004 and 2010/2011 police reporting years (Abrahams et al., 2012). It was also notable that while the rate of intimate femicide had, similarly, declined – from one woman murdered by her intimate partner every six hours to one every eight hours – the ratio of intimate to non-intimate femicides had increased between the first and second study.

The 2009 study also found significantly more suspected rape-homicides within the non-intimate femicide set – 28.5% in 2009 (compared to 13.2% in 1999) for non-intimate femicides and 19.8% for all femicides. Later papers suggested that this increase may have been due to the improvement of artefacts such as rape kits (Abrahams et al., 2013; Abrahams et al. 2017).

Gun-related homicides across both sub-groups nearly halved, a factor the authors suggested was due to the introduction of the gun control legislation discussed above.

The 2009 study also found that, ten years on, there was no evidence of improved police performance in the investigation of femicide cases and that, while the proportion of intimate-partner perpetrators who were convicted increased marginally, that of non-intimate perpetrators had declined by nearly 10% between the study years (Abrahams et al., 2012). News reports from the time indicated that, overall, homicide conviction rates had increased slightly, to around 13% (Steenkamp, 2009).

Following the publication of an initial MRC research brief, which was issued in August 2012, a much more detailed paper was published with *PLOS Medicine* the following year (Abrahams et al., 2013). In the *PLOS* paper, the terms used to describe different types of female homicide were amended in small but significant ways – it could be debated whether these changed or simply became more precise – and were no doubt influenced by the authors' experiences investigating and writing about their own data following the previous study. For the first time, femicide was directly positioned as being equivalent to female homicide, while the term "gender-based homicide" was used to describe murders with "distinct gendered circumstances".

The definitions used in this study were as follows:

> **Definition of terms**
> **Female homicide:** Killing of women
> **Femicide:** Killing of women
> **Gender-based homicide:** Homicide with distinct gendered circumstances, such as intimate-partner femicide and suspected rape homicide
> **Intimate femicide/intimate-partner femicide:** Killing of women by intimate partners (i.e., a current or former husband/boyfriend, same-sex partner, or rejected would-be lover)
> **Non-intimate femicide:** Killing of women by someone other than an intimate partner (stranger, family member, acquaintance, etc.)
> **Suspected rape homicide:** Homicide occurring with a sexual component identified during investigation.
> (Abrahams et al., 2013: 3)

The study's authors add that the findings "likely underestimate the female homicide rate" (Abrahams et al., 2013: 3) in light of the large number of cases missing data dependent on information from police investigations or that "excluded highly decomposed bodies or female skeletons where cause and mechanism of death could not be established". They conclude that "such cases are seldom successfully investigated unless a perpetrator reveals the crime" (Abrahams et al., 2013: 6).

Also in 2013, the authors published data on child homicides in South Africa (Mathews et al., 2013). This paper described age- and sex-specific rates of child homicide, including the deaths of children aged 15 to 17 years. Within this teenage group – which, together with children aged under five years, showed the highest rates of child homicide – the homicide rate for boys "mirror[ed] those in adult males" and was nearly five times higher than the homicide rate among girls. Data for all children (all ages) showed that girls were mostly likely to be murdered at their own home and were more likely to be murdered at home than boys. Disaggregated data also showed that more than 90% of the murders of female victims aged 15 to 17 years were related to child abuse or neglect and to sexual assault, and the authors noted that sexual assault was suspected in between 86% and 100% of female homicides in this study (Mathews et al., 2013).

The authors' comments on the differences between male and female child homicides echoed findings about adult homicides:

> The rate of homicide is distinctly different in males and females. Teenage boys were victims of homicide five times more often than teenage girls. The fact that more than half of all the boys who were victims of homicide were teenagers is not surprising, as violence and injury deaths are the second leading cause of death in South Africa, and males aged 15–29 years are disproportionately affected. Most teenage males who are victims of homicide are killed by acquaintances during shows of manliness and in a context of antisocial behaviour.
> (Mathews et al., 2013: online)

In 2017, the authors published a paper that reviewed sexual homicides in South Africa among adult women and children (Abrahams et al., 2017). This paper included, but also at times separated out, all children aged 0 to 17 years (sometimes separated by gender), females aged 14+ years, and adult females aged 18 years and older.

Additional homicide (femicide) studies 2009–2018

A number of other independent homicide and/or femicide studies were completed during and after the 2009 period and provide valuable context, contrast, or confirmation for the MRC study.

Injury-related mortality: The MRC commissioned a second national burden-of-disease study, published in 2015 (Matzopoulos et al.), which retrospectively looked at routine data gathered from post-mortem investigations in 2009 and assessed an unweighted sample of over 32,000 death records, recording the apparent manner of death using codes from the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 2007 (ICD-10). According to this study, homicide was the leading cause of injury-related deaths, and the male-to-female ratio for homicide was six male deaths to every female death. Within identified female homicides, the most common apparent causes of death were sharp force/stabbing, blunt force, firearms, and strangulation, followed by a smaller number of victims who succumbed to fire/burns, poison, and other causes.

The study enumerated 2,740 female homicides for the 2009 year, compared to 16,245 male homicides, with a total figure of 19,028 homicides.[34] This figure should be contrasted with the SAPS statistics for the 2009/2010 police reporting year, which documented 16,834 cases of murder (SAPS Crime Statistics, 2009/2010). The study's authors state that they "recorded significantly more homicides (13% higher) than the 16,834 recorded by the South African Police Service" but offer no further explanation (a separate paper by Prinsloo et al. (2017) discusses this issue in more detail). While this discrepancy must be noted, it is also not unusual. Differences between MRC homicide figures and those provided by SAPS have a longer and more particular history than might be evident from a single article. The MRC may overstate murder data (see Altbeker, 2008), and SAPS may understate the same, but this should not be used to infer that SAPS is deliberately or negligently erring in its reporting of murder statistics. Part of the discrepancy may be ascribed to administrative differences, for example bodies that are too badly decomposed to make a clear finding of homicide versus accidental death, or where no clear cause of death can be determined, or when no autopsy has been conducted (which might be the case in rural areas where access to mortuaries and pathologists may be limited). This is certainly an area for further consideration but is outside the scope of this paper.

Firearm vs non-firearm homicides: One of the most striking differences to emerge from the 1999 and 2009 femicide study results was the significant decline of the role of firearms as the mechanism of death. A number of separate studies and papers delved into this (for all homicides, not just female homicides) in some detail.

The Firearms Control Act (FCA) was introduced in South Africa in 2000, but (as mentioned previously) its implementation took place over a period of several years. Matzopoulos et al. (2014: online) explain this as follows:

> The stricter licensing conditions under the Firearms Control Act No. 60 of 2000 were part of a broader strategy to reduce the number of guns in circulation, and there was a firearm-access gradient between the FCA being passed in 2000 and its full implementation in 2004. The period was characterised by firearm amnesties and hand-ins, in which legal and illegal guns were recovered by the authorities, more rigorous application of existing licensing conditions, and the

[34] The total figure provided for all homicides is given as 19,028 (Table 3, Matzopoulos et al., 2015: online), but the sum of the male and female totals is 18,985. The slight discrepancy is not explained in the paper but is not unusual in such studies given the size of the sample(s), and because certain cases may be included but not enumerated because of missing paperwork and other such administrative errors.

> destruction of surplus and illegal weapons. The South African Defence Force destroyed an estimated 270,000 weapons between January 1998 and May 2001, and the police destroyed 30,000 in 2001 (Meek & Stott, 2003). It was also notable that there was a 75% increase in the number of firearms recovered by the police in 2003 compared with the previous year (i.e., from 20,000 weapons confiscated and recovered in 2002 to 35,000 in 2003) (Mthembu-Salter & Lamb, 2008). This coincides with the period in which the decline in firearm homicide became evident. After full implementation of the FCA in 2004, this effort was redoubled and a further 100,000 firearms were collected in the first 6 months of 2005.[35]

This paper set out to investigate whether, within the context of generally declining homicide rates in South Africa between 2001 and 2005, the decrease was "specific to firearm homicide or other factors associated with homicide risk" that could be "specifically attributed to the increasingly stricter gun control coinciding with the phased implementation of the FCA that was fully implemented by 2004" (Matzopoulos et al., 2014: online).

To assess this, the researchers conducted a retrospective study of 37,067 homicide cases presented to mortuaries in Cape Town, Durban (eThekwini), Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth (Nelson Mandela Bay), and Pretoria (Tshwane) during the five-year period from 2001 to 2005. The data was acquired through the NIMSS, with the authors noting that there was "erratic coverage" for NIMSS data after 2005 (Matzopoulos et al., 2014: online). To deduce homicide rates, these data were referenced against population estimates denoted by municipal demarcation boards and the 2001 national census. The study, of course, only covered the large urban areas mentioned and did not include data from several provinces (the Free State, Northern Cape, Mpumalanga, North West, and Limpopo) and smaller towns, nor from rural areas, although the authors included references to a number of other mortuary-based and similar studies that appeared to confirm their general hypothesis.

The study found that during the study period, all firearm homicides had indeed declined at a faster rate than all non-firearm homicides, altering the ratio so that by 2005, firearms were (marginally) no longer the leading mechanism of homicide in South Africa. The study estimated that more than 4,500 lives had been saved by the implementation of the FCA.

[35] I have replaced the text's footnotes with abbreviated citations in square brackets for simpler reference.

The findings of the above paper, and those of the second national femicide study (Abrahams et al., 2013), were quite controversial among gun-owning circles, and the pro-gun lobby made a number of attempts to query or challenge the data presented by medical and public health researchers. They published incensed op-eds on local media platforms (see, for example, Churr, 2015), in which they questioned data about firearm deaths – in particular, figures provided in a report from Statistics South Africa in which the agency stated that death by "other and unspecified firearm discharge" made up just 1.7% of the 5,019 "assault deaths" (Stats SA, 2013).

Matzopoulos et al. (2016) subsequently published a paper that asked, "Where Have All the Gun Deaths Gone?" They identified 105,694 gunshot-injury-related deaths over a 17-year period (from 1997 to 2013) and discussed these with the findings of several other national and regional studies into injury mortality profiles. After a review of the various data, the authors explained that the apparent absence of (homicidal) gun deaths in statistical records was largely due to "extensive misclassification" of the cause of death in assault cases. They added that prior to 2006, "most gunshot-related injury deaths (between 76% and 94% annually) were recorded as due to undetermined intent" rather than being classified as "intentional, assault" (as opposed to "intentional, self-harm" or "unintentional") (Matzopoulos et al., 2016: 590). The authors again concluded that the introduction of the FCA was the cause of the decrease in gunshot deaths from 2000 until 2010. However, after that time (from 2011 onward) there was an *increase* in firearm homicides, which corresponded with "the police fast-tracking the finalisation of more than a million firearm-related applications for firearm licences, licence renewals for individuals, and competency certificates between November 2010 and July 2011", together with an increase in the trafficking of illegal firearms in several high-profile cases (Matzopoulos et al., 2016: 591).

In 2018, Matzopoulos and others published an expanded time-trend retrospective study of firearm and non-firearm homicides in the city of Cape Town from 1994 to 2013. This study reviewed data from 36,207 homicide cases presented at the city's forensic pathology facilities in Salt River and Tygerberg and made findings in line with the previous review of national data, in that:

> Firearm homicide increased at 13% annually from 1994 through 2000, and decreased by 15% from 2003 through 2006, corresponding with changes in firearm availability in 2001, 2003,

> 2007, and 2011. A 21% annual increase in firearm homicide after 2010 coincided with police fast-tracking new firearm licence applications. Cape Town's coloured population experienced a significantly greater increase than other population groups following additional exposure to illegal firearms from 2007. (Matzopoulos et al., 2018: 197)

Based on these studies, it should be anticipated that homicide data from calendar or crime years after 2010 will reflect an increase in the number and proportion of firearm homicides (including femicides) compared to the data from the 2009 female homicide study.

Femicide and rape-homicides: By retrospectively examining mortuary data from the Salt River forensic laboratory for the period between 2000 and 2009, I.J. Molefe's MMed thesis (2016) looked at the epidemiology of femicides and suspected rape-homicides in Cape Town. The study included a sample of 1,002 female subjects (all ages) and relied on information and reports from the pathology labs, and did not include police or review dockets. Although Molefe's findings cannot be seen as nationally representative, the data still provides useful guidelines that can be applied to the localised Cape Town context.

Molefe also commented on femicide trends in general, noting that during the 2010/2011 police reporting year, SAPS reported a 5.6% increase in "homicides of adult women ... despite the general decrease of homicidal deaths by 3.4%". More recent reports on crime statistics (Makou, 2018) appear to indicate that as national homicide rates began to increase after 2011, femicide increased at a higher rate. This has remained a worrying and consistent trend.

Intimate-partner homicide-suicide involving members of the police services: Coenraad van den Heever's (2017) doctoral thesis looks at homicide-suicide in a sample of SAPS members who killed either their spouse or intimate partner before killing themselves. The study looks at 38 cases of suicide over a two-year period, from 2012 to 2013, and includes incidents where the perpetrator killed or attempted to kill more than one victim (for example other family members or a love rival) during the homicide-suicide attack. Consequently, not all of the victims in this study were female. The paper also includes testimonies from a number of female victims who *survived* the attempts to kill them (but who were wounded and thought dead before the perpetrator killed himself).

Rural homicide data: Many of the smaller studies mentioned in this chapter focused on either the Western Cape (because of its high murder rate *and* better-quality pathology data) or looked exclusively at murder patterns within major metropolitan areas. With the exception of so-called farm attacks (a term generally used to describe criminal attacks against white commercial farmers and smallholders), very little research looks specifically at homicide patterns in rural South Africa. This is compounded by the apparent paucity of pathology or autopsy data directly related to rural locations. In many remote locations there may be little official documentation – such as police reports and, more particularly, inquest dockets and autopsies – with which to systematically evaluate unnatural deaths.

Otieno et al. (2015) produced a cohort study for a nine-year period (2000–2008) in rural KwaZulu-Natal, using what they described as "verbal autopsies" (i.e. inferring cause of death from interviews with health officials or those who attended a death) to determine 536 "homicide-related" deaths. The study showed that homicide was the second-leading cause of death (after HIV) among young men aged 25–34 years, and that firearms were the most common mechanism of homicide. Among female victims, the homicide risk was highest among women between the ages of 55 and 64 years, followed by women aged 65 years and older (Otieno et al., 2015).

Conclusion

South Africa's femicide studies provide rich data on the murder of women in South Africa and highlight the extreme problem of intimate-partner violence, clearly correlating this with weaknesses in the police and criminal justice system's ability or willingness to investigate such cases. These studies also make a compelling case to position femicide as a public health issue and reveal the "substantial burden of mortality from murder of women in South Africa" (Abrahams et al., 2009: 554).

More importantly, these studies show the emergence of both deep and rich data, *and* broad and contextual thinking around multiple intersecting aspects of fatal violence in general, and violence against women in particular. One could argue that since the early 2000s, South Africa has consistently produced the most significant and most detailed epidemiological studies of femicide globally. This large body of work has influenced and enabled a rich field of associated study and encouraged a particular maturity in how such work is undertaken and how data/results are analysed – as can be seen even in small details, such as the amendments,

refinements, and additions to the definitions of femicide applied in the second national femicide study. At the same time, this data has, to date, been used predominantly within the same epidemiological, public health, statistical, and criminal justice spheres, with little (equivalent) cross-over into social sciences literature. Shalva Weil (2016) discusses the "invisibility" of femicide in this area and writes that there is a particular need to make femicide more visible in the future – by acknowledging and recognising it as a distinct crime (not just associating it with other crimes, including mass sexual violence against women), by making femicide a legitimate topic of study beyond the feminist framework, and by improving the quality of the methods, tools, and data used to study femicide.

In the next chapters I will discuss studies into the media coverage of violence against women, lethal violence, and femicide – and introduce my own femicide media-survey data as a basis for discussion and comparison.

CHAPTER FIVE: MEDIA COVERAGE OF FEMICIDE

Why do we study the media coverage of homicides and femicides, and what do these studies tell us?

In this chapter, I build on the mass-communication and media-effects themes and theoretical frameworks introduced in Chapter One and discuss the broad framework of research into the media coverage of violent crime and, in particular, homicide; and, as a subset of those categories, female homicides.

Media as a proxy

Why study media coverage of a phenomenon rather than the phenomenon itself? In the case of serious or violent crime, and of murder in particular, media coverage serves as an important proxy, as it allows us to make observations about media and about society, both as reflections of and reactions to each other. Finnish gender researcher and sociologist Minna Nikunen (2011: 86) describes this interaction/intersection between media and society as "ethnomethodological: the newspapers are seen as a forum to communicate (interact), to make sense of the world in ways that are shared by the members of that particular society." Nikunen cites Marian Meyers' study into news coverage of violence against women:

> Crime news is culturally defined and reflects the society's predominant values and assumptions as well as organisational considerations and constraints of the news organisation … news values constitute a framework that supports the dominant ideology while marginalising, trivialising, and constructing as deviant or dangerous any challenge to it.
> (Meyers, 1997, in Nikunen, 2011: 84)

Media reports also allow us to study crime itself, both thematically and as individual cases. In many countries, media reports are the only accessible documentation of certain crimes (Warren-Gordon et al., 2010). When statistical or epidemiological crime data *is* available, media reports may still add important information and nuance to our knowledge and understanding of the crimes themselves, including information about the victims and perpetrators (Huff-Corzine et al., 2014) and about the criminal justice system.

Murder and the media have a relationship that is in part summed up by the old newspaper adage, "If it bleeds, it leads" – the implication being that bloody, violent crime (and the fear or titillation of it) leads to a particular frequency and prominence of crime in media reports. This is accepted as a truism but is deserving of a brief discussion.

In an analysis of murder reportage in the American city of Baltimore, Schildkraut and Donley (2012) cite no less than eight different studies to support their statement that "stories pertaining to crime can account for up to 50% of news coverage" and their belief that general crime news is both popular and prevalent across a variety of media – though not all crimes are covered equally. Schildkraut (2017: online) writes that, although "crime news is an abundant staple in modern media coverage ... specific attention [is] dedicated to the most serious of crimes, such as homicide, even though these occur least often." Paulsen (2003: 290) makes a similar observation, writing that "newspapers disproportionately focus on crimes of violence such as homicide and robbery over crimes against property".

These claims have long-established provenance within the study of American and British newspapers, but the issue of crime media coverage as a proportion of overall news has not been similarly determined for South African media, which has one of the highest rates of violent crime in the world and a markedly different media landscape. A cursory analysis of news from the two highest-reporting newspapers (see Chapter Nine) – the *Star* (English-language daily, owned by the Tiso Blackstar Group, formerly Times Media) and *Volksblad* (Afrikaans-language daily, owned by Media24), shows some interesting results in response to this question.

For the purposes of this observation, data was obtained only via the Sabinet SA Media[36] online news clipping platform. For each newspaper, a broad query (with no text fields or limitations) was entered for individual months from April 2012 to September 2012 to produce a baseline total article count, i.e. how many articles the clipping service had on record for that newspaper title for that month. The period and year were chosen to overlap with the period of my own media survey, which will be discussed in the next chapter. The same search of articles was repeated with a sample of broad word-match terms ("crime words") whose presence might indicate a crime story. These were "[match for] crime OR theft OR robbery OR murder OR

[36] This archive is discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

hijacking OR rape OR assault OR knife OR firearm OR gun OR stabbed OR strangled" for the *Star* and "moord OR misdaad OR verkrag OR rower OR geweld OR kaping OR mes OR gesteek OR geweer OR vuurwapen OR verwurg" for *Volksblad*.[37] In order to exclude prominent stories relating to political crime or corruption, in both instances the search was simultaneously instructed to exclude ("NOT") stories that included a mention of former crime intelligence head Richard Mdluli ("mdluli") or then-President Jacob Zuma ("zuma"), both of whom were implicated in a number of criminal matters that predated the search period.[38] Finally, the same search was repeated a third time, looking only for a match for "murder" or "moord". The findings are presented and discussed below. While this is a limited study, its results can be acceptably compared *to each other*, as the database uses the same methods (of clipping collection and word search) for each type of entry.

Table 5.1: Proportion of news stories related to crime and to murder in the *Star* and *Volksblad*, April 2012–September 2012 (Source: Sabinet SA Media)

* % figures are rounded

	Star (all results)	*Star* (crime match) (% of all)	*Star* (murder only)	*Volksblad* (all results)	*Volksblad* (crime match) (% of all)	*Volksblad* (murder only)
April 2012	934	175 (19%)	80	227	108 (48%)	27
May 2012	1,237	202 (16%)	75	285	111 (39%)	31
June 2012	1,187	181 (15%)	66	265	86 (32%)	15
July 2012	1,102	137 (12%)	47	222	39 (18%)	8
Aug 2012	1,346	200 (15%)	104	262	51 (19%)	19
Sept 2012	1,014	126 (12%)	78	282	42 (15%)	21

[37] Roughly, "murder", "crime", "rape", "robber", "violence", "hijacking", "knife", "stabbed", "weapon", "firearm", "strangled".

[38] Excluding Mdluli and Zuma from "crime word" matches resulted in an exclusion of between 10 and 26 stories *for each month*.

This limited survey gives us insight into a six-month period in one particular year, from only two newspapers, using text content from one clipping platform. We don't know what the stories are about, only that they feature a match for one of a selection of subjective crime words. However, even these findings return interesting results. Stories about crime made up between 12% and a whopping 48% of all stories featured in this sample. On average, 15% of the *Star*'s and 28.5% of *Volksblad*'s clipped content during this period was about crime,[39] and stories about murder made up between a fifth and nearly two-thirds of all crime stories – or between 4% and 12% of *all of their news articles* during that time.

Media shapes perceptions and fear of crime

Although the definition of "what is news" is shifting, news media remains the primary source for public information about crime (Pollak & Kubrin, 2007; Tiegreen & Newman, 2009; Wozniak & McCloskey, 2010). Nancy Berns (in Taylor, 2009: 27–28) writes that "most people learn about domestic violence from the popular media. The media are the most common and influential tour guides for exploring the landscapes of social problems." This is a reciprocal or perhaps osmotic relationship, frequently situated within McCombs and Shaw's (1972) classic agenda-setting framework, where "the media influence what issues people think about and the feelings they have on issues", including whether or not an issue is considered worthy or important (Slakoff & Brennan, 2017: 18). Taylor (2014) adds that there is a reciprocal relationship between mass media, crime, and criminal justice, where each component affects media content, and media content equally affects the others.

However, as multiple studies have shown, media reports of crime typically do not match the actual rates or types of crime that are committed (McManus & Dorfman, 2003; Tiegreen & Newman, 2009; Wozniak & McCloskey, 2010; Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013), and there is no common "functional truth" in journalism (McManus & Dorfman, 2005). Instead, researchers have consistently found systematic bias in media reports. Wong and Lee (2018: 3) state that while "the media play a powerful role in the construction of knowledge", media does not offer

[39] The *Volksblad* content in April and May is most likely skewed because of the Griekwastad murders, which took place in April 2012. Don Steenkamp, a minor at the time of the murders, was found guilty of killing his father, his mother, and his teenage sister, and making the incident seem like a farm attack. The murders of Don's mother and sister are discussed in subsequent chapters.

an accurate reflection of real life. Rather, media acts as what Yvonne Jewkes (2004a: 45) describes as "a prism, subtly bending and distorting the view of the world it projects."

Even in the case of homicide, not all murders that are committed are covered in the media (Taylor, 2009; Schildkraut & Donley, 2012), and those that are covered are not necessarily covered in the same way, nor to the same extent. Media processes of selection, exclusion, and representation in crime reporting are, typically, obscure (in that they are not usually explained to readers/viewers/listeners) and highly subjective, relying on many factors beyond the simple "facts of a story", and include the beliefs of an individual reporter or editor (Taylor, 2009).

What newspaper crime reports represent are, simply, crimes that the newspaper has selected as being newsworthy. Nikunen (2011: 84) writes that "some crimes are seen as important or interesting, while others are not. Since newspaper space is limited, it is impossible to give the same amount of attention to every news story." These processes contribute to what Paulsen (2003: 289) describes as a "socially constructed reality of homicide as portrayed by newspaper coverage of homicide incidents"; in turn, this construction can be seen to "foster and reinforce particular perceptions of and attitudes toward violent crime" (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013: 148).

Related to this, media reports of crime play an identifiable and signal role in influencing people's understanding, perception, and fear of crime (Cohen, 2002; Wozniak & McCloskey, 2010; Monckton-Smith, 2012; Custers & Van den Bulk, 2013; Gillespie et al., 2013; Slakoff & Brennan, 2017; Wong & Lee, 2018), including perceptions of who is the typical criminal (Monckton-Smith, 2012), who is at risk of becoming a victim of crime, and what kinds of social, political, and policy responses should be implemented in response to these crimes (Iyengar, 1998; Taylor 2009; Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013).

Studies of media reports of crime

In 1920 the American city of Cleveland, then the nation's fifth-largest settlement, was experiencing something of a crime wave, evidenced by a series of unsolved, public murders and culminating in the arrest of the city's own chief justice for murdering a man he had been drinking with (Tittle, 1992). Cleveland's civic fathers commissioned a major crime survey, which was published two years later (Fosdick, 1922). The Cleveland report took an in-depth look at almost every aspect of the state of criminal justice in the city, from police to prosecution, the courts, correctional services and the penal system, and, unusually, even considered the

impact of interactions between newspaper coverage and criminal justice (Wisehart, 1922). Under the broad heading of "Newspapers and Criminal Justice", the author, Marion Wisehart, found that news stories on criminal justice made up between 6% and 28% of all news coverage in the city's three daily and two weekend newspapers (not dissimilar to the rough content analysis on South African newspapers in this chapter), and that the number of column inches devoted to crime were frequently completely out of proportion to the number or increase of crime itself but were spurred on by a *belief* that there was a "crime wave".

Other, similar studies of newspaper crime coverage may have preceded this, but Wisehart's work certainly seems to be among the earliest, preceding Frank Harris's 1932 "Presentation of Crime in Newspapers: A Study of Method in Newspaper Research" (not read). It also provided a central hypothesis in F. James Davis's 1952 (p330) review of crime news in four Colorado newspapers, namely that "there is no consistent relationship between the amount of crime news in ... newspapers and the ... crime rates, either for (a) total crime or for (b) various types of crime".

Thirty years later, a quote from Davis' work featured as the opening statement for Sheley and Ashkins' oft-cited 1981 paper, "Crime, Crime News and Crime Views", in which the authors comment that "the issue of official, media, and public views of crime" was no longer "the same one which Davis addressed" (492). Conversely, however, criminologist Robert Reiner (2007: 383) writes:

> Whatever its consequences, crime news does exhibit remarkably similar patterns in studies conducted at many different times and places. From the earliest studies (e.g., Harris 1932) onwards, analyses of news reports have found that crimes of violence are featured disproportionately compared to their incidence in official crime statistics or victim surveys. Indeed a general finding, emphasised originally in a pioneering study of Colorado newspapers, has been the lack of relationship between patterns and trends in crime news and crime statistics (Davis 1952).

Studies on media coverage of crime saw a retrospectively predictable upswing in the late 1970s and early 1980s, coinciding with the narrative and real crime waves and drug panics that swept through Ronald Reagan's America and Margaret Thatcher's Great Britain. In 1981, the *New York Times* published an editorial that described the previous year as the "worst year of crime

[in the] city[’s] history” (Buder, 1981). In the United States, panic was fuelled by the arrival of crack cocaine and a fear of black gangs, which contributed to Reagan’s deeply flawed, violent, and racist War on Drugs initiative. In the United Kingdom, mass unemployment and reduced welfare spending, the direct results of Thatcherite policies (although their histories dated before then), contributed to a spike and long-term growth in crime figures and panic around a “crack and smack” (smack being heroin) epidemic among disaffected, unemployed welfare recipients. In this context, it is perhaps unsurprising that the first American study to specifically analyse media coverage of murder (Wilbanks, 1984, in Paulsen, 2003) reviewed murders that occurred in 1980.

Since then, a great number of studies have been published that examined the media reportage of violent crime. Many of these share common findings, including that:

- Media coverage of crime does not resemble actual crime incidence;
- Murders are covered more often and more prominently than other types of crime;
- Multiple-homicide victims and “innocent” victims (children, the elderly) receive more coverage than other murder victims;
- Crime reporting shows bias against minorities (in countries where black populations make up minorities) and tends to stereotype victims and predators by race;
- Newspaper coverage shows bias in terms of the socioeconomic status and relationship status/es of those involved in crime.

Rather than attempting to critique all of the previous century’s surveys, I have chosen a selection of more recent research – conducted after the year 2000 – with a particular emphasis on papers that studied or included femicide. This serves to limit the already large field of homicide-media studies but has other practical implications. Older studies are less representative in terms of the radically changed and currently iterated landscape of media production, consumption, and observation that has evolved over the last two decades, as internet access and digital platforms have proliferated. There has also been a parallel evolution, diffusion, and maturity in race and gender studies, genealogies, and related nomenclature, which has meant that different types of questions can be and are being asked than, say, in the 1980s or even the 1990s.

Studies of homicide and femicide media coverage (2002–2018)

This section includes a review of twenty studies into both homicide and femicide media coverage published between 2002 and 2018.[40] Homicide studies are included because of obvious similarities in method, etc. and because the majority of femicide studies focus only on intimate-partner violence.

The purpose of this section is to provide the reader with a comprehensive understanding of the context within which my own survey and study functions, but also to examine how similar studies have determined their research focus or questions, how they collected and curated their media data sets (and the limitations of certain methods and data), and, finally, the analytical methods or frameworks that were applied to their data, together with some of the outcomes. These studies were not all necessarily selected because they are *good* examples of how to study media coverage of violence – in some cases, the studies expose problems or challenges inherent in particular data sources or methods, which it may be important for researchers be aware of.

In order to expose common or divergent approaches and findings, I have grouped studies within three broadly shared themes or frameworks, as follows: studies on media coverage of intimate-partner violence; studies on media coverage of homicide (i.e. all murders); and studies on media coverage of femicide (i.e. all female homicides, not just intimate-partner homicide)

A. Studies on media coverage of intimate-partner or domestic violence

i. **Bullock and Cubert (2002)**

Coverage of domestic violence fatalities gives a distorted view of domestic violence and portrays it as an isolated problem.

Bullock and Cubert conducted a content and frame analysis of newspaper coverage of domestic violence homicides in community and daily newspapers in Washington State in 1998. The study "included all news and feature articles, companion pieces (such as short articles giving domestic violence fatality statistics), and opinion pieces that dealt primarily with domestic violence-related deaths" (Bullock and Cubert, 2002: 480) and excluded one clipping for which

[40] It must be acknowledged that there was a significant uptick in studies into media coverage of violence against women, including female homicide, from the early nineties (e.g. Meyers, 1997), which possibly aligns with the growing global interest and acknowledgement of the term as outlined in Chapter Three.

full text was not available. Trial coverage (if there was a trial) was also excluded. Both male and female homicides were included in the study (the word "femicide" was not used at all), as were children who were killed as the result of an intimate-partner dispute (which included current and former intimate partners). Based on this, 44 domestic violence homicides were identified, covered in 230 news articles. News-reported perpetrator data was available for 42 cases, which included 29 female victims and 13 male victims (in nine of the latter cases, the perpetrator was female; all the perpetrators of the female homicides were male).

For the content analysis, the 230 news articles were coded to examine for the manifest and latent presence of terms or phrases that connoted issues around domestic violence, abuse, and trauma, among other things. From this, the authors determined that "domestic violence" was usually implied rather than overtly used in text, and that news reports generally "fail to provide readers with the vocabulary with which to discuss domestic violence" (Bullock and Cubert, 2002: 493). The articles also portrayed the cases as isolated incidents of murder, rather than thematic examples of domestic violence. Framing analysis was used to identify "themes or patterns in the coverage", and key ideas or clusters were synthesised into frame categories. Bullock and Cubert's frame analysis is discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight, which looks specifically at framing discourse and analysis within the coverage of femicide.

ii. **McManus and Dorfman (2003)**

Intimate-partner violence is under-reported in newspapers, while intimate-partner homicide is more regularly reported. This distorts the picture, making it difficult for audiences to see the problem.

McManus and Dorfman published a study that investigated the coverage of intimate-partner violence (IPV, defined as violence perpetrated by current or former romantic or sexual partners, including those on a first date) in California, looking at news reports of domestic intimate-partner murders in the *San Jose Mercury News* or the *Los Angeles Times* during the 2000 calendar year. Both newspapers were selected because they published in counties with domestic violence-death review teams, which allowed the authors to "compare rates of IPV coverage with the incidence of homicide between current or former partners" (McManus and Dorfman, 2003: 5). Separate electronic databases for both newspapers were used to identify 5,200 articles "about criminal violence" that had occurred in the United States and were

published in 2000, and 488 articles about intimate-partner violence were identified. A random 1-in-9 sample of 529 articles on all other violence was also gathered.

McManus and Dorfman's approach looked at, among other issues, the number of stories per arrest for intimate-partner violence compared with arrests for other crimes – significant because a history of intimate-partner violence is a strong predictor for future violence, including femicide. In this study, arrests for all other crimes were covered up to ten times more than those for intimate-partner violence. At the same time, intimate-partner homicides made up more than 60% of all intimate-partner violence coverage, despite making up less than 1% of intimate-partner violence arrests during that time. This indicates that "murder-centric" news media was focused on the most extreme expression of domestic violence but seldom covered its predictive symptoms.

McManus and Dorfman also looked at the quality of intimate-partner homicide coverage, including whether the coverage was episodic (single incident-based) or thematic (intimate-partner violence as a broader social problem), and they developed and applied a frame analysis through which to explore questions around victim-blaming or changes in news coverage. Through these processes, they observed that newsroom cultures had moved away from victim-blaming or excusing the perpetrator, but the authors issued a series of recommendations for a number of other problems. These included describing and naming domestic violence as such, broadening the media sources used, and providing and sharing data about intimate-partner violence.

iii. **Carlyle, Slater and Chakroff (2008)**

Newspaper framing of intimate-partner violence tends to be episodic rather than thematic, which may have implications for perceptions of risk and for public policy regarding intimate-partner violence.

Carlyle, Slater, and Chakroff (2008: 1) conducted a content analysis of a "nationally representative sample of newspaper coverage of IPV over a two-year period" and compared this with epidemiological data. The newspaper sample was drawn from "stratified media outlets" across the US, used to draw a representative sample (the process is not entirely clear). From this, a month of reporting was constructed, using random and distributed sampling, for the years 2002 and 2003, which resulted in a sample of 395 intimate-partner violence-related

articles. The epidemiological data was taken from statistics provided by the Centre for Disease Control. How or if these data were geo-location-matched to the random sample is not clear.

The methods for sampling the media data, and for using and applying the epidemiological data (including perceptions of crime surveys, which are not equivalent to actual crime data), are both problematic. Although it claims to have produced a representative sample, there are too many unknowns in the curation and application of sources to be sure that it is representative in any meaningful way. This study illustrates the caution that should be applied when extrapolating aggregated or narrow media data and when drawing comparisons with epidemiological data.

iv. **Taylor (2009)**

Media reporting on intimate femicide tends to blame victims, both directly and indirectly, for their own murders.

Rae Taylor's "Slain and Slandered: A Content Analysis of the Portrayal of Femicide in Crime News" looked at six years (1995–2000) of coverage in the Florida newspaper the *Orlando Sentinel* and found 292 articles presenting 168 cases of domestic homicide. Of these, 150 were cases with male perpetrators and female victims, and 18 with male victims and female perpetrators. In this study, Taylor uses the term "femicide" but defines it to mean the "killing of women by a male intimate partner".

Taylor selected the *Sentinel* because she believed that a local newspaper would be more representative of femicide than the national newspapers. In order to identify articles for the study, Taylor conducted a keyword search through the paper's archives, with 29 separate key phrases. Of the 292 articles that were returned, Taylor noted that 124 of them covered the same incident. Very few of the other homicides received multiple coverage, with only eight incidents featured in four or more articles.

In order to conduct her content analysis, Taylor used a coding sheet – developed based on previous, similar studies – to note items of interest in each article, including: its headline; the use of positive or negative adjectives in specific contexts; mention of a history of domestic violence; and the tone of the story. Through this analysis, Taylor identified a number of news reporting features, including a strong tendency to blame femicide victims for their own

victimisation. Taylor also noted several limitations of her study, including its narrowed focus, and made recommendations for how femicide studies might be expanded in the future, such as to cover multiple years or to include more newspaper titles. She also suggested that it would be useful to note other newsworthy events that (positively or negatively) impact rates of femicide coverage – for example, a prominent femicide or the passing of legislation related to violence against women.

v. **Wozniak and McCloskey (2010)**

Female victims are not blamed for their deaths in media reports on intimate-partner homicide, indicating attempts by media to more accurately depict such events. However, domestic violence is still not explicitly mentioned in the majority of stories about such violence that culminate or result in death.

Wozniak and McCloskey's study also looked at male *and* female intimate-partner homicide – in this case, through 100 newspaper articles selected from a previously existing database sampled randomly from newspaper reports across the United States (the structure of this database and the process of selection are not well explained). Seventy of the articles reported "male-perpetrated IPV homicides and 30 articles [reported] female-perpetrated IPV homicides", which "approximated the gender representation of the IPV homicide perpetrator population as reflected in criminal justice and public health statistics" (Wozniak and McCloskey, 2010: 934, 941). The articles were published between 2002 and 2003, and the authors used LexisNexis to ensure that only the *first* news article to appear on that particular case was included. The same system was used to identify follow-up articles that appeared within two weeks of the first article.

The first articles were coded on a rating system developed specifically for this study, by coders who were blind to the hypothesis. Based on this analysis, the authors identified and discussed a number of issues, most of which were predicted by previous studies, including that articles did not discuss the broader context of intimate-partner violence in their reporting.

vi. **Nikunen (2011)**

Media coverage of femicide-suicides tend to be contextualised within conventional notions of "family", gender, and heterosexual relationships.

Finnish researcher Minna Nikuken looked at murder-suicide in the news, with a focus on "femicide-suicide" within intimate heterosexual relationships. Nikunen's study looked at news reports gathered from five years (1996–2000) of coverage in four widely read newspapers in Finland. Nikunen's media search identified 33 murder-suicide cases during her survey period and a total of 156 news reports. Nineteen of the cases and 86 of the news reports were male-female murder-suicides. Based on a broad and detailed content analysis, Nikunen used news coverage to identify and explore themes similar to those in previous research, but also explained how news coverage tended to normalise femicide-suicide as a feature of heterosexual relationships, as if the "killing is presented as understandable and ordinary" (Nikuken , 2011: 94). Nikunen further demonstrated that sexual violence was not discussed within the context of a married couple who were both dead. These, she writes, protect notions of the perceived "moral order" of the family, specifically ideals of male-led patriarchal families and middle-class white men, and these male-led acts of violence are entrenched and protected as "private", not to be discussed in public.

vii. **Richards, Gillespie, and Smith and Givens (2011, 2013, 2014)**

News-media coverage plays an important role in shaping public perceptions of social issues, including domestic violence and femicide. Media coverage is moving away from victim-blaming language and embracing the use of different sources, but femicide is often explained away as commonplace, and it is not appropriately championed by the media as an important issue.

Richards, Gillespie, and Smith published three separate papers that examined different aspects of a news-media database of 995 newspaper articles representing 229 cases of femicide reported in the news in the American state of North Carolina between 2002 and 2007. In order to build their media database, the authors first accessed a list of domestic homicides from a domestic violence organisation in that state for the study years, which provided them with a comparative crime database of 324 cases. Based on this, they were able to obtain docket data for each case, including confirmation of the legal outcome through the state's Department of Corrections offender database. This information was then used to search a digital database of

30 newspapers that served North Carolina, and this search was subsequently expanded to an internet-based search of, for example, small town newspapers and web pages, eventually yielding 995 newspaper articles for 229 cases, which represented coverage of more than 90% of femicides.

During discussion of their methodology, the authors (Richards, Gillespie, and Smith, 2011) identified their combined data-set approach as a strength, as it allowed them to search for news by population (victim), rather than using general search terms, providing some balance to counteract bias towards certain "types" of more newsworthy femicides. The multi-year scope was another positive factor.

In a follow-on paper (Gillespie et al., 2013: 229) that looked at the framing of deadly domestic violence, the authors found "113 cases containing news coverage that utilised domestic violence language to define the femicide" and compared these with an equal number of cases that did not (a total sample of 226 cases). This study identified a number of key thematic and narrative frames, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight. Another paper (Richards, Gillespie, and Smith, 2014) looked at media depictions of femicide-suicides.

By creating a large and granular (detailed) database from the outset, Gillespie, Richards, and Smith were able to conduct multiple and diverse analytic explorations of the content. This approach is not commonly replicated in other media studies, however, and a majority of studies into crime media coverage are limited by their initial hypothesis or questions, which limits or inhibits the opportunity to ask new questions of the same or similar data in the future.

viii. **Fairbairn and Dawson, 2013**

News coverage continues to employ victim-blaming news frames and to portray intimate-partner homicide as an individual or isolated event.

Fairbairn and Dawson looked at news coverage of male-perpetrated intimate-partner homicides reported in three daily newspapers (the *Toronto Star*, the *Toronto Sun*, and the *Globe and Mail*) in Toronto, Canada, over two separate time periods: the first between 1975 and 1979 and the second from 1998 to 2002. The temporal approach of this study was intended to determine if and how news frames (of intimate-partner homicides) changed over time – including questions related to possible victim blaming, whether or not a previous history of violence was

mentioned, and the types of sources used. A femicide data set, created by one of the authors for a previous study, was used, which represented all femicide victims (and included perpetrator data) for the time frames being studied. The information was then used to search through the archives (digital and microfilm). Articles that involved the killing of a child and an intimate partner were excluded, as the authors felt the attention might skew their results. The final tally of newspaper reports in the study was 213 articles covering 49 cases of intimate-partner homicide. The authors conducted a detailed content analysis of the articles but discussed very little of the information about victims or perpetrators. Ultimately, the study provided a close reading of language around murder events but told the reader little about the events themselves.

ix) **Lloyd and Ramon, 2017**

Different media titles may present divergent narrative approaches to domestic violence, and these representations may change over time. While one UK newspaper assumed a more respectful position toward women, a tabloid newspaper consistently adopted textual and visual approaches that blamed the victim and sexualised violence.

Lloyd and Ramon's study presents a discourse analysis of articles on domestic violence in two UK national daily newspapers (*The Sun* and *The Guardian*), examining articles produced ten years apart (2001–2002 and 2011–2012). The authors initially searched the websites of each publication using the terms "domestic violence", "domestic abuse", and "intimate partner violence", but expanded these terms when they discovered that such limited word searches produced equally limited results. Added word terms included "domestic row", "disturbance", "argument", "strife", and "marital difficulties" and eventually expanded to include "woman/man dies", "woman/man/children killed or murdered", and "wife/husband killed or murdered" (Lloyd and Ramon, 2017: 120–121). This showcases the problem with many text-mining approaches and the flaws in study design related to narrow word searches. In the final study sample, 215 articles in *The Sun* were cross-checked and matched with equivalents in *The Guardian*. Key outcomes from the content analysis included the identification of persistent victim blaming across the time periods covered, particularly in the tabloid *Sun*.

x) **Dayan, 2018**

The distribution of femicide-suicide patterns can vary between different ethnic and sociocultural groups, and research into this phenomenon in non-Western contexts should be encouraged.

Dayan's study of femicide-suicide in Israel looked to address gaps in knowledge about femicide-suicide in non-Western societies (i.e. where the primary perpetrator was not statistically likely to be a white male). Dayan (2018: 8) writes that data for her study was drawn from media coverage "due to unavailability of official data on homicide-suicides in Israel" and explains that the study included findings of femicide-suicide in Israel "in the years 2005–2015, excluding analysis of femicide-suicide cases that occurred in [the occupied territories of] Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem". A total of 34 eligible femicide-suicide cases were identified, and their accompanying articles were coded and analysed according to a set of detailed criteria determined by the author. Victims and perpetrators in the sample were coded as either "Jewish Israeli or Arab Israeli. The Jewish Israeli group was further divided into three subgroups (veteran Jewish Israelis, Ethiopian immigrant Jews, and Russian immigrant Jews (immigrants from the former USSR)" (Dayan, 2018: 9).

According to Dayan's findings, veteran (which she uses to mean "native-born") Israelis and Arab Israelis were under-represented, while Ethiopian and Russian immigrant Jews were over-represented (the former much more significantly so). This finding, Dayan noted, confirmed previous studies on intimate femicide in Israel, which found that Ethiopian immigrants were represented 200% more than their proportion in the total population, and that immigrants from the former USSR were over-represented in intimate-femicide rates by more than 142%. While this is a small study, it presents important questions about intimate-femicide suicide outside of Western contexts.

B. Studies on media coverage of homicide

i. **Paulsen (2003)**

Homicides involving multiple victims, female victims, and multiple offenders are likely to receive more news coverage. Black and Hispanic victims are less likely to receive news coverage than white victims. Murders with statistically "rare" characteristics are more likely to receive prominent coverage.

Paulsen's study of newspaper homicide coverage in Houston sought specifically to remedy the failures of previous studies and account for the relative prominence of coverage or possible fluctuations in coverage over time. Paulsen assessed newspaper coverage between 1986 and 1994 and attempted an ambitious categorisation of incident, victim, and offender data and data about the media coverage itself.

Paulsen prepared and compared two databases, the first based on official police records obtained from the Houston Police Department, which covered "all incidents of criminal homicide (4,980) between 1986 and 1994" (Paulsen, 2003: 294). The second database comprised newspaper articles about homicides published in the *Houston Chronicle* between 1986 and 1995. Homicides covered in the newspaper were coded against those that were not. News coverage was then indexed for the incidents, including the number of stories per incident, their length, whether or not they were accompanied by photographs, where the story was placed in the edition, and so on.

Based on Paulsen's study, 69% of all homicides during that period received some kind of coverage in the newspaper (he found that 3,425 homicides were covered out of a total of 4,980, but the total number of news articles associated with the coverage is not specified). Paulsen also included a table that summarised the newspaper coverage of homicides in five other American cities, which ranged from as low as 13% in Los Angeles to 100% in Milwaukee, with larger cities typically showing lower coverage and smaller communities showing higher coverage.

In his findings, Paulsen confirmed many previous hypotheses about media coverage, including that, for example, white victims were statistically much less likely to be victims of homicide but far more likely to be covered than black and Hispanic victims; and that the number and

word length of articles increased in proportion to the race (i.e. white), gender (female), and socioeconomic status (higher income) of the victim. Paulsen also found that murders committed by strangers, unknown perpetrators, and acquaintances received more coverage than murders by intimate partners. Paulsen also speculated that, based on his results, an increase in homicides was linked to an increase in the proportion of homicides that were covered – homicides became more newsworthy because there were more of them.

ii. **Warren-Gordon et al. (2010)**

Murder-suicides are considered rare events, usually involving a male perpetrator and female victim, typically occurring in a home or private residence and involving a firearm. Studies of newspaper reportage of such events may contribute to our knowledge and understanding of murder-suicides.

Warren-Gordon et al.'s study looked at 166 cases of murder-suicide reported in the *New York Times*. Murder-suicide is a known feature of femicides, and over 76% of the initial victims of this sample were women. However, this study also searched for news reports across the *entire* newspaper index, which included murder-suicide stories from as early as December 1858 and up to September 2003. While this notionally allows murder-suicide to be explored over time, one must question whether such a broad sample – covering nearly 150 years – drawn from a national newspaper (though nearly three-quarters of the reports came from the country's north-east region, the area closest to New York) is indeed representative or even useful. However, having made that criticism, the authors note that the survey was an attempt to gain insight into an aspect of murder that was not typically discussed elsewhere, and for which there was no national data available (at the time of their writing).

iii. **Schildkraut and Donley, 2012**

In homogenous victim populations, demographic data, including the victim's gender, age, race, and mode of death are indicators of prominent media coverage. Females, older victims, and whites tend to receive more coverage. Factors such as sensationalism also contribute to coverage.

Race and gender are often cited as factors that influence or predict whether or not certain murder events will receive press coverage, and, if they do, the type of coverage they receive. Schildkraut and Donley's study of murders in the city of Baltimore in 2010 asks how these

factors play out when the population of homicide victims is "overwhelmingly homogenous",[41] and seeks to explore questions of salience and "celebrated" news coverage – that is, stories that receive premium placement or attract a higher word count or greater number of articles per incident. Data for the study were extracted from issues of the *Baltimore Sun* newspaper that reported homicides in Baltimore between January and December of the study year. This data was compared with homicide data on the Baltimore Police Department "crime map" for the same year, which showed 223 murders.

Similar to Paulsen (2003), data from the police crime map was used to search the newspaper for matching articles; only articles that appeared within 60 days of the crime were included, and editorials and obituaries were excluded. Based on these criteria, the authors found that 73% of homicides committed in Baltimore received some form of coverage, and that, within a mostly homogenous population, previous predictors of coverage did not apply. Instead, they suggested, other factors appeared to influence newsworthiness in populations that were homogenous *and* where homicide was a relatively common occurrence. These factors included atypical and "highly sensational" circumstances and stories where the perpetrator had been identified in print.

iv. **Huff-Corzine et al., 2014**

Media coverage of mass murders can be used to enhance the comprehensiveness and quality of murder data and make this data more useful for prevention and risk-mitigation efforts.

Huff-Corzine et al.'s work on mass murder is important because it includes a discussion of multiple sources of information for mass murder, including media archives, independent media databases, and law enforcement agencies and discusses the uses and limitations of these sources. The authors point out that a lack of access to (official) data hampers meaningful investigations into crime, and, as previous studies (and earlier chapters in this thesis) have shown, many countries do not keep or make accessible current homicide data. Consequently, popular understandings of crime and research into crime has often relied on media reports. While this has obvious limitations, it also offers some advantages beyond simply being publicly accessible:

[41] By this, the authors mean that homicide victims in Baltimore tend to be mostly black. The *city's* population is not homogenous.

> Media sources typically provide more incident details than are available through [official crime databases]. Media, for example, routinely include the names of offenders and victims, their known backgrounds, event outcomes for offenders, the exact location(s) of the incident(s), the police response, a time line for the killings, and selected commentary by local authorities, survivors, and witnesses, which can be used to supplement data available from law enforcement sources. (Huff-Corzine et al., 2014: 107)

In the general study of violent crime, Huff-Corzine et al.'s work makes a compelling case to include data obtained from the media.

v. **Petersen (2016)**

Economic status and the demographic make-up of neighbourhoods influence the presence or absence of newspaper coverage of homicides and the amount of coverage given to the victims of homicide.

Petersen's study of homicide newspaper coverage in Los Angeles County seeks to address a gap in the literature that would link media coverage to neighbourhood characteristics, particularly as it affects Latinos. In order to construct a database of neighbourhood characteristics, the author integrated crime data (murders committed in 2007) from several sources, including the *Los Angeles Times* "Homicide Report" (a special project initiated in 2007 to log and track every homicide within the LA county area) and requested data from the California Department of Justice, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, the LA County Superior Court, and LexisNexis' database of court cases. The resultant victim, suspect, and incident information was used to search a Newsbank database.

Petersen (2016: 32) focused on results from six local print newspapers: the "(a) *Daily Breeze*, (b) *Daily News of Los Angeles*, (c) *Long Beach Press-Telegram*, (d) *Pasadena Star-News*, (e) *San Gabriel Valley Tribune*, and (f) *Whittier Daily News*", because they were widely circulated in the research area and had a diverse readership. The *Los Angeles Times* was excluded from the study because of its national scope. Petersen coded for whether a homicide received coverage or not and, for the former set, evaluated a number of independent and dependent factors in relation to media coverage. Unfortunately, the published report only provides statistical data rather than actual figures (i.e. it shows the results rather than the inputs, which

makes it harder to understand or query the methods and the findings). Petersen noted that almost 66% of known homicide victims received no news coverage at all; homicides which did *not* receive media coverage tended to occur in areas with larger black and Latino populations. Homicides that were covered and occurred in neighbourhoods with larger black and Latino populations generally received lower coverage than homicides in other areas.

C. Studies into media coverage of femicide

i. **Mason and Monckton-Smith (2008)**

Female homicides are regularly sexualised by journalists. The media's association between sex and death skews its reporting of violence against women and effectively conflates the offences of rape and murder, contributing to perceptions of sexual assault.

Mason and Monckton-Smith's work on British press coverage of the sexual murder of women makes a convincing argument that "murders of women are regularly sexualised by journalists and conversely that sexual assaults of women are framed within a discourse of murder" (Mason and Monckton-Smith, 2008: 691). The paper centres around a discourse analysis of "six case studies of rape and/or murder of women by men between 2003 and 2004" (Mason and Monckton-Smith, 2008: 691) that were covered in British newspapers. The articles for analysis were drawn from a larger sample of articles extracted via a text-based search of LexisNexis for a twelve-month period, limited to six British newspaper titles: *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Sun*, the *Daily Express*, the *Daily Mail*, and the *Daily Mirror*.

A search using the terms "rape", "sexual assault", "murder" and "killed" generated an initial return of 3,000 articles, from which six of the most high-profile individual cases were selected. Four of these cases involved murder (two cases where rape or sexual assault had occurred, and two where it had not). Two included rape or sexual assault without a murder: one was an individual case (the victim was anonymous, in line with the provisions of that country's Sexual Offences Act) and the other was a collection of stories about spousal rape since 1995. These cases were linked to 486 news reports from the selected newspapers and analysed. Mason and Monckton-Smith describe their work as using a mixed-methods approach, including content- and discourse-analysis aspects. The study explores a critical aspect of what it means (in popular narrative) to be a "female victim" and highlights the often erroneous but still deliberate conflation of murder and sexual assault.

ii. **Slakoff and Brennan, 2017**

White, female victims of crime receive more sympathetic coverage than black or Latina victims. Black and Latina victims are more likely to be viewed as "bad" women, to be blamed for being victims, and to have their victimisation normalised in the press.

Slakoff and Brennan's study on differential representation of Latina and black female victims focuses on female victims who received front page coverage in the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Houston Chronicle* during the 2006 calendar year, resulting in a sample of 210 articles. In 66 stories, the victim's race was not discernible, and in a further 13, the victim's race was not white, black, or Latina. 75 of the victims were white, and 56 were identified as Latina or black. The study found that while black and Latina women were more at risk of violent victimisation, media outlets tended to focus on white victims and children. The authors also noted that black and Latina victims were more likely to be described in negative terms and to be blamed for their victimisation. Black and Latina victims were more likely to be described as being in "unsafe" environments, which, the authors noted, normalised their victimisation and perpetuated negative stereotypes of black and Latino communities. For white female victims, "themes of the 'safe environment' and 'attacked by a predator stranger' were significantly more likely to appear" (Slakoff and Brennan, 2017: 19).

iii. **Waters et al. (2017)**

A study of Australian media representations of homicide showed that female victims and multiple homicides were more likely to be reported in the media, and domestic violence homicides were less likely to be reported than stranger homicides.

Waters et al.'s study into Australian news coverage of homicide reviewed 120 news reports published between 1 July 2008 and 30 June 2012. The reports were sampled from a much larger database and process (which is why this study is of some interest), as follows: the news database "Festiva" was searched for (Australian-only) reports that included the words "homicide, homicides, filicide, lethal, violent, murder, murders, manslaughter, and murdered" during the study period (Waters et al.,2017: 141). This initial search yielded over 110,000 results. From this, a sample of 30 articles for each study year were selected using a stratified random-sampling method. If non-Australian homicides were inadvertently included in the sample, these were swapped out when identified. As a second source of data, the authors

accessed homicide information from the Australian Institute of Criminology's National Homicide Monitoring Program, which integrates police and coroner data. According to these records, there were a total of 989 known homicides in Australia during the four-year study period. The news article sample was coded and analysed and compared to the Monitoring Program data. Based on this comparison, the authors determined that certain groups and types of victims were likely to be over-reported in the media, including female victims and homicides with multiple victims. Domestic violence homicides were less likely to be reported than stranger homicides. Offender characteristics depicted in the news, however, were apparently consistent with offender data.

iv. **Wong and Lee, 2018**

The victim-offender relationship influences news-media coverage and prominence. Intimate-partner homicides receive less prominent news coverage than "non-domestic" homicides.

This large, multi-year survey looked at homicide articles published in Canada's *Vancouver Sun* between 2004 and 2015, where the nature of the relationship between the victim and perpetrator was specified in news reports. The study's authors searched the Newsstream database for articles in the selected newspaper for the selected years, using the broad terms "manslaughter", "murder", "homicide", "killing", or "slaying". The original search yielded 3,998 results. Once duplicates and irrelevant articles had been filtered out, 3,877 articles were left that specified the nature of the relationship between victim and offender. Of these, just less than 8% involved domestic homicide (within which 85% of cases involved a female victim) and the balance (over 92%) featured non-domestic homicide. Articles were coded on a set of 100 variables and then analysed. By comparing the two subsets, the authors determined that articles about domestic homicide were less likely to receive prominent coverage, and that the relationship between victim and offender was a factor in homicide stories' newsworthiness.

v. **Owusu-Addo et al., 2018**

Coverage of violence against women and girls is relatively low within Ghanaian English media. Those stories that are published show a high rate of victim blaming and tend to position this violence as episodic rather than thematic.

Owuso-Addo et al.'s (2018) study into Ghanaian media coverage of violence against women and girls includes 48 news articles covering 52 incidents, drawn from reports featured in the

Ghanaian Times, *Daily Graphic* and *Daily Guide* or on radio stations Peace FM and Joy FM (the radio stations' websites provide text linked to their news reports) between January 2014 and December 2014. Duplicates across platforms were removed, and the authors analysed each of the 48 articles as individual case studies. The authors noted that murder cases received the widest coverage, followed by rape and defilement (sexual violence against girls). The study also found that nearly three-quarters of the sample featured cases that occurred in urban areas (although only slightly more than 50% of the country's population lives in urban areas), and more than 90% of news stories framed the incidents as individual cases (episodic) rather than as part of a social problem (thematic). Other common threads that emerged from the analysis were victim blaming, excusing the perpetrator, and the commodification of women. The authors also noted that their findings demonstrated the remarkable paucity of coverage of violence against women and girls in Ghanaian media – just 52 cases out of 19,286 cases reported to the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service in 2014.

What do these studies of media coverage of homicide and femicide tell us?

In general, these studies indicate that many of the central hypotheses about homicide media coverage proposed in the 1980s and 1990s have persisted well into the millennium. Broadly, these are that:

- Media coverage of crime does not accurately represent the reality of crime.
- Media coverage of crime may actively distort the incidence of crime.
- Elderly and child murder victims are more likely to be covered in the press.
- Mass murder incidents are more likely to be covered in the press.
- White homicide victims are more likely to be covered than other race groups and are more likely to receive prominent coverage.
- Female murder victims are more likely to be covered in the press than male victims.
- Non-fatal intimate-partner or "domestic" violence is under-reported in the press.
- Fatal intimate-partner violence is typically framed as a private or individual problem rather than as a social problem or issue.
- News reports on intimate-partner violence frequently blame the victim.
- Murders involving rare or sensational characteristics are associated with higher news coverage.

- Media reportage of female homicides tends to sexualise the murder.

The studies above also suggest additional hypotheses that are less universal (or at least, have not been tested universally) but may be generalisable to other contexts. These include that:

- An increase in media reports of homicides in itself increases the newsworthiness of homicides (Paulsen, 2003).
- Stories where the perpetrator is named (in print) are more newsworthy (Schildkraut & Donley, 2012).
- Media reports on homicide can function as valuable sources of information on homicide, either in conjunction with law enforcement reports or when such reports/data are not available (Huff-Corzine et al., 2014; Dayan, 2018).
- Geographic and socioeconomic factors can enhance or inhibit the newsworthiness of homicides.

As much as we can learn from these deductions or discussions, it is also clear that there is much that is *not* covered or discussed in these papers. First, homicide-media studies are dominated by readings of media coverage from the United States – in this set, just eight of the twenty selected studies are non-American (two each from the United Kingdom and Canada; one from Finland; one from Australia; one from Israel; and one from Ghana). American studies also tend to be the most highly cited within this field. This is not to say that their findings or hypotheses are not valid, but they may not be applicable or generalisable to countries with different legal and political systems with radically different media landscapes, different rates of urbanisation, and, most importantly, where whites are not the majority population. Although this is discussed more extensively in my conclusion, there is an urgent need for more published research from the Global South on this theme.

Another serious limitation to emerge from these femicide studies is that almost no research is being conducted on media coverage of non-intimate femicide – that is to say, all the femicide studies above focus on intimate-partner violence. Although intimate femicides make up more than half of female homicides, non-intimate partner murders still comprise the balance and may receive more prominent media coverage. This points to a glaring omission in this area of

research, which is addressed further in Chapter Eight (where I conduct a framing analysis of news articles about non-intimate femicides).

Of equal import is that these studies provide a snapshot of the research choices and resources that are employed when undertaking such studies, exposing both more and less successful choices.

In this context, I have observed two primary limitations: the first is that the majority of studies have drawn on an extremely limited selection of media from which to select their articles (almost all of them used newspapers only, but that may be a function of their time), often relying on a single title. For regional studies using local newspapers (Bullock & Cubert, 2002; Paulsen, 2003; Taylor, 2009; Richards et al., 2011; Schildkraut & Donley, 2012; Gillespie et al., 2013; Petersen, 2016; Wong & Lee, 2018), this may allow for a relatively high validity (news coverage matched to actual crime incidence), but it limits the generalisability of their findings. For studies utilising one or more national news outlets (Mason & Monckton Smith, 2008; Warren-Gordon et al., 2010; Lloyd & Ramon, 2017; Slakoff & Brennan, 2017), the reciprocal question might be raised as to whether those papers cover homicide to the same extent as local news. It is impossible to establish how "representative" a national news title is without a great deal of other supporting data – for example, does a century of *New York Times* coverage of murder-suicide (Warren-Gordon et al., 2010) reflect anything about the actual national incidence of such events?

Some studies have attempted to aggregate national news databases in a random yet representative manner (Carlyle et al., 2008; Waters et al., 2017), but this presents an additional problem in that the randomisation and selection processes are not transparent (and nor is the stratification of the original database from which the results were randomised). While stratification and randomisation may present a solution for researchers faced with wading through 100,000 news articles, it is not clear that these approaches are effective or representative in a meaningful way.

Furthermore, many of these studies are limited to a fairly small number of articles, which may narrow the scope of the enquiry and limit its outcomes. Considered within the context of the dominant focus on intimate-partner violence, this has effectively resulted in a number of deep but often narrow readings of the available data. Of all the studies above, only one group of

researchers (Richards et al.) was able to use their data resource as the foundation for multiple enquiries. This is compounded by a tendency within academia (changing, but slowly) not to include or share original/raw data, so additional enquiries cannot be conducted based on the stated findings. Some of the studies above conducted preliminary searches for all female homicides (including intimate and non-intimate murders) and then simply "discarded" the non-intimate set at an initial sorting phase – although that data could clearly have been put to many other uses.

In order to truly map and understand the landscape of femicide media coverage, more representative media sources must be consulted, and we must expand the amount of data we believe it is possible and useful to process. This will also allow for future studies to be compared with each other, even if such comparison is not within the scope or intention of the original study. Media coverage of femicides in Miami could thus be directly compared with coverage of those in Los Angeles, or female homicides could be separated out from a larger homicide database and explored as a subset, and so on.

Finally, a challenge rather than a limitation: the most successful studies above integrate law enforcement or police data with media-survey results. While this may not always be possible, it should become preferred practice (and can be used to motivate such databases where it is not available). This may require the strengthening of relationships between media researchers and state officials, particularly the criminal justice system. Should this come to pass, media researchers would have to become more proficient with epidemiological data and, potentially, collaborate with researchers in other fields who are working on parallel studies of violence – which might similarly benefit from access to rich and broad media data.

Building on the foundations, responding to the limitations

In the next chapters I present my own database of femicide media coverage in South Africa, discussing the methods and methodological framework within which the data was constructed. Although my media survey database covers only a single crime year, it includes national, regional, and local commercial news platforms from every South African province, listing 408 individual victims linked to 3,278 unique news-media articles extending across multiple years of media coverage (from the data of the murder).

In addition to a discussion of the results of my data in Chapter Five, in Chapters Eight, Nine, and Ten, I show how the same database can be employed to answer multiple research questions, and how this approach integrates and synthesises qualitative and quantitative data using a mixed-methods approach.

CHAPTER SIX: FEMICIDE IN SOUTH AFRICAN NEWS MEDIA

In this chapter I discuss my original news-media survey, first looking at how my data was collected and structured, then at how relevant information was gathered from the news-media data sources once they had been collated. I review the results of the survey and look at them in terms of incident profiles (individual and overall information related to each murder, including data on victims and perpetrators) and media coverage (news-media coverage per incident and overall).

Building a femicide and media database

In 2013, following interactions with various right-wing individuals and interest groups (see Chapter One), I began an informal process of collecting media data on femicide, keeping pages of handwritten notes, capturing the victim's name (if provided) and the date of every femicide I could locate in South African media, and highlighting any story that appeared to be an intimate femicide, regardless of the victim's race. There was no specific methodology for my search, as I did not have access to clippings services at that stage and relied on Google search and online media archives.

The result of this initial effort was an unstructured handwritten list of femicides eleven pages long, which allowed me to gain some insight into the landscape of media coverage, together with options for and limitations with accessing archive content, and from which I could draw some preliminary conclusions, but which also exposed a number of limitations in my methodology.

When I commenced with a formal media survey as part of my degree, a more robust survey structure was required. First, I needed to set a specific time frame in order to obtain meaningful data. Rather than an open-ended set of femicide data, I chose to focus on a single police crime-reporting year so that I would be better able to compare my findings with statistical crime data. Because I started the work in the 2014 calendar year, I arbitrarily chose the 2012/2013 crime-reporting year, which ran from 01 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, assuming that it was highly likely that media coverage from this period would be digitally available and that enough time had passed for murders during that period to have been reported in the press. In line with the definitions used by the Medical Research Council, I included in my search all femicides (female homicides of women aged 14 years and older) that had occurred in South Africa during

this time, *and* which had been reported in South African commercial news media (initially at any date before May 2016 but extended to 2017 when I rebuilt the database).[42]

For the purposes of my thesis, I defined "commercial" media as content that was produced by formal or professional news-media organisations, either at local, regional, or national level, including professional community-news-media organisations. This would include publications or platforms that would be considered to fall under the Press Council of South Africa, such as the members of umbrella organisations like Print and Digital Media South Africa. The reason for selection "commercial" or "professional" outlets was, first, to limit the number of eligible titles; but it was also, deliberately, to distinguish news media content – which falls under a clear Press Code – from other content which does not. Although the lines between who is and who is not "a journalist" are increasingly ambiguous, there is still recognition of differences between news media and non-news media, and the criteria above, while not necessarily perfect, offer some form of replicable delineation.

This definition *excluded*:

- Publication in books;
- Publication in non-news media (eg: academic publications, educational publications, governmental publications, press releases);
- Publication on social media (including Facebook and Twitter);[43]
- Publication on a private blog or web page;
- Publication on a public or commercial web page that was not considered a formal/commercial news-media outlet (for example, content that was published by lobby or activist groups or by institutions);
- Non-South African media.

[42] I included the murders of three trans women or trans individuals who occasionally lived as or presented as women, as this was determined to be a factor in their murders.

[43] There is a larger discussion to be had about whether social media is the "new" news. This requires a more detailed discussion about who is represented on social media, and who is not – which is for the most part more easily defined in traditional commercial news media – and how one should go about sourcing, identifying, and filtering the significantly higher volume of shorter texts typical of social media posts. And, of course, whether or not there is a distinction between "citizen journalism", opinion, and formal news reporting. These issues are all important but are beyond the scope of this thesis.

As above, social media was specifically excluded because, firstly, it is not *news media* as I have defined it (although news media often post information on social media, it is not typically a primary news platform in itself). Secondly, "social media" is an extremely broad catch-all, and could refer to any or even all of: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and closed services like Whatsapp. Given the sheer volume of social media posts versus news media articles, it would have been impossible for "social media" to be studied in any comparably meaningful way in this study. Within that, meta conventions within formal news media (including conventions required by the press code) mean that it is relatively uncomplicated to identify news media platforms, and to identify, locate and read a news article about murder in a South African daily newspaper (and even to identify, for example, the repeated use of content obtained from a wire or syndication service). The same cannot be said for social media. It is, even now, no simple task to, for example, narrow down all tweets or posts or blog articles by topic (murder), or to establish whether these posts might refer to a murder that took place in South Africa, and whether they were authored by a person resident in South Africa. It is not clear how, then, it would be possible to create an equivalent database (to the South African news media coverage database) using social media sources, nor how one would attempt to extract meaningful data from them in the context of this study's objectives.

Anecdotally, social media conversations around femicide in South Africa also tend to be strongly based around rhetoric – we must "do something" – and offer little information compared to what is usually contained in news reports. This is not to say there is no potential future value in studying social media content, only that this content is markedly different from formal "news".

For my research, "news-media articles" included searchable text fields that complied with the above commercial news-media requirement, and included printed material (although my research was done on digital or digitised versions of print), online content platforms, and text articles posted by broadcast media (radio and television), either as accompaniment to a video or audio insert (captions were *not* included) or as a standalone article on the broadcaster's own website. Audio or video publications not accompanied by a formal text article were not eligible for inclusion, as they could not be systematically searched in the same manner as text.

As all the searches were performed using public platforms and publicly available media documents, there were no ethical permission or exclusion criteria for this portion of the research.

The different search platforms for the media survey are described in more detail below, but the basic method applied across platforms can be described as follows:

a) Searches were conducted online using the Sabinet SA Media clippings service/archive (see below for a discussion of how this service functions), online news media archives for individual titles, and Google search functions (to search through online news archives).

b) Where it was possible to modify the search option by date, it was done through date selection (clipping service) or text modifiers. The initial search platform was the Sabinet SA Media clippings service, and data collected from this search were used to expand the identification of other articles and incidents.

c) For the clippings search, a text delimitation matching for "murder" or "moord" was entered. While this resulted in an incredibly large number of positive results (e.g. 600 positive matches just for April 2012), it seemed the best way to ensure that the majority of potentially qualifying stories were considered. This was done for every month from April 2012 to the end of May 2013 (based on the assumption that murders that took place in March 2013 would have been reported in the press by that time).

d) Matching articles in both English and Afrikaans were read by me and selected or rejected depending on whether or not they met the survey criteria.

e) Homicides of males and of females under the age of 14 years were rejected.

f) Homicides that occurred before or after the 2012/2013 crime year were rejected (this refers to the date of death, not necessarily the date of the incident). News reports prior to the victim's death but associated with the murder (e.g. serial killings) were excluded on an individual victim basis using date parameters (for example, many of serial killer Petrus Madiba's victims were not reported on by name and it was often simpler to

search for the killer's name, or, before his arrest, for female homicides in Groblersdal. This often returned articles with multiple victims. In order to ensure articles were not logged against victims who were killed *after* an article, the date of publication was used to determine whether or not it should be allocated to specific victims' article counts).

g) Qualifying articles from the clipping service were saved as PDF files under the victim's name, or under the location and approximate date of death if the name was not known.

h) Non-editorial texts such as readers' letters were excluded. Formal opinion/editorial ("op-ed") columns were included, but reader-submitted blogs (e.g. the MyVoices section of *News24*) were not. Op-eds that spoke about "femicide" or murder in general but did not mention specific victims or incidents were excluded.

i) When a female homicide met the relevant criteria, the victim and incident details were written up by month of death in a notebook.

j) At the conclusion of the media survey, each femicide was logged into an Excel spreadsheet, with separate worksheets for each month (to make the sheets easier to manage).

k) For each individual femicide that was logged, I conducted a secondary online search for qualifying media reports (including online news platforms) on the incident that may not have emerged during the primary search. This was performed using the name of the victim (where this was supplied), the name of the perpetrator (if known), or by other signifying/identifying details – e.g. the age of the victim, the location of the murder, or the means of death (e.g. a "stabbing" in "Kimberley"), together with the date of the incident. A number of the additional press reports incidentally identified further qualifying femicides (e.g. "another woman was murdered last month"), which were then logged as above.

l) Media reports were logged on the spreadsheet for each respective femicide. Where the same content appeared under different publications (for example, SAPA wire reports may have been reprinted in several different outlets), each publication was logged as a separate article. News articles that mentioned more than one victim were also logged,

separately, to each victim. So, if a news report mentioned four qualifying victims' names, it would be logged four times; this duplication was accounted for during a later rationalisation of the media portion of the list.

m) When data from the clippings and online news archive services had been logged and integrated, I reviewed my original handwritten femicide list to identify any incidents that had not been captured. Where this was the case, I attempted to identify the incident through a clippings and online news search; in several instances, it was no longer possible to locate the original news report of a murder, as Caxton's community newspaper online archives no longer provided access to reports dating as far back as 2012. In those cases, the incidents were logged as a reported femicide but with no media details available.

n) A similar exercise was conducted for the list of femicide victims submitted by Sunette Bridges to the HRC (see Chapter Seven) to ascertain whether any or all of the incidents on her list featured in mine. Where information was missing, a similar search and logging process was conducted for each victim.

o) Specific details were captured for each femicide, depending on the information provided in the media reports. Details included: the name of the victim; her age; race; occupation; where she was killed; the manner of her death (e.g. stabbing or strangulation); whether or not a robbery/attempted robbery occurred at the time of the murder; whether or not there was a suspicion of sexual assault; details of the perpetrator (if he was known, his name, his relationship with the victim); and details about subsequent arrests, court cases, and successful or unsuccessful prosecutions. If the perpetrator had committed suicide or had been killed, this was also noted. In order to facilitate later analysis of the columns, I created Boolean-type summaries, such as "Intimate Femicide Y/N" (in addition to noting that the perpetrator was the victim's husband, for example). A further column was allocated for notes that would help me identify or recall (possibly) significant features, e.g. a celebrity connection or that the femicide occurred with other murders (not including perpetrator suicide). Where information was not supplied through media reports, these fields were filled in as "unknown". In some instances, the race of the victim was inferred from her name or,

when provided, from photographs of the victim *or* her family members. Race was very seldom overtly specified in media reports.

p) At the conclusion of the initial survey period, a total of 371 separate femicides were identified and 2,370 media articles were logged. This count excluded articles connected specifically with the murder of Reeva Steenkamp, although the femicide itself was logged on the list. News coverage of this murder was so excessive that it represented, on its own, a field larger than all the other media entries combined and would have distorted my results. It was also not feasible to manually log all the articles about that single incident – the clippings search alone turned up close to 2,000 matching stories.

The Sabinet News Clippings Archive and Service

The Sabinet SA Media news clippings service was started in 1977 at the University of the Free State and was purchased by the South African Bibliographic and Information Network or Sabinet, a commercial library, cataloguing, and information management service, in 2014. The titles included in the press clippings service "represent influential media voices in South Africa" (Sabinet, personal communication; August 2019). The current South African media database includes 39 titles of which 31 are English and eight in Afrikaans, and the archive extends to 156 titles (88 in are English, 65 in Afrikaans, one dual medium, and one in Dutch).

Sabinet explains that it receives newspapers/publications in print and digital format. These copies are manually reviewed by a team at Sabinet, which identifies articles for inclusion using a rubric based on subject or theme and content type. Suitable articles will be flagged to be added to the database. For example, under the subject of "Justice, Safety and Security", the Sabinet team will look for articles that include content on:

> Safety; crime; murders; rape; police; coverage of well-known court cases, e.g. Oscar Pistorius, Panayiotou; Krejcir; Cover reported cases as complete as possible especially where names are mentioned; farm murders; Hate speech cases; rescues from mountains, oceans, rivers; earthquakes; assisted death case; smuggling; drugs; shootings; bribes; children's rights; NSRI; Illegal Immigrants
> (Sabinet, personal communication; August 2019)

Print articles are scanned and the text is captured using the Abbyy FineReader Optical Character Recognition engine. Articles are uploaded to the South African media database six weeks after the date of publication. (Sabinet, personal communication; August 2019)

While Sabinet's SA media archive represents the most comprehensive news clippings archive and service in South Africa, and, unlike LexisNexis, features media articles in both English and Afrikaans, it is evident that 39 titles is not a comprehensive database of South African news media (using my definition of what constitutes formal or commercial news media, above). Sabinet's representation of "influential media voices" by definition excludes the majority of smaller news titles, particularly local and community news publications that are available across South Africa (many of these titles are centralised under the ownership of big media groups such as Caxton and Media24, but there are also a number of independent publishers of local/community news, which are also members of print or news media bodies and certainly qualify as commercial or professional news media). The Sabinet clippings service also does not include digital/online-only content platforms, like News24, nor any online-only content posted by either print or broadcast media (radio stations, the SABC, and so on).

For this reason, while the Sabinet SA media archive was used as an initial source it was by no means the only source that was consulted, and great care was taken to identify and include articles from local, community and other media sources which were not represented on Sabinet's database. A list of titles included in this media survey can be found in Annexure C.

Any media archive – hard copy or digital – has limitations, whether they are related to the archive's accessibility and searchability, or its representativity. When results from the Sabinet SA Media clippings archive are compared to similar archive-based searches used in other media studies (see Chapter Five), there do not appear to be any limitations particular to Sabinet's archive that may not also be present in other press archives elsewhere. Indeed, Sabinet allows the user perhaps even greater scope for the type of research presented in this thesis because it includes a national sample of newspapers – admittedly, something that is easier with a smaller media landscape (relative to that of the United States for example).

Chapter Seven specifically explores issues of the validity of these archive-based searches, and identifies both strengths and weaknesses in this approach.

Rebuilding my database

Between March 2017 and November 2017, I rebuilt my database so that it would be more robust and more responsive to deeper and broader interrogation of its content. I made several other significant additions or modifications to my research approach in this period. Firstly, for each victim I returned to the Sabinet clippings database and conducted a new victim/incident search. (Previously I had only used the clippings service to identify text matches for murder or *moord* by month, i.e. between 01 April 2012 and 31 May 2013, as above, but I had not conducted additional searches on Sabinet using victim names, locations, and so on. This was an oversight that I attempted to remedy). This approach yielded a number of additional press reports and several new femicides, mentioned in passing in news articles about homicides I had already listed.

All femicides were also re-searched on Google, again using a combination of victim and incident details. This proved important, as victims' names were frequently misspelled, featured a variety of spellings, or were not named; where one article might include (a version of) the victim's name, another article might only mention the incident and location. This oblique approach also proved important to compensate for limitations in the text recognition functionality of several archives, including the Sabinet clippings service, where words separated by hyphens (including run-ons) were often not detected, or where words and characters were not correctly read by the clippings programme. Searching for various combinations of signifying incident details (for example "granny" and "strangled" rather than just "woman" and "strangled" + the geographic location) further expanded the media database.

Another significant feature of the second version of the database was that I expanded and standardised the data I captured about each media entry. Initially, I had only listed the web link – or, in the case of clippings, had simply noted "clipping" – and the publication/platform name. As I worked through the data, I realised it would be valuable to capture more information about this portion, so, in addition to the URL (or article title in the case of PDF clippings) and publication/platform, I added fields to capture the date of publication and the byline or author name. I also created a digital "hard copy" version of each clipping or online article (as a PDF or JPEG). Hard copies of each article would have been very useful at the start of my research, as, already, many online links no longer worked (dead links were rendered in red on my spreadsheet), and a number of articles could no longer be accessed. In those cases I kept the listing for the article (so it contributed to the total article count, and sometimes the name of the

publication) but could not access its contents. In some instances, further information could be extracted from the text of the URL, for example the date of publication.

Where two versions of an article were available (a clipping source and an online source for the same newspaper), I created digital hard copies of both versions and noted both copies but did not count them as separate entries (i.e. they counted only as a single article). I also tried to identify articles that credited SAPA (the South African Press Agency wire service) in the byline or as an end credit.

During the database rebuild, I eliminated certain columns that had proved difficult to respond to consistently, e.g. the victim's socioeconomic status, which I had not clearly defined even for myself, and which was not uniformly apparent from news articles. At a later stage, while checking and cleaning up the database, I also removed columns that referred to the type of area where the murder had taken place (urban, peri-urban, rural, etc.), as I had not clearly defined the criteria and did not feel qualified to make the distinctions. This could easily be added retrospectively, as location data is available for the majority of cases. I also added a "counting" column and wrote a numerical value of 1 for each incident/victim (this made it easier to tally victim counts where incident data was spread across hundreds of Excel rows) and, similarly, a numerical value of 1 for each news-article entry (to facilitate cross-checking of individual totals, monthly totals, and overall totals). A separate column was added for the total number of articles for each incident, so I could easily refer to or filter by totals.

The second version of the database contained 410 femicides and 3,949 news articles (of which 3,249 were unique), representing a 66% increase in the total number of articles. In addition, I included a figure of 1,827 South African Sabinet news clippings that had come back with a positive match for "Reeva Steenkamp", and which appeared after the date of her murder on 14 February 2013. No further article count was attempted online for this murder, although based on previous high-profile cases such as the Griekwastad murders and the murder and rape of Anene Booysen, online searches would be expected to yield approximately the same or a greater number of new articles.[44]

[44] A Google search for results on Reeva Steenkamp and popular website News24.co.za alone returned 37,800 results.

After conducting a supplementary media survey using Lexis Nexis (see Chapter Seven), I undertook a further review of my own database and removed three entries: one of a victim who was younger than 14 years of age, and two that were shown to be duplicate entries, entered under separate months.[45] I also added a missing victim entry for Susan van Dyk, who had been mentioned in Sunette Bridges' list but who I had not added to my list. This left a final total of 408 femicide victims in my media survey.

Discussion of the media database

My database can, broadly, be divided into two sections: incident data and media data. Below, I discuss the outcomes from both sections and compare them against other relevant data sets, such as statistical and epidemiological femicide profiles via the MRC and other research papers.

Part one: Incident data

"Incident data" includes any information about the victim, the murder event, the perpetrator, the relationship between the victim and perpetrator, and subsequent justice information, such as arrests and convictions. On my spreadsheet this information ranges from columns B to W, where column A functions as the count (a sample showing media entries is included in Annexure B; the full database is available on request from the Data Services Office of the Wartenweiler Library via http://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/handle/10539/26566).

Table 6.1: Description of entry fields for incident data

Label	Column heading	Field
A	**Victim count**	Enter '1' for each victim/incident.
B	**Name**	Name/s of the victim, including alternate spellings and surnames. Unknown or unidentified if not provided or not known.
C	**Month**	Month of death.
D	**Day**	Day of death if known.
E	**Age**	Age if known (or age-bracket description if provided).
F	**Occupation**	Occupation if mentioned.

[45] This could occur due to an error in my own data capture or as a result of differing information presented in news reports, where the connection between the news reports was not immediately identified.

G	**Race**	Black, white, coloured, Indian, or Chinese. In some instances, it was not clear whether the victim was black or coloured, or Indian or coloured; in these cases both terms were included. Foreign-born victims (where this information was included in news reports) were also specifically noted.
H	**Place of death**	Location of death (suburb, town, etc.).
I	**Location (home, public, work, unknown)**	Type of location where death occurred/body was found (for example, own home versus open veld).
J	**City/Area**	City or geographic area if known.
K	**Province**	Province according to South Africa's provincial boundaries (in some areas this was not clear).
L	**Sexual assault Y/N/U**	Suspected sexual assault mentioned in news reports.
M	**Mode of death**	How the victim was killed (mode or cause of death). ** This column was further rationalised to one of the following categories: SHARP [object trauma], BLUNT [object trauma], GUN [firearm death], STRANGULATION or ASPHYXIATION, FIRE [burns], POISON, ACID, FALL, and CAR [vehicular homicide].*
N	**Robbery Y/N/U**	Suspected robbery mentioned in news reports.
O	**Suspect arrested Y/N/U**	Suspect or suspects arrested (if suspect committed suicide, enter "suicide").
P	**Suspect convicted Y/N/U**	Suspect or suspects convicted (if suspect committed suicide, enter "suicide").
Q	**Suspect name**	If the name of the suspect was supplied.
R	**Vic-Suspect relationship**	The relationship between the victim and the suspect, if described.
S	**No. of suspects**	Number of alleged suspects.
T	**Intimate femicide Y/N/U**	If the murder was described as an intimate-partner murder, was clearly not an intimate-partner murder, or the circumstances were unknown.
U	**Multiple murder Y/N**	Multiple victims (excluding the perpetrator in the event of homicide-suicide).
V	**Extreme violence Y/N/U**	Whether or not extreme or public violence was a feature of the murder.
W	**Other**	Any other notable features of the murder.

Inferring race, relationship status, and other information from news reports

The construction, attribution, identification and experience of race in South Africa are still strongly aligned with apartheid-era categorisations and have specific meanings and connotations that are not necessarily common with other regions.

Statistics South Africa includes five categories under race in its census: black African, White, Indian or Asian, Coloured, and Other, but these are not explained (in the Census or other statistical documents) and are self-described by Census participants rather than enumerators (Section A, P-05; Statistics South Africa Census 2011, Questionnaire A).

In the broader South African context "black" or "African" usually means black African, and may include some mixed-race individuals; "white" typically means Caucasian origin; "Indian" refers to South Africans of Indian origin; similarly, "Chinese" (both "Indian" and "Chinese" may be used to refer to recent i.e. first-generation immigrants who were born in those countries, or equally to individuals whose families have lived in South Africa for multiple generations); "Coloured" refers to "a phenotypically diverse group of people descended largely from Cape slaves, the indigenous Khoisan population and other people of African and Asian descent" (Adhikari, 2006), often described as being of mixed-race origin but associated with specific communities and histories rather than being a catch-call for mixed-race individuals. Unlike the use of the term in North America, "Coloured" in the South African context is not the same as "black", although coloured individuals may choose to identify as black.

Anthropologist Elna du Plooy (2018: online) writes that "coloured identities remain contested, fluid and ambiguous". There is extensive historical context for this contested and fluid space, dating back to the early colonisation of South Africa. Under Dutch rule it was rare but not entirely unheard of for manumitted female slaves (who were all people of colour) to marry white male colonisers, and for subsequent offspring (if pale enough) to be considered "white" (Brodie, 2016). Centuries later, under the complex and sometimes bizarre racial categories imposed and defined under various Apartheid-era Acts, lighter-skinned individuals from one "race group" might utilise their appearance in order to "pass" as someone from another racial group – this might have been done for many reasons including in order to live in a specific area (or indeed being allowed to remain living in an area that had arbitrarily been declared for a different racial group), in order to qualify for certain jobs, or even to marry a person whose recorded race was different (inter-racial marriage was illegal under Apartheid law). Although

Apartheid's race laws have been repealed, many elements of segregation persist today including spatial segregation that results from and continues to exist along Group Areas lines (Brodie, 2008; Brodie, 2016).

Gender and race also influence individual risk profiles for violence. In the Medical Research Council's 2008 book Crime, Violence and Injury Prevention in South Africa: Data to Action (Van Niekerk, Suffla and Seedat, eds), Matzopoulos et al. (2008: 17) write:

> The concept of "population group" or "race" and its constituents, i.e. "Asian", "Black", "Coloured" and "White" are social constructs and are not meant to signify any inherent genetic or biological differences between these groups. Instead, they are used as demographic markers where such profiling allows for identifying vulnerable populations in order to plan and implement effective prevention and intervention programmes.

Within this exceedingly complex and specific context, which cannot adequately be covered in this thesis, the notion of race is contested and unfixed. Attributing or inferring race to victims of crime, particularly to deceased individuals, is a challenging proposition – even at a medical level (see for example Sarah Wild's series of reports (Wild, 2017) on unidentified bodies in South African medico-legal laboratories).

In South Africa the official cause-of-death certification (form DHA-1663) is supposed to be filled out by the "medical practitioner/professional nurse/forensic pathologist" (Statistics South Africa, 2012b) who determined the cause of death, and includes a section where the practitioner is asked to "[s]elect the race group" that they consider the decedent to belong to. The Medical Research Council's femicide studies, and other similar mortality studies in South Africa (see for example Matzopoulos et al., 2015), use racial categorisations derived from either police and/or post-mortem reports, but even these can include a sometimes-large proportion of uncertainty. In the 1999 femicide study (Mathews et al., 2004) for example, 15.6% of non-intimate victims' race was categorised as unknown.

These ambiguities obviously make it challenging to infer racial identification from news reports, as this information is not generally explicit. It is nonetheless important to include data on race in order to examine the potential role played by the race of both the victim and the perpetrator in media coverage of violence.

In their work evaluating the use of geocoding (location or address) and/or surname analysis to estimate race or ethnicity in the United States, Fiscella and Fremont (2006: online) suggest that, in the absence of self-reported race/ethnicity, indirect methods can "offer a defensible interim alternative in lieu of direct data" and that combined geocoding and surname analysis data can yield useful positive (i.e. is a member of a certain race group) and negative (is not a member of a certain race group) predictive values that offer "viable means for assigning race and ethnicity for purposes of examining disparities".

Fiscella and Fremont (2006: online) also note that as "a practical matter, no method for obtaining race and ethnicity data can be entirely accurate or bias free". It is not clear whether similar methods would have similar (or greater or lesser) success inferring or validating the attribution of race in a South African context. In their own study, Fiscella and Fremont (2006) noted that their methods produced unreliable geocoding results for Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Island individuals, and that surname analysis was not accurate for African American subjects.

South Africa's particular and extended history of segregation is of course different from America's, and includes significant language-based differences between race groups – for example the majority of black (African) South Africans speak isiZulu or isiXhosa as a first language, while most coloured and the majority of white South Africans speak Afrikaans as a first language, with more than a third of white South Africans speaking English as a first language (Statistics South Africa, 2012a).

In this study, information about victims' race was determined where possible using a combination of provided information that could be used to positively include or negatively exclude a victim or perpetrator from a race category. This included photographs of the victim or the victim's family, using the victim's surname (e.g. "Singh" is likely to be Indian, while "Dlamini" is likely to be black), or using her location – for example, an elderly victim living in a village in the Eastern Cape is more likely to be black. However these approaches do include an unknown degree of uncertainty and recorder bias. Where information included in news reports was insufficient to include or exclude a victim or perpetrator from specific race groups, then their race was recorded as unknown.

For information relating to the (relative) relationship status between victim and perpetrator, this was usually much more explicit in news reports. For intimate partner murders, reports would typically name a perpetrator as an intimate partner (using terms like husband, boyfriend, ex-boyfriend, ex-husband, lover, etc) or would describe the female victim in similar terms. For non-intimate murders where the perpetrator was known to the victim, his role would usually be described in relation to her (for example a co-worker, and employee, a tenant, a customer, etc). In some cases enough information was made available about the murder to exclude an intimate partner perpetrator even when the perpetrator was unknown (for example, the murder of several elderly women). Where no explicit information was published about the victim-perpetrator relationship *and* an intimate partner perpetrator could not be excluded based on news reports, this relationship was listed as unknown. Similarly, alleged sexual assault was listed as "YES" only when this was specifically mentioned or specifically excluded ("NO") in news reports, otherwise it was listed as unknown. Answers were not arbitrarily assigned, but utilised specific information.

Femicide in South Africa, 2012/2013: Media coverage versus statistics

SAPS does not generally provide disaggregated femicide data with its annual release of crime statistics (this changed recently). As such, in February 2018 I submitted a formal request to SAPS' crime statistics and research division, asking for specific information on all female homicides that had taken place during the 2012/13 reporting year. For a number of reasons, this process took close to a year to complete, and the full results were only received on 29 January 2019, shortly before the submission of my thesis. A summary of the SAPS results are incorporated below, where possible, but are not discussed extensively. It is hoped that this will be achieved in future work. The full set of SAPS female homicide data is also available from the Data Services Office of the Wartenweiler Library as before.

While waiting for the SAPS data, I developed a range of femicide estimates using the 2009 MRC study (Abrahams et al., 2012), SAPS crime statistics for the 2012/13 year, and population data from Statistics SA.

In 2009/10, 16,834 homicides were reported to SAPS. While Abrahams et al.'s (2012) study followed a calendar year rather than a crime year, it included nine of the twelve months of 2009, so it could reasonably be assumed that the femicide figures – the weighted figure of 2,363 femicides – could be broadly applied to the 2009/10 crime year.

Homicide data for the 2012/2013 crime year showed 16,259 murders (SAPS). Based on this, I assumed there would be a similar or slightly lower or slightly higher number of femicides in 2012/2013 than in 2009 (slightly lower because a lower number of homicides was recorded overall; slightly higher because previous studies indicated femicide rates had decreased at a lower rate than homicides).

I used the femicide rate of 12.9/100,000 calculated by the MRC for 2009 and applied it to the relevant mid-year population data from Stats SA (for females over the age of 15) to get a result of just over 2,500 femicides. This gave me a range of between 2,300 and 2,500 estimated femicides. Based on this, my media group of 408 victims represented between 16% and 19% of all actual female homicides, meaning that over 80% of all femicides in South Africa were not covered in the news media at all.

The SAPS data that was sent to me in January 2019 included information for all female homicides, for all ages, for both the 2012 and 2013 calendar years. From these sets I selected the corresponding period (01 April 2012 to 31 March 2013), and excluded victims aged 13 years or younger. Initially, this left 2,763 female homicides – a substantially higher figure than I had expected. On closer review of the SAPS data, however, I identified a large number of what appeared to be duplicate or even triplicate entries, where multiple victims of the same age were entered at the same police station, on the same date. While this was not impossible, it was unlikely – my news data showed that, in cases of multiple femicides, the victims were most commonly mother (or grandmother) and daughter (a number of such cases could be identified within the SAPS data) and had relative ages, or were of similar but not usually identical ages. After obvious duplications had been removed, 2,587 entries remained for female homicide victims aged 14 years and older within the crime year in question. This is slightly above my estimated maximum.

The number of femicides provided by SAPS for this period may be significant for reasons beyond the immediate scope of this thesis but which are important enough to highlight here.

In 2018, SAPS reported that the murder of women and children had begun to increase at a rate higher than the increase in the overall homicide rate.[46] At a Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Summit held in Gauteng in November 2018, President Cyril Ramaphosa stated that femicide had increased by 11% over the previous two years (Office of the Presidency, 2018), compared to an increase of 6.9% for murder (Institute for Security Studies, 2018).

These statements implied that the increase in femicide was fairly recent. Indeed, a report published earlier that year by Africa Check (Makou, 2018) showed that, according to SAPS's data, the femicide rate had declined between 2013/14 and 2014/15, after which it had started to climb, increasing by 7.7% between 2015/2016 and 2016/2017. The same SAPS figures, though, claimed that in the 2013/2014 year there were 2,354 femicides of victims older than 18 years – which was *less* than the 2,467 femicide victims (18 years and older) SAPS submitted to me for the preceding year (2012/2013), when there had been fewer homicides (there were 16,259 reported murders in 2012/2013 and 17,023 in 2013/2014).

It does not seem likely that, between 2012/2013 and 2013/2014, as murder numbers increased, femicide numbers should decrease. If the 2012/2013 figure derived from SAPS data is correct, femicide numbers may have been significantly higher for a significantly longer period than has been acknowledged to date. This issue deserves urgent further attention.

Victim demographics

Information about the age (or broad age group) and race of the victim was available in most news articles. While the victim's race was not always explicit, it could often be inferred from the victims' names or from photographs of the victims or their families. The purpose of obtaining demographic information from press reports is not to postulate any detailed considerations of the problem of race or of race as a social or political construct. Instead, as perceptions of the race of both victim and perpetrator play a significant role in the apparent newsworthiness of a crime (see Chapter Five), such information was gathered with that in mind. Demographic information from the media database can also be compared with other demographic data, including population estimates and information from other femicide studies.

[46] This can also be seen as an extension of previous study findings that, when homicide figures decreased, femicide figures decreased at a relatively slower rate (see Abrahams et al., 2012).

For certain comparisons with the MRC data, victims are divided into intimate and non-intimate femicides (to compare similar framing or subsets provided by the MRC studies), as explained in more detail below. It should be noted that the method, time frames, and samples used for the media survey are not in any way equivalent to those featured in the MRC autopsy-based studies, but that where comparisons between the two are made this is for illustrative purposes.

Victims by race (media survey)

Overall, black women (all victims) made up 57% of the media-database set (234/408). This included one victim from Malawi, one from Somalia, and two from Zimbabwe. This was followed by white victims, who made up just over 16% (including one woman from Australia). Coloured women made up only 5% of reported victims and Indian women just under 3%. In 18% of cases, the race of the victim could not be determined from press reports. In a small number of cases, the race of the victim could not be *clearly* distinguished (difficulties usually lay in whether the victim was considered black or coloured, or coloured or Indian), but there was enough information to exclude the victim from other race groups – in such instances, both possible race groups were included.

Table 6.2: Media database of all victims by race

Race	Number	% (of 408)*
Black	234	57%
Unknown	72	18%
White	64	16%
Coloured	21	5%
Indian	11	3%
Chinese	2	0.5%
Black/Coloured	3	1%
Indian/Coloured	1	0.25%

*** The sum is not 100% because of rounding.**

According to Statistics South Africa's 2013 mid-year population estimate (Stats SA, 2014) South Africa's total estimated population in mid-2013 was 52,982,000, of which 27,158,700 were female (all ages), of which 19,465,663 were aged 15 years or older. By subtracting data for females aged 0–14 from the Stats SA population data, the following profile is presented for women aged 15 years and over:

Table 6.3: Female population (15 years and older) by race (2013)

Race (Stats SA)	**Female pop. (15 yrs+)**	% of total female population
Black	15,174,874	78%
White	1,959,783	10%
Coloured	1,813,358	9%
Indian/Asian	517,617	3%

Source: Statistics South Africa Mid-Year Population Estimates 2013 (2014)

Based on national population estimates, black and coloured women appear to be under-represented in the media database (black women most particularly), while white women are over-represented. The under-representation of black and coloured women may be partly offset by the number of cases in which this information was not available, but it cannot be assumed that race was inferred by the reader. Stats SA does not distinguish between Indian women and other Asian populations, but the percentage of Indian and Chinese women in the news reports does seem to more closely align with proportional population data.

There are some issues with this method, however – specifically in terms of how it may conflate distribution of media coverage (which is more extensive in urban areas) with actual population distribution (which varies by province and urban area). If we repeat this exercise looking only at victims in Gauteng province (largely urbanised and covered extensively by news media), there are 96 victims, of whom 39 (41%) were black, 17 (18%) were white, and 37 (39%) were of unknown race.[47] There were also 2 (2%) Indian victims and one (1%) coloured victim. According to Stats SA's mid-year population estimates for 2012, there were nearly 4,6-million females in Gauteng at that time (4,1 million women aged 15 years and older), of whom 74% were black, 19% were white, 2% were Indian/Asian, and 4% were coloured. Considering the large number of media reports in which race is not ascribed (and which would almost certainly account for a much larger number of black victims), media coverage – of white victims in particular – seems much more proportional when local populations relative to news distribution are considered.

[47] The total includes two victims in an area between the Gauteng and Mpumalanga provincial boundaries.

Intimate femicide and non-intimate femicide

In 293 of the cases reported in the media, the relationship between perpetrator and victim was identified or described clearly enough to determine whether or not the murder was an intimate femicide or a non-intimate femicide. In 115 cases, or 28% of the total sample, there was not enough information to categorise the victim–perpetrator relationship.

In cases where the relationship status *was* known, 124 incidents were clearly identified as intimate femicides, representing 30% of the total media set and 42% of the set of "known victim–perpetrator relationships". 169 incidents were clearly described as non-intimate femicides, making up 41% of all femicide cases and 58% of cases where the relationship between victim and perpetrator was known. While intimate femicides make up the majority (i.e. greater than 50%) of femicide cases, this is not the case in media reportage, where, when viewed as a whole, only 30% of all cases reported were intimate femicides.

Intimate femicides were reported in the media for 87 black victims, 7 coloured victims, 1 black/coloured victim, and 7 white victims. In 23 cases, the race of the victim was not known or not reported. There were no intimate femicides reported among Indian or Chinese victims.

Table 6.4: Media-database intimate femicide and non-intimate-femicide victims by race

Race	IF Number	% (of 124)*	NIF number	% (of 168)	Unknown
Black	86	69%	93	55%	51
White	7	6%	49	29%	8
Coloured	7	6%	8	5%	6
Indian	0	0	4	2%	7
Chinese	0	0	2	1%	0
Unknown	23	19%	8	5%	41
Black/Coloured	1	1%	4	2%	2
Indian/Coloured	0	0	1	1%	0

* Sum is not 100% because of rounding.

In the expanded version of the 2009 femicide study published in *PLOS One* (Abrahams et al., 2013), the MRC included estimated figures for intimate femicides in both the 1999 and 2009 studies. Although the study provided some of the data in the form of rates rather than raw numbers, the proportion of intimate-femicide victims by race within the MRC sets can be compared to the same proportions within the media data set.

Table 6.5: Intimate femicides by race – 1999 and 2009 (MRC studies)

Race	1999 data	% of IF* (n = 1,349)	2009 data	% of IF* (n = 1,020)[48]
Black	1,023	76%	801	79%
Coloured	252	19%	173	17%
Indian	21	2%	18	2%
White	53	4%	28	3%

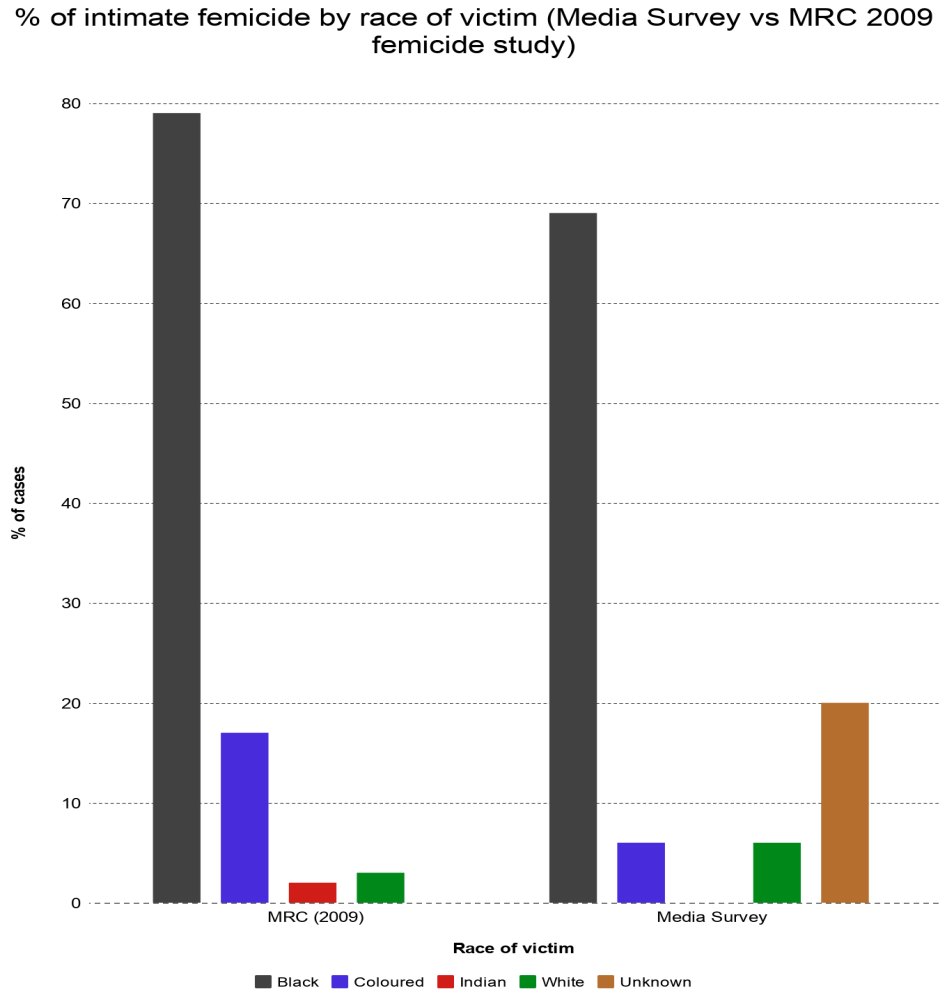
* Sum is not 100% because of rounding.

[Source: Abrahams et al., 2013]

It should again be noted that these numbers are not expressed relative to population and can only be interpreted relative to each other; nor is the media data representative of all femicides. Comparison of the two sets (see Figure 6.1, below) does, however, suggest that black and coloured intimate femicide may be under-reported in the media and proportionally over-reported for white women (which may be a factor of white female homicides being more likely to be reported in the media in the first place).

[48] In the 2013 paper, the total set for intimate femicide is given as 1,024, but racial information is only available for 1,020 of the victims.

Figure 6.1: % of intimate femicide victims by race (2009 MRC study vs Media Survey)



Femicide victims by age

Femicide victims do not present proportionally by age relative to population size – the risk differs by age group in a way that is not directly related to the size of that population group. For this reason, I compare the age profiles of my media set only against age data from the MRC studies and do not include an age comparison with Stats SA population estimates.

In the media data set, the median age of all victims was 38 (the average was 41.5), and the mode (the most frequently occurring age) was 25. The majority of victims in the media set fell in the 20–29 years age group (n=83), followed by 30–39 years (n=60). More than half the victims were between the ages of 14 and 44 years.

For intimate femicides, the median age was lower, at 30 years, which is similar to the profiles reported in the MRC studies, which showed median intimate-femicide victim ages of 29 (1999) and 31 (2009).

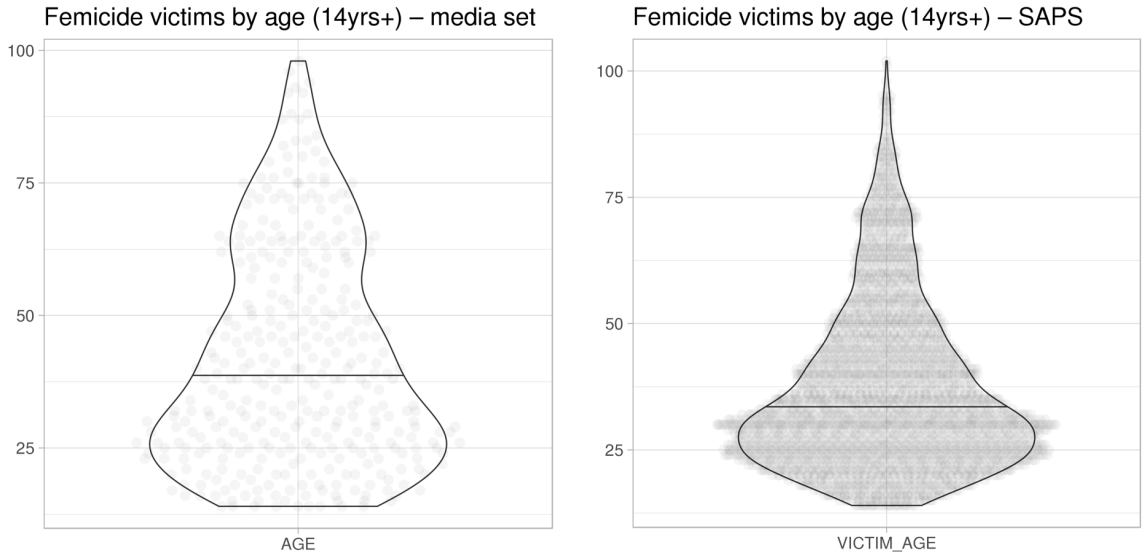
The age profiles for victims of non-intimate femicide, however, were less consistent. While the MRC studies showed median ages of 37 (1999) and 41 (2009) for non-intimate victims, in the media database this was nearly a decade older, at 47.5 years. Taking previous studies into account, this suggests that elderly women – while representing a higher risk category for non-intimate femicide (Mathews et al., 2004) – are over-represented in the media relative to other age groups (this is discussed further in Chapter Eight.)

SAPS does not provide information about the victim-perpetrator relationship, and so it is not possible to distinguish between intimate and non-intimate femicides. A comparison between the ages of the victims in the media survey and the SAPS data does show a similar divergence in terms of elderly victims being over-represented within the media sample.

In the violin plots (next page), it is easy to see that where there should be a narrowing after the age of 50, on the media set there is a horizontal/lateral bulge that starts around the age of 60 years and continues (although it tapers) to well after the age of 75, indicating a much higher proportion of elderly victims within the media set.

Figures 6.2 and 6.3: Violin graphs* showing age distribution and density of femicide victims in the media survey (left) and SAPS data (right)

[horizontal line = median]



Sources: Own media survey; SAPS female homicide data

* These violin plots give a graphic representation of the distribution of victims (X axis) by age (Y axis) and density (number of dots).

Cause (mechanism) and place of death

While there are seemingly endless ways to inflict lethal violence on our fellow humans, in this study the causes of death have been simplified and separated into nine categories, as follows:

1. *Sharp force trauma* – includes cutting, hacking, stabbing (also penetrating wounds or injuries)
2. *Blunt force trauma* – beating, stoning, etc.
3. *Gunshot injuries* – caused by a firearm
4. *Strangulation/Asphyxiation* – choking, strangulation, suffocation
5. *Fire* – burned to death
6. *Poison* – women who were poisoned
7. *Acid* – women killed as a result of an acid (chemical) attack
8. *Falls* – where the death was specifically due to falling from a height
9. *Car* – where a motor vehicle was used to commit the murder.

These categories are not based on formal autopsy findings but on narrative information provided by media reports and are loosely aligned with other causes of death-notification categories. In instances where multiple possible causes were mentioned, the first-appearing mechanism mentioned was selected for tabulation in the media survey, but errors may have occurred in this capture of data. To make these data easier to read, percentages below have all been rounded to the closest decimal point.

The primary mechanism of death (for all victims) in the media survey was sharp force trauma (24%), followed by gunshot injury (21%), and strangulation or asphyxiation (17%). For intimate-femicide victims, the leading mechanism of death was gunshot (33%), followed by sharp force injuries (26%), and blunt force trauma (10%) and strangulation (10%). For non-intimate femicides, this order changed again: sharp force trauma (29%) was the leading cause of death, followed by strangulation (24%) and gunshot injuries (21%).

Data from the MRC studies provides information on the proportional causes of death for both intimate and non-intimate femicides in three categories: blunt force trauma, sharp force trauma, and gun deaths. A 2005 parliamentary presentation by the 1999 study's authors (Mathews et al., 2005) also provided additional data for the proportion of deaths by strangulation, fire, and drowning. According to this presentation, the leading cause of death in intimate femicides in 1999 was blunt force trauma (35%), followed by sharp force trauma (33%), and gunshots (31%). For non-intimate femicides (1999), the causes of death were ranked as sharp force trauma (34%), firearms (34%), and blunt force trauma (22%). The 2013 *PLOS One* (Abrahams et al., 2013) study revised some of this data and stated that for intimate femicides (1999), blunt force and sharp force injuries each represented 33%, with gunshot injuries making up 31%.

For the 2009 data, 31% of intimate femicides were caused by sharp force trauma, 30% by blunt force trauma, and a significantly lower figure of 18% by gunshots. For non-intimate femicides it was 36% by sharp force, 22% by blunt force, and 17% by gunshots. Because strangulation was not mentioned separately, it is not clear whether this was included under blunt force trauma or not. If so, it would explain the significant difference in reportage of this category.

There are important differences between the victim profiles presented in the media survey and victims presented at mortuaries. Aside from prominent differences in age for non-intimate victims, both blunt and sharp force trauma are relatively under-reported in the media sample,

and firearm-related deaths are over-reported. However, the extent of the over-reporting of firearm deaths is not clear because of the known increase in firearm-related deaths that occurred after 2009 (Matzopoulos et al., 2016).

Sexual assault

Suspected sexual assault was mentioned in 19% of the media cases (78/408), which represented 6% of intimate femicides (7/124) and 27% (45/169) of non-intimate femicides. The previous MRC studies indicated suspected rape in 14% of all femicides in 1999 (11% for intimate femicide and 13% for non-intimate femicide) and in 20% of all femicides in 2009 (11% for intimate femicide and 27% for non-intimate femicide). The 2009 study noted that the increased prevalence of suspected sexual assault may be attributable to improved data collection rather than an increased rate of sexual assault. For this reason, the 2009 data is preferred as a basis for comparison to the media dataset. The discrepancies between the two studies suggest that sexual assault in intimate-partner femicides is under-reported in the media.

Place of death and type of location

The MRC studies did not include information on the geographic location or type of location of the incidents that led to the victims' deaths, but it is documented in several other studies, including Mathews et al. (2004), and is certainly a point of interest for further research and/or comparison.

According to the media survey, victims came from the following regions (in declining order; number of victims and proportional percentage in brackets): Gauteng (n=96; 24%); Eastern Cape (n=78; 19%); KwaZulu-Natal (n=69; 17%); Western Cape (n=59; 15%); Limpopo (n=25; 6%); North West (n=21; 5%); Mpumalanga (n=20; 5%); Northern Cape (n=19; 5%); and Free State (n=17; 4%). Two murders occurred in a region between Gauteng and Mpumalanga and were counted as being in Gauteng. In four murders, the province could not be determined, because the original articles could no longer be located.

For context, this data should be compared to SAPS murder data, because murder patterns are not directly proportional to population, and we typically see higher murder rates in specific areas of the country. SAPS crime data for the 2012/2013 crime year recorded 16,259 homicides. The provincial murders rates were (homicide totals and proportional percentage in brackets):

- KwaZulu-Natal (3,629; 22%)
- Eastern Cape (3,344; 21%)
- Gauteng (2,997; 18%)
- Western Cape (2,580; 16%)
- Free State (1,023; 6%)
- North West (876; 5%)
- Limpopo (702; 4%)
- Mpumalanga (696; 4%)
- Northern Cape (412; 3%).

It should be noted that the high rate of murders in KwaZulu-Natal most likely reflects a large proportion of political killings (Bruce, 2014), which more frequently (although not exclusively) tends to target male victims. Thus, it may not accurately reflect expected proportions of femicide.

Figure 6.4 (below) shows SAPS homicide data for 2012/2013 against my media survey femicide data (also for 2012/2013) and population data (for 2013, from Statistics South Africa's Mid-Year Population Estimates for 2013) represented by province. This comparison suggests that it may be important to consider provincial differences or variations when examining media coverage of femicide (or indeed homicide), and highlights the differences, in many of the provinces, between regional homicide data and reported femicide data. It may also be worth comparing homicide and femicide figures against regional population data – the value of this becomes clear when one reviews the Northern Cape, for example, which presents with the lowest homicide figures for the country but also has the smallest population.

Figure 6.5 performs the same exercise, but using the SAPS femicide data I received in January 2019. Rather than simply replacing the original Figure 6.4 with an updated Figure 6.5, I have kept both, as it is interesting to compare results. In Figure 6.5, we can see that, proportionally, femicide is over-reported in the media in Gauteng, and in the Western Cape; and that it is under-reported in KwaZulu-Natal.

Figure 6.4: A comparison of SAPS 2012/2013 homicide data and media survey 2012/2013 femicide data by province (showing provincial populations for comparison)

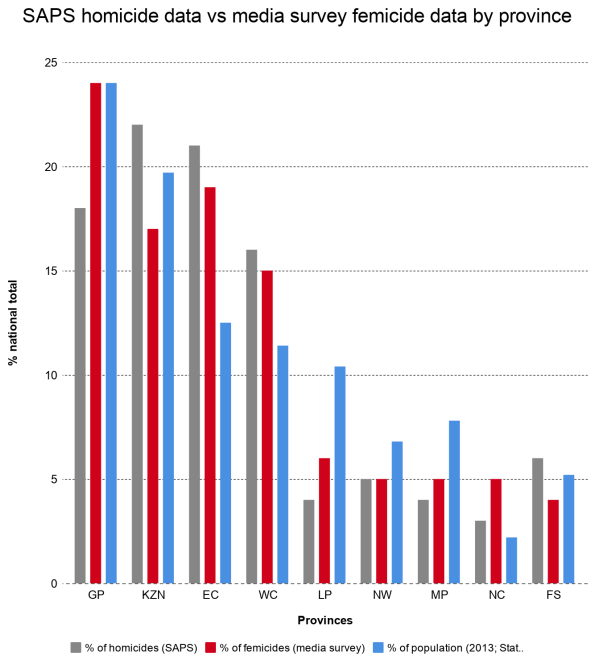
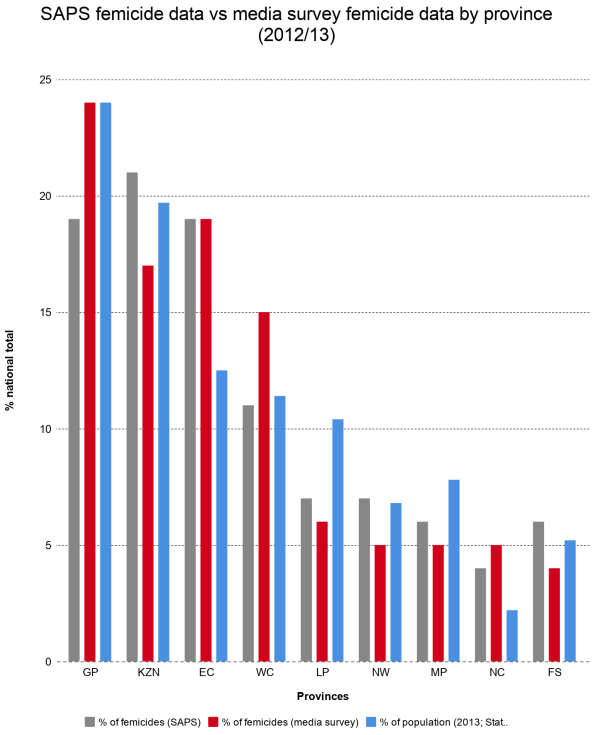


Figure 6.5: A comparison of SAPS 2012/2013 femicide data and media survey 2012/2013 femicide data by province (showing provincial populations for comparison)



Place of death

I reviewed news reports for each femicide in the media survey and noted if they reported that the murder had taken place (or the victim had been found):

- at the victim's own home;
- at the home of a relative, neighbour, family member, or friend;
- at the killer's home;
- in an open natural area (such as a park, a field, farmland, open veld, dam, or river);
- on a road, roadside, or street (also public spaces but distinct from bodies that are found "in the bushes" as above);
- in a backyard or space between homes (other than the victim's home or that of someone known to her) or between/behind public venues such as libraries or malls ("in-between");
- at a graveyard;
- at the victim's place of work.

Women were also killed in abandoned houses; at police stations; in hospital (while recovering from a first murder attempt); at a restaurant; at an initiation school; at a student residence; and in a tavern. Because these locations represented single incidents, they are not recorded on the table below but can be seen in the main database. For 110 incidents, insufficient information was available to determine the type of place of death.

This information has epidemiological value and can also be discussed in the context of previous studies' findings, e.g. victims of intimate femicide are more likely to be killed in their own homes (Mathews et al., 2004), and more than 60% of gunshot femicides occurred at home (Abrahams et al. 2010).

Table 6.6: Type of location of death reported in media

Location	n (all/408)	n (IF/124)	n (cause of death = gunshot)
Own home	148 (36%)	42 (34%)	36 (24%)
Open area or public space	52 (12%)		2
Other home (including family member or perpetrator's home)	21		4
Road or street	27		6
Back yard, between houses, in drains	12		0
Graveyard	7		2
Car	6		5
Place of work	12		6
Unknown	110		15

** n does not add up to 100% because some location categories are not included in this table.*

From this, it becomes clear that femicides that take place in the victim's home are generally not reported in the media as commonly as expected and that reports of gun deaths and intimate-partner femicides at home are particularly under-reported. This under-reporting is significant, as it may entrench perceptions that women are at greater risk in unfamiliar places, rather than in the familiar space of their own home, and underplays the risk of gun deaths in the home.

Perpetrator and justice profiles

Perpetrators were named in 196 of the 408 cases in the media set. In almost all of these cases, their names were released publicly because the suspects had been arrested or had committed suicide. In the few cases where no arrests had been reported but the suspect's name appeared in a news article, the suspect was typically the victim's intimate partner. However, in 100 cases, the perpetrator was described as being the victim's current or former intimate partner, but the perpetrator's name was *not* included in media reports. Sixteen perpetrators were identified as police officers (including Metro police and one former SAPS member).

Arrests were reported in 196 of the 408 media-set cases, but only 102 cases resulted in convictions. For intimate femicides, only 24 (20%) convictions were reported; for non-intimate femicides, 74 convictions (44%) were reported.

The MRC studies showed much higher conviction rates than my data set for intimate femicides (35% in 1999 and 37% in 2009) and a lower proportion for non-intimate femicides (33% in 1999 and 23% in 2009). This information is relevant to potential media coverage, as court cases represent important, scheduled opportunities for news coverage (confirmed by my interviews

with editors and journalists in Chapter Nine). While judicial processes and convictions for non-intimate femicides are proportionally over-reported, the arrests, court cases and convictions of intimate-partner perpetrators appear to be under-reported in the media. Again, this has the effect of over-stating the prevalence of non-intimate femicides and understating not just the prevalence of, but the culpability for, intimate-partner femicide.

A number of the intimate-femicide cases were reported on in the Caxton community newspaper archives that became irretrievable, and it is possible that arrests or convictions were reported in those articles and not captured in the database. However, most of the Caxton community articles were first logged in 2013 – within a year of the murders – making it unlikely that court cases and sentencing would have been finalised by then.

In 40 of the reported cases in the media survey (9.8%), the perpetrator committed suicide following the femicide (femicide-suicide). This aligns with data from the MRC, which showed the suicide rate for perpetrators at about 9.9% in 1999 (Mathews et al., 2004). For intimate-femicide suicide, the MRC studies reported that 17% and 18% of intimate-femicide perpetrators had killed themselves in 1999 and 2009 respectively (Mathews et al., 2004, Abrahams et al., 2013). Within the media sample, this proportion is much higher: nearly 30% of cases of intimate femicide reported in the media involved the perpetrator killing himself. When read together with the data on under-reporting of convictions, it suggests that South African news media are reluctant to report on the surviving perpetrators of intimate-partner femicide and are more willing to provide information about such perpetrators if they are dead. In four additional cases in the media set, the perpetrators were killed in other ways (by SAPS, mob justice, or by another attempted victim during the homicide event).

Part two: Media data

As discussed, the media database comprised 5,778 news-media articles,[49] published between 01 April 2012 and 31 August 2017, which were logged to 408 victims murdered between 01 April 2012 and 31 March 2013. A total news article tally was kept for each victim. The web URL or headline, publication or platform name, author byline, and publication date were captured for every news article (except for those with an expired link) and a digital hard copy of the article was generated and saved. From the news article set, 3,278 articles were unique

[49] 3,951 excluding Reeva Steenkamp.

(after duplicates had been removed), excluding articles on Reeva Steenkamp. The total number of articles (including duplicates) was used for information related to coverage per victim, but for data within the media set itself, duplicates were removed.

The media data can be analysed in a number of different ways. As broad sections, we can look at news coverage by incident (victim, perpetrator, etc.) and examine media coverage relative to itself. The structure of the database allows for multiple different enquiries, which is a new contribution to contemporary research into homicide media coverage. Although Excel functionality doesn't allow for extrapolation of relational features, these could easily be developed in the future using the same data.

The total media set included articles from nearly 200 different publications or platforms. The lack of an exact figure is because of the missing data from Caxton community newspapers and inconsistencies in how titles were referred to or how they should be categorised (e.g. the *Weekend Argus* includes separate Saturday and Sunday editions, also referred to as the *Saturday Argus* and *Sunday Argus*). A full list of platforms and titles is provided in Annexure C.

The ten newspapers or platforms with the largest number of unique stories on femicide were: *The Star* (189 stories), *Volksblad* (188), *News24* (185), *Cape Argus* (158), the now-folded *New Age* (147), *Die Burger* (144), the *Cape Times* (137), *Beeld* (118), IOL (the online service for independent newspapers, used when a newspaper title was not clearly credited) (115), the *Daily Dispatch* (106) and *The Sowetan* (103). A more detailed discussion and analysis of content by newspaper is provided in Chapters Nine and Ten.

There were stark disparities in the news coverage of the 408 victims, and this coverage was strongly skewed along racial lines. The median number of articles per femicide was three, with the mode (most commonly occurring figure) being just one article per victim. Only six victims received coverage of more than 100 articles each; of these women, only one (Anene Booysen) was not white. The cases that received the largest amount of coverage during the study year were (in declining order): Reeva Steenkamp (1,827+ articles); Anene Booysen (679 articles), a teenager who was raped, mutilated and murdered in the small town of Bredasdorp; Marthella and Christelle Steenkamp (230 articles each), who were murdered by their son/brother Don in a staged farm attack near Griekwastad; Charmaine Mare (109 articles), a teenager who was

murdered in Kraaifontein by the boyfriend of a friend's mother; and Rosemary Theron (109 articles), a stilt-walker and clown who was murdered by her daughter and her daughter's boyfriend in Clovelly.

News coverage by race

79% of black victims and 62% of coloured victims received coverage of nine articles or less. After Anene Booysen, the black and coloured women with the highest amount of media coverage were Police Constable Phindiwe Primrose Nikani, who was shot while on duty in Imizamo Yethu in Hout Bay (her death yielded 55 news articles) and Keamogetswe Sefularo, a 14-year-old student who was murdered by other students in an alleged satanic ritual near Johannesburg (51 articles). Two victims (Nomandla Mxunyelwa and Nophumzile Lubambo) of the Tholeni serial murderer (one of three serial killers active during the crime year) featured in more than 40 articles each (49 and 41 respectively), but the focus of these articles was the serial killer rather than the victims.

The highest-reported coloured victims after Anene Booysen were Sinodia Schutt (31 articles), a mother of three whose body had been badly mutilated at the time of her death, and Kraaifontein teenager Ge-Audrey Green (30 articles), whose corpse was discovered in a drawer under her neighbour's bed a few weeks after the murder of Charmaine Mare. The highest coverage given to an Indian victim was of the murder of Pietermaritzburg widow Venotha Ince (20 articles), who was killed by a carpenter she had employed to work in her home.

For white victims, 56% received coverage of nine articles or less, with the balance receiving coverage of 10 articles or more. Aside from the five white victims mentioned above who received significant coverage (100+ articles), the most-reported white female homicide cases were those of 76-year-old Annatjie or Annetjie van Rooyen (46 articles), who was murdered on her farm with her husband Ernst, and who was stuffed into a freezer while still alive, where she suffocated to death; and 72-year-old Cecile Fourie (40 articles), who was murdered on her farm with her husband Johan. Both of these murders took place in the Free State.

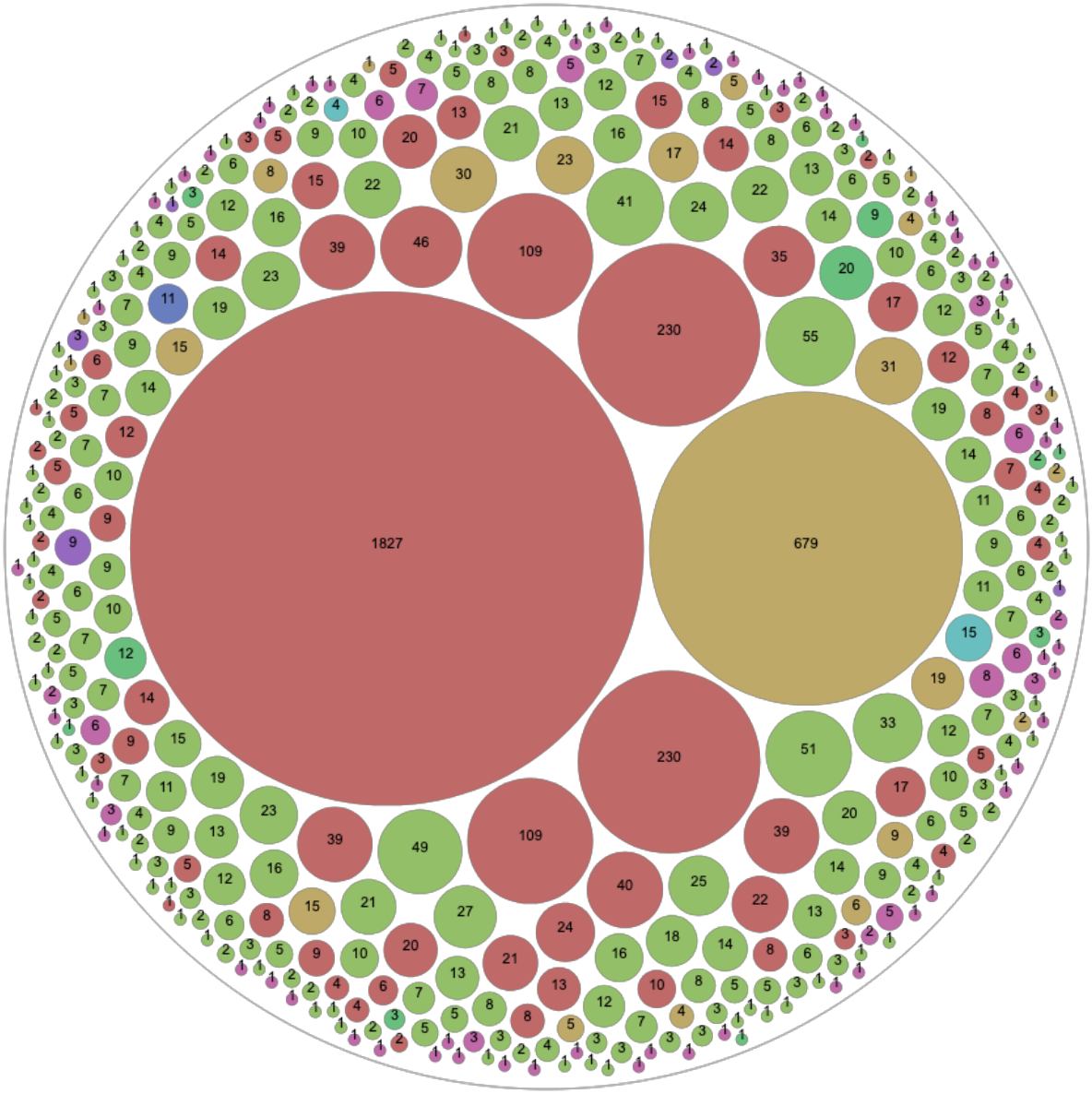
Other high-profile white victims were Delmas day-mother Margrietha de Goede (39 articles), who was killed with the five-month-old infant in her care; Claremont mother Anzunette or Antoinette du Plessis (39 articles), who was killed by a former roofing contractor while her domestic worker and infant were at the park; and 63-year-old Lorraine Adams (39 articles),

who was murdered with her husband Gordon, also in the Free State. The circumstances of these crimes can be considered significant in terms of news coverage. While multiple murders and murders involving children (or perhaps the mother of a small child) are expected to gain more attention, the three Free State murders speak to the uniquely South African phenomenon of the hyper-focus on farm attacks (the Adams' murders might not be considered a farm attack, but the small town in which they lived was a predominantly farming town, and the murder happened three weeks after the murders of the Van Rooyens).

Figure 6.6, on the following page, provides a weighted representation of total news coverage per individual victim, with colour coding to indicate the victim's race, and the size of the circle indicating the total number of articles (this number is also written inside the circle). Even without the victims' names, it is easy to identify news coverage of Reeva Steenkamp, Anene Booysen, Christelle and Marthella Steenkamp, Charmaine Mare, and Rosemary Theron. The weighting in this figure also shows how these stories dominated the media coverage landscape. In addition, the colour coding (chosen by the computer programme, not by me) indicates how, even though black women (shown here in green, with coloured women shown in light yellow-brown) make up the majority of victims covered in the press, the media landscape is quite clearly dominated by coverage of white female victims.

Figure 6.6: News coverage of victims by race and total article count

[Colour of circles indicates race – salmon = white, green = black, yellow-brown = coloured, purple = Indian, blue = Chinese; size of the circle indicates number of articles per victim by volume]



Infographic generated using http://app.rawgraphs.io/

News articles by perpetrator and cause of death

Information (or lack thereof) about the perpetrator appears to play an important role in whether a case is reported on. The suspect was not identified in 100 (74%) of 136 cases covered by only one article, and only 24 arrests and 3 convictions were reported in this section. Convictions were reported in a scant 15% of the 319 femicide cases that received 9 stories or less, compared to a group-wide conviction average of 24%. By contrast, suspects were identified in all but 4

of 36 (89%) femicide cases with 20 articles or more written about them, and there were convictions in 28 (78%) of the 36 most-reported cases. Perpetrator suicide also appeared to inhibit media coverage, with 29 (73%) of the 40 femicide-suicide cases receiving only 5 articles or less. This indicates that the availability of supplied information about a suspect or perpetrator encourages news coverage, while a lack of supplied information inhibits news coverage.[50]

News coverage also appears to have been influenced by the apparent mechanism of death. Excluding reportage of Reeva Steenkamp's gunshot murder, sharp object-trauma deaths received the greatest amount of coverage (37% of all articles), followed by gunshot wounds (25%), strangulation or asphyxiation (22%), and blunt force trauma making up only 9% of the news articles. From this, we can see that sharp object trauma is over-reported, gunshot injuries and strangulation are slightly over-reported, and blunt force trauma is under-reported.

Declining media frequency over time

One of the most significant uses or values of my media survey data is that it can be approached and organised, or re-organised, in multiple different ways, depending on the questions to be asked of the data. By viewing total media coverage (for the entire group of victims) over time instead of by individual victim, we can see how media coverage of femicide changes, persists, and then declines over the course of several years.

In the table below, we see that January, February, and March 2013 showed the highest total media coverage (for victims killed during the 2012/2013 crime year – this excludes media coverage of other femicides; this table also excludes media coverage of Reeva Steenkamp alone but includes stories that covered Steenkamp and another victim from that year). High story counts are to be expected for February and March 2013 due to the murder of Anene Booysen and the associated bump in femicide media coverage following the shooting of Reeva Steenkamp. However, the difference in coverage between other months bears investigation – for example, to determine whether an increase in coverage was linked to new femicide incidents, to court appearances for previous murders, or to a combination of these factors. We can also see how the volume of femicide coverage declines over time, which reveals a news-salience cycle that may be particular to femicide. Within three to four years of the murders documented in my media survey, there is almost no further coverage of the incidents.

[50] In some instances, information may be available to SAPS but is not provided to the public or the media.

Ideally, this kind of data should be compared against similar data for other crime years to gain a more comprehensive picture of femicide media coverage across time. This might be a particularly interesting exercise for those cases that receive the most extensive coverage.

Table 6.7: Number of media articles mentioning 2012/2013 femicide victims, by year and month, from April 2012 to August 2017

Month	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*
January	0	192	29	4	4	2
February	0	492	54	17	4	0
March	0	227	67	10	1	4
April	110	70	29	10	25	11
May	84	97	46	5	2	11
June	137	43	30	23	6	4
July	71	25	11	10	12	1
August	84	78	43	23	5	4
September	139	61	23	4	2	
October	163	153	4	18	10	
November	75	121	6	7	6	
December	114	29	10	18	4	

In the next chapter, I explore questions of validity and legitimacy against my media-survey data, explaining why such processes are particularly necessary within mixed-methods research, and how this approach can add value to research methods and outcomes.

CHAPTER SEVEN: INCLUSIVITY AND VALIDITY – EXPLORING NARRATIVE EXCLUSION AND DATA VALIDATION THROUGH ALTERNATIVE DATABASES, METHODS, AND SOURCES

Validity often presents a challenge to social science research: What is it (how do we define it, and how do we apply it in a meaningful way?), and why do we need it? In this chapter, I discuss analytical approaches to data validity and use various examples, including my own research, to demonstrate the importance of testing and exploring the robustness and validity of collected information. By using my own database as a source for comparison against other databases, other methods, and other data sources, I also explore data as a mechanism and feature of narrative inclusion and/or exclusion.

Robustness and validity

From previous chapters, we know that media coverage of crime is not typically representative of crime itself. One of the issues that is not usually addressed – or, at least, not resolved – is whether and how (or how much) the selected media sources are representative *of media coverage* at large, and how different media search functionalities and media archive platforms enable or disable identification and selection of relevant sources. This will become an increasingly important question as more media data (including archival media) becomes available and searchable across a wide variety of platforms in multiple languages. How do we know that the media sources we have selected to study are valid, appropriate, and comprehensive representations of the data that we wish to study?

The accuracy, transparency, and reproducibility of data have traditionally been considered key to establishing validity in social science data analyses. These concepts are interactive rather than exclusive, and reproduction or duplication can also function as a methodological approach rather than as simply an output (i.e. duplication of methodology rather than results). Playford et al. (2016: 2) explain that replication studies can "further [test] the robustness of the original piece of research, for example by employing new or additional measures, data or methods."

These tenets are also frequently sites of tension within social science research (Babones, 2016): between positivist, quantitative approaches, which require validity measures or tests, and supposedly more interpretive, qualitative approaches, which eschew such rigid metrics. The

issues of both robustness and validity present similar challenges within mixed-methods research, for similar reasons. In a paper that considers the validity issue in mixed-methods research, Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006) discuss a number of iterative qualitative equivalents of quantitative "validity", including words like "credibility", "authenticity", and even "dependability" (citing Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1990), before proffering their own suggested term of "legitimation" as a counter to Teddlie and Tashakkori's (2003) previously suggested "inference quality".

Whether one prefers "validity", "credibility", or "legitimation", these are significant concepts that must be discussed and evaluated, not only within the mixed-methods framework but also by researchers who apply multiple or blended methods. In Babones' (2016: 455) article on interpretive quantitative methods for social sciences, he positions this tension/conflict as a present and pressing problem for sociology, where the "privileging of quantitative approaches to social science has obvious implications for the future of qualitative research", but which "also has important implications for the character of quantitative sociology itself." Babones writes that, "leaving aside the potentially catastrophic implications for qualitative research and qualitative sociologists' careers, the unreflexive importation of methodological conventions from economics and the sciences is simply inappropriate for most social science, and particularly sociological, research environments" (Babones, 2016: 455).

In this chapter, I attempt to address the validity issue – and integrate parallel or concurrent concerns of credibility and legitimacy – by taking multiple and mixed comparative and explorative approaches, with or against my own data and/or data collection methods, including the sources and platforms I used to construct my database.

First, I compare my data with the femicide data on white victims collected by white, right-wing, Afrikaans-speaking groups using their own self-selected news sources (no formal method, subjective sources). Next, I look at independent data on femicide media coverage collected for separate academic research purposes using Media Monitoring Africa's content monitoring platform, Dexter (different method, different source/s). Finally, I compare content outcomes – identifying relevant femicides in news-media coverage – by applying my original method (month-by-month news-media search using the term "murder") to the LexisNexis news database rather than the Sabinet database (same method, different news archive platform, varied sources). These approaches provide at least some responses to the question of validity

(does my data cover what it says it does, and to what extent?) but also, in their exposition, suggest other important methodological and narrative issues for consideration in the study of media coverage of violent crime.

White space and Red October

On 10 October 2013 – formerly celebrated as "Kruger Day" in honour of Boer leader Paul Kruger – between 250 and 400 white protesters carrying red balloons marched through the streets of Pretoria toward the Union Buildings, the official seat of the national government. Similar protests, with much smaller crowds, were held in small towns across the country. In some, attendees donned old right-wing AWB (Afrikaner Weerstand Beweging) uniforms, and children held signs that urged viewers to "*Maak die wêreld bewus teen BLANKE moorde*" ("Make the world aware of white murders").



SA Media - The University of the Free State
Source: PRETORIA NEWS
Date: 11-Oct-2013
Topic: 15
Ref No: 10680
ID: 04205210-01 Source Page: 3

Backlash at 'stop killing whites' marches

Red October slated as racist, bid to get rid of its Facebook page

STAFF REPORTER

A BACKLASH erupted on Twitter yesterday as marchers were held in a number of cities by a right-wing Afrikaner group against the "oppression" and "slaughter" of white people.

In Cape Town, Red October protesters marched from Keizersgracht to Parliament where they released red balloons.

Red October, which is supported by musician Steve Hofmeyr, was largely slammed as "racist" on social media with messages of disbelief and anger.

The Red October hashtag trended on Twitter across South Africa.

By late afternoon, an online petition had been started.

"To all South Africans: Let's shut down Red October!" in an effort to have its Facebook page removed.

According to the Red October website, the marches had been organised "to let people know "that we've had enough".

"No longer will we be silent about the oppression of the white South African ethnic minority!

"No longer will we silently endure the killing of our people on our farms and in our towns and cities," read its petition.

Red October's grievances included "destruction of our infrastructure, our filthy government towns, dirty dams and rivers, uninhabitable parks and public areas, dangerous neighbourhoods, filthy streets and a disintegrating road network".

White people, said Red October, were entitled as an ethnic minority to protection of their rights as enshrined in the constitution.

Statistics do not support the genocide and claims of "oppression" and "slaughter".

An AfricaCheck report released earlier this year showed that black people were far more likely to be murder victims than white people.

The report cited statistics that showed 87 percent of murder victims were black, while just 3 percent of murder victims were white.

Census 2011 statistics showed that white-headed households had annual incomes more than six times than those of black-headed households.

The organisers maintained that the march was not racial.

However, some participants held banners that read "enough is enough against the slaughter of farmers and white South Africans".

featuring photos of slain farmers were carried by protesters singing and calling for their war hero General Koos de la Rey to come and lead them.

They participated in the Red October march to the Union Buildings yesterday, calling for an end to "white genocide".

The group, led by Afrikaans musicians Steve Hofmeyer and Sunette Bridges, were part of other marches that had been organised across the country and the world to speak out against what they called the slaughter of farmers and white South Africans at the hands of black people.

They were driven by the belief that whites are being killed in hate crimes across the country.

"If a white person kills a black person it's called a racist murder, but 17 farmers killed in one month by black people – that's not racist? asked Bridges.

"This is not acceptable," she said.

Marchers also carried red balloons, while online loved ones who had been victims of violent crime in the country.

The balloons were later released.

A memorandum calling for an end to black-on-white violence and reverse racial discrimination as well as inequalities in education, health and employment, was handed over to a representative of the government.

The group also called for an end to affirmative action and Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment B-BBEE.

The organisers maintained that the march was not racial.

However, some participants held banners that read "enough is enough against the slaughter of farmers and white South Africans".

Vierkleur, old SA flags, pictures of slain farmers

VALESKA ABREU

VIERKLEUR (old Transvaal) flags, old South African flags and posters

SA Media - The University of the Free State
Source: CAPE ARGUS
Date: 11-Oct-2013
Topic: 05
Ref No: 1031
ID: 04212325-01 Source Page: 2

'GENOCIDE' FLAGGED

RED OCTOBER MARCH MET WITH RIDICULE

Protesters descend on Media 24, legislature

Dawood Kraxoton
STAFF REPORTER

MARCHERS against the "genocide of whites" became a laughing stock on social media yesterday as their hashtag was hijacked and ridiculed by comedians, commentators and ordinary South Africans.

The hashtag #RedOctober was peaking on Twitter on Thursday as it emerged that scores, with dozens of tweets referencing the phrase every minute. Political commentator Jacques Rousseau's observation of the "peculiar coincidence" of Red October being held on World Mental Health Day was a favourite, being retweeted more than 300 times within a few hours.

Comedian Trevor Noah's satirical suggestion that the event be held, for ease of being accessible, started during black history month, also attracted even more retweets and LOLs.

Red October is a loose affiliation of white, mostly Afrikaner, South Africans who believe that white people are being disproportionally targeted in the country.

Via social media the group organised marches across South Africa and, apparently, as far as America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

In Cape Town, about 100 supporters clad in red marched on the offices of media holding company Media 24 and the provincial legislature to hand over, respectively, a list of grievances and a memorandum meant for President Jacob Zuma.

Many marchers adopted the insignia of the Boer republics alongside the old South African flag. Biodegradable balloons, representing the blood of murdered white South Africans, were released skyward by marchers at noon.

In a seeming twist of irony, Red October's indictment of Media 24 jumped to the defence of "white" murder and rape accused. The movement accused Media 24 of denouncing white people accused and cited the use of nicknames such as "Medewerkle Monster" and "Sunday Rapist".

"The nicknames of other groups are not identified by their race and no media nicknames are attached to their heinous crimes," a complaint to Media 24 read. The complaint also accused the company of having aligned with "extreme-leftism" and of reporting on news issues in a way that "inflames engrounded hatred at the European ethnic minority".

Although most reactions to Red October on Twitter were derisive, ridicule and disgust, the movement claims to have significant support. The group says public protests were held in more than 40 South African cities and towns and in 11 cities abroad.

The group's Facebook page has more than 11 000 likes and popular Afrikaans singer Steve Hofmeyr, who has championed Red October's cause, personally responded to dozens of messages of support on Twitter.

But Hofmeyr could not avoid backlash from the group's negative Twitter reaction. True to form, Hofmeyr personally responded to many detractors. When someone pointed out that "your fathers shot and killed 69 people in Sharpeville", Hofmeyr hit back by posting a recent article (written by him) which argues that the Sharpeville massacre "was not a human rights violation".

RED OCTOBER IS A LOOSE AFFILIATION OF WHITE, MOSTLY AFRIKANER, SOUTH AFRICANS

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SA Media - The University of the Free State
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Date: 18-Oct-2013
Topic: 15
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ID: 04226115-01 Source Page: 41

Comment & Analysis

Get your facts straight, Steve, and help to build a better society

Even a hugely popular right-wing rock star sometimers needs an agony uncle – especially when his Red October "army" fails to live up to his expectations.

Dear Uncle Charles

I don't usually write to agony aunts or uncles but I'm desperate. You see, I was talked into this Red October thing by Sunette Bridges, some far-right blonde dolly whose dad was that king of Kitsch-pop, Ben Bridges.

The other dude who was very involved was some angry nasibul Afrikaner named Dirk Roodt, who is actually a wannabe Frenchman. He creeps me out, the way he looks at me, but maybe that's just my imagination.

So this Red October campaign is supposed to highlight the white genocide, or as we put it on our website, "the inhumane slaughter and oppression of the white South African ethnic minority". Last Thursday, on what we used to call Kruger Day, we launched this campaign around the world. I was excited. The website looked good, with a photograph of people who could have advertised Woolies – there were a few good-looking women there, but let me not veer more because my fiancée may read this.

We even had a quote by Martin Luther King on the website, which on the day we became silent about the things that matter," Sunette had no clue who he was and Dan started rambling on about existentialism ... I forced it through with-out too much fussing.

Ahead of the launch, I saw in social media that many leftwingers actually felt for this silly footwork of ours.

So, come Kruger Day and I knew I had to do my bit. T-shirt and my just-right-enough-dreiniss. But what a damp squib!

Dan was wearing a silly hat and kept wanting to talk to me about poetry – he published some terrible verse years ago when he was a student. Sunette wore a long red skirt with a pattern of swallows flying from the ground up to who knows where.

But the reason I need your help is that, in the end, barely 300 people pitched to hear me speak. Me, a guy who pulls easily 10 000 fans to Loftus every Saturday just so they can hear my song *Die Blou Bul sal nie vere die vlieer sy vie (The Blue Bull doesn't eat off the floor)* when the Bulls play rugby! Me, who fills halls across South Africa whenever I perform! Me, who has been a popular guy on sex with the ladies, for what's a topic for another time ... Please help – *Steve Hofmeyr*

Dear Desperate Steve

You don't need to call me uncle. We're nearly the same age. And we're from the same Afrikaner background. So with the niceties and how's-your-family out of the way, let me focus on the agony part of my job title: Steve, *julle maak ons naare gal!* (Steve, you are blemishing our name.)

I take the fact that I have to stand up for an Afrikaner identity I feel uncomfortable with, but because we have a shared history – one I cannot deny – I simply have to say to my fellow South Africans: we are not all like you.

We're not all racists. We don't all wallow in victimhood. We don't all think that the undoubted pain and suffering of some Afrikaners who have been on the receiving end of violent crime is more acute, more special, more painful than that of other South Africans.

We don't accuse fellow South Africans of rape, murder or genocide. Not because we're weak, but because it is unacceptable. Get on the right straight!

We have chosen to live here, in this truly astonishing land, with all its problems. We've been to help to solve those problems. We want our children to grow up here to experience what it is like to be a South African in this most welcoming of societies.

I come from farming stock spanning several generations. I worry about my beloved family on the farm, not because of some imagined "genocide", but because of the way you and those Neanderthals portray us. Not only are you fanning the hatred some people may not towards us, but you're also perpetuating the stereotype that we're all hate-filled racists. That makes it easier for people to hate back, sometimes violently so. It makes us more and more vulnerable.

With that off my chest, can I say to you: we're too old for this shit. Have you ever considered leaving the hate squad of Bridges and Roodt? You can get away from bad poetry and Boere-gup in the process. Have you ever thought of joining the rest of us who want to help to construct a new society?

You are a creative man. You are influential. You are a rock star, dammit. I can only imagine the impact it will have if you joined our side of the fence – you'll get many of your fans to join too. It will be great for your laaities, all our laaities. It will be great for South Africa. Best wishes.
– *Charlize Leonard*

Figure 7.1: English newspaper headlines following the "Red October" protest in 2013

The "Red October" march, which bore no relation to the historical Red October events associated with communism, was the brainchild of Afrikaans performer Sunette Bridges and was largely organised via social media, leveraging her own Facebook pages and those of a handful of other right-wing and celebrity supporters. Bridges and her collaborators, including the singer Steve Hofmeyer, were vocal proponents of an alleged "white genocide" theory, which they insisted was taking place in post-apartheid South Africa despite evidence to the contrary (Brodie, 2013a). Their Facebook posts and personal blogs were supported and circulated by a wider group of online websites that specialised in white fear. This included one

hate site named "CensorBugbear", operated by a former South African journalist named Adriana Stuijt, who had relocated to Belgium but packed her apartheid mores with her, and who devoted the site exclusively to stories and claims of an Afrikaner/Boer genocide (the site still exists but has not been updated since 2014). Stuijt, in turn, sourced much of her content from posts and commentary generated by an organisation called AfriForum, a non-governmental organisation established to protect the minority rights of whites in South Africa and which had links to the white, Afrikaans trade union Solidarity.

The white-right Red October protest sought to draw attention to what the organisers said was the unprecedented level of "black-on-white" violence and "reverse racial discrimination in education and employment" (De Wet, 2013) experienced by whites in South Africa, but the history of the protest can be dated back specifically to a report I had written three months before for Africa Check, debunking claims of a white genocide (Brodie, 2013a).

A week after the Africa Check report was published, and following a newspaper story in the Afrikaans publication *Rapport* (see Chapter One), Bridges posted the following on her Facebook page:[51]

> Journalist Brodie stated in a Rapport article: and I quote... "A White woman has a greater chance to get murdered by her lover as by an unknown black man". Wel miss Brodie, here is the list of the names of 55 WHITE women, murdered in South Africa in the past 14 months, by "unknown Black men"! I expect to receive a list from you with the names of the MORE that 55 white woman, murdered in the same period by their lovers and spouses. ...or forever shove your stats where the sun doesn't shine!
>
> [List of names and incident descriptions follows.]
>
> The difference between me and the Stats peddlers is that I deal with FACTS! The NAMES of the Wives, Mothers, Grandmothers, Daughters and Sisters - All 55 of them, who were raped, tortured and murdered! ...and not by 55 Black men, but by at least 147 of them! I have attended funerals, raised funds for funerals and planted crosses on the Ysterberg mountainside with the

[51] Bridges' page no longer exists, or does not exist in the same format, so this is sourced from the archives of another hate site, farmitracker2. At the time, I did not think to screenshot Bridges' posts. The link provided in the farmitracker2 post is https://www.facebook.com/SunetteBridges/posts/540098189382747?comment_id=79557965&reply_comment_id=79559076&offset=0&total_comments=100.

> names of the people you have reduced to statistics! I have had enough of this! The next time you thumb-suck a stat about my people you better back it up with facts!
> (Sunette Bridges, July 2013)

The following year, when Bridges et al. made their submission to the Human Rights Commission (charging me with hate speech against white men), these 55 names formed the basis of what, by then, had grown into a much larger database of over 600 white women murdered since 1991.

Although there were problems with the accuracy of the data on Bridges et al.'s list (Myburgh, 2014) I would like to consider Bridges' submission on its own and look at how these names of murdered white women reflected and produced a particular and distorted narrative. This narrative simulated the forms of data and statistics but provoked and relied on an emotional reading of information to justify its extremely narrow content (55 out of over 2,500 murders), while simultaneously rejecting other formal sources of statistics and information ("shove your stats where the sun don't shine"; "stats peddlers").

Although in 2013 the white-genocide lobby and the Red October protest were not politically significant on a large scale, the claims (and their distorted data and methodology) persisted and were refined and boosted to the extent that by late 2016, shortly after the American presidential election in which Donald Trump won the electoral college, American right-winger and conspiracy theorist Mike Cernovich began to tweet about white genocide in South Africa. By 2018, AfriForum – which had become incrementally louder as a white-interest lobby group – was conducting global tours, including to the United States, to raise awareness about similar issues, which contributed to Donald Trump tweeting his concern about the murder of [white] farmers in South Africa.[52]

It is clear that the collection, presentation, and distribution of distorted and decontextualised information about the murder of white women in South Africa has a direct and persistent connection to global misinformation campaigns connected with broader right-wing interests, not just in South Africa but in multiple countries.

[52] "I have asked Secretary of State @SecPompeo to closely study the South Africa land and farm seizures and expropriations and the large scale killing of farmers. 'South African Government is now seizing land from white farmers.' @TuckerCarlson @FoxNews"

Old women and "gangs" of black men

This section discusses both the initial names and comments posted by Bridges in 2013 (see Annexure D) and the list of names submitted to the Human Rights Commission in 2014[53]. In order to facilitate a like-to-like comparison, murders that occurred outside the time frame of 01 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 were not considered for this study.

Of the list of 55 names Bridges posted online in July 2013, 45 names fell into the delimited time period, although one murder (of Geraldine Viana) was mislabelled and had occurred in the previous year. Of the later list, submitted by Bridges to the HRC, 55 deaths were listed as falling within the stipulated time period. On review, however, four were excluded for having occurred in earlier years (Laura Rees, Geraldine Viana, Magriet Uitenweerde, and Shirleen Booysen), one was excluded for being under the age of 14 (Alyssa Botha), and there were two duplications (double entries for Hendrien de Lange – who could not be identified or located in any media reports – and Anzunette du Plessis). This left a sample of 47 murders.

While Bridges' HRC list was submitted with only names, dates, and locations, in her earlier (July 2013) posting, she also provided commentary on the incidents and claimed that at least 31 of the 44 eligible murders had been committed by two or more black male perpetrators. In 16 of the murders, she specifically described the crimes as being committed by a "gang of black men".

When this claim was compared with information from my media-survey database (which followed coverage of the murders up to 2017), nearly a third of the 44 cases listed the suspects as *completely unknown* – so both their race and the number of perpetrators (not unusual when a murder takes place without witnesses, the body is only discovered some time later, and no potential suspects are identified). While Bridges did not define a "gang" of men[54], only eight of the 44 cases were described as having three or more perpetrators, with three additional cases having a larger number (i.e. more than two) of perpetrators implied but not confirmed or known. Unless Bridges had advance access to confidential information from SAPS or from

[53] The full list of names submitted to the HRC runs to 19 pages, and is not included as an annexure but is available on request from the Wartenweiler Library together with the other databases included in this thesis.
[54] We can assume she meant "more than two" as she specifically identified other incidents where she believed there had been two attackers.

unnamed witnesses, her implication that over a third of the victims had been murdered by multiple (a "gang of") black men was not supported by the available information.

In the case of the killing of audiologist Igna Nortje in May 2012, a news report from June 2016 indicated that, four years after the murder, there had been no arrests – but police were looking for a single black male suspect. An identikit sketch of the suspect was included. According to Bridges, the murder had been committed by a gang of black men. In the murder of advocate Susanna le Roux in September 2012, Bridges again claimed it was the work of a "gang of black men". Again, a single male, Ge-Nade Duncan Maharaj, was arrested and charged with the crime. In another case, Bridges claimed that 25-year-old Mikeila Valentine (who Bridges referred to by her maiden name of Baillie) had been murdered in her home by a "gang of 4 black men". As of October 2018, Valentine's (white) husband, Zak, and several other (white) members of an alleged cult supposedly known as "Electus per Deus" were on trial for a spree of murders in the Krugersdorp area, including that of Mikaela and two other white women (Natacha Burger and Joy Boonzaaier or Boonzaier) who Mikaela herself may have been involved in killing. For Bridges, and no doubt for perpetrators such as Zak Valentine (who later faked his own death to obtain a life insurance payout), the easily invoked spectre of the "imaginary black stranger" behind suburban South Africa's paranoia (Orford, 2014) provided a perfect narrative solution to their problems.

Before I continue my discussion of and comparison with Bridges' database, I should note that questioning and examining Bridges' inaccurate claims is in no way a minimisation of the injustice and violence of the death of the women she counted.

What Bridges' lists demonstrate is that, even when certain basic facts (e.g. a woman was killed) are present, the selection, presentation, and narrative of that information can be deeply and deliberately misleading. To fully understand this, Bridges' list must be viewed in two additional contexts: first, against the total number of white victims reported in the press for the crime year being studied (47 names on Bridges' list and 64 entries on my media-survey database); and second, as a percentage of the 408 femicides reported in the press for that period, which are documented in my media survey.

Bridges' list provides a very particular view of white victims – not surprising, as she chose only to include women who, in her words, she believed had been murdered by "unknown black

men". One clear indicator of the impact of this choice is the median age of Bridges' list – 64 years old. While this sounds very high (the median age for female homicides in my database was 38 years, and in the MRC studies (Mathews et al., 2004; Abrahams et al., 2013) was between 29 and 31 years for intimate femicides and 37 to 41 years for non-intimate femicides), it is only marginally higher than the median for all white women victims in my own media database, which stood at 62 years of age.

This presents and reinforces a very particular notion of white female victimhood, one of vulnerable, mostly older women at risk from "unknown strangers". Statistically, older women are more likely to be murdered by unknown perpetrators, and younger victims are more likely to be murdered by intimate partners (Mathews et al., 2004). Both Bridges' list and broader media coverage of white victims confirm that white intimate-partner murders are largely absent from media reports.

When looking at media reports associated with the 47 names of Bridges' list, further details emerge that may speak to *why* Bridges was aware of these women and not others, and why she gave prominence to their murders over others.

A total of 553 news articles was associated with the 47 victims on Bridges' list (killed in the 2012/2013 crime year), of which 530 articles were unique. This is slightly more than 16% of the news articles in my media database (for just under 12% of the victims).

The median coverage per victim in Bridges' list is six reports, with a mode of four – compared to three and one respectively for the general media database, i.e. the 47 women on Bridges' list had a slightly higher rate of coverage in the media than did the average female murder victim in the media database.

The deaths in Bridges' database were also predominantly covered in Afrikaans news media. Unique news reports from *Volksblad* (64)*, Beeld* (57), *Rapport* (23), *Netwerk24* (22), and *Die Burger* (26) made up more than a third of the total number of articles about the 47 victims. While the editorial selections of Afrikaans-language media are discussed more extensively in Chapter Nine, this representation is still significant in terms of Bridges' list, and, by extension, how this cultivated narrative could have influenced the largely white, Afrikaans-speaking protesters who took part in the Red October event. Indeed (as Chapter Nine makes clear), a

reading of the Afrikaans press at the time would have left one in little doubt that there was a grave and almost exclusive threat to white women across South Africa.

In July 2013, following the *Rapport* article critical of the "white genocide" claims, Bridges and Hofmeyr called for their followers to boycott "Naspers" (Media24), which, ironically, is the publisher of *Volksblad*, *Beeld*, *Die Burger*, *Rapport*, and *Netwerk24* – and also apparently the source for the majority of their information.

Bridges' lists did not count at least 17 other white women who were murdered that same year, and who were recorded in my media database. Of those homicides, six were committed by an intimate partner, three by a family member, and one by a guardian; two were linked to a spree of so-called "Satanic" murders, one was linked to a victim's drug abuse, and one victim was murdered by her tenant. In three cases, the suspect was either unknown or not named. In all likelihood, these cases would not have changed Bridges' perspective very much. All told, white perpetrators were named in only 13 of the 64 cases reported in the media that involved white, female victims (although it was suggested that the victim's partner was a suspect in at least two more cases).

What Bridges' list also neglected to mention, of course, were the 344 black, coloured, Indian and Chinese women who were murdered that year and whose deaths were also covered in the media.

The effects of disinformation

Two concerns arise from Bridges et al.'s submissions. One can perhaps best be described as "humanistic", as it is concerned with an "ethical framework that both respects human beings and seeks to improve the state of humankind" (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004: 465). Bridges' list blatantly disregards victims of other races, even though these women make up the majority of victims. A second issue is the absence of rigour and accuracy in her data, so, while the list has the broadly correct *form* of statistical data (names and dates in an Excel spreadsheet), its accuracy is low – names are frequently misspelled, dates are incorrect, there are several duplications, etc. This creates multiple margins of error within what the list claims to represent, without alerting the reader to the possibility of such errors. Even the narrative positioning of the list itself is designed to invoke emotional rather than rational responses: Bridges writes that she presents "the truth", while academic researchers and professional journalists are dishonest.

Any suggestion, therefore, that Bridges' statistics or methods are somehow incorrect is disallowed within this narrative.

This conflation (the blanket rejection of institutional sources of knowledge in favour of personal and subjective data) was most prominently highlighted in Bridges et al.'s submission to the Human Rights Commission. In their papers, Bridges, Hofmeyr, and Amanda de Lange, of the Freedom Front Plus, claimed that statements about intimate-partner homicide made by myself and specialist gender researcher Lisa Vetten were "inaccurate and devoid of any statistical or actual, factual research, but an offensive insult to 'white' South African men in general" ("The Ratcatcher", PoliticsWeb, 2014: online).

In the same article, the anonymous author attempted to use data from the MRC's femicide studies to prove Bridges et al.'s claims, and to show that the statements about white intimate-partner homicide made by myself and Vetten were false. Despite clarifying input about possible errors due to the small sample size of minority victims from one of the MRC's lead authors, Naeemah Abrahams, the PoliticsWeb editorial concluded that its own interpretation of the data was correct, and that all the other experts were wrong. I recognise that my own involvement in this matter may limit my ability to render an objective analysis of the anonymous writer's response, but it is worth noting that the flattening of statistical methodology and accuracy – including the conflation and analysis of data by non-expert readers – is a strategy that has been continued and encouraged within the South African "white genocide" lobby (and, indeed, globally). This study shows that these "confident" misreadings of decontextualised data are facilitated by gaps in media reporting.

Language and platform in alternative search and source functions

Although my own research method and integration of sources was refined and expanded over time, its initial approach – to search South African media-clippings databases and archives for *all* femicides (rather than exclusively for white deaths) – remained intact and produced a large number of results. Size, however, is no guarantee of validity, so it should still prove valuable to assess my results by comparing them with results obtained from other methods and approaches and against results retrieved from other platforms (i.e. other than the Sabinet clippings service).

Dexter

In 2014, independent media monitoring and analysis organisation Media Monitoring Africa launched its own proprietary in-house media monitoring and analysis tool, Dexter, which contains sets of South African news media data from that year onward.

Dexter was built as an automated data capture and monitoring tool rather than as a purely archival platform, so it offers more analytical functionality than a more basic clippings service like Sabinet. But it also covers a smaller amount of content sources and is limited to English news.

Although the 2012/2013 year cannot be directly searched in Dexter's chronological range, it may be possible to compare the volume and frequency of other findings (from subsequent years) with corresponding time periods within my own media survey.

Public health researcher Mpho Silima is using Dexter as the primary search tool for her unpublished thesis (in progress) into online media coverage of intimate femicide.[55] Through Dexter, Silima has identified and analysed online news articles that discussed or mentioned femicide over two six-month periods, two years apart (the first period was from 1 November 2014 to 30 April 2015; the second was from 1 November 2016 to 30 April 2017). Twenty-four South African online news media websites were selected, representing online platforms from South Africa's largest mainstream media companies (including News24, Independent Newspapers, Caxton, Tiso Blackstar (formerly Times Media), and the public broadcaster's (SABC) online sites.[56]

Within this database, Silima ran keyword searches using the terms "murder", "femicide", "domestic violence", and "intimate partner violence" (personal communication with Silima, also cited below as Silima, 2018). These searches returned 5,633 and 3,648 articles respectively for her specified time periods, within which Silima identified 291 and 141 articles that discussed intimate femicide.

[55] Silima contacted me in mid-2018 to discuss her research and was also kind enough to share her draft submissions showing her Dexter results.

[56] The online sources in Silima's study were: *IOL*, *News24*, *The Citizen*, SABC Online News, *eNCA* Online, *City Press*, *Cape Times*, *Daily Dispatch*, *Daily Maverick*, *M&G*, *Middelburg Observer*, *Eyewitness News*, *The Times*, *The Star*, *Daily Sun*, *The Herald*, *The New Age*, ANN7, *The Sowetan*, *Daily Vox*, *Polokwane Observer*, *Limpopo Mirror*, and *Moneyweb*.

Without going into a broader discussion of Silima's findings, several points of interest relate to the selection of media sources via Dexter and the number of articles these sources returned through the program.

As we will see with both the Sabinet and LexisNexis media databases (discussed in the next section), the titles/platforms made available or selected on Dexter directly influence the number and types of results that are obtained, and should bear closer scrutiny, viz.: how/are these media sources representative of South African media, and which media (or regions) are represented?

As an example, the media sources in Silima's survey include *The Daily Vox*, which is a niche student online platform, and *Moneyweb*, which has a large audience but covers almost exclusively business, financial, and technology stories. The media set also lists both IOL (Independent Online, the online-content portal for the Independent Group) *and* two Independent Group newspaper titles (*The Star* and *Cape Times*). It is not clear why, nor whether this might cause duplications in the results. On the community media side, the Dexter media-source set includes two Limpopo-based community media outlets (the *Limpopo Mirror* and *Polokwane Observer*) and one from Mpumalanga (the *Middelburg Observer*) but has no community media from any of the other provinces.

KwaZulu-Natal, one of the country's most populous provinces, with one of the highest murder rates, is not featured at all in the media titles, except for where applicable content is posted on national news platforms. It is not clear why certain regions have been excluded and some small/niche platforms have been included. Silima's provisional results also indicate that more than 80% of her responses (articles) were returned from the Western Cape, with less than 10% from Gauteng, and just over 2% from KwaZulu-Natal. This is undoubtedly because of the limited geographical range of sources available through Dexter.

A further limitation is that the available publications are only in English. For all news reporting, but particularly in the case of crime reporting (see Chapter Nine), Afrikaans news media remains a prominent and important source of information – in addition to which, three of South Africa's largest daily circulation newspapers and two of its largest weekly news titles are Afrikaans newspapers. As my own results show in Chapter Nine, reporting on/using only a

single language news source for media surveys can yield a very particular narrative, depending on the language.

Overall, the number and type of media sources used by Dexter should be acknowledged as a limitation, particularly as Dexter and similar tools become more widely available (Dexter is not currently available to the public). This dovetails with issues identified in similar research in other territories (see Chapter Five) – for example, media-monitoring programmes selecting weighted samples but not disclosing the available range of source titles and selection processes. As we see below, and in Chapters Nine and Ten, even "national" resources may not be representative. This can have a significant impact on outcomes, even in stratified and randomised selections.

Silima (2018) also notes that the majority of qualifying stories in her sets cover just two prominent cases, one of which occurred outside of her research periods. These are the killings of Anni Dewani in November 2010 and of Jayde Panayatiou in late April 2015. Both women were alleged to have been murdered by killers hired by their husbands, although only Panayatiou's husband was found guilty. Dewani's death made up 80% of Silima's 2014/2015 qualifying articles, because that period coincided with the trial of the accused, Shrien Dewani.[57] Anni Dewani's murder fell outside of my research period, but a search on the Sabinet clippings service shows that 58 articles were published about the Dewani murder between 01 November 2012 and 30 April 2013. This brings into question (relevant to my own media survey) how researchers should accommodate "mega" murder stories, where the data is potentially important but, because of the excessive amount of media coverage, has the potential to drown out other information and skew statistical results.

A similar article count for a corresponding period on my media survey set – i.e. the number of femicide articles published between 01 November 2012 and 30 April 2013 – returned 1,199 articles (for all victims), of which more than 150 were associated with intimate femicides. While this figure is within a similar range as the Dexter results, this count excludes stories about Reeva Steenkamp (a search on the Sabinet clippings service shows 350 articles

[57] Shrien Dewani's trial took place several years after the murder of his wife, as he had to be extradited to South Africa. At the trial he was found not guilty. This begs the broader question as to whether Anni Dewani's death can be considered an intimate femicide, as her husband was not found guilty of her killing. It also speaks to the ambiguity of assigning motive or determining what does and does not "qualify" as a femicide, and by what definition.

associated with her murder during the period) and excludes all femicides reported in the press in that time that occurred before or after my study period (such as that of Anni Dewani). Finally, my media survey only recorded news stories that mentioned specific victims and excluded stories that discussed femicide or intimate femicide as a generic or social problem. Had these latter articles been included, the number of intimate-femicide stories logged during this period would have increased significantly.

In the case of Dexter (and similar services), the results may have the strongest comparable validity when compared against *other Dexter results* (based on the same searchable sources) but less validity when compared against other media databases. Dexter's external validity could be strengthened by including more diverse and representative content platforms and by introducing even basic Afrikaans-text functionality. That said, however, Dexter offers a number of advantages, such as automatic offline archiving of selected stories and the ability to identify and tabulate features useful for analysis, such as dates, wordcounts, etc. Results returned from Dexter could also be easily integrated into matches found via other platforms, as I suggest below in reviewing LexisNexis.

It is my hope that critiques such as this can be used to strengthen the mechanisms through which Dexter works. If such mechanisms can be addressed, Dexter will become an extremely valuable tool with which to broaden media studies in South Africa.

LexisNexis

The value of such comparisons becomes even more evident when my Sabinet[58] search results are compared against similar results obtained using another media archive platform, in this case the LexisNexis news database.

Like Dexter, LexisNexis offers its search function only for English-language South African newspapers, but it includes a larger set of regional and national papers as its sample. LexisNexis does not include community newspapers, or websites, with the exception of ITWeb (the reason for this inclusion is unknown). Curiously, the pre-defined category "All South African National News Sources" (to auto-select all relevant titles in a search) also included "Australian Company News Bites – Market Report", the Somali news site Garowe Online, and "BBC

[58] "Sabinet" should be understood to mean Sabinet clippings *and* other news searches.

Monitoring: International Reports", which made initial search attempts completely unusable. Instead, I manually selected the available South African titles in the site's advanced option menu and searched for "murder" in the body copy or the article headline (also "options" under "advanced search"). Table 7.1 below lists all the titles available on LexisNexis and indicates whether the titles were also available on Sabinet.

To gain comparative insights from LexisNexis without building an entire parallel database, I logged only basic victim information and did not include all news articles (in some instances, though, news articles *were* logged to discuss the results; see below). I repeated a manual search of all South African-media news reports that matched for "murder" between 01 April 2012 and end June 2013 (similar to my search on the Sabinet SA Media platform) and logged qualifying incident and victim information for the period 01 April 2012 to 31 March 2013. To exclude known non-qualifying results that featured prominently in the press at the time, I set the search to exclude ("AND NOT [ ])") articles that featured the terms "zuma", "mdluli", and "dewani". This allowed me to build a comparable victim database against which to review the results of my previous media survey. This was an extremely laborious, but ultimately tremendously valuable, process that yielded a number of additional victims and provided additional (previously unknown) information about several victims already on my database. This comparative approach directly illustrates the importance of deeper validity studies for media-based research and the potential value of including or integrating multiple media-archive platforms – even if those platforms appear to contain similar resources or offer a similar functionality.

LexisNexis results matched for "murder" for between 760 and 930 stories per month (to speed up the process, I searched for up to three months at a time). Each result set was manually scanned by headline and, if the headline did not clearly exclude the story from qualifying (e.g. "Man shot and killed" would obviously not be a femicide), the article was read and either excluded or included in the survey.

Table 7.1: LexisNexis South African media sources

Title/Publication	National/Regional (Province)	In Sabinet SA News? (Y/N)
1. Business Day (South Africa)	National	Y
2. Cape Argus (Cape Town)	Regional (Western Cape)	Y
3. Cape Argus (South Africa)/Weekend Argus (South Africa)	Regional (Western Cape)	Y
4. Cape Times (South Africa)	Regional (Western Cape)	Y
5. Daily Dispatch (South Africa)	Regional (Eastern Cape)	Y
6. Daily News (South Africa)	Regional (KwaZulu-Natal)	Y
7. Financial Mail (South Africa)	National	Y
8. Health-e (Cape Town)	National	N
9. ITWeb Brainstorm	National	N
10. ITWeb Online	National	N
11. Mail & Guardian	National	Y
12. PlusNews (Johannesburg)	National	N
13. Post (South Africa)	Regional (KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng)	N
14. Pretoria News (South Africa)/Pretoria News Weekend (South Africa)	Regional (Gauteng)	Y
15. Sowetan (South Africa)	Regional (Gauteng)	Y
16. Sunday Times (South Africa)	National	Y
17. Sunday Tribune (South Africa)	Regional (KwaZulu-Natal)	Y
18. Sunday World (South Africa)	National	Y
19. The Herald (South Africa)	Regional (Eastern Cape)	Y
20. The Independent on Saturday (South Africa)	National	Y
21. The Mercury (South Africa)	Regional (KwaZulu-Natal)	N
22. The New Age (South Africa)	National	Y
23. The Star (South Africa)	Regional (Gauteng)	Y
24. The Sunday Independent (South Africa)	National	Y
25. The Times (South Africa)	Regional (Gauteng) [with National online presence]	Y
26. The Weekender (South Africa)	National	N
27. Weekend Post	Regional (Eastern Cape)	Y

LexisNexis's set of South African news media included a total of 27 titles (above). National titles and regional titles from KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, and the Western and Eastern Cape are well represented, but there are no regional titles from the remaining five provinces. By comparison, Sabinet offered 39 different newspaper titles, listed below (titles in Sabinet SA News but not on LexisNexis are highlighted):

Table 7.2: Sabinet SA media sources*

Title/Publication	National/Regional (Province)	In LexisNexis SA News? (Y/N)
1. Beeld	Regional (Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North West, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal)	N
2. Die Burger	Regional (Eastern Cape and Western Cape)	N
3. Business Day	National	Y
4. Cape Argus	Regional (Western Cape)	Y
5. Cape Times	Regional (Western Cape)	Y
6. Citizen	Regional (Gauteng)	N
7. Citizen Saturday	Regional (Gauteng)	N
8. City Press	National	N
9. Daily Dispatch	Regional (Eastern Cape)	Y
10. Daily News	Regional (KwaZulu-Natal)	Y
11. Daily Sun	National	N
12. Diamond Fields Advertiser	Regional (Northern Cape)	N
13. Ditsem Vrystaat	Regional (Free State)	N
14. Financial Mail	National	Y
15. Mail & Guardian	National	Y
16. Pretoria News	Regional (Gauteng)	Y
17. Pretoria News Weekend	Regional (Gauteng)	Y
18. Rapport	National	N
19. Saturday Argus	Regional (Western Cape)	Y
20. Saturday Beeld	Regional (Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North West, Limpopo, and KwaZulu-Natal)	N
21. Saturday Dispatch	Regional (Eastern Cape)	Y
22. Saturday Independent	National	Y
23. Saturday Star	Regional (Gauteng)	Y
24. Saturday Volksblad	Regional (Free State & Northern Cape)	N
25. Sowetan	Regional (Gauteng)	Y
26. Star	Regional (Gauteng)	Y

27. Sunday Argus	Regional (Western Cape)	Y
28. Sunday Independent	National	Y
29. Sunday Sun	National	N
30. Sunday Times	National	Y
31. Sunday Tribune	Regional (KwaZulu-Natal)	Y
32. Sunday World	National	Y
33. The EP Herald	Regional (Eastern Cape)	Y
34. The New Age	National	Y
35. The Times	Regional (Gauteng)	Y
36. Volksblad	Regional (Free State & Northern Cape)	N
37. Weekend Post	Regional (KwaZulu-Natal & Gauteng)	Y
38. Weekend Witness	Regional (KwaZulu-Natal)	N
39. Natal Witness	Regional (KwaZulu-Natal)	N

** This list is provided by Sabinet, but the list of available media titles on the Sabinet site is much larger and includes magazines and other media*.

A comparison of both news-media databases shows that the Sabinet SA Media selection offers more sources from the Free State, Northern Cape, and Mpumalanga, in both English and Afrikaans, and has a greater number of newspapers with traditionally black readerships (the *Daily Sun* and *City Press*). These features are significant in a South African context.

LexisNexis femicide results

Using the same method as developed for Sabinet's SA news media resource, I identified 218 femicides that had taken place between 01 April 2012 and 31 March 2013 and were reported in the LexisNexis news database. Of these, 48 victims did not appear in my Sabinet/other-based database, and information about these victims is discussed below. The databases had 170 victims in common, and 238 femicides were identified in my database but were not returned by the LexisNexis search (the gap between the two databases might have been narrowed if I had continued the LexisNexis search for another four to six months, and if I had performed a retrospective analysis by victim's name).

Within all LexisNexis results (n victims=218), 65% of the victims were black women, 15% were white, 7%–9% were coloured, [59] and 3% were Indian. The race of 17 (8%) of the victims could not be identified. Just 30% of the incidents could be determined as intimate femicides, and 50% were clearly non-intimate femicides. The victim–perpetrator relationship could not be determined in 45 cases. The majority of victims came from the Eastern Cape (n=58), followed by Gauteng (47), Western Cape (45), KwaZulu-Natal (35), Limpopo (12), North West (9), Free State and Northern Cape (5 each), and Mpumalanga (2).

Table 7.3: All victims by race – Sabinet+ vs LexisNexis sources

RACE	% OF VICTIMS (SABINET SURVEY)*	% OF VICTIMS (LEXNEX SURVEY)
BLACK	57%	65%
UNKNOWN	18%	8%
WHITE	16%	15%
COLOURED	5%	7%–9%
INDIAN	3%	3%
CHINESE	0.5%	-
BLACK/COLOURED	1%	-
INDIAN/COLOURED	0.25%	-

* Sum is not 100% because of rounding.

Within the group of 48 names found via LexisNexis that had not previously been identified (on my original media survey), 31 victims were black (65%), 5 were coloured (10%), 10 were of unknown race, and there was one white and one Indian victim. The majority of these murders took place in Gauteng (14), followed by the Eastern Cape (12), the Western Cape (7), KwaZulu-Natal (6), North West (5), and two cases each in Limpopo and the Free State.

Although I had initially assumed that the new names and incidents from LexisNexis would cluster around news reports in publications that were not available through Sabinet, this was not the case. A review of a sample of these names shows that, even when their murders were featured in news outlets that *were* listed on Sabinet, most of the specific searches for their names yielded no results on that platform. This indicates that the Sabinet clippings service may

[59] In some cases it was not clear whether the victim would be "categorised" as black or coloured.

not clip all parts of the contributing newspapers; that search functionality issues may lead to the omission of certain stories from the Sabinet clippings archive; and/or that Sabinet's search functionality is unable to pick up certain victims' names, perhaps due to issues with character recognition in the clippings texts.

Where I was able to locate the "missing" names on Sabinet, there are a number of reasons as to why they were overlooked during my initial search: stories associated with the names may not have come up as positive matches for the term "murder" (which speaks to a need for alternative or broader text-based search approaches) or they may have been overlooked due to manual error (i.e. I did not see them or discarded the stories in error). These concerns are worth noting, as similar issues are likely to affect future searches and, again, provide strong justification for cross-platform searches, even to the point of duplication.

Table 7.4: Review of a sample of victims identified via LexisNexis that were not identified previously on Sabinet+

Victim name (LexisNexis)	Newspaper source (LexNex)	Title in Sabinet (Y/N)	Sabinet match result (Y/N)
1. Peggy Tema	Sowetan	Y	N
2. Tanian Sheldon	Cape Argus	Y	N
3. Vinoliah Mashapu	Sowetan	Y	N
4. Anna Mulutsi	Sunday World, Star	Y	Y (Star)
5. Rhulani Mavunda	Sowetan	Y	Y (Star)
6. Unnamed (Hammanskraal)	Star, Pretoria News	Y	N
7. Bonisiwe Violla Mthembu	Mercury	N	N
8. Lihlumi Mthulu	EP Herald	Y	N
9. Rushnee Khan	Sunday Times	Y	N
10. Tracey Mabunda	Star	Y	N

Results from the LexisNexis search also helped to add valuable information to a number of shared entries – for the most part, these details were the age or occupation of the victim or the name of the perpetrator, which I had not been able to determine from the articles in my initial survey.

In one case, however, this search revealed a new victim *and* simultaneously "solved" a previous murder – the shooting of teacher Maureen Khuzwayo in KwaDukuza in December 2012. In

the reports I had previously logged, the teacher's death was thought to be linked to the family of a pupil who was unhappy with their marks. However, in February 2013, another woman, Nosipho Mbatha, was killed in the same area. The person accused of killing Mbatha was her own cousin, Hloniphile Ngcobo, who, the previous year, had hired a neighbour to kill the wife of her lover – a woman who was a school teacher at the same school where Khuzwayo taught. After the "hitman" killed the wrong victim (Khuzwayo), Ngcobo suspected that her cousin (Mbatha) was trying to blackmail her, so she arranged for her cousin to be killed too. Although this is a single example, it is an excellent demonstration of how additional information can affect the narrative of a murder.

Broader sources and methods improve the validity and usefulness of results

As this chapter shows, both a narrow reading of media data and narrow sources of the data themselves can limit the scope, validity, and relevance of an inquiry. Limited sources of information may contribute to or entrench narratively limited opinions or views based on incomplete readings and absent context (put another way, you don't know what you don't know). A *lack* of information has, in many cases, contributed to a distrust of formal crime data, particularly that supplied by SAPS, which has also made it easier for narrow (and inaccurate) data pretenders to fill the gap with "dodgy statistics" that are just "a means to an end", where data is used "not to illuminate, but to be manipulated, toyed with, distorted and, in some instances, manufactured to perpetuate a myopic, race-obsessed view of crime" (Rademeyer, 2014: online).

By challenging and testing the validity of my own research methods and media-data sources, I was able to identify several significant limitations in my original method and discover additional important information, which, moving forward, could be easily integrated into my existing survey, incrementally improving the integrity and validity of my methods *and* my data. I believe that this is an important step forward in this field of study, and one which could easily be replicated in multiple environments and contribute immensely to the shareability and usability of the data gathered in contexts such as this.

CHAPTER EIGHT: IDEAL VICTIMS AND SUPER PREDATORS

South African media coverage of femicide reveals particular, repeated patterns of significance and suspicion, constructed around the identity and roles of the victim or the perpetrator, and which intersect with narrative framing around race, prejudice, and fear. This promotes specific problem definitions that maintain a disconnection between individual femicide events and femicide as a broader societal problem, while simultaneously suggesting a "criminal individual" who should be subject to a collective, punitive social body.

While the majority of studies looking at femicide media coverage (see Chapter Five) focus on intimate-partner violence, very little research has been done into the coverage of non-intimate femicides, despite the latter making up the majority of news stories (see Chapter Six). In this chapter, I conduct a content analysis of South African media coverage of non-intimate femicide to explore who the media nominates and validates as an "ideal victim" and a "super predator". Based on the victim and perpetrator subsets identified through this analysis, I conduct a framing analysis of selected news reports, looking at narrative structures and media mechanisms through which notions of worth, guilt, and suspicion are induced and shared.

Media coverage of violence influences and distorts perceptions of violence

How the news media chooses to frame certain types of violence, particularly femicide, "can have important ramifications, influencing how society perceives the dynamics of such violence, its victims and perpetrators, and most importantly, the public's role in potential solutions" (Richards et al., 2014: 25).

Studies on news-media coverage of femicide (Bullock & Cubert, 2002; McManus & Dorfman, 2003; Taylor, 2009; Wozniak & McCloskey, 2010; Richards et al., 2011; Gillespie et al., 2013; Lagos Lira & Toledo, 2014) consistently reveal a subjective and obscure process of media selection and exclusion, which contributes to an archive of crime reporting that is not reflective of actual crime rates (McManus & Dorfman, 2003; Tiegreen & Newman, 2009). This actively distorts not only the nature and prevalence of certain types of crime but also raises concerns "about the nature of the processes which determine how news stories are chosen and why the stories may be framed as they are" (Monckton-Smith, 2012: 62).

Understanding how media reportage affects our perceptions of crime is important, as news media remain a primary source of public information about crime (Tiegreen & Newman, 2009) and "media representations of crime can influence public understanding, as the majority of people have little first-hand experience of crime, particularly violent crime" (Wardle, 2007: 264). In *Victims, Crime and Society*, Davies, Francis and Greer (2007: online) describe the "problem of crime" as "a socially constructed problem. What we mean by this is that, since most people have little first-hand experience of crime and victimisation, we are reliant on other sources of information for much of our knowledge about it." They suggest that few of these sources "are more important than the media" and describe crime and victimisation as "highly mediatised issues".

Media reports of crime also have an identifiable influence on our perceptions and fear of crime (Cohen, 2002; Monckton-Smith, 2012; Custers & Van den Bulk, 2013).

Intimate versus non-intimate-partner violence in media

Scholarship on the media coverage of femicide has, historically, focused almost exclusively on content analyses of media representations of intimate-partner or domestic violence (McManus & Dorfman, 2003; Taylor, 2009; Wozniak & McCloskey, 2010; Richards et al., 2011; Gillespie et al., 2013; Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013; Richards et al., 2014; Comas-d'Argemir, 2015; Lloyd & Ramon, 2017; Dayan, 2018). By comparison, relatively few studies of media representations of *non-intimate* femicides have been performed (reports of both intimate and non-intimate-partner violence are included in Mason & Monckton-Smith, 2008; Slakoff & Brennan, 2017; Waters et al., 2017; Wong & Lee, 2018; and Owuso-Addo et al., 2018).

The focus on intimate-partner violence doubtless emerged as a necessary response to the universal predominance of intimate-partner violence and accompanying media and societal tendencies to hide or underplay its dangers. Media coverage typically obscures domestic violence against women as a social problem and portrays it as an individual or isolated problem (Bullock & Cubert, 2002; McManus & Dorfman, 2003; Wozniak & McCloskey, 2010; Taylor, 2009; Richards et al. 2011; Gillespie et al., 2013; Lloyd & Ramon, 2017). However, nearly half of all femicides – and more than two-thirds of all femicides reported in the South African media (see Chapter Six) – involve a perpetrator whose relationship to the victim is clearly identified as being non-intimate, or where his status relative to the victim is not known or not

described in media reports.[60] The lack of critical enquiry into coverage of non-intimate femicide represents a significant gap in our knowledge and presents an important area for future study.

One way to consider non-intimate femicides is to look at localised notions of victim and perpetrator as they are presented or represented in the news media. If we know, by definition, who the victims and perpetrators are in *intimate* femicides, who are the victims of non-intimate femicide – and who is killing them?

Victimology and society

In his *Discipline and Punish* lecture series, Michel Foucault (1977) writes about changes, transitions, and displacements within social practices of crime and punishment over time. He observes that while "the division between the permitted and the forbidden has preserved a certain constancy from one century to another", our understanding of "'crime', the object with which penal practice is concerned, has profoundly altered" (Foucault, 1977: 17).

This was more than a literal definition of a particular crime (e.g. "blasphemy", which gradually lost its status as a legal offence) but had to do with how our understanding of what constitutes crime informs and interacts with the development of penal rituals and practices. For example, Foucault notes how, within the emergence of new codes of law and increasingly intricate legal machineries, the very assertion of "guilt" became part of a much larger "scientifico-juridical complex" or, related to this, how "the question of madness ... evolved in penal practice". Foucault explains that certain penal codes stipulated that "there [was] neither crime nor offence if the offender was of unsound mind at the time of the [criminal] act". From this, while the "gravity of the act was not altered ... nor the punishment reduced as a consequence; the crime itself disappeared. It was impossible, therefore, to declare that someone was both guilty and mad" (Foucault, 1977: 20).

The introduction and evolution of narrowed codes of law also prescribed the officers of the legal machinery. Central to legal, criminal, and penal reforms from the 17th centuries onward was a redistribution of the "power to punish", taken from sovereigns and given to magistrates and other mechanisms of state and, by extension, to society. Foucault writes that the intention

[60] In the femicide data collected for this study, less than 1% of perpetrators were female.

of this reform was "not to punish less, but to punish better; to punish with an attenuated severity perhaps, but in order to punish with more universality and necessity; to insert the power to punish more deeply into the social body" (Foucault, 1977: 82). The social body presided over the individual body, particularly the individual body of the criminal or delinquent. Reciprocally, any crime committed by an individual body was, inherently, a crime against the social body rather than a crime against an individual victim; the notion of *the* victim did not yet exist.

Garland (2000: 351) writes that the idea of "the victim" is a "new and significant fact of contemporary culture", and that, for centuries prior, the modern criminal justice system excluded the victim "by translating his or her experience into a legal complaint". The relatively recent "re-emergence of the victim as an element in the criminal justice process", Garland writes, saw the "interests and feelings" of victims become central to penal and punitive processes. Consequently, the "rhetoric of penal debate [now] routinely invokes the figure of the victim – typically a child or a woman or a senior citizen – as a righteous figure whose suffering must be expressed and whose security must be guaranteed" (Garland, 2000: 351).

In *Victims, Crime and Society*, Chris Greer (2007: online) writes that it is particularly important to explore how the media represents crime victims, because "over the past few decades, victims have taken on an unprecedented significance in media and criminal justice discourses, in the development of crime policy, and in the popular imagination." He cites Reiner et al.'s (2000, 2003) belief that "the foregrounding of crime victims in the media is one of the most significant qualitative changes in media representations of crime and control since the Second World War".

The success of the "idea of the victim", Garland (2000: 351) explains, relies on the "degree to which the victim has come to have the status of a 'representative individual' in contemporary society." Garland continues:

> [a] crime victim is no longer an unfortunate citizen who has been on the receiving end of a criminal harm, and whose concerns are subsumed within the "public interest" that guides prosecution and penal decisions. The victim is now, in a certain sense, a much more representative character, whose experience is taken to be common and collective, rather than individual and atypical.

For Jankowitz (2017: 7), "recognising that victim identification relies on subjective values and beliefs, victimology presents victimhood as a socially constructed, interactional concept that resonates with beliefs about innocence, responsibility, and context." Citing Holstein and Miller (1990, in Jankowitz, 2017: 9) she continues that "in order for a victim to exist there must be a source of harm. Processes of victimhood are therefore 'contingent upon features of both victimiser and victim'."

Victim and perpetrator

In news coverage, the demographics of the victim and the perpetrator "interact to determine both the newsworthiness of a crime and the prominence of a story in the media" (Taylor, 2009: 23). Murders committed by strangers or non-intimate acquaintances are more likely to receive news coverage than incidents of domestic or intimate-partner violence (Paulsen, 2003; Slakoff & Brennan, 2017; Waters et al., 2017). News media depicts strangers and acquaintances as "suspicious people" (Ochs, 2011: 82), where suspicion is understood as a shared "code of ... social knowledge that delineate[s] particular notions of 'threat'."

Shared notions of threat often have their origins in shared rituals, preserved and transformed through generations. Foucault (1977: 259) describes the (post-public execution era) spectacle of a mid-nineteenth century French chain gang-prisoner parade as one in which "famous characters or traditional types were recognised" among the "guilty who have been unmasked". Gathered crowds revelled in the passing of the condemned and convicted and played games at guessing which prisoner had been a murderer, which a thief, and so on – a game of prisoner "masquerades" or, as Foucault describes the efforts of the more learned observers, an "ethnography of crime".

There are, today, new pseudo-scientific attempts to "guess the criminal" by his or her features. A 2016 paper posted by Chinese researchers Xiaolin Wu and Xi Zhang claimed to use "machine learning to detect features of the human face that are associated with 'criminality' [and claimed] to have developed algorithms that can use a simple headshot to distinguish criminals from non-criminals with high accuracy" (Bergstrom & West, 2017: online). Although the Chinese authors did not make their full data available to other researchers, preliminary reviews of images included in the paper indicate that, rather than correctly identifying criminals from non-criminals, Wu and Zhang's programme had simply been able

to distinguish non-smiling or frowning ID and mug shots of convicted criminals from photographs of non-frowning or smiling non-criminals (Bergstrom & West, 2017).

In South African media, not surprisingly, the signification of suspected criminal tendencies is deeply skewed along racial lines that closely mimic the intergenerational iterations of "Black Peril" mentioned in Chapter Three and described in, among other texts, Charles van Onselen's (1987) histories of 19th century Witwatersrand. In my media database, white women are over-represented in the proportional number of victims reported in the press and, exponentially, in the number of news stories per white victim. The alleged suspects reported in the press are, reciprocally, almost universally black and coloured men, although they are not always specifically described as such in contemporary South African media. Ochs (2011: 82) similarly describes the vague Israeli vocabulary of avoidance about Palestinians, writing that "the discourse of suspicion also functioned as a [euphemism], a code used to signify stereotypical traits [of Palestinians] without referring to them, a veiled way to portray their fears ... in the oblique language of security rather than in the overt language of discrimination."

The "ideal victim" and the "super predator"

In 1986, Norwegian criminologist and sociologist Nils Christie developed a notion of what he called the "ideal victim". This was a "person or category of individuals who – when hit by crime – most readily is given the complete and legitimate status of being a victim" (Christie, 1986: 18).

Christie described this ideal victim as a little old lady who, while on her way to assist a sick family member, is accosted and assaulted by a drug user who is unknown to her. This was not, however, an attempt to define an actual victim or to create an empirical quantum. Van Wijk (2013: 2) explains that Christie's definition was a "theoretical concept", an "explorative way to try to think through how it can serve as a tool to possibly understand society's views and perspectives on victims."

Christie's construct has six requirements: (1) the victim should be weak (which typically includes elderly women, pregnant women, and young children); (2) the victim should be involved in a respectable activity and, at the time of the crime; (3) be at or en route to a place that is "beyond reproach" – she cannot be a sex worker or heading to a bar for a drink; (4) the perpetrator is able to physically dominate the victim and can be described in negative terms;

(5) the victim does not know the perpetrator, and there must be no relationship between them; and (6) the "victim has enough influence to assert 'victim status'", without threatening society's vested interests (Lindgren and Nikolić-Ristanović, 2011: 21; Van Wijk, 2013: 2).

The last condition is particularly important, because "victims of violent crime do not always have the power, means, opportunity, or ability to shape the public discourses surrounding their stories" (Sutherland et al. 2016, in Hawley et al., 2017: 3). In many instances – particularly in the event of a femicide, where the victim can no longer assert anything about herself – this attribution of victim status is assigned to or assumed by the news media as a proxy.

Lindgren and Nikolić-Ristanović (2011: 20), citing Legmann (1989), write that "a person can only be attributed victim status if someone has an interest in this occurring, or if the victim themselves can apply political pressure". The news media must thus have an interest in assigning and promoting victim status to a particular victim. In this way, news media legitimises certain views and victims while marginalising or excluding others, and they do so within predictable or determinable forms. Gillespie et al. (2013: 227) point out that "recurring patterns of news tend to highlight only certain kinds of criminals and their victims, while ignoring or downplaying others, thereby transmitting messages about who matters most in society."

An ideal victim, then, reflects not only ideals of vulnerability and innocence, but also of value: of whose bodies matter.

In South Africa, the role of the "ideal victim" in news-media coverage of femicide is quite literally occupied by Christie's "little old lady". In my own media data survey, 20% of all femicides reported in the press – and over 30% of all femicides not described as an intimate-partner murder[61] – feature victims aged 60 years or older. This is significantly higher than the figures in the first South African femicide study (Mathews et al., 2004), which found that women aged 60 years and older made up 11% or less of non-intimate femicides (this proportion declined further after the age of 75) and less than 2% of intimate femicides.

[61] This includes murders where the relationship between victim and perpetrator is not known or is not described in the media.

Again, the annotation of "ideal victim" is not intended as an empirical construct, although older women are often targeted because they typically live alone, are easy to dominate physically, and may have a source of income, such as a pension. Mathews et al. (2004) specifically note that pensioners are more likely to be victims of non-intimate femicide.

If victim and perpetrator are "inherently tied to one another as complementary opposites" (Bouris, 2007; in Jankowitz, 2017: 10), we might expect our "suspicious person" to be Christie's predicted corollary, the perfectly unknown predator – the stranger. Garland (2000: 360) cites Hale (1996), writing that "fear of crime is closely related to fear of strangers and of other social groups."

In the context of media representations of crime, Park et al. (2012: 477) explain how, in order to "protect collective self-image, Greer and Jewkes (2005) noted the mainstream media tend to construct an 'outsider' status for perpetrators of exceptional offenses." Wardle (2007: 273) also notes that "the 'other' must/can appear particularly immoral, bizarre, sub-human, and sexual". And yet, the most commonly reported perpetrators of femicide by the South African news media are not strangers, but those who are familiar to their victims, even invited into the victim's domestic space. How, then, are these perpetrators portrayed and narrated?

In my media survey, of the broad category of non-intimate femicides where the relationship between perpetrator and victim was known and identified (n=118), nearly two-thirds of the (alleged) perpetrators were known to the victim.[62] These included work colleagues, local community members, and neighbours. More than a third of the perpetrators, however, were specifically identified as close family members or trusted employees. The strange "other" is, literally, inside the house, a twist on Aretxaga's (2003: 404) "uncanny familiarity".

Foucault (1977: 286) writes about this apparent contradiction in narrative expressions: the "everyday redundancy" of the *fait divers* (newspaper crime-news snippets, literally "various facts/events"), which presented criminal delinquents as "close by, everywhere present and everywhere to be feared" (and therefore to be separated from society), and its opposite, presented by the crime novel, whose function "was to show that the delinquent belonged to an

[62] This analysis was conducted before Susan van Dyk was added to the media database, so does not reflect her information or related articles in the totals or coding.

entirely different world, unrelated to familiar, everyday life". This combination and contrast, Foucault (1997: 286) writes, produces "an enormous mass of crime stories in which delinquency appears both as very close and quite alien, a perpetual threat to everyday life, but extremely distant in its origin and motives, both everyday and exotic in the milieu in which it takes place".

In the context of South Africa, the tension between "otherness" and "everyday" or "familiar" has its own historicity and iterated and performative genealogy, which, to appropriate Butchart's (1997: 102) work on Foucault in South African socio-medical science, "are indexical of the different power regimes that have invested and invented it".

Bowman (2005: 202) points out how the inherent "othering" of blackness in the apartheid state precluded, for many years, the possibility of the black paedophile because "[i]n a process of perverse othering, the violator of the child was compelled to be the person closest to it. Quite simply, it was because blackness was otherness that it was disqualified from participating in discourses of apartheid paedophilia."

Bowman (2005: 213) goes on describe "[m]ultiple lines of objectification" which produce the "effects of a powerful 'othering'" in relation to South African paedophiles, and which have strong resonance with the media's construction of perpetrators of violence against women: an ambivalence characterised by tension between fascination and repugnance, that:

> leads in discursive terms, to a spiral of otherness, an increasingly amplified cycle of difference-and-yet-possible-similarity, of attraction yet repulsion, which elevates the discursive category of paedophilia. [...] Thus, new discourses of monstrosity and new moral therapeutics appear to rely on the constant tensions of pushing the paedophile into a category of otherness while simultaneously pulling him toward the familiarity that his crime requires. (Bowman, 2005: 213)

Bowman (2005: 203) goes on to discuss how the figure of the paedophile:

> [...] must tread the tenuous tightrope between a space of external otherness and disconcerting familiarity arising from his internal relations with the community or nation into which he is integrated. It is through this discursive tension that the discourse of the paedophile is constantly reproduced. His inconspicuous relation to others and the absolute otherness of his actions

> ensure that his is located beyond both the comfort of familiarity and the certainty of absolute disidentification. (Bowman, 2005: 205-206)

Homicide research indicates that the majority of perpetrators are indeed known to their victims (Lancaster, 2017), but that this is typically played down in the press and "stranger crimes" get more coverage. In countries where black men or men of colour make up minority populations, this bias contributes to "racial stereotypes and public perceptions of particular groups as 'super predators'" (Tiegreen & Newman, 2009: online).

In a country like South Africa, with a majority black population and an exceptionally high rate of violent crime, this may play out in modified iterations.

The notion of a "super predator" is, itself, heavily racially loaded and coded. The term was coined in the mid-1990s by American politics professor John DiIulio to describe a "new breed" of juvenile delinquent – supposedly "radically impulsive, brutally remorseless youngsters, including ever more teenage boys, who murder, assault, rob, burglarise, deal deadly drugs, join gun-toting gangs, and create serious [linked] disorders" (Bennett, DiIulio, & Walters, 1996: 27). Garland (2000: 360) writes that in the 1980s and 1990s, the fear of crime became disproportionately focused on "inner city youth and especially black males, intensifying their social and cultural exclusion, and building a perception of them as a newly dangerous, alien class". The phrase "super predator" was deliberately used to signal an impending epidemic of (black) youth violence – one that never materialised and was subsequently disproved, but which persisted as media and institutional shorthand for "dangerous black males" (Howell, 2009).

Moral panics such as these require phrases or narrative frames that function as "powerful organising principles" and allow "story hearers [to] participate in a type of shared experience", which "necessitates reliance upon group catchphrases, for interaction and meaning exchange" (Rosas-Moreno & Straubhaar, 2015: 65). These terms, repeatedly used by media and politicians, become code for something that people eventually believe to be a real threat. The ultimate intention of this is to identify a narrow and specific perpetrator in relation to a legitimate victim – in order that the perpetrator can be "punished for his act" (Bar-Tal, 2003, in Jankowitz, 2017: 12).

Framing effects

Moody et al. (2008: 7, citing Bird and Dardenne's 1988 work on myth and the narrative qualities of news) write that news tends to "reduce complex phenomena into neat mythical packages that reflect the ideological practices of news-making structures". Frames are one of the structures used to define, create, and study these "mythical [narrative] packages".

The concept of framing as a way of organising experience dates back to sociologist Erving Goffman's 1974 *Frame Analysis*. His theories were adapted by media and communications researchers, notably Robert Entman (1993), and framing (or frame analysis) is today considered an important part of media effects theories that include agenda-setting and priming (Dearing & Rogers, 1996; Scheufele, 1999). Media effects theories examine mass communication mechanisms, devices, and interactions that determine or influence media agenda (issues) and salience (importance of the agenda) at a particular point in time or over a period of time, possibly including the effect of prior content (priming).

Media frames can be described in various ways: as principles of organisation; as mechanisms of selection (and thereby exclusion); and as a means of emphasis and presentation (Gitlin, 1980; Gamson & Modigliani, 1987; Matthes & Kohring, 2008; Cacciatore, Scheufele & Iyengar, 2016; Hawley et al., 2017). A frame can be a literalised focal device or an organisational device for narrative or meaning. As an extension of this, frames can take on broader narrative and supra-narrative functions as schemas within which meaning develops and can (or even must) be interpreted, viz.: "The act of reading a news article will determine which stored knowledge structure (or schema) becomes active. In turn, the activated knowledge structure will be used to interpret the news article" (Cacciatore, Scheufele & Iyengar, 2016: 16).

Scheufele and Iyengar (in Cacciatore, Scheufele & Iyengar, 2016: 12) describe framing as "rooted in Gestaltpsychologie and attribution theory, which explored the tendency among people to detect patterns in pieces of information that were consistent with pre-existing cognitive schemas." This ties in with Bennett and Edelman's (1985, in Moody, Dorries, & Blackwell, 2008: 7) work on narrative accounts in mass media, in which they argue that news stories "maintain the status quo by presenting social problems within comfortable cognitive frames" that simultaneously "disallow the entry of alternative renditions".

The idea of "social problems" being presented – or "framed" – in particular ways is central to Entman's much-cited 1993 work, which attempted to clarify framing paradigms. Entman describes framing as predominantly about selection and salience. News frames typically "define a problem"; determine a causal agent or give a causal analysis; make a moral judgement to evaluate cause; and suggest a remedy to treat or fix the problem (Hawley et al., 2017). Entman (1993: 52) also writes that news frames can be examined and identified by "the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgements". Reese (2001, in Carter, 2013: 4) adds social dimension and duration, writing that "frames are organising principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world." Hawley et al. (2017: 5) propose that the "success of any particular frame depends on journalists finding sources that will 'sponsor' or endorse a frame (Gamson, 1992) and the frame being consistent and credible enough to endure through multiple reiterations and contestation (Benford & Snow, 2000)."

Framing is often described as a subset of agenda setting – even as a secondary level of agenda setting (McCombs, Shaw, & Weaver, 1997 in Scheufele, 1999) – but Cacciatore, Scheufele, and Iyengar (2016) argue that framing, while often poorly defined, exhibits distinct mechanisms if correctly applied. In response, they suggest moving away from the emphasis framing proposed by Entman and others, towards an equivalence-based model – i.e. all other things being equal, definitions that are tied to alterations in the presentation of the same information, and which "disentangle" the frames from salience-based or persuasive effects (Cacciatore, Scheufele & Iyengar, 2016). For example, taking statistical information about opiate use and presenting the same data through two different narrative frames – either as a criminal threat, or as a public health crisis – where distinct framing effects are achieved.

In the context of framing effects or frame analysis, *inductive* frames are considered as those which are generated in response to research or data (for this reason they are considered *qualitative*, i.e. the data generates the frame). *Deductive* frames are those that use "predetermined framing categories that are brought in contact with the news stories" (Touri & Koteyko, 2015: 2), i.e. a pre-determined frame is applied to data and are considered to be *quantitative*.[63]

[63] For example, Creswell (2009) suggests that deductive frames can be used to test a theory.

The choice of frame can be used to generate or select a set of codes or codebook, and data (content) can be coded accordingly.

Framing femicide

Previous framing analyses of femicide media coverage were performed almost exclusively on what is variously described as domestic violence or intimate-partner violence. Before considering frames within which non-intimate femicides can be examined, we should review the frames that have been used elsewhere in media studies about femicide.

Bullock and Cubert's (2002) paper identifies four frames or framing schema typically used in the coverage of "domestic violence fatalities". These are: a police frame, or "just the facts"; a frame that implies that such events only happen to "certain types of people"; a frame that seeks to blame the victim and excuse the perpetrator; and finally, an expression of shock at "how normal" the perpetrator appears (Gillespie et al., 2013, Lagos Lira & Toledo, 2014).

Surette (2007) proposes several parallel and intersecting frames common in broader "crime and justice media", to which she makes some important additions. These include: blaming a criminal event on a faulty criminal justice system; suggesting that a victim or offender had been blocked from opportunity at a structural level; noting a recent "social and moral breakdown"; taking institutional racism into consideration; and, an evergreen favourite, blaming real violence on violence portrayed in the media (Surette, 2007, in Gillespie et al., 2013).

Gillespie et al. (2013) and Richards et al. (2014) modified and expanded these frames and identified different frames for when domestic violence is overtly defined in a news story about domestic-violence fatalities and when it is not. For stories that defined domestic violence, these frames were:

- normalising the event as commonplace;
- framing the event as an isolated incident;
- focusing on the actions of the victim or victim blaming;
- finding fault with the criminal justice system; and
- domestic violence as a social problem.

For articles that did not mention domestic violence, the additional frames were:

- minimising the event by focusing on an alternative issue in the lives of the victim/perpetrator (e.g., illness); and
- personal loss of control or moral breakdown by the perpetrator.

These themes and frames are evident, in various iterations, across jurisdictions. The last, for example – that of the "moral breakdown" or "loss of control" – has particularly strong resonance in South Africa, where the violent act may be utilised by the perpetrator to *re-assert* a sense of order and control. In Boonzaier and De la Rey's (2004: 445) study of narratives of violence, the "practice and discourse of violence" is described as "provid[ing] an opportunity for men to reconstruct contested and unstable masculinities shaped by cultural and structural change", in which "men resolve a crisis in their masculine identities through the use of violence against their partners".

What is the "practice of violence" as opposed to the *act* of violence? This speaks to a larger framing device: the narrative positioning of violent crime as either episodic – individual event- or incident-bound – or thematic – enacted in a way that "links and contextualises" violence within a communal and social context (Hawley et al., 2017).

Maydell's (2018: 709) study of ethnic stereotypes in the print media coverage of child abuse describes this dichotomy as follows:

> Episodic (or individual) frames focus on a concrete event, such as a specific case, and provide an extensive coverage of court hearings and/or detailed descriptions of victims and perpetrators. In contrast, thematic (or societal) frames emphasise the nature of social problems and feature statistical and research data, risk factors and wider societal causes. Episodic framing tends to place the responsibility on individuals, while thematic framing has potential to increase the

> collective responsibility of society in tackling risk factors and environmental conditions [that lead to child abuse].

These frames may exist on a spectrum, so a newspaper report on intimate femicide that describes only the crime itself is episodic; a news report that discusses a specific crime *and* links it to the broader problem of domestic violence could be episodic and thematic; while an op-ed that highlights the "problem" of violence against women, without referring to specific cases, would be predominantly thematic. This can be related to the conflict between femicide as private matter or public problem, as discussed in Chapter Three.

Wozniak and McCloskey (2010: 935) observe that intimate partner homicide stories "are often episodic and focus only on that particular incident rather than the broader context of IPV ... an IPV homicide is often portrayed as a single event and not reported as the endpoint in a pattern of abuse that has occurred over time (Bullock & Cubert, 2002; Websdale, 1998)."

Hawley et al. (2017: 6) explain that, with their emphasis on episodic framing and specific incidents, news media "can become complicit in moving 'the responsibility from society to the individual' [Palazzolo and Roberto, 2011]", and such framing encourages the view that "men are fundamentally violent, fundamentally incapable of controlling their base instincts, and therefore it is up to women to take all the precautions and accept all responsibility (Batty & Corbett, 2015)".

Comas-d'Argemir (2015: 122), however, writes that in Catalunya, Spain, this pattern has shifted so that partner violence (in news-media coverage, at least) is no longer regarded solely as a private matter, but is seen as a public problem that is "presented in the media in the context of political, police, judicial, and social actions designed to eliminate the problem." The author notes that this is a relatively recent shift and links it to guidelines on the coverage of partner violence against women, produced by the Catalan Association of Journalists in 2004 and 2010 to complement "the ethical codes of the journalists" (Comas-d'Argemir, 2015: 124).

Framing non-intimate femicide

Any number of the above frames could be used for the coverage of non-intimate femicides – "just the facts", blaming the victim, blaming the criminal justice system – but these existing narratives are not always appropriate.

Richards et al. (2014: 27) state that media frames are "based on three primary components: sources, word choice or language, and context", providing both a convergence and departure point from which to establish deductive frames that can be used for coding and analysis of non-intimate femicides, based on the evaluation of the sources used. Based on schema used in previous framing studies of homicide media coverage, I adopted a primarily deductive approach, with the option to include inductive frames where they presented themselves as worthy additions to the deductive scheme.

In Claire Wardle's extensive work on the press coverage of child murders in the UK and US between 1930 and 2000 (Wardle, 2006; 2007), the author performed analyses of narrative framing and of press photographs related to the media coverage of child murders. She coded each piece of content according to nine initial schema that she collapsed into three core narratives, viz.:

> ***Personal*** – photographs of the perpetrator, the victim, or the family (of either);
> ***Institutional*** – images of police, the court or court process, or of politicians;
> ***Societal*** – images of the local community, of community grief or anger, or of nostalgia.

This triptych functions exceptionally well as a deductive device for a framing analysis of non-intimate murder and finds general and specific resonance with the frames previously suggested by Bullock and Cubert (2002), Richards et al. (2011), and Gillespie et al. (2013).

FRAMING ANALYSIS: SOURCES AND SCHEMA OF SUSPICION

In order to identify sets of articles for the entire framing analysis, all the non-intimate femicides within the media-survey database were selected. Data from this set were stratified by victim, which identified 85 incidents in which the victim was a woman aged 60 years or older – literally, Christie's "'little old lady' of international crimes" (Van Wijk, 2013).[64]

The same data (all non-intimate femicides) were explored by victim–perpetrator relationship, looking at reported incidents in which the relationship between the victim and the alleged perpetrator was known or claimed to be known by the press. This yielded two significant

[64] Keeping in mind that this set excludes Susan van Dyk.

subsets by perpetrator: one where the perpetrator was identified as a domestic employee or worker who was allowed into the victim's home to work (15 incidents associated with 256 articles), and a larger subset where the perpetrator was identified as an immediate or close family relative of the victim (27 incidents associated with 687 articles). The size of some of the samples meant that not all the articles were read and coded, but smaller representative or exceptional subsets were identified and coded as below.

Articles were read by me and were coded for dominant source – institutional, societal, or personal. Where more than one distinct source type was employed in a story, secondary (and sometimes tertiary) codings were added. In these cases, the dominant source was listed first. Secondary frames were only included where there was sufficient text or import to make it a *distinct* frame.

Articles were coded as "institutional" when the sources included police officers, mortuary officials or medical experts, lawyers, court officials, or politicians (with the exception of political protests). As a new addition, "media" was included as an institutional source – many news articles referred to previous articles as their "source", even referring to news reports from other news agencies. This is a significant and increasing practice and should be considered in future analyses – although media might also be considered a "societal" frame rather than an institutional one.

Articles were coded as "societal" when the sources included neighbours, community associations, and local or regional political associations or organisations, including political parties that participated in protests against crime.

A "personal" coding was used when close family members of the victim or the perpetrator were used as sources and included victim profiles and perpetrator testimony. This category of coding can be read ambiguously and was thus often listed as a secondary rather than primary framing. For example, a secondary personal coding might include the accused giving personal testimony in mitigation of sentencing (taking place within the institutional context of the court). Typically, sentencing was the only source of substantial personal information about the perpetrator.

Where strong narrative themes not covered by these three categories were present in the text, a parallel inductive frame was noted for reference.

As all of the reading and coding was conducted by a single reader/coder (myself), errors may have occurred in my reading and/or coding (through comprehension or typing) of the source material and through my own subjectivity in determining the coding of sources. For comparative purposes, it would be preferable to have multiple coders for future coding and analysis.

Ideal victims: writing the "Little Old Lady"

A number of studies (Clarke et al., 1985; Pain, 1995; Powell et al., 2007) demonstrate that "older people" are statistically the least likely to be victims of crime[65] but are likely to *fear* being a victim of crime because of their heightened vulnerability (physical infirmity, living alone, etc.) and because of the serious consequences of being a victim of crime – the after-effects of physical violence are generally much worse for a 75-year-old than for a physically strong 20-year-old. Other factors that contribute to the fear of crime include personal knowledge of crime (or victims of crime) and confidence (or lack thereof) in the police and criminal justice systems (Hale, 1996, in Powell, Wahidin and Zinn, 2007).

Outside of position papers on what might commonly be categorised as "elder abuse" and neglect (withholding food, cruel treatment, physical abuse, etc.), there is little South African data or research about the elderly victims of crime, which makes it slightly more challenging to definitively categorise the iteration of "risk" in a local high-crime context. Data from Statistics South Africa's annual Mortality and Causes of Death (2013) reports show that the proportion of non-natural deaths (including accidents) declines strongly with age and reaches its lowest proportions after the age of 64. The highest proportion of deaths from all causes also occurs within this broad age band, from 55 to 79 years, which is to be expected.

According to Stats SA (2013), approximately 3.1% of non-natural deaths among those aged 65 years or older were due to "assault" in 2013, estimated at 3.7% for males and 2.6% for females.[66]

[65] "Older person" is often poorly defined and may refer, variously, to people older than 60 or people older than 65 years of age.

[66] Table 4.13: Underlying non-natural causes of death by age group and sex, 2013.

The subset of the 85 elderly victims in this group can be seen in Annexure E. Their ages range from 60 to 98 years old, and the median age for all victims is 71, with the most frequently occurring age (the mode) being 64.

The racial composition of this group and how it links back to the number of articles per incident are of particular interest. There were near-equal numbers of reported black and white victims (37 white victims and 36 black victims) in the elderly women victim group, with two coloured victims, two Indian victims, and eight women of undetermined race. The group returned a total of 578 news-media articles, with a median number of four articles or mentions per victim (an "article" is not necessarily an entire news story about the victim and may consist of a single-line mention).

When the article count per victim was split by race, it showed that the majority of black victims (31/36) were reported on in five or fewer articles – in fact, 14 black victims warranted just a single mention – while only 17 of the 37 white victims had five articles or fewer, and just two of the white victims had a single mention each. Nearly a third (11/37) of the elderly white female victims received prominent media coverage of 14 articles or more. With the exception of daycare owner Margrietha de Goede, who was murdered together with the baby in her care, of the seven elderly female victims to receive coverage of 21 articles or more, six were farm murders and five of these were multiple homicides in which the women were killed with their husbands (farm attacks and multiple murders are both typically multipliers of press coverage).

The context of farm attacks is discussed again below, but it is worth noting that such murders have a specific significance in South African media and tend to garner more attention than all other types of murders. Minority "rights" group AfriForum has consistently critiqued "mainstream media" coverage of farm attacks, but its own surveys found that over 70% of farm murders were covered in the South African press (AfriForum, 2018). This is more than three times the media coverage of femicide and must be considered an important multiplying factor in the coverage of violent crime – when the victims are white (discussed below).

For the majority of cases (over 62%) involving elderly women, the relationship between the victim and perpetrator was not known or not clearly identified in the press. Arrests were reported in less than half (46%) the cases and convictions in less than a quarter. Both of these

factors inhibit press coverage and imply that little information is known about alleged or accused perpetrators. In nine of the 85 incidents, the perpetrator was described as being a close or immediate family member of the victim; in ten of the murders, the perpetrator was described as being a stranger. Five of the perpetrators were community members (i.e. they may have known the victim but were not necessarily close), and two of the perpetrators were described as the victim's tenants, living on the victim's property at the time of the murder. Only two of the elderly female victims were killed by an intimate partner: Hester Salmans was murdered by her husband, who had reportedly raped his 14-year-old-stepdaughter (who he also tried to kill); and Australian tourist Jette Jacobs was killed by the Nigerian boyfriend she met online, who was trying to scam her for money.

Because of the extremely large number of articles for this subset, I did not complete a framing analysis on the entire group but conducted framing analyses on smaller samples within the group. Firstly, on those murders that received a single news report and, secondly, on three incidents in which the victim received prominent coverage (more than 10 stories), but was not killed during a farm attack.[67] The prominent-coverage group comprised the killings of Winterveldt crèche owner Kate Legodi (who was murdered by her son and stepson) and Kei Mouth newspaper editor Anne Roeberts (who was tortured, raped, and murdered during a robbery), both of whom were 75 years of age, and the rape and murder of 98-year-old church leader Betty Titse near Mahikeng.

Although 24 victims in the group received a single mention in the press, news articles were not available in five of the cases, and there were only 11 news articles for the remaining 19 victims – two of the articles included in the media survey mentioned two victims or more (one article essentially contained a list of elderly victims spanning several years).

Of the 11 articles reviewed and coded, seven showed a dominant institutional frame, three showed dominant societal frames, and one showed a dominant personal frame. For the murders of Kate Legodi and Anne Roeberts, institutional sources also dominated media framing – the articles available for Legodi (10/11) had a dominant institutional frame, as did 11 of the 13

[67] It was thought that the "farm murder" narrative would strongly influence any framing. Joy Boonzaaier's murder was also excluded from this group because of its alleged links to Satanic rituals, which would also have skewed media coverage. Similarly, the killing of Australian Jette Jacobs by her Nigerian lover had too many additional factors that might have skewed or influenced media framing.

available reports on Roeberts. In both murders, the perpetrators were arrested, tried in court, and sentenced.

In the case of Titse's murder, however, only six of the eleven available stories had a dominant institutional frame, and, while a suspect was arrested for her killing, there were no subsequent reports on his trial or conviction – if such an event took place. Societal framing was much more prominent here than in any other sets, as the victim's extreme age became a rallying point for community protests and calls to action, particularly by politicians. Dominant societal framing was also accompanied by distinct inductive sub-frames about how the community needed to "stand up against rape" and "protect the elderly", suggesting that rare qualities (including extreme age) can shift the narrative.

Within the sets of women who received prominent coverage and those who received a single mention, another distinction emerged – a repeated frame within the single-mention incidents that points to a failure of the police or justice system, or the government in general. In such instances, the frame was not caused by the system failing the perpetrator but by the system failing the victim. This can be seen, for example, in cases where it was written that the victim had previously been targeted by crime but never reported it; where one or both perpetrators were out on bail for previous crimes and/or had extensive rap sheets; or where local government had failed to secure an incomplete RDP housing development, making the area a target for criminals. Only in one of these stories was the frame flipped to speak about a police task force set up to address previous failures.

Although many of the news stories reviewed in this section can be viewed as episodic, many contain a strong thematic thread, evident in how "crime against the elderly" is framed and positioned in the news media and is not present in the coverage of other non-intimate femicides.

Dominance of institutional framing in femicide reporting

In both the victim and perpetrator groups analysed in this chapter, institutional framing emerges as the dominant frame for reportage of non-intimate femicides – a phenomenon also applicable to the coverage of intimate femicide in the news. Previous femicide media studies identified "police and other criminal justice personnel [as] the primary sources used by the media for crime news in general as well as coverage of domestic violence" (Bullock, 2008; Taylor, 2009).

Surette (2007) describes these types of sources as "authorized knowers" – those that are "given ownership over explaining and framing an event" (Gillespie et al., 2013: 225).

Richards et al. (2011: 179) describe how law enforcement often functions as the "gatekeeper to criminal incidents", adding that this "can be problematic because their [law enforcement's] opinions are commonly grounded in patriarchal attitudes that are biased against female victims (Heeren & Messing, 2009)". Hawley et al. (2017: 12) add that official, institutional sources often function as the "primary definers" of a crime event, which then "establish the initial definition or primary interpretation of the topic in question". This primary interpretation "[sets] the limit for all subsequent discussion by framing what the problem is."

In Jane Duncan's (2014: 7) source-based analysis of news coverage of the massacre of striking miners at Marikana in August 2012, she notes that the "[a]nalysis of primary definers is useful in assessing how social power is expressed through the media, especially if one gives differential weightings to certain social actors and their views (Hansen et al., 1998: 109)."

Altheide (1997: 662–3) describes news formats as having a tendency "to be 'tight' and 'closed' rather than 'loose' and 'open' (Schlesinger et al., 1983; Altheide, 1985) ... so they seldom permit the context and very significant background information that is essential to understand an event rather than just appreciate a dramatic aspect of it." He links this narrative structure to the "problem frame" (viz. Entman) and writes that since "the major sources of news for crime and most problems are 'official agencies' who claim 'ownership' of such issues, seldom are journalists provided the breadth of information that would at least make certain events more understandable" (Altheide, 1997: 663).

The dominance of institutional sources in these media frames is significant for other reasons. Smolej (2010: 70) contends that "the purpose of representations of deviance is traditionally seen to be that they awake moral anger and show that deviant individuals will be punished for their behaviour." Seedat (1999: 132) notes that "within this perspective the media is viewed as a controlling and consent-creating agent that not only constructs the violent event for the public but also informs the public on how to understand the violence."

This narrative construct has a few immediate outcomes in that it reinforces the authority of institutions and implies that they are "dealing with the problem", and this schema directly

encourages audiences or readers to support punitive approaches to crime – through the police and the courts.

Iyengar (1998: np) notes that:

> Episodic framing of issues of public order (crime and terrorism in particular) encourages viewers to advocate a more punitive approach to criminal justice ... based on this evidence, it can be anticipated that exposure to local news will strengthen public support for punitive approaches to crime and encourages the expression of racist attitudes.

Bullock (2008: 17) adds that by relying on institutional sources, "journalists may imply that police and court accounts of domestic violence murders and attempted murders are the important ones" and "reinforce the authority of these social institutions", while giving the impression that the problem is being somehow addressed by these official sources.

Framing "Super Predators"

A slightly different picture emerges from those articles covering the murders of elderly victims when the same coding and framing analysis exercise is conducted on sets segregated by perpetrator type, although institutional frames still tend to dominate.

Within the group where the perpetrator was identified as a close family member, three non-intimate femicides received significant amounts of news coverage – the murders of Marthella and Christelle Steenkamp by their brother and son, Don, and the murder of Rosemary Theron by her daughter and daughter's boyfriend. Because of their relatively heavy coverage, these murders were separated from the main news subset. A supplementary framing analysis was done on articles about Rosemary Theron (109 articles) but not on the Steenkamps (because of the large size of the data set, which comprises 230 articles). The following sets were read and coded for the perpetrator framing analysis:

i. Perpetrators identified as domestic employees;
ii.a. Perpetrators identified as close family members (excluding Steenkamps and Theron); and
ii.b. News articles related to the murder of Rosemary Theron.

Some of the victims in this data set were included in the elderly victim data set as well, depending on the identification of the perpetrator.

i) **Alleged perpetrator identified as a worker or employee**

A content analysis of the original media data set found media reports on 15 victims in which the perpetrator was identified as a current or former domestic employee of the victim.[68] The sub-set of the victims and alleged perpetrators can be seen in Annexure F. Nine perpetrators were identified as gardeners (in two of these cases, the victim was not the perpetrator's employer but the employer's domestic worker); two as handymen; two as former farm workers; and one as a general helper with access to the house. In one case, the victim's home and business were adjacent, and the perpetrator had access to both spaces, but the nature of employment was not defined. The perpetrators were all identified as either black or coloured males, except for one case in which the race of the perpetrator was not identified. Eight of the victims were identified as white, three as black, two as Indian, one as Chinese, and one as coloured.

A total of 255 articles were associated with these 15 femicides, of which text was available for 234 of them. These articles were read and coded as above. The results show that nearly three-quarters (171/234) of these news stories (perpetrator = worker) had a dominant institutional frame.

Societal framing, including community responses to the murder and community members commenting on the victim, were dominant in 39 (17%) stories, and there was a dominant personal frame in just 24 (10%) of the reports. A third (77) of all the stories had clear secondary or tertiary frames (157 did not); of those that did, the most prominent secondary frames were societal (40/77), followed by institutional (21/77), and personal (16/77). Overall, this coding revealed an almost complete absence of personal frames in this coverage of femicide – even in violent death, victims (and their families) are almost invisible.

Duncan (2014: 8-9) highlights the impact of this erasure and editorial failure in the context of the Marikana massacre:

[68] "Perpetrator" includes individuals alleged or suspected of the crime but not charged or found not guilty. It also includes cases in which perpetrators were convicted but were subsequently found not guilty and released on appeal.

> These analyses of sources used, primary definers and lexical choice strongly suggest that the workers were subjected to what George Gerbner has termed 'symbolic annihilation' through underrepresentation or non-representation (Hansen et al., 1998: 111) [6]. When they were represented, they had little agency in shaping the coverage and defining its overall direction. This suggested that the press constructed a public understanding of events that presented the official account of events as being, at best, largely reasonable, and at worst, an example of police panic at the workers' growing and increasingly violent militancy. The absence of the workers' accounts meant that no alternative narrative emerged to challenge the dominant perception of events.

In 79 of the 234 stories, three distinct inductive sub-frames emerged. In the first frame, the victim is mentioned "in passing". This typically occurs when the adult female victim was killed together with a more vulnerable victim – a baby, in both cases; one with its mother, the other with its day mother – or where the victim was employed by a celebrity employer, and news coverage focused predominantly on the employer's fear and suffering rather than the victim's. Another version of this "relegation of the victim" occurs when the victim is described as one of many, or as an example of a type of crime. This is an extension of Gillespie et al.'s (2013) frame of crime being "commonplace" – for example, through phrasing like "this is the second murder to happen this month." Bullock (2008) excluded articles that contained generic femicide or domestic violence data "in passing", including summaries of homicides for the year. However, given the frequency with which such stories appear, researchers may overlook a significant source of news through such exclusions. These articles may in fact be one of the more regular sources from which readers receive information about femicide.

The remaining inductive sub-frames have specific, connected South African contexts. One is the frame of "farm attacks" or "farm murders", which has specific connotations in a South African context and is used almost exclusively to refer to attacks or killings of white farmers by black perpetrators (not to rural killings of black women, even if they are farm workers). In a smaller but distinct subset, several stories reported a murder as a "race crime" or "hate crime" against whites. As with the farm attacks, this frame only occurred when the victim was white.

ii) Alleged perpetrator identified as a close family member (non-intimate)

Twenty-seven victims were identified as having allegedly been murdered by an immediate or close (non-intimate) family member. The perpetrators included sons, brothers, grandsons, nephews, uncles, cousins, stepsons, sons-in-law, an adopted son, a brother-in-law, and a daughter (some of the murders were committed with a non-family accomplice). Sons were the most common perpetrators (7/27), followed by sons-in-law (5/27). Where the perpetrators were sons- or brothers-in-law, the incidents often involved multiple (attempted) homicides, e.g. the perpetrator killed or attempted to kill his intimate partner as his primary target, and during that act also killed the partner's mother or sister. Three of the perpetrators committed suicide following the murder, while a fourth was killed in an apparent hit outside the courtroom. In all of the remaining cases except one, it was reported that a suspect or suspects had been arrested; convictions were reported in 11 of the cases.

The original total of 687 news-media stories in this set included duplicates for the mother-daughter victims of the Griekwastad killings; however, because of the exceptional nature of the Griekwastad crime and its news coverage, it was excluded from the set. News coverage of the only other white victim in this group, performer Rosemary Theron, was also separated from the set. The 109 articles on Theron were coded and analysed separately and are discussed below.

There were 119 news articles for the remaining 26 victims, with data available for 106 of them. The median number of articles was four per incident.

When the 106 articles were coded as before, a dominant institutional frame was identified in 86% of reports (91/106). Only 9 articles had a dominant societal frame, and only 6 had a dominant personal frame. Thirty of the 106 stories showed distinct secondary frames (14 personal, 9 institutional, and 7 societal).

Although nine of the deaths were a result of family homicides, where the victim was killed together with another family member (often the perpetrator's intimate partner, but sometimes children), "family murders" did not emerge as an inductive frame. The inductive frames that emerged were very incident-specific – one looking at the problem of police murder-suicides (where the perpetrator was a member of the police) and another at people's "fear" of Chinese gangs (this frame appears common among the few Chinese victims in the media survey, even

when the victims were killed by non-Chinese employees; the killing of a Chinese shopkeeper by her South African employee was initially reported as a suspected "triad" or gang hit).

As in the previous subset, these reports show a noticeable absence of personal framing and represents another near-complete erasure of the victim while eliding the perpetrator. In this set, the 24 victims were predominantly black women (n=20), with one Chinese and one coloured victim, and two victims whose race was not determined. As above, the three white victims were separated out from the initial analysis.

When I conducted the same coding and frame analysis on the white victim, Rosemary Theron, a slightly different framing profile emerged from both of the previous subsets.

Theron's disappearance and the subsequent discovery of her body several months later, buried in a shallow grave, generated a significant amount of media attention even before it was revealed that the perpetrators of the crime were Rosemary's oldest daughter, Phoenix Racing Cloud, and her boyfriend, Kyle Maspero.

There were 109 articles on Theron, with data available for 108 stories. Of these, 85 had a dominant institutional frame, 17 had a dominant personal frame, and 6 had a societal frame. While institutional framing is still present in nearly 80% of the news articles, a much more prominent personal-framing element is also evident. It seems most likely that this is because the perpetrators and victims were white.

In the case of Theron's murder and murderers, a number of significant inductive frames emerged. These include:

- *The victim's "alternative lifestyle" or the daughter's "troubled lifestyle".* Theron was described as "free-spirited", with three children by three different fathers. She had worked variously as a clown, face painter, and stilt walker. Her daughter, Phoenix Racing Cloud, claimed to have done drugs with her mother and to have been sexually abused by her mother's previous partners. Rosemary Theron refused to send her youngest daughter, who was nine years old, to school. These issues were raised in mitigation of Phoenix Theron's motivation for killing her mother – Phoenix Theron's

troubled childhood made her a sympathetic figure in some narratives (similar issues, however, were used to describe Maspero as a deviant figure).

- *The perpetrators' drug use prior to the murder and the mental state of Maspero in particular*. Maspero admitted to being a methamphetamine [tik] user, which his attorney claimed was responsible for his inability to recall certain details of the murder. Maspero spent 30 days under observation at Valkenberg Psychiatric Hospital before being declared fit to stand trial. Rosemary Theron's drug use was mentioned within the context of the "alternative lifestyle" frame mentioned above. Nearly half (n=22) of the 50 stories with distinct inductive frames featured drug use.

- *The* "*loss felt by the community*" within which Rosemary Theron had performed, travelled, and lived. A number of articles focused on memorial services and tributes to Rosemary Theron, where the narrative angle spoke about the grief and loss experienced by friends and fellow performers who shared the victim's alternative lifestyle and beliefs.

These three inductive frames resonate clearly with several of the frames used in previous femicide studies discussed earlier in this chapter: blaming the victim for her "unusual lifestyle"; narratives that imply this kind of thing only happens to "certain types" of people; minimising the event by focusing on external issues (drug use, alternative lifestyles) in the lives of the victim and perpetrators; and a (drug-induced) loss of control or moral breakdown by the perpetrators (Surette, 2007; Gillespie et al., 2013, Richards et al., 2014; Lagos Lira & Toledo, 2014).

Crime and punishment

Foucault (1977: 23) writes that we should regard punishment "as a political tactic". This should, perhaps, be seen as the intention behind the media's framing of both victims and perpetrators.

When we analyse media coverage of non-intimate femicides, it reveals the (suspected) existence of schema that represent deliberate organisational and cognitive structures of meaning, which induct and rely on communally – and perhaps socially – shared notions and

contemporary iterations of victims and perpetrators. Framing analysis of this content indicates a (not-entirely-unexpected) dominance of official or institutional sources and suggests that these same sources are the "authorised knowers", the preferred mechanisms through which victims are legitimised and by which "super predators" are both defined and known to audiences. In South Africa, as in countries with minority black populations, the binary between victim and perpetrator exposes how a particular demographic of women are prescribed legitimate status as victims (their prominence again drawing our attention to the invisibility of black women), while black men are, once again, profiled as the primary suspects.

This scheme deliberately locates the individual criminal as simultaneously being both close at hand and outside of society, resituating the perpetrator (real or imagined) within the "invisible" and "anonymous" disciplinary gaze of the punitive social body. In this schema, the individual perpetrator "opposes … the entire social body" and so:

> In order to punish him, society has the right to oppose him in its entirety. Thus a formidable right to punish is established, since the offender becomes the common enemy. Indeed, he is worse than an enemy, for it is from within society that he delivers his blows – he is nothing less than a traitor, a "monster". How could society not have an absolute right over him? How could it not demand, quite simply, his elimination? And, although it is true that the principle of punishment must be subscribed to in the pact, must not each citizen, logically, accept the extreme penalty for those of them who attack them as a body. Foucault (1977: 90)

CHAPTER NINE: FEMICIDE IN THE NEWSROOM

In this chapter, I describe a two-part sequential mixed-methods study that explores which titles or platforms published the largest number of unique stories on femicide, how they did this (i.e. which stories were covered), and what were the journalistic processes that were involved in "making" news.

The first part of the chapter looks at the concept of "newsworthiness" as a news value, and looks in particular at the role of the newsroom in deciding what is or is not newsworthy. This section includes a discussion of other newsroom-based studies looking at the roles of newsrooms and newsroom dynamics in terms of homicide coverage in particular.

This chapter then goes on to look at what kind of femicide stories were covered in which South African newspapers or news platforms, including a discussion of significant differences in coverage patterns by publication language (English or Afrikaans) and target audience/readership, and uses information from the media database to determine which publications or platforms produced the largest number of unique femicide stories.

The first part of the chapter provides a theoretical and quantitative framework that directly informs the second part, which features interviews with editors and journalists from some of these identified high-coverage publications. This two-part approach enables the specific and deliberate inclusion of newsroom and individual processes when discussing outcomes of "newsworthiness", rather than simply measuring outcomes or individual bias/perceptions, which is identified as a shortcoming in previous newsroom studies.

The interview portion of this chapter is not meant to be weighted as an equal part of the preceding analytic structure (the database), but rather, it is something that is an outcome of the preceding analytic structure, which is a feature of mixed-methods studies. This chapter illustrates how diverse approaches can be implemented and diverse outcomes can be achieved, using the same data to inform different approaches and achieve different objectives within a mixed-methods study.

This is a natural reciprocal or extension of the idea of "synthesis" and "integration" in mixed-methods – that the deliberate mixing of qualitative and quantitative aspects, in different ways and at different stages, can achieve distinct results or outcomes not otherwise possible, and that these results (while retaining an ability to speak to each other and be re-integrated, converted, etc if necessary) can also remain heterogenous.

PART ONE: BURIED LEDES[69]

Understanding the role of newsrooms

Homicides are described as being one of the "most newsworthy" crimes, but not all homicides are equally newsworthy or even newsworthy at all (Soothill et al., 2004; Gruenewald et al., 2009; Gekoski et al., 2012). In addition, while many studies, including this one, have found that particular victim qualities such as race, socioeconomic status, age, and location tend to predict greater news coverage (Paulsen, 2003; Tiegreen and Newman, 2009; and Slakoff and Brennan, 2017), these findings are not universal and there are frequent exceptions.

The reasons for these variations lie within the complex input dynamic that makes up contemporary newsrooms and their place within broader media ecosystems. News systems encompass myriad roles and practices, including but not limited to: journalists and photographers; production editors managing editors and copy or sub-editors; senior editors and (sometimes) publishers; internal production and management processes, platforms and systems – from content planning and creation to layout, design, printing and distribution; reader engagement, readership figures, cover sales, and advertising revenue; and, ultimately, even regulatory bodies and statutory guides such as the Press Ombud, appropriate copyright laws, and so on. These exist within broader strata, such as the social, public, and political spheres discussed in Chapter One. In this context, then, the "newsroom" should perhaps be considered as a gestalt system – not quite the simplified conception often applied of "reporters/editors making decisions" but also not directly equivalent to "newsrooms plus media effects theories".

[69] A "lede" refers to the first or leading paragraph of a news story, which contains significant information (the story's "lead" paragraph, but spelled "lede" to distinguish it from the printers' leads (metal blocks) that were once used). A "buried lede" is an idiom used to refer to the deliberate or accidental practice of "burying" the most significant aspects of a story in a later paragraph where it might be overlooked.

A number of papers have noted the critical need to better understand newsrooms as a context for the "increased academic interest in media coverage of murder" (Gekoski, et al. 2012: 1212). These studies challenge media researchers to go beyond mere enumerations of coverage or quantitative analyses (Soothill et al., 2004 in Gekoski et al., 2012) and instead to identify factors that "contribute to the decision-making process of whether to cover, and how much to cover, a particular homicide event" (Gruenewald et al., 2009: 262).

Whether or not these questions have been successfully integrated, even in studies examining the roles of individual actors within newsrooms' homicide coverage, is not entirely clear. In many instances, what appears in print (the output) appears to be given direct equivalence to newsroom and journalistic processes (the input). However, anyone even vaguely familiar with actual newsroom processes knows that this is commonly not the case.

No journalist runs with a story without the encouragement or approval of an editor. It is still common to have several section editors, even in medium-sized newsrooms, who may report in turn to a news editor or a shift editor while also engaging with an overall editor and so on. Although the downsizing of newsrooms has had a dramatic impact, most commercial newsrooms employ sub-editors or other forms of copy editors, "correctors", and even rewriters, who may edit, cut, or rewrite supplied copy, and who are often responsible for writing headlines, sub-headers, and even article ledes (the lead paragraph). All these roles and individuals contribute significantly to the final news product, yet these (non-reporter) roles and related processes rarely get more than a passing mention in media studies.

Lloyd and Ramon (2017: 115) write that "although consumers decide for themselves which newspapers to read, the content, tone, and allegiance of news coverage will be determined by journalists, editors, and in some cases, press proprietors". The details of the Leveson hearings[70] were obviously prominent in the authors' minds at the time of their paper and were cited quite extensively, undoubtedly shaping a particular notion of partisanship in the UK media that may not have equivalent iterations in other markets. Lloyd and Ramon (2017: 115) suggest that the "newspaper editorial power in setting the news agenda ... coupled with journalists' influence

[70] A series of public hearings in the UK chaired by Judge Leveson, looking into media ethics and practices in the British press.

on framing popular understanding (Butler, 2014)" ensures that a specific and "appropriate 'take home' message (Wozniak & McCloskey, 2010) is communicated to readers".

While it is easy to make assumptions about an intended "take-home message" based on newsrooms' output, it would be simplistic to assume that – although inherent – newsroom bias in the coverage of femicide was *intentional* (and it would be equally false to assume that it was accidental). Based on my interviews with editors and journalists and on my own substantial experience as a journalist and editor in a variety of newsrooms over the past two decades, very few editors or journalists deliberately set out to create pre-tooled meta-narratives that idealise little old ladies as perfect victims of crime. Nor, in current South African newsrooms, do most commercial news ventures intentionally seek to prioritise white victims at the expense of victims of other races.[71]

In fact, a great deal of thought and consideration *is* usually given to those stories that reach the newsroom, and overt consideration is usually given to broader South African social contexts and inequalities. This may be particular to South African newsrooms post-1994, where issues of racial and gender equality, as highlighted in our Constitution, are more prominent and visible than in other territories.

In this context, the notion of South African journalistic "newsworthiness" has some features not extant in the European, British, or North American press. It may also be relevant that two streams of "newsworthiness" may need to be understood – one is retrospective and reverse-engineered, identified through media surveys and media research of published outcomes; a second, however, is based in the present and guides newsroom staffers in their work. Quite frequently, the former is accepted as credible (perhaps because it can be enumerated), while the latter is relegated to a vague "gut feeling" or hunch.

When Pritchard and Hughes (1997) conducted research into murder coverage in Milwaukee County, the authors interviewed five journalists – three white males, one black male, and one white female. The authors (Pritchard & Hughes, 1997: 50) commented that the "journalists have a hard time explaining exactly how they evaluate an event's newsworthiness. When

[71] Notions of who newsrooms are and are not comfortable depicting as suspects and perpetrators are not dealt with substantially in this section but are worth further investigation.

pressed, they tend to provide examples related to coverage of individual incidents (Tuchman, 1978) or vague notions such as having a 'nose for news' (Ericson et al., 1987: 137)."

Pritchard and Hughes (1997: 50) continue that, while journalists "have difficulty clearly identifying the components of newsworthiness", this does not mean that those components "cannot be understood", adding that "journalists may not be the best sources about the factors that shape newsworthiness." Their relegation of newsroom staff to some sort of dumb actors in their own scripts is condescending and is, in my experience, incorrect. Schudson (1989: 264) showed more self-reflection when he wrote that the "study of the generation of news aims to find and make plausible an order behind this sense of accident[72] ... and to understand as ideology journalists' failure to recognise such an order."

In Gekoski et al.'s (2012) later study, the authors interviewed 10 journalists (all white; seven male and three female) who worked as reporters at UK tabloids. The lead author had formerly worked as a journalist, which mitigated some of the problems of Pritchard and Hughes' work and encouraged broader and more insightful questions and discussions about the reporting process and additional relevant newsroom processes. One such indicator, for example, is that the role of race and racism is more overtly acknowledged and described as playing a role in newsroom decisions. This finding contrasts Pritchard and Hughes' (1997: 50) paper, which states that "mainstream news media pay more attention to homicides involving Whites than to homicides involving non-Whites" but determined that this was a "pattern for which no clear theoretical explanation has been advanced." The "pattern" they were looking for is almost certainly racism.

Journalists and editors are shaped by the societies in which they live, and they internalise many of those societal values while simultaneously reflecting and shaping them in their professional endeavours.[73] News platforms (and publishers) also reflect and shape particular social values and encourage those values within their editorial content. Lloyd and Ramon (2017: 119) describe this as a prescribed "allegiance to a newspaper's ideological worldview".

[72] Why news or news programmes turn out as they do.
[73] Academic researchers are similarly the products of their time and place.

For these and other reasons, Soothill et al. (2004: 2) rightly place "newspaper reporting, and the decisions made, within a wider criminological and sociological context in which newspaper reporting is positioned within a web of social relations – acting, reacting, and interacting".

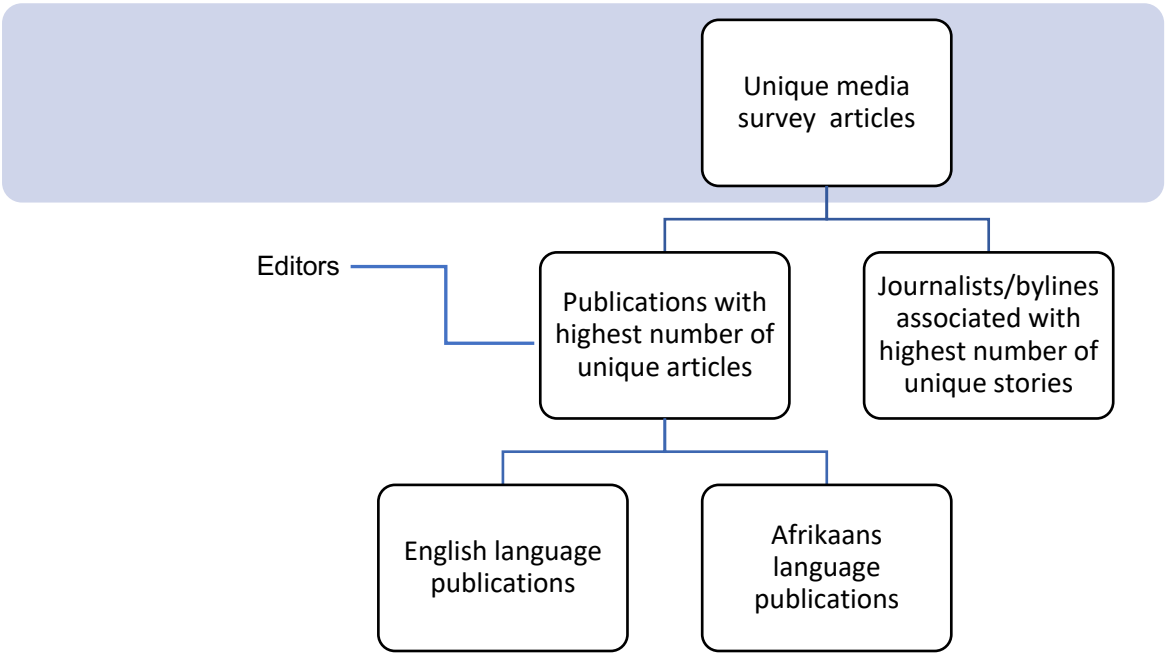
An explanatory note on the study design (a mixed-methods design)

In this chapter, quantitative media data (unique stories derived from the total media-news set) were determined from the central media survey. Duplicate entries were identified and removed, and the remaining entries were disaggregated by title/platform so they could be ranked by total number(s). Titles/platforms with 50 or more unique stories were tabulated and individually disaggregated – both quantitatively (the number of stories *and* number of individual femicide incidents) and, within a smaller selection, qualitatively (which femicide incidents they covered, the race of the victims, geographic regions in which the femicides occurred). A parallel qualitative disaggregation was arranged to identify femicides covered in leading Afrikaans news outlets versus similar English-language publications.

The same news-media data were used to quantitatively rank journalists/authors by the number of unique stories published. Specific high-performing titles (editors) and journalists were then identified for in-depth narrative and semi-structured, open-ended (qualitative) interviews. This process is illustrated in figure 9.1, below.

Both the quantitative and qualitative aspects obtained from the analyses and interviews are integrated in the discussion and conclusion of the chapter.

Figure 9.1: Process design for disaggregating and identifying publications/platforms and editors and journalists from high-coverage title



Distribution of news

There are close to 200 news titles or platforms in my media survey, including national, regional, and local publications, radio stations, TV-news websites, and online news services across the country, in both English and Afrikaans. Data from my media survey shows, however, that more than three-quarters of femicide news-media coverage in South Africa (individual stories irrespective of how many distinct femicides are reported in the story) were produced by a relatively small proportion of titles. Just 24 titles/platforms published 50 or more unique femicide stories, and, together, these titles represented more than 76% of all news-media coverage of femicide in South Africa (2,504 out of 3,278 unique stories).[74] The top 10 titles by unique stories are shown in Table 9.1 below. The top 20 titles by unique stories can be seen on Annexure G.

[74] Excluding "Look Local" stories, which were logged for article count purposes but for which no other data were available.

Table 9.1 – Top 10 media titles by individual/unique femicide story*

Title	Circ[75] (Q1 2013)	Distri-bution areas	Media owner	# of unique stories	Griek-wastad if n > 10	Bredas-dorp if n > 10	Mare if n > 10	Theron if n > 10	SAPA if n > 10
STAR	106,484	JHB	TML**	192	14	82			19
V/BLAD	21,811	FS and NC	M24	191	91				
N24	-	National	M24	186				16	78
CAPE ARGUS	33,247	WC and EC	IND	158		60	13		
NEW AGE	-	National	TNA	152		32			12
BURGER	62,237	WC and EC	M24	146		50	10		
CAPE TIMES	35,616	WC	IND	138		82			
BEELD	67,700	GP, LIM, NW, MP	M24	121	13	16			
IOL	-	National	IND	116					97
DAILY DISPATCH	28,879	EC	TML	108		11			

* Stories on victims who were murdered in 2012/2013; the news article may have appeared any time before September 2017.
** TML = Times Media Limited (which changed its name to Tiso Blackstar in 2017); M24 = Media24; IND = Independent Newspapers; TNA = TNA Media.

While all duplicate stories were removed for this portion of the analysis, in some instances a story may have been attributed to an online platform instead of the original print title. This is particularly true for stories tagged to either IOL, *News24*, or *Netwerk24*, where the online news services variously generate their own content *and* share content from their respective media houses' print titles – but not always with visible attribution. Thus, a story from the *Cape Times* or the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* may be inadvertently attributed to IOL, because the entry that was found was published under the generic IOL page rather than that of the initial publication, and no press clipping or individual URL with publication credit was identified. Sufficient processes were in place during data capture and filtering to minimise the double capture of such stories (i.e. not logging separate entries for print and IOL entries that were actually the same). In instances where a story from one newspaper was reprinted in a separate title, these were logged as separate, unique stories, even though the content was internally syndicated. Because production processes varied extensively across news groups, weekend editions of daily papers were not included in the count of daily titles (e.g. the *Saturday Star* was not counted with *The Star*, etc.), although in some instances they are prepared by the same team.

[75] Source: ABC daily and weekly newspaper summary January–March 2014. (Figures for Q1 2013 are provided on the same sheet)

As before, these data do not include coverage of the Reeva Steenkamp murder, specifically excluded from these analyses because of the exceptional nature of its media profile, which would have unfairly skewed the context for any other data. The high volume of press reports would also have made it extremely challenging to document and review in the same way.

The data in Table 9.1 shows that the majority of femicide media coverage is concentrated in a handful of titles, but also that media coverage of femicide within these titles is typically dominated by prominent coverage of a limited number of specific high-profile femicide events rather than equal coverage of multiple femicide events.[76]

Nearly 48% of femicide stories in *Volksblad* were about the Steenkamp family murder in Griekwastad, while close to 60% of all femicide coverage in the *Cape Times* was about the murder of Anene Booysen in Bredasdorp (this latter proportion was only 38% for the *Cape Argus*, although it falls under the same media stable). By contrast, *Volksblad* only covered Anene Booysen's death in eight news reports, and the *Star* covered the Griekwastad killings in just 14 stories. This reveals differences in the perceived "newsworthiness" of certain stories and indicates that editorial selection bias diverges significantly between newspaper titles, depending on language and/or location (geographic coverage). *Beeld* carried similar coverage for the Steenkamp family (n=13) and Anene Booysen (n=16) murders but did not cover the Cape Town-region murders of Charmaine Mare or Rosemary Theron. None of the top-reporting titles gave prominent coverage (here defined as 10 articles or more) to all four of the top-reported femicide incidents for that year (Steenkamp family, Booysen, Mare, and Theron).[77]

While femicide news coverage appears to be strongly influenced by location (Cape Town papers predominantly covered Western Cape murders; Eastern Cape newspapers almost exclusively covered regional murders, etc., discussed in more detail below), this should not be interpreted as indicative of a correlation with the regional incidence of female homicide. A paper with a higher volume of femicide reports may simply be covering more female

[76] Soothill et al. (2004) call these high-profile cases "mega-cases"; they receive the most prominent coverage and, in some cases, eventually come to represent a general knowledge about homicide.
[77] Excluding Reeva Steenkamp.

homicides, rather than being an indicator of a higher prevalence of female homicides in that area (also discussed below).

The significant role played by SAPA (the South African Press Agency news wire service) within this top-reporting group should also be noted, particularly within the online platforms. Online, 84% of IOL's femicide reports and 42% of *News24* femicide reports carried SAPA attribution. Within print titles, 42% of femicide reports in *The Citizen*, 27% of those in *The Times*, 25% in *The Sowetan*, and a massive 79% of all femicide coverage in the *George Herald* were attributed to SAPA. Within the broader tally of unique stories, SAPA was credited in at least 429 of them, or 13% of *all* unique femicide stories, which represents a significant contribution to femicide content. This is almost certainly an under-count, as many news articles carry SAPA content without directly identifying it as such in the byline or as an end credit.

SAPA closed down at the end of March 2015, and while other local newswire services exist, including the subsequently constituted ANA, they do not have the same reach or impact (certainly not in this database, because of its timespan). It would be useful to conduct a comparative analysis of press data from the 2015–2016 crime year to see if and how SAPA's closure impacted the coverage of female homicides (and even homicides in general).

Unfortunately, because Independent Media purchased and removed the entire SAPA archive after its closure, this data is no longer available to the public and cannot be viewed for comparative purposes (e.g. how many SAPA stories on femicide were filed vs how many were published by media clients). It is hoped that, in the future, Independent Media will grant researchers access to this information.

Newspaper coverage of femicide by title, region, and language

While the stories of many of the higher-reporting titles focus on prominent femicides, a detailed review of a representative selection of these titles/platforms shows significant differences in other femicides within their reporting, both in number and geographic distribution and by race.

A unique victim tally and listing, noting location and race, was done for the following titles: *The Star* (English: Johannesburg); *Volksblad* (Afrikaans: predominantly Free State and Northern Cape); the *Cape Argus* (English: Western and Eastern Cape); *Die Burger* (Afrikaans: Western and Eastern Cape); *Beeld* (Afrikaans: Gauteng, Limpopo, North West, and

Mpumalanga); *Daily Dispatch* (English: Eastern Cape); *The Sowetan* (English: Johannesburg); and *Rapport* (Afrikaans: national weekly). A summary of these results is included below in Table 9.2.

Table 9.2 – Victim distribution and type by selected top-reporting media title

Title	Language	Distribution area	# of unique stories	Total number of femicide victims covered	Victims by main location (province) % > 10	Victims by race*
STAR	Eng	Johannesburg (GP)	192	58	38% GP 22% LP 21% WC	38B 12W 5C 2U 1BC
V/BLAD	Afr	FS and NC	191	34	41% FS 32% NC	18W 10B 3U 1BC 1C 1CH
CAPE ARGUS	Eng	WC and EC	158	45	73% WC	21B 12W 10C 2U
BURGER	Afr	WC and EC	146	46	63% WC 17% EC	22W 13B 9C 2U
BEELD	Afr	GP, LIM, NW, MP	121	63	32% GP 13% LP 11% MP 11% NW	39W 17B 3C 3U 1BC
DAILY DISPATCH	Eng	EC	108	66	93% EC	47B 5W 2U 1C 1BC
SOWETAN	Eng	Johannesburg (GP)	106	74	28% GP 18% LP 12% EC 11% NW	61B 11W 2C
RAPPORT	Afr	National	62	23	35% GP 26% WC 17% MP	22W 1C

* B = Black; W = White; C = Coloured; Ch = Chinese; U = Unknown; BC = Black or coloured.

Rapport was the only weekly newspaper included in this analysis, because it was the highest-reporting weekly paper for number of femicide stories, and also because it represents a significant Afrikaans-language title with a very large readership. No analysis was done at this stage on the top-reporting paper from KwaZulu-Natal, because it was felt that this would likely

show results similar to other regional papers already included. It would, however, be of interest to conduct comparative analyses that consider the differences in regional coverage by large (non-community) newspapers in the Northern Cape (*Diamond Fields Advertiser*), Eastern Cape (*Herald* and *Dispatch*), and KwaZulu Natal (*Witness*). All the relevant information is available in my database.

From the analysis in Table 9.2, we can easily see that coverage in the *Daily Dispatch*, *Cape Argus*, *Volksblad*, *Die Burger* and even *Beeld* were strongly aligned with their defined readership/distribution areas. These newspapers focused, in some cases almost exclusively, on female homicides that occurred within their immediate coverage region. The notable exceptions to this were the two Johannesburg-based newspapers, *The Star* (Independent Media) and *The Sowetan* (Times Media, now Tiso Blackstar), which showed only marginally dominant femicide reporting for the Gauteng region and included a large number of stories from incidents in other provinces. This does not imply that the coverage in the two newspapers was similar in any other way, as there were significant differences in the constitution of their respective content.

Both *The Star* and *The Sowetan* are Gauteng-based and are, even more specifically, distributed primarily in greater Johannesburg. Despite this, only 37% of female homicides reported in *The Star* occurred in Gauteng – and an even smaller proportion (less than 20% of the total) in greater Johannesburg itself.[78] A review of the 58 individual femicide incidents covered by the newspaper suggests that, rather than location being a primary driver, news selection for the title was driven largely by the prominence and rarity/exceptionalism of the femicide. Almost every female homicide featured in *The Star* had what could be considered "exceptional" or "rare" features (see Pritchard & Hughes (1997) and Gokeski et al.'s (2012) discussions of status and statistical deviance), such as: a suspected serial killer; allegations of satanic rituals; victims who were teenagers and/or pregnant; lesbian hate crimes; and murders committed by or involving police officers, amongst others. Almost all the femicide reports[79] in *The Star* were relatively widely reported in general, the net effect being that *The Star* newsroom appeared to

[78] Excluding Centurion and the far East and West Rands but including areas that may fall under Ekurhuleni and would nominally be considered to be "in" Johannesburg.
[79] On a parallel note: the Sabinet clipping service used to compile part of my own database may not have included *The Star*'s news "snippets" sections, where short news information (typically from SAPA) was posted, and which were found when the same search was conducted on LexisNexis. For this reason, the data shown here may be an undercount of the true tally.

publish femicide stories based on their exceptional narrative qualities rather than on any attempt at local relevance.

A contributing factor to the apparent geographical diversity of this title may be *The Star*'s own newsroom and financial model, where content from other Independent Media titles was frequently internally syndicated. Reporting from the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* (Kimberly and Northern Cape) and either the *Cape Argus* or the *Cape Times* (Cape Town) was often included in *The Star*'s own pages. By contrast, the respective Northern Cape and Western Cape newspapers did not include a similar volume of reciprocal Gauteng content in their pages. This may have been due to the smaller page count of the newspapers (in the case of the *DFA*)[80] but was more likely related to lower interest in non-local news in provinces outside of Gauteng. For all *The Star*'s relatively prominent coverage of femicide, it only covered 20 unique incidents of intimate femicide, of which only three victims were white (by comparison, the newspaper covered eight serial killer victims).

The Sowetan was the only predominantly black-readership newspaper in the analysis of prominent coverage in this chapter. Although the paper has a similarly geographically diverse – but differently constituted – victim-incident profile to *The Star*, it differed substantially in the composition or narrative arc of its stories, in that *The Sowetan* typically included a number of "everyday" female homicides, not just exceptional ones. More than 82% of the victims featured in *The Sowetan* were black women (compared to 66% in *The Star*). Reviewing the victim count and profiles covered in *The Sowetan*, it was clear that the content was much more evenly distributed across all black victims irrespective of geographic location or "rarity". Perhaps as a result, a greater number of domestic or intimate-partner femicides were included in this newspaper's coverage (29/74), even when the murders were not covered prominently elsewhere. *The Sowetan* often used content from sister Tiso Blackstar (Times Media) publications in other regions, including Eastern Cape titles *The Herald* and the *Daily Dispatch*.

Another significant finding from the victim-based analyses of these titles' coverage was not only how the coverage broke down by race, but how it skewed by language. Here again, a distinct profile emerged: in the English-language newspapers, the majority of female homicide

[80] Personal observation from hard copies of the newspaper.

victims reported on were black (this was true even for the *Cape Argus*, where the majority of the city's population is coloured).[81] However, in the Afrikaans-language newspapers, the majority of victims covered were white: in *Beeld*, 62% of victims were white; in *Volksblad,* the proportion was 53%; and in *Die Burger*, it was 48% (whites were the largest single group but not a majority). Every femicide victim covered by *Rapport* was white, with the lone exception of Anene Booysen. As an anecdotal observation, if one's sole source of news was the Afrikaans-language media, the narratives of an alleged "white genocide" or of a particular and deliberate epidemic of "violence against whites" becomes perhaps a little more understandable. The four Afrikaans-language papers featured in this count are owned by the same media company (Media24) and traditionally share or feed content to each other.

More than any other data-mining approach, the breakdown of news-media coverage by title, area, and language provides perhaps the strongest indicators of how the problem position of femicide is specifically, and often narrowly, presented to South African readers by the different media that they consume. This survey does not (and cannot) make assumptions about actual readership, comprehension, and perception – which newspapers are read by whom; how many people actually read crime news; what information readers retain or discard; and how the coverage they are exposed to makes them feel about crime – but it does present a detailed picture of what was published (and what was not), which may provide a foundation for better-informed discussions. In particular, the finding that local newspapers focus almost exclusively on local news and that Afrikaans-language newspapers tend to report predominantly on white victims should be explored in future research – particularly if this research is extended to multiple crime years and to other types of homicide and violent crime.

To understand the processes behind these identified outcomes, the next section discusses interviews with a reporter and selected editors from some of the identified high-coverage platforms and titles.

[81] This is a "majority" based on victim numbers, not coverage per victim. When the news-media set is read by coverage, a different profile obviously emerges.

PART TWO: NEWSROOM INTERVIEWS

The interview selection process

Using the unique news entries from my media database, editors and journalists associated with high-volume outputs of unique femicide stories were identified. Journalists were identified by their byline, while "editors" were determined as the individuals who held the position of editor for the respective publications at the time of the study (i.e. 2012/2013). Approval for the interviews was sought and obtained from the University of the Witwatersrand's Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), Protocol number H18/02/03. Copies of the ethics approval, the interview request letters, and schedules are attached as Annexures H, I, J, K, and L. Copies of each participant's consent form are included in Annexures M-Q.

Qualifying journalists and editors were contacted electronically and/or telephonically and were asked to participate in this study.

Before each interview, participants were asked to complete a short biographical CV to confirm professional titles and note relevant work experience. Subsequent interviews were conducted in person or telephonically and loosely followed the semi-structured interview questions submitted to the Ethics Committee (see Annexures K and L). Interviews lasted between one and two hours.

Because of the diverse nature of the newsrooms involved, not all questions were relevant to all interviewees, and questions that were not pertinent were skipped over. Participants thus received slightly different question schedules. Furthermore, many of the participants were professional colleagues who I knew or had encountered prior to the interviews, which allowed for a fairly flexible and discursive interview session in which the conversation naturally focused on areas of particular relevance or interest for that individual/publication/platform. All of the interviews were conducted five or six years after the homicide events in question, and long after the associated newsroom processes had originally been enacted. As such, the intent of the interviews was to extract general thoughts and impressions rather than to function as a memory test.

The individuals who completed interviews were (titles for the 2012/2013 crime year): Gasant Abarder [GA], editor of the *Cape Argus*; Johanna van Eeden [JVE], editor of *Volksblad* and

assistant editor of *Beeld*; Jannie Momberg [JM], editor-in-chief of *News24*; Mark van der Velden [MVDV], SAPA's final editor; and Jade Otto [JO], court reporter for the *Cape Argus*.

All participants consented to be identified by name, but for ease of reference and reading they will be referred to by their initials for the remainder of this chapter. Only JO was employed at the same title at the time of the interviews, and three individuals had left full-time news media completely. At the time of her interview, JO was the Assistant Editor at the *Cape Argus*.

Senior and relevant experience of participants

Four of the five respondents held editor or editor-in-chief positions in the year in question, and all had had lengthy and/or significant careers as journalists before being appointed as editors. The span of the editors' individual newsroom careers ranged (at that time) from 11 to over 20 years. The only dedicated reporter in the interviews, JO, had worked in a newsroom for approximately five years prior to the study year. Given the small size of the interview group, the newsroom experience of the participants is important, as it speaks not only to their credibility but also to their ability to give relevant input related to interpersonal and professional dynamics within and beyond the newsroom.

Of the respondents, three were male and two were female. Two of the respondents identified as white, two as coloured, and one respondent preferred not to specify race. The absence of any black respondents is a limitation in the context of this study and can hopefully be addressed in future work. Improved and expanded gender and racial diversity within the sample is an obvious way to improve the relevance and validity of these types of interviews.

The ages of the respondents [in 2018] ranged from 30 to 59 years of age, with three of the respondents in their forties. This is an expected feature given the seniority of the participants – the youngest participant was, at the time of the study year, the only reporter in the group. Although it may be of value to include the responses of younger/more junior reporters in future studies, less-experienced reporters may not always fall within a high-output reporting category and, also, may have less correspondent knowledge and understanding of newsroom dynamics.

Newsroom structures and platforms

The participants in the interview section of this study represented three quite distinct news content platforms: print media/newspapers (*Cape Argus*, *Volksblad*, and *Beeld*); digital news

media (*News24*); and an independent national news-content wire service (SAPA). The newspapers each served particular and clearly defined regional markets, while the digital platform and newswire service offered national coverage. Content produced by the print media titles was available either in hard copy (newspapers) or via their own digital platforms – IOL and *News24* or *Nuus24* (now *Netwerk24*) – while SAPA content was supplied to about 100 subscribers, including media houses that used SAPA for their print and online content.

At the start of each interview, participants were asked to describe their newsroom, their routine or everyday newsroom processes, and their role within the newsroom at or around the time of the study year. They were also asked to give a brief description of their readership (as they understood it) at that time.

For this portion of the interview, JVE's answers focused on the newsroom for *Volkblad*, although she was also the Assistant Editor at *Beeld* at this time.

In addition to the editor, the *Volksblad* newsroom employed some nine in-house senior editors and reporters at the time of the research period, including an assistant editor and a news editor, and had bureaus in Kimberley and Kroonstad (with one full-time reporter each), plus a network of about 11 reporters across smaller towns in the Northern Cape and Free State, drawn from an associated network of local newspapers. JVE commented that this was smaller than the newsroom had been in the past, and that at one stage *Volksblad* had employed five reporters in Welkom alone.

At that time, *Volksblad* published three daily editions – one for the Northern Cape, one for the Platteland (including Free State, Welkom, and Smithfield districts), and a "city" edition focused on Bloemfontein. Each edition had a customised front page and featured local-specific content on page 4. JVE explained that while *Beeld* was national in focus and included more international news, *Volksblad* was more of a regional newspaper and focused on industries, particularly agriculture, covering news that was of interest from a community perspective. JVE had determined a group of additional core interests for readers, which included court stories, crime news, and church news. According to JVE, the typical *Volksblad* reader was a "41-year-old white male who was married with children". Approximately 12% of its readers at that time were black.

An editorial meeting was held each morning, where a draft news list was presented by the news editor (who would have held preliminary meetings or spoken to each of their reporters beforehand) and important stories for the following day's edition were identified and, if needed, allocated resources. Front page and lead stories for the three editions and for the sports and business sections were also discussed. In the afternoon, a second meeting was held with the production team, where stories were allocated to specific pages. JVE explained that, after the production team had arrived in the afternoon, it was customary for the senior editorial staff to have an informal coffee meeting where they would "share [their] views on the day's newspaper, and what went wrong last night. To me that was one of the anchors of the day."

The *Cape Argus* had a substantially larger newsroom, publishing two editions (morning and afternoon), with a staff of between 30 to 40 people, including the sports desk and production team. GA explained that the morning edition was prepared the night or the day before, while the on-day afternoon (Late Final) edition was prepared "from about 6am onwards, for an 11am deadline". The morning edition was introduced in 2012 and impacted the newspaper staff's schedule, changing from a Monday-to-Friday operation to a six-day-week operation, with the bulk of the team working from Sunday to Thursday. Some reporters, including the court reporter (who at that time was JO), would work Monday to Friday, depending on their beat.

GA says that during his time as editor he worked to retain what he described as a "family kind of tone" in the paper, so that it would be "welcome in the home ... there were never in-your-face bodies on the front page. It was always about strong family values." The paper attempted to cover all parts of the Cape Town Metro area, "from Melkbos to Hanover Park and Khayelitsha" and frequently included stories from the Eastern Cape, because there were large communities in Cape Town with links to that region. GA believed that the readership at the time was predominantly coloured and majority female, with a growing black audience and a shrinking core subscriber base of white readers.

The daily production schedule for the *Argus* was not dissimilar to that of *Volksblad*: at around 10 a.m. the newspaper's reporters would meet with the news editor or their section editor. A news conference would take place at around 11 a.m., during which time the news diary would be presented to the editor (GA worked with an assistant editor and the news editor), and the next edition's early pages would be planned. A second conference was held later in the day, where the team set about planning the late pages (which included the front page, the world

news page, and "news selections made in the afternoon"). Between the two news conferences, a late-final update meeting took place with the team responsible for the on-day edition to account for any important breaking news or other issues. GA says that this was often more of a consultation with his assistant editor, who "had a great news sense and cracked on with it."

News24 and SAPA were both nominally 24-hour operations and operated distinct day and night shifts, with the night shift typically being smaller or on a skeleton staff.

News24 went through a number of content and platform iterations subsequent to its launch in the late 1990s. By 2013, several content sections had been disaggregated, and JM says that about 25 people worked exclusively on the "hard news" team, with separate editorial teams for other sections, including Women24, Wheels24, etc. JM said that most of *News24*'s content was generated from the SAPA feed, aggregated from other news sources, or came from other Media24 newspaper titles, including the Afrikaans-language newspapers (content was translated into English). Only five to ten long-form stories a week were planned as original content for the platform.

In this model, digital newsroom operations deviated significantly from those of the newspapers. JM says: "In a digital environment, a person decides to publish a story and decides on the importance of the story – where it will be highlighted on the home page – but it's impossible to operate like a news editor [at a newspaper], who decides what will go in tomorrow's edition. We were publishing 150 to 200 stories a day, and you don't know in advance what 60% to 70% of them are going to be."

JM was editor of *News24* and, from 2011, editor-in-chief of all 24.com titles. As a result, many of the day-to-day operations for the *News24* site were handled by the day and night editors. The respective teams' working times were staggered, with a day shift arriving between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m., and a night shift working from around 2 p.m. or 3 p.m. until midnight. The period between midnight and 6 a.m. was historically quiet, although JM noted that from around 2013, increased mobile internet use started to drive earlier traffic, which started spiking from about 5.30 a.m. Consequently, one of the editorial team would begin preparing content from around 5 a.m.

In the day team, JM said that there were dedicated sections: world news, Africa news, science and technology, and local South African news. Individual reporters were allocated to these sections and (under the editor) were responsible for regular updates, subbing new received copy (e.g. from the wires), and updating pictures. In the event of breaking stories, the shift editor would move resources as needed. JM pointed out that, where in a traditional newsroom there would have been additional layers of revise-subbing before publication, the News24 model was leaner and "employed people who could sub copy [straight] from the wires, and then publish it". For original content, at least one additional person subbed the story before it was published.

SAPA did not publish content directly, but supplied news content to approximately 100 paying subscribers, which included a number of non-media clients (political parties, embassies, and so on, who were not allowed to publish the wire content). For readers not familiar with SAPA's model, the agency historically functioned as a non-profit, non-government, independent content "pool" for domestic news, funded through members' subscriptions. SAPA provided "wholesale" news to its publishing clients, meaning that each member received the same content at the same time. There were no external commissions (editorial decisions were made by SAPA's own team), and SAPA customers could not purchase exclusive or first rights to stories.

Although the SAPA newsroom had shrunk substantially by 2012/2013, MVDV says that its primary aim was still to operate as the "newspaper of record" for South African news. SAPA's total editorial staff at that time was about 35 or 36 people, including MVDV, although on a day-to-day basis this might translate into "two or three journalists, a news desk, a copy taster,[82] and a few sub editors". Under MVDV were an executive editor and two shift editors, one for the day shift and one for the night shift.[83] The SAPA head office was in Johannesburg, with branch offices in Pretoria, Durban, Bloemfontein, and Cape Town, and another in the Parliamentary complex. SAPA also worked with stringers.[84]

[82] A copy editor who "tastes", or previews, the text content.
[83] At the *Cape Argus*, *News24*, and SAPA, the assistant editor, news editor, and day/night editors were all female. JO and JM said their newsrooms at that time were also predominantly female. MVDV said there was frequent churn within SAPA, but the newsroom was also often majority female.
[84] A freelance contributor who posts or submits reports on a regular basis.

MVDV explained that, in terms of crime news, a staffer would be assigned each morning to make "crime calls" – contact police and other sources – although police officials were "increasingly reluctant" to provide this information (discussed further below). MVDV described the production process as being like "news triage" in terms of deciding which stories to cover or continue covering, which stories to hold, and which stories to drop. "It's slightly different to a newspaper process. With a wire agency, you've got the almost uncomfortable luxury of looking at a story that is only in front of you for a short while before you go on to the next one."

According to MVDV, SAPA would send out its news wires "as quickly as we could possibly get it out". Wires were coded – F for "flash" (for example the death of Nelson Mandela), U for "urgent" (a budget speech announcing taxes going up or down), and R for "routine" or ordinary news. The agency also sent out regular diaries and schedules, including one at 2 a.m. specifically designed to help those on the early news desks. This was followed by a late-morning schedule with an update of news and another schedule at around 5 or 6 p.m., with a preliminary diary for the following day to allow news editors to plan schedules and allocate resources. SAPA also sent out advisories for upcoming events such as press conferences.

Although SAPA's role was as an independent, co-operative news source – and it therefore did not produce copy or provide preferential rights or access for individual subscribers – MVDV says the agency regularly fielded "anxious" requests from weekend newsrooms looking for fresh content. "They weren't worried what it was, they just wanted something new." Where this was possible, SAPA would oblige. "We would dig out a [shelved] story about a drunk pedestrian who had been killed the night before, turn it into a couple of paragraphs ... It sounds blunt, but that would then make the news."

As the court reporter, JO's daily routine (at the *Cape Argus*) had many elements in common with SAPA reporters. JO said that, around the time of the study year, the newspaper employed between 12 and 15 full-time reporters, including beat reporters (such as the court beat). At that time there was no dedicated crime reporter. JO's work covered events predominantly in the Magistrates' and Regional courts in the Western Cape, although she also sometimes covered cases at the High Court.

JO had to manage her own news diary and, in collaboration with the news editor, decided which stories to cover. Her work generally followed fixed hours, from Monday to Friday, unless there was an urgent matter appearing before the court. JO's news diary was constructed from potentially newsworthy items drawn from a number of sources, including the monitoring of events that were published or broadcast by other news outlets. She explained that court reporters usually have court diaries (this diary is typically handed over from the previous court reporter), which are populated as stories are covered. Many court processes drag out for years, so the diary functions as a way of marking follow-ups and court appearances for important cases. MVDV described similar processes at SAPA.

Information for the court diary was obtained in a number of ways; in some cases, SAPS sent out a media statement about a crime, in which they indicated when and where a suspect would appear before the court (the role of SAPS is discussed in more detail in the next section). There was also a court roll at the High Court every day, which reporters could scan for details, well-known names, and interesting or high-profile cases. JO explained that in the lower courts, reporters built up professional relationships with justice officials, including prosecutors, court orderlies, lawyers, and clerks, which might help the reporter learn when cases were coming up and whether they would be heard or postponed to a specific day. The latter was particularly important. JO covered up to 54 different courts – "Not all of them, but about 85% of them. You wouldn't want to send a resource all the way to Mitchell's Plain if the case was going to be postponed." Exceptions to this occurred when journalists knew there would be a postponement but went to court to cover community outrage or protests in response to the original crime, because "When that happens, people want to know what the next step in the process will be."

JO says that after her news diary was sent to the news editor, she would "get into [her] car and spend most of the day at court", returning to the office later in the day to file between two and three stories. For higher-profile court cases, like the trial of Indian national Shrien Dewani, JO filed stories from the courtroom to make the 11 a.m. news deadline.

Crime news in a high-crime country

Gruenewald et al. (2009: 263) write that when "crime is abundant, news personnel decide what crimes to cover and what crimes to ignore based on their newsworthiness". While this is nominally correct, the interviews in this chapter and my own work in newsrooms suggest that this statement does not capture the myriad factors and influences that accompany these

decisions when made in the high-crime, low-resource South African news environment. Future research might focus on newsrooms in high-crime regions in Africa and South America, rather than relying on studies conducted in relatively low-crime, high-resource Western countries.

All the interviewed editors explicitly described the difficulties of covering crime in the South African context – although these difficulties were experienced differently according to the platform or organisation. After several years of consecutive declines in the country's murder rate, the 2012/2013 study coincided with a climb in the murder rate. Even the notion of a "decline" should be seen as relative: at the country's "lowest" murder rate, an average of 43 murders were reported every day (SAPS crime data 2011/2012).

JVE recalled an often "overwhelming feeling of compiling the news of murder after murder. It becomes about news management mode." At one stage, JVE said *Beeld* featured victims of home robberies almost every single day. "People started to 'joke' that we were using the same story, just changing the name of the hospital [that the victim was in]."

According to JVE, there was a clear understanding that readers were fed up and didn't want to read about crime all the time. Unless, of course, the crime affected them directly. "People would complain if there was too much [crime] coverage, but they would also complain if you didn't cover a crime [that affected them]."

Newspaper editorial decisions had unexpected consequences for online news coverage. JM commented that when he was the news editor at *News24* (a few years before the study year), one of the nicknames for the website was "Crime24". "The perception was, if it bleeds, it leads, because we would take the lead story from *Beeld* every day and it was always some blonde woman who had been raped and killed. The night editor would take that story, translate and publish it. And that would be the best-read story every day."

JVE also said that the editorial team at *Volksblad* went through stories in *Beeld* and *Die Burger*, and

> decided which of those stories to use and which not to. It depended on the time of the week – I would imagine there would have been higher coverage of news on Monday, because the guys were working on a Sunday – but also the size of [our] newspaper. If it was a big edition you

> would publish stories that previously you would not have – you had space, and now you needed to fill that space.

JM said that *News24* started publishing crime stories from the moment SAPA began to file them each morning, starting at around 7 a.m. "It gave the perception that the place was being overrun by crime. And I'm not saying crime wasn't a problem, but what we presented was not a true reflection. It was just the strategy at the time. You publish as stuff comes in." JM instituted changes that staggered the rate and number of crime stories at any one time and moved crime stories away from being the main story all the time.

Faced with similar challenges, GA made a specific call to push back against the notion of "If it bleeds, it leads" by "putting crime in the inside pages rather than blowing it up upfront. Family values were important. I didn't want people to choke on their marmalade. That wasn't what the *Cape Argus* was about."

GA was "cognisant of not beating people over the head on crime issues. Sometimes you can't get away with it. If there was a big story you have to cover it. But over the space of five days, you have to balance it."

GA felt that the "*kaalgat* killers, bodies" [85] approach adopted by tabloid titles like the *Daily Voice* (also Independent-owned) "sold a lot of newspapers, but I believe it did more long-term harm to the reputation of the paper." GA says he was criticised for not having a dedicated crime reporter but explained that he didn't want to cover events and preferred to cover issues. JVE also utilised this solution at *Volksblad*: "We would try and look at how to cover the trend, not just the individual attack or incident. We would try harder to answer 'why', not just reporting on 'what'."

Both GA's and JVE's comments challenge Gruenewald et al.'s (2009: 263) assumption that, "in order to sell news, news media emphasise stories that are graphic and violent crimes, because such stories are preferred by audiences (Gans, 1979; Kaniss, 1991)." This is not to say that such crimes don't drive sales, but that it is problematic to assume that all news media choose to pursue this model.

[85] *Kaalgat* is an Afrikaans expression meaning "naked". In this instance, the phrase "*kaalgat* killers" refers to a headline on one of the streetpole posters issued by the tabloid *Die Son*.

A rationale for this approach may have been the relatively strong community ties both papers had, albeit in different iterations. JVE repeatedly commented on the community core that threaded through *Volksblad*'s operations. "It was great to have a newsroom that was really involved in the community. But the terrible thing was that they would also have to cover people that they know."

For GA, this was expressed as "family values", but it also spoke to the diverse areas and communities that the paper reached and on which it reported, and where many of the reporters themselves had come from. "People used to say that we only wrote about Khayelitsha when there was a murder or Manenberg when there was gang violence. So we made an effort to tell good news stories. And when we did cover gang violence, to try and tell it from the perspective of someone who lives there, but not to make it about 10 dead bodies."

In her interview, JO commented that she grew up in Eerste River, explaining "It's a poor community. There are very few resources, very few positive stories. I wouldn't want to tell a negative story [about Eerste River] because that's the only kind of story that makes the paper from those communities."

There was also, across the group, a shared acknowledgement that the media was only able to cover a fraction of the crimes that were actually taking place.

MVDV says he was:

> always very well aware that we only really scratched at the top of stuff. Staff used to roll their eyes at me when I used this clumsy metaphor, that if you took a picture of Mount Fuji in Japan, I would say the news of the day was the mountain and the snow cap stays more or less the same. That's what we can get to. The snow cap. And a nice, routine murder story in one town today will be discarded as irrelevant tomorrow, because you've got some other stuff on. There would be days when we would literally dump dozens of potential stories. When Mandela died, that was the story.

All the interviews demonstrated that editorial decisions about crime-news coverage were regularly influenced or determined by much broader social contexts and chains of news events,

including non-crime news, and that variation in crime news was not always or exclusively a function of "newsworthiness" as Pritchard and Hughes (1997) had suggested.

To account for crime news variations, Pritchard and Hughes' (1997: 49) use notions of "deviance", defined as normative deviance (when an act violates formal norms, e.g. it is illegal); statistical deviance (the extent to which something is unusual); status deviance (the less status/power a group or individual holds, the less they will be covered); and cultural deviance (whether or how much an act complies with or deviates from cultural norms). They conclude that "status deviance and cultural deviance are important components of newsworthiness and that statistical deviance (unusualness) may be much less important than commonly assumed."

While these assumptions may hold true for individual crime stories, when broader newsroom and media systems are considered, qualities of newsworthiness become less linear and more complex. Paulsen (2003) suggests that when there are more homicides, homicides become more newsworthy. This may be true where homicide is an unusual (or statistically deviant) crime but is less applicable in countries where homicide is relatively commonplace, where an excess of crime (in society and/or the media) may inhibit crime coverage.

JVE said she once went through a year's worth of press clippings from *Beeld* to prepare for a column she was going to write at the start of 16 Days of Activism:[86]

> It was like a tsunami. And that's the big issue also in our newsroom – how to manage that flow of information without handling it as just another murder. I think maybe that's one of the reasons that there's a lot of coverage about some individuals. So that you can give a face to the story and so many other untold stories.

The quantitative portion of my media survey records that certain high-profile individual cases (specifically the murders of Anene Booysen and Reeva Steenkamp) contributed to a brief "bump" in the coverage of other femicides but did not appear to produce sustained or long-term amplification effects. Because newspapers in particular have finite space, high-volume coverage of high-profile cases usually means less space for other homicides. A similar effect

[86] The global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence runs from late November to early December every year.

is experienced during any large news event (e.g. Mandela's death), which draws journalistic resources and page space away from all other news, including crime news. Taylor (2009) observes that it would be useful to note other newsworthy events that positively or negatively impact femicide coverage. Conversely, on slow news days even routine (rather than unusual) homicide stories might make news headlines, suggesting that "newsworthiness" has temporal and contextual qualities that may be as important as "deviance" and may offer more pragmatic explanations for variations in what is reported.

Finally, the role of the police services should be considered in order to understand how crime stories are processed and produced in South Africa.

Working with the police: sources and suspects

> How would I get information about crimes? In a number of ways. Sometimes people would call and give tipoffs. Also, your contacts. Lots of Community Policing Forum groups, neighbourhood watches, having your ear to the ground. I was travelling by train at the time, and I had been told, "Don't discredit anyone as a source." You would listen to people talking, "Did you hear about this? Did you hear about that?" There was following up, going to the cops and asking if something had happened or not, getting official confirmation. Cops would send in press releases. Political parties would do the same. And you had to follow up on what the competition is doing, stories in *Die Burger*, the *Daily Voice* or *Die Son*, we needed to follow up. (JO)

There were (and are) effectively five primary ways that journalists and/or editors can learn about new homicide cases: directly from SAPS through a media statement or, occasionally, as a confidential tip-off; via a tip-off from a witness or community member (GA mentioned that in some areas, ward councillors might call the newspaper with a story); via legal counsel involved in a particular matter – lawyers may contact journalists directly with information; by seeing a case on a court roll; or from other media sources. It was common practice to read competitive papers or news sources, to read news content in other languages (particularly the Afrikaans press reading the English titles or platforms and vice versa), and to look to small-town local papers for tip-offs.

In all of these instances, the police were particularly important, not only for official confirmation of a murder, but also for basic information that would allow a reporter to write even a short piece – details about the victim, the alleged suspect or perpetrator, the cause and place of death, whether or not any arrests had been made, and so on.

JVE said that when she started working as a journalist:

> The police had public relations officers and they would call you if there had been a murder. But that changed. You almost had to call and say, 'This is the information we have, can you confirm it'. And they might confirm, but they would not share information. So unless you had good contacts, you wouldn't get the news.

In the case of *Volksblad*, these limitations were mitigated by the newspaper's own extensive community networks. "We didn't have 'freelancers' so much as we had people who had been in the community for a long time," JVE says. "Often they were not trained journalists, maybe they were retired teachers, they were people who had been around a long time. They would give us the first call, 'Did you know…'. People know how to contact everyone in a small community."

JO said that while she relied on the police as a primary source for new stories, they "offered a very bad service. If we sent enquiries, they would give us one-line responses with very little information to work with." This was where JO's "black book" of contacts came into play, and she was able to informally access a number of "really reliable, brilliant sources" within SAPS, with whom she built good relationships over the years. JO also interacted with community policing forum (CPF) members and neighbourhood organisations. "They weren't big, but they were better, more effective at giving you more information. They would help you get in contact with the family."

JVE also mentioned local community policing organisations as an important news source for *Volksblad*. "As crime levels started to rise, communities started to get organised. Local community policing organisations became a source that we started to trust." JVE said that in Bloemfontein in particular, the role of community police organisations was to provide support for SAPS rather than because the communities no longer trusted SAPS. "These were people

who organised for prevention; they were eyes and ears for the police. They know their community. It was not a trust issue. They knew the police needed some kind of support."

MVDV also spoke about SAPA reporters' struggles to obtain information from SAPS. "The one thing I did become more aware of [was] cops deliberately withholding a lot of that kind of information. Just not sending it out or letting it out unless it was specifically asked for." MVDV believes that in some cases this was "them trying to cover up [their] embarrassment at horrific crime numbers, at not being able to produce any arrests." As a result, MVDV says there was:

> quite a large base of news about crimes that never came to light. It was known about in the streets, in the community, but never went any further. Cops would suppress [stories], or their public relations capacity was so bad. They would regard all of it as bad news instead of as important news. So you knew there was a huge bank of stories that you would never know about.

MVDV added that it was also not enough for proactive reporters to phone SAPS, because the relative success of a response would depend on "which [police officer] was on duty, which one was more cooperative. Then you would be able to extract some crime stories, and after that you work out whether or not it's a big story or a run-of-the-mill one."

The challenges with SAPS may also, in part, have been due to inefficient or outdated information management systems (rather than obstructive police officers) within already resource-strained police services, where data was not necessarily centralised, even for internal use. At the time of the study year, there were numerous issues with SAPS management, and a decline in public perceptions of trust contributed to a decline in morale among SAPS members, with many police officials themselves losing trust and confidence in their leadership (Burger, 2012).

Based on responses from the interview participants, my own experience reporting on South African crime and crime statistics, and attempting to obtain data from SAPS, I believe the police–media interface is worth significantly more attention. It would be instructive to understand how this relationship has changed over time, and how it contributes to access and exclusion of information that impacts news-coverage options.

Which murders mattered?

The challenges experienced by and with SAPS should not imply that there was ever a shortage of crime events or homicides for the media to consider. Given the near-constant supply of potential stories that *did* make it to newsrooms, what factors decided whether or not to allocate resources to a murder? (Obviously, we do not know which murders newsrooms decided *not* to cover, only which ones they did.)

Pritchard and Hughes (1997: 63) write that "journalists on tight deadlines make very fast judgments about the newsworthiness of an event" and "race, gender, and age of homicide participants (especially victims) were the strongest predictors of newsworthiness". They suggest that the significance of these factors may be connected to the fact that the "victim's race, gender, and age are almost always available from police shortly after the fact of a homicide becomes public."

Pritchard and Hughes' assertion that journalists make decisions in isolation must be adjusted, as, in practice, both journalists and editors engage in such judgement calls. Furthermore, in South African newsrooms, other important initial considerations do not fit into Pritchard and Hughes' deviancy modelling, or even into typical "newsworthiness" models at all, and instead reflect pragmatic considerations about newsroom resources. These considerations are, broadly: where the murder took place (requires proximity to the newsroom or availability of a journalist in the area to cover the case); how much official information is available about the murder (requires enough information to craft a few paragraphs); and how much space is available to publish the story. Schudson (1989) describes some of these factors as the "mechanical" pressures of work; these modes suggest that, in very high-crime, low-journalistic-resource situations, variations in homicide news coverage have as much to do with economy as with narrative qualities.

JVE explained that, when situations arose where *Volksblad* had to choose which murder to cover, determining factors might include "proximity – so how close it was to home – and the quality of reporting [resources] that we had at that place." Reporters were allocated:

> depending on where and what happened, but it really was who was available *right now*. If there was an opportunity to choose, we would send someone who was a bit more experienced and who had covered these kinds of stories [murders and violent crimes] before. You don't want to

> send a journalist on her first day to speak to a family that has just lost someone in circumstances like that.

JVE also said that "the more information we had, the better the chance it would be published. If we didn't have the names of the victims, sometimes we would work on the stories the following day. And sometimes it was just a case of 'it's another murder', and the next day you move on."

GA echoed the need for proper information:

> I always felt there needed to be some kind of smoking gun before I would put it into the paper. There is no value in [unattributed] stories other than to create more speculation about an issue. I refused outright. It was rare to find an unnamed source in the paper, unless it could be corroborated or there was no other way of telling the story. But even then, I needed to know who the unnamed source was.

SAPA was able to implement a slightly different model. MVDV says that when a homicide story came in to the SAPA desk, there was a standing brief to:

> refer it upwards, to myself or the executive editor, and [they would] make a call on the story. [Sometimes] we didn't have all the facts. It could be big, not routine. While we were trying to get more [information], we would have to think how long do we hold back [before sending out a story]? We had all sorts of escape routes. [Using phrases like] 'as yet unconfirmed'. We would hold back the name of somebody. You could attribute uncertainties to the source. That was the luxury in a wire. Ten minutes after you've sent out the first story, you can run another one updating it with a few extra facts. You have to make the call that this is important enough to roll with what you've got, even if it's not perfect.

MVDV added that this:

> was how we dealt with all big breaking stories with critically missing elements; not only murders. It shifted authority and responsibility for deviating from prescribed desk requirements on a tricky story to a higher level. It would have been unfair to expect juniors to make such calls and then blast them when they got it wrong. But it was also a great way to show junior

> staffers how there was usually always a way around if we were confident enough the story was worth it.

Location was, similarly, an equal consideration when following up on stories, particularly those that were outside of the major city centres where SAPA had offices. MVDV said that in those cases it was a "combination of having a stringer hopefully not too far away or being able to quickly parachute a branch staffer into place."

Proximity and location were indeed significant considerations for all the publications. GA commented that although the *Argus* had a relatively strong staff component at the time, "When you strip that number down to pure reporting staff, you have to have a handle on what is happening in the [central] city. Atlantis was very important but was very difficult to get to. So it would fall by the wayside unless something big was happening."

Swellendam, 220 kilometres east of Cape Town, was similarly impacted. "The Swellendam circuit court used to cover all the areas in the surrounding rural community," GA explained, "and that was always a good place to find news. But it was really difficult to get into what makes those places tick. We were a daily newspaper, we didn't have the resources or the time." Over time, GA says that the *Argus* reduced distribution of the newspaper in those regions and reduced coverage of stories from those areas, consolidating its readership in the Cape Town area instead. The Knysna area was an exception, considered as "special interest. We had Garden Route media that worked as freelance units and that used to offer us things as and when they happened. Mostly court cases, the low-hanging fruit."

In the digital environment, these resource-allocation choices played out differently because of their reliance on syndicated or aggregated, rather than original, content. "News editors have very strong news senses. [In a normal newsroom] the news editor would plan what is scheduled for tomorrow, send out crime reporters," JM said. He continued:

> If there were 10 big stories but I could only cover two, [in a normal newsroom] I would have to make a decision. For *News24*, because we were very dependent on the content that came our way, we didn't have to make those decisions. A lot of the decisions were made by editors in newsrooms outside of *News24* – at SAPA, at *Beeld*, at EWN. That is part of the [digital] story.

JM also didn't think that:

> *News24* ever underplayed any crime story. Sometimes people might say we overplayed it, because we were always looking for content. But the decisions we took were mostly based around staffing and production. It's important to keep that in mind. People always have this idea there is this big conspiracy. Ultimately, we didn't have enough people at the time, and we were under pressure. Nine times out of ten that explains all the decisions that were made, the good and the bad. I reckon the mistakes that were made were due to this constant pressure on our team.

These comments, read together with the earlier section describing newsroom processes, are a reminder – particularly for academics outside of newsrooms weighing in on choices and outcomes that emerge from actual news production environments – that pragmatic, rather than simply ideological, constraints determine and influence news choices.

This is not to suggest that "newsworthiness" is not a significant factor. The "nature of the attack", as JVE put it, was a strong consideration and was certainly taken into account – and was accorded more weight when making resource allocation decisions. There is no disagreement that, rightly or wrongly, certain murders were accorded more interest and importance as potential stories. All the interviewees expressed this explicitly and simultaneously expressed distaste at having to make the kinds of editorial decisions that prioritised one death ahead of another.

MVDV said:

> I used to have a huge issue with people having to view one murder as less significant than another one. That if it was a German tourist on the beach it was more newsworthy than another gang killing in the flatland. But the harsh reality is sometimes it does work that way. That was where the experience of the news editor came in. If the story had legs we would phone more, chase up more – not just two paragraphs for the record in case somebody wants it.

He recalled that, when the first tip came through on the Shrien Dewani case:

> It was an incredibly bland story. A couple that seemed to have been kidnapped, one missing presumed dead, then found dead. It seemed totally routine. But tucked away in there was the

> information that they were British. That made it more newsworthy, because the British news media will want it. Immediately, that moves it from mundane to the big story of the day.

JO commented that one of the reasons she believed the Dewani story appealed to local audiences was not the importance of a foreigner, but the narrative of a foreigner "using a poor black person to commit your dirty work. R10,000 was like the sweet number. You could pick anyone off the street to commit the crime." Earlier in her interview, JO had mentioned a similar case that happened outside of Cape Town (in Worcester), where a wife had hired her gardener to kill her husband. "It was a white lady who used poor coloured workers to do her dirty work. Even though it was not in our readership area per se, it had the hallmarks of a great story."

JO said stories that generally drew attention were:

> a story that has the shock-horror kind of impact. If there was any child murder we would definitely cover it. A child murder or a rape. A case where a spouse had killed the other partner. We would generally do that, especially if the victims were white or middle or upper class because we seldom hear about [crime in those groups]. Gang rapes and gang murders would get reported on. White collar crime would be reported on if it stretched into the millions – like the Arthur Brown Fidentia story. Asset forfeiture would only be carried if it was a quiet news day – or if it was Arthur Brown or some notorious alleged gangster having his assets attached, if something was happening with their fancy homes and cars. We wouldn't cover civil matters so much, but there would be one or two. Rich white people complaining their neighbour's dogs were barking too much or that a tree was hanging in a yard. Something different, something that would get people talking. For other crimes, it might be the mere fact that you wouldn't have expected someone to do that. We've even done a story on a man who was sleeping with a dog.[87]

JO also discussed the frequency and relative prominence of some of her stories. "For me, all my stories should be a page lead at least, if not on page 1. That is just being a journalist." The decision as to what was used, where, and how, ultimately depended on the news editor. One important factor was whether or not there was a photograph to accompany a story: "Once you have a picture to go with a story, it's used better. But it also depended on the time of the month, whether there were fewer ads."

[87] This calls to mind the classic example of statistical deviance cited by Pritchard and Hughes (1997), that it is not news when a dog bites a man, but it is news when a man bites a dog.

Because it is not common practice in South African media to print or publish photographs of deceased victims' bodies, and images of crime scenes are also typically suggestive rather than explicit, the types of photos used for JO's stories ranged from standard portraits of the victim or the accused or the victim's family to community protests. When these were not available, they would use pictures of the evidence: the axe in the Van Breda murders;[88] a tree stump described in a rape and assault case. GA mentioned a murder case in which a photo of a parking garage entrance had been used to illustrate a story.

From GA's perspective, murder stories were not about driving sales:

> These stories were supposed to make people feel uncomfortable. Certain crime stories probably didn't sell well. A lot of people in Cape Town would feel, "This has never happened in my leafy community, and I'm not interested, really." And we were saying, "This is happening in your city, and one day it will happen in Tokai forest, which it did."[89] The truth is, if it's somewhere where people live, where they work, if it comes into their spaces, then it drives sales. I suppose that's "news". It's a terrible thing.

JO commented on the perceived geographical and narrative "territories" of different news titles, recalling that the *Argus* did not give much coverage to the violent rape and murder of Kraaifontein teenager Cytheria Rex in 2009, partly because the death occurred in what was considered a "*Burger* stronghold". The story was extensively covered in the (Independent and Media24-owned) tabloids *Die Son* and the *Daily Voice*, which may have been driven by the narrative and graphic aspects of the murder. Rex's death was alleged to be tik-related (crystal meth). She had been raped and stabbed 39 times, her stomach sliced open, and her body loaded into a wheelie bin, which was used to dump her corpse in the nearby veld. Seven men were arrested and charged with the murder, but, after numerous court delays, no convictions were ever made.[90] "It's not always a matter of how horrific it is," JO said, drawing a comparison between Rex's death and the later murder of Anene Booysen (which the *Argus* gave prominent coverage to). "I don't know why we never really covered it. It may have been the readership.

[88] In 2015, Henri van Breda killed his parents and one of his siblings with an axe and seriously injured another sibling.
[89] In March 2016, teenager Franziska Blöchliger was raped and murdered in Tokai Forest.
[90] Two stories covered Rex's murder in 2009, but there was no subsequent coverage by the *Argus* of the court case, which only began in 2012.

It also depends on the news of the day. You have to make a tough decision as a news editor, or even a court reporter."

JO said that choosing which cases to cover had "a lot to do with the mood, with public interest. Media plays such an important role, because we shape public opinion. But you are the ones who put it out there and made them want to be interested in the story to begin with."

Measuring public response to stories was particularly interesting on the digital site because of the immediacy of the information. JM said that while part of his brief at *News24* was to grow the website's audience:

> that can't be the only factor, otherwise it's a clickbait factory. You had to balance [audience traffic] with newsworthiness and decide what is important for people to know. If you publish a story and get 5,000 clicks, that might be a lot for some sites, but on *News24* some stories would get 50,000 clicks. If you get or write a 50,000-click story, naturally you follow that up more. But sometimes you publish the 5,000-click story anyway, because it is in the public interest. We used to have a programme that would provide real-time analytics. I had a dashboard. I could see in real time, at any given time, how many people were on the home page, how many people were clicking on a story as it happened. When Oscar [Pistorius] got convicted there were 100,000 people on the site at that moment. You can see when a story is working, and you can see when you have a great story and people aren't clicking on it. Maybe the headline is wrong. You can change the headline and see the engagement spike. It's a useful tool but also dangerous.

Newsworthiness is not the only way stories matter to journalists

Although news coverage of violent crime can appear to be (relatively) dispassionate – the "just the facts" approach – journalists and editors are frequently affected by the stories they encounter, and an awareness of both public and personal interests shapes their selection and narrative processes. Gekoski et al. (2012) describe these as the "unpredictable factors" when determining the newsworthiness of a homicide, which otherwise include five "superordinate" themes: "perfect" versus "undeserving" victims; statistical deviance; whether or not the killers are still at large; the sensational aspects of a case; and whether a case involves a serial killer (Gekoski et al., 2012).

Interviewing journalists and editors five years or more after the crime events under discussion, it was not expected that the interviewees would remember every femicide case they covered or published at the time (in some of the initial interviews, lists of victims' names extracted from the database were supplied to editors and journalists before interviews, however these generally did not serve as memory prompts with the exception of the more prominent cases). And yet, there were individual crimes that stood out for the participants in many of the interviews. Many of these crimes preceded the study year, and some even dated back to periods when the editors were working as reporters. These "significant" crimes stayed with them and were described as having an impact on their subsequent homicide coverage.

When asked about the awareness of femicide and gender-based violence in the newsroom, GA replied that for him it was:

> almost a special category. When I was a young crime reporter at the *Cape Times*, the Valencia Farmer murder happened, and it really shook me at the time.[91] Just the way it happened, how brazen it was. In that community, people just shrugged their shoulders and said it was a gang ritual, that was just how it was. Roger Friedman was the news editor at that time, and he was saying it was a story that was important, because here was a young teenage girl with her entire life ahead of her. Calling it a ritual almost means it is normal, but it is not. [Nearly] fifteen years later, Anene [Booysen] happens, and it is almost eerily similar. I just thought, this is the one occasion I want to lead with a crime story. It's so pervasive that it can't be normal. You have to tell people, you have to put it in their consciousness so that they know *this* is not okay. That was what I tried to do with these pieces [about Anene]. I was looking out for think-pieces and other content around it. At the same time, we were seeing rape culture exploding. What were men being told or taught about their sister, their mom, kids, girls in class, about how to engage with women?

GA got personally involved with activism campaigns, including a fundraising bicycle ride to raise funds for Rape Crisis. "It cost around R100 an hour for counselling, and I raised quite a bit of money, I think. What I was trying to say was, we were all part of the solution. You can't say you need to be part of the solution if you're not participating."

[91] 14-year-old Valencia Farmer was gang-raped in Eerste River in 1999. She was stabbed 53 times and left in an abandoned house. She was discovered, still alive, and was able to name her assailants before she died in hospital.

The *Argus* was also involved in the LeadSA campaign, which GA now says he has mixed feelings about, and a separate Stop Rape campaign:[92]

> What we tried to do was turn it more into an issue than an event. We followed up with our own campaign called 'Don't Look Away' around the time of 16 Days, saying that everybody is affected by [gender-based violence]. It was about covering it in a way that went beyond the courtroom and the arrest.

JO said she had to learn:

> very early on to be objective. In the beginning [covering criminal cases] definitely affected me negatively. I used to dream about these things. When Ananias Mathe escaped from C-Max,[93] I dreamt that. My dreams were often jumbled up. There was a murder where a baby had been killed and was put in a black bag. I dreamed the baby was playing with a plastic bag and I strangled the baby. [One story was about] a three-year-old girl. The neighbour had raped and killed her. There were these crazy quotes that stuck with me. He literally raped her to death. He penetrated her so deeply that her kidneys ruptured. The body goes into hypovolemic shock. That is what killed her. Eventually I went for counselling. I had to take serious steps to detach myself.

About going to court, she added that:

> Sitting through all that crap, then writing my story, was a means to release all the gunk I had just listened to. Then I would go home, purposefully decide to switch off. I used to go dancing, I got involved in church activities. So that, tomorrow, I'm just coming to do the story.

JVE also explained the importance of looking after her team:

> You can only send your journalists to so many crime scenes. *Beeld* had great support systems. If you needed any help you could get into an employee support programme. We tended to think about the crime reporters, but [often] we forgot about the court reporters – who will sit through

[92] LeadSA was a "call to action" campaign endorsed by Independent Newspapers and Primedia Broadcasting (http://www.leadsa.co.za/about).
[93] A serial rapist and robber who escaped from maximum security prisons in Pretoria and Kokstad.

> a whole case and hear the same details over and over again, whereas the crime reporter was on the scene only for that moment.

Many of the *Volksblad* murder stories were covered by outside offices, which was a further issue of concern for JVE.

> Those people work in very different circumstances, mostly isolated. They don't have a support system in place. You need that, even if it's just a coffee with a colleague and you can say, that was a terrible story. At *Beeld*, at one stage we organised a group session. There were all these different journalists struggling with the same problems covering crime. To have a platform to share that emotion in a safe space is very important.

JVE also voiced concerns about a sometimes-overlooked aspect of public interest: not just "an important story the public needed to know about", but caution about how a story is told in terms of the public responses it might trigger.

> One of the first calls I had to make at *Volksblad* was a phone call I got from the night office. There had been a family murder in Harrismith. They had been axed to death. The community was outraged, and it was being treated as black-on-white violence. But we had information it was actually the brother. Normally we wouldn't write the story without official confirmation, but I made the call to write it. It was a small town and we didn't want to contribute to racial tension.[94]

JVE said that being so close to the communities they covered "influences your decisions, which I think is a good thing. Either we say [what we know] and get into trouble for publishing at a stage we should not have, or we publish on what happens next. We don't want to be responsible for what happens next."

When the news had first come through about the Steenkamp family murder in Griekwastad in April 2012, JVE noted that it was also initially reported as a farm attack. The media's handling of the Griekwastad events is something that, in future, would be worth closer analysis – because of the original attempt by the white killer to blame the event on unknown black perpetrators,

[94] Dominee (preacher) Willem Brits and his future son-in-law, Gerhard Vermeulen, were killed in the attack, which occurred in November 2012. Brits' wife, Dorothea, was seriously wounded. The Brits' adopted son, Martin Brits, and his accomplice, Elliot Mhlambi, were convicted of the crimes.

but also because of the media's coverage of the case. For well over two years, the primary suspect, Don Steenkamp – who was later convicted – was not named, because he was a minor at the time of the attacks. JVE said that, in addition to the sensational aspects of the case, the Griekwastad murders were closely followed by *Volksblad* readers because the Steenkamp children (Don and his sister Marthella, who he murdered) had attended school in Bloemfontein, and "everyone in Bloemfontein [which was the newspaper's primary urban market] knew the family."

Conclusion: How we understand and study "newsworthiness" needs to be revised

Although this chapter draws on a small sample of editors and one journalist, the approach – describing and integrating broader newsroom practices – adds significant context and information to previous studies about how and why particular homicides are covered by the media. Although narrative qualities including race, gender, age, and "unusualness" do influence news coverage choices, they do not sufficiently account for the importance of other consistent newsroom factors, such as the availability of journalistic resources, the accessibility or proximity of the event, and whether or not the police are willing or able to provide information on the case.[95] In this context, the functioning of a professional newsroom should not be confused with "newsroom culture" (Gruenewald et al., 2009), and the so-called "unpredictable factors" (Gekoski et al., 2012) of public interest and personal journalistic interest should perhaps be reframed as constant, despite not being easily measurable based on media outputs.

Overall, studies of newsrooms and journalistic practices would be strengthened by the inclusion of more journalists (rather than academics) in the study design and implementation and by broadening the diversity of the roles and individuals who are interviewed. Women and black journalists are dramatically under-represented in these studies, although this may simply reflect newsroom structures in most Western countries. Future studies would also benefit from interviewing not only journalists but also editors, including news and shift editors, and by diversifying the content platforms to include different types of national, regional, and local news outlets. At the same time, models of "newsworthiness" should occasionally be expanded

[95] The obstructive role of SAPS here must be distinguished from what Pritchard and Hughes (1997) describe as police "bans" on information.

to consider the impact of other (non-homicide) news stories, which can easily be plotted using the same media-survey tools.

CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION (AFTERMATH/EPITAPH)

> I think he shot six times, then I fell on the ground but he was still shooting… that's when I saw that no I've already shot on the head. (Lisa, 39)
>
> Apparently [he] fired six bullets but only four got me (Anna, 32),
>
> I had 16 bullet wounds on my body (Maria, 30).
> (Van Den Heever, 2017; 145)

Although this is a study about how and what the media reports about women who have been killed, it is also about the aftermath of that violence. It is for those who survived, like the women quoted above from a study into homicide-suicides involving police force members (Van Den Heever, 2017), and for those who are left behind.

We do not study representations of violence simply to better understand the mechanisms of how violence works. We study violence so that we can prevent it, or so that we can reduce it. Perhaps we also study violence as a way of mourning. In the wake of the mass shooting of 14 women in Montreal, Andrea Dworkin (1997: 105) wrote, "it is very hard to think of an adequate way to mourn, but we know that tears are not adequate. We know how to cry. The question is: how do we fight back?"

Having spent more than five years reading and cataloguing stories of murder, I am constantly aware that the few lines on the pages of a newspaper or a website that I have tracked represent the real lives of real women. And that, despite my best efforts, I am not always able to recall the names of the women on this list. The parts that I remember most are the notes (written for my own benefit) at the end of each entry, a sort of aide memoire, describing some notable point about the case. It was these notes that I would see repeated again and again, as if they had been cut and pasted onto newspaper headlines, and only the date had been changed: the grandmother raped and killed by her son or grandson; the woman who had a protection order against her killer; the woman and her mother shot through the door of her home by her policeman ex, using his service pistol; the woman's body found dumped between shacks, or next to train tracks; the woman on her way home from a tavern; the killer who beat his partner while drunk and then

went to sleep, and only realised she was dead when he could not wake her up; the victim who was pregnant; the victim who was killed with her husband; the victim who was killed because she was old and alone…

Like the Dworkin quote I used at the start of this thesis, I am sick to death of not being able to remember the names of the women who are killed.

How do mixed-methods approaches provide new insight into media coverage of femicide?
A research problem is not always the same as the issue-question that prompts the start of a thesis. In the case of this project, it began with a simple need: I wanted good-quality data about South African news coverage of femicide and could find nothing recent or extensive enough. After I started thinking about how to find and compile this information, I realised this had to follow with another question: to what end – for what purpose – was I collecting this data? These requirements indicated, early on, that I would need to find or develop ways of integrating and mixing both qualitative and quantitative data and approaches, which in turn led me to a mixed methods framework and design.

My research question emerged from this process: *what is the profile of femicide produced by South African media and how is this profile selectively produced?*

To answer this, I conducted a rigorous survey of South African commercial news media sources and used this process to build and populate an extensive database of victim, incident and media information. Data from and about thousands of individual media sources (e.g. news clippings, websites, and so on) were consolidated into standardised Excel spreadsheets, the contents of which were summarised and analysed using pivot tables and other tools. These provided the basis for subsequent comparative analyses (i.e. comparing the results of the media survey with other studies on femicide, or into media coverage of femicide), and a number of parallel mixed-methods studies (which studied the data/content relative to itself).

Within the central research question, I had identified several sub-questions that my work would need to address. The first of these looked at the creation and analysis of data on media, and on crime and gender-based violence in media, and asked what existing methods were used to look at this type of data. The second group of questions asked what we knew about femicide – how was the concept defined, how was data on femicide created (and what was this data like), and

what was the statistical landscape of femicide in South Africa? The next questions integrated the first portions – media and femicide – and asked how femicide was reported in South African commercial news media, how this media coverage compared with statistical data, and what factors if any appeared to influence (increasing or decreasing) the incidence or frequency of news coverage. From these, I asked how these factors constructed particular notions of femicide in South Africa.

I introduced my research problem in Chapter One by situating my research question within the continuum of inter-personal violence in post-apartheid South Africa, and within an overarching framework of "media effects" theories.

My methodological framework (mixed methods research) was discussed in the second chapter. This was prefaced by a discussion around the challenges, opportunities and limitations associated with *how* we might choose to study media (particularly text) sources in an age of digitisation and automation, and which I believe particularly informs the choice of mixed-methods as a suitable paradigm for contemporary in-depth media-based research.

Questions related to definitions of femicide were discussed and answered in the third and fourth chapters of the thesis. The third chapter provided a comprehensive genealogy of the concept-term "femicide", tracing its fairly recent iteration and evolution together with parallel or intersecting political and social events connected to gender and gender-based violence. It also observes how the phrase has come to represent multiple, sometimes divergent, notions reflecting political, societal, epidemiological, and criminological issues and ideologies. Chapter four, which discusses the rather brutal statistical landscape of femicide in South Africa, primarily through mortuary-based epidemiological studies, demonstrates the convergences of these issues, and highlights the need for a coherent rather than fractured approach. I.e. femicide is a persistent problem, and it cannot be properly addressed as long as it is still treated as a matter of ideology.

In chapter five I returned to methodological questions and reviewed recent academic papers on media coverage of homicide and femicide, assessing the studies' selection and or use of data source(s), their research methodology, and their outcomes, before going on to describe my own media survey methodology and results in chapter six (discussed below). In chapter seven, I looked at questions of validity and legitimation of data – first, from a theoretical perspective

within a mixed-methods paradigm; and, second, by testing the robustness of my own survey data through comparisons with other data sources and/or survey methods.

In chapter six I was able to draw direct comparisons between parts of my media survey/database, and statistical data from the previous chapters, which gave a preliminary profile of the differences or divergences between the version of femicide that was constructed through news reports, and the reality of femicide as it was seen in mortuaries and police stations. The media profile of femicide was then used as a prompt for two distinct mixed-methods studies, which explored factors that influenced news coverage of femicide and which indicated how particular notions of femicide victims and perpetrators were constructed through media reports. In chapter eight this was done through a framing analysis that looked at media coverage of non-intimate femicide, and which identified profiles and framing schema used to nominate or define ideal victims and "super predators". In chapter nine, the full media survey data was analysed to look at how femicide coverage broke down by newspaper, by region, and by language. This was concluded with in-depth interviews with editors and journalists, about newsroom and editorial processes and decisions as they related to femicide stories, which attempted to re-contextualise the outputs (articles) that were determined and enumerated in the media survey.

The findings that are presented in this thesis show quite clearly that media coverage of femicide in South Africa is not representative of actual incidences of female homicide in the country (with less than 20% of all femicides making it into the press at all), and that the limited media coverage that *is* presented constructs particular and inaccurate notions of violence against women, including perceptions of who is most at risk, and who should be most-feared as perpetrators of this fatal violence. Media representations of crime are important not only because media coverage plays a role in cultivating fear of crime within its audience but, as previous studies have shown (for example Seedat, 1999), media coverage can also influence government and non-governmental policies on both defining the "problem statement" and determining suggested solutions.

What is also significant about the multiple research approaches and findings in this thesis is that they were all conducted using the same media survey database, and that the database itself was designed to be fit-for-purpose. This study has produced new and important results in terms of our understanding of media coverage of femicide; but, equally, this is directly because of

how the study collected and constructed relevant and rich media-based data that could be interrogated in multiple ways.

What is the value of this study?

There are a number of reasons why we should study femicide in and through the context of media. As I have noted, above, news media remains a primary source of public information about violent crime in particular, influencing how society perceives the dynamics of such violence, and even cultivating a fear of crime. Media coverage also tells us something about the society it reports on, and more particularly, it can tell us about that society at particular points in time – a barometer of the zeitgeist. This is of course a collaborative relationship, an ouroboros of media and society, where media is as much an actor as a reflector. Through inclusion and exclusion, media coverage of crime tells us who matters, whose bodies matter, who is given the status of a legitimate victim, who is most-feared as a predator. Finally, media coverage of crime can provide valuable information about crime itself. Even though media coverage typically has no correlation with actual crime, media reports can still add important details that are not usually included in official crime data: it tells us about the victims, who they were, how they lived, as well as how they died. In many countries where the state only makes available limited information about crime to begin with – and this includes South Africa – media coverage may also be one of the only publicly available sources there is.

Looking at the context of global studies of homicide or femicide coverage in media, this study presents the largest and most detailed dataset of media coverage of femicide to date, not just for South Africa but in any country. This is important not only because of the breadth and scope of the data (and how that in itself enables new questions), but also because of how the data was constructed and collated. This study is, in part, a proof of concept: that a single researcher can construct a large, methodologically robust database, using primarily manual skills and tools. This means that the methods used in this study can be easily replicated, as they do not require any specialised programmes or platforms (aside from access to archives or clippings services) and can easily be adapted for use in languages other than English. The research method also allows for and even encourages the integration of multiple types and formats of media sources (e.g. press clippings, archives, online platforms, community media PDFs and so on), and clearly demonstrates the need for this – i.e. that even formal clippings or archiving services are not always inclusive or representative on their own.

Within the context of academic research, the construction of this database also demonstrates the value of building and sharing broad and deep material, against which multiple enquiries can be conducted, rather than limited data against which only narrow or shallow enquiries can be performed by a limited number of people. This is not to say that all such research must be conducted against thousands of articles at a time; rather, that there is the potential to collaborate on larger data sets within which narrower, specialised enquiries would have more validity and agility. As text mining programs become more sophisticated and more easily available, the capacity of social scientists and media and journalism researchers to integrate larger data sets will also enable better dialogue between disciplines and mitigate the potential threat of media and journalism studies being relegated to some sort of coding proficiency. At the same time, media researchers who study representations of violence in the press will also benefit from integrating their methods (at least to some extent) with previous and parallel work being done in related areas of justice, crime, and public health research.

These multiple suggested "collaborations" speak directly to the mixed-methods core of this study, and it is also hoped that work like this will encourage qualitative and quantitative researchers in related fields to seriously consider the potential pragmatic, methodological and theoretical framework benefits of integrated and synthesised paradigms. The ideal of mixed-methods should be to more closely integrate theory and praxis – what Hesse-Biber (2012: 137) describes as creating "a tight link between the research problem and the research design."

Results

This is the first South African study of media coverage of femicide to look at both intimate and non-intimate femicide in the news. It is also the first study to include national news coverage of femicide, and to include news coverage in both English and Afrikaans.

The results from this study confirm many existing hypothesis described in chapter five (about media coverage of crime in general, and homicide and femicide in particular), including that media coverage of crime does not accurately represent the reality of crime; that media coverage of crime may actively distort the incidence of crime; that elderly victims and white victims are more likely to be covered than other groups, and are more likely to receive prominent coverage; and that murders involving rare or sensational characteristics are associated with higher news coverage. This study also confirms other hypotheses: that media reports on femicide can, in themselves, increase the newsworthiness of homicides (for example, the deaths of Anene

Booysen and Reeva Steenkamp saw a short-term increase in the total number of femicides reported in the media); that media reports on femicide can function as valuable sources of information on femicide; and that geographic and particularly language factors can enhance or inhibit the newsworthiness of homicides. Although these are sometimes assumed to be "universally known", my readings indicate that this is not the case, and it is nonetheless important to test and demonstrate the data in different contexts, particularly in a country like South Africa which has such an exceptionally high rate of interpersonal violence and of femicide.

A number of unique and/or new findings have also emerged from this data, and which suggest potential for future research. The first is coverage of non-intimate femicides in news media – this is an area that has been neglected due to an emphasis on intimate partner violence studies, but which reveals important and complex dynamics around victim and perpetrator profiles. Second, because of the national reach of this study and its dual language approach, this is the first femicide study to expose the extent of the differences in regional coverage of the murder of women, and also how these differences play out between languages. This demonstrates the value of and even the need for more national and multi-lingual studies, but also highlights the perhaps under-acknowledged limitations of previous studies where media data has come from a single news title or platform, a single region, or is limited to a single language (in multilingual countries). A final significant feature for me is the newsroom interviews in chapter nine. These reveal that the processes through which news coverage of femicide is selected and constructed are far more nuanced than previous studies have suggested. Rather than blaming the presence or absence of coverage on the supposed salaciousness of a reporter, or the whims of a publisher, media stories on crime are influenced by multiple complex dynamics including financial and human resources, the availability of information from police services, and even the justice system itself, and that these constraints are deliberately considered and managed within a broader ambition of being both relevant and responsible to each title or platform's audience, and broader society.

Findings

This study makes a number of key findings – some of which were not specifically stated in the initial research questions but which emerged through the research process, and need to be mentioned as they have a significant impact on how we interpret or contextualise previous research, and how we might improve future research study designs.

Roughly following the order of the chapters in this paper, these are:

i. **Using mixed-methods approaches allows researchers to build larger and more robust media data sets which can more easily accommodate diverse/non-uniform media source inputs and which enhance the diversity, contextualisation, and validity of results.** Research into media coverage of crime is often associated with qualitative approaches, which can lead to narrow or shallow results. Using mixed-method approaches that integrate and synthesise qualitative and quantitative data and methods facilitates more relevant, pragmatic designs and solutions, and enables greater methodological reflection and robustness. Further, mixed-methods studies of media data enable improved diversity and contextualisation of research question, which allows researchers to gain new insight from these studies.

ii. **A broader universal definition of femicide is necessary in order to standardise and enable integrated global research into femicide.** Although femicide is an extremely nuanced concept, representing sometimes distinct and divergent political, ideological, and epidemiological issues, the lack of consensus around the term – between researchers, law enforcement agencies, government bodies, and so on – serves to disable meaningful discussion and research, and particularly disables comparative and cross-border research of the phenomenon. There are a sufficiently large number of global studies that show why it is problematic to use motive as a qualification for "femicide", and studies that also consistently demonstrate a unique profile for female homicides where the victims are older than the age of 14 years.

iii. **Studies of media coverage of femicide urgently need to expand beyond Western countries where profiles of violent crime and violence against women may not match those of countries in the Global South.** The majority of studies into media coverage of crime/violent crime, including femicide and homicide, are conducted in

"Western" countries (i.e. North America, the United Kingdom, Western Europe). While these studies still offer great value, on many levels, they cannot be seen as representative and many of their findings are either not appropriate for or not generalisable to countries in the Global South, including South Africa, where there is a black or brown majority, and where there are often much higher levels of inter-personal violence in general, and violence against women in particular.

iv. **80% of femicide victims are not covered in the press. News coverage that is published presents a skewed and inaccurate picture of the reality of femicide and minimises the incidence of intimate partner femicide.** The results from my media survey indicate that a minority of femicide incidents are covered in the press, and that, among these white and elderly victims are over-represented by numbers and, exponentially, in the volume of news coverage they receive. Similarly, coloured women victims are under-represented in media reports. Intimate femicide is also under-reported in the media. Media reporting on femicide is over-represented for victims in Gauteng and the Western Cape (although this may also be due to the higher concentration of media platforms and journalists in these provinces), and under-reported/represented in KwaZulu-Natal, North West, Mpumalanga, and Free State.

v. **Studies of media coverage of femicide need to expand to include coverage of non-intimate femicides.** Although intimate femicide is the most common type of female homicide, and deserves a greater amount of attention, this study indicates that the majority of media coverage of femicide is of non-intimate murders. This is an important area of study that yields significant findings in terms of the racial profiling of suspected perpetrators, and the societal validation of who is and who is not given the status of victim.

vi. **Institutional sources dominate South African media coverage of non-intimate femicide, and personal voices are invisible (except for certain white victims).** The prominence of institutional sources in South African media coverage of crime is to be expected, and is consistent with multiple previous studies (see Chapter Five). This study also showed that, through this mechanism, personal voices are largely silenced and/or rendered invisible, particularly for black victims. Analyses of media coverage of

prominent white victims also indicates that in certain cases, a stronger personal voice may be allowed in media coverage.

vii. **Media coverage of femicide is dominated by "mega" cases that tend to become shorthand for societal knowledge about murder.** The results of my media survey show that a very small proportion of high-profile or prominent femicide cases are responsible for the vast majority of media coverage of femicide. My data also shows that while these cases may provide a short-term boost in terms of coverage of other femicide cases, this is not sustained. When media coverage of femicide is viewed over time, it is evident that "mega" cases gradually transition from incident-based reporting to thematic shorthand, or they become a form of metaphor for femicide, and represent what society typically "knows" about femicide.

viii. **There are stark differences in media coverage of femicide by region and by language.** A detailed analyses of media coverage by newspaper/platform (looking at distribution region), and by language, shows that there are very large differences in the profiles of femicide that are covered by individual platforms or publications, and that these are strongly influenced by region, and by language. Where English-language media tends to include a majority of black victims in its femicide coverage, the majority of femicide victims covered in the Afrikaans-language press are white.

ix. **In high-crime and resource-limited societies, "newsworthiness" is a more complex factor that extends beyond reporters' "gut instincts" and usually involves multiple intersecting dynamics including the availability of newsroom resources, and competing news stories.** Newsroom processes and actors are often not well-described or understood in academic studies of media coverage of crime, and tend to oversimplify or oversignify media systems and processes and the roles of individual actors. This is compounded by a relative lack of diversity in many such studies, which (as before) tend to focus predominantly on resource-rich newsrooms in Western countries, and almost exclusively feature white male participants. In South African newsrooms these processes and decisions take place within a high-crime (and high crime-news) environment, and where newsroom resources are increasingly limited or constrained. As a result, editorial decisions are often strongly influenced by practical concerns, and a desire to balance the amount of crime featured in news stories.

Recommendations

This thesis is suggested as a framework and a foundation for future research, so that we can learn more not just about violence against women, but about narratives of other violence – in South Africa and, potentially, other countries in the Global South that bear a disproportionate burden of inter-personal violence in general and violence against women in particular, and where a lack of state information and a lack of resources has perpetuated knowledge gaps that cannot be filled by parachute anthropological studies.

In the South African context, the contents of this media survey database can and should be used and tested by other researchers – whether in media, crime, gender, or data – who may have additional or supplementary or different or better questions than the ones I have posed. Together with this, it would be ideal to use this database as a beginning, and not an end. That is to say, it would benefit from the addition and integration of femicide data from further crime years, to test whether 2012/2013 was itself a "normal" crime year, or an anomalous one. While this is being done, it would also be reasonable and desirable even to extend the research / data collection to not only female homicides, but to all homicides. As much as there is a relative paucity of publicly available information about femicide, this is even more so for male homicides – which, of course, make up by far the majority of murders in South Africa. Research of and data collection from media coverage of homicide could add important and currently absent information to broader studies into crime and interpersonal violence in South Africa, and in other countries.

In order to maximise this potential, I also believe that media researchers and data and social scientists using media sources need to have urgent and intensive conversations about methodological questions, and that mixed-methods approaches be seriously explored as a way of introducing or improving methodological robustness, transparency and accountability. With that in mind, this data (including the media survey database in its current form) could also be used by machine learning programmes, as training material that may, in future, enable improved computer-aided outcomes.

Whether or how this will help us in identifying solutions to prevent or reduce violence is a question that this study cannot answer. South Africa remains an extremely violent society – with no clear or definitive answer as to why, or at least, why it has persisted to such a great

degree. South Africa is not the only country to have endured centuries of brutality from colonisation, slavery, and the theft of resources. Apartheid was a distinct feature but was also not wholly unlike a spectrum of other violent and discriminatory practices that were deployed across the global south in particular. And yet we are, now, almost unique[96] in our remarkable aptitude for violence. Antony Altbeker (2007) once described South Africa as a "country at war with itself". The narratives put forward in contemporary South African media affirm that these hostilities are not only ongoing, but that they are unrelenting. It is impossible to escape the constant reminders of violence, on streetpole posters, on website headlines, on social media posts. This persistence in itself has an impact on what we believe about crime, and what we believe about others. We are a country that is afraid of itself, and rightly so.

[96] Together with a handful of central and south American countries.

ANNEXURES

A. Summary of Femicide* Data 1999-2018

B. Sample media entries from media survey database showing format and type of entries

C. News titles and platforms included in media survey

D. List of murdered women posted online by Sunette Bridges, July 2013

E. List of victims aged 60 years and older (media survey)

F. List of incidents (victim and perpetrator) where the alleged perpetrator was described as an employee

G. Top Media Titles (50 individual/unique stories or more) by individual/unique story

H. Ethics clearance certificate

I. Participant information sheet for journalists

J. Participant information sheet for editors

K. Femicide in Media: Interview schedule for participants – journalists

L. Femicide in Media: Interview schedule for participants – editors

M-Q – Consent forms from participants

TABLE A.1: Summary of Femicide* Data 1999-2018

Femicide = Homicide of a female aged 14 years or older by any perpetrator
Intimate femicide (IF) = Murder of a female aged 14 years or older by a current or former intimate partner of any gender, including rejected partners
Non-intimate femicide (NIF) = Murder of a female aged 14 years or older by someone other than an intimate partner

** Sources: SA Medical Research Council 1999 and 2009 national femicide studies (Mathews et al., 2004 and Abrahams et al., 2013); National burden of disease study, 2009 (Matzopoulos et al., 2015). 2009a refers to Abrahams et al., 2013 and 2009b refers to Matzopoulos et al., 2015.*

	1999 national female homicide study	***rate / 100,000 population (1999)***	***% of n (1999)***	***2009 national female homicide study (2009a)***	***rate / 100,000 population (2009a)***	***% of n (2009a)***	***2009 injury-related mortality study (2009b)***	***rate / 100,000 population (2009a)***	***% of n (2009b)***
N= *Number of female homicides (unweighted)*	1,052			930			2,740		
n= *Number of female homicides (weighted)*	3,793	24.7		2,363	12.9		2,740	11.3	
n = *cases in police system*	3,296			2,325			-		
n = *cases not in police system*	502			38			-		
n IF	1,349	8.8		1,024	5.6		-		
n NIF	1,335	8.6		768	4.2		-		
n *perpetrator not ID'd by police*	612			533			-		
IF by age group							-		
14–29 y	649	10.3		474	6.0		-		
30–44 y	524	12.8		430	8.5		-		
45–59 y	71	3.5		103	3.2		-		
60+ y	26	1.5		14	0.7		-		
IF by race							-		
All		8.8					-		
African IF	1,023	8.9		801	5.7		-		
Coloured IF	252	18.3		173	10.1		-		

ANNEXURE A (continued)

Indian IF	21					3.5	-		
White IF	53	7.5		18		1.5	-		
Suspected rape homicide		2.8		28					
All	526		16.3	455		2.5	-		
IF	151	3.4 [3.65]		108		0.6	-		
NIF	171	1.0		210		1.2	-		
Median age		1.1							
IF	29			31			-		
NIF	37			41			-		
Mean age							-		
IF	30.4						-		
NIF	41.2						-		
Victim characteristics							-		
Victim pregnant							-		
IF			2.4			3.6	-		
NIF			1.0			3.1	-		
Perp convicted							-		
All			37%			37.4	-		
IF			35.1			23.1	-		
NIF			32.7			-			
	1999 national female homicide study	**rate / 100,000 population (1999)**	**% of n (1999)**	**2009 national female homicide study (2009a)**	**rate / 100,000 population (2009a)**	**% of n (2009a)**	**2009 injury-related mortality study (2009b)**	**rate / 100,000 population (2009a)**	**% of n (2009b)**
Cause of death									
Blunt force							735	3.1	27%
All			33.2			29.5			
IF			21.2			22.4			
NIF									
Gun injury							611	2.5	22%
All	1,147	7.5	33.3	462	2.5	17.4			
IF	405	2.7	30.6	179	1.0	17.1			
NIF	435	2.8	33.6	132	0.7				
Sharp force/ stabbing							823	3.4	30%
All						31.4			
IF			33.2						

ANNEXURE A (continued)

Strangulation/ asphyxiation	*NIF*	34.3	35.5		
	All			315	1.2
	IF				
	NIF				
Fire/burns	*All*			79	0.4
	IF				
	NIF				
Poison	*All*			72	0.3
	IF				
	NIF				
Perp committed suicide (related to the femicide)	*All*	19.4			
	IF	16.6			
	NIF		18.2		

ANNEXURE B

Figure B.1 Sample media entries from media survey database showing format and type of entries.

MEDIA COVERAGE LINK OR NAME	MEDIA CODE	DATE OF AR	AUTHOR	PDF NAME	CLIPPING PD	ARTICLE COL	SAPA/WIRE	Total ar
Y DOMESTIC WORKER								20
http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2012	TIMES	24-May-12	Philani Nomber	Mpho Tutu f led	1520124979.	1	N	
http://www.iol.co.za/saturday-star/tut	SS	17-Apr-12	Bianca Capazori	Tutu domestic w	1520123329.	1	N	
Murder at Tutu Daughter's House (sam	WEEKEND AI	14-Apr-12	Bianca Capazori	NA	1520124472.	1	N	
http://www.news24.com/Archives/City	CP	04-May-14	Bienne Huisma	Forgiveness is a	062014902.p	1	N	
http://www.thenewage.co.za/mobi/De	TNA	09-Aug-13	Vincent Cruywa	Tutu safety conc	NA	1	N	
http://www.iol.co.za/weekend-argus/i	WEEKEND AI	01-Nov-14	Caryn Dolley	Impact of a motl	NA	1	N	
http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-cour	CA	22-Sep-14	Natasha Prince	TutuÕs gardener	NA	1	N	
http://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/killer-	CA	18-Jul-12	Jade Witten	ÔKiller must hav	NA	1	N	
http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-cour	CA	16-Apr-12	Sibongakonke M	Motive for killing	NA	1	N	
http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/df5f03	SABC	14-Apr-12	NA	SABC News - Pol	NA	1	N	
http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-cour	CA	03-May-12	Sibusiso Nkomc	Murder of Tutu c	1520128100.	1	N	
http://www.iol.co.za/pretoria-news/dc	PN	03-May-12	Caryn Dolley	Domestic strangl	NA	1	N	
Mpho Tutu's Gardener in Dock (same a	CA	03-May-12	Caryn Dolley	NA	1520128269.	1	N	
http://www.netwerk24.com/nuus/201	NETWERK24	31-Oct-13	Nielen de Klerk	Dogter van Tutu	NA	1	N	
http://www.netwerk24.com/nuus/mis	BURGER	29-Aug-15	Jana Breytenba	Man vry n‡ moo	NA	1	N	
http://www.netwerk24.com/nuus/201	BURGER	02-Feb-15	Jana Breytenba	Tutu-tuinier teke	NA	1	N	
https://www.pressreader.com/south-a	CA	13-May-13	Jade Otto	NA	1520131118	1	N	
Tutus Beef Up Security	ST	11-Aug-13	Shanaaz Egging	NA	1520135717.	1	N	
Police probe murder at home ofTutu's c	SUNDAY ARC	15-Apr-12	STAFF	NA	1520125554.	1	N	
Tutu se tuinier vas na moord	BURGER	03-May-12	Maygene de W	NA	1520124905.	1	N	

ANNEXURE C

News Titles and Platforms Included in Media Survey

1. 100punt6
2. AFRIKANER
3. ALBERTON RECORD
4. ALGOA FM
5. ALLAFRICA
6. BARBERTON TIMES
7. BEDFORDVIEW EDENVALE NEWS
8. BEELD
9. BEELD NAWEEK
10. BENONI CITY TIMES
11. BIZCOMMUNITY
12. BLOEMFONTEIN COURANT
13. BOKSBURG ADVERTISER
14. BOLAND GAZETTE / KLEINMOND GAZETTE
15. BOSVELD REVIEW
16. BURGER (DIE BURGER)
17. BUSINESS DAY
18. CAPE ARGUS
19. CAPE TIMES
20. CARLETONVILLE HERALD
21. CAXTON NEWS SERVICE
22. CHANNEL24
23. CHATSWORTH RISING SUN
24. CITIZEN
25. CITIZEN SATURDAY
26. CITY PRESS
27. COSMOPOLITAN
28. CX PRESS
29. DAILY DISPATCH (also: Dispatch)
30. DAILY MAVERICK
31. DAILY NEWS
32. DAILY SUN
33. DAILY VOICE
34. DAILY VOX
35. DESTINY
36. DESTINY CONNECT
37. DIAMOND FIELDS ADVERTISER
38. DIE HOORN
39. DIE POS
40. DIE SON
41. DRUM
42. EASTERN CAPE TODAY
43. EAST COAST RADIO
44. EDGE COMMUNITY NEWS
45. ENCA
46. EP HERALD
47. EWN
48. EXPRESS
49. FAR NORTH BULLETIN
50. FARMER'S WEEKLY
51. FINWEEK
52. FREE STATE TIMES
53. GEORGE HERALD
54. GROCOTTS
55. GROUNDUP
56. HEARTFM
57. HERALD
58. HOEVELDER/HIGHVELDER
59. HUISGENOOT
60. IAFRICA
61. IKAMVA
62. INDEPENDENT ON SATURDAY

63. IOL
64. ISIZULU24
65. ISOLEZWE
66. IZINDABA24
67. JACARANDA FM
68. JBAY NEWS
69. KATHU GAZETTE
70. KEMPTON EXPRESS
71. KERKBODE
72. KFM
73. KNYSNA PLETT HERALD
74. KOUGA EXPRESS
75. KROON NUUS
76. KRUGERSDORP NEWS
77. LADYSMITH GAZETTE
78. LAEVELD BULLETIN
79. LANDBOUWEEKBLAD
80. LEADERSHIP
81. LENASIA NEWS
82. LIMPOPO MIRROR
83. LOOK LOCAL
84. LOWVELDER
85. MAIL & GUARDIAN
86. MAHALA
87. MAMBA GIRL
88. MAMBA ONLINE
89. MARIE CLAIRE ONLINE
90. MERCURY (Natal Mercury)
91. METRO NEWSPAPER
92. MIDDELBURG OBSERVER
93. MOPANI HERALD
94. MOSSEL BAY ADVERTISER
95. MPUMALANGA NEWS
96. MTHATHA EXPRESS
97. MWEB
98. NATAL WITNESS (Witness)
99. NETWERK24
100. NEWS24
101. NORTHERN NEWS
102. OFM
103. OPPIDAN PRESS
104. OUDTSHOORN COURANT
105. OVERSTRAND HERALD
106. PARYS GAZETTE
107. PE EXPRESS
108. PE EXPRESS INDABA
109. PEOPLE MAGAZINE
110. PEOPLE'S POST
111. PEOPLE'S POST ATHLONE
112. PEOPLE'S POST WOODSTOCK
113. PERDEBY
114. PLATINUM WEEKLY
115. POLOKWANE OBSERVER
116. POST
117. POTCHEFSTROOM HERALD
118. PRETORIA NEWS
119. PRETORIA NEWS WEEKEND
120. R NEWS
121. RANDFONTEIN HERALD
122. RAPPORT
123. REKORD MOOT
124. REKORD PRETORIA NORTH
125. RIDGE TIMES
126. RISING SUN CHATSWORTH
127. ROSEBANK KILLARNEY GAZETTE
128. SABC
129. SANDTON CHRONICLE

130. SARIE
131. SATURDAY ARGUS
132. SATURDAY INDEPENDENT
133. SATURDAY STAR
134. SATURDAY VOLKSBLAD
135. SEDIBENG STAR/STER
136. SERVAMUS
137. SOMERSET BUDGET
138. SOUTH COAST HERALD
139. SOUTHERN COURIER
140. SOUTHLAND SUN
141. SOWETAN
142. SPRINGS ADVERTISER
143. STAR (THE STAR)
144. STEELBURGER
145. SUNDAY ARGUS
146. SUNDAY INDEPENDENT
147. SUNDAY TIMES
148. SUNDAY TRIBUNE
149. SUNDAY WORLD
150. THE BEAT
151. THE NEW AGE (TNA)
152. TIMES (THE TIMES)
153. TLOKWE NEWS
154. TNA FREE STATE
155. TRIBUNE
156. TYGERBURGER
157. VAALWEEKBLAD
158. VISTA NEWS
159. VOCFM
160. VOLKSBLAD
161. VROUEKEUR
162. VRYSTAAT
163. VUTHA NEWS
164. WOMEN24
165. WEEKEND ARGUS
166. WEEKEND POST
167. WESLANDER
168. WEST CAPE NEWS (WCN)
169. WINTERVELDT NEWS
170. WITBANK NEWS
171. WITNESS
172. WITS VUVUZELA
173. WORCESTER STANDARD
174. YOU
175. ZOUTNET
176. ZOUTPANSBURGER
177. ZULULAND OBSERVER

ANNEXURE D

Sunette Bridges' list of murdered white women, reposted on farmitracker at http://farmitracker2.rssing.com/chan-16247364/all_p8.html

07/02/13--15:49: 55 white women murdered by unknown black males since 15 May 2012 to date in South Africa - names, dates, details:

55 white women murdered by unknown black males since 15 May 2012 in South Africa: Sunette Bridges writes: "Journalist Brodie stated in a Rapport article: and I quote... "A White woman has a greater chance to get murdered by her lover as by an unknown black man'. Wel miss Brodie, here is the list of the names of 55 WHITE women, murdered in South Africa in the past 14 months, by 'unknown Black men'! I expect to receive a list from you with the names of the MORE that 55 white woman, murdered in the same period by their lovers and spouses. ...or forever shove your stats where the sun doesn't shine! 1. 15 May 2012 – Tess Broskie (92) raped and murdered in her home by a gang of black men in Malvern, Johannesburg. 2. 17 May 2012 – Vanessa Stafleu was brutally murdered by a gang of black men, in front of her 2 small children, on her farm in Randfontein. 3. 22 May 2012 – Margaret de Goede (62), the Daycare mother of Wiaan Botes, was murdered in her home in Delmas by 2 black men. 4. 25 May 2012 – Annetjie Madden (62) was stabbed to death in her dairy shop in Brandfort by 2 black men. 5. 29 May 2012 – Inga Nortje (33) was abducted and stabbed to death by a gang of black men in Middelburg. 6. 31 May 2012 – Julie Cruse (72) was tortured with boiling water and a hot clothes iron and finally strangled to death with a scarf by 2 black men. 7. 31 May 2012 – Pietie Bower (88) was brutally attacked and tortured on her farm in Potchefstroom by a gang of black men and died a week later from her injuries. 8. 4 June 2012 – Arina Muller (29) was shot to death in front of her parents by a gang of black men on their smallholding in Centurion. 9. 6 June 2012 – A gang of 8 black men shot and killed the mother of a young boy on Plot 13, Johan Road in Honeydew. Name withheld to protect the identity of the child that is now orphaned. 10. 9 June 2012 – Helena Gouws (62) was murdered during an attack in her home in Ugie. She was stabbed to death with a knife by a black male. 11. 11 June 2012 – June Nefdt (73) was murdered in her home in Cape Town by her black gardener. 12. 14 June 2012 – Betty Robins (77) was stabbed to death in her home in Port Edward by a black man. 13. 20 June 2012 – Gloudien van Rensburg (64) was brutally assaulted by a gang of black men on a farm in Baltimore. She died of her injuries 6 days later. 14. 18 July 2012 – A 73-year-old woman was beaten to death in her home in Edenvale by a gang of black men. http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Rowers-slaan-73-jarige-by-veilige-huis-dood-20120719 15. 23 July 2012 – A 71-year-old white woman was found bludgeoned to death in her home in Germiston. She was murdered by 4 black men. http://www.looklocal.co.za/looklocal/content/en/germiston/germiston-news-crime?oid=5917796&sn=Detail&pid=490065&Elderly-woman-murdered 16. 25 July 2012 – Geraldine Viana (43) was gang raped and murdered along with her family on their smallholding in Walkerville by 3 black men. 17. 5 August 2012 – Annette Knoetze (64) wat stabbed to death in her home in Odeldaalsrus by a gang of black men. 18. 13 August 2012 – Ronel van Eyk (46) was shot 3 times by a gang of black men on her farm in Hartbeesfontein. She died on the scene. 19. 5 September 2012 – Alyssa Botha (13) was shot dead in front of her sister and father by a gang of black men at their home in Muldersdrift. 20. 6 September 2012 – Bets Greeff (79) was suffocated to death in her home in Sandton by a gang of 3 black men. 21. 6 September 2012 – Annemarie Birk (41) was raped and murdered by a black man at her home in Ermelo. 22. 9 September 2012 – Cecile Fourie (72) was tortured, hacked with an axe and eventually shot to death on her farm in Trompsburg by 3 black men. 23. 15 September 2012 – A 56-year-old woman was bludgeoned to death while her 92-year-old mother was being raped by a gang of 6 black men at their home in Westonaria. Name withheld because of mother's rape. 24. 16 September 2012 – Susan le Roux (65) was tortured to death and her body burnt by a gang of black men in her home in Pietermaritzburg. 25. 4 October 2012 – Anzunette du Plessis (33) was murdered in her home in Claremont in the Western Cape by a black man. Her

throat was slit. 26. 4 Ocotber 2012 – Surina Kriegler (62) was strangled and stabbed to death in her home in Elsburg by a gang of black men. 27. 4 October 2012 – Mikeila Baillie (25) was murdered in her home in Ruimsig by a gang of 4 black men. Her throat was slit. 28. 7 October 2012 – Elizabeth Louw (92) was murdered in her home by black men. She was strangled to death. 29. 21 October 2012 – Corlia Kock (39) was murdered in her office in Vryburg by a gang of black men who beat her to death. 30. 24 October 2012 – Minke Aucamp (18) was shot to death in her parents driveway in Springs by a notorious black highjacker. 31. 5 November 2012 – Marjory Southerland Uren (93) was murdered in her home in Port Elizabeth by 2 black men. 32. 5 November 2012 – Marieta Maree (61) was murdered in her home in Potchefstroom by 2 black men. 33. 10 November 2012 – Hester Koch (62) was raped and murdered on her farm in Phillipi by a gang of black men. 34. 22 November 2012 – Annette Muller-Botha (74) was tortured to death by 4 black men in her home in Boksburg. Her entire face was smashed and she was strangled to death. 35. 24 November 2012 – Susan Armstrong Flight (60) was strangled to death in her home in Darling by a black man. He was caught when trying to draw money with her ATM card. 36. 5 December 2012 – Betsie Gouws (60) was stoned to death by a mob of black attackers on her farm in Belfast. 37. 9 January 2013 – Elna van Heerden (69) was bludgeoned to death and stuffed into a freezer by 3 black men in her home in Belfast. 38. 13 January 2013 – Annatjie van Rooyen (68) was murdered and stuffed into a freezer by a gang of black attackers on her farm in Parys. 39. 15 January 2013 – Fiona Finnis (57) was shot to death in her home in Centurion by 4 black men. 40. 22 January 2013 – Lorraine Shepheard (78) was brutally murdered in her bed in her home in Port Elizabeth by a black man. 41. 29 January 2013 – Hettie Phillips (51) was attacked, raped and murdered by a gang of black men in her home in Cradock. 42. 6 February 2013 – Dawnsy Mieny was murdered by a black man in Cape Town. 43. 7 February 2013 – Carmen van der Westhuizen (38) was raped and stabbed to death by a black man in her home in Welkom. 44. 9 February 2013 – Lorraine Adam (69) was butchered to death with machetes and knives in her home in Bethuli by 6 black men. 45. 12 March 2013 – Suzie Willemse (84) was brutally murdered in her home in Port Elizabeth by her black gardener. 46. 22 April 2013 – Shirley Soffiantini (63) was raped, strangled and murdered in her home in Umhlanga by a black man. 47. 29 April 2013 – Nadine Prinsloo (20) was shot to death in Centurion by a black man. 48. 1 May 2013 – Babs Roos (70) was tortured and murdered by a black man in her home in Klerksdorp. 49. 2 May 2013 – A 60-year-old lady was attacked and murdered while her 89-year old mother was being tortured in their home in Greenhills. Name withheld because the mother was raped. 50. 8 May 2013 – Erika Rousseau (68) was murdered in her home in Wellington. She was suffocated to death by a black man. 51. 23 May 2013 – Jenny Lachenicht was murdered in her home in Keptonpark by a black man. She was beaten to death with a garden shovel. 52. 24 May 2013 – Annebe Lategan (32) was raped and murdered in Elsburg by a black man. 53. 24 May 2013 – Traudel Kretschmer (76) was murdered by 3 black men in her home near Picketberg. She was beaten to death. 54. 27 May 2013 - Carmen Manthe (37) was hacked to death with axes and knives in her home in Willowvale by 3 black men. 55. 8 June 2013 – Melinda Lee Bam (30) was shot to death in her bed during an attack on a farm in Gravelotte by 3 black men. ---------- The difference between me and the Stats peddlers is that I deal with FACTS! The NAMES of the Wives, Mothers, Grandmothers, Daughters and Sisters - All 55 of them, who were raped, tortured and murdered! ...and not by 55 Black men, but by at least 147 of them! I have attended funerals, raised funds for funerals and planted crosses on the Ysterberg mountainside with the names of the people you have reduced to statistics! I have had enough of this! The next time you thumb-suck a stat about my people you better back it up with facts! " Sunette Bridges:
https://www.facebook.com/SunetteBridges/posts/540098189382747?comment_id=79557965&reply_comment_id=79559076&offset=0&total_comments=100

ANNEXURE E

Table H. 1 List of elderly victims[97] (60 years+)

Victim name	*Total articles*	*Age*	*Occupation*	*Race*	*Place of death*
1. UNNAMED	1	60	U	Black	Mount Ayliff
2. Unidentified	1	60	U	Black	LUSIKISIKI
3. Marita Maree	1	61	U	White	POTCHEFSTROOM
4. Sophie Abrahams	1	62	U	U	Cradock
5. Unidentified	1	62	U	Black	Libode
6. Thobeka Nhami	1	64	U	Black	Duncan Village
7. Unnamed	1	65	UNKNOWN	Black	Xhwili village
8. Unnamed	1	65	U	U	101 Flamingo Street
9. Unidentified	1	65	U	Black	Mahasane Village
10. Veronica Wilkinson	1	65	U	U	Mhluzi
11. Maletsa Nkone	1	67	PENSIONER	Black	BOTSHABELO
12. Unnamed	1	70	U	U	Actonville
13. Unnamed	1	70	U	Indian	Condor Avenue
14. Unnamed	1	70	U	U	Horison
15. Rebeka Shwane	1	70	PENSIONER	Black	ATHLONE
16. Unnamed	1	73	U	U	Kwasanti
17. Johannah Nomqibelo Mbonani	1	73	U	Black	KWAGGAFONTEIN
18. Unidentified	1	80	U	Black	Queenstown
19. Unnamed	1	81	U	Black	Flagstaff
20. Kgobane Eleanor Thobejane	1	81	PENSIONER	Black	MADEIRA VILLAGE
21. Unidentified	1	83	U	Black	BHUKWANA
22. Unnamed	1	87	U	U	Westonaria
23. Unidentified	1	88	U	Black	NKULU WARD MARGATE
24. Theresina or Tess Broskie	1	92	RETIRED	White	MALVERN
25. UNNAMED	2	61	U	Black	MOUNT FLETCHER
26. Duduzile June-Rose Khomo	2	64	U	Black	Umzumbe
27. Serena also Surina Kriegler also Kruger	2	64	SALES AGENT	White	ELSBURG EAST RAND
28. Julie Cruse	2	72	LIQUOR STORE OWNER	White	PULLENS HOPE
29. Nothembile Zenzile	2	72	U	Black	Ntonga Village

[97] Excluding Susan van Dyk as indicated in Chapter Eight.

30. *Irene Khanyile*	2	80	PENSIONER	Black	KWAMASHU
31. *Petie Bouwer*	2	88	RETIRED	White	SYFERFONTEIN
32. *Unidentified*	2	92	Retired	Black	Mount Fletcher or Mount
33. *Bets Gouws*	3	60	GARDEN SERVICE	White	BELFAST
34. *Unnamed*	3	65	U	U	Horison
35. *Mieta Sarah Matshidiso*	3	67	U	Black	IKHUTSENG, WARRENTON
36. *Unnamed*	3	71	U	Black	Machubeni / Lady Frere
37. *Thokozile Tembe*	3	72	PENSIONER	Black	NGWAVUMA (INGWAVUMA)
38. *Sabitha Sewlal*	3	73	U	Indian	AVOCA
39. *Margaret (also Margareth) Shihlangu*	3	76	Pensioner	Black	Nkambaki village
40. *Unnamed*	3	83	U	Black	Gwabeni
41. *Evelyn Nombeko Tofu*	3	87	Pensioner	Black	Gugulethu
42. *Reina Louwrens*	3	94	RETIRED	White	MONTANA
43. *Susan Armstrong Flight*	4	60	ACCOUNTANT	White	DARLING
44. *Millie or Milli Oostendorp*	4	61	Pensioner	Coloured	Wesbank, Delft
45. *Annetjie Madden*	4	62	DAIRY STORE OWNER	White	BRANDFORT
46. *Margaret Maree*	4	72	RETIRED	White	SANDBAAI
47. *Unnamed*	4	72	U	Black	Mthonjeni
48. *June Nefdt*	4	73	NURSE AND FAMILY BUSINESS	White/Coloured	ATHLONE
49. *Unnamed*	4	73	PENSIONER	Black	MANZANA
50. *Annette Muller-Botha*	4	74	NURSE	White	BOKSBURG
51. *Henna or Johanna Smit*	4	75	Farm shop owner	White	Theerivier farm
52. *Qeda Sithole*	4	75	U	Black	ST CHAD'S
53. *Unnamed*	4	82	U	Black	Centane
54. *Pauline Ngubane*	5	62	U	Black	Snathing road Dambuza
55. *Charlotte Froneman*	5	64	Farmer	White	DAGBREEK FARM, GEELHOUTBOOM
56. *Beslina Duma*	5	64	U	Black	Mqatsheni
57. *Frederika Ferreira*	5	64	U	Coloured/White	ALGOA PARK

58.	*LORRAINE SHEPHARD*	5	76	U	White	BEVERLEY GROVE
59.	*Suzie also Suzzie Willemse*	5	84	RETIRED	White	FERGUSON TOWNSHIP
60.	*Marjory Uren*	5	93	PENSIONER	White	WALMER, PE
61.	*Annette Knoetze*	6	64	Advertising sales	White	Odendaalsrus
62.	*Elizabeth Robbins or Robins*	6	75	Retired	White	Port Edward
63.	*Dina also Ntombi Masuku*	7	62	U	Black	ETWATWA
64.	*Qukeza Tom*	7	77	U	Black	KwaMiya, Ngqamakwe
65.	*Ria Coetzee*	8	76	Retired	White	ST MICHAEL'S
66.	*Bets Greeff*	8	79	RETIRED	White	MORNINGSIDE JHB
67.	*Elizabeth also Elize Louw*	8	96	RETIRED	White	Witkoppies
68.	*Hester Salmans*	9	63	U	Coloured	SMUTSVILLE, SEDGEFIELD
69.	*Maria also Susan also Susanna le Roux*	9	65	Advocate	White	PMB
70.	*Marie Sim*	9	68	Guesthouse owner	White	Cresslawn
71.	*Kate Legodi*	11	75	CRECHE OWNER	Black	WINTERVELD
72.	*Zamekile Ngidi*	12	65	U	Black	KwaSwayimane
73.	*Betty Titse also Tiseng also Monabe Pitse*	12	98	Preacher/Pensioner	Black	Tloung Village
74.	*Jette Jacobs*	13	67	U	White (Australian)	JOHANNESBURG
75.	*Hester Marie Koch*	14	62	Smallholder	White	PHILIPPI
76.	*Anne Roebert*	14	75	Newspaper editor	White	Kei Mouth
77.	*Helena Or Helene or Linie Gouws*	15	61	Retired teacher	White	Ugie
78.	*Joy Boonzaaier or Boonzaier*	17	68	Pensioner	White	Wierda Park
79.	*Gloudien Van Rensburg*	21	64	FARM OWNER	White	COSMOPOLITE FARM

80.	*Ria Mills*	24	64	Farmer	White	Groot Brakrivier / Klein Brakrivier
81.	*Elna OR Elma Van Heerden*	35	79	RETIRED	White	BELFAST
82.	*Lorraine Adams*	39	63	RETIRED	White	BETHULIE
83.	*Margrietha De Goede*	39	66	Day mother	White	Delmas
84.	*Cecile Fourie*	40	72	Farmer	White	Trompsburg
85.	*Annetjie / Annatjie Van Rooyen*	46	76	FARMER	White	PARYS

ANNEXURE F

TABLE F.1: Alleged perpetrator described as domestic-type worker

VICTIM	(ALLEGED) PERPETRATOR/S	OCCUPATION OF PERPETRATOR/S	METHOD OF DEATH	NUMBER OF NEWS ARTICLES
1. ANGELA MACHINGA	Olwethu Matiso (charges later dropped and he was set free)	Gardener/Handyman	Strangulation	20
2. VENOTHA INCE	Sikhumbuzo Enock or Enoch Mkhize	Carpenter	Stabbed	20
3. VENESSA OR VANESSA STAFLEU	Unknown	Alleged farm worker	Shot	9
4. MARGRIETHA DE GOEDE	Themba Ephraim Mahlangu (charges withdrawn later)	Gardner	Strangulation	39
5. JUNE NEFDT	Rudolph Jones	Gardener	Strangulation	4
6. SONIA MABEDLA	Johannes Botha	Gardener	Hacked	6
7. ELIZABETH ROBBINS OR ROBINS	Sgidi Xolani Sonjica (Gardener)	Gardener	Stabbed	6
8. YOGRISHREE 'DONNA' REDDY	Morris Laguwo	Gardener	U	2
9. ANNEMARIE BIRK	Mxolisi Malinga	Gardener	Throat slit	5
10. LI-PING CHEN	Dumisane Selepe, Sicelo or Scelo Ndaba, Mbongeni Tlai	U	Hacked	15
11. ANZUNETTE ALSO ANTOINETTE DU PLESSIS	Moegamat Salie	Contractor handyman	Throat slit	41
12. NOBUHLE LENEHA	Tsepang Mokhali (distant family member)	General	Shot	18
13. CARMEN VAN DER WESTHUIZEN	Paul Maphasa Nqakalatsane	Gardener	Throat slit	22
14. SUZIE ALSO SUZZIE WILLEMSE	Unnamed	Gardener	Suffocated	5
15. ANNETJIE / ANNATJIE VAN ROOYEN	Ngope Abram Oupa Mokoena, Ezekiele 'RASTA' Mtshembelele Mguni	Farm worker	Stabbed	46

Table G.1 – Top Media Titles (50 individual/unique stories or more) by individual/unique story (total n=3278 excluding Look Local)

	Title	Circ[1] (Q1 2013)	Distribution	# of unique stories	% of total * may not = 100 due to rounding	n G/stad if n > 10	n Anene if n > 10	n Mare if n > 10	n Theron if n > 10	n SAPA if n > 10	% SAPA (of self)
1.	**STAR**	106,484	Johannesburg	192	6%	14	82			19	
2.	**VOLKSBLAD**	21,811	FS and NC	191	6%	91					
3.	**N24**	-	National	186	6%				16	78	
4.	**CAPE ARGUS**	33,247	WC and EC	158	5%		60	13			
5.	**THE NEW AGE**	-	National	152	5%		32			12	
6.	**BURGER**	62,237	WC and EC	146	4%		50	10			
7.	**CAPE TIMES**	35,616	WC	138	4%		82				
8.	**BEELD**	67,700	GP, LIM, NW, MP	121	4%	13	16				
9.	**IOL**	-	National	116	4%					97	
10.	**DAILY DISPATCH**	28,879	EC	108	3%		11				
11.	**SOWETAN**	98,258	Johannesburg	106	3%					26	
12.	**DFA**	9,691	NC	91	3%	37					
13.	**CITIZEN**	63,854	National	90	3%		43	10		38	
14.	**EPH**	23,372	Port Elizabeth	79	2%						
15.	**EWN**	-	National	76	2%				12		
16.	**DAILY NEWS**	32,002	KZN	73	2%						
17.	**WITNESS**	19,001	KZN	73	2%						
18.	**RAPPORT**	213,460 Oct-Dec 2012 [weekly]	National	62	2%	23					
19.	**SABC**	-	National	62	2%	11	21			13	
20.	**DAILY SUN**	296,489	National	61	2%						
21.	**TIMES**	[142,523]	GP	62	2%		24			17	
22.	**GEORGE HERALD**	16,255 (weekly)	George	57	2%					45	
23.	**OFM**	-	FS	52	2%					13	
24.	**NETWERK24**	-	National	52	2%						
TOTAL				**2,504**	**76% (actual not rounded)**						

[1] Source ABC Daily Newspaper Summary January - March 2014

ANNEXURE H

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Brodie

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H18/02/03**
PROJECT TITLE	Using mixed-method approaches to provide new insights into media coverage of femicid
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Miss N Brodie
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Journalism and Media Studies/
DATE CONSIDERED	16 February 2018
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved
EXPIRY DATE	05 March 2021

DATE 06 March 2018 **CHAIRPERSON** _____
(Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor : Professor S Hazelhurst

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10004, 10th Floor, Senate House, University. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (Non-Medical)

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

_____ _____/_____/_____
Signature Date

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

ANNEXURE I

Participant information sheet for journalists

Project name: Media coverage of femicide in South Africa
Researcher: Nechama Brodie, University of the Witwatersrand

Dear [name]

My name is Nechama Brodie. I am a PhD student at the University of the Witwatersrand and I am conducting research into news coverage of femicide (the murder of women aged 14 years and older) in South African media. The aim of this research is to better understand how we can gather useful data on media coverage, and to provide data and insight on how South African media reports on femicide.

As part of my research, I have created a database of South African media coverage of femicides that took place in the 2012/2013 crime year, which is from 01 April 2012 to 31 March 2013. This database comprises 409 individual murder victims linked to over 5,000 news media entries, with more than 2,500 unique articles. The database contains reported victim information, information about where each article was published and, if provided, the name of the journalist/s that wrote the article. Based on this data I have been able to identify specific journalists who produced proportionally higher numbers of articles on femicide victims relative to their peers.

I am looking to interview these journalists as part of my research, in order to evaluate or gain insight into the newsroom and/or community context, and any newsroom processes that may have influenced the journalist's decision or action to pitch and/or pursue these specific stories.

Based on the number of stories your byline identifies you as having authored during that time, I would like to invite you to take part in answering a questionnaire and possibly participating in a follow-up interview based on the questionnaire, about your role, the newsroom or organisational environment in which you worked, and your perceptions or recollections of your coverage of femicide during the relevant period. Because of the nature of the research, you would need to be identified by name, together with the associated or relevant job title and publication title or platform or organisation name. This means that confidentiality or anonymity cannot be guaranteed to any participants.

The questionnaire will be provided as an emailed Word document or an online form, and will take around 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The interview will require between 30 minutes and two hours depending on the number of incidents and stories to be discussed, and the complexity of the newsroom structure. Interviews will be conducted telephonically or in person at your work premises, and can be structured to suit your time and availability. The interviews do not need to be completed all at once, and may take place over a period of time. With your permission, I would also like to record the interview/s.

You will not receive any direct benefits from participating in this study, and there are no disadvantages or penalties for not participating. You may withdraw at any time or not answer any question if you do not want to.

If you have any questions afterwards about this research, feel free to contact me on the details listed below. This study will be written up as a thesis which will be available online through the university library website. If you wish to receive a copy of this thesis, I will be happy to send it to you upon request. Written and audio records of the questionnaire and interview may also form part of a future publicly available database on media coverage of femicide. If you have any queries, concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) telephone <redacted>

Yours sincerely,

Nechama Brodie
<redacted>

Supervisor
Professor Scott Hazelhurst
<redacted>

ANNEXURE J

Participant information sheet for editors or line managers

Project name: Media coverage of femicide in South Africa
Researcher: Nechama Brodie, University of the Witwatersrand

Dear [name]

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I am looking to interview relevant editors, managing editors or news editors or other line manager/s at these publications or platforms, in order to evaluate or gain insight into the newsroom and community environment or processes that may have influenced the decision to commission and publish these stories.

Based on your [current/previous] role as [insert job title] at [name of publication], which has been identified as one of the titles or platforms with high coverage, I would like to invite you to take part in answering a questionnaire and possibly participating in a follow-up interview based on the questionnaire, about your newsroom or media organisation, your role in the newsroom or organisation, and your perceptions or recollections of your title's coverage of femicide during the relevant period. Because of the nature of the research, you would need to be identified by name, together with the associated or relevant job title and publication title or platform or organisation name. This means that confidentiality or anonymity cannot be guaranteed to any participants.

The questionnaire will be provided as an emailed Word document or an online form, and will take around 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The interview will require between 30 minutes and two hours depending on the number of incidents and stories to be discussed, and the complexity of the newsroom structure. Interviews will be conducted telephonically or in person at your work premises, and can be structured to suit your time and availability. The interviews do not need to be completed all at once, and may take place over a period of time. With your permission, I would also like to record the interview/s.

You will not receive any direct benefits from participating in this study, and there are no disadvantages or penalties for not participating. You may withdraw at any time or not answer any question if you do not want to.

If you have any questions afterwards about this research, feel free to contact me on the details listed below. This study will be written up as a thesis which will be available online through the university library website. If you wish to receive a copy of this thesis, I will be happy to send it to you upon request. Written and audio records of the questionnaire and interview may also form part of a future publicly available database on media coverage of femicide. If you have any queries, concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) telephone <redacted>

Yours sincerely,

Nechama Brodie
<redacted>

Supervisor
Professor Scott Hazelhurst
<redacted>

ANNEXURE K

Femicide in Media: Interview schedule for participants – journalists

Section A: Newsroom and production processes

i. How would you describe your publication/platform [at the time of the research period]?

ii. Describe your newsroom at the time.

iii. Describe your role and function in the newsroom.

iv. Describe a typical newsroom production process, indicating at which stage(s) you were directly or indirectly involved.

v. Discuss through which processes or mechanisms stories were selected/commission for publication. What types of stories were considered important? What types of stories were considered unimportant?

vi. Describe your readership/audience.

vii. Are there any other processes or issues you would like to raise which may be relevant to this study?

Section B: Femicide and gender-based violence in the newsroom

Part one (general)

i. How would your newsroom typically receive information about a murder?

ii. Was the murder of women perceived to be different in any way to the murder of an adult male? If so, how?

iii. How would you describe the importance or awareness of femicide/GBV in your newsroom? (If important, why? If not, why?)

iv. How would you describe the importance or awareness of femicide/GBV to your readers/audience? (If important, why? If not, why?)

v. Were you typically be assigned to cover femicide/GBV?

vi. Were you aware of other news outlets coverage of femicide/GBV?

vii. Did you or your newsroom/publication participate in any awareness campaigns or similar related to gender-based violence or femicide? If so can you describe these?

Part two (specific cases/stories)

i. Discussion of individual cases written by the journalist [cases/information will be provided in advance to the participant]:

    a. Recollections of the murder(s) and subsequent coverage.
    b. Recollections of newsroom response for each case.
    c. Recollections of reader/audience response for each case.
    d. Discussions of frequency or number of stories.

ii. Were you aware of any stories related to femicide that you chose *not* to pursue? If so, why (without revealing identifying information)?

iii. Did you ever propose to cover a story about a femicide that was rejected by your editor/similar? If so, why?

iv. Did your editor ever make a decision not to publish additional stories about a femicide you were covering? If so, why do you think this happened?

v. Did you ever leave out information when writing a story about a femicide? If so, what kind of information and why (generic rather than specific)?

vi. Did you ever experience any negative backlash for your coverage of a femicide?

vii. What do you believe accounts for the fact that you covered a proportionally higher number of stories [on femicide and GBV] than your peers?

viii. Is there anything you wish to add to this discussion that has not been raised?

ANNEXURE L

Femicide in Media: Interview schedule for participants – editors

Section A: Newsroom and production processes

viii. How would you describe your publication/platform?

ix. Describe your newsroom at the time.

x. Describe your role and function in the newsroom.

xi. Describe a typical newsroom production process, indicating at which stage(s) you were directly or indirectly involved.

xii. Discuss through which processes or mechanisms stories were selected/commission for publication. What types of stories were considered important? What types of stories were considered unimportant?

xiii. Describe your readership/audience.

Section B: Femicide and gender-based violence in the newsroom

Part one (general)

i. How would your newsroom typically received information about a murder?

ii. How would you describe the importance or awareness of femicide/GBV in your newsroom? (If important, why? If not, why?)

iii. How would you describe the importance or awareness of femicide/GBV to your readers/audience? (If important, why? If not, why?)

iv. Who (role or individual) would typically be assigned to cover femicide/GBV?

v. Did individual reporters play any specific or key role in getting coverage of femicide in your publication/platform?

vi. Were you aware of other news outlets coverage of femicide/GBV?

vii. Did you or your newsroom/publication participate in any awareness campaigns or similar related to gender-based violence or femicide? If so can you describe these and discuss what role management played in this decision?

Part two (specific cases/stories)

i. Discussion of individual cases published/broadcast by the outlet (this information will be provided in advance to the participant):

    a. Recollections of the murder(s) and subsequent coverage.
    b. Recollections of newsroom response for each case.
    c. Recollections of reader/audience response for each case.
    d. Discussions of frequency or number of stories.

ii. Were you aware of any stories related to femicide/GBV that you chose *not* to publish? If so, why (without revealing identifying information)?

iii. Did you ever make a decision not to publish additional stories about a femicide? If so, why?

iv. What do you believe accounts for the fact that your outlet/title published a proportionally higher number of stories [on femicide and GBV]?

v. What kind of reader/audience response did you get for the stories you covered?

vi. Is there anything you wish to add to this discussion that has not been raised?

ANNEXURE M

Consent Form

Project name: Media coverage of femicide in South Africa
Researcher: Nechama Brodie, University of the Witwatersrand

I Johanna van Eeden agree to participate in the above research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve.

Please circle your response below:

I agree that I will be identified by name in the research report	**YES**	NO
I agree that information provided by me or quotes supplied by me may be attributed to me in the research report	**YES**	NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded	**YES**	NO
I agree that the information I provide may be used by other researchers following this study	**YES**	NO

…JA van Eeden…(electronic) signature

…Johanna van Eeden… name of participant

…2018/05/15… date

ANNEXURE N

Consent Form

Project name: Media coverage of femicide in South Africa
Researcher: Nechama Brodie, University of the Witwatersrand

I Gasant Abarder agree to participate in the above research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve.

Please circle your response below:

I agree that I will be identified by name in the research report	(YES) NO
I agree that information provided by me or quotes supplied by me may be attributed to me in the research report	(YES) NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded	(YES) NO
I agree that the information I provide may be used by other researchers following this study	(YES) NO

..... signature

Gasant Abarder ..... name of participant

7 March 2019 ..... date

ANNEXURE O

Consent Form

Project name: Media coverage of femicide in South Africa
Researcher: Nechama Brodie, University of the Witwatersrand

I JADE OTTO agree to participate in the above research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve.

Please circle your response below:

I agree that I will be identified by name in the research report	(YES)	NO
I agree that information provided by me or quotes supplied by me may be attributed to me in the research report	(YES)	NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded	(YES)	NO
I agree that the information I provide may be used by other researchers following this study	(YES)	NO

..... signature

JADE OTTO name of participant

21/02/14 date

ANNEXURE P

Consent Form

Project name: Media coverage of femicide in South Africa
Researcher: Nechama Brodie, University of the Witwatersrand

I MARK U.D. UELOEN agree to participate in the above research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve.

Please circle your response below:

I agree that I will be identified by name in the research report	(YES) NO
I agree that information provided by me or quotes supplied by me may be attributed to me in the research report	(YES) NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded	(YES) NO
I agree that the information I provide may be used by other researchers following this study	(YES) NO


signature

MARK U.D. UELOEN name of participant

Feb 25/2019 date

Scanned by CamScanner

ANNEXURE Q

Consent Form

Project name: Media coverage of femicide in South Africa
Researcher: Nechama Brodie, University of the Witwatersrand

I **Jannie Momberg** agree to participate in the above research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve.

Response in bold below:

I agree that I will be identified by name in the research report	**YES**	NO
I agree that information provided by me or quotes supplied by me may be attributed to me in the research report	**YES**	NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded	**YES**	NO
I agree that the information I provide may be used by other researchers following this study	**YES**	NO



…… signature

Jannie Momberg name of participant

21/02/2019 date

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