The Love Story of Gender Violence:
feelings and normativity in media discourses of feminicide in contemporary Brazil



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Abstract

This work asks how feminicide is understood in contemporary Brazilian media. It applies discourse analysis on over four thousand news reports from 2019-2021 in order to interrogate the narratives around the phenomenon in the country. This research proposes a conceptualisation of feminicide that incorporates Kate Manne's concept of misogyny as norm-enforcing (2018). By engaging with Judith Butler's concepts of 'precariousness' and 'grievability' (2004), this thesis considers that the current narratives of feminicide in Brazil are epistemically violent and reinforce gender normativity. The work dissects how concepts of victimhood and love are used in Brazilian media to strengthen a concept of feminicide that reinforces old tropes around crimes of passion. It notes how such conceptualisation also gatekeeps 'feminicide', strengthening divisions of what is and what is not gender violence and furthering epistemic injustice.

Dedication

To all the women murdered in Brazil. May you be remembered.

Acknowledgements

Writing a thesis is both an incredibly solitary process and one that only exists in a community. Several people have shared my life over the years that I have been writing this work, and though I will not be able to thank them all, I will try.

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‘Am I sitting here now, months later, in Los Angeles, writing all this down, because I want my life to matter? Maybe so. But I do not want it to matter more than others. I want to remember, or to learn, how to live as if it matters, as if they all matter, even if they do not.’

— Maggie Nelson, The Red Parts

‘I write as if to save somebody’s life. Probably my own. Life is a kind of madness that death makes. Long live the dead because we live in them.’

— Clarice Lispector, A Breath of Life

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The first feminicide case I remember clearly happened in 2008, when I was fifteen years old. Eloá Pimentel was also fifteen and had been doing schoolwork with her friends when her ex-boyfriend, Lindemberg Alves, 22, broke into her apartment and held her hostage for 100 hours of nonstop televised agony. She was then shot in the head and groin, dying in the hospital.[1] At the time, the picture that stuck with me was the one illustrated in all newspapers in Brazil: Eloá at the window of her apartment building, crying, her hands up in the air as a hostage. In 2015, the documentary 'Quem matou Eloá Pimentel?'[2] analysed[3] the four-day media coverage that encompassed her kidnapping and murder. Upon watching it, I was struck by a scene that escaped me at fifteen; in a live TV show on the final day of captivity, the reporter called the house in which Eloá was being held hostage, speaking directly with Lindenberg. He asks the man how he is feeling, that he should not despair, to which Lindenberg replies: *'Desespero? Desespero? Se eu estivesse desperado eu dava um tiro na minha cara (...) Eu tô sem sentiment nenhum, tô (sic) frio para caralho'* (Sônia Abrahão, 2008). The presenter replies: *'Mas fica tranquilo, eu sei que é difícil, procura se acalmar'* (idem).[4]

This dissonance struck me because it seemed the reporter was unable to listen to what the perpetrator was telling him, operating under the assumption that Lindemberg must be in a particular state of mind to be holding his ex-girlfriend hostage — one of despair, perhaps, or agitation. More than ten years have passed between that phone call and the cases which make up this work; in 2008, neither the media nor the law had the vocabulary to name Eloá's death a feminicide and discussions of how to portray GBV in the media were still ongoing. Nonetheless,

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1 Lindemberg made all her friends leave except one, her best friend Nayara. After negotiating the release of Nayara, police officers allowed her to go back into the apartment, arguing that it would make it easier to negotiate Eloá's release. Nayara was also shot, but she survived.

2 'Who killed Eloá Pimentel?'

3 All translations in this thesis have been done by the author, unless specified otherwise.

4 'Despair? Despair? If I was desperate I would shoot myself in the face (…) I have no feeling at all, I'm cold as fuck (sic).' (translation mine)

the dissonance stayed with me, because it spoke of how a reporter's beliefs/perceptions of the affects and emotions involved in gender violence can directly impact their interpretation of the situation — even if it is happening right then and now. This year, I turned thirty, but Eloá will forever remain fifteen; I do not doubt that if Eloá were held hostage today, the media would name it feminicide. This is due to the efforts made by activists and legislators to put a name to the phenomenon. But I remain unsure whether a call between a reporter and Lindemberg would go differently – his words and the reporters' misunderstanding of them would stay the same.

This continued misrepresentation of feminicides as an eruption of emotion, of a love story gone wrong, is what prompted me to write this thesis. While Brazilian feminist activism has argued that feminicide should be considered a legal and public policy issue, has come up against narratives of 'crimes of passion' and championed *Quem ama não mata* campaigns, when I watched the daytime TV shows and read the news, I could see, skirting the pages, the echoes of the call between Lindemberg and the report. It seems to be there, worked into expressions, ideas that lie just beneath the surface of the text. Long after Eloá's story left the pages and other lurid stories occupied talk shows and law-and-order television, some words remained: something of that irresistible narrative of thwarted love, of throes of despair. But this was just a supposition, intangible — the idea that feminicide is still seen through the lens of feeling and love needs to be shown, proven and explored to become anything more than that. What lies there (if anything) needs to be made explicit, its language analysed closely, in order to confirm that such narratives exist, that they are etched into the text.

This thesis arose from my interest in understanding whether this was true and how (and if) narratives of feminicide affect the way the phenomenon is understood in Brazilian society. In this work, I will discuss how feminicide, while nowadays an identifiable phenomenon, is still laden with narratives and meaning that can be detrimental to efforts to fight this form of violence. If, like me, you are somewhere located in the category of 'woman', writing on gender violence seems always to be an intimate effort. Writing about Brazil as someone born and raised there presents

similar forms of intimacy. As a Brazilian who has herself been a victim of gender violence, this project represented something beyond a thesis. Throughout the years I have worked on this project, I have both been reminded of my passion for it and all the ways in which it is hard, consuming and emotionally draining. It took me back to my teenage years: my friend's boyfriend screaming at her on the phone because we were at a party; he was going to kill her, he said, how dare she disobey him. Another girl, crying in my arms in a night club, her arms purple with bruises. One boyfriend who passionately claimed my body was 'partially his', and another who tried to forbid me from cutting my hair. The high levels of gender violence in Brazil make the country an interesting case study for academics but makes life as a woman continuously threatening. Knowing the statistics is one thing — experiencing gender violence as an inherent part of life is another. It requires noticing how many of us have walked this line, afraid of tipping into the vortex of gender violence. While writing, I was reminded of my walk to theatre class after school – at 14, head high, looking forward, no missteps, the ringing of sexual harassment a constant alarm in my head. I felt fear and anger, my body running cold even in the oppressive heat of the São Paulo summer. My goal with this work was to move away from the statistics, to try and give words to this feeling – walking that invisible line.

Understanding feminicide in regional and global contexts: the case of Brazil

Establishing the bounds of a highly interdisciplinary project is a complex endeavour. Within a given field, establishing the parameters for your project's 'genealogy' is supported by firm subject boundaries — those disappear in interdisciplinary work. As a scholar, you find yourself awkwardly located at the edges of several bibliographies, imbibing from different sources and trying to build something cohesive out of them. While I hope that my research serves scholars working on gender violence across other regions, this thesis is concerned with Brazil and secondarily with how Brazil is situated in Latin America. This choice of case study encompassed a series of considerations, the first being that Brazil is a

particularly poignant example of the phenomenon. The country boasts comprehensive legal protection against domestic violence (the Maria da Penha Law of 2006). It has made great strides in legislating feminicide with the promulgation of the Feminicide Law in 2015. Nonetheless, it also has one of the highest rates of feminicide in the world and an increase in the number of feminicides each year (Globo G1, 2023).

Furthermore, familiarity with the language, not only formally but socially, was essential for the completion of this work — understanding discourse as going beyond the words or the phrase but focused on the relationships between text, speaker, and the historical and social factors around them (Pessoa de Barros, 2011(2003)). The intricacies of text are crucial for this thesis: not only the words used but what they represent in Brazilian society, what they expose or hide, euphemisms and overstatements. My familiarity with Portuguese, my mother tongue, allowed me to dig through all this, compare it with conversations surrounding me as I grew up, contrast it with the language of academic texts and locate them within the social context of contemporary Brazil. Due to this, I decided to have all texts in this thesis in the original Portuguese and translate them myself.

Moreover, Brazil experienced between 2019-2021 a dramatic political shift. The election and government of Jair Bolsonaro seem to encapsulate much of the current political climate of far-right populism. It was discussed in academic circles and by political commentators as a marked change in the country's politics since redemocratisation (The Guardian, 2018; Cravo, 2019). Since my research was situated within this scenario, I was interested in seeing how and if the statistics and narratives of feminicide would be affected by decisions and discourses at the federal level of Brazil. Sadly, my work shows less of a sea change with Bolsonarismo, though the rise of antigender discourse in contemporary politics is consistently documented (Butler, 2024). Current debates in the Brazilian Congress against women's reproductive rights, as well as the 2024 regional elections will possibly impact the legislation around gender violence in the country. It is my hope that this research opens up future avenues of debate and study that take such developments into account. However, discourses of violence against women predated the

phenomenon of Bolsonarismo and are reflected in it. It is the persistence/continuity of these attitudes about women that this thesis hopes to combat.

Findings and contribution

When writing this thesis, my guiding question was: 'How is feminicide understood in Brazil?'. There were many answers to this, such as looking at the Brazilian Feminicide Law and statistics on women's deaths. Still, they have often left me unsatisfied, seeking a deeper answer — I wanted to reach into the heart of the matter, find an answer to this violence that seems to be so present in my life, and the lives of all women in Brazil. I mentally (and once the pandemic allowed, physically) travelled back and forth across the ocean, noting names I recognised, following cases as they developed, under the watchful gaze of the victims' photos in the news. In order to understand feminicide in Brazil, I needed to examine even that question more profoundly and break it down further. It was important to ask what is considered feminicide in Brazil? Who determines what is feminicide? And where do people hear about or experience feminicide? Who is writing the stories of feminicide that reach the public?

In order to answer these questions in a way that would satisfy me, as well as engage in serious academic enquiry, there were many steps I first had to take. When I began working on this thesis, I had concerns about the process of naming crimes as feminicides in Brazilian society, but a priori, I wanted to understand the system that was set in place in the country. Therefore, this thesis examines the cases named feminicides under Brazilian law in relation to cases that are not named as such. I was interested in how feminicide gets classified as such, who is involved in this classification, and what narratives exist within crimes named 'feminicide' and crimes named something else.

This thesis contributes to the studies on feminicide in Brazil by providing an overview of feminicide that goes beyond the cases reported to institutions in the country. While data tracking feminicide in Brazil has tried to provide information that accounts for the underreporting of feminicide (for example, the Instituto de Pesquisa e Estatística Aplicada (Ipea) considers all homicides of women that happen

within the home feminicides) and scholars have engaged with the changing numbers between female homicides and feminicides (Roichman, 2017), there are no large-scale qualitative studies on the differences in reporting of feminicide and female homicide.

This thesis contributes to the current research on Brazilian feminicide by producing a large-scale qualitative analysis of the phenomenon in media discourses. In this, I engage with research conducted by previous scholars (Thurler 2017, Meneghel et al. 2022) who reflected on the impact of media narratives in constituting and reflecting social perceptions of feminicide in the country. This follows on previous work done by scholars such as Rancière and Butler on media production and the shaping of everyday reality. The latter particularly examines such media production in the shaping of perceptions of life and death, and whose deaths become object of grief in society. This highlights how media is part of overall societal narrative-making – as noted by Calzado et al. (2022), media has a direct impact on how crime gets to be constructed and perceived socially. By engaging with news sources, I directly follow on to the scholarship that considers that examining media is extremely fruitful to understand broader narratives in society.

In this work, I have created an original database of cases reported in the Brazilian media between 2019-2021. This database includes cases that were reported as feminicides but also included cases that should have been named feminicide as they had strong gender elements to them and cases in which there is not enough information to determine whether the murder is a feminicide. By comparing and contrasting the discourses around these different sets of cases, I have pinpointed the way feminicide as a category is still not wholly accessible to victims of gender violence in contemporary Brazil.

Furthermore, this thesis uses new methods of research in the social sciences, specifically a mixed-methods approach that includes a computational element. As I will discuss in Chapter III, I used Large Language models, specifically GPT-3 and GPT-4, to create the database. This allowed me to analyse and process over 6,000 cases, out of which 4,153 were incorporated into the database.

Finally, this thesis contributes to the study of feminicide in Brazil by using its findings to sustain that feminicide should be conceptualised as a form of norm-enforcing violence. In this, I follow the work of philosopher Kate Manne (2018), who conceptualised misogyny as norm-enforcing, creating the framework from which I began to think about feminicide in the country. In establishing dialogues with concepts such as Judith Butler's grievability, Achille Mbembe's necropolitics and Giorgio Agamben's bare life, I posit that the construction of feminicide as a category in Brazil is predicated upon women following specific gender normative scripts to be recognised as (potential) victims of feminicide.

This thesis has found that understanding feminicide in Brazil — understanding it as a social phenomenon — requires going beyond official statistics and legal categories. While the reporting on feminicide in Brazil using official statistics is very important in order to 'name the problem', so to speak, it gives space for what I consider in this thesis to be an 'epistemic injustice' (as established by Fricker 2007). That is, it allows for cases not to be named feminicide, or even not be considered as possible feminicides, because they are not perceived to be so by the media, police or the public. These findings are based on the dataset I compiled of over 4,000 media cases of women killing in Brazil across three years, including not only the cases that were reported as feminicides but any case in which it could be argued that gender was at play (e.g., rape followed by death, transmisogynistic murder).

These findings are relevant because they shed light on the difficulty of applying legal and policy definitions to a social phenomenon. While much work has been produced examining feminicide in Brazil since the implementation of the Feminicide Law in 2015, these studies have used the official feminicide statistics (Macaulay 2021; Meneghel et al. 2022). And those working with different sources, such as Romio's study using data from the health sectors (2017) are not directly examining classification of cases as feminicides or not. My research contrasts cases that are named feminicide against cases that are not named feminicides to understand how gender violence is understood in Brazil and what cases get the institutional and legal protection available to them.

While activists focused on making 'feminicide' visible to institutions and organisations (as well as the public), there are several different conceptualisations of the phenomenon. As discussed in Chapter II, the contentious ground on which feminicide itself is named showcases how the category itself can vary, such as the debate around feminicide/femicide between Russell and Lagarde. This thesis utilises a definition of feminicide that gives space for the concerns of several theorists while serving as a working concept for criticising and understanding legal and institutional applications.

The analysis of these data demonstrated that some instances are more likely to be named feminicides than others: cases of domestic violence and intimate partner violence are the majority of the cases which are named feminicides. On the other hand, cases that involved very marginalised populations, such as homeless women and sex workers and cases in which drug abuse or drug trafficking is suspected, are less likely to be named feminicides or even to receive much media attention. Furthermore, cases in which gender is at play but do not have specific legal provisions in the Brazilian Feminicide Law (such as rape followed by murder) are less likely to be named feminicide even if they fit its legal definition.

Furthermore, a close examination of cases named feminicide showed that while these cases are classified and named as gender violence, the narratives and discourses surrounding them are still very gender normative. The victim, perpetrator and crime portrayals still rely extensively on patriarchal narratives of jealousy, passion and tragedy that feminist scholars and activists have criticised since the 1970s. By using concepts such as 'himpathy' (Manne, 2018) and 'testimonial injustice' (Fricker, 2007), this work has found that narratives of crimes classed as feminicides in Brazil are still perpetuating gender norms. Newspaper reports and police statements to the media still maintain discourses which garner sympathy towards the perpetrator while creating very high standards for a victim to be perceived as grievable.

Therefore, my thesis contributes directly to the literature on feminicide in Brazil and Latin America exactly due to this dual contribution: one, the contrasting of cases named feminicide and not named feminicide; and two, the large-scale examination

of media narratives in order to understand the limitations of the use of the category 'feminicide'. My thesis examines how tropes around gender violence still remain widespread in the collective imaginary of what it means to be a 'victim of feminicide' and what 'feminicide' itself is – it highlights how little advancement has been made on reframing gender violence structures in contemporary Brazil. And in doing so, it adds to the literature by providing an in-depth analysis of how feminicide is filtered through society more broadly through media narratives.

Terms and definitions

In this thesis, I will propose that feminicide must be understood as a form of norm-enforcing violence, following Kate Manne's contribution to the understanding of misogyny (2019). My argument is that understanding feminicide in such a way allows for a more focused approach to gender violence — one that can hopefully be incorporated in different societies and across time. Throughout this work, I will propose that feminicide is the lethal violence that is enacted when a woman breaks (or is perceived to be breaking) gender norms and expectations. Therefore, feminicide enforces a particular form of normativity, one that upholds patriarchal and cisheteronormative ideals and values. Feminicide becomes a mechanism through which women's lives are regulated — the threat of violence enforces the importance of subscribing to particular gender norms, lest one wants to become a victim themselves. It is both the enactment and the threat of feminicide that helps sustain cultural matrixes of gender intelligibility, which in turn maintain the economic, social and political structures that are present in society.

By doing so, this work creates a broader picture of what feminicide looks like while retaining the necessary focus that allows for classifying a case as a feminicide. This contradiction — to be broader and more focused, seems to befit a doctoral thesis. My objective is not to dissuade people from understanding feminicide as 'the killing of women due to gender violence' but instead to interrogate the categories themselves and reflect on whether they are themselves creating the possibility of violence of a different kind — the normative and discursive violence. My definition allows one to catch cases that fall between the cracks, cases that society itself might

not easily perceive as feminicides because they deviate from cases in which gender is clearly understood to be at play, such as cases of domestic violence.

Methods

My research methods changed considerably due to COVID-19. As previously discussed, my thesis followed a much more ethnographic approach, in which perception was to be analysed through the lived experience of those living in Brazil. However, with the advent of the pandemic, I had to reimagine how to understand the perceptions of feminicide. The increase in online and social media information shared in Brazil, which was highlighted in the 2018 national elections, provided a space for this. If people were being informed through online media, that was the media that would interest me. My thesis is mainly a qualitative endeavour, though I have employed descriptive statistics to locate my findings within the larger picture of feminicide in Brazil. As previously discussed, my chief concerns were with how the killing of women was being portrayed in the media — both the cases that were named feminicides and those that were not. To extract and compile cases spanning three years, I consulted with a researcher in machine learning to develop a web scraper that would extract all news which contained the deaths of women in Brazil between 2019-2021.

Once the data was all there, I wanted to create a comprehensive overview of the cases, allowing statistics to be compiled on all available information (e.g. age of the victim, location, weapon used), which could then be put in dialogue with the discursive findings. I decided to apply a new method of research, using recently available Natural Language Processing (NLP) models to parse through the over 7,000 cases that had been compiled. This was once again done with the support of a machine learning specialist, who helped me train the model to avoid mistakes, a process discussed more extensively in Chapter III. Once the data was compiled, I could use it to establish general statistical parameters for my research — which regions of the country reported more killings of women, what was the average age of victims, etc.

Nonetheless, this was only half of the analysis. Once the cases had been compiled, I had to work on doing the discourse analysis on the different sets of data; an essential use of the NLP was to divide cases that were named feminicides from those which were not — through it, I could see whether the crime was called feminicide in the text, title or a quote. Those cases made up the first dataset, whereas cases that were not named feminicide were further divided: first, cases which could feasibly fit the definition of gender violence, and second, cases in which there was not enough information to decide whether the case was one of gender violence.

The discourse analysis was done using MAXQDA, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). I employed various coding methods through four iterations to establish themes and categories which examined discourses surrounding the perpetrator, the victim and the context of the crime. My theoretical considerations informed my decisions on the methodological side, as I wanted to test whether normative judgments were being made of perpetrators/victims/crimes in order to see if feminicide could be considered norm-enforcing violence. This meant that my research uses primarily affective coding methods, which rely on perception, emotion and moral judgement of texts, as well as concept coding with concepts emanating from feminist theory. My objective was to test whether concepts around gender normativity existed in the perceptions, feelings and judgments around women killing in contemporary Brazil.

Thesis outline

This thesis is organised in eight chapters, including this one. In Chapter II, I will present an overview of the theoretical underpinnings of the research and put forward a detailed proposal of my contribution (understanding feminicide as norm-enforcing). The backdrop of Area Studies allowed me to engage very broadly with the scholarship on feminicide — to engage encounters of authors across disciplines in Latin American studies and with gender scholars across borders.

Chapter III focuses on the methodological approach and methods used in this thesis. It is divided into two parts, one pertaining to the extraction and quantitative analysis of data using computer coding and one pertaining to the qualitative coding

conducted via MAXQDA. In this chapter, I address the concerns around and uses of NLP technology in social science research, as well as give an overview of how the GPT4 model was trained in order to produce reliable results. Finally, it discusses the epistemological basis for my qualitative coding, focusing on the process and the different cycles of coding the research went through.

Chapter IV provides a statistical overview of my data, covering the cases of feminicide in Brazil between 2019-2021. It considers several points of interest in feminicide, including the region and city in which the crime occurred, the age and number of victims, the weapon used and whether the case was named feminicide or not. The data is shown both as a whole and subdivided between the three sets: classified as feminicides, classified as other crimes and not enough information.

Chapters V, VI and VII provide the discursive analysis of the three sets of data mentioned above. They all include three main points of analysis: the perpetrator, the victim and the context of the crime. In Chapter V, I discuss how crimes of feminicide which receive this classification uphold particular narratives of passion, jealousy and love, which are antithetical to the project of combatting gender violence. In Chapter VI, I highlight cases that were not named feminicide, discussing how the portrayal of victims as ungrievable allows for their cases to be framed as another form of violence. Finally, in Chapter VII, I discuss what I call the 'lost women': women whose cases have so little information that it is impossible to even understand how the crime is classified. This final chapter is particularly interesting when put in dialogue with my statistics because it shows how the efforts to name gender violence are made more difficult when many of its victims are believed to be at the margins of society.

Finally, I move on to the conclusion, in which I highlight the main findings of the thesis and discuss what that means for my conceptualisation of feminicide as norm enforcing violence. Through an overview of the work, I note how the efforts to make feminicide more legible in the Brazilian social context have created the space for the perpetuation of patriarchal narratives around gender violence. In conclusion, I also propose ways in which this research can contribute to the study of feminicide in other contexts.

CHAPTER II: BUILDING AN APPROACH TO FEMINICIDE

Introduction

This thesis contributes to the study of feminicide[1] by proposing that it should be understood as norm-enforcing violence. I sustain that by understanding feminicide in such a way, it is possible to go being the politics of naming and into discussions of how the phenomena is perceived and sustained socially. This adds to the work of many decades of feminist activism and academic production, particularly during and after the 'second wave'[2] of feminism in the 1970s and 1980s.[3] The discussions raised by authors such as Diana Russell, Jill Radford, Marcela Lagarde, as well as Heleith Saffioti, Suely de Sousa Almeida and Maria D. Gregori in Brazil historically argued that the conditions in which women[4] were the victims of violence differed from those of men. It was through their work that feminicide was established as a social phenomenon and later even became enshrined in legal systems, such as is the case in Brazil.

This chapter has two aims: one, to provide an overview of scholarly work in the study of feminicide, and two, to build my own theoretical contribution to the study of feminicide in relation to that work. In this chapter, I will develop my argument that feminicide needs to be understood as a form of norm-enforcing violence and

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1 In the previous chapter, I have touched upon my use of the word feminicide throughout this thesis, instead of other terms such as femicide or women-killing. As stated previously, I believe that all those terms seek to address the same social phenomenon — that is, killings that are related to gender violence. Therefore, some of the literature which I analyse in this chapter use different terminology than mine. I will incorporate their terminology in quotes, and engage with any theoretical differences as they arise.

2 While this nomenclature is be useful to the reader in situating these contributions, I support Olufemi's understanding that 'separating feminist history into waves, often erases the splintered nature of feminist struggles, neglecting the existence of dividing lines across race and class'(2020:12) and 'erases dissenting voices' (2020:13). Therefore I will avoid using 'waves' in the rest of this work, and try and locate scholars within their own particular movements.

3 The discussions on GBV were prominent in the space of the radical feminist movement due to the centring of discussions on women's oppression by male supremacy — in which physical violence became a clear way of exerting power over the female body.

4 And, as later postulated by queer interventions, these debates included violence against gender diverse people.

that such enforcement exists both in the terrain of the feminicide itself and how it is spoken about after the fact. In order to do so, I will touch upon some central themes in the study of feminicide, such as precariousness, vulnerability, exploitation and grievability. Before I can do that, however, I would like to preface this chapter by discussing two central issues I encountered while establishing the theoretical basis of this thesis: the question of naming feminicide and the question of recording feminicide.

The violence of feminicide

Defining what is feminicide in Brazil seems at first to be very straightforward. As previously discussed, the country has a Feminicide Law, law 13.104/15, which adds the aggravating circumstance of 'feminicide' to the crime of homicide in the Brazilian penal code. A homicide becomes a feminicide when it involves 'domestic or familial violence' or 'discrimination and/or disdain for the condition of the female sex' (Lei 13.104/15). Crimes that meet such categories are classified as feminicides and join the statistics of gender violence in the country. In this thesis, I use the term feminicide due to both the spelling of the word in Portuguese (feminicídio) and also due to efforts from Latinx scholars to incorporate state responsibility into this form of violence (Lagarde 2006, Menjívar and Drysdale 2017). As I will discuss in Chapter II, the term feminicide is not the only one used to discuss the type of violence I examine, with the authors using the term femicide. This was the original name given by Diana Russell to what she then termed 'the killing of females by males because they are female' (1976) when the project of naming a social phenomenon as gender violence was incipient. While Russell's definition is pivotal to the process of naming this form of violence, other scholars have developed and furthered the term, and nowadays, both the terms feminicide and femicide are used by scholars and policymakers. But if feminicide exists as a social phenomenon, it is important to understand not only what it means to me as a researcher but also what it means in Brazilian society.

Since I began working on gender violence, I have often been the subject of random texts (news clippings attached with messages saying: 'this might be of

interest!') and sudden conversation prompts ('Did you see the case of the woman who was thrown from her balcony?'). Despite the often upsetting nature of the cases, I have always been grateful to those tentative engagements with my work by friends and family, the fact that they were reminded of me when going about their day. One day, walking into the kitchen of my parents' house, I noticed the television speaking in great detail about the tragedy that had befallen a young woman. Her smiling face was shown, while the TV presenter (a staple figure of daytime TV in Brazil) emphasised how her boyfriend, the man who killed her, is a monster who deserves to be in jail. I made my coffee, watching the camera pan to her street, showing the house in which she died. Next to me, the housekeeper said, sagely: 'Taí Jô, os seus feminicídios.'[5] I do not protest the possessive — this case will be one of mine, as I note the name down on my phone to research later. Feminicide is so present in the lives of Brazilians, in the newspaper, on daytime television, and on social media. People know it now; what to call it and how to recognise its victims.

However, this recognition exists because of previous attempts to name the phenomenon. The use of the word feminicide nowadays seems to be mostly understood as 'the killing of women due to gender violence' (CEPAL, 2022). In Brazilian law, as I have discussed, murder is defined as a feminicide if it involves 'domestic or familial violence' or 'discrimination and/or disdain for the condition of the female sex' (Lei 13.104/15). These definitions are interesting because they are simultaneously broad and narrow; they give specific parameters for what is classed as feminicide and what is not, but these parameters have a degree of malleability. The Brazilian Feminicide Law or even international organisation's definitions of feminicide face a challenge: to codify into text the experience of gender violence, and furthermore, to do so in a way that allows for efficient categorisation. The border and the marginal spaces are harder to classify; for example, how do we define discrimination or disdain for the condition of the female sex? Does a Tinder date that results in murder count as domestic violence? What really makes some violence gender violence?

5 See Jo, look there, your feminicides.

Throughout the years I have spent researching gender violence, one driving question has always been: 'What type of violence is it? How is it different from other forms of violence?'. One of the most common arguments I have heard when my thesis topic comes up is: 'But men are the majority of those killed in Brazil. Why do women get 'special' treatment?' This sort of question is either disingenuous or coming from a lack of awareness about the term. It is pointless to engage with the former, but the latter merits some discussion because it is linked to how the term 'femicide'/'feminicide' came to exist. While there is no dispute that men are the majority of victims of homicide, scholars of feminicide are interested in the patterns that lie behind the killing of women and how they differ from men's victimisation — for example, how women are much more likely to die in the home than men (UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2022) and how women worldwide are more likely to be killed by people they know (ibid.). Galtung's formulation of security highlights this consideration: 'When one husband beats his wife, there is a clear case of *personal* violence, but when one million husbands keep one million wives in ignorance, there is structural violence' (1982:145-6, emphasis mine). Patterns are extremely significant to understanding feminicide — it is not only that one million husbands kill one million wives, but that those deaths are situated within particular patterns. In the case of feminicide, the repeated pattern of violence being enacted on women's bodies within their homes, family and relationships is what makes it hard to discount gender violence as a solely 'personal' instance of violence - the killing of women can reveal 'the structural ordering of the family, as well as its sexual and bodily normativity' (Bandeira and Magalhães, 2019:298, translation mine).

It is precisely this act of revealing that makes the concept of feminicide useful: through recognition, it can be researched and made visible. On the data level, this allows for the amount of feminicide and its increases and decreases to be tracked, which is particularly useful in relation to the state's actions on the matter. That is, it is possible to see how many of the women killed are victims of feminicide and how many die for other reasons, for example. On a larger societal scale, concepts of feminicide allow for recognition — and how recognition impacts political and societal action. As stated by Macaulay, the *act of naming* has long been considered

by feminists a highly political act (2021:27). Rivera has argued that naming the world consists of putting into words what it is, what has been, what one lives and what surrounds them:

> Nombrar el mundo consiste en poner en palabras lo que es, lo que ha sido, lo que va siendo; o sea, en decir lo que voy viviendo, lo que ocurre a mi alrededor y lo que me ocurre, lo que vivo a solas y en relación. Con el fin de no sucumbir al crudo determinismo de las cosas. Es una práctica que ordena, que me ordena. (2005:1160)[6]

The name feminicide, therefore, aims to situate a social phenomenon within the world; it implies recognition, validation and ordering. In her work on epistemic injustice, Miranda Fricker details how one's experience can be 'obscured from collective understanding' due to 'structural identity prejudice in the collective hermeneutical resource' (2007:155). She was referring to a case in which 'sexual harassment' came to be seen as a term to signify a particular form of behaviour:

> We were referring to it as 'sexual intimidation,' 'sexual coercion,' 'sexual exploitation on the job.' None of those names seemed quite right. We wanted something that embraced a whole range of subtle and unsubtle persistent behaviours. Somebody came up with 'harassment.' Sexual harassment! Instantly, we agreed; that is what it was. (Brownmiller in Fricker, 2007:150)

It was Russell who first coined the term 'femicide', intending for it to be fundamentally different than the gender-neutral term 'homicide' — a distinction that is agreed throughout all theoretical approaches on the topic. She stated in 1976 that femicide was the killing of females by males because they are female (Russell 2011). Alongside Russell, Radford considered that femicide occurred in patriarchal societies and was characterised by a relationship of (male) dominance/(female) subordination[7] (Radford 1992:8.) This formulation allowed for femicide to be

6 Naming the world consists of putting into word what is, what has been, what is going on. It is to state what I'm living, what happens around me and what happens to me, since I live both individually and in community. Its aim is to not submit to a crude determinism. It is a practice that puts things in order, puts me in order.

7 In which there was construction of masculinity as aggressive/active and of femininity as receptive/passive (Radford 1992, 8.)

recognised as a social problem — it presented the issue as one that should not be normalised and the act of women killing as politically charged as a reinforcement of patriarchy. Russell and Radford's edited volume on femicide provided a wide variety of contexts in which femicide would apply (1992). In her development of the term, Radford added misogyny, considering femicide to be 'the misogynous killing of women by men, as a form of sexual violence' (1992:3) — this inclusion of misogyny and the sexual nature of femicide was in dialogue with Liz Kelly's proposition that an essential element of femicide would be understanding it as a form of sexual violence (1988). In Kelly's text, sexual violence is central to unmasking the gendered nature of this form of violence because it speaks directly to men's desire for dominance and control. This centring of misogyny is particularly interesting — as stated by Manne, misogyny is often referred to in scholarship, but there are not many overarching theories of what it is and how it operates (2018).

Nonetheless, Kelly's locating of femicide as a part of a continuum of sexual violence (in which she includes rape, sexual harassment and physical abuse of women and children, for example) does not necessarily mean that feminicide always has a sexual component to it. While many of the first works on femicide (Cameron and Frazer, 1996 and Caputi, 1987) discussed the killing of women in relation to sex crime and/or sexual murder, Kelly and Radford conceive of sexual violence as a form of violent male control over female bodies. This concept has allowed for this type of violence to be understood beyond 'discrete legal categories' and as part of the maintenance of patriarchal structures (Radford and Russell 1992:4). Such an understanding of femicide: that it is a form of violence enacted by men over women as part of a structure of control and dominance (patriarchy) is still central for legal and policy-oriented approaches that we see today. However, it has also been challenged and expanded by scholars working on this type of violence since its establishment.

In her translation of Russell's 'femicide' into the Latin American context, Marcela Lagarde used the term feminicídio (feminicide) instead of the intuitive

femicídio in a linguistic[8] and theoretical manoeuvre. Lagarde was concerned with the involvement of the state in situations of lethal gender violence, more explicitly with its complicity in creating and reinforcing structures that allowed for feminicide to not only exist but to thrive. This theoretical distinction is important — Russell herself is concerned with whether involving state responsibility would not detract from the broader meaning of feminicide. She states:

> 'if a wife-batterer finally kills his wife because she wants a divorce, he would be guilty of femicide. However, if he is arrested and found guilty of this crime, then by Lagarde's definition, he is no longer guilty of feminicide because the case was not treated with impunity.' (2012)

Here it is possible to see an important disagreement between feminicide theorists: beyond naming, there are concerns regarding whether incorporating impunity allows for the category to lose significance if such impunity ceases to exist. Lagarde sustains that:

> la impunidad es parte del feminicidio y por eso partimos de la definición de violencia institucional, la discriminación en la impartición de justicia, la discriminación en las averiguaciones, en los peritajes; en todo el proceso hay una mirada profundamente misógina. (2006:223)[9]

Therefore, the issue is a misogynistic *structure*, and a case that succeeds in being prosecuted is still subjected to such a structure. Despite this, Russell's concern is not fully assuaged because what if the state's mechanisms become overwhelmingly receptive to cases of women killing, seeking to investigate and mete out justice? Does this mean the misogynistic structure is done away with, and therefore, the category feminicide loses its meaning? These questions are important because they touch upon particular understandings of feminicide/femicide. As I previously stated, I'm less troubled about which term to use, as Latin American legislation, for example, uses those words interchangeably (Grzyb, 2015), and most contemporary

8 In both Spanish and Portuguese, the word for 'man' (hombre and homem, respectively) is very similar to the word for homicide (homicídio). Therefore, the word of femicídio would be considered to be quite close to 'female homicide' instead of its own category.
9 Impunity is part of feminicide and because of that we begin from the from the definition of institutional violence, the discrimination in the application of justice, in the investigation and in the forensic evidence gathering; the entire process is incredibly misogynistic. (2006:223)

scholarship allows for the use of both (Dawson and Mobayed Vega, 2023). However, I agree with D'Ignazio (Upcoming:10) that feminicide is a term more broadly used in Latin American activism and initiatives and that building on the work of scholars such as Lagarde, Fregoso and Bejarano, it is a concept that allows for a more intersectional approach to the phenomenon.

Now that I have taken into account some of the debates surrounding the terminology of this thesis, I would like to briefly engage with the question around data — as this thesis engages directly with mechanisms and institutions which are in themselves data-focused. Despite this, I would consider that my work, whilst engaged with such efforts, cannot be understood as a work of 'data feminism' (D'Ignazio and Klein, 2023), as I will discuss below.

Recording and understanding feminicide

This thesis is particularly focused on understanding feminicide — how it is spoken about and seen socially. It is not my aim here to focus on an application of the definition of feminicide; that is, how to categorise feminicide in order to increase the quality and quantity of the data pertaining to it. These approaches, which I name data-driven, concern themselves with creating different categories which seek to encapsulate the phenomenon of feminicide into categories which can be applied legally and institutionally. As discussed by Ricaurte, data-driven approaches can contribute to what she names 'data colonisation' by developing legal frameworks and designing public policy, among others. Ricaurte states that data-driven epistemology that presumes that '(1) data reflects reality, (2) data analysis generates the most valuable and accurate knowledge, and (3) the results of data processing can be used to make better decisions about the world.' (2019:351). She argues that data-driven rationality must be understood as an expression of the coloniality of power (ibid.), which includes dispossession and capture of life.

This does not preclude data-driven approaches from contributing to a feminist scholarship that is critical of the aspects highlighted by Ricaurte. As stated by Pine and Liboiron, 'We need to be aware of these underlying structures and our own role in shaping them as interventions in the world' (2015:3154) — data activism efforts incorporate those criticisms in order to use this data in order to support a different view of reality, one that centres injustice and questions 'truthful' representation (Fragoso and Bejarano, 2010:25). In her work on what she names 'quantification', Sally Engle Merry highlights how statistical knowledge is often seen as disinterested and as the product of expertise (2016:4). However, she discussed how in order to 'quantify' social phenomenon inevitably creates simplification and decontextualisation (2016:212), and that the use of qualitative information can help make quantified indicators less 'distorting' (2016:217). This understanding of quantitative data does not minimise its importance but provides an important criticism for the social sciences and policymaking, both of which have become increasingly focused on quantitative research.

In recent years, authors such as D'Ignazio and Klein (2023) have focused on developing the idea of data feminism, or the use of data science, in efforts to combat injustice and expose the way power operates in data. Ultimately, these efforts highlight why data never speaks for themselves (ibid.) and needs to be contextualised in all stages of its construction. They are in line with Merry's argument about the limitations of quantitative data in its current form. Particularly, Catherine D'Ignazio's work on 'counting feminicide' (upcoming) has shown the importance of what she named counterdata science, or that data gathered, verified and analysed by feminist organisations and activists rather than relying solely on more traditional institutions. Such efforts have given rise to initiatives such as the 'Latin American Model Protocol for the investigation of gender-related killings of women (femicide/feminicide)', a UN initiative that incorporates many of the feminist activism critiques of law enforcement and institutional application of feminicide. These efforts highlight how data-driven approaches can potentially improve the ways in which data is compiled and analysed, bringing questions of justice and erasure into institutional spaces.

While my thesis follows from several of the criticisms made by data activists and data feminists, my primary question is not focused on the development of new or the refinement of old measurements for counting feminicide in contemporary Brazil. Data-driven approaches serve an important function in shifting data science to take into account questions of ethics, liberation and justice. However, their aim is still to 'reveal' social phenomena through the use of data to improve ways in which data is gathered, contextualised and visualised to provide a better overview of such phenomena.

My work is phenomenological in its core — my focus is revealing something about the experience and perception of feminicide in Brazil. Through the use of data and mechanisms that have been developed in data science, my aim is to engage with a broader theoretical engagement with feminicide. The use of media as a source for my work comes from the understanding that, much like quantitative data, the media does not reflect an objective and absolute truth. Media reports, narratives and discourses reflect perception, being designed to 'speak' to and connect with a broad audience. Therefore, I use this data to capture this broad speech, these narratives that go beyond the individual. While I am indebted to the work of data-driven scholars, my aim is to propose a reconceptualisation of feminicide: the way it is spoken about, not just the way information about it is gathered and shared. And through this reconceptualisation, I examine the ways in which feminicide is perceived in Brazil and how this perception directly impacts the bodily experience of feminicide and potentially even the experience of gender violence more broadly.

A brief note on lifeworlds and media production

In their discussion of contemporary Brazilian media, Marques and Martino (in Cotten et al. 2017) use the phenomenological concept of 'lifeworld' to discuss the ways in which media conciliates perceptions of 'reality' and 'everyday'. In this, they follow Rancière's proposition that communication supports the construction of inter-subject and subject-object relations (2013). Therefore, media discourses produce reality insofar as they are part of how one 'makes sense' or 'constructs' their lifeworld. Butler (2016) contributes to this by highlighting how the 'framing'

of narratives impacts how life and death is conceptualised by the public. In her analysis of Abu Ghraib photographs and the construction of the image of 'ungrievable' bodies, Butler establishes a dialogue with Susan Sontag and discusses how narratives can also work as photographs. That is, they can crystallise and limit and 'frame' (2016:63) much like photos can. Butler argues that this is not solely limited to media production itself, but that it is also present in larger structures of society (2016:62). In this, she explores something similar to Rancière's idea that all forms of communication take part in this 'making of' reality.

However, there are interesting aspects about the media that are worth taking into account as a particular object of study. The scale of consumption is higher than other forms of mass communication, with research by PoderData noting that online newspapers are the main source of information for over 41% of Brazilians, compared to 13% of print media (Poder 360, 2020). Taking into account the idea that media shapes how 'lifeworlds' are experienced and constructed, media then becomes an integral part of the making of concepts in their everyday use. This raises the question of who produces media and therefore participates in this 'creation' process.

While it would not be possible for me to provide an analysis of the production aspects of the texts here analysed, it is important to take into consideration who produces the text. As noted by Marques and Martino in the same article, most media framings are being 'produced by powerfully institutionally validated agents who have an interest in attributing certain meanings to current events' (2017, 319). In a country with high levels of regional inequality, this implies not only potential testimonial injustice at the level of production, but also a focus on certain regions over others. This is particularly noticeable in the existence of what are called 'news deserts' or 'nearly-news deserts' which happen predominantly in poorer municipalities (Silva and Pimenta, 2020).

The constraints of media production in Brazil reflect broader inequalities in the country – simultaneously, this also makes them more successful in reflecting hegemonic societal discourses. As discussed by Fernandes and Barbabela (2023), Brazilian media is often considered to replicate particular political interests and

views, particularly when it comes to stories focused on party politics. In this thesis, I have been particularly attuned to that; if anything, the hegemonic aspects of media production strengthen the idea that the narratives of feminicide here analysed reflect dominant discourses. Constantopolou (2023) notes that storytelling has become crucial for contemporary journalism, and that mediates a variety of social relations. As Brazilian media is seeped into inequalities, the storytelling also reflects those inequalities – impacting the construction of reality and 'lifeworlds' of the public.

As I discuss on Chapter III, during the process of gathering sources for this work, I was particularly concerned with how to best counterbalance these inequalities while giving space for an analysis of those dominant discourses. It is also relevant to note despite Brazilian media has been historically characterised by hegemonic media conglomerates, there is an ongoing shift in the media landscape as the country moves away from cable television and into a more varied media landscape (Carter 2021:163). This is still a new phenomenon, and can represent a future avenue for research for media scholars.

Understanding feminicide as norm-enforcing violence

This thesis proposes that feminicide must be understood as a form of norm-enforcing violence, based on research conducted by philosopher Kate Manne, in which she proposes an ameliorative account of misogyny. Manne states that misogyny serves to 'uphold patriarchal order' (2018:13), which is in itself a system of domination.[10] This thesis follows Manne's work in considering misogyny the 'law enforcement' branch of patriarchy insofar as it serves to police and enforces gender normativity and gendered expectations[11]:

> …by visiting hostile or adverse social consequences on a certain (more or less circumscribed) class of girls or women to enforce and police social norms that are

10 Manne opposes what she deems a naive conception of misogyny, in which 'misogyny is primarily a property of individual rents (typically, although not necessarily, men) who are prone to feel hatred, hostility, or other similar emotions towards any and every woman, or at least women generally, *simply because they are women*.' (2018:32). She argues, and I concur, that misogyny should be understood as a system operating within patriarchal order, rather than a manifestation of individual behaviour.

11 Manne also considers sexism to be the 'justificatory' branch of the patriarchal order, something we will touch upon later in the text.

> gendered either in theory (i.e., content) or in practice (i.e., norm enforcement mechanisms). (Ibid.)

In this work, I contend that feminicide is a misogynistic tool — that is, it is one of the 'hostile or adverse' consequences of this enforcement of gender. But even further than this, I would like to propose that the category itself — even when currently used to shed light on the issue of feminicide in contemporary Brazil — is yielded normatively, enacting epistemic violence to the women who are victims of this violence. Through this, violence is not only enacted in the embodied experience of feminicide, but the perception around the phenomenon becomes normatively and epistemically violent. In this, I follow the work on epistemic injustice proposed by Miranda Fricker (2007), who examined how people can be wronged in their capacity as 'knowers' through either hermeneutical or testimonial injustice. By drawing on the work of other scholars who have examined questions of violence and vulnerability, I consider that feminicide needs to be understood as working within a particular form of misogynistic necropolitics (Mbembe 2019), which is extremely normative both in its enactment of feminicide and its perception over this violence.

Manne's work on misogyny discusses how men's relationship with women is one of entitlement (to their time, affection, and support) (2018). She is not alone in this — Wilson and Daly note that 'men take a proprietary view of female sexuality and reproductive capacity' (Wilson and Daly 1993:276), highlighting how the sense of property or ownership impacts intimate violence. In Manne, this idea is expanded: men do not feel entitled only to the women in their lives (wives, sisters, daughters) but to women more broadly, and this entitlement shapes the way women's behaviour is understood and found satisfactory or lacking. She states, with a good dose of irony:

> A woman's perceived resistance to or violation of the norms and expectations that govern these social roles[12] would naturally tend to provoke just these kinds of reactions. What could be a more natural basis for hostility and aggression than defection from the role of an attentive, loving subordinate? (Manne 2018: 49)

12 The social roles of a patriarchal order.

Following on this, I sustain that feminicide is the ultimate demonstration of such violent reaction; it is the obliteration of the woman subject. Manne's approach relies extensively on examples of women who are perceived to be violating a 'social pact' — the one in which the spaces and speeches of women are circumscribed to the domestic and private spheres. This follows what the field of feminicide has often referred to as situations of societal 'backlash' in which violence is considered to be a response to women encroaching on perceived men's spaces or deviating from their places as wives/mothers. While this formulation is interesting, it leaves out an important question: what happens to women killed who are wives and mothers? Think of Vanderléia, who was killed in 2019 because she brought cake to a party instead of a savoury treat (G1 Globo 2019). At first glance, her murder would seem completely different than that of Kareen Victória, a trans woman sex worker killed by one of her clients in São Paulo in 2020 (G1 Globo 2020). However, I would argue that the violence enacted upon both their bodies emerges from patriarchal structures, which consider that gender normativity implies entitlement — having women behave, act and serve in particular ways. Therefore, understanding feminicide as norm-enforcing allows for an understanding of the phenomenon of gender violence across a variety of social, economic, racial and contextual differences.

Kareen Victória, her own existence as a trans woman being a challenge to particular cis heterosexual patriarchal understandings of gender, is more easily framed as a transgressor. Vanderléia, the mother of two children, bringing food to a party, seems incongruent—dislocated from the idea of challenging the patriarchy. However, her choice to bring a cake instead of a plate of 'salgados'[13] brought about her death. Would the man who killed Vanderléia shoot another man if he was the one who brought the cake? Would he even expect a man to bring food in the first place?

Those questions are important because they reveal that underlying entitlement — the sweet or savoury treats are not the central point, the catalyst to violence.

13 Assorted savoury treats, usually common in parties.

Instead, they are the excuse for the violence; the expectation is that had she only done what was asked of her, had she only obeyed, maybe her death would have been avoidable. Manne offers an interesting contribution to the idea of entitlement by considering the difference between a human *subject* and a human *giver*:

> 'A giver is then obligated to offer love, sex, attention, affection, and admiration, as well as other forms of emotional, social, reproductive, and caregiving labour, in accordance with social norms that govern and structure the relevant roles and relations' (Manne 2018:301)

In the case of the human *giver,* the goalposts shift to consider obligations that are somewhat intangible — the fulfilment of the gender roles at play become enmeshed with entitlement: it is not enough to be a wife; one needs to be doting, caring, sexually available to her husband, etc. Vanderléia was a wife and a mother; she even brought the food to the party as requested. Her deviation from the expected script was something so minor it would not register to most as worthy of notice, much less as an infraction. Nonetheless, it was perceived as an infraction by her attacker, a male party atteende, and it became the cause of her death.

This case might be pointed out as an outlier — women are not killed every day because they bring the wrong dish to potluck dinners. But what this case shows is how the expectations that harm women are present everywhere, and the outliers reveal important insights into the mechanism of gender violence. Let us consider the case of Elliot Rodger, a case that is so well known that it resulted in extensive BBC media coverage and pop culture references such as the TV show Criminal Minds. After a thwarted attempt to kill the members of the sorority Alpha Phi, he went on a killing spree, which ended with six dead and many more injured. In his manifesto, he stated that his aim was to: '…slaughter every single spoiled, stuck-up, blonde slut I see inside there [Alpha Phi sorority house]'. (Democratic Underground). What does it mean to be spoiled and stuck up for Rodger? In his manifesto, he highlights how his rampage was fuelled by having been 'forced to endure an existence of loneliness, rejection, and unfulfilled desires because girls have never been attracted to me. *Girls give their affection and sex and love to other men but never to me*…'

(Democratic Underground, emphasis mine.) Here, Manne's formulation of the human giver is made clear, as Rodger feels entitled to women's love, sex and affection. He is cheated by them, and that justifies killing them. Their behaviour is judged based on Rodgers' expectations of women, which include a particular form of sexual and romantic subservience, and those who deviated from it were considered to have undesirable character traits as well as becoming acceptable targets for his rage. Rodger is an example of what is now called incel (involuntary celibate) culture, a highly online subculture of (mostly) men who claim to be celibate because women will not have sex with them[14].

This double act, which renders the victims physically dead but also ascribes unto their bodies ideas and characters that are less valuable (such as being spoiled or stuck-up), is central to the understanding of feminicide as norm-enforcing. Through the eyes of the perpetrator, women get killed for a reason — be it because of their flaws or their inability to perform an expected role. They can also get killed because of the way they make the perpetrator feel, robbing him of care, love or desire. In this construction of feminicide, victims are less valuable and are somehow implicated in their own deaths. It takes away from their grievability — that is, the ways in which their deaths can be mourned. The idea that some lives are more grievable than others is not new in the social sciences, and particularly in questions of gender violence.

Grievability and lives that matter

Judith Butler discusses the concept of grievability by considering that 'grievable lives' are those which are deemed worthy of mourning — and that ungrievable lives, in turn 'cannot be lost, and cannot be destroyed, (…) they are ontologically, and from the start, already lost and destroyed' (Butler 2004:xix). When thinking about feminicide as norm-enforcing, it is possible to see two ways in which the concept of grievability can be used, marking specific grievable lives and those that are ungrievable through a web of moral and affective judgements.

14 For more discussions on incels and masculinity on the internet, see Perrone, 2019; Ging, 2019; Heritage, 2024.

In her work on feminicide in Northern Mexico, Wright highlights the construction of the 'public woman' — the one who occupies the public sphere and whose death is made less grievable because she has made herself/her body available in the eyes of the police, media and public (2006). The 'public woman' is perceived to be continuously transgressing society's norms and, therefore, *putting herself in situations in which death is a possibility*. This idea of bringing herself into danger returns to Butler's discussion of a life that is from the start lost — from the start, this is an ungrievable life. The case of Kareen Vitória would be an example of this, a life that transgresses cisnormative and heteronormative narratives — as discussed by Marinho (2020), trans women are located within a consistent process of dehumanisation and a witch-hunt. Marinho remembers the case of Dandara Kettlyn de Velasques, who was publicly beaten and murdered by 12 men in 2017 and whose death was filmed and shared on social media (2020:95). The exploitation of her death and the brutality of it seem to reveal an underlying understanding of that life as one that does not matter, and that travesti as one that deserves her death.

These considerations of grievability are not solely restricted to trans women. Sex workers or women who are assumed to be violating sexual boundaries are highlighted by Wright as cases in which the label 'public women' is inscribed on their bodies to justify their deaths — and furthermore, to justify the absence of state action to investigate and persecute them (2006). Wright highlights that the discourse of public women also symbolises 'social decay' (2006:682), making all women who occupy the public space be regarded with suspicion (ibid.). In the case of Brazilian feminicide, this reflects a moral concern with victims that are in the non-domestic space — in particular, victims who are in impoverished areas, engage in sex work, drug abuse or engage with organised crime are less likely to be able to access state support and are more likely to be portrayed as ungrievable (see Macaulay 2021, Maia 2019 and Meneghel et al. 2022).

However, there are feminicide victims who might be grievable (as I discuss in Chapter V of this work). The death of Tatiana Spitzner in 2018 is a good example of this — in recent news coverage, the case was said to have become a symbol of the fight against feminicide (CBN Curitiba, 2023). She was beaten by her partner

and thrown out of the window of the apartment they lived in together. The case gained much attention due to the existence of CCTV images showing the beatings. Tatiane was also a white, middle-class victim who was a lawyer and whose family has been engaged in naming her death as feminicide and as the product of an abusive relationship. This highlights the importance of social context to the questions of grievability — the perception that a victim worth mourning must abide by certain social scripts and a social and affective network that will be engaged in fighting for justice in her name. Moral and affective narratives are at play in determining the grief that certain victims deserve or not.

In one of Brazil's most emblematic feminicide cases, the murder of socialite Ângela Diniz by her boyfriend Doca Street in 1976, the perpetrator was found not guilty as his lawyer called the victim a 'lascivious Venus' that drove the man to the act of murder due to her flirtatious and alleged unfaithful behaviour. (Ordem dos Advgados do Brasil - São Paulo (OAB-SP)). Ângela was independently wealthy and had access to a network of material support, which could have allowed her some safety and escape from the violence; however, not only was she killed, but after her death, her status as a socialite was used against her. The image in the courtroom and in the public eye was one of a woman who was in control — control over her partner, who was driven to kill her because of her own actions, control over others due to her beauty, weaponising her sexuality to manipulate men. Therefore, the question of grievability does not affect only women who are socially marginalised (i.e. sex workers) but can be yielded to portray certain victims as less deserving of grief than others through perceptions about the victim's behaviour.

In his seminal work 'Necropolitics, ' Mbembe discusses what he names the 'living dead' — that is, populations which live under specific forms of social existence in which living and/or dying are enmeshed (2003). Mbembe's work stated that Foucault's idea of 'biopower' was insufficient to describe the ways in which life was being subjugated in those spaces, marked by colonial oppression and terror, setting out the idea of necropolitics to attend to these concerns. Mbembe is thinking about the ways in which death-in-life exists — if Foucault's 'biopower' spoke of the *droit de glaive*, the right to kill, Mbembe is speaking of a right to expose others

to death, to create a form of social death in which life becomes so precarious that one might as well be dead, or so precarious that death seems to be the same as being alive. Nancy Sheper-Hughes registers the words of Nilda Gomes speaking about medical mistreatment and the everyday violence of hospital clinics in Brazil: 'It's always like that with the poor (…) Our lives and our deaths are very cheap. The nurses and doctors look at us, and they say, 'Well, what does it matter, one more or one less?' (1994:247).

Nilda's words reflect some of the underlying issues of necropolitics very well: she articulates the idea of being left for dead, of your death not mattering in the eyes of the institution. Alive or dead, it makes no difference. Ultimately, Nilda's words reflect the idea that some lives do not seem to matter (grievability) but also that the state and institutions are implicated in this process of 'making death'. Some of this has been articulated in Brazil, especially in the context of racism and of black lives and state violence (Nascimento, 1989; Christen, 2013) and more recently, in the way the Bolsonaro government handled the pandemic of COVID-19 (Duarte, 2022), especially in relationship with the indigenous population (Russo Lopes and Bastos Lima 2020). The necropolitics of the Brazilian state shape the way certain bodies — especially black and Indigenous bodies — are so precarious as to have their deaths be subsumed under the daily life of Brazil. Therefore, grievability has been linked to another concept, the idea of precariousness (as discussed by Butler 2004, 2011), which has impacted not only the ways women are perceived after their death but also underscores their vulnerability to death itself, as I will discuss below.

Death and precariousness

Looking at feminicide, this precariousness comes to the fore. Many scholars of feminicide have highlighted how this type of violence can be linked to issues of precariousness and exploitation — in particular, scholars working in the emblematic case of Ciudad Juarez have argued that the political and economic scenario of the border town had a direct bearing on feminicides in the region, making the state active in furthering economic precariousness and gender violence (Washington Valdéz 2006; González Rodríguez 2012). Wânia Pasinato, in her discussion of feminicide

in Ciudad Juarez, highlights its connection to the transformations in the labour market of the region - including the establishment of EPZs (export processing zones) that were centred around factories from the U.S. and Canada — relied heavily on women employee's due to its characterisation as 'cheap and docile' (Pasinato, 2011:255). These women are then seen not only as a labour force but a particular type of labour force: one that can be paid little and that will accept such exploitation. This creates a type of economic precariousness that is furthered by the state, which is interested in maintaining that economic set-up for the continuous investment of foreign capital into the EPZs.

This precariousness is not only seen through the material realm in which these women are exploited — it seeps into the discursive practices around their bodies. In the case of Ciudad Juarez and in other border towns, several authors (Driver 2015; Wright 2006; 2011) have highlighted how the media and government focused on hyper-sexualising the victims, as well as linking their deaths to the drug trade, in order to evade responsibility for their deaths. Notably, Fregoso (2003) and Wright (2011) have discussed how unable to further deny the issues surrounding the killing of women in Juarez, state officials began to utilise the concept of 'la doble vida' (the double life) — accusing the victims of having been maquiladoras (factory workers) by day, and sex workers by night. Their economic precariousness then signifies a different kind of precariousness — one which first integrates women into exploitative systems such as the maquila and then operates on a moral and discursive level by portraying women as failing in their social reproductive duties (and, in turn, validating their exploitation). This oppression operates both in life and in death because victims (and their families) are unable to access the appropriate channels in which to claim justice or get the state and perpetrators to answer for the violence caused. In the case of gender violence, the impact of a woman's death can be devastating — as a consequence of their centrality on both productive and reproductive spheres, the killing of women has a devastating impact on family and community income, resources and reproductive arrangements.

In Brazil, economic precariousness also entails other forms of precariousness, and as I have discussed, race plays a central role in this vulnerability to violence.

The vulnerability of Black and Indigenous women in Brazil is not shaped only by feminicide but can be seen in other forms of violence, particularly police violence, as highlighted by Smith:

> The epidemic of police violence in Brazil, its economy of death, and its hegemonic racial logic all suggest that the spectacular display of the mutilated, tortured, and dead bodies in Brazil is a symbol of the state's necropolitical tactics. (2013:180)

Smith was discussing the question of death squads in Salvador, Bahia, but her work speaks to broader concerns about the precariousness of black life in contemporary Brazil. Beyond Nilda's words to Scheper-Hughes, the work of Smith highlights how sometimes lives are not only ungrievable but, in fact, portrayed as undesirable — as she states, the black subject in Brazil has been historically 'constructed as an internal enemy (captives, terrorists, criminals)' (2013:181). The everyday violence of the country, allied with the historical construction of subjects which are portrayed as a plight or a stain in the national scenario, makes the question of precariousness particularly interesting and relevant for thinking of feminicide in contemporary Brazil.

Much like Menjívar's work on Ladina women's lives in Guatemala (2011), which highlighted the particular precariousness of the Ladina subject in an economy of violence, the question of race and racism is often at the heart of dynamics in contemporary Brazil. As I will discuss in Chapter III, there were limitations in my own research around the race of the women whose deaths I examined, but race is often everywhere in the construction of precariousness in the country — historically intertwined with the construction of undesirable social subjects (see Pereira and Sampaio, 2018). Black women, exposed to violence at all levels (physically and epistemically), are not only victims of gender violence but are less recognised as potential victims and have less access to institutional support, being oftentimes victimised by the state itself (Perry, 2012).

Precariousness, much like grievability, impacts the making of the subject during life and death. In studies of feminicide, both these concepts have been studied and used to a certain extent to highlight the ways in which women's lives/deaths exist in

the social fabric and how they are spoken about in the media. However, there are other underlying assumptions in the questions of grievability and precariousness that are also worthy of note, namely questions surrounding social normativity and gender roles.

Social norms and gender norms

The concept of social norms is not entirely fixed in the literature, but it can broadly be understood as 'informal rules' that govern behaviour in society (Durkheim 1982 (1895); Coleman 1990). Social norms have often been conceptualised as opposing personal attitudes (Cislaghi and Heise 2019) that are focused on others' approval. Ultimately, social norms are enacted due to society's expectations of their fulfilment, without necessarily speaking to one's self-perception. The breaking of 'social norms' can have varying effects depending on the context and on what norms are being broken. These contexts are also highly variable across age group, country, social class, etc., with some norms (e.g. greeting the bus driver when you board) being more universal than others (e.g. what to bring to a funeral).

This conceptualisation of social norms is itself a way of separating social norms from gender norms and gender normativity — which have been understood as the belief that certain attitudes, behaviours, social traits, etc., are inherently gendered and, oftentimes, hierarchical. This can be seen clearly in the research of authors such as Connell (1993) and Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) in the construction of what they name hegemonic masculinity. Some actions are perceived to be 'feminine' or 'masculine', and adherence to these norms speaks to one's value as a man or woman. Connell's hegemonic masculinity, for example, relies on values of self-reliance, enterprise and dominance and attitudes that derive from it (Ibid.). An example of that would be the maxim: 'men do not cry.' This assumes that crying is a feminine trait, and that men who do cry are therefore not fulfilling their role as man, being perceived as 'inferior' to their more stoic counterparts.

Gender norms are linked to social norms; they can be focused on others' approval but are also highly internalised. For example, in her feminist critique of the

idea of biological differences between men and women, Cordelia Fine discusses how the perception of women, both by society and by themselves, impacts their performance in various aptitude and personality tests (2011). Women might be discouraged from pursuing certain careers, or if they pursue such careers, they might feel compelled to behave in more 'masculine' ways to prove their belonging (ibid.)

Social norms and gender norms, however, both speak to underlying ideas of morality and affect. As highlighted by Manne and discussed by myself earlier in this chapter, the expectation of women as *givers* of affection, support, sex, etc., sustains that women who are perceived as *withholding* are breaking with norms. Are these norms social or gender ones? I would sustain they can be both, as the emphasis on certain gender norms can impact social norms (e.g. the notion of chivalry and/or gentlemanly behaviour often presupposes gender normativity but would also fulfil the concept of the social norm). Ultimately, both types of norms underlie the perception of 'what is right' regarding behaviour.

Within spaces of gender violence, these ideas of 'what is right' gain extra connotations, especially when it comes to familial and domestic violence. As discussed by Herrera and Agoff (2018), moral philosophy has often been concerned with 'whether the special moral character of family relationships comes from affection or reciprocal obligations' (p. 1326). Considering what Manne discusses about women as givers, the questions of women within family and domestic relationships — and the negotiations around care, domestic labour, emotional support, etc. — come to the fore. In the case of feminicide, the idea of a good/bad mother/wife/daughter is intrinsically linked to what can be termed

> a feminine ideal of motherhood and service to children and spouse as opposed to the search for personal liberty and for recognition by means other than motherhood, mainly through participation in the labour market (Herrera and Agoff 2018:1329)

This signifies that women are perceived through gendered moral norms in which they are 'right' through abiding by very narrow conceptualisations of femininity.

When put in a broader context, the question of social and gender norms in feminicide becomes a double-edged sword. Women are exposed through general social norms and moral judgments (as discussed above, for example, the question of the racist construction of a 'public enemy') and also specific gender norms which disqualify their victimhood and/or behaviour (i.e. being a bad mother or bad wife). In the cases which I touched upon in this chapter, the yielding of such moral judgements can be applied broadly (like in the case of transgender women) or narrowly (like Vanderléia and her savoury treat). The moral and affective responses that are linked to the breaking of these expectations are both entitled and gendered (as discussed by Manne, 2020). Furthermore, in the cases of groups which are perceived to be contributing negatively to the social fabric, the question of affect intersects neatly with moral judgements — as highlighted by Miller et al. in their work about attitudes towards transgender rights 'disgust shifts moral judgements towards politically conservative positions' (2017:8). In Brazil, the construction of certain groups as socially repugnant, morally wrong and/or detrimental to society more broadly, as I have discussed, can impact how these lives are perceived by the public more generally.

Women's double bind in relation to moral judgements then affects both the domestic and the public spaces, creating lives that are governed by strict social and gender normativity. In the question of domestic/familial feminicide, this can be reflected in attitudes that 'justify' killing through perceptions of women abandoning their partners, not fulfilling their roles in the home, being perceived as unfaithful, etc. (Fahs et al., 2023). And in 'public' feminicides, i.e. those that happen to women who are constructed as 'public women', the same norms highlight those lives as less-than through their engagement with social activities that are constructed as morally repugnant and/or wrong.

In a way, the construction of social and gender norms feeds into the ideas of precariousness and grievability that I have highlighted as central to understanding feminicide literature. By considering how normativity underpins the construction of desirable and undesirable social identities, I'm proposing to engage these concepts together in the 'norm-enforcing' characterisation of feminicide.

Other considerations on feminicide as norm-enforcing

As I discussed above, conceptualising feminicide as norm-enforcing allows for the articulation of all these different concepts (precariousness, grievability, necropolitics) in an overarching framework for understanding this type of violence. As I have discussed, scholars working on feminicide have highlighted the ways in which economic and social precariousness, as well as the construction of 'undeserving' victims, have contributed to the continuing lethal violence against women. I propose that the consideration of feminicide as norm-enforcing considers this rich literature whilst simultaneously engaging with a more critical understanding of what feminicide is as a category and how the category itself is used in Brazil.

What I want to showcase in this thesis is that even when women are perceived to be victims of feminicide, they are subjected to very strict normative readings of their victimhood. Naming someone a victim of feminicide subjects them to a narrative of gender violence, one that I will showcase being very similar to the ones of 'crimes of passion' that feminists have argued against in the 20th century.

In her work on epistemic injustice, Miranda Fricker discusses what she dubs hermeneutical injustice:

> …the injustice of having some significant area of one's own experience obscured from collective understanding owing to a structural identity prejudice in the collective hermeneutical resource. (155:2007)

By considering feminicide as a norm-enforcing form of violence, I do not limit the violence to the act of feminicide but also to its subsequent classification in society. Some women are victims of feminicide, and some are not. This distinction often relies on their position in society, with marginalised groups such as trans women or homeless women not having their deaths seen as feminicides. Understanding feminicide as norm-enforcing allows for an understanding of the norms and narratives at play not only in the act of feminicide but in what happens

after. Feminicide, while an act that is final in many ways, does not stop as a social phenomenon once a woman is dead.

Therefore, my engagement with Fricker's concept of epistemic injustice draws from Mbembe's discussion of necropolitics and Butler's argument about grievability. The injustice lies in certain women not having their deaths labelled as feminicide due to their social marginalisation. This means not only that their deaths do not receive the same legal treatment as those of 'recognised' victims but also that the narrative around their deaths will be different than those of the latter. This epistemic injustice is also normative because the label 'victim of feminicide' is constricted by what is collectively understood to be 'feminicide'. In Fricker's words, victims of feminicide not recognised as such are victims of a structural prejudice (based on what the victim is or has done) in the collective hermeneutical resource (what is understood to be feminicide). By framing feminicide as norm-enforcing, I can understand the phenomenon in the multiple ways in which it is enacted in society, including in the ways that it does not get named. Furthermore, it allows me to see how factors involved in normativity also play a part in determining whether murder is classified (or not) as a feminicide.

For example, the violence committed by Rodgers is one type of feminicide (in fact, most feminicides happen in the home, and the vast majority are committed by intimate partners), and it touches upon overall patterns that are part of gender violence. As I have discussed at the beginning of this chapter, patterns are crucial to understanding feminicide as a category. In fact, they are one of the main underpinnings of feminicide, as the term itself results in an interest in understanding why certainties or violence seem to be repetitive and reoccurring. Rodger framed much of his violence around his anger at being denied what he considered he was entitled to: women's love, affection and sexual availability.

While Rodger's case is one literal example of the rhetoric of entitlement, it is not the only way in which it manifests. Manne considers this entitlement, as well as the establishment of women as 'givers', as an essentially moral function. While I would agree with this, my thesis also aims to engage with the affects involved within those notions of giving and entitlement. As discussed by Butler in this chapter, the

responses given to certain forms of violence reflect not only how we perceive the victims in death but also in life (Butler 2016) — and those responses are not solely a judgement of whether or not someone was morally right but also involves sympathy, pity, indignation. Manne's own concept of 'himpathy' hints at this, the underlying emotional aspects that are never removed from both the reporting and the reading of social phenomenon. The norms involved in feminicide are not solely moral ones: they hide within them a complex web of affects, from how we perceive the perpetrator, the victim and the context in which they were involved. Considering this, what I propose is to get to the heart of feminicide: how do we see it, from the moment someone writes a news story about a woman killed to the moment someone reads it, police testimonies and friends grieving and the word feminicide being given (or not) to that victim, in an act of recognition. If we think of feminicide as norm-enforcing, I'm proposing that this act of recognition is in itself normative because the determination of what counts or not as feminicide is not solely a categorising effort. It is one of understanding what motivates an act of violence — what ideas of good and bad are being mobilised, what feelings exist or are perceived to exist, and what circumstances perpetuate the cycle of violence.

In this, 'norms' are not solely applied as discursive or material but operate in both realms. They have to do, as discussed by Manne, with the execution or not of particular acts — the provision of things such as reproductive labour (which is material) and also the abiding by ideas of femininity, such as not being perceived as 'stuck up' (which is discursive). By engaging with the idea of normativity more broadly, my thesis allows for a more complete picture of feminicide. As discussed, my proposition allows feminicide to be understood twice-fold: one, as an act of violence and two, as an act of naming — and in both those cases, perceptions of gender norms are fundamental. Women are placed within a catch-22 in which both being and not-being a victim of feminicide feeds into normative narratives of gender. By making such narratives explicit, my aim is to showcase how the current form of addressing feminicide is lacking, and pinpoint possible directions in which to go from here.

Conclusion

This is the first study to systematically analyse reporting on all cases of women killed in order to understand how the idea of feminicide is used — which women are victims, where are they located socially, what are the expectations and norms applied to their bodies and experiences both in life and in death. I will showcase how current news reports about feminicide are norm-enforcing both to women who get to be victims and to those who do not. In the following chapter, I will discuss the methods involved in the gathering and analysis of my data, particularly focused on why the project made certain methodological choices and how my inductive process of data gathering and analysis took form.

This thesis seeks to find answers to the questions posed in this chapter. While my concept seems to neatly encapsulate answers to tensions in the study of feminicide (how are grievability and precariousness constructed in relation to gender norms), this thesis wanted apply such a concept to test its validity against the empirical data in order to see if it held. By showcasing, like I did, that it does hold, my goal was then to study what norms are at play and what they say about the circumstances in which women die. I will also discuss what happens to them after they die and that the incorporation of feminicide into the collective epistemic resource, as proposed by Fricker, does not create conditions in which gender violence gets conceptualised as misogyny. By showcasing that the way feminicide is spoken of is still in itself misogynistic and reinforcing of gender normativity, I want to contribute to the field so that researchers can think about how else should we be speaking of gender violence.

While I propose some avenues of interest in my Conclusion, my goal with this work is not to prescribe a particular way of speaking of feminicide. Instead I wanted to engage with the shortcomings of the way in which feminicide is understood in Brazil. It is my hope that I can further research more liberatory and less normative ways of perceiving and narrating feminicide.

In the following chapter, I will provide an overview of the methods used in this work, as well as the underlying ontological and epistemological challenges of conducting phenomenological feminicide research during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I will also highlight the methodological contributions of this work, namely the construction of a media database reporting on women's deaths in contemporary Brazil and the use of a mixed-methods approach that encompasses the use of new artificial intelligence technology.

CHAPTER III: METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

As discussed in my introduction, my research had to undergo substantial changes due to the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic during the second year of my DPhil. As discussed by Gibbs and Flick (2018), the purpose of qualitative research is to describe what is happening and answer the question: 'What is going on here?' It is not surprising, then, that my research focused extensively on qualitative analysis. My research asked: how can we understand feminicide in contemporary Brazil? How is it perceived and experienced in this space and time? However, I was constricted in accessing the space in which the phenomenon occurred. The impossibility of organising fieldwork in Brazil had to make me rethink not only the overall project but also what it meant to do the research I desired to do — an analysis that would be phenomenological, that is, concerned with experiences and perceptions. The question was: how do we discuss perception and experience from an ocean away? In this chapter, I will discuss how I addressed this concern, and what methods I used to provide an answer to the questions posed by this project.

Following on to the discussions raised in my chapters I and II, this thesis is focused on discussing feminicide under a phenomenological[1] lens, that is, asking the question, 'How can we understand feminicide in contemporary Brazil?.' In order to contribute to the phenomenological aspects of this thesis, this chapter is structured alongside phenomenological research procedures. First, I will discuss the design and rationale behind the research and my choice of phenomenology, particularly feminist phenomenology as a methodology — establishing a dialogue with overarching poststructural concerns after the discussion in Chapter II. Second, I will

1 This thesis is a primarily existential phenomenology endeavour, and therefore the words phenomenology and existential phenomenology will be used interchangeably.

touch upon my role in this research, focusing particularly on researching a phenomenon that has deeply personal meaning to me as a Brazilian woman. Following this, I will discuss instrumentation, that is, which methods were used to acquire the data and the rationale behind choosing them. Afterwards, I will delve into the data collection and explain what were the instruments used, and finally, I will discuss the process of data analysis, focusing particularly on the coding of my qualitative data for discourse analysis.

The case of Brazil

The case study of Brazil was relevant to the study of feminicide and to my own research due to several aspects. First, Brazil is a particularly interesting case study of feminicide, having a wide array of legal protections around gender violence (the Maria da Penha Law of 2006 and the Feminicide Law of 2015). However, as pointed out by Macaulay, there has been tension in the way the country addresses gender violence. Historically, it has been a supporter of the protection of policies in relation to gender violence, but it has been reluctant and non-compliant in implementing, reporting back on and adhering to international standards (Macaulay, 2021:13). And, as I have previously discussed, it has high rates of feminicide, increasing in numbers every year since the legal category was implemented (Globo G1, 2023) furthermore, since I am a native Portuguese speaker, it is easier for me to understand cultural and linguistic nuances both in spoken and written discourse.

Using Brazil as a case study was also important to me on an individual level. As I have previously discussed, my location as a Brazilian woman informed my research. It was important to me to make an academic contribution that would add to current and past research on gender violence in my home country. Throughout my research, I was once again reminded of how close to home the topic of feminicide is to women in Brazil. One of the victims of the dataset was known to friends, and seeing her name and face on the news felt both excruciatingly near and somehow detached. Her killing is one of the many cases not classified as feminicides that are part of my dataset. Seeing her name and looking over the media reports on

her murder highlighted how my own experience is part of this project and how gender violence is part of the environment in which I spent most of my life.

Despite focusing on Brazil, my research can be applied elsewhere. The methods that I have used, which I will discuss in detail in this chapter, can be replicated in other countries. The main concerns in its application would be the number of sources that are available and whether they can be said to feasibly represent perceptions over feminicide and gender violence (i.e., the prevalence of o digital media and its consumption). The methods I have developed in this chapter could even be adapted to analyse other social phenomena and scaled up to incorporate more articles. Long-term, potentially longitudinal studies examining discursive trends over time could be implemented as well.

Ontology and epistemology

It will come as no surprise to the reader that this is a thesis about discourse and, therefore, that it is based on ontological concerns arising from post-structural theory. As I discuss in Chapter II, this work also engages with the important contribution to the field of gender violence that arose from the work of feminist historical materialism and social reproductive theory. However, its concern is chiefly with the maintenance of particular forms of discourse surrounding feminicide in Brazilian society. Before COVID-19, my aim was to focus particularly on the lived experience of women living in Brazil, taking a purely phenomenological approach to the research. With the advent of the pandemic, I still wanted to think about the experience but had to work within the constricted circumstances of the moment, which meant that my original approach – an ethnographic study – was impossible.

One of my primary concerns when discussing experience was to go beyond the immediate physical experience of gender violence and focus on what surrounds the subject of violence. My concerns about the classification of feminicide seemed to echo concerns around questions of experience, as discussed by Victoria Sanford:

> It seems that often, in attempts to encapsulate a culture, anthropologists seek to categorise and compartmentalise, rather than problematise experience. This is

> particularly dangerous when one seeks to reveal truths about violence and survival, for it is a slippery slope to reifying survival, difference, and terror, and thereby eliminating all possibilities for understanding. (2006:31).

What does Sanford mean by the problematising of experience that she suggests as the anthropologists work? In her article, she puts forward the importance of testimony and the uneasiness that lies within assuming an objective truth, but not only that — she proposes an active engagement with the structures of understanding that frame one's research. Therefore, understanding gender violence through the prism of experience involves centring one's experience as a researcher as well as the experience of the researched subject(s). How could one consider that experience is seminal in building feminicide as a social phenomenon without taking into account the ways in which experience might build one's own analysis?

This understanding made it clear to me that some ontological and epistemological decisions had to be made early on in my project. Throughout this thesis, I do not commit to an objective truth that is removed from the daily understanding of gender violence as promoted and discussed in Brazilian news, nor am I in denial about how being a Brazilian woman has shaped my interest and research on the subject. The intense presence of the self within my research is a strength in a phenomenological project, as it allows for an engagement with both oneself and others.

My ontological position is that we can understand reality through discourse — particularly through discourse that is constructed by dominant ideas and narratives. As stated by Oksala (2010):

> The important philosophical idea behind Foucault's hybrid notion of power/knowledge is that social practices always incorporate power relations, which become constitutive of forms in the subject as well as domains and objects of knowledge (p. 447)

Therefore, feminicide would encapsulate power relations both in its enactment and in the legal and institutional process following the crime. All the subjects and objects involved in the practice of feminicide are then constituted by it and vice

versa, allowing for a researcher like myself to delve into those matters. As I discuss in Chapter II, through my proposition that feminicide should be understood as norm-enforcing, I have sought to link discourse with the ways in which lives are materially impacted by feminicide, thereby using phenomenology to understand how discursive practices can become embodied in the experience of feminicide.

My choice of subject and training has also given me particular standings on the epistemological side. This thesis has sought to actively engage with feminist theory and methods, focusing particularly on how women's experience and knowledge have been historically removed from the Brazilian political and legal system. Suppose one is to consider the construction of discourse about feminicide incorporating dominant narratives and ideas. In that case, it is important to put those in tandem with proposals of scholars focused on the subaltern narratives of the phenomenon. As discussed in Chapter II, I am particularly indebted to the work of feminists working in Latin America (Segato 2014, Fragoso and Bejarano 2010, Lagarde 2006, Wright 2006) and the work of Brazilian feminists (Pasinato 2011, Romio 2019) who have examined feminicide through an emancipatory lens. Their work often challenged gendered assumptions about victims and perpetrators, including those in the media.

Design and rationale

As my research question was, 'How is feminicide understood in Brazil?.' The question of understanding feminicide is broad, and, as discussed in my introduction, I wanted to tease out the experiential dimension of it — that is, I am trying to understand the perception of feminicide in contemporary Brazil and how it gets perpetuated by hegemonic media discourse. As discussed by von Eckartsberg (1998), existential phenomenology is concerned with what the phenomenon is — and the use of existential phenomenology focuses on the question of everyday experience as a way to demonstrate the nature of that phenomenon. Therefore, my methodology had to reflect this phenomenological query. Phenomenology has been used in social science contexts studying gender (Chandler 2019, Siddika and Baruah 2018), and existential phenomenology aligns itself with a feminist research ethos.

Merleau-Ponty considered that the relationship between the individual and the world was interdependent and co-constituted (1989(1945):410), allowing for the considerations of feminist theory that challenge objectivity to flourish. The co-constitution of subject/world was of particular interest to me as I examined the idea of feminicide since part of my query involved understanding who a victim of feminicide can be and what that means.

Nonetheless, the fact that existential phenomenology centres the experience of the self poses a challenge to the researcher — that is, the researcher needs to be fully aware and willing to engage with the limits of their research due to their own perception of the world. This was particularly relevant to me as a Brazilian researcher — my interest in feminicide was also intertwined with my own perception of it, which was in itself shaped by many of the same media outlets that I analysed in this thesis. If, on one hand, my familiarity with Brazil and Brazilian media has followed a rich tradition of Latinx scholars engaging with their own culture (see Cecília Menjívar, Flávia Biroli, Marcela Lagarde, Gloria Anzaldua and many others), on the other it required extra attention to my own positionality in the country itself — born and raised in a white, middle-class environment in the city of São Paulo; I occupy a position of historical epistemic, class and racial privilege in Brazil. Simultaneously, I also have been the recipient of gender violence in a country in which gender oppression is a daily occurrence. Far from being removed from matrices of gender normativity and oppression, my chief concern was to not collapse all different experiences of Brazilian women into my own. Throughout the gathering and analysis of my data, it was my goal to keep those concerns at the forefront of my research.

Beyond my own experience and perception being concerned with the realms of phenomenological study, there were two other crucial aspects of understanding feminicide through the lens of feminist phenomenology. One of them is ontological, and the other epistemological, and I will examine both briefly:

Ontological concerns

In her discussion of feminist phenomenology, Linda Alcoff highlights that there are issues within the use of phenomenology and 'lived experience' – first-person accounts might alleviate some bias in understanding gender violence, but they do not provide an absolute truth (2000, 43). She discusses how the experience of rape while serving to supplement our understanding of this type of violence, is marred by ideological patriarchal influence (say, a victim might feel responsible for the violence, but this does not mean that this is the truth). The emphasis of feminist existential phenomenology in the lived experience (Alcoff 2000; Young 2005) considers that there are spatial concerns, concerns that have to do with how the body relates to the world around it, but also gives space for this lived experience to be co-constituted by the world around it.

Understanding feminicide in Brazil might be a phenomenological endeavour, but this sometimes seems to be a contradiction. That is, existential phenomenology is primarily concerned with the 'lived experience' and the 'everyday experience' of a phenomenon, but there is no primary lived experience of feminicide that can be accessed. The presence of life is inherent to feminicide, and it is the act of removing life from a body that characterises the violence I am examining. The essential presence of the body in existential-phenomenological work, therefore, poses questions for studying feminicide: that is, how to understand lived experience once the body which experienced the phenomenon has been eliminated? That is, how do we bring forward the lived experience of violent death?

Since the individual is gone, the experience of the phenomenon itself exists merely in the impression it has made on those surrounding the victim — family, friends, the police and the perpetrator itself. The site of feminicide, the body of the victim, cannot be apprehended by the victim herself, making them subject to outside perceptions. The experience of the female body is obliterated by the act of feminicide, leaving behind an impression, a mark of life. This contested space in which the victim cannot speak about her own experience becomes the centre for disputed perceptions of the victim, perpetrator, and the act of feminicide itself.

This body also becomes the ground for other disputes, namely political and institutional ones — that is, while those affected by feminicide will have their own

perceptions of the phenomenon, other interested parties contribute to its understanding from the perspective of elaborating on the phenomenon through individual experiences. This includes researchers like me, as well as activists. An example of the direct impact of research and activism on feminicide is the name itself, as I have examined previously. Part of my interest in using qualitative research methods was to be able to explore my own perceptions of feminicide in relation to the ones of my peers. Politicians, activists and journalists are all contributing to perceptions of feminicide — and, as discussed, participate in shaping the experience of victims, families, the police, etc. Macaulay discusses the impact of training on police officers' attitudes towards gender violence (2021), showcasing that perceptions can be altered and shaped.

The idea of the body as a site for contested perceptions over social phenomena is not new (Ahmed 2006, Butler 2004, 2011); however, the discussion of such contested space in a body that is gone raises interesting points. Despite being an essential bodily act, feminicide then exists in the limbo between experience and perception. By researching feminicide, I am not only examining the act but how it is spoken about and thought of as well. In this, my methodology also reflects Husserl's proposal that all thinking and knowing was related to knowledge. He considers that when we think, we think about our thinking on something rather than its 'objective existence'. In this, Husserl finds many commonalities with other poststructural thinkers who referred to how dominant discourse impacts how certain meanings and categories become the 'way of thinking' about a phenomenon (e.g., madness).

Epistemological concerns

Much of contemporary phenomenological research, however, is premised upon interaction — that is, ethnographic fieldwork, interviews and other methods in which the researcher directly engages with the subjects and bodies that are experiencing the phenomenon that is being studied. My concern was how to capture the idea of feminicide phenomenologically when I was physically unable to explore Brazil ethnographically. Due to COVID-19, many methods were unavailable to me,

and those which I could use (such as online interviews) would not be useful in encompassing the variety of experiences across Brazil, as they required technological literacy and access. Therefore, I needed methods that would not be so exclusionary and would still be available during a time of unprecedented uncertainty.

The impossibility of ethnographic fieldwork added a new dimension to my concerns regarding the body as a site for contested perceptions and experiences of feminicide in contemporary Brazil. Following on to work that engaged with ethnography (Jaarsma and Rohatynskyj, 2000; Sanford and Angel-Ajani, 2006), I realised that ethnography was also concerned with these ideas of contested views and experiences. This made my approach of discourse analysis interesting as it allowed me to gain access to the answers to my question within the constraints of the pandemic. Even if discourse analysis and phenomenology are sometimes labelled as different methods in qualitative research (Starks and Brown Trinidad 2007), much of phenomenology was established within post-structuralism, having ontological and epistemological commonalities. In general, phenomenology tries to comprehend reality through the experience or the perception of individuals. That is, by looking closely at the lived experiences of different people, scholars seek to capture the meaning of a phenomenon. Merleau-Ponty, for example, shaped much of French philosophy, including several post-structural authors (Lawnor, 2003) and was taken up by feminist scholars to discuss how embodiment and experience reflect sexual difference (Young, 2005).

Originally, Merleau-Ponty did not assume that 'experience' would be obviously affected by its body's location within a gendered system. This tension was picked up by feminists engaging with phenomenology, and in 1994, Linda Martin Alcoff stated that if the phenomenological project wanted to 'avoid becoming an artefact in the museum of philosophical history', it had to engage with feminist theory. Since then, several articles have emerged that discuss gendered experience and how it can change concepts within existential phenomenology (Fisher and Embree 2000; Oksala 2006; Ahmed 2006). Since the bodies of feminicide victims became contested ground for perceptions of feminicide, discourse analysis was particularly

useful as a method. Much of critical discourse analysis is concerned with the underlying cultural models (as defined by James Paul Gee) that discourse represents. Such understanding overlaps heavily with Foucault's work on orders of discourse and the ways in which discourse itself constitutes knowing.

As previously discussed, the impact of digital news media in Brazil is considerable; more and more, the population relies on online media to inform themselves, and the main media outlets are prolific in their reporting, creating their own phone apps for easy digital access. Once feminicide became a legal category, the word began to be used not only in police and institutional reports but also in the media. The establishment of articles on 'what is feminicide', which reoccur both independently and within reports of particular cases, showcase how Brazilians search for the meaning of the word. Feminicide is also a contested category, both because of its newness in the legal system and because it is inserted in a political context in which gender and gender violence are contested grounds politics (Balieiro 2018; Ferreira and Aguiar 2018; Cyfer 2018). The more I explored the use of news media, the more I realised that it could bridge some of the epistemological concerns around ethnographic work that had haunted me even before COVID-19. The understanding that society has of feminicide is not only related to one's experience of (or around) the phenomenon. It is also and, arguably, primarily done through having one's experience resonating with others – and this is the focus of media production. As discussed in the previous chapter, the ways in which the media portrays phenomena and produces affects is mediated through hegemonic actors who are involved in the 'making of' reality. Therefore, I was particularly interested in, and focused to engage with, the dynamics of media which allow for the permanence of hegemonic discourses, while simultaneously being attentive to the limitations of this approach, as I will discuss below.

Instrumentation

After I was faced with difficulties doing ethnographic research due to COVID-19, I started to seek alternatives to answer my research question. Interviews were briefly considered, but that would severely limit my access to participants as they

relied on access to the internet and technology literacy from them, and I was concerned it would create a bias — that most of the participants choosing to do an interview would be already 'keyed in' to discussions on feminicide. An analysis of media discourse, however, answered all my concerns:

1) Diversity: I was concerned about reflecting broader perceptions of Brazilian society about feminicide. Therefore, my methods needed to be able to showcase the dominant discourse, not merely the discourse of those already involved with gender violence (be it researchers, activists or politicians). Media discourse is often criticised for reflecting hegemonic voices and perpetuating 'status quo' points of view, which suited my research.

2) Understanding: My research needed to illustrate an 'understanding' of feminicide; that is, it went beyond whatever the official definitions. That is, it needed to provide a complete picture of feminicide in contemporary Brazil, and could not emanate only from the cases reported as feminicides, since those would have been 'interpreted' into this category by the police and other institutions. Once again, an analysis of media supported this – it allowed for me to look at cases that were and were not named feminicides. Furthermore, media discourse allowed me to easily explore whether narratives changed between the two cases.

3) Access: Due to COVID-19, my research needed to be doable even in uncertain conditions — at the time, we did not know when normalcy would return, so whatever method I chose, it needed to be continuous and not rely on the eventual return to in-person fieldwork. Once again, analysis of media discourses did meet this need and also allowed for an ever-growing amount of data in case the pandemic continued (as it did).

As seen, an analysis of media discourse met all my requirements. It provided the possibility of being applied to sources that would reflect dominant perceptions and discourses of feminicide in Brazil, and it could be done regardless of my access to

the country, whilst allowing for future incorporations of in-person research if that could be done. Furthermore, discourse analysis provided an answer to some of the epistemological concerns of my thesis: namely, it created an avenue for engaging with essential tenets of phenomenology — experience and perception. As discourse produces and sustains power structures which in turn impact the production and reproduction of social life (Foucault, 2009), analysing media discourses on feminicide would reveal much of the power structures constituting and defining feminicide.

To strengthen my contribution, I decided to combine this essentially qualitative method with descriptive statistics to determine a baseline for my findings. I had previously established a compilation of news reports which I originally aimed to contrast with ethnographic fieldwork. I realised I could expand the collection of that information across 2020 and 2021 to be able to acquire a better view of feminicide in Brazil. These three years of media reports became the central point of my thesis – from them, I derived both the descriptive statistics and the texts which I examined through discourse analysis.

The decision to use media text was made due to my understanding that media discourse reflected not only the general sense of 'feminicide' in society, but that this discourse was ubiquitous in Brazil. For example, during the 2018 election, much was discussed about the prevalence of online media in the country, with Jair Bolsonaro being elected president without relying on television time. The then-candidate's reliance on social media campaigns and memes represented a new strategy of political campaigns in the country (Barreto Junior and Venturi Junior, 2020). This showcased the importance of different kinds of media, following on the historical trends of media influence in elections (Vasconcelos, 2020). With growth of channels such as WhatsApp seemed to indicate that the public was consuming more media which could be shared on these applications — that is, online news reports. The increasing interest in gender violence within institutional politics in Brazil (such as laws like Maria da Penha and the Feminicide law) has also signalled an increase in media reporting on the subject (Kras 2023).

Beyond this, using media to analyse portraits of gender violence is an established method; Domínguez-Ruvalcaba et al. discuss how the print media in Ciudad Juarez can be considered violent journalism which represents a violent border culture (2010:104). Similarly, in her article about the portrayal of filicide in Australian media, Little discusses how the media has maintained its relevance in analysing crime. Furthermore, she highlights:

> As nodes of online participation become public life instead of mediating the user's proximity to, or interest in, public life the stories that once merely shocked and disgusted now have the potential to shift policy and adversely affect judicial processes (Fitzpatrick 2013: 12 in Little 2015).

From a phenomenological standpoint, the advances in technology and online participation have shifted the locus of experience — it is not merely physical, but it enters the realm of the 'digital' or the 'online self' who can be victimised (Zempi 2016) and become politically active (Bailey 2021). The advancement, for example, of laws protecting individuals from online bullying and harassment showcase that, more and more, the digital experience has acquired a real impact on the lived experience and the perception of people over phenomenon. In her most recent book, Naomi Klein discusses the ways in which existence has become intrinsically linked to 'online selves' (2023) and that 'it represents an enormous and radical shift not only in how we live, but also, far more importantly, *what our lives are for*' (2023:73).

Therefore, the pandemic allowed me to engage with how the understanding of feminicide develops. While I am certain ethnographic work would provide interesting results, the approach I used provided me with a framework that was characterised by 'engagement'. Since the media's efforts are to engage the reader, it is possible to understand media discourse as resonating with a variety of people across Brazil. The fact that I used any available channels, rather than confining my research to only bigger outlets, for example, assuages concerns about my own perception and experience in Brazil. By centring the language used to communicate

‘generally’ rather than ‘specifically’, the use of discourse analysis has yielded results that successfully engage with this work's guiding question.

This conflation of lived experience and digital experience, aligned with the use of digital media to publicise news in Brazil, demonstrated to me that the use of digital written sources would create a meaningful contribution to the understanding of feminicide in contemporary Brazil. The phenomenological experience, once linked so directly to the physical experience of being-in-the-world, now is also being-in-the-digital-world. The adaptation of news stories to cater to media algorithms (and of algorithms to keep people engaged) means that media texts are even more invested in using language that elicits a response from the reader. Due to this, the use of online newspaper articles in my thesis provided a new model for analysing text, which can be used by other researchers in the future. Nonetheless, more studies that focus on televised and audio-visual media depictions of feminicide in the country would add to this thesis.

As I discussed in the previous section, one of my concerns when using textual media as my primary source of analysis was whether these sources would serve to represent broader national perceptions of feminicide. In order to provide a broad overview of media discourses in Brazil, I opted to not select which media outlets I would work with. Instead, I utilised all media reports that were available online, including both free and paywalled services20. As discussed previously, midia in Brazil is not only highly concentrated in terms of ownership, but it is marked by territorial variations (Sônia Aguiar 94:2017). I was concerned that by narrowing the scope of the sources (e.g. by picking highest circulating papers, or by picking only free services), I would exacerbate already existing issues in the Brazlian media landscape. In order to increase the variety of midia sources, I included all websites accessble through Google search, as it is the most popular search engine – amounting to over 100 different news websites. This allowed me to engage both with major players in the Brazilian media scene (e.g. Globo G1 and its subsidiaries) and also more local papers (such as 94fm Dourados). This was done intentionally, as I wanted to see whether the narratives around feminicide would be similar across different types of news sources.

After deciding on instrumentation, the next steps were to extract and analyse the media texts. In the following sections, I will discuss how I mined the data needed and what processes were used in the analysis.

Collaboration in the technical aspects of the dataset

Since I was using methods in computer science, I originally sought advice from Julia Slupska and Hubert Au, who were DPhil candidates at the Oxford Internet Institute. Both provided me with starting points in the literature and discussed the feasibility of the project. In 2021, when I decided to proceed with a larger dataset, Baskaran Sripathmanathan, a DPhil candidate in Engineering at the University of Oxford, provided assistance in the technical aspects of the work. While not a collaborator in the design of the project, he contributed to thinking through how to use the available technology of GPT-3 (and later GPT-4) as he had the technical knowledge to use machine learning through Python. The research on social science applications of machine learning was conducted by me, and I also was responsible for the analysis of the dataset and writing up all results. He and I discussed how to optimise results and avoid mistakes in data extraction and his technical expertise allowed me to gain access to the data much quicker than if I had done the programming by myself. As an acknowledgment, I have named him a collaborator on the methods of my thesis rather than a technical assistant. In sum, he worked by implementing the technical aspects of the methods, specifically by writing the Python code for data mining and then the Python code using GPT-4. Hubert Au also provided some technical assistance with the Python code before final submission, as GPT-4 had updates that required changes in the code. I designed the research, including questions asked of the data, keywords, timeframe, and the cleaning of the data once collected. Furthermore, the research on best practices on machine learning methods, data extraction, organisation and analysis, as well as the writing up of results was all done by me.

Data mining

The first aspect of data analysis was the gathering of the data, which was extracted through a data mining process throughout the years 2019-2021. Originally, I used DataMiner for ease of data scraping as they automated much of the process. Nonetheless, in 2021, DataMiner was unusable for the process at hand due to updates on the Google interface. Therefore, in early 2022, I re-scraped all the data using a Python-based code developed by my collaborator. The first step was to mine the URLS from GoogleNews – the search query used was 'mulher morta' (dead woman), which, due to Google's algorithm, also includes 'mulher assassinada', 'mulher é morta' and 'mulher morre'. The reason for using such 'dead woman' instead of 'feminicide' was due to my interest in including cases that might not have been classified or named feminicide but would still fit that category. However, this meant that once I had access to the texts, I had to establish a set of parameters to clean the data — as this research focused on feminicide, there was no point in analysing cases that were clearly not feminicides, such as car accidents and, from 2020, COVID-19. This cleaning process took some time and first consisted of searching for a set of words within the entire dataset, e.g. 'accident' or 'COVID-19'. The cases that had those words were then manually analysed in order to check whether they fit the dataset, and they were removed when they did not.

Once the URLs were mined, I ran them through a Python-based code to extract the text from the URLs, giving me the raw data for all the cases. This was a process that was very iterative between the collaborator and me, as the texts were located on a variety of websites, including some protected via a paywall. This meant the code had to be rewritten a couple of times when I found that it would not work on a particular website. There were other difficulties with the re-scraping process. One was that some websites had removed the text from the internet, and therefore it could not be re-extracted. Since the previous extraction had used a different tool and I could not verify whether the extraction was correct, I decided not to use those texts, which comprised only 3% of my original numbers for 2019.

Another problem I encountered was that some websites would block attempts to mine information if I mined too much information all at once. This is due to

protection from misuse of data and copyright infringement, which was not the case for my thesis.[2] Therefore, I established an iterative process in which I would trial the extraction in sets of 100 cases, check whether the information was extracted correctly, and, if not, let my collaborator know so he could readjust the code. In the end, I was able to extract the news from all the main Brazilian outlets (i.e. Folha de São Paulo, O Globe, G1, etc.), as well as other regional outlets which seemed to report extensively on cases of feminicide (such as GZH News, a news portal focused on the South of Brazil). This created an adequate mix of regional and national sources, answering some of my concerns about having too much of the data focused on the Southeast region (which comprises two of the biggest and most well-known cities of the country, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro). Once the data had been extracted correctly, I had over 6,000 cases of feminicide to analyse, which led me to focus on another form of computational analysis — quantitative and qualitative data organising and categorising through natural language processing (using GPT-3 and GPT-4).

Data analysis I - GPT-4 and natural language processing

The decision to use natural language processing to parse through data stemmed from two main methodological concerns. The first one was the number of cases that could be analysed by using a computational method versus manually — with the use of GPT-3 and GPT-4; it was possible to process and parse through the texts in over 6,000 cases regarding the killing of women in Brazil between 2019-2021, which would not be feasible manually within the proposed timeframe of the thesis. The second methodological concern is related to innovative methods in social science research and the growing use of machine learning within the field of data analysis. The potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been increasingly documented both in academia and by the media in general (Elliott, 2021; Esplugas, 2023; Grossman et al., 2023). Crompton and Burke (2023) highlight the growth of academic

2 I tried contacting the main Brazilian portals for news to see if they had an available API I could use, but I never received my response. I did however check that research purposes were within their reasonable copyright use.

publications in higher education (HE), discussing how AI tools have been applied across several levels of HE, from assessment to managing platforms. This increase in the use of AI technology in education demonstrates to me that researchers need to engage with these emerging technologies to establish productive dialogues with society and produce impactful research.

AI refers to a large group of different technologies, and therefore, this chapter will focus on the subset of AI technology used in this thesis — natural language processors (NLPs) and, more specifically, Large Language Models (LLMs). LLMs have two bases for their capabilities: deep learning and large sets of data — that is, learning by example and using a vast amount of information. They operate using a transformer model[3] such as the one discussed by Vaswani et al. (2017) (for more information on LLMs and the operational aspects of the dataset, please check Appendix I).

Due to the exponentially large amounts of data used to train LLMs, their capabilities eclipse those of the basic transformer models on which they were based. This creates space for such technology to be particularly useful to what is commonly known as Big Data. While the term is used in a variety of ways across fields (Favaretto et al. 2020), here I refer to Big Data as a large amount of data compiled from a variety of different sources, including video, email, social media, digital media, etc. Big Data opens the possibility of using increasingly larger datasets to illuminate the workings of a variety of social phenomena. Due to the quantity and variety of Big Data datasets, social scientists have realised the potential of AI in extracting and analysing large sets of data; for example, Lorenzini et al. discuss developing a semiautomated approach to Protest Events Analysis over time and space (2022). They build on Nardulli et al. work on civil strife data (2015), using a mixture of automated selection of sources with manual coding. Such an approach is

3 A transformer model operates in a particular way — you tokenise a text into a sequence of words, which are then encoded as numbers. These numbers get converted into an embedding, which essentially is a representation of the original token (preserving its meaning). Afterwards, the encoder transforms all of these embeddings into a 'context vector' which the transformer uses to generate output based on clues. This process is known as autoregressive generation, which is basically how a language model works. But because large language models are transformer that can take very long text, the context vector is large enough that the model can handle much more complex concepts and layers.

similar to the one developed in this research project, which also relies on a cross-analysis using automated and manual approaches to data selection and analysis. Within LLMs, I decided to use GPT-3 (and then GPT-4 once it was released) due to its accessibility and capabilities to answer the questions I wanted to ask of the data, as I discuss below. There were two reasons for using both automated and manual approaches. One was my own field and research focus, which emphasised qualitative analysis. While GPT-4 can produce answers to qualitative questions, these answers are extrapolated from the dataset rather than operating on a critical engagement with the text. The use of GPT-4 in research is incipient, and therefore, I decided to focus on the output that I knew the LLM would provide best, namely quantitative data and text processing. The second reason was the phenomenological approach itself, which requires the element of human experience. Part of the process of qualitative coding is to exercise reflection both as a reader and as a researcher, and this was the reason why I wanted to engage with discourse analysis.

The input given to be analysed by GPT-4 was all cases that had been mined through the Python-based code discussed above, with the exception of deaths by accident, natural causes or disease (including COVID-19). These sources consisted of full media texts (title, body of the text, alt-text on photos) of over 5,000 media reports of women killed in Brazil between 20192-21. All of these websites were scraped from the GoogleNews search tool and included national and regional media websites.

Asking questions to the model: constructing a database for research

In order to work with GPT-4 and apply it to researching feminicide in contemporary Brazil, I made use of OpenAI API, a machine learning toolset that allowed my collaborator to train the API to read through the text input of the news sources and return the answers to the questions which I developed in my research design. Since the OpenAI API is capable of processing Portuguese as part of its LLM capabilities, it was possible to maintain it as the input language, but in order to facilitate the transition from raw data to statistics, the output language was

English. As discussed above, the methodological design, including questions asked and the supervision of the training process of the model, was mine, and my collaborator contributed to the technical aspects, as I did not have the required level of familiarity with Python in order to effectively use the tool. His role within the database construction was to allow the model to provide the data required without allowing for deviations, mistakes, etc.

The model was trained following the expected models for GTP-4 model training. At first, the model was given the extracted news texts of one hundred cases of women killed in Brazil and asked to answer basic questions from the text:

What was the name of the victim?
What was the age of the victim?
What was the weapon used?
Where did the crime happen?
Was this named a feminicide?[4]

The output given by the model was then analysed manually, correcting any information and adding any inputs it missed from the text. This process allows for spotting any issues that the model might have due to being exposed to new information — that is, analysis of feminicide in Portuguese. Then, the API was given the corrected output and asked the same questions using a new set of a hundred cases. This process was repeated until no mistake could be spotted in the output, which meant that it could now 'read' a news article on feminicide and extract the necessary basic information needed for the descriptive statistics of the case.

Following on to establishing the basic knowledge, I then moved on to train it with more complex questions, such as:

4 I considered that crimes named feminicide were those in which the term feminicide showed up either in the text or in the title, which allowed me to assume that the reader could deduce information from the text. For example, if a woman's death was reported as 'woman killed' but the following paragraph is 'cases of feminicide are on the rise', I understood that the reader would consider this case was being counted as a feminicide.

How many victims were there?[5]

How was the victim killed?

Such questions also underwent the training discussed above, with the model being fed the corrected outputs to learn from them and refine its capabilities in reading the data and extracting information correctly. This required a much closer reading of the output, as these questions These processes were repeated three times, in which the API was being trained with increasing amounts of data. This allowed me to make sure the model was fully refined before giving it the totality of the data, which was both time and resource-consuming, so I wanted to try and minimise the risk of having to re-run it.

The questions asked of GPT-4 were mostly descriptive — that is, my interest in the model was to extract data that would make up the descriptive statistics analysed in Chapter IV. Questions such as age, location and weapon used are straightforward to the model because that information can be found in the text. In terms of training, the main concerns were to guarantee that certain errors did not occur; for example, in the cases in which two or more weapons were used (e.g. strangulation followed by stabbing), both were reported in order to have a better overview of the data.

GPT-4 is trained to answer your questions about a text. Therefore, one concern I had during the training process was to guarantee it was not making up answers when the text did not contain the desired information. In order to do this, the training and retraining of the model were useful, as they allowed me to easily spot 'made up' answers for simple questions, such as victim name, because the model would give us a 'generic' name, usually Jacqueline dos Santos. Similarly, with location, it would give us the same made-up address every time it could not find it in the text. Once the model was trained to return 'Not mentioned' when a piece of information was not available in the text given, the model began to produce a usable output for data analysis.

5 This question allowed for a correct representation of numbers — e.g. if an article contained the news of more than one woman killed. This would mean that that article accounted for two victims, not one, and that should be reflected in the statistics seen in Chapter IV.

As I analysed bigger and bigger sets of data, I realised that the model could also help with the manual data cleaning I had already completed in the process of extracting the URLs — particularly, it was very useful in finding any attempted feminicide cases that might not have been removed from the dataset previously. This was then accomplished by asking the model to answer 'how many women died?' and eliminating from the dataset any cases in which no women had died. This got the overall number of cases to 4,153 cases, which comprised the entire dataset.

Once these questions were also working, I moved on to what was arguably the most interpretation-based question of my designed questions: motive. The model was asked to give us the answer to the following question:

What was the motive of the crime?

In the original research design, this was not part of what I planned to ask the model to extract for me. Nonetheless, this became a question due to the nature of GPT-4, namely its ability to make inferences based on its training in a particular field. While I trained the model not to do this for final results, this type of 'making up answers' caught my attention, exactly due to the nature of the LLM. The reason the model gave me an answer was because such an answer was perceived to be a feasible answer based on all the given data extracted by the model. That meant that the model extrapolated answers based on common instances in the text. The motives given, therefore, were not random, but rather, they showcased what motives were most present across the entire dataset.

Therefore, when moving on to the more complex and less descriptive question, 'motive', I took note of the made-up answers as I trained the model. I wanted to see whether those answers would correlate with potential coding clusters in the qualitative analysis part of my methodology.

The training for the question of motive followed the same pattern as previous training. However, it required even more attention on my part, as I not only had to tell the model not to make up answers but also had to show the model where the motive was located in the text. For example, if a text stated: 'The man killed the

wife in an altercation as he thought she was cheating on him', the motive is not an altercation, but rather the suspicion of infidelity. Motive required very close reading on my part in order to guide the model into 'reading' the text rather than solely extracting data. Once the model was trained, it did not make up answers for motive and only gave an answer to the question of motive if the text contained enough information to answer the question, such as can be seen below:

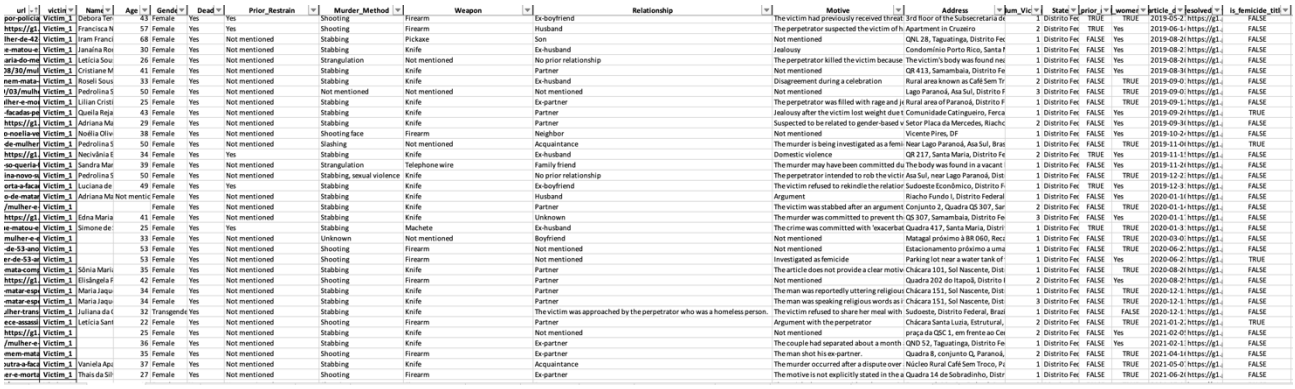
- The murderer suspected the victim of infidelity.
- The suspect could not accept the end of the relationship.
- There were also cases in which the motive was implied, and the model returned answers such as these:
- It is not clear, but police suspect sexual abuse
- It is not explicitly stated, but it is implied that the perpetrator had a history of aggression towards the victim.

These motives range from specific (suspicion of infidelity) to implied (history of aggression). While I did not explicitly use the answers given to this particular prompt to extract descriptive statistical data, it was used in two ways: one, by providing some potential codes for my qualitative analysis, two, to provide discussion points in relation to the data that I did use for descriptive statistics in chapter IV. This information was particularly useful for thinking about the codes that could be used regarding the perpetrator (as discussed in Chapter V). It also provided a tool to clean and organise cases quickly when working with raw data, as it allowed me to understand what context was around the crime and, therefore, useful for sorting between cases that would be in subset two (not-feminicides) and subset three (not enough information).

There are interesting questions raised by this exercise: for example, the most common 'motives' given by GPT-4 in cases named feminicide were jealousy and the end of a relationship, which corresponded to the actual findings in the qualitative analysis (see Chapter V). Therefore, while the question of 'motive' was mostly examined through a non-computational analysis, this shows potential for analysis of

subjective questions by computational approaches, which has also been seen in other mixed-methods analyses of gender violence that use LLM technology.

After the use of GPT-4, my dataset now included two parts: one, the full text extracted through data mining, and two, the data extracted from that full text with the use of GPT-4. The raw data was organised in a spreadsheet (see below), which would then be refined into subsets.



url	victim	Name	Age	Gende	Dead	Prior_Restrain	Murder_Method	Weapon	Relationship	Motive	Address	Num_Vic	State	prior_i	women	article_d	lesolved	is_femicide_titl
por-policia	Victim_1	Debora Ter	43	Female	Yes	Yes	Shooting	Firearm	Ex-boyfriend	The victim had previously received threat	3rd floor of the Subsecretaria de	1	Distrito Fe	TRUE	TRUE	2019-05-2	https://g1.	FALSE
https://g1.	Victim_1	Francisca N	57	Female	Yes	Yes	Shooting	Firearm	Husband	The perpetrator suspected the victim of h	Apartment in Cruzeiro	2	Distrito Fe	TRUE	Yes	2019-06-1	https://g1.	FALSE
lher-de-42	Victim_1	Iram Franci	68	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Pickaxe	Son	Not mentioned	QNL 28, Taguatinga, Distrito Fe	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2019-08-2	https://g1.	FALSE
e-matou-e	Victim_1	Janaina Ro	30	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Ex-husband	Jealousy	Condomínio Porto Rico, Santa I	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2019-08-2	https://g1.	FALSE
aria-do-me	Victim_1	Leticia Sou	26	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Strangulation	Not mentioned	No prior relationship	The perpetrator killed the victim because	The victim's body was found nea	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2019-08-2	https://g1.	FALSE
28/30/mul	Victim_1	Cristiane M	41	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Partner	Not mentioned	QR 413, Samambaia, Distrito Fe	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2019-08-3	https://g1.	FALSE
nem-mata	Victim_1	Roseli Sous	33	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Ex-husband	Disagreement during a celebration	Rural area known as Café Sem Tr	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2019-09-0	https://g1.	FALSE
V/03/mulh	Victim_1	Pedrolina S	50	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Lago Paranoá, Asa Sul, Distrito F	3	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2019-09-0	https://g1.	FALSE
iher-e-mor	Victim_1	Lilian Cristi	25	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Ex-partner	The perpetrator was filled with rage and je	Rural area of Paranoá, Distrito F	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2019-09-1	https://g1.	FALSE
-facadas-pe	Victim_1	Quelia Reja	43	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Partner	Jealousy after the victim lost weight due t	Comunidade Catingueiro, Ferca	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2019-09-2	https://g1.	TRUE
https://g1.	Victim_1	Adriana Ma	29	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Partner	Suspected to be related to gender-based v	Setor Placa da Mercedes, Riacho	2	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2019-09-3	https://g1.	FALSE
o-noelia-ve	Victim_1	Noélia Oliv	38	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Shooting face	Firearm	Neighbor	Not mentioned	Vicente Pires, DF	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2019-10-2	https://g1.	FALSE
de-mulher	Victim_1	Pedrolina S	50	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Slashing	Not mentioned	Acquaintance	The murder is being investigated as a femi	Near Lago Paranoá, Asa Sul, Bras	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2019-11-0	https://g1.	TRUE
https://g1.	Victim_1	Necivânia E	34	Female	Yes	Yes	Stabbing	Knife	Ex-husband	Domestic violence	QR 217, Santa Maria, Distrito Fe	2	Distrito Fe	TRUE	Yes	2019-11-1	https://g1.	FALSE
-so-queria	Victim_1	Sandra Mar	39	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Strangulation	Telephone wire	Family friend	The murder may have been committed du	The body was found in a vacant	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2019-11-2	https://g1.	FALSE
ina-novo-a	Victim_1	Pedrolina S	50	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing, sexual violence	Knife	No prior relationship	The perpetrator intended to rob the victir	Asa Sul, near Lago Paranoá, Dist	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2019-12-2	https://g1.	FALSE
orta-a-faca	Victim_1	Luciana de	49	Female	Yes	Yes	Stabbing	Knife	Ex-boyfriend	The victim refused to rekindle the relation	Sudoeste Econômico, Distrito F	1	Distrito Fe	TRUE	Yes	2019-12-3	https://g1.	FALSE
o-de-matar	Victim_1	Adriana Ma	Not mentic	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Husband	Argument	Riacho Fundo I, Distrito Federal	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2020-01-1	https://g1.	FALSE
/mulher-e	Victim_1			Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Partner	The victim was stabbed after an argument	Conjunto 2, Quadra QS 307, Sar	2	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2020-01-1	https://g1.	FALSE
https://g1.	Victim_1	Edna Maria	41	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Unknown	The murder was committed to prevent th	QS 307, Samambaia, Distrito Fe	3	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2020-01-1	https://g1.	FALSE
ie-matou-e	Victim_1	Simone de	25	Female	Yes	Yes	Stabbing	Machete	Ex-husband	The crime was committed with 'exacerbat	Quadra 417, Santa Maria, Distri	1	Distrito Fe	TRUE	TRUE	2020-01-3	https://g1.	FALSE
mulher-e-e	Victim_1		33	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Unknown	Not mentioned	Boyfriend	Not mentioned	Matagal próximo à BR 060, Recz	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2020-03-0	https://g1.	FALSE
-de-53-ano	Victim_1		53	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Shooting	Firearm	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Estacionamento próximo a uma	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2020-06-2	https://g1.	FALSE
er-de-53-ar	Victim_1		53	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Shooting	Firearm	Not mentioned	Investigated as femicide	Parking lot near a water tank of	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2020-06-2	https://g1.	TRUE
mata-com	Victim_1	Sônia Maria	35	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Partner	The article does not provide a clear motiv	Chácara 101, Sol Nascente, Dist	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2020-08-2	https://g1.	FALSE
https://g1.	Victim_1	Elisângela F	42	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Shooting	Firearm	Partner	Not mentioned	Quadra 202 do Itapoã, Distrito I	2	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2020-08-2	https://g1.	FALSE
-matar-esp	Victim_1	Maria Jaqu	34	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Partner	The man was reportedly uttering religious	Chácara 151, Sol Nascente, Dist	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2020-12-1	https://g1.	FALSE
-matar-esp	Victim_1	Maria Jaqu	34	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Partner	The man was speaking religious words as i	Chácara 151, Sol Nascente, Dist	3	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2020-12-1	https://g1.	FALSE
ilher-trans	Victim_1	Juliana da (	32	Transgende	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	The victim was approached by the perpetrator who was a homeless person.	The victim refused to share her meal with	Sudoeste, Distrito Federal, Brazi	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	FALSE	2020-12-1	https://g1.	FALSE
ece-assass	Victim_1	Leticia Sant	22	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Shooting	Firearm	Partner	Argument with the perpetrator	Chácara Santa Luzia, Estrutural,	2	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2021-01-2	https://g1.	TRUE
https://g1.	Victim_1		25	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	praça da QSC 1, em frente ao Cas	2	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2021-02-0	https://g1.	FALSE
/mulher-e-	Victim_1		36	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Ex-partner	The couple had separated about a month	QND 52, Taguatinga, Distrito Fe	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	Yes	2021-02-1	https://g1.	FALSE
mem-mata	Victim_1		35	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Shooting	Firearm	Ex-partner	The man shot his ex-partner.	Quadra 8, conjunto Q, Paranoá,	2	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2021-04-1	https://g1.	FALSE
outra-a-faca	Victim_1	Vaniela Apa	37	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Stabbing	Knife	Acquaintance	The murder occurred after a dispute over	Núcleo Rural Café Sem Troco, Pa	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2021-05-0	https://g1.	FALSE
er-e-morta	Victim_1	Thaís da Sil	27	Female	Yes	Not mentioned	Shooting	Firearm	Ex-partner	The motive is not explicitly stated in the a	Quadra 14 de Sobradinho, Distr	1	Distrito Fe	FALSE	TRUE	2021-06-2	https://g1.	FALSE

Figure 1. Image of the raw dataset.

The next step in my methods was the qualitative analysis of the data gathered in the computational stage. I cleaned the data again, with over 4,000 cases remaining, and it became my main database[6]. I subdivided the raw data into three different subsets: one of the cases that had been classified as feminicides, one of the cases that had marks of gender-motivated crimes (e.g. domestic violence, sexual violence, harassment) and one subset which included the cases which did not yield enough information for me to know whether the case was a feminicide or not.

Data analysis II - Discursive analysis using MAXQDA

The second aspect of my research involved the qualitative discursive analysis using MAXQDA. As discussed, the coding aspect of this research used Computer

6 I It was useful to have all the information extracted, since the use of the raw data on a spreadsheet allowed me to find duplicates, crimes that were committed before 2019, accidents and crimes that had no gender motivation more easily.

Assisted Qualitative Data AnalysiS (CAQDAS), in my case, MAXQDA2020 and MAXQDA2022. As discussed by Silver and Lewins (2014), CAQDAS originated in social science and is distinctive from other software because it is focused particularly on qualitative analysis of qualitative data. While new iterations of such software, including MAXQDA, also allow for researchers to engage with mixed methods and quantitative analysis, CAQDAS packages were originally developed exactly for the type of research I propose in this thesis — detailed qualitative analyses of a variety of sources, primarily textual.

As discussed by Saldaña, coding is not the only method in qualitative research, and much like any other method, it has its supporters and detractors (2021:3). However, coding has been given great attention when used to try and understand a social phenomenon. Due to the advance of CAQDAS, coding is now able to go through a much larger set of data in a shorter period of time, which was of extreme significance for my research. Much like the use of GPT-4, the use of CAQDAS allowed me to properly analyse over three years of data, creating a detailed overview of the phenomenon of feminicide in Brazil.

Coding, much like training a language model, consists of several iterations, which are called cycles in coding. A detailed description of the cycles used for this project is provided in Appendix II. As data gets coded and recoded, the overall themes of the data emerge, and clusters of codes get refined in order to more accurately reflect what the data are saying. Coding methods interact both within and between cycles based on the epistemological and ontological concerns of the research and the questions it is asking. Once I decided that the questions I was asking required me to analyse the data phenomenologically through discourse analysis, this informed the process through which I coded and recoded the data during the qualitative analysis.

As discussed previously, it is possible to acquire a certain degree of familiarity with one's data through the process of data extraction and data cleaning. While I proceeded with the data mining, I could see the dataset taking shape — I could see similar titles, check for repeated cases, and ask myself questions about the texts. This process of familiarising oneself with the data, alongside the considerations

given on an epistemological and ontological level to one's research, is what allows the researcher to set what type of coding will be used for the first cycle of coding.

As my focus was understanding feminicide through experience and perception, I used a form of simultaneous coding that sought to, on the one hand, incorporate my feminicide approach and, on the other hand, test it against the text itself. That is, my goal during the entirety of the coding process was not only to use codes that had emerged from the dataset but also to test them against codes that had been previously established both in my theoretical framework and in studies in the field of gender violence. In order to do so, I undertook four initial cycles of coding, plus an additional cycle once the data had been compiled into its final format based on the commentary given to me throughout the confirmation of the status interview.

Throughout the coding process, I engaged with a variety of coding processes, but my main focus was coding methods, which focused on perceptions, feelings and moral judgements. These included:

- Eclectic coding, also known as 'open coding' which consists in combining two or more first cycle coding methods (in my case emotion and value coding as seen below) in one cycle of coding.

- Thematic coding, which uses codes emanating from overarching themes. In the case of my dataset, these themes arose from previous research in gender violence, such as statements that could indicate 'victim-blaming.'

- Emotion coding: As the name indicates, codes are focused on emotions experienced. In the case of news analysis, some of the clear applications would be for words such as 'tragic'/'dramatic' or for certain statements released by victim's families.

- Values coding, that is, the application of codes that reflect values, attitudes and beliefs. In news sources, this could be indicated in cases in which the victim is portrayed as being part of a criminal organisation, or

by a police officer stating that 'unfortunately' a victim would not leave an abusive relationship.

- Pattern coding – my main coding method from the second coding cycle onwards, pattern coding consists in grouping together the more general nodes/codes that I developed in the first cycle (see above).

The process of coding is extremely interactive, which means that the final dataset might look quite different from the starting one. However, the main challenge encountered by the use of discourse analysis was trying to read the text not as one who is engaged in gender violence research but as an everyday reader. This meant trying to read normalised behaviours of controlling relationships not as proverbial red flags but engage with them as a reader who is not familiar with the literature on domestic violence or abuse, for example. It also required some engagement with other forms of media, which I was not able to analyse deeply – e.g., daytime television and crime shows – in order to see which words they used and compare them to the ones used by written media. For example, the use of the word 'execution' (execução in Portuguese), as I discuss in Chapter VII, is mostly used in the context of gang violence and criminal organisations. Therefore, when the reader is faced with the word 'execução' they usually would think the victim is involved somehow with crime. This association can bring negative judgements towards the victim, as well as make inferences about the crime not being linked to gender violence. As I will discuss, this obscures the ways in which organised crime and gender violence can intersect (see Macaulay, 2021; Segato, 2010)

The codes are all concomitant in the same text – that is, one same excerpt can include a variety of codes which have different bases (e.g. codes that identify feelings and codes that identify values can show up in different parts of the same text). Furthermore, some words might repeat themselves and symbolise a code (like I show below with the word 'jealous'), or different words might all have similar connotations (as seen below with words such as 'sad', 'outburst', 'close friends' signifying the emotional impact of the victim's death). An example of an excerpt

being coded can be seen below, but a more detailed set of examples and the way the coding evolved can be found in Appendix II:

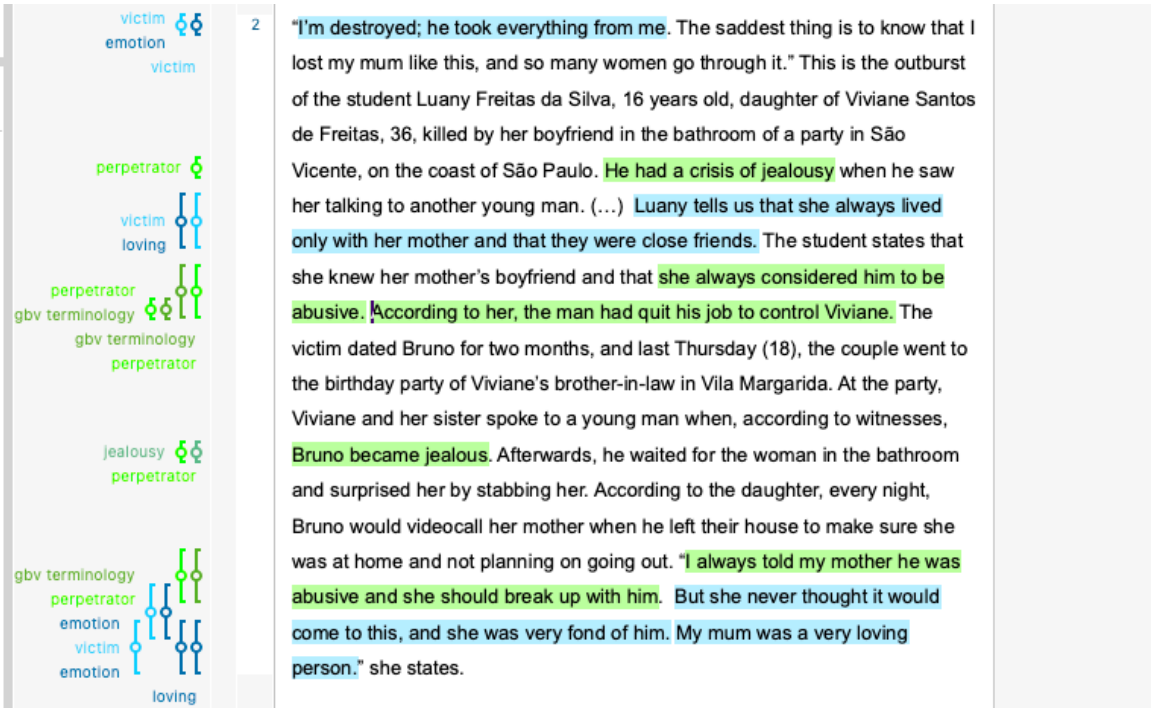


Figure 2. Sample of coding in MAXQDA [in English]

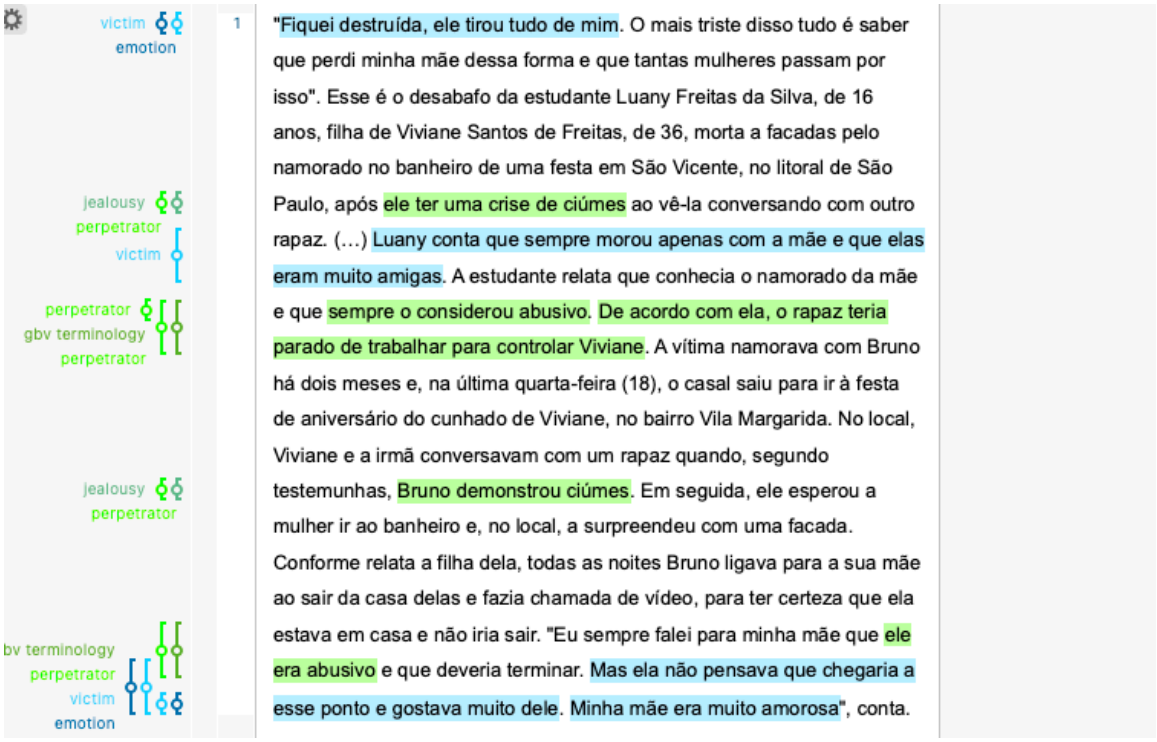


Figure 3. Sample of coding in MAXQDA [in Portuguese]

For ease of reading, the text in the previous two figures can be found below:

'Fiquei destruída, ele tirou tudo de mim. O mais triste disso tudo é saber que perdi minha mãe dessa forma e que tantas mulheres passam por isso'. Esse é o desabafo da estudante Luany Freitas da Silva, de 16 anos, filha de Viviane Santos de Freitas, de 36, morta a facadas pelo namorado no banheiro de uma festa em São Vicente, no litoral de São Paulo, após ele ter uma crise de ciúmes ao vê-la conversando com outro rapaz. (...) Luany conta que sempre morou apenas com a mãe e

'I'm destroyed; he took everything from me. The saddest thing is to know that I lost my mum like this, and so many women go through it.' This is the outburst of the student Luany Freitas da Silva, 16 years old, daughter of Viviane Santos de Freitas, 36, killed by her boyfriend in the bathroom of a party in São Vicente, on the coast of São Paulo. He had a crisis of jealousy when he saw her talking to another young man. (...) Luany tells us that she always lived only with her mother and that

que elas eram muito amigas. A estudante relata que conhecia o namorado da mãe e que sempre o considerou abusivo. De acordo com ela, o rapaz teria parado de trabalhar para controlar Viviane. A vítima namorava com Bruno há dois meses e, na última quarta-feira (18), o casal saiu para ir à festa de aniversário do cunhado de Viviane, no bairro Vila Margarida. No local, Viviane e a irmã conversavam com um rapaz quando, segundo testemunhas, Bruno demonstrou ciúmes. Em seguida, ele esperou a mulher ir ao banheiro e, no local, a surpreendeu com uma facada. Conforme relata a filha dela, todas as noites Bruno ligava para a sua mãe ao sair da casa delas e fazia chamada de vídeo, para ter certeza que ela estava em casa e não iria sair. 'Eu sempre falei para minha mãe que ele era abusivo e que deveria terminar. Mas ela não pensava que chegaria a esse ponto e gostava muito dele. Minha mãe era muito amorosa', conta.

they were close friends. The student states that she knew her mother's boyfriend and that she always considered him to be abusive. According to her, the man had quit his job to control Viviane. The victim dated Bruno for two months, and last Thursday (18), the couple went to the birthday party of Viviane's brother-in-law in Vila Margarida. At the party, Viviane and her sister spoke to a young man when, according to witnesses, Bruno became jealous. Afterwards, he waited for the woman in the bathroom and surprised her by stabbing her. According to the daughter, every night, Bruno would videocall her mother when he left their house to make sure she was at home and not planning on going out. 'I always told my mother he was abusive and she should break up with him. But she never thought it would come to this, and she was very fond of him. My mum was a very loving person.' she states

Limitations of the research

While the use of new technological developments was essential to this research, it is important to note the constraints and perils surrounding the same. Technology in itself has facilitated gender violence (Powell, Sugiura and Flynn, 2021), and the development of artificial intelligence has in itself facilitated harassment and gender violence through deepfakes, for example (Wheeler, 2024). Therefore, even if it is possible to use technology to advance gender violence research, it is important to understand that the same technological advancements can contribute to the phenomenon at hand.

Furthermore, much like data, technology itself is not objective. In their studies on the 'datafication' of #MeToo, Henne, Shelby, and Harb highlight the ways in which two apps to report gender violence were constructed in ways that invisibilised race and reinforced particular types of property relationships (2021). They follow authors such as Noble and Roberts (2019), who have argued against the idea that technology is somehow 'postracial'. In fact, many technologies used in our everyday lives, such as chatbots, are racialised (see Marino, 2019). While my use of GPT-4 was limited to the extraction of information from text already provided, it is important to note that there have been studies showcasing how the use of LLMs can have gender and racial bias (Amit et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2024). Therefore, it is important to exercise caution in extrapolating from results obtained by using LLMs and other forms of machine learning.

I have expanded upon the issues around quantification in my introduction, but it is relevant at this stage to reiterate that the use of technology in my thesis allowed for a vast number of cases to be analysed. Most of the data utilised can be extracted and analysed without utilising LLMs; the main difference is that LLMs such as GPT-4 do allow for an exponential number of cases to be analysed. However, there is another downside to this, which is the engagement with technology that has biases, and that is, oftentimes, a for-profit endeavour. Since LLMs benefit from people using them, and oftentimes, the models are built to learn from the user (see ChatGPT), it is important to ask whether using such technology has a net benefit. In the case of my thesis, as the information I used was mined from widely available online sources, this was not as much of a concern. Finally, there is an issue of cost. The use of GPT-4 and other LLMs is, in general, paywalled, and this can be a barrier for research that aims to use those tools.

Conclusion

The challenge of the pandemic provided me with new methods for analysing feminicide in Brazil: methods that ended up being more effective than my original design. Despite the challenges I faced with COVID-19, the shift from ethnographic

fieldwork to the discourse analysis of over 4,000 news reports on feminicide provided me with a better overview of the narratives around the phenomenon in the country. Discourse analysis was able to capture not only the perspectives of those directly engaged with gender violence but also the broader hegemonical understanding of the phenomenon. The decision to include cases that were not named feminicide but that fit the definition of feminicide provided another interesting comparison point that I had not originally envisioned when I designed the first methodology of the thesis.

I had always hoped to go beyond the legal category and engage directly with perceptions, feelings and judgement of society in relation to feminicide. Since the role of the news is to directly engage with those aspects, my methodology was innovative because it allowed me to look at a multitude of cases. The media text., eliciting perceptions, feelings and judgements, contributes to creating the environment in which embodied experiences of gender violence, in general, and feminicide, in particular, exist. Furthermore, the use of discourse analysis also allowed me to engage with some of my epistemological and ontological concerns since it gave space for the dead woman to exist as a subject and for her story to be told even though she is not there to reflect on her own lived experience. By approaching the discourse analysis through methods such as values and emotion coding, I could really focus on the phenomenological aspects of the media being analysed.

The creation of an original database on reports of feminicide in the country in itself provides a contribution to the field of feminicide. By engaging with Python coding to both extract and analyse media resources, my research opens up the possibility of replicating such datasets in other countries. Recognising the impact of digital experiences on lived realities, research positioned digital written sources as a meaningful lens through which to investigate feminicide as they shape public perception and social narratives around the phenomenon. As I previously highlighted, this also gives tools for scholars who want to engage with other forms of media discourse, including television and other forms of audiovisual media –

particularly, it is my belief that daytime television, with programs such as Cidade Alerta and Brasil Urgente could serve as rich sources of material on the topic.

Due to the physical and time constraints on the project, I decided to construct this database by using cutting-edge technology in the form of LLMs, in particular with GPT-3 and then GPT-4, which only became available in 2020 and then in 2021, respectively. The choice to incorporate a computational aspect into my thesis allowed me to engage with new technologies in the production of academic research, opening avenues of inquiry for future scholars wanting to continue large-scale discourse analysis of gender violence in media sources. Once this database was established, I organised the data in two ways: one is a set of descriptive statistics providing an overview of feminicide reporting in Brazil; the other is a qualitative discourse analysis through CAQDAS of three subsets of my database.

Overall, this chapter sustains that my methodology and methods are aligned with the overarching aims and theoretical concerns of my project. Furthemore, this chapter highlights how the methods used are in themselves contributions to the field of social science, not only in the production of the database itself, but also with the use of GPT-4 as a tool to extract information from large swathes of text and provide support to creating a statistical descriptive overview. This methodological contribution also provides the potential avenues for exploring the use of LLMs to analyse what I have here termed 'subjective' data, including inferences from text which can serve as starting points for more efforts in qualitative coding.

In the following chapter, I will examine the statistics of feminicide reporting in Brazil between 2019-2021, focusing particularly on comparing this data with other reports in the field, particularly statistics organised by some of Brazil's most prominent data trackers of violence. After that, I will move on to discussing the qualitative aspects of the database by engaging with three subsets of data: cases named feminicides, cases not named feminicides, and cases in which I had not enough information to classify.

CHAPTER IV: AN OVERVIEW OF FEMINICIDE IN CONTEMPORARY BRAZIL

In this chapter, I will discuss the findings of the dataset containing news reporting of women killed in violent deaths between the years of 2019-2021 in Brazil. The dataset consists of 4,153 cases. This number is the final number of cases reported and extracted via data mining (7,589), excluding duplicates, news reports that referred to cases prior to 2019, accidental deaths and suicides. I also further excluded any cases in which the motivation of the crime was not gendered: for example, robberies with no sexual violence, money-motivated disputes, etc. These cases were excluded because of the absence of any information that would link this killing to gender violence. As I aimed for consistency across cases, it was important that some identification with gender-based violence was present. As an example, a reported money dispute involving a sex worker provides an indication of potential gender violence, whereas a money dispute between two friends does not. Once these cases were eliminated, the result was 4,153 cases across 3 years, which showcased that the media under-reports those deaths, considering that between 2019-2021, there at least 1,300 cases of feminicide (crimes named feminicide) each year, with more than over 3,800 cases of women killed each year (Fórum Brasileiro da Segurança Pública, 2022).

The data was further subdivided into three sets. The first one included cases that were named feminicide either in the title or in the body of the text. The second set was cases that did not include the word feminicide anywhere in the text but had enough elements to be considered feminicides due to being gender-motivated. The final set was cases in which there was not enough information to find out whether a case was or was not motivated by gender. As Table 4.1 indicates, the full dataset is roughly equal in terms of cases that fall into these categories.

Feminicides	39%	1637
Not-feminicides	32%	1347
Unknown	29%	1169
Total	100%	4153

Table 1.Cases in each subset in relation to overall numbers.

While roughly the same number of cases falls into each category, cases labelled feminicides are slightly more frequent. This could be due to the increase in attention to gender violence monitoring since the category of feminicide was added to the aggravating circumstances of homicide in 2015, though further studies would be necessary to prove this hypothesis. It is important to consider the impact organisations such as Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública (FBSP) and Mapa da Violência have had by including and publicising feminicide data. However, the number of cases reported as feminicides is still lower than the overall number of cases in which gender is a motivating factor for the murder — almost half the crimes that could feasibly be considered feminicides are still reported as being something else ('not-feminicides').

Finally there is also a considerable amount of cases from which very little information can be extracted ('unknown'). These deaths are what I have termed the 'lost women' due to information about them being lost, unsearched for and their lives deemed of very little significance to the reader. The fact that they amount to almost a third of cases showcases that they are not outliers in media reporting and might reveal a little about the media's concern with reporting on crime and violence more broadly. Polls conducted have shown that crime TV, for example, has historically had high TV ratings and it impacts public perception (New York Times, 2009; Oliveira, 2012; Amaral e Swatek, 2020; YouGov in Multichannel news, 2020) – this could indicate that reporting on crime is profitable for media in general. Furthermore, research has shown that media coverage of crimes impacts the population's perception on crime (Chiricos, Eschholz and Gertz, 1997; Lowry, Nio

and Leitner, 2003; Holbert, Shah and Kwak, 2004; Velásquez et al, 2020). Such reporting then, reflects a preoccupation of the media not only with ratings, but also with societal mood and perceptions over crime. The rise of politicians such as Bolsonaro, who is supported by large groups of law enforcement, weapons manufacturers and others who spouse 'tough on crime' rethoric (Paes Manso, 2020; dal Piva, 2022) further supports the media's investment in reporting on crime, gendered or not. For the interests of this research, I was particularly interested on whether the way that these cases were reported could influence social perceptions in relation to them.

Information gathered versus information presented

As discussed in the previous chapter, my dataset gathered a variety of information about the cases acquired through data mining. Those were:

- Name of the victim
- Age of the victim
- Existence of a prior restraining order
- Cause of death
- Weapon used
- Relationship with the perpetrator
- Address of where the crime happened, or body was found
- State in which the crime happened
- Was this case named a feminicide in the text or title?

The model was asked what the motive was for the crime, but this was done merely to provide insights into perceptions of feminicide based on the workings of LLMs and the way they process information and produce output (see chapter III). The data gathered and discussed here was quantitative and similar to the data released by other organisations working on monitoring gender violence in Brazil.

In this chapter, I have focused on portraying these data in order to provide an overview of media reporting on women killing in Brazil between 2019-2021. In

these pages, I will focus particularly on three axes of data: geographic information (where the crime occurred), contextual information (age of the victim, relationship with perpetrator, existence of restraining order) and lethal information (cause of death and weapon used. It is important to highlight that this work does not aim to be a quantitative analysis of gender violence in Brazil, and that this chapter serves to give an overview of the state of gender violence reporting in Brazil before moving on to the qualitative analysis. It is my hope that the data showcased here can pique the interest of other researchers who might be willing to set up a more detailed quantitative study, especially when it comes to contrasting and comparing the different sets of information here presented.

Data results

As highlighted in my discussion on methods, there is undoubtedly other questions that could be asked of the text and that could feasibly be modelled using LLMs. However, since this thesis was focused particularly on understanding portrayals of feminicide and women killing in the media, the questions asked were deemed the most appropriate to sketch out the current situation. This chapter organises information regarding the killing of women between 2019-2021 by comparing and contrasting the information acquired through data mining and analysis with the most up to date information reported through institutes and the Brazilian states.

I engaged with the statistical work compiled by other organisations and scholars in Brazil to better contextualise the data encountered in my research, especially in what related to the following 'blind spots'.

- Race: The reporting on the race of those involved in the cases analysed was extremely low. Including it as a factor in the model yielded less than 5% of accurate and reliable data on the race of victim and/or perpetrator. This is due to the lack of reliable information about race in media reporting – differently than age, the race of

the victim is not mentioned. Brazilian media's relationship with issues of racism, for example, is 'complicated', often being marked by bias and racism itself (Garcia, 2020). Studies have shown that whiteness is the 'norm' in aspirational media, including ads (Roso et al.), but simultaneously that 'whiteness' in Brazil is complicated by ideas of colonialism, colourism and class (Sovik, 2004). The mainstream media's lack of commitment to issues of race and racism directly impact the portrayal of victims of feminicide turning them into race-blind subjects. Implicitly this removes race from the equation, making gender violence seem equal across white women and women of colour, despite research showing otherwise.

Keeping that in mind while establishing the dataset, I considered other ways to include race in the data but could not find any that were not reductive in their understanding of race. The complex considerations around race in Brazil, with categories such as *pardo* ('brown') being considered racial identity limbos (Gomes, 2019), add to the difficulty in including race in the dataset. Therefore, I deemed that including data on race would not be reliable and have engaged with scholars who have researched the intersection of race and gender in feminicide more thoroughly.

For scholars who, in the future, choose to engage more clearly with the racial aspects of feminicide, the use of sources that bring forth the racial dimension would be helpful. As mentioned above, police reports might characterise the victim according to her race (though this would also be mediated by the police officer's perception of race

- Regional diversity: While an active effort was made to include regional and local news within the sources of news reporting on violent deaths of women, it is important to note that there is a discrepancy between cases that happen and cases that make it into official news channels. The prevalence of news in the big urban centres reveals blind spots in the media's coverage of more remote areas, which directly impacted the dataset. 'Urban bias' has historically been reported in public policy (Bates, 1981; Jones, 2010), but it can also be seen in the media (Parvathamma, 2003; Nielsen, 2023).

This discrepancy has been addressed through a comparison of my numbers and the numbers compiled by other organisations working to track both feminicides and homicides of women across Brazil. However, for future researchers, a local approach to media research that focuses specifically in small publications might reveal whether the patterns seen in mainstream media are similarly present in local news.

- Trans women and gender diverse folk: My dataset and the modelling included travestis and trans women in the search, however, as I will discuss later in this chapter, the number of trans women and travestis who had their deaths reported in the media does notcorrespond to the number of cases reported by monitoring organisations.

To bring attention towards this problem, I have engaged with organisations such as the Associação Nacional de Travestis e Transexuais (Antra) in order to examine how this population is at further risk of lethal violence, and particularly how travestis and trans women are often silent victims of feminicide. As stated by Antra in their 2023 report on the killing of travestis, trans and gender non-conforming people in Brazil:

> Unfortunately, the data does notfollow a pattern and there are many cases in which gender identities or social names of the victims are not respected in the media. This makes the searching of this data even harder, and invisibilises the motive behind the crime, increasing the subnotification [of violence against travestis and trans and gender noncomforming people]. (…) It is very difficult work, since the identity of the victim is under the responsibility of whoever wrote the media report – which in turn is often based on preliminary information done by the police. Police which has no adequate training on gender diversity or care for the victim's memory. (2024:38)

Such considerations cannot be forgotten when examining the data in this thesis. As highlighted by Antra, a case reporting a 'woman' killed could mean a trans man whose identity is not being respected, and reports of trans women being killed could have been excluded because they were reported as killings of men.

I have deliberately included cases in which trans women and travestis were murdered in the analysis of contemporary Brazilian feminicide. I consider them to

be particularly important in understanding gender normativity, especially with the rise on what has been seen as discourses of 'gender ideology' in politics (Butler, 2024; Miskolci 2018). As stated in the same Antra report, 'antigender and transphobic agendas have become a priority to the far right' (2024:14), and highlight the ways in which these intersect with gender violence is important if one wants to gain a comprehensive view of the matter.

Race and violence

As I have highlighted above, the reporting does not include race, but this does not mean that race and racism do not have an important impact on violence against women in Brazil. There are reliable and consistent data highlighting that gender violence is extremely racialised. In their 2023 report, Ipea states that the risk of being a victim of homicide is 1.8 times higher for a black woman than a non-black woman (2023:47) and that while non-black women experienced a 2.8% reduction in lethal violence between 2020-21, black women saw it increase in 0.5%. This showcases that black women are more likely to be victims of lethal violence than other racial groups in Brazil, even if the media reporting does not engage with the victim's race at time of reporting.

Many scholars have also developed studies discussing how the Brazilian state is involved in systematically killing its black and indigenous population (Nascimento 1989; Smith 2013; Genna and Bachman 2019; Papazian et al 2023). As a country built on enslavement and colonialism, Brazil's institutions are marked by structural racism. This creates ripples throughout society, and impacts access to institutional support and trust in institutions. In their study of race and feminicide in Brazil, Monteiro, Romio and Drezett (2021) showcase the high incidence of violence against mixed race women whilst simultaneously noting that there's still 'little information about feminicide when stratified by race' (p. 359). They also highlight the importance of noting how other forms of social exclusion, such as low education, no formal job or occupation and lower income put women in more precarious

situations in regards to gender violence. As highlighted by the IBGE (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística) black women are socially and economic disadvantaged – therefore, these other forms of social exclusion directly impact black women's vulnerability to gender violence.

As I will discuss in chapter VII, the racism involved in reporting of gender violence can be seen through other factors that are not necessarily the race of the victim. I will discuss that the cases which I have labelled 'lost women' are more common in Northeast and North states than cases of feminicides/not-feminicides proportionally. Those regions are also highly racialised, including larger black and indigenous populations relatively to the South and Southeast. Furthermore, as I discuss in the same chapter, women in that subset of cases are more likely to be perceived and/or portrayed as being involved in criminality and gang violence, revealing the ways in which racism operates in the country[1]. As discussed by Meneghel et al (2013) many women are killed due to being linked to men who are involved with criminality (p. 528) and these killings are more likely to go unpunished by the state, both by the absence of information due to fear of retaliation and by a lack of access and interest from the state.

As previously discussed, the idea of necropolitics is particularly concerned with questions of race and racism. The particular vulnerability of black, mixed race and indigenous women in Brazil to violence, allied with a state that is complicit with and sometimes even the perpetrator of (in the case of police violence for example) violence means that the lives of those women become even more precarious. The absence of race in media reportings of feminicide adds to this precariousness, as the problem remains obscured and wrapped in layers of racism by making these victims' deaths less grievable. Therefore, the absence of race as a specific variable in my research does not mean that I believe or sustain that gender violence and feminicide in Brazil is not racialised. Rather, I think that the absence of race in the media

1 A study conducted by Lima and Vala (2004) showed that social success in Brazil has a 'whitening' effect, that is, black men and women who obtained social success are perceived to be whiter than their less socially successful counterparts. In the case of media reporting, the attributes given that signify social failure (e.g. involvement with criminality) can be also seen to signify that these women are seen as more racialised, impacting their grievability both under the lens of classism and racism.

reporting of feminicide in Brazil serves as a way to reinforce racial stereotypes, particularly when it comes to highly vulnerable groups. By invisibilising race, reports give the reader space to racialise the victims and perpetrators of feminicide through a web of stereotypes and historical and social constructs. This means that women who are perceived to be indigenous, black or mixed-race will be thought of as so; and also that women whose occupations and or social positions are racialised will be impacted by this. However, such racialisation would happen without giving space for the real dimension of violence against those women to be understood or conceptualised through data. This conflation of vulnerability, precariousness and forms of social exclusion are also present in another group that the data does not fully reach: the LGBTQ+ population in Brazil.

Violence against LGBTQ+ people

There are two important aspects to note on the question of feminicide against LGBTQ+ people. First is the absence of data on the sexuality of the victims, both in statistics and in the media reporting itself. The data gathered by official reports includes all LGBTQ+ people, even though the violence suffered by gay men, lesbians, bisexual women, intersex people, trans and gender diverse people etc. is varied and encompass many different factors. In one case in my data, a man killed both his neighbours, a lesbian couple, and the reason given in the news report was that he had argued with one of the victims (G1 Globo, 2019). The text later mentions that the same man was already accused of having killed another woman (sexuality unknown). Is this man homophobic? Is this case a feminicide? I'd argue that the case is a feminicide due to the history of violence against women, but any potential homophobia of the perpetrator is not mentioned. Does it not exist? Or is it silenced? Like Amparo mentioned in the 2019 edition of the Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 'The first thing of note is the absence of data' (Amparo, 2019). If LGBTQ+ are not being recognised as such, or hatred against LGBTQ+ people is not being named, the data becomes inadequate.

Another important aspect of the data surrounding feminicide and the LGBTQ+ population is the ever-present idea that certain types of violence, particularly intimate partner violence, only exist in heterosexual couples. In her memoir about an abusive queer relationship, Carmen Maria Machado says: 'I speak into the silence. I toss the stone of my story into a vast crevice; measure the emptiness by its small sound.' (Carmen Maria Machado 2019:134). The difficulties in recognising and reporting queer intimate partner violence has been historically documented (Barnes, 1998; Helfrich and Simpson 2006), alongside the difficulty of victims of violence in those contexts in speaking about and recognising the violence they are victims of (Giorgio 2002; Rausch 2016). From a data perspective, this silence means that some cases of violence might not even have appeared in the dataset or their reporting did not make gender violence clear enough to the reader because that violence is notrecognised as such.

Finally, a central aspect of feminicide against queer women is the overwhelming presence of trans and gender diverse people in statistics of violence against the LGBTQ+ population. One of the most notable aspects of the data gathered her is the low numbers of trans women in the dataset – only 64 of 4,153 cases. These are vastly underreported number, considering that the Associação Nacional de Travestis e Transexuais (Antra) registered 135 killings of trans women and travestis (out of 140 trans people killed) in 2021 alone (Antra, 2021). This number is in itself interesting, since the Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública registered 176 homicides of LGBTQ+ people in the same year (FBSP, 2023), which could indicate how visible trans people are as LGBTQ+ and how that makes them more easily subjected to violence.

Brazil is the deadliest country in violence against trans and gender diverse people, and of people killed in 2021, more than 80% identified as Black and/or mixed race (Antra 2021), showcasing also how racialised is this type of violence. The marginalisation of and discrimination against trans women pushes them into sex work and other precarious jobs. This them makes them more vulnerable to all types of violence – of the victims reported, over 78% were sex workers (idem).

The question of violence against trans women encapsulates why feminicide must be understood under a framework that allows for intersectionality. As I have discussed in Chapter II, and what I continue to discuss in my qualitative analysis of the data gathered, is how understanding feminicide through a norm-enforcing lens allows for questions of queerness, race, and class to be considered. By engaging with how trans women and travestis, especially Black trans women and travestis, are perceived to transgress normativity, the violence enacted upon these women can be understood as a way to uphold a normative system that is not only gendered but also racialised and heteronormative. It is exactly this invisibility in the dataset, when contrasted with more visible victims, that showcases how precarious their position is —not recognised, not named and oftentimes not even reported on.

While the above are certainly limitations in this research, I have sought to engage with external data, which puts these factors in dialogue with the information gathered from the media reports. Furthermore, in the following chapters, I have sought to examine how certain discursive practices can themselves operate within racist, transphobic and xenophobic frameworks in order to sustain normative narratives that make certain lies more grievable than others. In this chapter, I have focused more on the information that is available through media reporting, starting with the geographic representation of cases of women killing across the 26 Brazilian states.

Cases by state

The overwhelming majority of cases (98%) of women killing reported in the media state in which city or region that the crime occurred. The remaining 2% are usually reported to have been on highways or border areas, which makes it hard for the reader to have a firm grasp on the location unless they are from the area[2]. I have

2 In several cases I managed to check the state by checking the news website in which it was located, but in some cases the websites themselves covered a region across state lines, and therefore I left them as 'not mentioned' in the dataset.

focused on examining the cases in which I knew the state in which the crime had been committed. The data can be seen in the figure below (Figure 2).

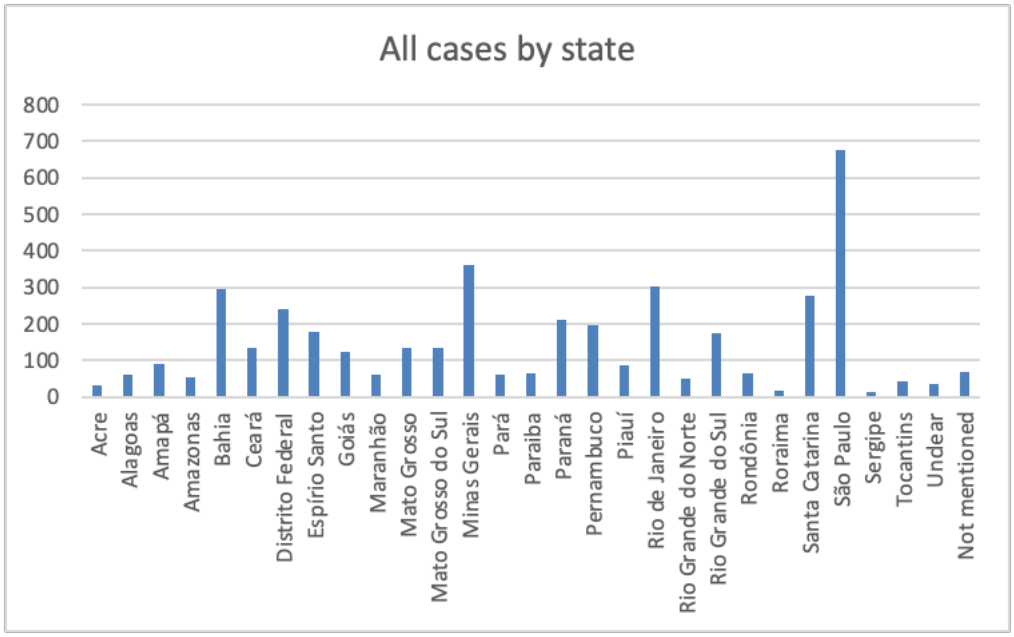


Figure 4. All cases of women killing per Brazilian state.

As shown above, the cases which have the highest number of reported women killings are São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro and Bahia. This follows the demographics of the country, as those states are also the most populous pattern. The data is also in line with other findings such as the Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública (FBSP, 2023) which highlight those cases as the ones registering the highest instances of women killings. However, the data also seems to indicate that impoverished states in the North and Northeast of Brazil are less likely to be featured in the news than states in the Southeast and South, considering that their numbers are, on average, lower than the numbers reported by institutions using the data from the police in each state.

These considerations seem to hold across the three subsets of the data, as seen below:

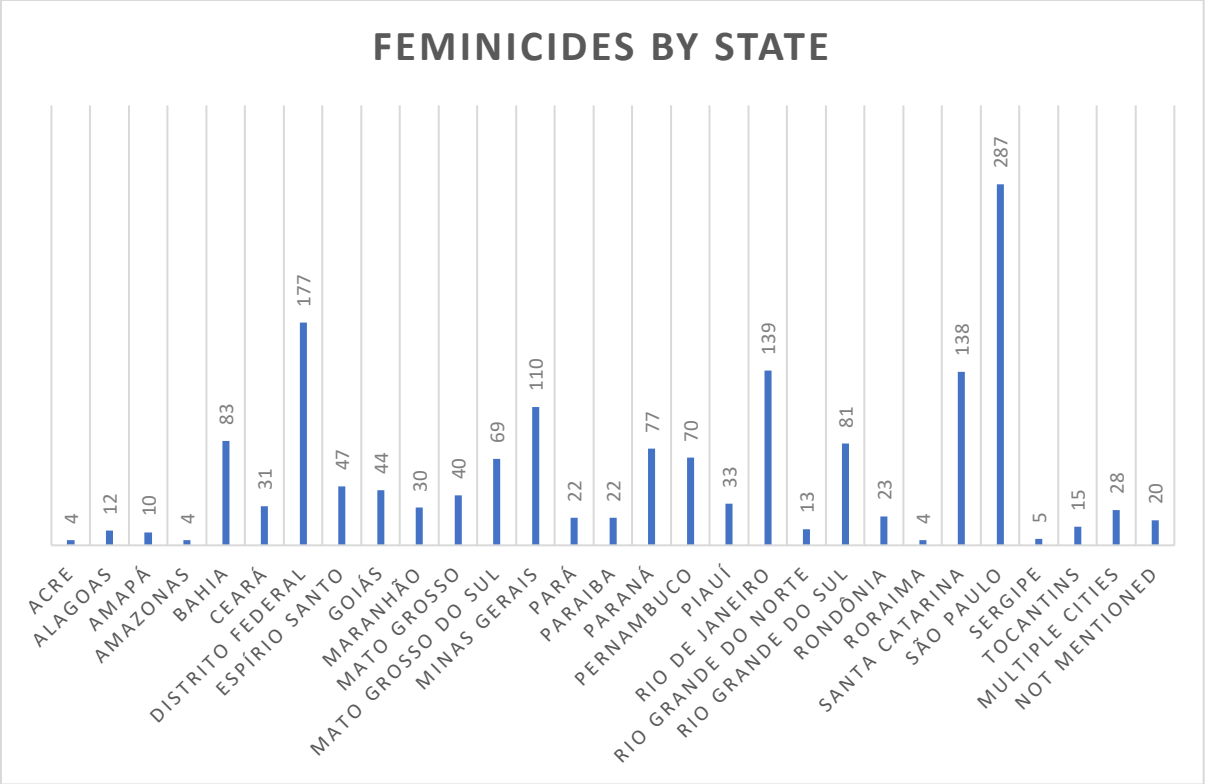


Figure 4.2. Distribution of feminicide cases by state.

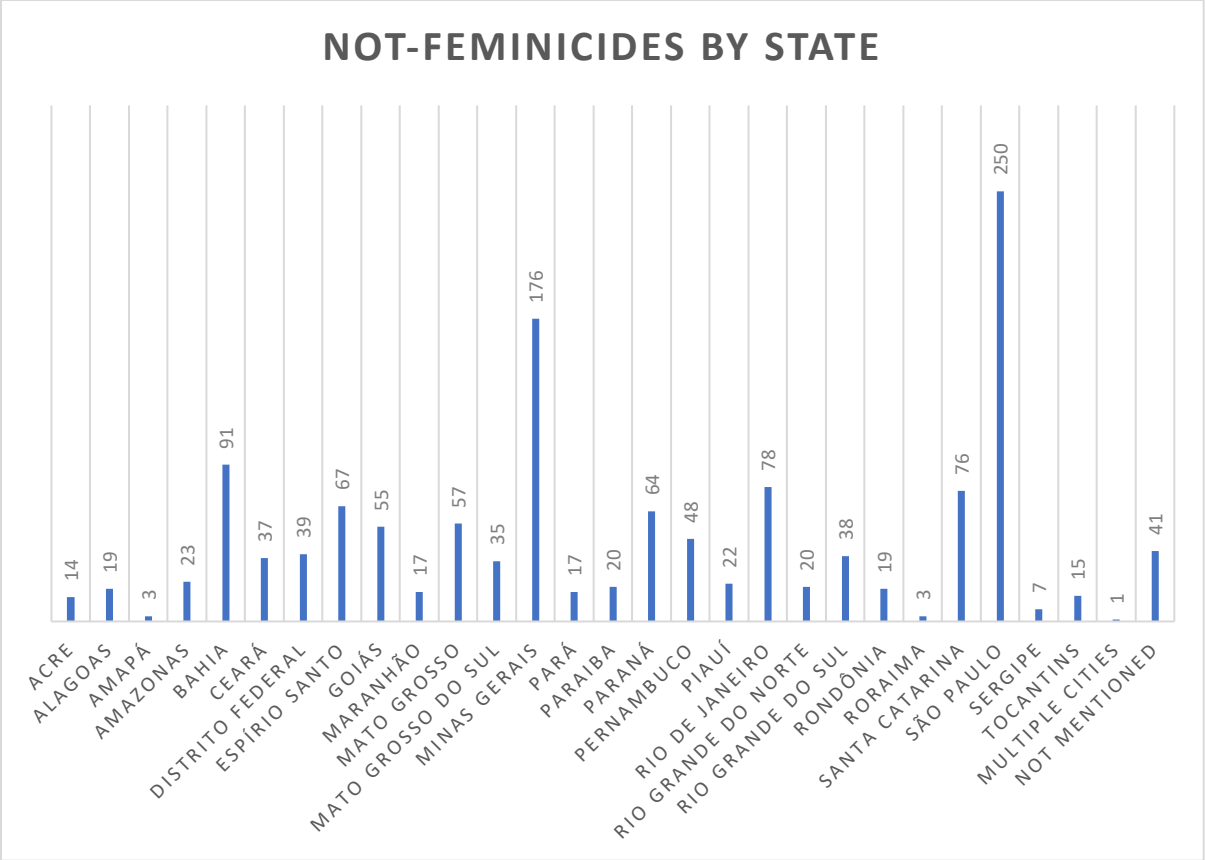


Figure 4. Distribution of not-feminicide cases by state.

As I compared the cases named feminicide versus cases not named feminicides, it is possible to see a slight increase in cases in Minas Gerais, allied with a drop in cases from the Distrito Federal, which is also in line with findings from the FBSP 2023. Other noteworthy aspects of this comparison are the low amount of cases from the North of Brazil – a surprising aspect because both the Ipea and the FBSP have highlighted that the state of Amazonas is one of the most lethal in the country, with the violence in the border regions in the north of the country also increasing (FBSP 2023:27). In the state of Amazonas, for example, the lack of crimes named feminicide in the media could indicate that media reporting in the region focuses on other important aspects of violence in the region (e.g. violence against activists and

indigenous people) without necessarily applying a more intersectional approach to such violence.

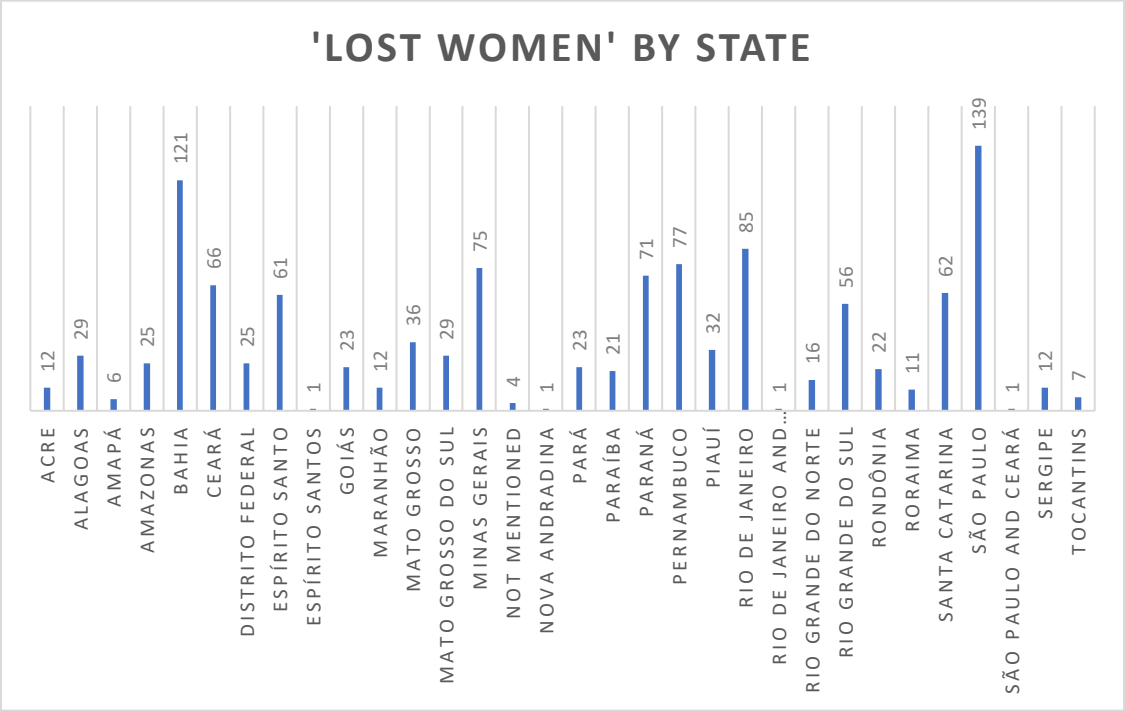


Figure 5. Distribution of 'lost women' cases by state.

In comparison with the previous subsets, the states with the highest number of reported cases often remain the same regarding of how the crime is being named, with a couple of notable exceptions. The first one is the high number of cases named feminicide in the Distrito Federal (with a population of around 2 million) versus states like Bahia (around 15 million inhabitants) and São Paulo (over 44 million inhabitants) (IBGE, 2022). The second one is the proportionally higher number of cases from states in the Northeast in the subset of 'lost women' (i.e. cases in which there was no way of knowing whether a killing was gender-based or not).

These two questions can be seen to be linked to important class and racial lines across Brazil – the Distrito Federal has over 40% of its population declaring themselves as white, versus a region (Northeast) in which the population is over

60% racialised (ibid.). The Northeast region also has the lowest average wage of Brazil (R$1,979.00) whereas the Distrito Federal has average wages of R$4,373.00 (ibid.) These data followed my expectation that killings of women in wealthier and whiter regions tend to receive larger media attention and could potentially signal a difference in reporting of cases of violence against white and racialised women in Brazil.

As I highlighted previously, the data regarding killings of women in the media is often 'blind' to race, not engaging directly with the race of the victim. While the data regarding the race of the victim was mostly unavailable in media reports, there was some information that was put forward to the reader, more specifically the victims' ages and their relationship with the perpetrator, which I examine below.

Victim data

In the qualitative chapters of this work I take a closer look at the portrayals of victims in the media reporting of feminicide, some information about the victim is gathered in the text. In this section I focus on the two main aspects of victim data that the media reported on: the age of the victim and the relationship that the victim has with the perpetrator of the crime against her. These two variables allowed me to map out not only the age distribution of cases reported, but also how the relationship between victim and perpetrator was portrayed to the reader of Brazilian media and whether cases classed differently also involved different types of relationships.

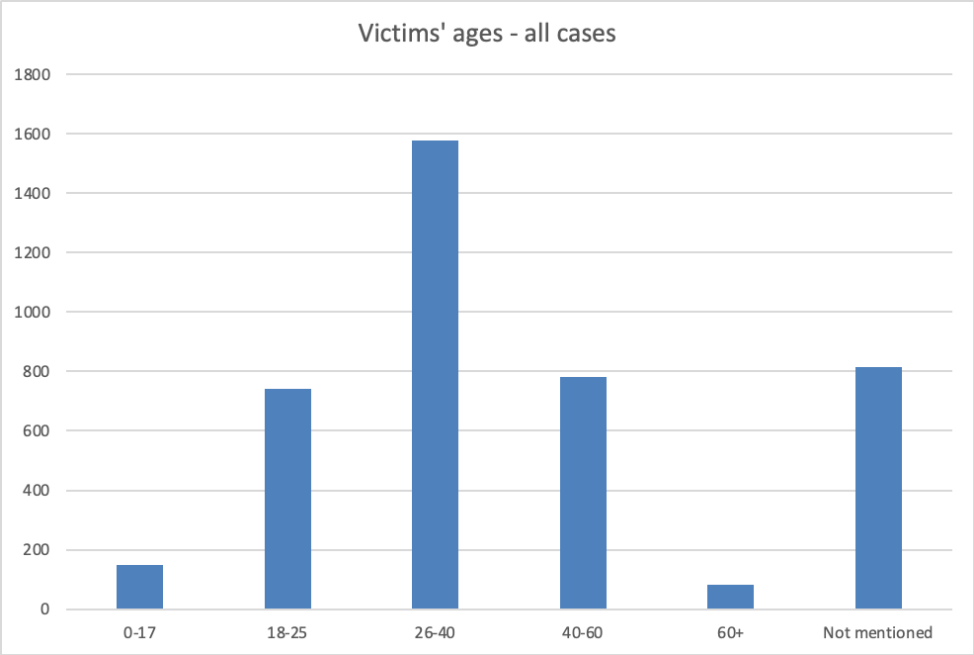


Figure 6. Chart of victims' ages across all cases.

As seen above, the most common age for victims in this dataset are those between 26-40 — around 38% of all cases involved victims that age. This is in line with findings reported in the Atlas da Violência 2023, which considered that over 38% of homicides of women in their residencies victimised women between 25 and 40 years old.

There are some questions that need to be asked of this information, the first being the large number of cases which do not have the ages mentioned. If I compare the information found in my data (see Table 2) with information found in other reporting of feminicide (FBSP 2023, Ipea 2023), it is possible to see that cases involving girls younger than 17 and women older than 40 are less likely to appear in the media, which could mean that these numbers are 'hidden' in the cases in which the age of the victim is notmentioned.

Age of victim	Number of cases	Percentage of cases

0-17	147	4%
18-25	743	18%
26-40	1576	38%
40-60	783	19%
60+	82	2%
Not mentioned	815	20%

Table 2. Proportion of victims' ages in the all cases.

The ages of the victims become less likely to be reported as well in cases not named feminicides than in cases named feminicides, as it can be seen below (Table 3). And of course, in the cases of 'lost women', the lack of information is even more glaring, which I discuss in detail in chapter VII.

Age of victim	Percentage in feminicide cases	Percentage in not-feminicide cases	Percentage in 'lost women' cases
0-17	3%	4%	0%
18-25	18%	19%	17%
26-40	41%	36%	36%
40-60	21%	19%	17%
60+	3%	2%	1%
Not mentioned	15%	20%	26%

Table 3. Percentage of victims' ages across the three subsets

This data is interesting because it shows that feminicide cases are less likely to not report on victims' ages if compared to cases not named feminicides. However, the proportion of victims' ages remains steady, showcasing that most women killed in Brazil are between 26 and 40 years old, which is in line with findings from the FBSP (2023).

Another information which the media report gives the reader about the victim is the relationship that the victim had with the perpetrator. According to the FBSP, over 90% of feminicides was practices by a partner, ex-partner or family member of the victim. This is in line with my findings on media reporting of feminicide, as seen below (Figure 8).

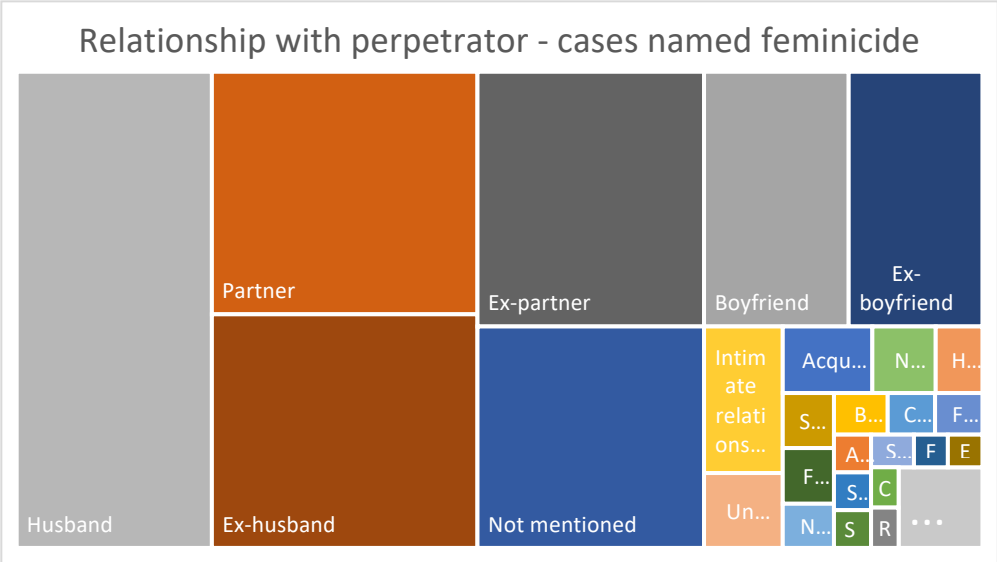


Figure 7. Victims' relationship with perpetrator in cases named feminicide.

My data showed that the vast majority of feminicide victims are killed by a partner, ex-partner or someone they had an intimate relationship with (sexual relationship, date etc.). However, what surprised me was that the same was true for cases not named feminicides, as seen in figure 7 below.

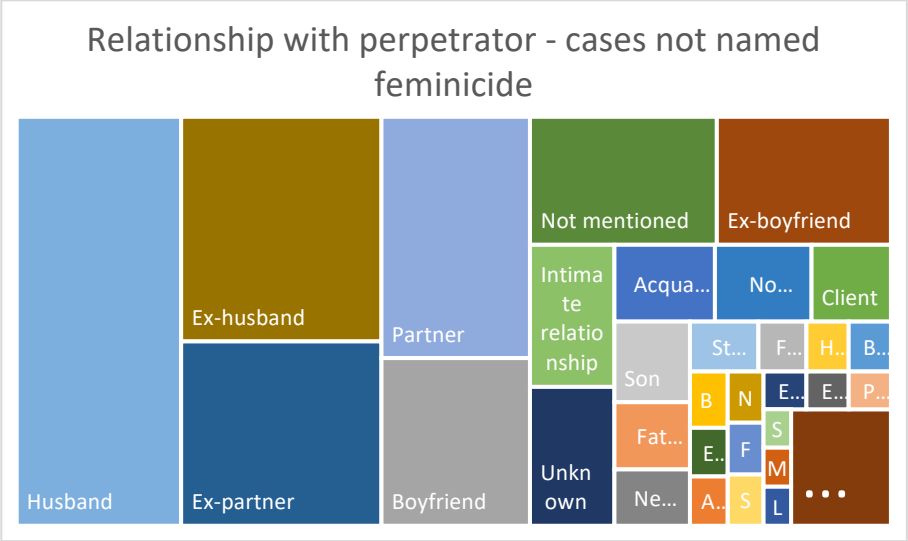


Figure 8. Victims' relationship with the perpetrator in cases not named feminicide.

As I explore in Chapter VI, the large amount of not-feminicide cases which involve intimate partner violence and, therefore, should be considered feminicides demonstrate the limitations of the media in reporting gender violence. Similarly, the higher presence of family members in the not-feminicide cases seem to indicate that while domestic violence is more easily recognised as feminicide, familial violence remains a lesser reported crimes in terms of gender, despite its presence in the Brazilian Feminicide Law.

Finally, in the case of the 'lost women' the vast majority of cases did not mention the perpetrator or mentioned him as unknown (see Figure 8)[3]. Another common relationship in the case of 'lost women' was that the perpetrator was an acquaintance – this was a broad category that ranged from them being seen together before the crime to the use of the word 'acquaintance' in the reporting.

3 Some of those cases made allusions to the perpetrator possibly being a family member, partner or ex-partner, but there was not enough information to definitely move the case from the subset of 'lost women' to the subset of 'not-feminicides'.

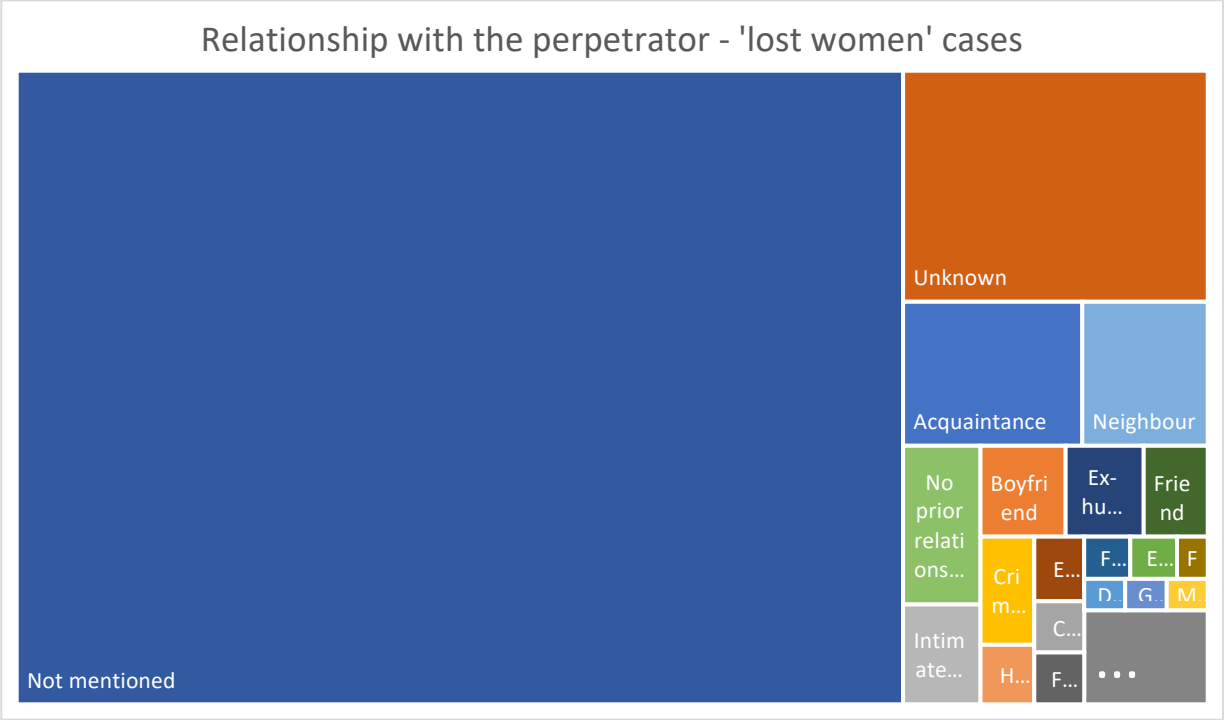


Figure 9. Victims' relationship with the perpetrator in the 'lost women' cases.

The data on media reporting of women killing shows that in the cases of crimes named femincides and crimes not named feminicides, the relationship with the perpetrator is similar. This was unexpected, as cases of domestic and familial violence are specifically covered in the Brazilian Feminicide Law and I expected that this would mean they would be more easily reported on. The data does show an issue with naming, regardless of the reason. Even if I were to only analyse the category ‘feminicide’ in Brazil strictly through the Brazilian Feminicide Law, there are a substantive number of cases not being named feminicides (around 1,000 in a dataset of 4,153 cases, or one fourth of the cases analysed) in the media. This discrepancy could be explained by the fact that the category feminicide has been in both the Brazilian legal and everyday lexicon for less than 10 years. This could mean that the media is less likely to use the language of feminicide, though further research is needed to sustain that hypothesis.

Existence of restraining order

The data regarding the existence of restraining order cannot be considered illustrative of the Brazilian scenario due to the absence of that information in the cases reported. Out of the 4,153 cases, only 328 news reports stated whether or not a prior restraining order was in place – less than 10% of all cases. Within cases that highlighted the existence of restraining orders, 75% states that restraining orders were present, whereas 25% highlighted the absence of restraining orders.

Prior restraining order	**Cases named feminicide**	**Cases not named feminicide**	**Cases of 'lost women'**
Yes	163	106	6
No	47	32	2
Not mentioned	1,427	1,209	1,161

Table 4. Restraining order data per subset.

Types of violence and weapons used

The other type of data collected was the one referring to the type of death – both the cause of death and the weapon used. In regard to the latter, while the full data included all different types of weapons used, I organised the data with the categories: firearm, knife, not mentioned, multiple weapons, other. The category other included all different objects turned into deadly weapons against women, including homemade flamethrowers made of lighter and deodorant, cars, bras, and sometimes the bare hands of the perpetrator.

Some insight into this violence can be seen in the cause of death (Table 5). In order to understand what violence was being done to women in Brazil, I established categories that could cover more than one weapon (e.g. stabbing involves knives, bladed weapons, garden tools etc.; bludgeoning involves bottles, stones, pieces of wood etc.).

Cause of death	Number of cases	Percentage of total cases
Shooting	1268	31%
Stabbing	1086	26%
Not mentioned	600	14%
Multiple methods	356	9%
Other	277	7%
Strangulation	178	4%
Bludgeoning	161	4%
Beating	143	3%
Asphyxiation	83	2%

Table 5. Causes of death in the full dataset

An aspect of note in the data above is the large number of cases in which the cause of death signalled particularly violent deaths: bludgeonings, stabbings, beatings and cases in which the victim was assaulted in a variety of ways. As I examine in chapters VI and VII, the violence enacted on female bodies is oftentimes portrayed in detail to the reader, including by reporting on the specific types of objects used to murder a woman (for example, a case had as weapons 'a broken knife, a brick and a piece of wood', whereas another stated the victim had been stabbed, hit by a car and shot). This is a particularly interesting aspect of the data gathered through media reports, as a official reporting will focus on the specific cause of death as specified by the coroner. When the violence is seen outside the final blow, it is possible to note that women can be subjected to aa myriad of pain in the moments before her death.

Another aspect to note is that the data shows that the vast majority of news reporting of women killing in Brazil involves firearms, which is in line with the growth of gun crime in Brazil between 2019-2021 (Ipea 2023; FBSP 2023). However, this number changes when I look at the different subsets, as seen in in Figures 10 to 12.

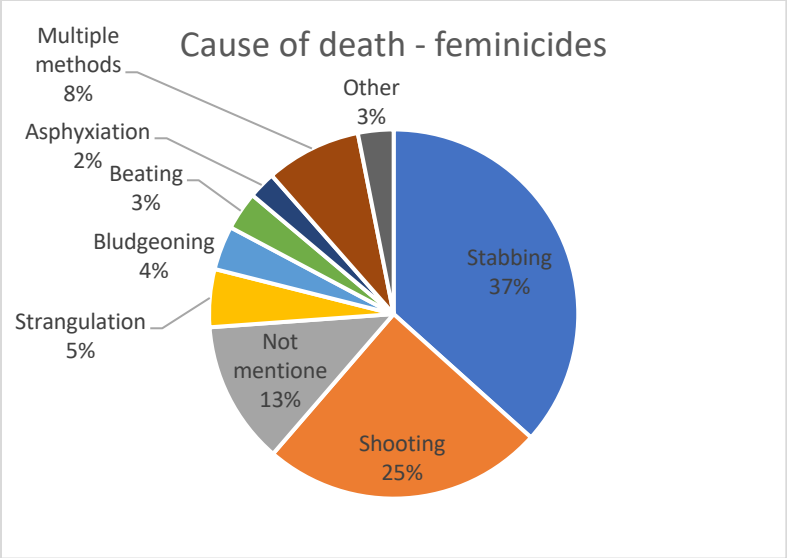


Figure 10. Cause of death in cases named feminicide.

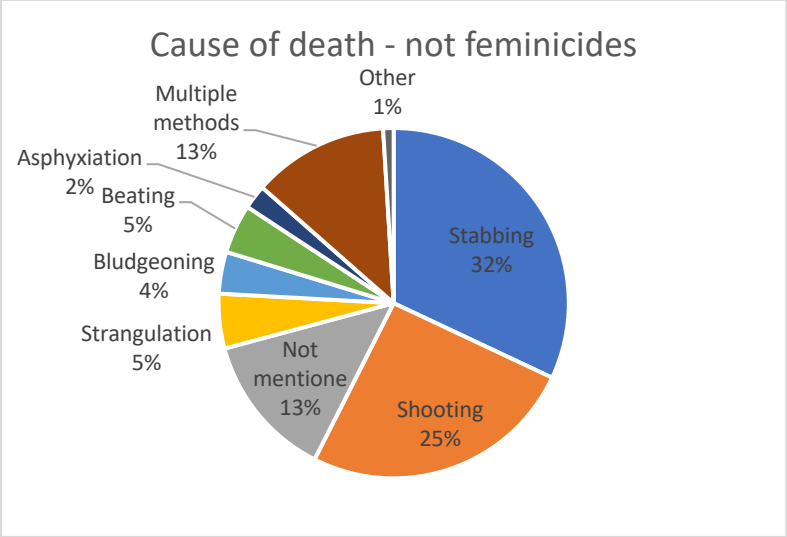


Figure 11. Cause of death in cases not named feminicide.

The cases named and not named feminicide both have stabbing as the leading cause of death, information that also appears in the feminicide report of FBSP (2023) and Ipea (2023). As I have discussed previously, those two subsets are also the ones with highest concentration of domestic and familial violence, showcasing that those crimes do seem to be mostly committed using bladed weapons4. However, the picture changes when looking at the third subset, which includes the 'lost women' whose deaths do not have enough information to know whether they had gendered aspects within them.

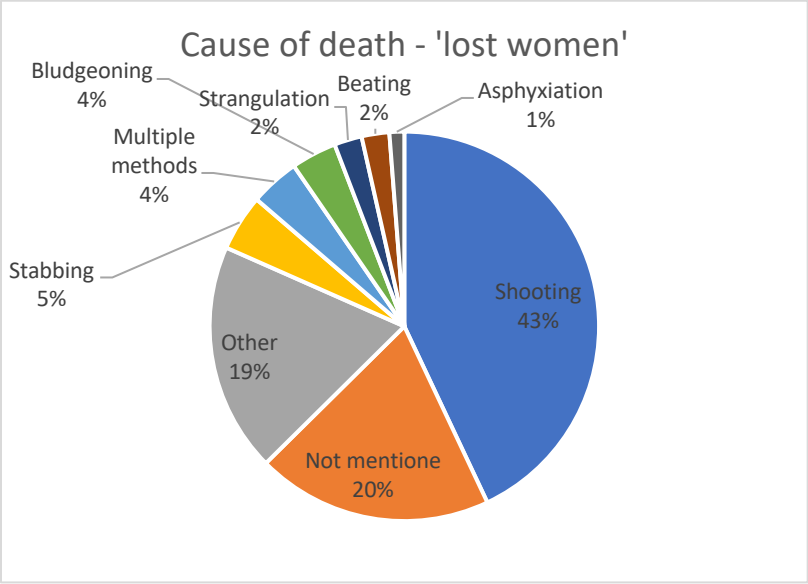


Figure 12. Cause of death in the cases which cannot be classified ('lost women').

It is possible to see that the subset of cases of 'lost women' has a higher presence of shooting as the cause of death. As I discuss in Chapter VII, this could be due to the crimes being motivated by other factors, but it could also indicate an association with organised crime – which does not preclude the crime from being a feminicide,

4 Following the flexibilization of firearm legislation in the Bolsonaro government (2019-2022), it will be interesting to see how this period of easier access to firearms impacts official indicators of feminicide in Brazil from 2022 onwards.

as highlighted by Macaulay when speaking of feminicides 'by connection' in the context of criminal groups. However, the difficulties in acquiring information regarding those crimes, both by the media and the police, can skew the cause of death of feminicides, as the cases that get named as such have stabbing as the main cause of death (Figure 9).

The overall analysis of murder weapon and cause of death in the dataset showcase similar findings to other information highlighted in this chapter. That is, cases named feminicide and cases not named feminicide are quite similar in their statistical makeup, which could indicate that the reasons they do not get named correctly can be better captured through a qualitative lens. In the following chapters, I will engage with the discursive aspects of those subsets, hoping to find clearer answers as to why some cases might get named feminicide, and others not, and understand how feminicide cases and not-feminicide cases get spoken about in Brazilian media.

Regarding the third subset, which I name 'lost women', the statistical makeup is different, in great part because of the lack of information about those crimes in the media reports. I have noted a higher level of reporting of these cases in Brazilian states with a lower average income and with higher numbers of Black Brazilians, which could indicate an underlying structural issue in reporting the violence inflicted against women from those regions and reflects an already known issue of structural violence against Black and mixed-race women in Brazil.

A brief note on data regarding motive

As I have highlighted in my methods chapter, I was interested in how 'subjective' categories such as motive would be interpreted and produced by the model. I was particularly interested in this as a tool to think about potential categories in my qualitative analysis as before; the model was trained and refined to properly interpret the question 'What was the motive of the crime?' I found that the model gave answers that it extrapolated from the ones it could find on the dataset.

This was interesting to me because it gave me a general idea of what could be found in the data ahead of my detailed examination using MAXQDA – the main findings, as I stated in the previous chapter, were that the model ascribed motives of jealousy to the perpetrator in cases the perpetrator was a partner or ex-partner of the victim.

Once the model was trained, the answers to motive became much more varied, especially since the model would 'read' the media reporting and use the wording for motive that was used in the reporting. Due to the constraints of time and word limit, I decided not to produce a detailed analysis of the 'motive' output generated by the model, though it is my hope that I can do so in the future.

However, some of the most common words in the query about motive impacted the establishment of my qualitative categories and their insights were validated by the qualitative analysis. For example:

- One thousand five hundred forty-six (1,546) cases that indicated no motive was mentioned.
- Three hundred eighty-two (382) mentions of disagreements, fights and/or arguments as a motive.
- Three hundred fifty-eight (358) mentions of the end of a relationship as a motive.
- Two hundred thirty-nine (239) mentions of jealousy or suspected infidelity as a motive.
- One hundred thirty-two (132) mentions of domestic violence or abusive relationships as a motive.

These indicated potential avenues to explore in the qualitative analysis of the data. It is no surprise that the cases in which there was not much information (the 'lost women' subset) did not provide a clear picture of motive. However, it was important to note that questions such as jealousy and end of relationship are present in both cases named feminicide and cases not named feminicides – this is unsurprising considering that the statistical data show that those cases have the highest numbers of domestic violence cases.

Another aspect that I noted was that cases in which rape and sexual violence featured as part of the motive are more present in not-feminicides (in line with the absence of rape and murder as explicitly belonging to the category of feminicide in Brazilian law). Similarly, cases that are not-feminicides tend to have a higher presence of motives relating to disagreements over sex work and client-sex worker violence, though none of these (sexual violence and sex work) achieved significant numbers, being around 2% of all motives.

Therefore, the inclusion of motive in the data produced by the model allowed me to preview some of the questions that I could elaborate on in my qualitative analysis. Certain clusters of motive tend to correlate to different ways in which the crimes are classified, leading to the idea that the motive (or the perception of motive) plays a part in the determination of whether the crime is a feminicide. This is not surprising, seeing as the Brazilian Feminicide Law has a large interpretative aspect to it, as discussed in Chapter II. Therefore, it is possible to infer that violent deaths which happen in the context of an end of a relationship or jealousy are more likely to be classified as feminicides, whereas crimes involving sexual violence and/or sex work are less likely to be classified as feminicides. I will discuss this further in chapters V and VI.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided an overview of the data, which informs the qualitative analysis I will undertake in the following chapters. The 'all cases' dataset was divided into three different subsets: feminicides (named feminicide in the news), not-feminicides (named something else other than feminicide) and 'lost women' cases (cases in which there is not enough available information to infer whether a crime is motivated by gender). I have compared some of the information given in those.

This classification was a challenge. How can I understand how a crime is motivated by gender? I could do so precisely because of my use of discourse

analysis. If a crime is not named feminicide, the elements of gender motivation need to be found in the text. For example, rape followed by murder would characterise a gender motivation. So would a case in which a woman is killed because she refused a man's advances in a bar. However, some cases did not even give me that, creating the third dataset, which I named 'lost women'.

There are crucial aspects of my research that emerge from the data. First, the existence of the three subsets showcases how feminicide as a category is normative. If the aim is to recognise gender violence, what does it mean for feminicide victims to be named as such? In looking at cases named feminicide, I examine how their narratives follow on normative understandings of perpetrators, victims and the context they are in—e.g. what relationships that end in feminicide 'look like'. As I will demonstrate, this actually shows that even 'ideal' cases (e.g. feminicide cases that get named feminicide) are normative.

However, even these normative understandings grant feminicide victims some institutional and media recognition. In the subsets of not-feminicide cases and of 'lost women', women are invisibilised as feminicide victims due to perceptions of their value stemming from their adherence to social and gender norms. This is significant because it shows that even the category of victim is gatekept from women, and that there might be even more feminicides than officially report.

These data cannot be analysed outside of important contexts — that is, they depend not only on the news source itself but also on the social context of Brazil and even on the class and racial context of the victims and perpetrators. As I will discuss in the following chapters, conceptualising motive and categorising a crime as feminicide are processes which are somewhat linked and need to be investigated through a qualitative lens in order to yield scientifically sound answers. In the next chapter, I will focus particularly on those cases which were named feminicides in Brazil between 2019 and 2021.

CHAPTER V: WEAVING THREADS: CASES DEFINED AS FEMINICIDES (2019-2021)

This chapter focuses on the cases which were named feminicides at the time of reporting – either in the news article itself or as a statement by the police. While my research covers 4,153 cases of women who were killed between 2019-2021, only the 1,637 cases analysed in this chapter fit this criterion[1]. This chapter asks: is naming enough? Once a case is named as feminicide, does it mean that the gendered aspects leap from the page, making it clear to the reader that misogyny is at work? Or are there other discursive practices that stubbornly remain, caught in the fabric of the media text, with underlying assumptions that by themselves wash away how gender is crucial to this form of violence? To explore these potential avenues of enquiry, this chapter examines feminicide reporting, bringing forth an important contribution to the scholarship by looking at what happens when a case is correctly assigned feminicide.

I have analysed all 1,347 cases by establishing clusters[2] of words around the perpetrator, the victim and the context of the crime and their relationship. In this chapter I examined extracts pertaining to any clusters that made up more than 5% of the cases in each of those categories. As discussed, to parse through the vast amount of data, all chapters that make use of discourse analysis are divided equally — first an analysis of the terms or clusters of terms referring to the perpetrator,

1 This disparity between the number of cases and cases labelled feminicide is of particular interest, as it demonstrates that there are cases that are not being called feminicide either by the police or by the media, despite sharing characteristics that would qualify the crime as a feminicide. I will examine this further in Chapter V.

2 There were two types of clusters: ones that were stating a fact about a case and those who can feasibly be considered to describe and/or impart judgement in a case. For example, if it is stated that the victim was pregnant, this would be categorised under 'pregnant' cluster in the victim category. However, if the victim was pregnant and the newspaper report stated she was killed because her partner did not want her to have the child, this would be classified as 'pregnant' but also the perpetrator would be classified as 'controlling.' Similarly, if the cases stated that the victim had a restraining order this would be filed under 'restraining order' in the context section, but if the newspaper stated that the victim had declined to file a report and/or asked for a removal of the restraining order, this would be filed under 'victim blaming.'

followed by the same in relation to the victim. Finally, an analysis of categories/clusters that refer to the context of the crime — that is, what circumstances are highlighted in the reporting, both spatially and temporally. As discussed in my methodology chapter, I arrived at the detailed data analysis after working through annotations and overviews of the dataset, which were informed by the extensive literature on feminicide. As I worked through the cases which make up this chapter, I had a sense of what I might encounter — words that had been noted as I looked over the myriad of reports, as well as the feelings which drew me into this work in the first place. There was no guarantee that upon close examination, those ideas would hold, but they informed the setup of my clusters and categories.

I identified several categories (or 'clusters') which can be seen in the table below:

Thread	**Clusters**
Perpetrator	End of relationship Jealousy Mistake, madness Regret No regret Criminal Background Valorising the perpetrator
Victim	Dreams and plans Beautiful soul Fighter Family-oriented Beautiful Pregnant Victim-blaming
Context	Restraining order/police report Fights/arguments Troubled Suicide or attempted suicide Cheating Revenge of retribution Passionate Self-defence

Table 6. Names of categories for each of the analysed threads.

Some of these clusters were expected as narratives of gender violence, while others were more of a surprise. Building on scholarship about victim-blaming in reports of gender violence, I was surprised to find that victim-blaming did not meet my threshold for analysis (5% or more of cases). The overall positive reporting on victims was in general unexpected as scholars have emphasised the difficulty women face when reporting gender violence (Manne, 2018; Rose, 2021). Nonetheless, certain aspects had been noted by me when I first began researching — the images of women smiling in the news reports that told me of their deaths were haunting. In the text, I noticed how words that highlighted their character and vitality seemed to be present often when looking at the testimonies of their friends and family. Those frequently seem dignified, with the image seeking to illustrate what was in the text — a life lost. Nonetheless, I was particularly interested in how the ideas of character and 'goodness' seemed to emerge from the dataset and what that meant for understanding the portrayal of victims and their lives.

Another unexpected finding was how clear examples of valorising the perpetrator (e.g., by highlighting their good qualities) were infrequent, and that most coverage regarding the perpetrator was directly linked to the relationship with the victim. I expected some words regarding the perpetrator, such as those relating to jealous and controlling behaviour both in police and witness testimonies. Ideas of jealousy seem to seep into the collective imaginary of violence (for example, Othello and classic tropes of detective TV shows), as well as having been discussed extensively by researchers in gender violence (Correa 1981; Oliveira 2022).

Of course, I could not only look at the victim and perpetrator without looking at how their relationship and the context in which the crime occurred were portrayed by the news. Through my first sweep of the data, another set of words that caught my eye from the start was the use of words relating to fighting and/or conflict between the couple. Ideas of dissonance seemed to be present in the reporting of feminicide, giving me a strong sense that a history of violence/conflict/threat seemed to be brought forward often in the reporting of gender violence. Finally, I wanted to leave room for exploring how mediatic discourse could be used to educate those reading about feminicide; I included any form of educational texts about feminicide,

the law and gender violence under this category – unfortunately, they did not meet the 5% threshold of mentions needed to be included in the chapter.

Weaving the threads between perpetrator, victim, and the context they were in allows us as readers to see how news reporting of feminicide brings forth narratives of how and why gender violence occurs. As discussed in chapters 1 and 2, this thesis is interested in exactly how feminicide narratives shape the understanding of the phenomena, and particularly how such narratives enforce ideas of gender and behaviour. Throughout the data analysis of cases named feminicide, I engaged with what lies behind the text and what are the expectations, norms and ideas that construct 'the crime of feminicide' in Brazil between 2019-2021.

Thread one: Perpetrator

When exploring the clusters and terms around the perpetrator, I was heavily influenced by previous discussions on gender violence. In her article discussing the dehumanisation of women in the media, Thurler highlights how a newspaper 'names the young woman — including a photograph — and safeguards the jealous, possessive and murderous ex-boyfriend.' (2017:483). I would ask the reader to reflect on whether the cost of recognition as a victim is premised upon exposure of her face, life, and the details of the violence she was subjected to. These are questions I have grappled with as I have looked over the thousands of names that make up my work. The perpetrator remains hidden, unnamed — the partner, husband, boyfriend. This is one of the examples given by the author to discuss the different ways in which media narratives impact the portrayal of perpetrators, which remain present even in this absence: their invisibility says much about the way in which the crime is being portrayed. When analysing the data, these ideas lay behind the questions I asked of it: what was shown and what was hidden? Was the perpetrator there? And if so, how was he portrayed?

I would like to examine a different way in which the narrative impacts the perpetrators. While Thurler considers the obscuring of the perpetrator as way to grant him impunity and dignity, I noted that in cases named feminicide, the perpetrator was present in the text in the majority of cases (see Table 7). However,

as I will discuss in the section, he was still being presented in a positive light to the reader. Manne extensively discusses a concept she names, firstly, 'androphilia' and later, 'himpathy' — what she calls the mirror image of misogyny, as it protects the agents of misogyny by making them into the subjects of compassion, sympathy and understanding (2018). In her 2016 op-ed in the Huffington Post, she suggests a broad understanding of such a concept:

> The term 'androphilia' as I'm using it is intended to encompass all of the ways we collectively ignore, deny, minimize, forgive, and forget the wrongdoing of men who conform to the norms of toxic masculinity, and behave in domineering ways towards their historical subordinates: women. (Manne, 2016)

Manne was referring to the case of Brock Turner, the Stanford student who raped a woman and whose case became an example of misogyny at work in both media coverage and the US judicial system. The sentence he got (six months in jail, plus three years of probation) prioritised his reputation over a redress to the victim. A female friend of Turner's submitted a document to the court:

> Turner's crime was 'completely different from a woman getting kidnapped as she is walking to her car in a parking lot.' 'That is a rapist' she wrote. 'I know for a fact that Brock is not one of these people.' (Manne, 2017:198)

Her words reveal an underlying truth about narratives of gender violence: perpetrators and victims are constructed in them. She is unable to see Turner as a perpetrator even as he is found to be one in a court of law, and that inability arises from how we conceive of perpetrators (and victims) in situations of gender violence. While Manne's work does not specifically address feminicide, her analysis of 'himpathy' gives us ideas about how perpetrators can be perceived in feminicide cases — he can be seen as 'not one of these people,' that is as someone whose crime is minimised because it is not the same as what we would expect.

My data tested these ideas. It is true that the absence of perpetrators' names is much higher than that of victims. Even in cases in which the victim is named, and

her aggressor is known, the media reporting will not necessarily name him — some of this stems from legal concerns: police investigation or presumption of innocence. Yet, it is not unfair to wonder why the victim should be rendered exposed while the perpetrator is only portrayed in relation to her, as Thurler (2017) does. The background of the perpetrator is intrinsically linked to the victim, as seen in the figures below – all the main characterisations of the perpetrator are linked to the circumstances surrounding the crime (see Table 7). Characterisations valorising the perpetrator, which are the ones highlighted by Manne, make up only 5% of the coded segments.

Nonetheless, himpathy was harder to pinpoint – the number of clusters valorising the perpetrator was low, and the other clusters, such as jealousy and refusal to accept the end of the relationship, are outright sympathetic. Thurler's characterisation of a 'murderous, possessive boyfriend' is not a flattering one – however, the data shows that himpathy can persist regardless by relying on ideas about what motivates the perpetrator to commit violence. This could be ideas of love, of emotion and of heartbreak, as we will see below.

Clusters (Perpetrator)	Number of cases (1637)
Cluster 1: End of relationship	413
Cluster 2: Jealousy	325
Cluster 3: Mistake, madness	213
Cluster 4: No regret	176
Cluster 5: Regret	127
Cluster 6: Criminal background (perpetrator)	94
Cluster 7: Valorising perpetrator	85
Not applicable	204

Table 7: Cases with codes related to the perpetrator.

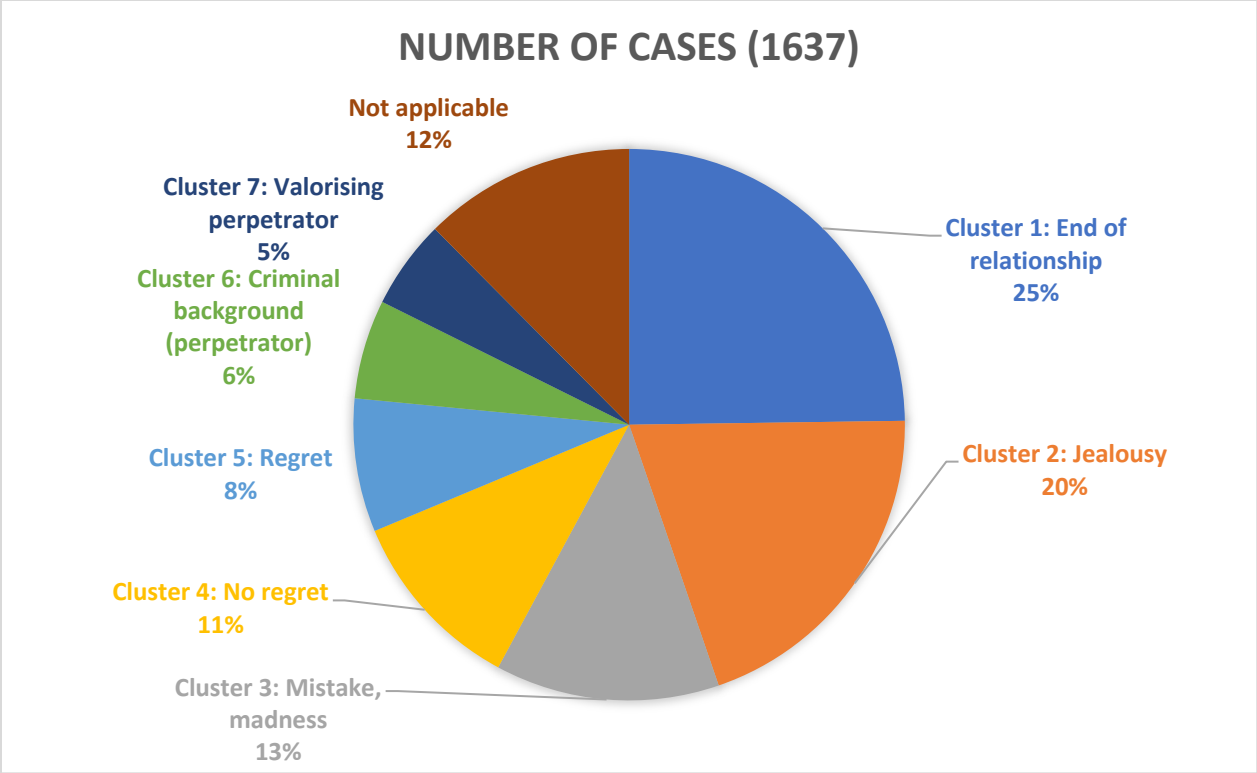


Figure 13. Percentage of each perpetrator code in relation to overall numbers.

I) Jealousy and its evils

[Ciúmes, ciumento, controlador, possessivo]

The picture of the jealous lover is evocative in the collective mind; in Brazil, many children study the novel *Dom Casmurro*[3] by running moot courts on whether Capitu betrayed her husband, Bentinho[4]. In a recent study, Pichon et al. discussed that jealousy is systematically linked to gender violence (2020). In the same cross-cultural systematic analysis, the authors highlight how jealousy relies on gender norms to sustain itself (ibid.). As they discuss:

3 Dom Casmurro is one of the greatest novels of Brazilian literature and an example of a realist novel. Written by Machado de Assis in 1899, the novel is a fictional memoir of a jealous lover.

4 I was lucky; my teacher, Davi, clearly found the idea contemptuous, so we were never subjected to this at my school.

> Additionally, and in line with global evidence (e.g., [108]), we found that unlike unfaithful men, unfaithful women faced severe stigma and discrimination. Hence, patriarchal, cultural expectations that women will be subservient and faithful to their partners gives men leverage over them, indicating that hegemonic femininities—which were threatened by accusations of infidelity—were missing from the explanations proposed by the authors of included quantitative studies (Mechanism B) [109]. (Pichon et al, 2020)

It is not surprising, then, that jealousy as a motive serves so well in the media narratives of feminicide. Some of the most commonly occurring words regarding the perpetrator and the motivation for the crime were those related to jealousy and controlling behaviour. Jealousy seems to make the crime understandable. However, this use of jealousy is detrimental if the labelling of feminicide as a particular legal category aims to shed light on the gendered aspects of this form of violence.

Jealousy belies the understanding of gender violence as a form of violent control over women's bodies. When jealousy becomes the focal point of a narrative of feminicide, it is understood as the perpetrator being overcome with feeling, emotion or 'not thinking straight' (as seen in section III below). Characterising the perpetrator as jealous gives the crime a logic, as seen below:

Na época do crime, uma prima da vítima disse que o homem era extremamente ciumento. Relatou ainda que a prima revelou sofrer agressões verbais e físicas de Aidilson.	*At the time of the crime, a cousin of the victim stated that the man was extremely jealous. She told us that the cousin had disclosed being verbally and physically abused by Aidilson.*
Ela afirma que Rute (foto em destaque) era uma pessoa calma e religiosa, porém, o marido tinha fama de ser muito ciumento	*She says that Rue (photo) was a calm and religious person, but her husband was famously very jealous.*
O delegado Hugo Alcântara disse ao Cidadeverde.com que familiares da jovem	*The police chief Hugo Alcântara told Cidadeverde.com that the family of the young*

relataram que o marido tinha muitos ciúmes dela. Ainda ontem, antes da morte, testemunhas contaram que viram os dois tendo uma briga motivada por ciúme.	*woman stated her husband was very jealous of her. Yesterday, before the killing, witnesses stated that they saw the couple having a fight due to jealousy.*
Rafaella e Edson viveram juntos por sete anos, mas, desde 2016, o matrimônio desandou. . O então marido era considerado agressivo e bastante ciumento, segundo a família dela.	*Rafaella and Edson lived together for seven years, but, since 2016, the marriage fell apart. The then-husband was considered to be aggressive and very jealous, according to her family.*
— Ele era muito ciumento. A casinha que eles moravam era muito pequenininha, trancada com cadeado — diz a mãe de Bruna. Teresinha diz que o namorado da filha se mostrava agressivo, ciumento e, em um determinado momento, já havia a ameaçado.	*'He was very jealous. The house they lived in was very tiny, with a lock in the latch.' says Bruna's mother. Teresinha states that her daughter's boyfriend had shown himself to be aggressive, jealous and had previously threatened her [the daughter].*

In these cases, it is possible to see that the idea of exacerbated jealousy is the driving force in the violence. In the one case in which violence is not mentioned explicitly, the idea of jealousy is contrasted with his wife's qualities of 'calm' and 'religious,' demonstrating that there was something excessive or troubling about the man's jealousy. The interplay between this jealousy and the physical and/or verbal aggressiveness displayed by the alleged perpetrator is clear in some of the examples, such as the excerpts referring to Aidilson and Edson as well as Bruna's husband. In all those cases, the idea of aggressiveness and excessive jealousy go hand in hand, as they are presented together and in juxtaposition.

This idea of excessiveness is also present in another iteration of 'ciúmes' — one when the sentence is constructed as a 'crisis' ('crise de ciúme'). As discussed by De Rycker and Mohd Don, the concept of crisis is linked to its perceived inevitability (2013: 5) and that crisis is socially shaped by the way it is talked about and portrayed (idem). In relation with feminicide and jealousy, the concept of crisis is interesting

because it highlights the possible inevitability of violence — the crisis of jealousy seems to represent a rupture in 'acceptable' behaviour by uncontrollable forces.

In this, the jealousy crisis is interestingly linked to the excessiveness discussed in the previous quotes as it demonstrates a suspension between acceptable forms of behaviour (e.g., reasonable jealousy) and unacceptable forms of behaviour (e.g., excessive jealousy and crises of jealousy).[5] This unacceptable form of behaviour seems to erupt from uncontrollable, excessive emotion, which echoes ideas around gender violence as stemming from feeling rather than forms of control and dominance. The efforts of scholars such as Russell (2011) and Kelly (2013 (1988)) in highlighting feminicide as an apex of violence is subsumed into a narrative that would be more suited to the old tale of a 'crime of passion.'

As seen below, a crisis of jealousy is directly linked to the feminicide — it is what causes the crime to happen, becoming the central motivation for the crime.

Bruno Simões dos Santos, 36, was accused of killing his girlfriend, Viviane Santos de Freitas, same age, by stabbing her in the neck during a crisis of jealousy in a party in São Vicente, on the seaside of São Paulo.	*Bruna Simões dos Santos, de 36 anos, é acusado de matar a namorada, Viviane Santos de Freitas, da mesma idade, com facadas no pescoço durante uma crise de ciúmes em uma festa em São Vicente, no litoral de São Paulo*

In the case above, the crisis of jealousy is the temporal space in which the crime happens. The crisis is a culmination, but also a rupture; it makes it easier to isolate the crime as being caused by uncontrollable forces. Manne discusses that violence, or the threat of violence, are often used as ways of dictating women's behaviour. In that sense, it is possible to consider violence and jealousy as feeding off each other — the perpetrator is jealous and uses the threat of violence to coerce the woman into more 'acceptable' behaviour. Once violence is enacted, the perpetrator then uses jealousy to justify this violence – this assumes that the perpetrator is overcome with

[5] This will also be present when I discuss the classification of crimes of passion and the use of the 'language of love' in the next chapter.

emotion and thus not 'thinking straight,' rather than enacting forms of violent control over their partner that stem from a social context of misogyny.

Similarly, in the case below, the crisis of jealousy created the 'fight' in which the feminicide occurred.[6] The use of the word 'fight' creates a sense of equality between the actions of the perpetrator and the victim, absconding responsibility from one to the other. As I will discuss when analysing discourse around the situation/setting, this type of 'equaliser' functions similarly to the idea of jealousy – turning the crime into a passionate dispute which resulted in death.

Ao ser interrogado, ele contou que tinha um relacionamento com a vítima há cerca de sete meses, mas que o relacionamento era conturbado em razão de ciúmes excessivo que sentiam um do outro. Explicou que nesta madrugada, após discutir com a companheira, pegou uma faca e foi até o quarto onde a mulher dormia com a filha e passou a lhe desferir golpes. A mulher foi esfaqueada diversas vezes pelo autor.

When interrogated by the police, he stated that he had a relationship with the victim for seven months, but that the relationship was troubled due to the excessive jealousy they felt for one another. He explained that over the course the night, after arguing with his partner, he grabbed a knife, went to the room where she slept with her daughter and began to attack her. The woman was stabbed several times by the perpetrator.

The case above is an example of how the jealousy of a partner can become an 'equaliser,' in which the narrative is being controlled by the perpetrator who states that the relationship was troubled (see section on context) because of the 'excessive jealousy they felt towards each other.' While it is impossible to state whether or not this is true, there is no dispute that the situation ended in feminicide. The victim is unable to refute the accusation that she was also jealous and thus responsible for the allegedly troubled character of the relationship.

Jealousy becomes central to the narrative — either in the voice of the perpetrator or in the media narrative.

6 For discussions on the use of the word 'briga' (fight), please refer to section 'Recurring words – context' in this chapter.

A 19-year-old woman, a stay-at-home mother in the neighborhood of Colorado, in Contagem, in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte, was killed with 25 stab wounds by her husband. The main suspicion is that the young woman was killed in a fight provoked by a crisis of jealousy.

Uma mulher de 19 anos, dona de casa no bairro Colorado, em Contagem, na região metropolitana de Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, foi morta com 25 facadas pelo marido. A principal suspeita é de que a jovem tenha sido morta durante uma briga provocada por uma crise de ciúmes.

The centrality of the crisis of jealousy can be seen in the case above. The excerpt shown is the beginning of the news article, which highlights the victim, where the crime happened, the mode of the crime and then the given reason for the crime. The narrative being constructed is one of a crisis of jealousy, and that is central to the set-up of the text. Nonetheless, the article continues:

A 19-year-old stay at home woman from the neighbourhood of Colorado, in Contagem (metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais) was killed by her husband with 25 stab wounds. The main suspicion is that the young woman was killed during a fight provoked by a crisis of jealousy.

The woman was brutally murdered in her living room, and the mattress that was there was completely covered in blood, which shows some of the violence in this crime. Married to the alleged suspect for five years, she leaves two sons, 1 and 3 years old.

Uma mulher de 19 anos, dona de casa no bairro Colorado, em Contagem, na região metropolitana de Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, foi morta com 25 facadas pelo marido. A principal suspeita é de que a jovem tenha sido morta durante uma briga provocada por uma crise de ciúmes.

A mulher foi brutalmente assassinada na sala de casa, e o colchão que estava lá ficou completamente ensanguentado, mostrando um pouco da violência do crime. Casada com o suposto assassino há cinco anos, ela deixou dois filhos, de 1 e 3 anos.

The article then highlights the violence of the crime and mentions how long the victim had been married to the perpetrator, as well as the fact that they had two children together. However, the article obscures the fact that the victim was 15 when she was married and had her first child at 16, and it does not mention the age of her

husband at all. The young age of the victim, the fact that she was married so young and that she had a child while being a teenager, raises questions about the potential unequal power dynamic in the relationship. It can also raise questions about the potential level of abuse and control that interceded the 'crisis of jealousy.' Yet, this gets subsumed under the narrative of jealousy in the news article. This occurs in more than one case in the dataset, as seen below:

A 16-year-old teenager was shot and killed by her boyfriend in the evening of Sunday, in morro dos Macacos, in the Northern part of Rio. Glicia Kely de jesus Almeida was shot in the forehead by Jeferson Silva de Carvalho, 31. He shot her due to jealousy, running away soon after the fact.

Uma adolescente de 16 anos foi morta a tiros pelo namorado, na tarde deste domingo, no Morro dos Macacos, na Zona Norte do Rio. Glicia Kely de Jesus Almeida foi alvo de um disparo dado na cabeça, na altura da testa por Jeferson Silva de Carvalho, 31. Ele teria atirado na namorada por ciúmes, fugindo do local logo em seguida.

In this situation, Glicia Key, 16, is killed by her boyfriend, who is 15 years older. This dynamic is not interrogated in the text; the age gap is instead glanced over as a given to focus on the cause of the violence, which is jealousy. Such focus leaves a lot to be desired from a feminicide point of view, as it allows for the normalisation of other dynamics of violence to be discounted and put out of sight. I'm not arguing that we can know what the relationship was like, though there is no surprise in the text about a teenager was dating an adult man with a big age gap. It does not elicit a response from the reporter and instead gets buried in the text and thus normalised for the reader. The centrality of discussions of jealousy in feminicides creates an interesting dynamic – even when the perpetrator is described as excessively jealous, feminicide gets constructed because of jealousy itself. The perpetrator is not directly absolved of responsibility as in the case of Brock Turner, but the media discourse still implies that there are 'reasons' for the crime which arise from an uncontrollable feeling. This narrative works in two normative ways: 1) it shifts the onus of responsibility away from the perpetrator and unto the victim; 2) it makes the violent reaction of jealousy 'normalised' rather than out of the norm. In the first case, the

construction of jealousy as a normal feeling further sustains ideas of possessiveness and entitlement over women. In the second, it creates the space for the violence emanating from jealousy to be perceived as a tragic conjunction of circumstances rather than part of a systemic pattern of gender violence.

What this discourse hides is the underlying misogyny that jealousy indicates. By referring to the reasons of murder to feelings of jealousy, the text grants space for a reading of feminicide that excludes misogyny. Jealousy, as a relatable feeling, it is perceived as less harmful than control and possessiveness. Furthermore, jealousy can be 'warranted', which then shift the responsibility to the victim for 'causing' jealousy in the first place. This makes one perceive feminicide as women dying due to jealousy, not due to misogyny. Abuse gets hidden under this feeling without any interrogation of the feeling itself.

A 54-year-old woman was stabbed to death by her husband due to jealousy. This happened on the last Friday (18) in the rural area of Unaí, Minas Gerais.	*Uma mulher de 54 anos foi morta pelo marido a golpes de faca por causa de ciúmes na última sexta-feira (18) na zona rural de Unaí, MG.*

The main line of enquiry shows that the woman was killed in Feira de Santana due to jealousy, states the police.	*Principal linha de investigação aponta que mulher foi morta em Feira de Santana por ciúmes, diz polícia.*

Jealousy is an end in itself — a neat 'motive' package — and this is not new in both media and police reporting. The recognition of jealousy as a motivator for gender violence, however, seems to reflect the effort of policies that have highlighted questions surrounding intimate partner violence in Brazil. From the 1980s campaign slogan 'Quem ama não mata,'[7] discussions around jealousy have been at the heart of activism and policymaking in Brazil. The recognition of this pattern of violence in the dataset showcase that both news sources and family/friends

7 'Those who love do not kill.'

of victims/perpetrators have given it value. Probably one of the most emblematic cases of feminicide in Brazil, the murder of Ângela Diniz in 1976 was one of the driving forces for support of the 'Quem ama não mata' campaign. She was killed with four shots in the face by her boyfriend, Doca Street — who was first exonerated of the crime, only to be retried and found guilty after the popular demonstrations.

In his first trial, Doca Street's lawyer argued that Ângela Diniz had attacked Street's honour by flirting with other men, and that he had retaliated, overcome by emotion. As discussed in chapter 2, Doca's crime was justified by his lawyer because it was seen as a reaction to unjust provocation: his feelings had boiled over because such passions had been excited by the alleged promiscuous woman that he murdered. While the figure of 'crimes against the honour' has fallen in disuse in Brazil, and it is not accepted as a defence for gender violence nowadays, the ideas that sustained it seem to still be present in media discourse. The idea of an overwhelming emotion of jealousy goes hand in hand with the entitlement that goes with the 'honour crimes' discourse. This is not solely due to jealousy, however. In the next section, we will examine another cluster of words that are directly linked to the feelings of the perpetrator: the refusal to accept the end of a relationship.

II) End of relationship

[inconformado, não se conformava, não aceitava, não queria aceitar]

Another reoccurring characterisation of the perpetrator was one of being unable to accept the end of the relationship, with over 400 cases coded within this cluster. The words here contained segments such 'inconformado' (unhappy with) or 'não se conformava' (not happy with) which were coded 82 times. Plus, 239 segments contained words such as 'não aceitava' (did not accept) or variants. Furthermore, there were 182 cases in which the words 'fim do relacionamento' (end of the relationship) or 'separação' (separation) appeared as the motivating factor for the perpetrator. These often appeared in conjunction with the previously mentioned

segments of unhappiness and unacceptance. Or they appeared as a motivating factor within the text e.g. 'ela já havia tentado se separar diversas vezes antes, mas ele não queria' (she had tried to separate from him several times before, but he did not want to).

As discussed in the case of 'jealousy', the coding of 'end of relationship' often signalled the motive of the perpetrator. As seen below, the strtucre of the sentences is similar to the ones I examined when looking qat the previous cluster of 'jealousy'. The end of the relationship serves as the reason for the feminicide, being the cataclyst for the murderous actions of the perpetrator.

As testemunhas contaram que, neste momento, eles discutiram novamente e Iolanda reafirmou que não queria reatar o casamento. Inconformado, Rodrigo atacou Iolanda, diante das crianças, dando mais de 30 facadas na ex-mulher.	*Witnesses say that, in that moment, they argued again and Iolanda reiterated that she did not want to get back together. Unhappy with her answer, Rodrigo attacked Iolanda in front of her children, and stabbed her over 30 times.*
Ele disse em depoimento que não se conformava com o fim do relacionamento de 22 anos com a ex-mulher.	*He testified to say that he was unhappy with the end of the 22-year relationship with his ex-wife.*
Inconformado com o fim do relacionamento, um homem atirou contra a cabeça da ex-companheira e tentou suicídio, na tarde dessa terça-feira (22), no município de Viçosa, Zona Mata de Alagoas.	*Unhappy with the end of the relationship, a man shot his ex-partner in the head and attempted suicide in the afternoon of Tuesday (22nd), in the city of Viçosa, in the Zona Mata of Alagoas.*
O crime aconteceu por volta das 5h40 de quinta-feira. Segundo o portal Diário do	*The crime occurred around 5h40 of Thursday. According to the news portal Diário do Vale, Elias Paulo Ferreira, 37,*

Vale, Elias Paulo Ferreira, de 37 anos, não se conformava com o fim do relacionamento.

was unhappy with the end of their relationship.

The most interesting aspect of the use of 'inconformado' and 'não se conformava' is that the perpetrator's motivation is ascribed to him by the reporting, without necessarily drawing from the voice of the perpetrator himself (except for in excerpt 2). This language 'sees into' the mind of the perpetrator, likely arising from sources such as the police and/or friends and family of victims. How it is known that the perpetrator feels like this is not explained, and a random sampling of the cases in which those words appeared does not include whether previous acts of violence were attempted. Another iteration of this is the phrase 'não aceitava,' as seen below:

Uma mulher de 31 anos, identificada como Vanessa Gonçalves Santana da Costa, foi morta com quatro tiros na cabeça na noite deste domingo (20), no bairro CPA IV, em Cuiabá-MT. O suspeito do crime é o ex-marido dela, que não aceitava o término do relacionamento entre ambos.

A 31-year-old woman, identified as Vanessa Gonçalves Santana da Costa, was killed with four shots to the head on Sunday night (20th), in the neighbourhood of CPA IV, in Cuiabá (Mato Grosso). The suspect is her ex-husband, who did not accept the end of their relationship.

Shirley, segundo apurações da Polícia Civil do Distrito Federal (PCDF), havia se separado de Rafael há quatro meses, e tentava recomeçar a vida. O autor do crime não aceitava o fim do relacionamento. A vítima teria sido atacada pelas costas, com pelo menos três facadas. Em seguida, Rafael fugiu do local e seguiu para a casa dos pais, em Samambaia, onde morava desde a separação de Shirley.

Shirley, according to the Polícia Civil of Distrito Federal (PCDF), has split from Rafael four months ago and was trying to begin her life again. The perpetrator did not accept the end of the relationship. The victim was reportedly attacked from behind, with at least three stab wounds. Afterwards, Rafael fled the scene and went to his parents' house, in Samambaia, where he resided since the split.

Marlize Rios da Silva Souza, de 36 anos, foi morta a facadas pelo ex-marido, Agnaldo de Souza, 50, em Jandira. O crime aconteceu porque o homem não aceitava a separação, que aconteceu cerca de 15 dias antes. A mulher foi morta na casa onde morava com os dois filhos, de 3 e 15 anos.

Marlize Rios da Silva Souza, 36, was killed by her ex-husband, Agnaldo de Souza, 50, in Jandira. The crime happened because the man did not accept their separation, which had happened 15 days before. The woman was killed in the house she inhabited with her children, 3 and 15 years old.

This perception of refusal to accept the end of the relationship as a motivator for violence follows the discussion raised in the previous section. There is recognition from external actors (police and friends/family) that the motivation lies within the realm of the spurned/rejected lover, much like it is in the case of the jealous lover. Those narratives, therefore, have much in common, ascribing meaning to the violence and locating them for the reader. Instead of senseless or baseless violence, the reader is faced with violence motivated by something (e.g., jealousy, refusal to accept the end of the relationship). Underlying both these sentiments is the entitlement discussed by Manne: women's bodies and feelings should be available to men who desire them (2018). The reaction to a withdrawal or an unavailability of women's affections is one of violence—and this violence, even if exaggerated or disproportional, relies on feelings that are 'understandable' to the public.

But while both those narratives rest on misogyny to be maintained, that leap is not made by the news coverage. In the previous section, I highlighted how jealousy is often perceived differently in men and women, and how perceived or real infidelity by women is perceived more negatively according to studies. Both jealousy and refusal to accept the end of a relationship reveal a degree of entitlement over women, their affection, love and bodies – and this, as Manne sustains, underlies misogyny (2018: 301).

New studies on men's mental health show that the end of a relationship is often perceived to be injurious to men or to be an attack on their masculinity or social status (Oliffe et al., 2022; Hartman, 2021). Historically, studies have shown that

gender violence victims are particularly at-risk when they are trying to leave their abusive partners or spouses (Fleury, Sullivan, Bybee, 2000; Downey, Feldman, Ayuk, 2005; Anderson, 2019). In conjunction, these data shows that men are more lilely to have negative and violence reactions to a woman leaving the relationship. However, the narrative of refusal to accept the end of the relationship does not engage with that danger, or with the reasons why men might struggle with the end of a relationship. Instead, media narratives only provide the 'reasoning' of the perpetrator without engaging with the way it rests on misogynistic assumptions and perceptions of women and relationships. It makes the violence justified rather than senseless, regardless of whether that 'justification' relies on patriarchal beliefs about women.

The opposition between 'justified' and 'senseless' violence echoes Manne's discussion of himpathy as it locates feminicide (alongside other forms of GBV). When discussing rapists, Manne states:

> We assure ourselves that real rapists will appear on our radars either as devils, decked out with horns and pitchforks, or else as monsters—that is, as creepy and ghoulish creatures. Monsters are unintelligible, uncanny and they are outwardly frightening. (Manne, 2017: 199)

Baseless violence is committed by monsters, or by individuals moved by unknowable forces. Whereas jealousy or not accepting the end of a relationship is understandable; these feelings are somehow universal and make violence intelligible. This is an understandable effort on the part of a narrative; they exist to organise events and give them sense and meaning. However, as discussed in the previous section, there is an obfuscation when the feelings of the perpetrator are centred in narratives of feminicide. Without making explicit how such feelings emanate from misogyny and sexism, the narrative risks creating an identification with the perpetrator of gender violence. By feeding into ideas of normativity that make women's bodies and affections available to men, such identification can create problems as it increases the chance of victim-blaming and correlates to diminished empathy with the victim.

III) Mistake and madness

[besteira, loucura, fora de si, não pensou, erro]

The use of the term ‘besteira,’ or ‘erro,’ shows up as reflection — that is, while jealousy is framed as the state of mind of the perpetrator upon committing the crime, this word shows how the perpetrator might perceive his own crime and relay it to others. In many of the cases in which words from this cluster appear, they are attributed to being said by the perpetratror after the violence was enacted. This is particularly true with the use of the word ‘besteira’ as seen below:

Antes de fugir, Ismael ainda esteve no endereço, disse que tinha acabado de ‘fazer uma besteira’ e em seguida fugiu.	*Before fleeing, Ismael came by their address, said he had just ‘done something stupid’ and then fled.*

‘A mãe de Gislane me ligou e disse que o cunhado dele falou para ela: ‘Sua filha está morta. André me ligou do número dela e disse que havia feito uma besteira’’, acrescenta.	*‘Gislane’s mother called me and said her brother-in-law told her: ‘Your daughter is dead. André called me from her number and said he had done something stupid.’’*

In these two cases, the perpetrator contacts the victim’s family to inform them of his crime, stating that he ‘he did something stupid,’ i.e., killed (in these cases respectively) his aunt and girlfriend. It is interesting that the perpetrator both takes responsibility for his crime and simultaneously obscures it — there is no mention of what that ‘something stupid’ is. The word ‘besteira’ also carries within itself a degree of regret, in which the murder is conceived of as a mistake. Such a mistake

is in line with the idea that the crime is committed in an exceptional moment – similar to the already discussed 'crisis of jealousy.'

This idea of the crime as a mistake that happened during a moment removed from reality is sometimes developed even further, as seen below:

'Fiz uma besteira', disse suspeito a vizinha (...) 'Aí eu fui lá, encontrei com ele no corredor, aí ele ajoelhou no chão e falou:'Fiz uma besteira. Pelo o amor de Deus, fiz uma besteira'. Daí eu falei: 'melhor chamar a polícia.' E aí eu liguei', relata [a vizinha].

'I did something stupid', said the suspect to his neighbour (...) 'I went there, met him in the corridor and he knelt on the floor and said: 'I did something stupid. For the love of God, I did something stupid'. Then I said:''better to call the police'. And then I called,' states [the neighbour].

Here, the neighbour of the perpetrator narrates the aftermath of the crime: they arrive, and the perpetrator kneels, invokes the name of god and repeats that they did something stupid. This picture elicits in itself a call for sympathy: a kneeling man calling for god and regretting a mistake. I will examine this further below, when I look at the role of contrition and regret in the portrayal of the perpetrator. But in this interaction, something else is at play: replying to the perpetrator, the neighbour states they should call the police. In this interaction, the crime remains subtextual. Both perpetrator and neighbour know what 'something stupid' stands for, and tellingly, so does the reader. The reporting pulls the reader into acknowledging that 'something stupid' describes the act of violence — in Portuguese, the word 'besteira' can also mean something silly or foolish, which could also be used to describe a prank or joke. Yet, here, it is being used to refer to violence and death.

The existence of this emotional space that makes it possible for these ideas to exist reveals something else. It both disqualifies the murder and justifies it by making it into a temporary lapse in judgment brought on by excessive feeling. While this does not exempt the perpetrator, often being portrayed as responsible, the use of a word such as this to signify the crime itself remove some of its importance. This also showcases how emotion can make a man 'lose his senses' when motivated by

his feelings for a woman. Somehow, then, women become complicit in their own deaths.

If thought of within the frames I have already discussed, portraying the crime as a 'mistake,' 'folly,' or even more intangibly as 'something stupid' contributes to the portrayal of the crime itself as a mistake brought on by ordinary feelings and thoughts. The intention is diminished, and the perpetrator is considered to have erred without thinking through his actions, perhaps due to emotions. The elements of feminicide that highlight the continuum of gender violence (Kelly, 1988) are lost.

IV) Arrependido/ não arrependido

[arrependido, chorou, se arrependeu, não arrependido, frio, premeditado, calmo]

Another node that can be seen in the cases of feminicide is the use of the word 'arrependido' and 'não arrependido' to signal the regret (or absence of regret) of the perpetrator. The question of regret also plays a role in creating the image of the perpetrator, strengthening the opposition between baseless violence and intelligible violence. Nonetheless, the characterisation of 'arrependido' is much more prevalent than the 'não arrependido'z in crimes considered feminicides.

Following from the image of the jealous and spurned lover, the remorseful perpetrator follows the idea of the overwhelming feeling that permeates narratives of gender violence. Like the crisis of jealousy, the crime and its violence are then located in a suspended time period, one in which the perpetrator momentarily lost sense and reason. As seen below:

O delegado Mario Santiago disse que, em depoimento, o suspeito se mostrou arrependido e contou que o crime teria sido motivado por uma suposta traição.	*The police chief Mario Santiago said that, while testifying, the suspect was regretful and stated the crime was apparently motivated by alleged cheating.*

The police officer tells the newspaper that the perpetrator regrets his actions, and the crime seems to have been committed because of alleged cheating. While there

is no outward sympathy for the perpetrator, the underlying story being told is that he was upset because of his partner's betrayal, enacted violence because of that feeling, and ultimately regretted it because he loved his partner. The idea of 'love' is particularly strong in this cluster, and the whole aspect of regret is fuelled by feeling which permeates the entire sentence, even if not explicitly. See the case below:

Em depoimento, Wagner mostrou-se arrependido do ato, porém, justificou que teria sido 'muito magoado' por Claudia. O homem revelou ainda que, enquanto casados, a jovem dizia que queria se prostituir, além de deixar dívidas que ele e o pai tiveram de arcar.	*While testifying, Walter showed regret, but justified his actions saying he had been 'very hurt' by Claudia. The man stated that, while married, the woman told him she wanted to engage in sex work, and also left debts that he and his father had to cover.*

In this case, Walter reiterates the ways that he has been injured by his partner. There are two situations that get told to the reader, one that posits the victim as a potential sex worker, and the other which states that she left him debts. Both of these actions seem to sustain the assumption is that Walter loved her enough to withstand this 'offensive' behaviour until he could not cope anymore. There is something almost pathetic about Walter in his statement, which switches his position from perpetrator to victim.

Other news clippings are less subtle in highlighting feeling, as seen below:

Após atirar contra a própria mulher e perceber que ela estava morta, o policial militar começou a chorar e a gritar dizendo que estava arrependido.	*After shooting against his own wife, and realising she was dead, the police officer started to cry and scream, saying that he was sorry.*

In the first article, the perpetrator is shown to have an outward expression of regret and feeling — he cries and screams, and his regret makes the news. The article continues to state that the perpetrator called an ambulance to try and save his wife,

but when the ambulance arrived, she was already dead. There is no mention of their relationship or any qualifiers of the perpetrator, only the statement highlighting he was regretful and that he tried to save her.

O homem teria confessado o crime e afirmou que está arrependido e matou Maria Luiza por paixão.	*The man confessed the crime, stated that he regrets it and that he killed Maria Luiza out of love.*

In the second article, the perpetrator also has his voice highlighted. Not only does it state he is regretful, but it also centres his feelings by saying he killed Maria Luiza because he loved her. Unlike the previous article, this one also gives the victim some voice, with the police officer stating that she had ended the relationship but the perpetrator would not accept it, leading her to request a restraining order. However, the same officer continues to say, 'she informed us she had never been physically assaulted and he was not a violent person, but that she wanted to go no-contact'.

It's possible to see how this narrative, while leaving space for the victim to 'speak', still maintains a narrative of excessive feeling. The perpetrator, while killing his ex-partner with seven stab wounds, is not really a violent person but was instead so in love with her that he could not accept the relationship was over. Once he killed her, he regretted his actions, which further emphasises that this was not his 'normal' behaviour. A similar case is seen below, where the perpetrator speaks:

'Eu vi minha filha pequeninha e eu não queria brigar. Ela começou a discussão comigo. Eu parei de beber, dei dinheiro pra ela 'fazer o cabelo' dela e dormi no chão para não brigar. Acordei com ela me chutando, pedindo a chave e eu disse que não estava com chave. Eu amava ela e estou muito arrependido. Eu quero pedir perdão para a mãe dela e os familiares. Eu sei que	*'I saw my little daughter and I did not want to fight. She [the wife] started arguing with me. I stopped drinking, gave her money to go 'get her hair done' and slept on the floor so we would not fight. I woke up with her kicking me, asking for the key and I said I did not have the key. I loved her and I'm really sorry. I want to ask for forgiveness to her mother and family. I know I made a*

errei, e que não deveria ter feito aquilo', disse o suspeito.

mistake and should not have done it.' said the suspect.

In this case, the perpetrator states that he did not want to fight — that he did everything to avoid fighting, but he was physically assaulted by his partner and, presumably, lost control when that happened. He moves on to state that he loved her and regrets his actions, and that he knows he made a mistake and should not have done it. The narrative is further emphasised by the statement given by the police about the same case, which says:

''Ele é réu confesso. Falou em depoimento que teria ingerido bebida alcoólica por 24 horas, estava embriagado. Chegou em casa, a vítima teria discutido com ele pelo fato dele estar bebendo. Ele decidiu dormir fora de casa e acordou com ela novamente brigando com ele. Em função de uma chave que ela cobrava, ele perdeu a cabeça e desferiu vários golpes contra a esposa', contou [o policial].

'The suspect confessed. He testified that he had drunk for over 24 hours, was drunk. He arrived home, the victim would have argued with him because he was drinking. He decided to sleep outside of the house, and he woke up with her arguing with him again. Due to a key that she wanted, he lost his mind and attacked his wife' he [the police officer] stated.

The victim[1] has no say in the narrative, and the statement by the perpetrator remains unchallenged in the text. Opposing the feelings narrative, the unrepentant killer is seen in the cases below:

Mais um crime bárbaro de feminicídio foi registrado em Arraial do Cabo. Um homem, que estava inconformado com o processo de separação, matou a facadas a esposa, dentro de casa, na frente de uma das filhas, adolescente. Ele foi preso em flagrante e, em

'Another barbaric feminicide was registered in Arraial do Cabo. A man, who was unhappy with the separation, killed his wife in her home in front of one of her daughters (a teenager). He was arrested and, while talking to the police, confessed his crime. He did not

[1] This case is also analysed in sections 'Recurring words - victim' and 'Recurring words - context'.

conversa com nossos policiais civis aqui na delegacia de Arraial do Cabo confessou o crime. Em nenhum momento ele demonstrou arrependimento. Pelo contrário, permaneceu tranquilo e frio durante todo o tempo', relatou a delegada de Arraial do Cabo, Patrícia Aguiar.

show any regret at any time — on the contrary, he remained calm and cold all the time.' Stated the police chief of Arraial do Cabo, Patrícia Aguiar.

De acordo com o delegado Laércio de Carvalho, da 35ª DP (Sobradinho II), responsável pelo caso, o assassino confesso não demonstrou arrependimento. 'A gente imagina que os primeiros golpes de faca ele tenha desferido com a vítima ainda dormindo. A filha deles estava no quarto no momento, então pode não ter havido discussão entre o casal antes', destacou, à época. A suspeita dos investigadores é de que o feminicídio tenha sido premeditado.

According to the police chief Laércio de Carvalho, of the 35ª DP (Sobradinho II), who is responsible for the case, the confessed murdered showed no regret. 'We think that the first stab wound he inflicted while the victim was still asleep. Their daughter was in the room at the time, so there might not even have been a discussion before the crime', he highlighted. The investigators suspect that the feminicide was premeditated.

The perpetrator here is very different from the one overwhelmed by feeling. As one can see in the first excerpt, the perpetrator is 'cold', and in the second case, the police suspect the crime was premeditated. This is in sharp contrast with the previous characterisation of the perpetrator, in which the crime is committed in the heat of the moment without premeditation. These antagonistic images mirror Manne's (2018) discussion of the real versus imagined perpetrator — in which the cold, unfeeling monster, while much rarer, seems to exemplify the terror of violence. Simultaneously, the more common type of violence gets subsumed under narratives that make the crime, if not reasonable, at least intelligible as the result of uncontrollable and uncommon forces.

In this section, I aimed to showcase the ways in which the perpetrator of a crime gets portrayed in cases labelled as feminicides. The narratives all seem to elicit

certain types of responses, as I have seen above — an excessive amount of feeling, a location in a temporal lapse in which reason is lost, subsequent regret, and the ways in which love turns violence. Another commonality between all these points is that they locate the crime as 'uncommon'; the perpetrator is overtaken by a feeling that escapes his normal reality and compulsions, and this break results in violence. In several cases, these feelings are framed as precipitated by women's actions or behaviours – e.g. the end of a relationship or perceived infidelity. The words on the perpetrator seem to highlight that he is 'reactive' rather than 'active'. In doing so, the texts portray the perpetrator's actions within an idea of passion and feeling, which echo old legal framings for gender violence (see Eluf, 2007).

The perpetrator, however, is only one of the two main actors involved in feminicide. As I discussed at the start of this section, the victim is often portrayed front and centre in media narratives of feminicide (Thurler, 2017). In the next section, I will examine the portrayal of the victims and begin to establish some dialogue between the portrayal of victims and perpetrators in news pieces on feminicide.

Thread two: the victim

While the perpetrator is shown in the text mostly in relation to the crime itself, the victim transcends it. Her presence is ubiquitous in the text; it permeates everything, from the title of the page to the photographs that illustrate news reports. This can be seen even in my methodology — when researching the cases with the web scraper, my parameters were adjusted like so: 'woman killed', 'woman murdered'. Most titles centre such language, the image of the dead woman becoming essential to the understanding of feminicide, which should not be a surprise, considering what this violence entails. However, the centrality of women's bodies and their deaths in the reporting does not necessarily equal the centrality of women's experiences or narratives. A body does not necessarily tell the story of a woman's life. Even the formulation 'mulher é morta,' so crucial for finding the cases of feminicide across Brazil, is in itself very passive. The central communication is that the woman is killed, becoming the subject of the phrase only insofar as needed to

obscure why she died. That is, she is a receptacle of violence, and the violence seems to emerge.

In this section, I wanted to focus on the portrayal of victims, while taking into account that this portrayal is also more common than the portrayal of perpetrators, as discussed in the previous section. When analysing the portrayal of the victims in cases of feminicide, I was particularly interested in the interplay between passivity/activity and how the victim was portrayed both in text and by witnesses and interviewees. During the coding process, I wanted to see if and how she was portrayed or spoken about as a 'person', not merely how her body and death were described in the text.

An interesting aspect of the portrayal of victims is that the text itself seemed to reveal very little about her outside the murder itself. While reports on feminicide tend to include mentions of the perpetrator insofar as they might affect the crime (e.g. jealousy, refusal to accept the end of the relationship., etc.), mentions of the victim as her own subject are rarer. Most occur when testimonies of friends and/or family are included in the reporting. One of the most interesting findings was that victim-blaming, which is arguably one of the most common findings in discussions of gender violence (particularly sexual violence), was very uncommon as it comprised only around 1% of cases. In the vast majority of the cases, victims were described positively, which will be a point of comparison for victims of crimes not named feminicide in the following chapters. As previously discussed, the framing of situations of violence can reiterate or 'downgrade' the grievability of the victim, which in turn impacts directly on her status as a victim herself.

In her analysis of victimhood in the US from the 1980s to the 2000s, Alyson Cole considers that victim status has become 'tainted'. It considers that the use of 'victim' yields discursive and political power, granting the 'victim' status socially. Alongside the idea that emphasising victimhood is detrimental to values such as self-reliance and hard work, the 'victim' becomes unsympathetic. However, in feminicide, there are no language alternatives such as 'survivor' – in order to be a victim of feminicide, one needs to be a victim. Therefore, Cole's discussion on negative associations with the status of 'victimhood' becomes even more salient:

these women need to be good victims. As I will discuss, they will be portrayed both as unable to stop the violence (and therefore not victimising themselves) and fighting to survive (either the violence or by being self-sufficient subjects in other areas of their lives).

In the case of feminicide, the portrayal of the victim as 'good' seemed to directly correlate with the crime being named as feminicide. As I will examine in Chapters V and IV, other victims do not have the positive clusters found in the case of victims of 'feminicide'. As seen in Table 3, the clusters that valorise the victim are very prevalent and more obvious than those displaying 'himpathy'. In a way, this validation of the victim's life, character, and achievements seems to reflect a need to emphasise grievability or highlight that these victims are good victims and deserve the title given to them.

The 'ideal' victim of feminicide as I will showcase, is woman who is or was on a heterosexual and heteronormative relationship with a man. She is a 'good' woman who is portrayed as driven and independent, but also family-oriented, a good mother/sister/daughter. These contradictions on the 'ideal' victim showcase how hard it is to inhabit this space of victimhood, and how norm-enforcing operates in the classification of women as victims of feminicide.

Clusters (Victim)	Number of cases (1,347)
Cluster 1: Dreams and plans	160
Cluster 2: Beautiful soul	148
Cluster 3: Fighter	133
Cluster 4: Family-oriented	107
Cluster 5: Beautiful	93
Cluster 6: Pregnant	92
Cluster 7: Victim-blaming	17
Not applicable	594

Table 8. Number of cases coded in the victim category.

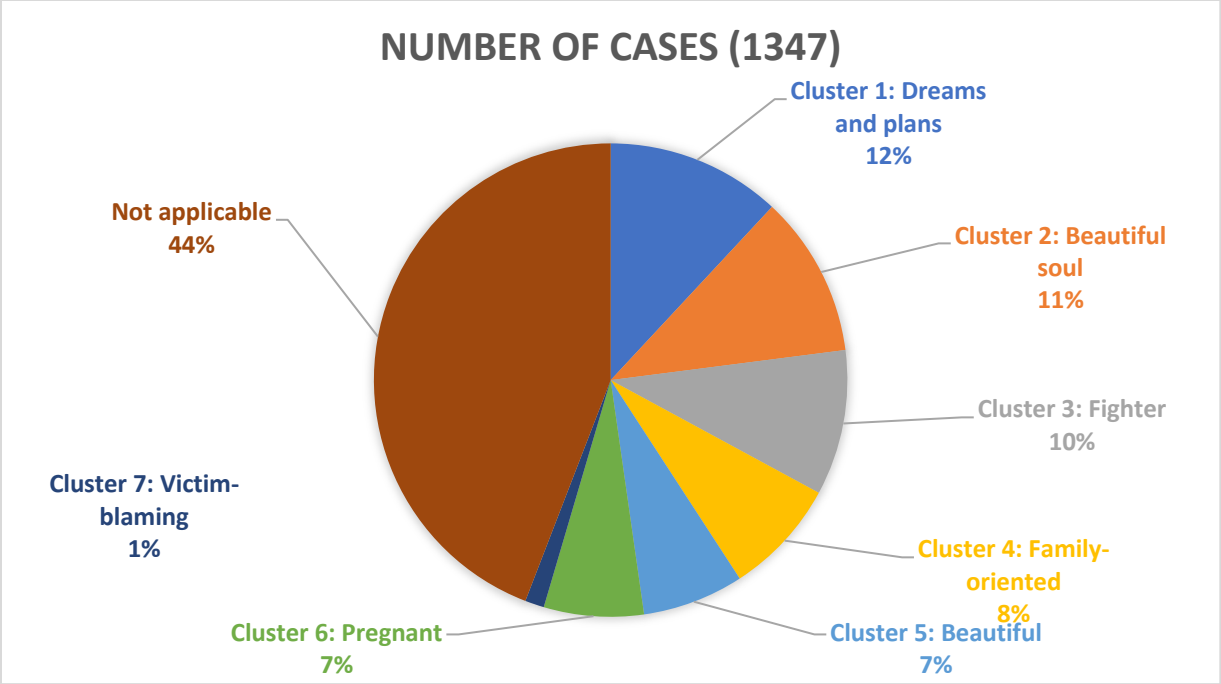


Figure 14. Percentage of each victim code in relation to overall numbers

I) 'Full of dreams'

[sonhos, projetos cheia de sonhos]

One of the commonly occurring clusters of words regarding the victim has to do with dreams and projects that the victim might have had for the future. Such formulations seem to obviously elicit sympathy towards the victim by showcasing her life as one that was cut short. This seems to be particularly true if the victim was young, but it is notsolely applied in those cases.

Vitória morava com os avós em Campos Elíseos e havia começado seu primeiro emprego formal, há um mês, como atendente de uma loja. Ela também vendia doces pela

Vitória lived with her grandparents in Campos Eliseos and had started her first formal job as a shop assistant just a month before. She also sold baked goods online to pay

internet para pagar a escola, pois pretendia concluir os estudos e sonhava passar no vestibular de Medicina.

for her studies, since she hoped to pursue a degree in medicine upon leaving school.

In this case, Vitória's youth and potential is central to her image. She had started her first job less than a month before and was also selling homemade goods online to pay for her school. Her dream to go to medical school is another mark of her virtuous self — she is hardworking, dedicated, and has plans. The reader recognises her qualities because they are generally desirable and because they speak of forms of docility. There is respectability in Vitória's behaviour and ambitions. This recognition of desirable behaviour as a validation of the victim is not restricted to Vitória's case, as seen below:

De acordo com a família, Erica era uma pessoa alegre, protetora dos filhos, amava estudar e sonhava em passar no concurso da Polícia Federal.

According to her family, Erica was a joyful person, protective of her children, who loved to study and dreamt of joining the Federal Police.

Erica's case is quite like Vitória's, despite their different ages and family situations — she is also portrayed as studious and with dreams for the future (passing the exam for the Federal Police force). Her love of studying and her dreams are in dialogue with other desirable characteristics, such as being 'joyful' and even a clear case of gendered expectation in which she is said to be 'protective of her children'. If Vitória seems to embody the ideal teenager, Erica is a responsible mother and young woman whose love for her children is emphasised by the reporting even before her own dreams. In a sense, they represent two facets of desirable womanhood, which fulfils responsibilities and has valuable, respectable goals.

II) ‘She was a fighter’

[batalhadora, lutadora, guerreira]

Another recurrent cluster of words linked to the victim in the dataset is the one that includes words such as lutadora, batalhadora and guerreira (all synonyms for fighter), as well as verbs representing the same nouns such as ‘lute’, ‘batalhou’ (synonyms for ‘fighting’) etc. Unlike the previous cluster, this one is almost exclusively composed of descriptions given by family, friends and through social media testimonials featured in the news reporting. This cluster also includes some mentions of women’s rights and gender violence made by friends/family of the victims, such as shown below:

Ana Paula Neves, 45 anos, jornalista e radialista da Rádio Federal, conta que Evelyne era uma mulher guerreira. ‘Ela sempre lutou muito e era cheia de projetos e planos. Para mim, Evelyne sempre será essa pessoa cheia de vida. Ela lutava, inclusive, pelos direitos das mulheres nos nossos programas’, lembra.	*Ana Paula Neves, 45 years old, journalist and radio presenter at Rádio Federal tells us that Evelyne was a fighter. ‘She always worked hard and was full of projects and plans. Evelyne will always be, to me, this person that was full of life. By the way, she also fought for women’s rights in our reporting’, she remembers.*

‘Uma mulher de 27 anos [Kauana], mãe de dois filhos, uma guerreira. Ela sempre lutou pela sua independência. Até quando vamos ver nossas mulheres sendo brutalmente violentadas?’, questionou Maria.	*‘A 27-year-old woman [Kauana], mother of two, a fighter. She always fought for her independence. Until when we will see our women being brutally hurt?, questioned Maria.*

In these two instances, the victim is seen as linked to broader struggles of gender. Evelyne was a radio presenter whose colleague remembers her as fighting for women’s rights, while Kauana’s fight for independence is immediately followed by

a criticism of the levels of gender violence. In doing this, the victims reclaim a degree of agency by becoming themselves champions of womanhood. This reclaiming of agency seems to be twofold in the cases of this cluster. First, they recognize the value of their lives. They are portrayed as woman that were full of action and that would not be defeated. In some ways, this echoes the portrayal of women who are full of dreams and projects because it recognises that they contributed to the lives of those around them and that they were 'do-ers.'

However, there is also a flip side to this reclaiming. By emphasising their characteristics as fighters, they can be seen to be opposing or disqualifying from the idea of 'victim'. As mentioned earlier, considering how the idea of 'victim' has been considered as disempowering or even morally wrong, this characterisation of the victim as a fighter can be seen as seeking to rectify that. It says to the reader that this is a good victim, one that deserves this status. However, being a fighter only serves women when they are dead—she needs to both be fragile enough to not be perceived as a 'willing' victim, whilst simultaneously having actively fought their victimsation.

A clearer example of this can be seen in the case below:

O motorista se refere à vítima, terceira dos cinco filhos, como uma menina 'guerreira', que, defende ele, teria 'lutado para não morrer' em caso de estrangulamento - causa de morte preliminarmente apontada pela Polícia Civil. O fato de não haver sequer um arranhão, garante o pai, em toda extensão do corpo franzino da jovem, pode ser um indicativo de que ela 'foi dopada'. A reportagem procurou o DPT para questionar o laudo preliminar, mas ainda não obteve retorno.

The driver refers to the victim, the third of his children, as a 'fighter', that, he stated, would have 'fought not to die' if she was strangled — which so far has been determined to be cause of death according to the Civil Police. The fact that there was no scratch in the whole thin body of the young woman, says her father, indicated that she 'was drugged'. The reporting has tried to ask about the preliminary results, but has received no answers yet from the DPT

The father of the victim considers that the victim fought not to die, and that the reason no marks could be found on her small body could indicate that she was drugged. This determination of the father seems to reveal an underlying anxiety. It seems to echo Fernandes' findings on truth commission narratives, which considered that 'the good victim was one who was innocent, helpless and incapacitated, with whom audiences could emphasise' (2017:23). Such a caveat on victimhood also seems to be in line with Cole's findings that victimhood is not always a respected position to be in — that victimhood becomes undesirable as it is portrayed to reveal a moral flaw (2007). Cole states that anti-victim sentiment, including among anti-victim feminists (which she names as AVFers), has created an idea that victims 'seek power in an identity of powerlessness' (Wolf in Cole 2007:50). As stated, Cole shows a concern over victims yielding power by having a victim status. Cole's findings also reveal a moral concern over the victim identity, the idea of a person being a 'victimiser' – one that indulges in self-pity and is unable to claim responsibility for their own lives (Cole 2007:21). Therefore, the insistence in naming victims of feminicide as fighters could be seen as seeking to redress this moral flaw and to recognise them as *real* victims.

Such articulation of victimhood, however, can be wielded dually — for example, the idea of the fighter does not need to be reduced to the moment of death but may serve to raise the standard of the woman as a whole, shown in the cases below:

Conforme explicou Marilene, Francisca e Queiroz eram casadas há 32 anos e tiveram dois filhos. 'Ela era uma mãe guerreira, que fazia crochê para pagar a faculdade da filha. Uma pessoa íntegra/'	*Marilene explains that Francisca and Queiroz were married for 32 years and had two children. 'She was mother who was a fighter, she made crochet to pay for her daughter's university. She had integrity.'*

'Foram sete anos que trabalhamos juntas. Nesse tempo, vi uma mulher batalhadora, honesta, íntegra e de família. Tudo na vida dela era o esposo e as filhas. Quando conversávamos da relação dela, a Adriana o elogiava, dizia que era feliz com ele', comentou.

'We worked seven years together. In that time, I saw a woman who was a fighter, who was honest, had integrity and focused on her family. Everything in her life were he husband and children. When we talked about her relationship, Adriana paid him compliments, said she was happy with him'', her friend stated.

These statements are undoubtedly coming from people who are interested in valorising the victim, and the choices made in this process reveal underlying expectations about women. In both cases, the women are portrayed as grievable victims due to generally good attributes such as integrity as well as their dedication to their families and their role as wives and mothers. This form of valuation both answers to some of the concerns of the anti-victimists but also emphasises the injustice of their deaths: they were *good* and they cared for those around them, particularly those in their family circle. These ideas of goodness in both the context of social reproduction and in the affective context valorises the victims because it considers their deaths to be more unintelligible or more unjust as they did nothing to warrant their hurt.

The fighting spirit of those women seems to be granted a central space in their life narratives. The use of batalhadora/lutadora/guerreira emphasises the desirability of a non-passive victim someone that has not settled — they fight for better jobs, better futures for their children, and they may even fight for other women and their rights. This seems to highlight that storytelling creates subjects which are 'guided by these principles of upward mobility, entrepreneurship, and self-reliance' (Fernandes, 2017:11). Ultimately, the most interesting aspect of such narrative is how it abides by expectations of the neoliberal subject (Fernandes, 2017), albeit with a decidedly gendered slant, considering the aforementioned centrality of family and reproductive labour in those narratives.

This creates an interesting contradiction on the use of words in this cluster, which considers both the desirability of an innocent and helpless victim but also one

that embodies action and self-reliance. In this sense, the victim must have lived as one who resists victimhood in order for her death to be considered one which she

'Sua mãe foi uma mulher guerreira. Mesmo no seu último minuto, ela conseguiu colocar esse verme na cadeia. Agora ela vai em paz. Missão cumprida', disse outra amiga.	*'Your mum was a fighter. Even in her last moments, she managed to put these vermin in jail. Now she is at peace. Mission accomplished.' said another friend on social media.*

had no escape from. Cole considers the moral judgement against victims one that relies on their willingness to 'use' their victim identities, which the desirable subject that Fernandes highlights would not do. The desirable subjects are characterized as go-getters, problem-solvers; their deaths did not happen through any fault of their own. This notion of a desirable victim that is not 'passive' is applied broadly, as we read below:

This is the culmination of the fighter narrative, as even her death is the accomplishment of a mission: she has sent her murderer to jail. Even her death seems to have served a bigger purpose, and this is used as a potential source of comfort to the family. In fact, all fighter narratives purportedly express sympathy and grief and therefore intend to serve the purpose of supporting the victim. Nonetheless, as seen above, this seems to be linked to readings of victimhood which are in many ways reactionary toe the concept of victim itself. Such contradiction which portrays the victim through a 'good' lens is not seen only in the case of the fighter narrative, but it is also present in another cluster examined in the following section.

III) Beauty of body and soul

[linda, bonita, pessoa boa, pessoa do bem]

Another cluster that is often seen when speaking of victims is the one that encompasses the adjectives linda/bela (beautiful). It is important to note that much

like in English, the word beautiful, when applied to people, can also emphasise non-physical attributes — e.g., a beautiful soul in English could also be seen in Portuguese as 'uma pessoa linda.' This broader understanding of beauty is exemplified in the case below:

Elzenir Gama Vieira, 36 anos e produtora de eventos, confessa, ainda muito emocionada, que Evelyne sempre fará parte de sua vida. 'Não tenho palavras para descrever o sentimento, a raiva, porque ela era tão linda, tão cheia de sonhos, com uma vida inteira pela frente e se tornou uma vítima desses monstros que não aceitam o fim de um relacionamento', revela.

Elzenir Gama Vieira, 36 years old and an event producer, says, emotionally, that Evelyne will always be part of her life. 'I have no words to describe this feeling, the anger, because she was so beautiful, so full of dreams, with a whole life ahead of her and she became a victim of one of these monsters that cannot accept the end of a relationship' she reveals.

In this case, the victim is mourned as beautiful, but that is linked to other aspects we have discussed: she had so many dreams, her whole life ahead of her. 'Beautiful' here seems to encapsulate the victim's appearance, character, and place in the world.

Combining two clusters is not unusual when describing victims. Another example can be seen below:

'Eu te amarei para sempre, mãe. Você era linda, incrível, batalhadora, tudo que conquistou foi com tanto esforço. Te amarei até os confins da terra. Não consigo acreditar que você se foi', disse a jovem, antes de pedir auxílio para encontrar o suspeito.

'I will love you forever, mum. You were beautiful, incredible, a fighter; everything you achieved was because of your effort. I will love you to the end of the earth. I cannot believe you are gone', said the young woman, before asking for help in locating the suspect.

In this testimony, the daughter of a victim characterises her as beautiful before emphasising her other qualities: a fighter who achieved everything through sheer effort. From the text, it is possible to say that the daughter is not only referring to her mother as physically beautiful but instead speaking more broadly about her beauty of character and her goodness as a person. The articulation of such ideas with

the narrative of the figure emphasises her grievability and raises her character in the eyes of the reader. The idea of beauty seems to be intrinsically linked to affection, as it is a term of endearment and an expression of love. Due to this, it highlights the grief involved and brings to the reader the image of the grieving friend or relative, even if it is done through a medium such as social media:

Nas redes sociais, amigos lamentaram a morte da mulher: 'Não estou acreditando que você nos deixou, minha amiga linda. Como tá doendo, a saudade é muito grande. Descanse em paz', disse uma colega da vítima.

On social media, friends grieved her death: 'I cannot believe you have left us, my beautiful friend. This is very painful; I miss you so much. Rest in peace', said one of the victim's colleagues.

In the case examined above, the use of the word 'linda' is once again intended to bring forth the idea of loss and an appreciation for the victim's character and good qualities. Her colleague states that the victim was 'a beautiful friend' and expands on the pain she feels when faced with her loss, much like in the previous examples. Nonetheless, there is also a more conventional use of the words in cluster linda/bonita, which seems to be slanted towards an appreciation for a woman's physical beauty (and oftentimes, youth), as seen in the examples below:

'Inacreditável. Tão jovem, cheia de vida, tão bonita, me lembro de quando a conheci, sempre desejei o melhor pra ela, descanse em paz, que Deus te de ilumine', postou outra conhecida.

Unbelievable! So young, full of life, so beautiful, I remember when I met her, I always wished the best for her, rest in peace, may God light your way' stated another woman on her social media.

'Meu coração sangra de dor, não tem como não se chocar. Uma mulher linda, cheia de vida, que simplesmente foi impedida de ser mãe, ser mulher, de estar viva. O feminicídio não é um fato que está distante, está aí ao

'My heart bleeds, there is no way one cannot be shocked.A beautiful woman, full of life, that was prevented from being a mother, from being a woman, from being alive. Feminicide is not something that is far away from us, it is within

alcance das mãos e dos olhos de qualquer uma de nós (...)', afirmou uma usuária do Facebook, acrescentando a hashtag #lutopormaisumamulher ao seu post.

the reach of our eyes and hands (...)' said a Facebook user, adding the hashtag #griefforonemorewoman in her post.

Such expressions of grief seem to centre youth and beauty, as well as the fact that death took those women away from their lives as women. The second example lists what she will miss by being killed, and it does so by centring her experiences as a mother first. These cases bring forward an image that is not only of someone who was well-loved or morally good, but of someone who was beautiful and full of life. This vitality and beauty are central to the shock of the tragedy of death.

The function of paragraphs such as the ones examined in the reporting is to bring forth grief, adding a clear emotional aspect to the story. As Fernandes states, there are stakes involved in the crafting of narratives (2018:17), and the way they are constructed serve purposes of mobilisation. This is political in the case of Fernandes' case studies but also inherently affective too. For the purposes of news reporting, the outpouring of grief from friends and family serve to emphasise the grievability of the victim, bring forth the tragedy of a life lost. Due to its function in the text, it is particularly interesting to see how the victim is reported because it is the textual moment in which the reader is brought closer to grieving themselves.

Thread three: the context of the crime

Beyond looking at the characterisation of victim and perpetrator, it is important to analyse the ways in which the context of the crime is presented to the reader both by the reporting itself and by those speaking through it (e.g., the police). This analysis of the context can be linked to perceptions of the identities of both the victim and perpetrator, and it also speaks to understandings of the dynamics of gender violence both by media and by those involved (such as family, friends and the police). As I will analyse throughout this thesis, this context does not refer solely

to the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, but also their location in society.

Scholars such as Easter, Bartels and Bradford have discussed how the construction of reality in domestic violence cases involve 'using the civil domestic violence legislation shifts the blame to the victim and/or infer that there was mutuality in the abuse' (2012:12). In the aforementioned authors' analysis, the context is used to construct a particular reading of the situation of violence in which victim blaming occurs. Therefore, through understanding how the context of gender violence is represented, it is possible to discuss how agency and victimhood are being constructed. This is relevant because feminicide, as characterised in Brazilian law, has elements that are up for interpretation. For instance, as discussed in chapter 3, 'discrimination and/or disdain for the condition of woman' is not exemplified in the Feminicide Law, which allows for a situation to be interpreted at several stages of the process. From the police to the prosecutor to the potential judge and/or jury, context can be determinant in understanding how a case is classified.

Clusters (Context)	Number of cases (1,347)
Cluster 1: Restraining order/police report	228
Cluster 2: Fights/arguments/troubled	178
Cluster 3: Troubled	171
Cluster 4: Suicide or attempted suicide	125
Cluster 5: Cheating	95
Cluster 6: Revenge or retribution	68
Cluster 7: Passionate	25
Cluster 8: Self-defence	13
Not applicable	439

Table 9. Number of coded segments in relation to context.

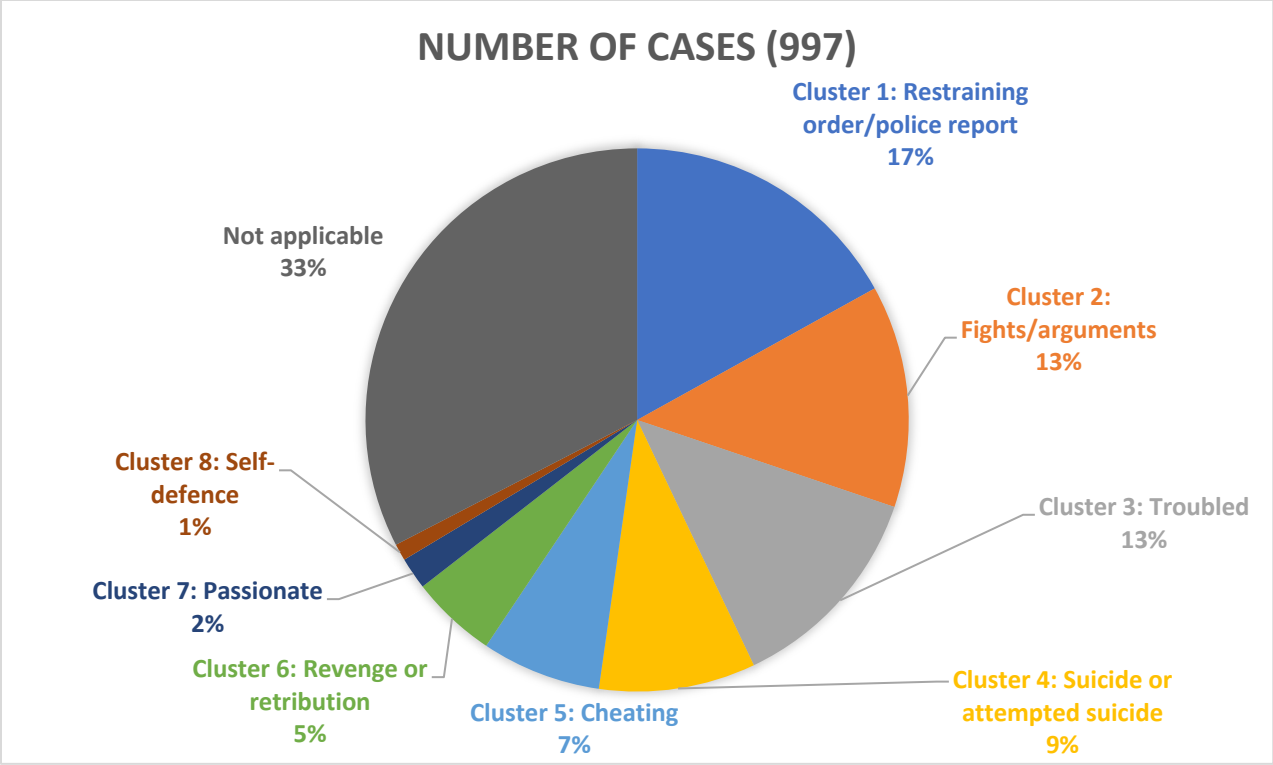


Figure 15. Percentage of each context code in relation to overall numbers

i) Conturbado

[conturbado, prolemático, idas e vindas]

The use of the word 'conturbado' (troubled) appears in the data 68 times, always as an indicator of the state of the relationship. It pairs often with 'brigas' discussed below. The use of the word 'conturbado' seems to identify a relationship that is characterised by conflict, or otherwise considered to be unstable — full of ups and downs or 'on-off' relationships. Nonetheless, there are no clear description of conturbado and the word remains unexplained to the reader. In the majority of cases,

the characterisation of the relationship as troubled is used to imply and create assumptions about the relationship, as seen below:

'Eles vivam um relacionamento conturbado e de agressões. A polícia já havia sido chamada pela filha da vitima há alguns meses atrás, mas ele fugiu do local antes da chegada da equipe de policiais. A vítima também nunca registrou nenhum Boletim de Ocorrência', disse o comandante

'They had a troubled relationship with instances of assault. The police had been called by the daughter of the victim some months before the crime, but the man fled before the police arrived. The victim also never requested a restraining order,' said the police commander.

The 'troubled' aspect of the relationship adds another depth to the consideration that there was violence in the relationship. There is duality between recognising that abuse is ongoing but simultaneously highlighting the absence of a restraining order. The policeman speaks: violence was present, but the victim did not make intervention possible.[2] The situation becomes hopeless as the cycle of violence continues and the victim is outside the realm of state support.

A hipótese foi levantada pela jovem porque, semanas antes, ele havia discutido com Rosana e a teria ofendido verbalmente. 'Eles tinham um relacionamento conturbado. Depois que ela descobriu que ele tinha outra família, aí começaram as brigas', esclarece.

The hypothesis [of feminicide] was raised by the young woman because, weeks before the murder, her partner had argued with Rosana and been verbally aggressive. 'They had a troubled relationship. After she found out he had another family, they began fighting' she clarifies.

This example is another one in which the idea of a 'troubled' relationship seems to hide an underlying pattern of toxic masculinity. The 'fights' started because the woman found out her partner had another family. They argued and he offended her verbally, but the relationship does notget explicitly labeled as abusive. What can be

2 A similar case was seen in the perpetrator section, in the case of Maria Luiza, in which the police declared she had not requested a restraining order and did not believe the husband to be violent.

seen is that the use of 'troubled' then seems to be used as a euphemism for abusive, but oftentimes without a clear recognition of violence. This absence of recognised violence turns the idea of 'troubled' into a hazy one. This in turn removes responsibility from the perpetrator. This can be seen in the case below:

A defesa alegou que o cantor agiu em legítima defesa. 'Já era um relacionamento conturbado e na data dos fatos ela teria ido à residência dele com certa manifestação de violência e as questões que ocorreram no interior da casa estão sendo discutidas hoje tecnicamente', disse o advogado José Roberto Nunes Júnior à EPTV, afiliada da TV Globo, durante o julgamento.

The defence alleged that the singer acted in self-defence. 'It was a troubled relationship and at the time of the facts she had come to his residence with a certain violence, and the issues that arose inside the house are being discussed now by the technics,' said the lawyer José Roberto Nunes Júnior to EPTV, a Rede Globe affiliate, during the trial.

'Ao ser interrogado, ele contou que tinha um relacionamento com a vítima há cerca de sete meses, mas que o relacionamento era conturbado em razão de ciúmes excessivo que sentiam um do outro.'

'When testifying, the suspect told us he has a relationship with the victim for over seven months, but that the relationship was troubled due to the excessive jealousy they felt towards the other.'

In the first case, the defence of the perpetrator uses the word 'troubled' to equalise the conflicts within the relationship. 'Troubled' in this case highlights that the relationship itself was marked by issues assumed to be caused by both parties, thus diffusing responsibility. That highlights that the perpetrator would have acted in self-defence. Similarly, in the second case, the 'trouble' of the relationship was the jealousy that both partners had, creating a relationship of equality between victim and perpetrator in the 'excessive' feelings they had towards one another. These uses are different than when the word 'troubled' is used by or alongside testimonies of victims' families:

A vítima morava com o ex-marido, com quem vivia um relacionamento conturbado. A família dela acredita que o ex-companheiro de Carolline está envolvido no crime.

The victim lived with her ex-husband, with whom she had a troubled relationship. Her family believes that Caroline's ex-partner is involved in the crime.

A mãe de Maria Karolina entrou em desespero ao saber da morte da filha. Muito abalada, ela contou que a operadora de telemarketing tinha um relacionamento conturbado e pediu justiça.

The mother of Maria Karolina became desperate when she heard of her daughter's death. Very pained, he told [us] that the telemarketing operator had a troubled relationship and asked for justice.

A trigésima vítima de feminicídio no Distrito Federal neste ano, Necivânia Eugênio de Caldas, de 34 anos, era vista frequentemente com marcas da violência que sofria do ex-companheiro. Amigos da vítima relatam que as agressões eram de conhecimento de todos. 'Tudo conturbado. Ela apanhava sempre. Sempre ela vinha para cá [com marca] roxa', conta uma amiga que preferiu não se identificar.

The 30th victim of feminicide on the Distrito Federal this year, Necivânia Eugênio de Caldas, 34, was seen frequently with bruises from the violence of her ex-partner. Friends of the victim stated that the aggressions were common knowledge. 'It was very troubled. She was always beaten. She was always coming here bruised,' told a friend who requested to remain anonymous.

The recognition of being 'troubled' in both cases above either imply or directly showcase violence and, unlike the cases seen so far, it elicits sympathy for the victim by highlighting either the perpetrator's responsibility and/or the suffering of the victim and her family. By contrasting how 'troubled' is used by different actors, it is possible to see that the term functions differently in feminicide narratives, which speak to the unclear definition of 'troubled' and its malleability. When claimed by those speaking on behalf of the victim, it highlights previous abuse and the responsibility of the perpetrator. However, when used by the police and/or the defence, 'troubled' can be combined with ideas of jealousy, fights and/or absence

of restraining orders to create a space in which the victim is somehow linked to the violence enacted upon her.

This highlights how terms can gain and lose meaning across a piece of text, but it also gives some insight into how different actors involved in feminicide seem to regard the same circumstances under very different lens. The underlying ideas behind 'troubled,' such as a fights, jealousy and violence, are perceived by victims' families and friends to reveal the undeniable gendered aspect of the murder and the consideration that the relationship was abusive. In many ways, this aligns with the ideas of 'continuum of violence' discussed by Kelly (1988). As stated above, the police and the defence of the perpetrator use this differently – and it is revealing that the meanings would align with a law-and-order institution supporting the narratives used in the defence of the alleged criminal. 'Troubled' is an adjective, and gets ascribed to different sets of circumstances, becoming very flexible in its description. The strategy of lessening the 'victim' status of the victim by de/entangling her in the actions that would reveal abuse and violence demonstrate that words of 'context' can reveal much about who portrays feminicide and how they do so. This can also be seen in other clusters, such as the one below.

ii) Briga/brigas

[briga/s, discussão, conflitos, bate-boca]

The usage of the node briga/brigas (which also includes 'discussões') occurs in two different contexts throughout the reporting. One, as a characterisation of the state of the relationship and two, as a characterisation of the crime itself. I will look at those separately as they have different meanings in the discourse analysis of feminicide in Brazil. When applied to the context of the relationship itself, the usage of briga/brigas tends towards the latter ('brigas'), highlighting a perceived pattern of instability and/or violence in the relationship predating the murder. As seen below:

A própria família de Ezequiel afirma que ele bebia muito e, por isso, as brigas entre os dois eram frequentes. Ao longo dessas discussões, inclusive, era comum o suspeito jurar a esposa de morte.

Ezequiel's own family states that he drank a lot, and therefore the couple fought constantly. In their arguments, it was common for the suspect to threaten his wife's life.

In this excerpt, the family of the perpetrator highlights his alcohol abuse, but in the text, it is due to their words or the reporter's. The violence arising from such abuse is framed as conflict, as there is no unilateral violence, but instead 'brigas'. This is an explicit demonstration of a particular reading of gender violence, in which both partners are somehow equally responsible for creating an unstable environment. This follows similar perceptions of the aforementioned 'troubled' relationship: legitimate grievances, concerns and patterns of violence are all blended together without care. This carelessness, while not outrightly blaming the victim, blames her nonetheless through the haphazard way it is constructs the narrative For example, Ezequiel's drinking, their fights and his threats on his wife's life, provide no linearity. Two different readers could gather very distinct stories from this same text: one, a wife who tries to deal with a husband who abuses alcohol and is aggressive, including verbally threatening her life, or two, a man whose wife has issues with him drinking alcohol, and who in turn gets upset enough to threaten his wife when they argue. While the latter narrative does notexempt Ezequiel, it grants himpathy — the reader can infer that maybe he was not the only 'unreasonable' one in the relationship.

Another form in which the responsibility for the perpetuation of the cycle of violence is shared between perpetrator and victim is seen below:

De acordo com o delegado responsável pela investigação do feminicídio, Rafael Pareja, testemunhas relataram brigas frequentes entre o casal. No entanto, Paolla

According to the police chief assigned to investigate the feminicide, Rafael Pareja, witnesses said that the couple fought frequently. However, Paolla had never filed a police report against her husband.

nunca havia registrado boletim de ocorrência
contra o esposo.

In this example, the reason for the fight is unclear and not directly linked to either victim or perpetrator. It speaks, however, to a perceived pattern of conflict in the relationship, in which responsibility is diffused between perpetrator and victim. They had been frequently in conflict with one another. Once again, the absence of official reporting is highlighted by the police, in this case constructed in opposition with the conflict. While they frequently fought, she had not reported him to the state to label such violence as abuse. As discussed in Chapter 2, the distinction between conflict and abuse, explored by authors such as Schuman (2016), is particularly relevant in the context of interpersonal relationships. The diffusion of abuse into conflict, or the misconstruction of conflict into abuse, can have lasting impact not only on the relationship itself, but on general readings of social phenomena (Schuman, 2016:217). In the cases seen here, 'fighting' becomes a possible euphemism for abuse.

Nonetheless, it goes on to highlight the absence of any restrictive orders filed by the victim. While this is informative, most of the cases in the dataset which refer to restrictive orders are to note their existence, not absence (222 cases against 52). It is not unexpected that restrictive orders are mentioned when discussing the context of a relationship. Fiona Macaulay has discussed the improvements made in supporting victims of domestic violence in Brazil and how the use of restrictive orders safeguards women (2021). Nonetheless, the sentence construction in the examples above either diminish the importance of the fights or potentially insinuates the victim should have gotten restrictive orders. The use of the words 'brigas' could then serve to obscure a pattern of previous abuse by contextualising domestic violence as conflict. Therefore, the violence becomes somewhat mutual, and responsibility for establishing cycles of violence spreads between both partners.

As we have seen so far, it seems like the clusters regarding the context of the relationship have highlighted a tendency to equalise — that is, to potentially transform abuse into conflict, as well as to potentially grant himpathy to the

perpetrator while doing so. Nonetheless, there are other ways in which the relationship and situation can be portrayed to the reader, such as a further examination of the crime itself or the circumstances surrounding the crime, as seen below.

iii) Traição

Another node of interest is the cluster of words referring to cheating — 'traído', 'traição', 'caso com outro homem' (68 cases). The crime is then contextualised within either alleged/suspected or actual cheating on the part of the victim. The former is much more common than the latter, representing 76% of cases in which the cluster of words were present. This cluster once again reminds me of Bentinho, the protagonist of Dom Casmurro, and his pervasive jealousy and absolute certainty that his wife cheated on him with his best friend. The mock trials held at schools in Brazil when teaching this novel reveal an underlying sense that romantic betrayal should be punished — that the treatment and portrayal of Capitu by Bentinho is justified if she is revealed to truly have been unfaithful.

There are no calls for the trial of potentially unfaithful women in the news reports I compiled, but there is of course the location of the act in the collective mind. When I noted the repeated allegations of cheating or mentions of cheating in the cases of feminicide, I was of course intrigued to see how the newspaper ascribed to the victim a potentially morally wrong action and if it seemed to have any impact on the case as a whole. One of the most usual forms in which 'cheating' shows up in the dataset can be seen below:

De acordo com o delegado Fabiano Medeiros, responsável pelo caso, Alexandre José Padilha teria matado Ana Beatriz Nascimento Silva por acreditar que estava sendo traído.	*According to the police officer Fabiano Medeiros, responsible for the case, Alexandre José Padilha killed Ana Beatriz Nascimento Silva because he believed he was being cheated on.*

Testemunhas contaram à polícia que o marido da vítima havia deixado o local, em uma moto, momentos depois do crime. O irmão do homem também esteve na residência do casal e contou que o suspeito acreditava que estava sendo traído.

Witnesses told the police that the husband of the victim left the scene in his motorbike shortly after the crime. His brother was currently at the couple's home and told [police] that the suspect believed he was being cheated on.

In both these cases, motive for the murder is directly linked to the belief that cheating was ongoing. The voice of the perpetrator is present to give context to the relationship, or at least, provide context for the killing. This does notseem to be particularly important on its own, but it gains another dimension when considered in relation to the other nodes that I have examined so far in this chapter. That is, while there is no explicit argument in the text that cheating would justify violence. By highlighting the motivation of the crime as cheating, this context clue serves a similar purpose to the ones that discuss the jealousy of the perpetrator as the motive for killing — a lapse in judgement, in this case due to a perceived injury. Such inferences can be seen in cases in which the terms in the cheating cluster are in dialogue with other clusters that have been examined before, such as in the case below:

'Testemunhas ouvidas por nós disseram que ele acreditava que estava sendo traído e não aceitou a situação. O casal começou uma briga, e ele atirou nela', disse ao G1. Não há confirmação se ela tinha ou não um caso com outra pessoa.

'Witnesses heard by us told us that he believed he was being cheated on and refused to accept such situation. The couple began to fight, and he shot her,' said [the police officer] to G1. There is no confirmation on whether the woman had an affair or not.

In this case, the narrative is as follows: the perpetrator believes he is being cheated on, the couple begins to fight, and he shoots his partner. The escalation here strengthens the narrative, creating a scenario in which the context is a perceived injury which becomes a 'fight' and ends up in death. Therefore, cheating functions

as an initiator of conflict leading to lethal violence, and while it does not excuse the perpetrator from responsibility, it serves to contextualize abuse. The news report goes on to state that there is no information on whether the alleged affair was real. While informative, this makes the reader wonder, as the victim is suddenly morally ambiguous or at least capable of having committed a morally wrong act. The impacts here are multiple — sympathy towards the victim, of course, but also ambiguity as to whether the perpetrator himself was not also a victim, the injured party of an affair.

The possible responses of the reader to the news report are not unintentional, as newspaper capitalise on these impacts to boost their circulation These concerns are relevant for us because different combinations of clusters elicit a different response on the reader, and all those feed into overall narratives of feminicide. If unfaithfulness is perceived to be 'wrong', and if the victim is perceived to have done such wrong, then the framing of the murder is wildly different than if there is no unfaithfulness and the victim is thus not responsible for exciting murderous feelings in the first place. In a case in which the unfaithfulness becomes a more remote possibility, however, there are still ways in which the combination of clusters can bring forth a particular framing of the crime, as seen below:

O crime teria ocorrido em decorrência dos ciúmes que o criminoso tinha da mulher. Informações de moradores da região dão conta de que ele chegou em casa e, ao ver Francisco Edicarlos na calçada de sua residência, supôs que estivesse sendo traído. O agressor, então, teria chamado a mulher para dentro de casa e passou a esfaqueá-la. Em seguida, passou a agredir também o homem. A PM ainda apurou que o relacionamento entre o acusado e a sua companheira era conturbado, com diversas discussões por

The crime would have happened due to the jealousy that the criminal had over his wife. Information relayed by neighbours seem to indicate that he arrived home and, seeing Francisco Edicarlos on the pavement outside his home, assumed he was being cheated on. The perpetrator then called his wife into the house and began to stab her. Afterwards, he also attacked the man. The police revealed that the relationship between the accused and his partner was troubled, with several arguments due to his jealousy. After the crime, José fled.

causas do ciúme que o agressor tinha. Após o crime, José fugiu.

In this case, 'cheating' is used alongside 'troubled', 'discussions' and 'jealousy'. This narrative highlights the jealousy of the perpetrator and indicates that such jealousy lay behind the troubled aspect of the relationship. This construction is similar to other narratives of jealousy seen in the section analysing the characterisation of the perpetrator and highlights the idea of 'feeling' behind a case of feminicide. Here, the perpetrator seems more at fault over the unfaithfulness — that is, he is portrayed as a jealous man, which would mean his suspicions could be overblown. However, the 'troubled' aspect is brought back into the text, once again acting as an equaliser. As I have shown, the use of the word *conturbado* can remove abusive aspects and replace them with conflict. Overall, this combination seems to reflect much of what has been discussed in this chapter. It highlights that the relationship was troubled due to jealousy and that the crime was enacted upon a perceived provocation in which feelings took over reason.

Conclusion

The crimes analysed in this dataset seem to showcase understandings of what constitutes a feminicide. By weaving together the threads of perpetrator, victim and context, it is possible to see the most common narratives that exemplify a feminicide in Brazil between 2019-2021. Cases named feminicide often happen in the context of relationships, especially those that are already considered to be somehow dysfunctional and have as common motives ideas of jealousy or the unwillingness to accept the end of a relationship. Perpetrators of crimes named as feminicide are often portrayed as having been jealous or aggressive partners that committed the crimes due to a perceived stressor — a fight, crisis of jealousy, or the end of the relationship. This seems to go against the idea of 'himpathy' proposed by Manne, but such characterisations legitimise the feelings of the perpetrator; he becomes sympathetic. They might be jealous and even aggressive, but this emanates from love or explosions of temper. The narrative is not one of coercion and control exerted

over time, but one of a burst of unreasonableness that made the perpetrator 'make a mistake.'

Similarly, the context of the relationships seems often to act as an equaliser, 'spreading' the responsibility for the violence between the couple. Also, as I have seen, certain aspects of the relationship seem to be subsumed under the term 'troubled' without making it clear to the reader that conflict is different from abuse. The perpetrator and the context create the space in which what is being brought together are a series of unfortunate events – the wrong couple, or a fight that turned sour are similar to the ideas of a 'break' from the ordinary that characterises, for example, the 'crisis of jealousy.' The narrative might be using the term 'feminicide', but the ideas behind it still seem to echo those of crimes of passion which have been criticised by feminist scholars since the 1970s.

This is even clearer when the terms used to portray the victim are brought forward: the victim of feminicide seems to hold in herself a myriad of contradictions. She is helpless enough that she could not resist death, but this helplessness must not extend into her daily life in which she is portrayed as a fighter and as someone who resists victimisation. Her dreams and plans are portrayed, which give the reader the dimension of the loss as well as demonstrate the victim's allegiance to societal scripts which emphasise her 'goodness' as a good student, a good mother, and as a hardworking person. A perpetrator overcome by feelings and a 'troubled' relationship sounds like a tragedy. While I have no desire to argue that a feminicide is not tragic, I wonder whether this idea of tragedy does not take away from misogyny again, making it somehow inevitable or a product of an unfortunate set of circumstances.

Eloá Pimentel, whose death I watched in slow motion and whose story I relayed at the beginning of this thesis, cut a tragic figure standing by the window, tear-stained face and hands held up. But as the news reporters crowded outside her flat, and the police officer stated that her killer was suffering from a 'love crisis', no one wondered how a 15-year-old girl had become involved with a 22-year-old, or why the man felt entitled to kill her when she decided to stop dating him. One reporter joked that the story would end in a wedding — their 'troubled' relationship turned

happy ending. Eloá's death has now been named a feminicide, but if I look at the portrayal of feminicide in Brazil in 2019-2021, the narratives that shaped her death seem to still lurk there as part of the tapestry of 'feminicide.' And if this sense of tragedy and inevitability permeates the cases that receive the correct naming, the cases that have boundaries which seem clear enough to be included by the police and the news as feminicide, what happens to the cases that are not correctly named?

What this chapter has shown is that even cases correctly named feminicide rely on normative understandings of gender. The construction of the perpetrator, the victim and the context of their relationship creates a matrix of normativity. The perpetrator is 'full of feeling' which simultaneously makes him more appealing to the reader and allows for his actions to be excused as a 'break' from acceptable conduct. The victim, in order to be recognised as such, needs to be both vulnerable and a 'fighter'; needs to be a 'giver' but also self-reliant. This creates a difficult and contradictory space in which the 'good' woman is constructed in opposition to a 'bad' woman. However, even by being a good woman, she is not exempt from the tragedy of feminicide. And furthermore, when I look at the context, she is still portrayed as somehow complicit in her own death. She deviates from gender normativity through 'fighting' or her implicit acceptance of risk by having a 'troubled' relationship that makes her vulnerable to violence. These normative understandings allows for the recgnition of feminicide, but do not seem to be challenging to assumptions about gender violence. Instead, they perpetuate normative perceptions.

In the next chapter, I turn to examine my second dataset, which included cases that would arguably fit the legal definition of feminicide but that received other names in their reporting.

CHAPTER VI: WEAVING THREADS: CASES NOT NAMED FEMINICIDES (2019-2021)

This chapter focuses on feminicide cases[1] reported by the media that received another classification other than feminicide. As discussed in the previous chapter, my overall analysis considered over 4,000 cases of women murdered between 2019-2021, which I then subdivided into three different datasets — the cases here are 1,347, or roughly 30% per cent of the total. This number showcases how feminicide, while gaining traction as a legal category in Brazil, is still not uniformly applied in the country's media landscape.

The classification of the crimes here described is broad: some of the deaths receive clear descriptions of legal type (e.g. homicide with the aggravated charge of having a futile motive, robbery followed by murder) whereas others are much broader (e.g. murder, homicide). The defining feature of this subsection of my data is that these crimes can be feasibly understood as feminicides due to their gendered nature. When examining the discourse used on victims, perpetrators, and the context of the crime, I pay close attention to how they are constructed and whether they differ from those of the previous subset — the cases that got to be named feminicide.

If the previous chapter asked whether naming is enough, this chapter interrogates whether naming is even happening. While writing this project, I consistently asked myself whether the ways in which feminicide was constructed as a legal category created barriers for the recognition the role of gender in those violent deaths because they did not fit the limited scope of the law. However, one of the central findings of my data was that the name was still not being applied even in cases that fit the law, which then made me ask, what are the other factors at play that stopped the naming process? Is the naming process forever evolving, and will there always be

1 I here use the term feminicides because these cases should have been named feminicides, but for ease, I have referred to them as not-feminicides when comparing them with the cases discussed in the previous chapter.

incorrectly named cases? Those questions are central to understanding how feminicide is understood in contemporary Brazil.

The process of naming a crime feminicide in news reporting is not only linked to police and court charges. A variety of factors could influence a case being named feminicide: it is mentioned by a police officer as a possibility, it is the actual charge against the perpetrator, or the reporter simply uses the term in the reporting. Ultimately, whether a crime is classed as feminicide is up to those observing and narrating the crime. Because reporters have this level of agency in classifying cases, the existence of cases that would 'fit the law' but do not get named feminicide is possible.

I have analysed all 1,347 cases of crimes that could be understood as feminicides but were not named as such by establishing clusters of words around the perpetrator, victim and the context of the crime and their relationships, following the organisation of the previous chapter. In this chapter, I examine extracts of any clusters that made up more than 5% of the cases in each category. Similarly, as with the previous chapter, as I worked through the cases not named feminicide, I had a general idea of what I might encounter based on the annotations I had undertaken while I was familiarising myself with the data. However, I had to test them out through the establishment of my cycles of coding, which would potentially change the clusters, which can be seen below:

Thread	**Clusters**
Perpetrator	End of relationship Jealousy Criminal background
Victim	Naked/half naked Dead body Affair/lover
Context	Murder Sexual violence Robbery

Table 10. Clusters of codes in subset.

One of the aspects that I noticed immediately in comparison to the previous subset was that information about the crime was harder to find — descriptors were rare, and there was a distinct lack of voices from friends and family of the victim in comparison to cases named feminicide. However, it was too early to tell why that was; that is, which came first. Was the lack of information about the victim causing journalists and reporters to be unable to reach out for comment? Or was there not enough interest in seeking out that information because of who the victim was perceived to be? These questions cannot be fully answered in the scope of this work, but they were important in guiding my thinking about the implications of my findings.

Another notable aspect of this dataset, as I mentioned above, was how many of the cases involved familial and domestic violence, which should be quite straightforward cases of feminicide. Following my findings in Chapter IV, I was not surprised that the qualitative analysis reflected the similarities between cases named feminicide and cases not named feminicide. More than half of the cases not labelled as feminicides involved intimate partner violence by a recognized partner or ex-partner of the victim. Even when there was recognition of the relationship, the crime was not classified as a feminicide. This was unexpected, as I anticipated that cases not labelled as feminicides would be those outside normative relationships – e.g. heterosexual monogamous arrangements.

This unexpected similarity between cases named and not named feminicide was also emphasised by the presence of many of the same perpetrator clusters that I analysed in the cases named feminicides. As I discuss in this chapter, the variation in portrayals of cases named feminicide and not named feminicide seem to rest much more on victim portrayals than on portrayals of perpetrators, which raises interesting questions around who gets to be a victim of feminicide and who is a victim of a different crime (such as homicide without the qualifier). As I will discuss below, the distinction made by other Latinx scholars about the difference between a ‘public feminicide’ versus a ‘private feminicide’ (Fuentes 2020) have a direct impact on how the crime is constructed and perceived.

Other findings followed my expectations. As I discussed previously, Brazilian feminicide law does not encompass sexual violence followed by murder. Therefore, it is not surprising that this subset involved many cases of such crimes, as they are not classified as feminicides in the law. But as I have highlighted in Chapter II, feminicide has been historically discussed in relation to sexual violence, even before it was named (such as seen in the works of Jane Caputi, Deborah Cameron and Elizabeth Frazer). Some authors have even posited the concept of sexual femicide (such as Fragoso, 2003) in the cases of women being raped and killed.[2] Therefore, including cases of sexual violence followed by killing as feminicides was a given to me. What was particularly interesting was not necessarily the non-classification of these cases as feminicides[3], but how they were presented to the reader.

Another expected finding was the presence of more sex workers, queer women and trans women in this dataset in relation to the cases named feminicides. Though none of these cases met the threshold for analysis, their heightened presence in this subset of data rather than in cases named feminicide seems to follow my assumptions that women who are living less normatively accepted lives — be it by gender, sexuality or engagement with behaviour considered deviant and/or promiscuous — are less likely to be recognised as victims of feminicide. As I will discuss in Chapter VII, this assumption holds true as I move to examine women's deaths that do not merit more than two or three sentences in the news.

While in the previous subset of data I could more neatly contrast descriptions of perpetrator and victim and analyse the ways their relationship was portrayed, in this chapter I have weaved these threads slightly differently. While the structure remains similar, I have emphasised the analysis of the structures of writing, especially when descriptors of those involved, their inner lives, their relationships, become less and less present and clear. In this chapter, I begin to engage more clearly with what Butler calls ungrievable lives, lives which are both 'destructible' and 'lose-able'

2 I have no conceptual issues with using the term sexual feminicide to highlight the particular circumstances of this type of violence, and therefore have used the term sexual feminicide to specify cases in which rape followed by murder occurred.

3 Though I will sustain that the lack of an explicit inclusion of sexual feminicide in Brazilian law does contribute to the overall perception of feminicide as a 'private' crime, excluding women from the possibility of being victims and further increasing their precariousness socially.

(Butler, 2009:31), as well as with the work of scholars such as Fuentes (2020) and Ferreira da Silva (2012) who emphasised the 'no-bodies' that is, bodies that are perceived as socially disposable. Those are also the lives which I sustain are perceived to be more transgressive, such as discussed above, and in which bodies the guilt of their own deaths can be more easily ascribed to. I have engaged with the expectations, norms and ideas that turn those crimes into a negative case — that, is not-feminicides. This chapter examines why certain cases are not-feminicides despite being motivated by gender. I argue that many of these cases do not comply with the normative narrative discussed in the previous chapter, and therefore, do not get classified as feminicides. Instead, they reinforce gender norms by gatekeeping 'feminicide' from these victims.

Thread one: Perpetrator

As highlighted above, I encountered some difficulty in finding descriptions for perpetrators in some cases of this subset of data. This was particularly true in cases in which the reporting only covered the discovery of women's bodies (with indication of sexual assault), but it also applied more broadly to cases of domestic violence — perpetrators were usually described only by their relationship with the victim and not much else was said about them. However, I was surprised to find that the more prevalent descriptors were quite similar to some that I have already explored in Chapter V — therefore, similar questions around Manne's concept of himpathy and universalising the perpetrator's feelings can be raised in not-feminicides. Perpetrators remain more unnamed than their victims, and their motivations still follow narratives of scorned love and jealousy.

One notable exception for this was the case of Marinésio dos Santos Olinto, a sexual predator and serial killer who was sentenced to prison in 2022. While he was sentenced for feminicide, the reporting of his crimes up until 2021 did not use the term, instead using murder, rape and sexual harassment as the crimes he was being accused of. The serial killer was described as a 'maniac' emphasising the deviancy of his behaviour. While Marinésio only represents one case in the dataset, this

showcases an interesting inversion of the Brock Turner case which I mentioned in the previous chapter — if Turner could not be considered a rapist because he did not fit the mould of the unknown assailant hiding in the bushes, Marinésio did not fit the idea of a perpetrator of feminicide exactly because he was an unknown assailant preying on random women. And it is interesting that information about him was much more present than information about any other perpetrator – a man to whom the label of 'deviant' could be easily applied. He is the quintessential rapist, a monster who preys on random women. No matter that this subset contained hundreds of cases of sexual violence, and that a 2023 report from Ipea states that a woman is raped in Brasil at the rate of twice a minute.

The reporting on Marinésio maintains that raping and killing women is an inhuman act, one that could only be done by a diseased mind. Jacqueline Rose narrates the story told to her by Gillian Slovo about a young woman, who had been tortured by the apartheid regime and sought out activist Ruth First (Slovo's mother) to talk:

> And then, when the woman reflected that her torturers could have possibly know what they were doing and still be human, First unhesitatingly replied: 'They knew exactly what they were doing.' (2021, 290).

First's words could also apply to the men 'in crisis' who killed their wives and girlfriends in Chapter V (and as I will discuss, in this one too). But in this chapter, with the absence of the perpetrator heavy on the texts, her words reveal the importance of highlighting the humanity of the perpetrators. In Marinésio's case, constructing him as a 'monster' and as an outlier contributes to the idea that gender violence is caused by something external and uncommon. As I discussed in Chapter II when analysing Manne's concept of 'himpathy' – it is possible to sympathise with certain perpetrators because there is the construction of other perpetrators as 'monsters.' In a country like Brazil, in which gender violence is a daily occurrence, to portray rape/murder as the product of inhuman subjects is to obscure the ways in which rape/murder emanates from everyday structures of gender normativity.

As seen in the graph below, the number of cases in which clusters are not applicable have increased from the previous subset. However, some of the characterisations have remained, particularly the ones that were most common in cases named feminicides; end of relationship and jealousy[4]. As I discuss below, the use of both those terms in not-feminicides seems quite close to the use in feminicides, which suggests that narratives of feminicide and not-feminicide in relationship to the perpetrator are close to one another. This maintains my assertion that perpetrators tend to be made more visible in contexts of domestic violence, where narratives of excessive feelings and out of control emotions provide an acceptable narrative for the violence they are enacting upon the victims.

Clusters: perpetrator	Number of cases
Cluster one: End of relationship	131
Cluster two: jealousy	130
Cluster 3: Criminal background (perpetrator)	22
Cluster 4: Mistake/madness	11
Not applicable	1,053

Table 11. Cases with codes relating to the perpetrator.

4 This also confirms the findings discussed in chapter IV, which highlighted how the number of intimate partner violence instances in cases not named feminicide showcases that the naming of the phenomenon in the media is lacking.

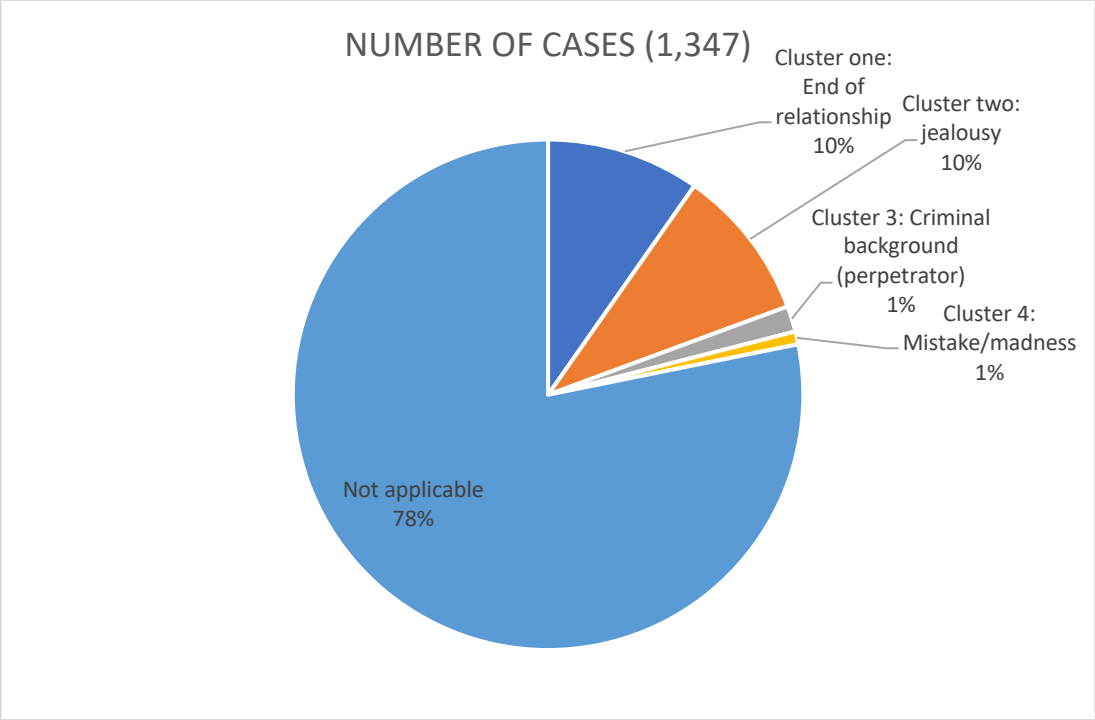


Figure 16. Percentage of each perpetrator code in relation to overall numbers.

I) End of relationship

[inconformado, não se conformava, não aceitava, não queria aceitar]

The most common attribute to perpetrators in this subset of data was one that I have examined before in the cases named feminicide — the perpetrator who will not accept the end of the relationship and murders his ex-partner because of it. As discussed in the previous chapter, the language of 'not accepting' the end of the relationship provides an insight into the mind of the perpetrator, giving the reader an insight into his mind. As seen below, the sentences regarding the inability to 'accept' the end of the relationship are quite self-contained, providing a neat motive for the feminicide.

Segundo a polícia, o homem não aceitava o fim do relacionamento. A vítima deixa três filhos. Os enterros aconteceram no cemitério municipal de Morungaba, no domingo (8). O caso foi registrado na delegacia de Itatiba (SP).

According to the police, the man did not accept the end of the relationship. The victim leaves behind three children. The funerals will happen on the municipal cemetery of Morungaba, on Sunday (8). The case was registered in the police precinct of Itatiba (SP).

This sentence is self-contained, an end in itself. As it had happened in cases named feminicides, the perpetrator in cases of domestic violence not named feminicides has his feelings portrayed in an almost sympathetic manner. The refusal to accept the end of the relationship – a sign, as I will discuss below, of potential harassment against the victim – reflects a simple, universal feeling. This 'reasoning' becomes the central reason for violence in the text, creating a bind for the reader: take the text's reasoning at face value, or already have an insight of what this language signifies[5]. This narrative is so strong that it sometimes gets repeated in the text, so as to drive the point home for the reader, as seen in the case below:

O crime teria sido cometido porque o ex-marido não aceitava o fim do relacionamento. Testemunhas contaram que a jovem morta estava na rua quando o homem chegou de moto, fez os disparos e, na sequência, fugiu em uma motocicleta branca. Ainda segundo o relato de testemunhas à corporação, o homem já teria ameaçado matar a vítima outras vezes, já que, conforme relataram, ele não aceitava o fim do relacionamento.

The crime was allegedly committed because the ex-husband did not accept the end of the relationship. Witnesses told us that the woman killed was on the sidewalk when the man arrived on a motocycle, shot at her and ran away on a white motorcycle. Still according to eyewitnesses's testimonies to the police, the man had already threatened to kill the victim, since, as they stated, he did not accept the end of the relationship.

5 While I and other gender scholars or activists might read into this a gendered form of coercive control, this implication is hidden behind the emotional charge of the text. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, the underlying assumption of the reporting is that the frustration with the end of a relationship comes across to the reader as a 'reason' for killing.

The case above brings up the 'reasoning' repeatedly, first by the text and then as eyewitnesses' statements. Further, the previous violent behaviour of the perpetrator (death threats) also gets subsumed into the same reasoning. In this, the use of 'end of relationship' is similar to the cases that are named feminicide — a language that sees into the mind of the perpetrator and validates the idea of the spurned/rejected lover which reflects universal, relatable feelings. The overlap of this language in cases both named feminicide and cases named murder seem to reinforce what I posited in the previous chapter: that while naming feminicide as such, the ideas that lie behind it remain the same as the cases which are not named as feminicide. The main differentiation between not-feminicide cases and feminicide cases is that feminicide cases make more use of the words 'não se conformava' and 'inconformado' which would roughly translate to 'not come to terms with' something (in this case, the end of relationship). As I discussed in the previous chapter, this language obfuscates the misogyny and sexism that are at play in the 'inability' of the perpetrator to accept the end of relationship.

As I will discuss below, the fact that this inability is contrasted with diminished insights into the victim on the not-feminicide cases, the reader is left with more psychological and emotional insight into the perpetrator than the victim.

ii. Jealousy

Another category present in this subset of cases is jealousy. While being used 50% less than in the cases named feminicides, jealousy is still one of the few factors that is used to describe the perpetrators in not-feminicide cases. Yet, there was a qualitative difference in the way jealousy was used in cases not named feminicide, being much less elaborated on, as it can be seen below:

Principal linha de investigação aponta que mulher foi morta em Feira de Santana por ciúmes, diz polícia.	*The main line of investigation shows that the woman was killed in Feira de Santana due to jealousy, states police*

Durante as investigações, o suspeito foi ouvido e admitiu ter cometido o crime por causa de ciúmes.	*During the investigation, the suspect testified and admitted having committed the crime due to jealousy.*

In the not-feminicide cases, the language of excessiveness is less present. While a small quantity of the cases with signifiers of jealousy used terms like 'muito', 'bastante' and other signifiers of excessiveness, in over 70% of the cases jealousy appeared on its own as a motivator for the crime. As I have discussed extensively in the previous chapter, jealousy serves important purposes in the media narratives of feminicide, being not only common but also evocative in the collective mind — think of Othello and it's green eyed monster. The formula on cases not named feminicide, which once again centres jealousy as the reason behind the violence, prioritises feeling over control, logic over misogynistic behaviour. The self-contained phrases that indicate jealousy as a motive also give it a clear-cut reasoning to the reader: the men killed a woman because of his feelings. This is similar to the 'end of relationship' reasoning, providing the reader with an immediate explanation for the violence they are reading about. From a gender scholar's perspective, this also means that there is no way for the reader to engage with the misogynistic aspects of such violence. If jealousy is an end in itself, the reader is unable to understand it as a manifestation of mechanisms of coercive control and the gender normativity that lies beyond it – which considers women as always potentially promiscuous if they do not abide by certain behaviours and which gives men the 'right' to control their bodies and attitudes.

Further still, even in the cases in which jealousy receives qualifiers, the language and underlying assumptions are the same that they were in feminicide cases. For example:

Mãe da vítima, Vane Corrêa Machado Castro, de 53 anos, conta que, por diversas	*Mother of the victim, Vane Corrêa Machado Castro, 53 years old, states that she*

vezes, presenciou atitudes agressivas do suspeito com sua filha.

'Sempre foi agressivo. Às vezes que ela [vítima] tirava por menos e dizia para eu não me meter. Eu dizia 'tá bom', e ficava apenas observando', relatou.

Segundo a mãe, as crises de ciúmes eram constantes por parte do suspeito. Nesta terça-feira ela presenciou o assassinato de Aline.

Durante as agressões no interior da residência, os filhos do casal também presenciaram as cenas - até que o pai os trancou em um quarto. Logo em seguida levou as duas mulheres para o lado de fora da casa e continuou as agressões com um pedaço de madeira.

'Eu fui me meter para tirar ele de cima dela, mas ele estava muito agressivo. Era muita paulada, paulada mesmo. Foi muito sangue, meu Deus', disse, emocionada.

No último domingo (18), a dona de casa relatou que a família foi para um clube e, lá, o suspeito xingou Aline com palavrões. 'Queria bater nela, só não bateu porque a família toda estava reunida e tentamos acalmá-lo, mas ele todo tempo exaltado e desconfiando da minha filha'. Não foi registrado nenhum B.O. sobre esse caso.

had witnessed aggressive attitudes of the suspect against her daughter several times.

'He was always aggressive. Sometimes she [the victim] would forgive him and tell me not to get involved. I'd say 'OK' and continue to watch it happen', she tells.

According to the mother, the crises of jealousy were constant. This Tuesday, she witnessed the murder of Alice.

During the beating inside the house, the children of the couple also bore witness to the scene – until the father locked them away in a room. Soon after, he took the two women outside and continued to beat them with a piece of wood.

'I went to intervene and get him off her, but he was too aggressive. He was beating her a lot, really beating her. There was so much blood, oh my God.' she says, emotional.

In the last Sunday (18), the homemaker stated that the family went to a club and there the suspect verbally assaulted Aline with swear words. 'He wanted to hit her, the only reason he did not was because the whole family was there and we tried to calm him down, but he was impassioned and suspicious of my daughter.' There was no police report filed about this case, exaltado e desconfiando da minha filha'.

The perpetrator is once again here portrayed in a radically emotional life — he is aggressive and has crises of jealousy. Previous aggressions are also interspersed with a degree of conformity (and potentially even victim-blaming): his aggressions

are a given, his rage even accepted by the victim. The aggression is put in the same level of other emotions, explained by them. The perpetrator is not seen as a repeat offender whose controlling behaviour exists due to structural issues of violent sexism and misogyny; he is an emotionally unregulated subject. Even the emotional charge of the mother relaying her daughter's death is mediated through the feelings of rage and jealousy of the perpetrator — he is so out of control with feeling, but very little space is left for the feelings of fear and sadness of the victim and her family.

As I have discussed previous when looking at the 'end of relationship' cluster, the presence of the jealousy cluster once again in cases not named feminicide seems to indicate that when perpetrators are spoken of in this subset, they are spoken of in the same way they were in the feminicide cases. The absence of further descriptions for perpetrators in the not-feminicide cases

iii. Criminal background

The final category regarding perpetrators in not-feminicide cases is what I have named 'criminal background' cluster — that is, when the perpetrator is portrayed as criminal or as a member of a criminal organisation. It is important to note that there were perpetrators named as criminals in the cases named feminicide, but the frequency of those cases was much smaller here, potentially due to the absence of perpetrator's descriptions in general. Due to the decrease in descriptions and qualifiers for the perpetrator in not-feminicide cases, the use of criminal background indicators becomes more important, because it showcases what is said when something is said about the perpetrator.

The perpetrator being called a 'criminal' is more common in this dataset than being called an aggressor (a language more used in feminicide cases. The distinction is interesting, as 'criminal' evokes a sense of outside danger — and it is oftentimes a racialised term. On the other hand, the use of 'aggressor' in Portuguese is language more used in contexts of intimate partner violence. Considering that this subset included more crimes in which the relationship between perpetrator and victim was not clear, this is unsurprising.

One of the interesting aspects of the use of criminal background descriptors on the perpetrator is that it can be allied both with certain aspects of sexual crime which I discuss in the context section and with information given about the victim. Examples of this can be seen in the cases below:

A PM informou que a vítima era garota de programa e trabalhava no bairro da Pajuçara, quando foi ao local com o homem. (...) O sargento disse ainda que o criminoso derrubou o portão e fugiu do local em um carro de cor vermelha.	*The PM informed that the victim was a sex worker and worked in the neighbourhood of Pajuçara, from where she went to the location of the crime with the man. (...) The sergeant said as well that the criminal broke down the gate and ran away in a red car.*

A adolescente está desaparecida desde o fim de semana. Criminosos gravaram e divulgaram nas redes sociais o corpo de uma mulher morta que, segundo a família, é o de Alice. Ela teria sido estuprada e agredida antes de ser assassinada.	*The teenager has been missing since the weekend. Criminals recorded and divulged in social media the body of a woman who, according to the family, is that of Alice. She would have been raped and beaten before being murdered.*

In the first case, the victim is a sex worker, and in the other, the victim was raped before being killed. These two instances reiterate the distinction I pointed above — between the criminal and the aggressor. The conflation of sex and death with the stranger hiding in the bushes has been pointed by several scholars of sexual violence (Manne, 2018; Bates 2018). The fact that the word criminal is more used in the cases not named feminicide than the word aggressor both reveals what kind of crimes are still not being considered feminicides and what kind of violence counts as 'criminal'.

It is also important to note that in both cases, the victim is also pulled into criminality – on the first, the victim is named as a sex worker, whereas on the second, the circumstances of the crime seem to indicate a feminicide 'by connection' (Macaulay, 2021) in which a girl or woman is killed due to relationship(s) with

criminal groups or individuals. This will be discussed further when I examine the portrayals of victims in this subset, but it is worth of note in the perpetrator analysis because it showcases how in the cases that the perpetrator is seen in an 'unsympathetic' light this gets extended to the victim, highlighting her as a transgressor of society's norms.

The absence of words to describe and identify the perpetrator in not-feminicide cases raises many questions. The first one is why those cases have less information? Even the cases which follow domestic violence scripts included in the not-feminicide subset have less information than the cases that appear on the feminicide subset. As I have previously discussed in Chapter IV, the difference in what states have the most cases in each one of the subsets could indicate underlying issues of prejudiced reporting – however, they could also indicate structural issues within the police and legal structures of each state. These questions are important and could be explored in further research that looked specifically at comparisons between states. Similarly, a closer examination of police reports to check other important indicators, such as race of the victim, could yield interesting results in thinking about why some cases seem to elicit more interest and information than others.

Another issue around this absence of information about the perpetrator can be understood when looking at the questions surrounding the portrayal of the victim as a sexual disposable commodity and the difficulties of using the category of sexual feminicide in Brazil, which I discuss in the thread two and three of this chapter respectively. The lack of information when looking at the perpetrator in cases of sexual violence can be both a question of impunity (are these cases being taken seriously and investigated?), of morality (are these victims sympathetic?), and even as a difficulty (are these cases harder to solve?).

If the perpetrator does not seem to be portrayed in a different light than in the cases of feminicide, does the same apply to victims? In the previous chapter I have highlighted how the victim and perpetrator have different relationships to the text — the victim of feminicide was central to the construction of the text, her pictures often illustrating the pages. In the next section I will see whether in not-feminicide

cases the victims are portrayed similarly following on to the close relationship between perpetrator portrayals in both cases.

Thread two: victim

As discussed above, the portrayal of perpetrators seems to have many commonalities with the portrayal of perpetrators in the cases of feminicide. Bearing that in mind, I was interested in seeing whether the same was true for the victims of crimes not named feminicide. One of the first questions I had was: if the perpetrator in many cases is being portrayed similarly, does that mean that the differentiation between feminicide/not-feminicide falls unto the victim?

The first aspect of note was how much less information I seemed to have about the victims in this particular subset when compared to the one where crimes were named feminicides. If in the previous subset they were everywhere, pictures of smiling faces and tearful quotes from family and friends, in not-feminicide cases they became silent figures, not portrayed and sometimes not named. In particular, I began to see in this subset of the data something I will explore even further in the following chapter: women who seem to live and die within the margins, whose existence was reduced to the discovery of their bodies, the injuries and violence done unto them.

As discussed in chapter IV, crimes not named feminicide fit in their majority under three categories: domestic violence; familial violence; and sexual violence. When analysing the cases not named feminicide, I often encountered the same issues with perpetrators and victims — that is, that cases not named feminicide contained much less information about those involved in the crime than cases named feminicide. Some of the descriptors seen previously applied to victims, such as ‘linda’ and ‘bonita’ barely appear (less than 1% of cases). In the vast majority of cases, women killed by their partners and ex-partners in crimes not named feminicides were only described in straightforward terms: name (if available), age, method of murder. In the not-feminicide cases, the most common descriptions were those that focused on what was done to the victim — her body, the marks of the

violence left behind. In this, I began to see a process of objectification, that is, an metamorphosis of the victim from an embodied subject into an inert body.

Before I examine the most common characterisations of victims however, it is important to highlight some of the findings There were a couple of interesting cases that were notable in relation to the other subsets. In particular, not-feminicide victims are more likely to be named as sex workers — there were over twice as many instances of women (cis and trans) being named sex workers in this subset than in the previous one.[6] While the number of threshold cases was not met, the fact that sex workers are mostly mentioned in this subset of data it raises the question of whether their work impacts perception over their deaths. In cases named feminicide, the few cases in which sex work was mentioned usually involved an established romantic relationship, rather than a death occurring in the act of sex work. Whereas in the not-feminicide cases, sex workers victims were killed in other context, with implications that they were killed due to their position as sex workers.

This follows my assumption that victims of gender violence suffer from epistemic injustice (Fricker, 2007) at every step of the way. In Chapter V, I have taken a closer look at the ways in which the category of victim becomes contradictory and difficult even for women who are being subjected to a sympathetic gaze. In this chapter, the inability to name the violence being inflicted upon them as feminicide further removes them as possible subjects of gender violence — that is, makes the violence somebody else's fault (maybe the victim herself). The case of sex workers showcases this well because being sex work comes with many stereotypes and preconceived ideas, and as Fricker states:

> Notably, if the stereotype embodies a prejudice that works against the speaker, then two things follow: there is an epistemic dysfunction in the exchange—the hearer makes an unduly deflated judgement of the speaker's credibility, perhaps missing out on knowledge as a result; and the hearer does something ethically bad—the speaker is wrongfully undermined in her capacity as a knower (2007:17)

6 In the previous subset, we had 12 cases, while in this one, there were over 30 women named as sex workers.

As I have stated before, the women who are killed cannot speak, so the way that they are spoken about directly impacts how they are perceived as subjects and what this perception 'says' to the reader. Sex workers and women perceived to be involved with criminal groups suffer from a credibility deficit — for example, Wright highlights how sex workers are suspected due to familiar ideas of them being 'threats to society' (2006:682). The same holds true for women who are perceived to be involved with criminal groups and/or activities. However, these ideas do not operate only in these clear cases – as pointed out by Manne, the idea of female sexuality can itself become the ground for accusations of sex work and generate a sense of entitlement to their bodies (2018:56). She is highlighting how certain men might think that women owe them something (sex, access to their bodies). In the case of the murdered women in this subset, the reader seems also to be entitled to their bodies, the story of their deaths. In contrast, cases named feminicide, the reader is entitled to know what makes those victims 'deserving' or 'grievable' victims (such as being a good mother, a fighter, beautiful). Here, the reader is privy to the details of the violence this woman suffered from, as seen below:

A mulher foi encontrada sem roupa e com o sêmen do agressor na região genital. Já as agressões físicas ocorreram na região da cabeça, com um pedaço de pau. Há suspeitas de que a mulher era garota de programa e vivia em situação de rua.

The woman was found without her clothes and with her aggressor's semen in the genital area. The physical aggressions happened in the head area, with a piece of wood. It is suspected that the woman was a sex worker and was homeless.

In the case above, the woman is first described in explicit detail in terms of what was done unto her. Then the image is juxtaposed with a 'suspicion': that this woman was a sex worker and also homeless. This suspicion serves to give context to the reader — that this woman was at-risk, subjecting herself to violence by being homeless and/or working as a sex worker. As seen in below (Table 9, Figure 16), the categories ascribed to the victim in this subset of data is radically different than the one in the cases named feminicide. In this section, I will examine how they are

portrayed as sexualised body-objects and are oftentimes made complicit in their own victimisation.

Clusters: victim	Number of cases
Cluster one: Nudity	255
Cluster two: Sexual violence	225
Cluster three: Dead body	108
Cluster four: Criminal background (victim)	71
Not applicable	1,053

Table 12. Cases with codes related to the victim.

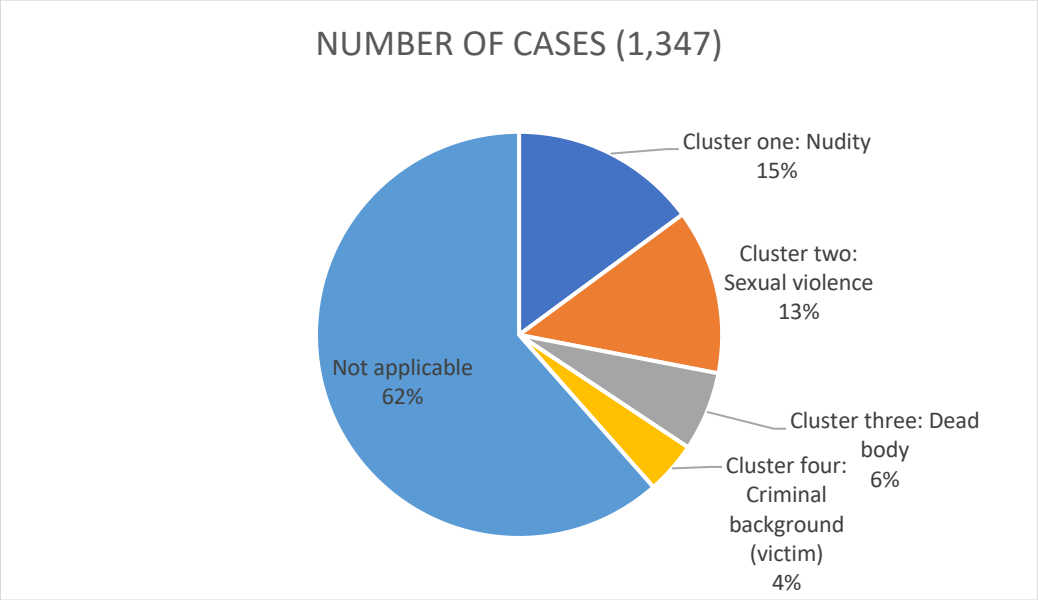


Figure 17. Percentage of each victim code in relation to overall numbers,

i. Naked

One of the most common descriptors to the victims of this dataset was the characterisation of women as naked, half naked or undressed. This is not surprising — as discussed, sexual violence followed by murder is not straightforwardly characterised as feminicide in the Brazilian Feminicide Law. This does notman, however, that all victims that are portrayed to be nude or seminude are portrayed as victims of sexual violence (in fact, they appear together in less than half the cases in this subset).

In my analysis, I have considered that the question of nudity is important for two reasons: one, even if there is no explicit mention of rape, to leave a body nude or seminude can indicate other forms of sexual violence (including harassment, assault, or gendered forms of torture and humiliation); two, the reporting of the bodies as nude/seminude also tell something to the reader. An example is seen below:

Os indícios também apontam que Rosiane entrou no campus ainda viva no carro do assassino e que os dois teriam encostado no local do crime para namorar. Porém, ainda não há indícios de que houve estupro.

'O corpo estava semi despido, com os seios de fora e tudo indica que ela estava acompanhada de uma pessoa dentro de um carro. Pode ser que tenha havido alguma discussão e ele tenha a arrancado de dentro do veículo... possivelmente já morta. Vamos analisar os laudos, tanto do IML, quanto do ICRIM, para estabelecer a dinâmica desse crime', declarou a delegada da Mulher, Viviane Fontenelle.

The investigation indicated that Rosiane arrived at the campus still alive in the murderer's car and that they stopped the car at the crime scene to make out. But there are yet no indicators that she was raped.

'The body was semi nude, with the breasts out and everything indicates that she was accompanied by someone inside a car. It could be that there was an argument and that he would have pulled her from the vehicle… possibly already dead. We will analyse the reports [from the coroner and crime scene investigators] so that we can establish the dynamics of this crime', declared the police officer [of the Delegacia] da Mulher, Viviane Fontanelle.

In this case, the threat of sexual violence lies just behind the text — the police declares that there are no indicators of rape, but the imagery is in itself violent: seminude, with the breasts exposed. Once again, it is possible to see the difficulties of naming appearing once again. Sexual violence is best manifested in its ultimate iteration: rape, and this creates a blindness to the other forms in which it can manifest extreme misogyny. Despite this, the reader is being presented with a picture of Rosiane. She was making out with her murderer in a car and was found with her breasts exposed, but nothing indicates she was raped. This signals Wright's idea of a 'public woman', the one who 'via her own activities on the street invites the violence she suffers: she is not an innocent victim of a public crime.' (2006: 686).

As I have discussed in Chapter II, legibility is at the heart of this project — and legibility threads through not only how feminicide is understood but also how misogyny is portrayed and, oftentimes, obscured by language. When looking at the case above, there is a duality present: absence of rape/presence of violent sexual imagery; innocent victim/public woman. As I will discuss in the cluster of words referring to sexual violence in descriptions of the victim, the two do not always coincide, but they all reveal similar narratives of violence. As seen below:

Conforme testemunhas, a vítima estava sem roupa da cintura para baixo. A polícia foi acionada pelos conhecidos da mulher.

A vítima, segundo moradores da região, havia sido vista pela última vez na noite de sábado (17) na casa de um amigo dela. Uma das hipóteses, ainda conforme informações prestadas por conhecidos da jovem, é que ela tenha ido visitar um amigo e teria se encontrado lá com um homem conhecido dela. Ela teria ido embora da residência do amigo com o homem. No caminho, o homem teria abusado sexualmente dela e a matado com pedradas na cabeça e no rosto

According to witnesses, the victim was without clothes from the waist down. The police was called by acquaintances of the woman.

The victim, according to neighbours, was last seen on Saturday night (17) at a [male] friend's house. One of the hypotheses, according to the information provided by an acquaintance of the young woman, was that she went to visit a friend and there met with a male acquaintance of hers. She left her friend's house with him. On the way, the men abused of her sexually and killed her by bludgeoning her face and head with stones.

In this report, the victim allegedly knew her killer, having left another male friend's house with him on the night she was killed. The text later goes on to mention that the victim consumes illicit drugs and has three children (4 and 5 years old and a one-month new-born). while the text has no explicit markers of moral judgement, the characterisation is wildly different than the 'hard-working', 'family-oriented' women of cases named feminicide. The woman here is engaging in illicit behaviour such as drug use, and her other behaviours has implications for the reader. While the text never explicitly says: 'Why was she out with a male acquaintance when she has a newborn at home?', it gives the reader the information to ask this same question. In this, the narrative becomes extremely normative without any judgment being uttered in the text.

While this portrayal of nude bodies is present in the subset, it is not the only one. As I have stated previously, victim qualifiers are much rarer, creating situations in which the nude body of the victim is the first image given to the reader, such as seen below:

Vizinhos acionaram a polícia depois que entraram no imóvel e a encontraram seminua sobre a cama. Ela tinha hematomas no rosto, braços e pulsos.

Neighbours called the police after they gained access to the house and found her half nude on the bed. She had bruises on her face, arms and wrists.

The victim here, once again portrayed as half-naked, and then the article continues to describe the violence enacted upon her. There is no mention of an agent of violence, however — the scene is set almost as a script: half naked atop the bed. Bruises on face, arms and wrists. This set up seems to be even more interesting when the article is read as a whole:

Mulher é encontrada morta em BH após registrar ameaças do ex-companheiro

A causa da morte será definida após autópsia (...) O corpo de uma mulher de 37

Woman is found dead in BH [Belo Horizonte] after registering ex-partners threats [with the police]

anos foi encontrado em estado de decomposição e com marcas de violência na tarde de sábado (28/8), no Bairro Maria Getrudes, Região Oeste de BH. Vizinhos acionaram a polícia depois que entraram no imóvel e a encontraram seminua sobre a cama. Ela tinha hematomas no rosto, braços e pulsos.

The cause of the death will be defined after the autopsy. (...) The body of a 37 year old woman was found decomposing and with marks of violence in the afternoon of Saturday (28/8) in the neighbourhood of Maria Getrudes, in the western region of BH. Neighbours called the police after they gained access to the house and found her half nude on the bed. She had bruises on her face, arms and wrists.

Therefore, the article juxtaposes two images: one, the domestic violence victim; two, the unknown assailant and the threat of sexual violence. Her ex-companion appears only in the title and disappears in the text that follows — in fact, all agents of violence disappear in the text that follows. As I have touched upon previously, the language in cases of violence against women is often passive, existing regardless of a perpetrator or aggressor. It is the woman who has bruises and her body who bears the markings of such violence, not a perpetrator who inflicted the bruises and the violence. In her discussion of 'public women', Wright highlights how the sex worker body becomes: 'The site of normalized rape, torture, and murder. She is guilty of her own crime. She, not the perpetrator, is in fact the criminal.' (2006:687). By making the female body open to the gaze of the public as a site of violence whilst obscuring the violent actor that caused it, the bruised female body becomes normalised.

Another example of language in which the victim's semi-nude body becomes the main site of violence can be seen below:

Mulher é encontrada morta por enforcamento e seminua na manhã de Natal

Uma mulher de 47 anos foi encontrada morta e apenas com calcinha e sutiã dentro do quarto de uma fazenda em Varjão de Minas, no Alto Paranaíba, na manhã do Natal, nesta

Woman is found half naked and dead by strangulation on Christmas morning

A 47 year old woman was found dead and only wearing her bra and pants inside a room in a farm in Varjnao de Minas, Alto da Parnaíba, on Christmas morning, this

quarta-feira (25). A perícia concluiu que Neide Oliveira da Silva foi morta enforcada e ela também tinha traumas no tórax.	*Wednesday (25). Forensics concluded that Neide Oliveira da Silva was strangled and she also has bruises in her thorax.*

In this case, Neide has been 'killed by strangulation' and there are 'bruises in her thorax', but it such violence seems to exist in a vacuum, similarly to the case analysed before hers. As the text develops, however, it moves on to describe how her partner tried to kill himself after her death, and highlights that her body showcased that she had fought against her assailant, had grass in her hair and that she and her partner had police records for 'fights' between them. Suddenly, the description of Neide as a passive violated body gets inserted into more complex situations, all of which are gendered: her nakedness, a history of gender violence. But for the reader, this is all secondary — the attention has been focused on the strangled, half naked body on Christmas Day, an image that is disturbing to the reader.

The figure of the nude/semi-nude body present in the dataset does notexist alone in the text. It is allied with another important aspect of the data, which is the portrayal of victims are dead bodies rather than women subjects. While these two often go together, they are used differently across the data — for example, in the case above, Neide while exposed as a victim of violence, remains named and her figure retains some subjectivity: she is a woman, she is 47 years old. What I noted and what I will analyse later in this chapter, are the cases in which the victim becomes even less of a subject: the cases in which the victim is mostly portrayed as a dead body, a corpse, without any semblance of life. Beyond being portrayed as nude and semi-nude, this subset also included words such as raped, violated and abused to describe victims – all words that refer to sexual violence. While these words sometimes occurred concurrently with nudity, this was not always the case, as I discuss below.

ii. Rape and sexual violence

In conjuction with the cluster above, the cluster of words referring to sexual violence was also highly present in this subset of data. While sometimes used alongside descriptions of the victim as nude or seminude, I decided to analyse both as separate instances since there are cases in which women are described as being nude without the words rape or sexual violence appearing, and vice-versa. As I have discussed above, the presence of nudity serves as an eroticisation of the dead female body, but also has the implication of sexual violence, which sometimes lies just under the text. On the other hand, the words on the cluster of rape and sexual violence are explicit – raped, violated, abused.

One of the noteworthy aspects of the use of words referring to rape and sexual violence is there while the characterisation of 'raped' was used 99 times in the data, the word 'rapist' only occurred 4 times. This disparity in words once again highlights the presence of violated and injured bodies without considering who has inflicted the violence upon them. Once again I was reminded of Thurler, highlighting the absence of the perpetrator in the text while centring the victim (2017) – only in this dataset it is notthe smiling face of the victim that faces the reader. Instead, the details of the violence that she suffered become her main representation in the text.

The words in this cluster were once again used in a clear and descriptive fashion, as can be seen in the cases below.

Uma mulher de aproximadamente 30 anos foi estuprada e morta a pauladas, na manhã desta segunda-feira (2), em um terreno na Avenida Autaz Mirim, zona leste de Manaus.	*A 30 year old woman was raped and bludgeoned to death this Monday morning (2), in an empty lot in the Avenida Autaz Mirim, eastern region of Manaus.*
A empregada doméstica Gilmara da Almeida da Silva, de 45 anos, morta no último dia 30 - após ser espancada na casa dos patrões na	The housekeeper Gilmara da Almeira da Silva, 45, killed on the 30th of last month – after being

Freguesia, em Jacarepaguá, na Zona Oeste do Rio - foi abusada sexualmente antes de ser asfixiada.	beaten at her employer's house in Freguesia, Jacarepaguá, western region of Rio – was sexually abused before being asphyxiated.

Uma mulher foi estuprada e morta a pedradas no bairro Vila São Paulo, em Contagem, na região metropolitana, neste domingo (18). O corpo dela foi encontrado por vizinhos na passagem de pedestres desativada do metrô.	*A woman was raped and bludgeoned to death with stones in the neighbourhood of Vila São Paulo, in Contagem, in the metropolitan area, this Sunday (18). Her body was found by neighbours in the inactive pedestrian walkway of the underground.*

Examining the excerpts above, it is possible to see that descriptions of violated women are the same regardless of how much information is given about them. The two anonymous women have their violence represented like Gilmara does: they are raped, abused, asphyxiated, and beaten. There is not a subject that enacts violence upon them – the violence comes from nowhere, erupts and impacts both the victim and the reader. In the cases of the two anonymous women, the perpetrator is unknown, but in the case of Gilmara, the perpetrator is a member of her employer's family. This is only revealed much later in the text, and the title and byline follow the same structure of cases in which there is no perpetrator: a violated victim who is exposed to the reader.

Finally, the interchangeable terms of rape, abuse and sexual violence, while useful for an analysis such as mine, also reveals that the portrayal of sexual violence remains uncertain: in one report, the media highlights that a girl was 'abused' by her father before being killed by him. It is only later in the text that the reader learn that the title means that the girl was raped by her father – the same happens in other news reports, with the word abuse, sexual abuse, sexual violence and rape being used interchangeably. While rape is a form of abuse, sexual abuse and sexual violence, the conflation of those terms means that other forms of sexual violence might be obscured since they are not rape.

One example of this can be seen in the case below:

De acordo com a Polícia Militar (PM), foi apurado que a vítima estava bebendo desde cedo com cerca de três pessoas e, pela cena do crime, ela pode ter sido abusada sexualmente. No entanto, apenas exames poderão confirmar o estupro.	*According to the Militar Police (PM), the investigation shows that the woman was drinking all day with other three people and the crime scene shows she could've been sexualle abused. However, only exams can confirm the rape.*

In this case, the context indicates that the woman was sexually abused – however, the news quickly contends that only a medical examination can confirm the rape. This gives the reader a yes or no scenario. Either there was rape (and therefore sexual abuse) or there was no rape (therefore no sexual abuse). This is not in line with the multifaceted nature of sexual violence, not limited to rape.

As I have discussed both in this chapter and in Chapter IV, sexual violence victims are more present in this subset of data than in any of the other two subsets. However, the portrayal of such victims seems to centre the violence done upon them rather than the perpetrators of sexual violence. Furthermore, the portrayals do not centre any agency of the victim, her story or other aspects beyond the exposure of their brutalised bodies. This construction of sexual violence further feeds into the narrative that I discussed above: the violated body is open to the male gaze by centring violent sexual imagery. When put into context with the idea of 'public women', or the images of the female body as open to the gaze of the public, these victims become the subect of a whole array of normative assumptions over their bodies. While Wright highlights the concept of 'public woman' as one found in plces outside the domestic, I here highlight how even when found in domestic settings, this portrayal of women reduces them to subjects of violence (sexual and otherwise.) As I will discuss below, this is not limited to those victims of sexual violence, but it applies to the entirety of this subset.

iii. Corpo de uma mulher

Another common description of the victim is of her as a dead body. This was something that was of immediate interest to me as it differed from the cases named feminicide, in which this description did not meet the threshold of 5% of cases. In the crimes not named feminicide, in over 8% of the cases, the women are written as dead bodies, oftentimes before they are written as women, such as seen below:

Assassino enterra corpo de mulher em quintal e morre após conflito com a PM

Crime ocorreu em Araguari, no Triângulo Mineir. Mulher de 20 anos foi assassinada e o corpo dela foi enterrado no quintal da casa onde ela e o autor se encontraram, neste sábado (10/4), em Araguari. Ele foi descoberto e, em conflito com a Polícia Militar, acabou sendo baleado na sequência e também morreu.

Murderer buries a woman's body in yard and dies after conflict with the PM

The crime occurred in Araguari, in the Triângulo Mineiro A 20 year old woman was murdered and her body was buried in the yard of the house where she and the perpetrator met, this Saturday (10/4) in Araguari. He was found out and, in conflict with the Military Police (PM) ended up being shot and also died.

The text begins by highlighting that the murderer buried a woman's body, and only later goes on to switch to the word woman and give information on who she was. The language is interesting because a body is an object, whereas a woman is a subject — and in being an object, a woman's body becomes even more available to the misogynistic gaze. In her article 'Whose Story is Written on Her Dead Body?', Sabine Binder, while focusing on crime fiction, asks how the female victim is portrayed in ways in which highlight a certain eroticism of the dead female body (2017).

Binder's questions surrounding the depictions of women's dead bodies echoed within me — how the idea of the beauty of women's deaths does notseem to be reduced to crime fiction. In my teenage years, one of my favourite book series Anne of Green Gables, describes the funeral of one of the protagonist's schoolfriends.

> Her loveliness, as she lay, white-clad, among the delicate flowers that Anne had placed about her, was remembered and talked of for years in Avonlea. Ruby had always been beautiful; but her beauty had been of the earth, earthy; it had had a certain insolent quality in it, as if it flaunted itself in the beholder's eye; spirit had

> never shone through it, intellect had never refined it. But death had touched it and consecrated it, bringing out delicate modellings and purity of outline never seen before – doing what life and love and great sorrow and deep womanhood joys might have done for Ruby. Anne, looking down through a mist of tears, at her old playfellow, thought she saw the face God had meant Ruby to have, and remembered it so always. (2009(1915), p. 153)

In this excerpt, the dead girl is redeemed through death (the character has been portrayed in the novels quite as a vain, flirtatious girl). Dead, however, it becomes redeemed of its flaws, becomes more beautiful, more worthy. Agency gives it less sympathy, and death grants it a new beauty. When I began reading about the dead bodies of women and the ways in which they were destitute of agency while gaining a captive audience (either through sympathy or through eroticisation), the image of Ruby Gillis in a young adult's book of the early 20th century sprung to mind. This seemed to indicate to me that the ideas that lay behind the text were once again ones that rest on powerful collective images which have been part of the cultural fabric of society for a long period of time.

As I highlighted in the previous chapter, I was expecting to find clearer examples of victim-blaming in media reporting — while some narratives of transgressiveness and moral judgements can be seen in cases presented in the cluster of nudity, this was still not explicitly present in the media reporting. A dead body has no agency in which its demise can be blamed on. A dead body elicits mixed feelings, and a violated woman, crossing between sex and death, becomes even more available to society's gaze. Similar arguments are seen in discussions of the portrayal of victims of violence in anti-trafficking campaigns (Andrijasevic, 2007) — beautiful, young, naive women portrayed as victims of an evil from which no escape is possible. The depictions of the women's bodies in this subset of data begin to showcase an issue that is even more present in the cases I will analyse in the next chapter. That is the portrayal of victims as a canvas of violence — passive receptacles in which their life disappears to be subsumed by their violent deaths. Another example can be seen below:

Enterrado em Volta Redonda corpo de mulher morta pelo ex-namorado com tiro na cabeça

Sepultamento de Sirlene Ferreira de Lacerda, de 38 anos, foi no Cemitério Municipal do Retiro. Ela foi assassinada na manhã de quinta-feira, no caminho para o trabalho.

Buried in Volta Redonda body of the woman killed by her ex-boyfriend with a shot to the head

The burial of Sirlene Ferreira de Lacerda, 38 years old, was held at the Municipal Cemetery of Retiro. She was murdered in the morning of Thursday, on her way to work.

The title of the piece emphasises the woman's dead body rather than the woman herself, who only gets introduced to the reader if they choose to keep reading the article. It is not a woman who is buried, it is the body of a woman. This can be taken even further when the body is described as 'being killed by' the boyfriend, shifting the action away from the perpetrator into the victim herself. While this was already seen in the cases named feminicide, the absence of other victim descriptions means that the woman gets further removed from life and further aligned with death.

In her article about the victims of feminicide in Juárez, Monárrez Fragoso states that 'the horror and the atrocities become part of the urban norm and part of the sexual excess of girls and women who 'asked for it.'' (2010:68). She highlights how the portrayal of women's bodies, naked, violated and left in places such as empty lots, desert zones, and garbage dumps, symbolise the devaluing of women and reflects their status as sexually fetishised commodities. In the cases I analysed, much of what Fragoso encountered on women's nude and seminude bodies holds true: the portrayal of the bruises left behind, and the signals of violence echo women's defencelessness (2010:60). Despite the spatial and temporal difference between the Juárez 1990s-2000s victims and the victims of feminicide in contemporary Brazil, the same signifiers seem to hold true.

A case in which these commonalities become evident can be seen below:

Uma mulher com aparentes 30 anos foi encontrada morta no fim da manhã deste domingo (15), no bairro Providência, na Zona

A woman of around 30 years old was found dead at the end of the morning this Sunday (15), in the neighbourhood of Providência, in

Norte de Belo Horizonte. A vítima estava nua, com o resto de uma blusa rasgada e com roupas íntimas, igualmente danificadas, ao lado do corpo.

O corpo foi encontrado em um lote vago, na esquina das avenidas Risoleta Neves com Waldomiro Lobo, por um homem que teria entrado no local para defecar. Segundo a Polícia Militar, além das vestimentas rasgadas, a mulher apresentava sinais de esganadura no pescoço, com marcas de unha, e a face roxa.

the northern region of Belo Horizonte. The victim was nude, with the remains of a ripped blouse and underwear equally damaged by the side of the body.

The body was found in an empty lot at the corner of the avenues Risoleta Neves with Waldomiro Lobo, by a man who had entered the lot to defecate. According to the Military Police, besides having ripped clothes, the woman showed signs of having been strangled, with nail marks on her neck and a purple face.

The place in which the body is located is an empty lot, and a man only finds her because he is going to use it to relieve himself. The clothes are torn, the woman has been strangled so hard that there are nail marks on her neck, and her face is purple. The image contrasts disgust (the empty lot being used as a public toilet), horror (the violence) and sex (clothes ripped, and ripped underwear lying next to the body). The disposability of the body, located in a site of abjection and disgust, creates a distance between reader and victim. As Ahmed discusses, 'disgust does something' (2015:83), it causes the recoil. But similarly, Ahmed contends that it is also ambivalent — it also involves an attraction towards the objects that are repellent.

In the case of the bodies of dead women, what is encountered in this juxtaposition of disgust, horror and sex is shock value. The reader goes through several emotions which are mainly elicited through seeing the body as a receptacle of violence and as an object (often a sexual object). The sympathy and/or concern that the reader might have towards the victim does notseem to encompass an understanding of sexual violence – mainly it seems abhorrent, out of norm and exceptionally brutal. The recoil and attraction of the brutalised body creates a fixed image in the head of the reader: a snapshot of the victim in the moment of ultimate violence.

Sontag claims that photographs, whilst eliciting emotional responses, do not allow for the build-up of any interpretation – they are dissociated moments that lack some sense of cohesion (2003:154). Similarly, the image of a brutalised (and as I have discussed, often sexualised) dead woman's body creates an emotional response – and a mixed one, with repulsion and attraction vying for attention in the reader. Differently from Sontag's snapshots though, this image repeats itself ad nauseam – and as I argue in this work, creates a cohesive narrative in which the violence gets both normalised and exceptionalised.

Even in cases in this subset in which the victim receives positive characterisation, the presence of the dead body spearheads the text, as seen below:

Corpo de mulher morta pelo ex-marido será enterrado em Alagoas

A morte de Maria da Gloria Santos, de 33 anos, que foi brutalmente esfaqueada pelo ex-marido, no final da noite da última terça-feira (7), em Ibaté, causou muita comoção e indignação.

Maria da Gloria trabalhava em uma empresa que prestava serviços na Fábrica de Motores da Volkswagen, em São Carlos. Ela havia acabado de chegar do trabalho, quando foi atacada por Jaldir dos Santos.

Amigos próximos de Maria a descreveram como uma mulher trabalhadora, guerreira e temente a Deus. Ela sempre estava na igreja com as duas filhas de 12 e 13 anos, que ficaram órfãs às vésperas do Dia das Mães.

Body of woman killed by ex-husband will be buried in Alagoas

The death of Maria da Gloria Santos, 33, who was brutally stabbed by her ex-husband late at night last Tuesday (7), in Ibaté, caused much commotion and indignation.

Maria da Gloria worked in a company that was contracted by Volkswagen, in São Carlos. She has just arrived from work when she was attacked by Jaldir dos Santos.

Friends of Maria described her as a hard-working woman, a warrior and a woman who feared God. She was always at church with her two daughters, 12 and 13 years old, who became orphans close to Mother's Day.

Maria is a hard worker, a warrior and a religious family woman[7] – but she is first presented to the reader as a body. The title of the news report could have been

7 For further discussions on the narratives around these positive portrayals of victims, please refer to chapter V

‘woman killed by her husband is laid to rest in Alagoas’ but the choice of words emphasises her dead body. This shows that even in cases in which the victim’s life and qualities are being centred to the reader, there is the presence of her as a brutalised body (quite literally, the word ‘brutally’ qualifies how she was stabbed). This double bind in which the victim follows normative scripts but is still being portrayed primarily in relation to the violence she suffered echoes some of the concerns discussed in the previous chapter.

While there are not enough cases to make any final contributions to the portrayal of sex workers in cases of feminicide in Brazilian media, I hope that these questions serve as a starting point for future research in the field. This thesis has so far sustained that women who exhibit ’transgressive’ behaviour (or any behaviour that does not follow very specific gender norms) are punished not only with the violence that is enacted upon their bodies but with testimonial and epistemic violence that makes them less grievable victims.

While in the previous chapter, I examined the context surrounding one specific type of crime – that is, a woman killing, which was named a homicide with the qualifier of feminicide according to Brazilian law – the context of the cases here is varied. As I have discussed so far in this chapter, the perpetrator is portrayed more often in cases in which there is the presence of elements of domestic and intimate partner violence (even though they are not named feminicide), whereas victim’s characterisations seem to occur more in the context of explicit or implicit sexual violence. This demonstrates that context is crucial to the understanding of narratives of crimes not named feminicides, and this is what I will examine below.

Thread three: the context of the crime

As I have discussed in this chapter, the victim and perpetrator receive much less attention in the cases in this subset of data than they have received in the cases named feminicide. However, the context of the crime gains importance, as the cases here are not classified as feminicides, which means that their location as gender violence becomes slippery — at least under the eyes of Brazilian law, police and media. I have so far examined how the portrayals of victim and perpetrator are linked

to the context of the crime, but there are still questions surrounding why these crimes have not been named feminicides in the media. If there is less information about the victim and the perpetrator, are there answers in the context of these crimes that can explain why they are classed as something other than feminicide? In order to answer this question, I examined the context of the crime in cases not classed as feminicides not only by what is described, but also by the classifications themselves.

While in the previous subset of data I knew that the crime was being named feminicide, here I considered that the politics of naming, which are central to this thesis, play a part in the description of context. A robbery followed by murder elicits a certain image; a rape followed by murder, another image. The absence of information could mean that gendered social perceptions gain space — Manne discusses when analysing the idea that perpetrators are monsters, that the banality of misogyny needs to be accepted. But if the violence is not being named as misogynistic, will this banality be seen? Or will other ideas, which have historically been used in cases of gender violence, be brought as explanations? While I will examine more closely depictions of the context in which the cases not named feminicide, I believe that the name they receive is an inherent part of this description.[8]

i. Murder/Homicide

By far the most common classification was the crime being named a homicide or murder. This covers both cases that were actually classed as 'homicides' by the police (and such classification is stated in the news report) and cases in which the crime is described as a murder or homicide only in the text, without police input.[9] When analysing cases named murders or homicides, I had to make decisions on whether there was information there that would justify it being a feminicide rather

8 As I sustain that the crimes in this subset are also feminicides, I would disagree with using other names in these cases – a feminicide in which a purse is stolen is still a feminicide. However, this is a mostly discursive concern – in a legal scenario, a perpetrator could be charged with both robbery and feminicide. My concern here is how this gets portrayed and told to the wider public, which will not read the police report or a judge's decision, and therefore whose perception of the crime will be linked to how the media names it.

9 This does notmean that the crime did not receive the qualifier of feminicide, but it was reported to the wider audience of a newspaper as something else.

than a homicide. Some cases, such as those involving domestic and familial violence,[10] were clear cut — they fit the legal definition. Some were less clear under a legal lens, such as the one seen below:

Mulher é morta a facadas após discutir com homem que passou mão na perna dela, em bar no DF (...) Crime ocorreu no Gama, no domingo (4). Segundo testemunhas, suspeito já tinha assediado outras mulheres no local; ele foi preso.

Woman is stabbed to death after arguing with man who grabbed her leg, in a bar in the DF [Federal District] (...) Crime occurred in Gama, on Sunday (4). According to witnesses, the suspect had already harassed other women in the same location; he was arrested.

In the case above, the victim is killed after rejecting a man who was sexually harassing her - the article also mentions he had previously harassed other women. This is not the only instance in the dataset in which women are killed after reacting to harassment, as seen below:

Segundo a Polícia Militar do município, Lucilene alegou aos policiais que ela e Ana Francisca estavam nas proximidades de um campo de futebol quando o suspeito a abordaram e disse que 'queria ficar com elas'.

As garotas não aceitaram e foram atingidas por golpes de faca.

According to the municipal Military Police, Lucilene alleged to the police that she and Ana Francisca were near a fooball field when the suspect approached them and said he 'wanted to hook up with them',

The girls did not accept and were hit by knife blows.

Situations such as these answer directly to those who oppose the idea of harassment and violence, as discussed by Jacqueline Rose — 'I have lost count of the number of times people have expressed outrage at the merest suggestion of an affinity between harassment and violence on the grounds that it tars the innocent (at

10 I adopted a conservative approach here — I did not include any cases in which there was familial violence involving disputes over inheritances, and other goods. While it is possible that some of those cases also involved misogyny, I did not have enough information to decide whether the victim would still have been killed if she were not a woman. While it is possible that some of these cases involved a perception of norm-breaking which could influence the murder (e.g. a son believes he has the right to his father's property because he is a man and his sister is a woman), I had no way of knowing whether this was the case.

worst thoughtless) and the guilty (at worst serial predators) with the same brush' (2021:39). As Rose herself answers: harassment and violence are not the same, but they often go together.

While these cases might be unclear under a legal lens in Brazil (relying on interpretation on the part of the police of what qualifies as 'discrimination and/or disdain for the condition of the female sex'), other cases in this subset had harassment aspects that were clearly feminicides under the law. Returning to the idea of the spurned lover, the advances that a perpetrator makes towards the woman who ended the relationship are also harassment — and the name of murder is also given to those cases in this subset, revealing that harassment is not always recognised by its own name in cases of gender violence. The presence of this context of harassment across cases named and not-named feminicide showcase that this situation elicits both correct and incorrect naming practices from the media.

This holds true when looking at the large number of cases in this subset of data that relate to intimate partner violence. As I have highlighted in chapter IV, both cases named feminicide and cases not named feminicide have the majority of the perpetrators as partners and ex-partners of the victims. An example of he use of murder in a case of domestic violence can be seen below:

Uma mulher foi morta a facadas dentro de uma casa em Acaú, na cidade de Pitimbu, Litoral Sul da Paraíba, na madrugada desta segunda-feira (12). A vítima foi identificada como Raquel Floretino dos Santos, de 32 anos, e o principal suspeito de ter cometido o crime é o namorado dela, que fugiu do local.

A woman was stabbed to death inside a house in Acaú, in the city of Pitimbu, south coast of Paraíba, in the early morning of Monday (12). The victim was identified as Raquel Florentino dos Santos, 32, and the main suspect of commitment the crime is her boyfriend, who fled the scene.

This case is interesting because it is quite similar to the ones included in the previous subset — that is, a case of deadly intimate partner violence. But here the name feminicide is notused, not in the text, title or in any declarations from the police. This is not the exception on the subset, as discussed. Other examples can be seen below:

Uma mulher foi morta a pauladas dentro de casa em Eunápolis, no sul da Bahia, na noite da sexta-feira (2). O corpo de Renata Moreira Delfino, 32 anos, foi achado no final da manhã deste sábado dentro de casa por uma amiga. O suspeito pelo crime é o marido dela, que está sendo procurado.

A woman was bludgeoned to death inside her house in Eunápolis, south of Bahia, in the night of Friday (2). The body of Renata Moreira Delfina, 32, was found by a friend late morning Saturday inside the house. The suspect of the crime is her husband, and police are looking for him.

Uma mulher foi morta a pauladas pelo companheiro na noite do último sábado (2), no município de Tenente Laurentino Cruz, na região Central potiguar. O homem foi preso em flagrante pela Polícia Militar e encaminhado a delegacia de plantão no município de Caicó. De acordo com a PM, o agressor já tinha matado outra esposa em 2016.

A woman was bludgeoned to death by her partner last Saturday (2) in the city of Tenente Laurentino Cruz, in the central region of Rio Grande do Norte. The man was arrested on the scene by the Military Police and booked at the precinct in the city of Caicó. According to the PM, the aggressor had killed another wife in 2016.

In both of the cases above, the name feminicide is notmentioned anywhere in the tile or in the text, but the crime clearly occurs within the context of an intimate relationship. In the second case, it is noted that the perpetrator had already killed another partner in 2016 – demonstrating that the man was a repeat offender against women. The absence of the name feminicide leaves space for the reader to make their own assumptions about causes of violence, which can follow some of the normative scripts that I have discussed in the previous chapter: tragic stories overflowing with feelings of love, jealousy or troubled relationships in which both parties collaborated into violent environments.

It is important to state that in the case of a crime being named homicide in media reporting does not preclude it being named feminicide — as discussed by Macaulay (2021:83), the crime is usually firstly recorded as a homicide, only being recorded as a feminicide when the police report is concluded. While this means that a

percentage of the cases analysed in this thesis will eventually get named feminicide, there are still problems in relation to the perception of the crime by the public. That is, the cases are being presented to the media as not-feminicides, and their change in denomination is not being followed up on.[11] While the change in typification would eventually impact institutional and legal approaches to this crime, society at large still gets in contact with the initial reporting, which is not using the name 'feminicide'.

However, the characterisation of the crime as a murder is not the only one in the not-feminicide cases. As I have discussed in Chapter IV, this subset also includes the highest number of cases involving sexual violence (double that in the subset of cases named feminicides). In the following section, I will examine the context of sexual crimes and the narratives that it portrays about crimes not named feminicides.

b. Sexual violence followed by murder

As I have presented, another common classification of the feminicides not named feminicides is sexual violence followed by murder. I have previously noted that the Brazilian feminicide law does not explicitly include sexual violence[12] followed by death as feminicide – differing in this instance from other legislations in Latin America, such as Guatemala's *Ley contra el Femincidio y otras Formas de Violencia Contra La Mujer13* (Decree number 22-2008) and Chile's *Ley número 21.212*. While I sustain that this could be feasibly interpreted under 'discrimination and/or disdain for the condition of woman', this is by no means established in Brazilian jurisprudence. However, the idea of sexual crime is inherently gendered and for this reason, I have included all deadly sexual crimes against women as being feminicides.

11 I checked the dataset to see if any case was not reported as a feminicide and then changed to feminicide, but there were no cases between 2019-2021.

12 I use the term sexual violence broadly, in order include rape, sexual assault and harassment. I have also used sexual violence in cases which include mutilation or burns to genitalia and breasts, for example.

13 Law against Feminicide and other Forms of Violence Against Women.

One of the difficulties with the examining the discourses around deadly sexual crimes is that they are oftentimes lacking in detail in the reporting, as seen below:

Uma mulher, de 49 anos, foi encontrada morta ao lado de um trilho de trem em Cornélio Procópio, no norte do Paraná, nesta quinta-feira (2). Segundo a Polícia Civil, o corpo tinha marcas de agressão. Alguma pedras, possivelmente usadas no crime, foram recolhidas e encaminhadas para perícia. A suspeita é que a vítima tenha sido morta por volta das 5h, quando estava a caminho do trabalho. A polícia trabalha com a hipótese de crime sexual.A bolsa da vítima e algumas roupas foram localizadas perto do local do crime. O corpo foi levado ao Instituto Médico-Legal (IML) de Londrina.

A 49 year old woman was found dead near train tracks in Cornélio Procópio, north Paraná, this Thursday (2). According to the Civilian Police, the body had marks of aggression. Some stones, probably used in the crime, were recovered and sent for forensic analysis. The suspicion is that the woman was killed around 5 a.m. when she was on her way to work. The police is working with the hypothesis of sexual crime. The victim's purse and some clothes were found near the crime scene. The body was taken to the Medico-Legal Institute of Londrina.

In this case, the information about the context is lacking – we know where the victim was found, that her body had marks of violence and that stones were potentially used. But the sexual violence aspect is only presented to the reader more than halfway through the text. The euphemisms of 'marks of violence' serves the function of conjuring horrors of violence at the start, but it is presented without any motivation or narrative—senseless violence. The hypothesis of sexual violence, when it appears, has only the effect of making the violence even more prominent, adding a new layer to it.

Another example, in which the police does not use the term sexual crime, but still highlights the classification of rape and murder, is seen below:

Uma mulher de 24 anos foi encontrada morta no Conjunto 1 da Quadra 10 do Setor Complementar de Indústria e Abastecimento

A 24-year-old woman was found dead in the Conjunto 1 da Quadra 10 do Setor Complementar de Indústria e Abastecimento

(Scia). A vítima estava sem sem as roupas íntimas, com sinais de lesão no crânio e estado de putrefação. A Polícia Civil já identificou a mulher, porém, manteve o nome em sigilo até a mais recente atualização desta matéria. (...) Segundo a PM, a suspeita é que a jovem tenha sido estuprada e, em seguida, assassinada.

(Scia) [an industrial complex]. The victim was without underwear, with signs of lesion to the head and in a state of decomposition. The Civilian Police already identified the women but has kept her name confidential until the release of this news report. (...) According to the PM, the suspicion is that the young woman was raped and then murdered.

In both cases above,[14] all information available comes from the discovery of the bodies of those women, and the information merely signals that they were at some state of undress and had suffered a violent death. In this, the information surrounding the feminicide disappears, leaving merely the remains of violence, which are perceived to be a question of sex (or sexual desire) not misogyny. 'After all,' as Jacqueline Rose states, 'sex and violence are two experiences which tend to leave people lost for words' (2021: 218). This assertion seems to me to reveal an underlying issue of sexual crimes — they seem to be self-explanatory, following a pattern of desire > rape > murder. Beyond buying into narratives that conflate rape with an enactment of unbridled desire (rather than power), this pattern gives the reader a simplistic reading of a situation in which many other factors are at play.

The absence of sexual feminicide from the Brazilian Feminicide Law also contributes to what I began to sketch out in the previous chapter. The women in feminicide cases are family women and beautiful women — sex and sexuality do not play a central role in their stories. Their lives read as a love tragedy. On the other hand, in the not-feminicide cases, sex comes into play, turning those stories into pulp fiction. As I discussed in the victim section of this chapter, sex gets pulled into portrayal of victims by making the bodies less grievable, more open to the male gaze, sexual disposable commodities.

14 However, there are cases in which the victim, perpetrator and context are brought forward, and details are given, and I examine them in this chapter as well.

iii. Latrocínio (robbery followed by murder)

Another common classification was the charge of 'latrocínio', a legal category in Brazil for a robbery resulting in death (there is no equivalent word in English, so I will use the term in Portuguese throughout this thesis). Feminicide cases classified as latrocínios usually highlight what items were missing and therefore why the crime was considered robbery resulting in death. However, as I will discuss below, latrocínios involving women can oftentimes have a gender element to them — victims are found undressed or partially dressed, for example, or with evidence of sexual violence. This causes me to ask questions about whether that victim would have been killed had they not been a woman, or whether the motivation for the crime was the stealing of property, or whether the aim was sexual violence from the start, with the robbery being only an afterthought.

It also raises the question of why these crimes were considered robberies/murders and not rape/murders like the cases discussed above. It is unclear whether it is the fact that objects are stolen that made the police and/or the news refer to the crime primarily as a latrocínio, or whether it was due to sexual elements being found later, or due to a reason that is not unclear from the texts. There were around 40% of cases of latrocínio in which the element of sexual violence was acknowledged in the reporting itself. As an example:

Após confessar que abusou sexualmente de Hitomi Akamatsu antes de assassiná-la, Rafael Lima da Costa agora foi indiciado por estupro. O acusado, de 18 anos, também responderá na Justiça por latrocínio (roubo com morte) e ocultação de cadáver. Os crimes foram cometidos em Abadiânia (GO), no Entorno do DF.

After confessing to sexually abusing Hitomi Akamatsu before murdering her, Rafael Lima da Costa was now booked for rape. The accused, who is 18, will also be charged with latrocínio (robbery with murder) and hiding a cadaver. The crimes were committed in Abadiânia (GO), nearby the Federal District.

In the case above, the perpetrator initially confessed to robbery as the motive for the murder, but then confessed to raping the woman. The perpetrator is then charged

with rape on top of latrocínio, which means that the gender element is then acknowledged, though, the crime is still not named a feminicide. This dual 'taking' — of the body and of the material possessions of the victim — is then interpreted by the media, the police and the reader. This is done both implicitly and explicitly.

One of the cases in which this is made explicit can be seen below:

Uma das hipóteses da polícia para a morte da jovem Júlia Rosenberg, de 21 anos, é que o homem que a estragulou em uma trilha na praia de São Sebastião, no litoral norte de São Paulo, tenha tentado violentar a garota, que reagiu e acabou assassinada. 'Um estupro não é caracterizado somente pela conjunção carnal. Não é descartada a hispótese de outros atos libidinosos', afirmou um dos investigadores.

(...)

Até o momento, a polícia conclui que o homem levou o celular, a pochete e o tênis que a estudante usava na manhã em que foi estrangulada. 'Com isso, já se caracteriza um latrocínio', dizem os investigadores.

One of the hypotheses of the police for the death of Júlia Rosenberg, 21, is that the man who strangled her in a trail in the beach of São Sebastião, in the northern seaside of Sao Paulo, tried to rape the girl, who reacted and ended up murdered. 'A rape is not characterised solely by the act of penetration. We have not discounted the hypothesis of other crimes' stated one of the investigators.

(...)

So far, the police has concluded that the man took the cellphone, the bad and the sneakers that the student was using in the morning that she was stranged. 'With this, we already have the characteristics of a latrocínio,' state the investigators.

The police states that the crime is already being considered a latrocínio because there are objects already missing. While the recognition that rape is not limited to penetration demonstrates a good understanding of sexual violence on the part of the investigator, the structure of the reporting demonstrates the difficulty in trying to highlight gender aspects whilst simultaneously following the statements given by the police. That is, the reporting is emphasising the potential sexual nature of the crime whilst it reports on the material interest of the perpetrator in robbing the victim. This contradiction highlights a difficulty in considering gender as part of a motivation for murder. As a researcher, I ask myself: would this man had followed her, even if to steal, had she not been a woman? Did he see the rape as an opportunity

or was the stealing opportunistic? These are questions that have a bearing on how the case is considered by society and potentially by the law.

However, explicitly, the crime is not gendered—there is no discussion of the category feminicide, and the gender elements impose upon the victim a narrative as well. There was an attempt at sexual violence; she reacted, and she was killed. It is possible to wonder, had she not reacted, if the same society would recognise the sexual violence. The stealing, however, is straightforward: the police officer states that by taking her phone away, the perpetrator has committed latrocínio. But the sexual violence followed by murder cannot be neatly encapsulated into a legal category. Because feminicide is not explicitly applicable to cases of rape followed by murder, there is more space for the police to anmed this a latrocínio than a feminicide.

iv. Crime of passion

While not as present in the subset of the data as the other classifications, it was important for me to include the classification of 'crime of passion'. The naming of a crime as a crime of passion is probably one of the most straightforward and oldest cases of 'naming issues' — that is, the inability and/or difficulty of naming gender violence for what it is. The idea of a crime of passion lies at the heart of the efforts of activists in Brazil and worldwide which have fought to characterise feminicide as motivated by misogyny rather than love. As I have discussed previously, the 'Quem ama não mata' campaign in Brazil sought to undo the idea of love being the engine of feminicides. The classification 'crimes of passion' inherently speaks to the idea that the crime is a product of emotions running high, of too much feeling and being blinded by emotion. As discussed in the previous chapter, these ideas have been used to create narratives that emphasise himpathy and create a sense of tragedy around an event, dismissing the misogyny that sustains much of these ideas.

What particularly interested me in the case of feminicides named as crimes of passion, and the reason they were included in this dataset, was whether there was some underlying reason for this nomenclature. I assumed that there would be some

substantial difference in the However, there did not seem to be a substantive difference in the portrayal of these cases versus the ones named feminicide, as seen below:

O delegado que está à frente do caso, Wesley Amaral Castro, contou que o casal se conhecia há pouco mais de um ano. Eles estavam casados há oito meses, mas o relacionamento era conturbado, de acordo com as apurações.

'As investigações apontam que o casal já vinha tendo diversas discussões. Inclusive, no momento do crime, duas filhas da vítima estavam no local e ouviram os disparos de arma de fogo. Há registros de que o investigado já havia ameaçado se matar, caso acabasse o relacionamento. Contudo, não havia nenhum indício de que ele poderia fazer algo em relação à vítima', destacou Wesley.

(...)

Crime passional

A principal suspeita da Polícia Civil é de crime passional, já que o casal tinha se desentendido recentemente e eles chegaram a se separar.

'No meio do relacionamento eles tiveram um término, pois a esposa soube que ele poderia ser pai de um filho de uma outra pessoa. Contudo, quando ela soube que ele não era o pai, eles reataram. O relacionamento passou a ser bastante conturbado, onde ocorreram diversas discussões', destacou o delegado.

The police officer in charge of the case, Wesley Amaral Castro, told us that the couple knew each other for a little over a year. They had been married eight months, but the relationship was troubled, according to the findings.

'The investigation shows that the couple had been having several arguments. In the dah of the crime, two daughters of the victim were there and heard the shots being fired. There are records that the suspect had previously threatened to kill himself if she ended the relationship. However, there were no signs that he would do anything against the victim', highlighted Wesley.

(...)

Crime of passion

The suspicion of the Civilian Police is that this was a crime of passion since the couple had recently argued and even undergone a separation.

'Midway through the relationship they broke up, because the wife heard that he could be the father of another woman's child. However, when she found out he was not the father, they got back together. The relationship became very troubled, and they had several arguments', noted the police officer.

As shown above, the case uses much of the same language as used in the cases named feminicides — including the word 'troubled' and 'arguments', which I examined in the previous chapter. The news goes on to report that the crime is being considered as one of passion because the couple had argued recently, and ad even undergone a separation. This language is virtually the same of feminicide cases, so why is not this case named a feminicide? While I tried to see if there was any pattern to this in the data, I could not find one.

This is not a one-off occurrence, but it gets repeated in other cases named crimes of passion, as seen below:

O marido da vítima, 38 anos, é suspeito de ter cometido o homicídio. (...) De acordo com informações do delegado Rodrigo Rolli, o homem foi ouvido e confessou ter desferido facadas na vítima. O crime passional teria acontecido em virtude de ciúmes.	*The husband of the victim, who is 28, is suspected of having committed the homicide. (...) According to information from the police officer Rodrigo Rolli, the man testified and confessed to stabbing the victim. The crime of passion would have happened due to jealousy.*

In here, the reason given for the name crimes of passion is jealousy, which is also present in the cases named feminicide. The data therefore showed that so-called crimes of passion and feminicide share many of the name discursive qualifiers, are structured and presented to the reader similarly. There being no qualitative difference between the language used in the cases, this told me two things:

First, that the classification of crimes remains at mercy of individual actors. As highlighted by Macaulay, the definition of feminicide as a new category of aggravated homicide in the Brazilian Penal Code has implications for the way that police record crimes. She highlighted how the online campaign #Issoéfeminicídio (#thisisfeminicide) ultimately convinced law enforcement in Pernambuco to remove the term 'crime of passion' from the BO, replacing it with feminicide (2021:47). This demonstrates the importance of institutional approaches that tackle the use of outdated language, as individuals within the system might still use it. The media becomes then complicit in this by not challenging those terms in the text, allowing

for such language to not only be maintained, but also to be vested with official meaning.

Second, and most importantly to me, the fact that language between crimes of passion and feminicide reporting was virtually the same strengthened my assertion that the naming process of feminicide, while important, is still reinforcing normative and patriarchal structures. That is, if the portrayal of the crime is the same (e.g. creating emotional connections with the perpetrator, equalising violence in the context of abuse etc.) then the use of feminicide as a term is still following patriarchal and misogynistic scripts. The not-feminicide cases named crimes of passion complemented my findings on the cases named feminicides because they show how narratives of love are etched deeply int the portrayal of intimate partner violence — while the language of crimes of passion has become outdated and the media and institutions are moving away from it, the ideas behind them stay the same.

As I have discussed in Chapter V, the current reading of feminicide in Brazilian society is marked by

Conclusion

The crimes analysed in this dataset show the difficulty that the Brazilian feminicide law encounters in naming cases that fall outside case of domestic violence. In particular sexual crimes and crimes involving stolen items are less likely to be reported as feminicide, receiving the names of rape followed by murder and latrocínio (robbery followed by murder) in the media. But the data also showed some contradictions, as over half of the not-feminicide cases reported on are cases of intimate partner violence.

The data also showed a steep decrease in characterisations of the victims and perpetrators in comparison to the previous chapter. I discussed how perpetrators, when they are characterised, still follow the scripts of feminicides such as end of relationship and jealousy as motivators of the violence. However, perpetrators still receive considerable less attention than their victims in terms of naming as highlighted by Thurler — being often referred to as ‘partner’, ‘ex-boyfriend, and ‘husband’ for example.

On the other hand, victim portrayal becomes objectified — that is, if in cases named feminicides victims were characterised by their adherence to certain gender normative scripts, in the not-feminicide cases they are mostly portrayed as eroticised dead bodies. The conjunction of victims being portrayed as nude and seminude and being referred to as 'dead body' or 'corpse' seem to demonstrate how their lives get devalued in relation to the victims in the previous dataset.

In relation to the context of the crime, the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator once again remains outside the text. The main indicators of context are related to the tipification of the the crime at the time of reporting — what category the police is using. However, as I briefly noted, cases in which the context of gender violence are less obvious - e.g. being killed because they rejected advances of a man — are also increased on this subset in relation to the previous one.

These findings provide some interesting points of comparison to think about how feminicide is perceived and understood in contemporary Brazil. If in the previous chapter, I discussed how narratives of feeling come to the fore, in this chapter, the stories of the victims are absent, with the information about them being focused on the violence done unto their bodies and the circumstances surrounding their deaths. When the codes align with those of Chapter V, this does not make the story one of feminicide – rather, it demonstrates further how the category 'feminicide' does not mean the narrative will be substantially different than 'not-feminicides'. It shows that the application of 'feminicide' to gender violence is still replicating normative understandings of gender dynamics, specially in intimate relationships – they appear again without the name 'feminicide' in this subset of data.

Furthermore, I have discussed how the murders in this subset seem to involve configurations of victim-perpetrator that are not the same as in the previous chapter. The inclusion of cases of sexual violence, as well as murder occurring outside the 'home', highlight how the current perception of feminicide is epistemically normative. Once removed from the very specific narratives presented in Chapter V, it is hard for cases to be perceived as feminicides in the media and, subsequently, by the public. This makes the victims in this dataset less-than. Their stories become

irrelevant to the reader –serving more as pulp fiction than tragedy. If in previous chapters I showcased the narrative of a 'love story gone wrong', in this chapter I discussed the 'sensational novel'. Victims that do not align with the virtuous good women discussed in Chapter V are not allowed to be victims of 'feminicide'.

While these comparisons were interesting, the cases analysed so far do not make up the entire dataset. In the next chapter, I will look at the remaining cases, which were the cases in which I did not have enough information to understand whether a crime had elements of gender violence or not. Even more than the not-feminicide cases, the following chapter is characterised by an increase in the absence of information.

CHAPTER VII: WEAVING THREADS: THE 'LOST WOMEN' (2019-2021)

If in the previous chapters the information was there for me to sift through, this chapter is as much about what is not there; the absences, the bits that are missing. The 1,176 cases of this subset are the shortest ones, sometimes only five or six sentences stitched together. The women whom I speak about in this chapter seem to have barely left an impression in the world — their lives are sketches, their names often unknown. I have called them the lost women because their absence is felt so keenly; I wanted this chapter to be about the search, finding what lies beyond the silence of the text.[1] In Frames of War, Butler asks the reader to consider what might be out of the frame (2009:29) – this chapter engages with exactly that. If I can consider the first subset of data as the framing of 'feminicide' as a legal and journalistic category and the second subset as the framing of 'other crimes', this chapter lies on the edges of both. It lies outside the frame, away from any specific category. It was important to create this chapter because it could not fit within the definitions of the previous two chapters.

In Chapter V, I look at cases that are explicitly labelled feminicides. Chapter VI looks at cases that are not named feminicides, but that have enough elements to see that they were gender-based. In this chapter however, I have no way of asserting whether or not the crimes were motivated by gender violence. However, I also cannot discard the possibility that they were, creating an interesting 'limbo' space. The victims in this dataset are victims of violence, but the narrative of this violence is left very much up to the reader to interpret and make sense of—even if it to simply shake their head and complain about the world they live in.

It is exactly because this violence is enacted upon these 'lost women', these unknown members of society, that it becomes important to consider it in the context

1 The name lost women was also important to me for a different reason. The expression lost woman in Portuguese is often used to reveal a moral judgement about her character - lost women have been lost to temptation, to bad behaviours, to drug use. I wanted to reimagine the use of the word and portray this idea of 'losing' under a different lens. It was through the abandonment that society grants to women who have or are perceived to have strayed from certain norms that they become more vulnerable to violence. They are not lost because they have 'lost their way'. Instead they are lost because they are trying to find a way to survive within structural constraints.

of my thesis. In the previous chapters, I have focused extensively on the portrayals of the victim, the perpetrator and the context in which the killing is immersed. In this, I have pointed out the ways in which the tasks may mask or obscure gender dynamics, or the ways in which gender is made explicit and even central to the text. This chapter cannot follow the same structure — there is not enough information about these women for a detailed portrayal of themselves, of those who killed them, of how they lived. Oftentimes, there is not even enough information about how they died. But the sheer number of them — over one thousand cases in which the reader is left to wonder, to assume, to suppose—highlights that these cases are common and part of society. Furthermore, the fact that their deaths is so easily brushed aside raises many questions about who they are and why do they seem to leave such a fleeting mark in the news. Especially in comparison with the detailed portrayals of the feminicide victims of Chapter V.

Scholars have highlighted that the mantle of silence that covers deaths of women reveal much about who they are in society – see for example the work of Washington Váldez (2006) and Fragoso (2003) on Mexico, Sanford in Guatemala (2008). Scholars have particularly discussed how racialised women are at even further risk of becoming invisible — the cases of women in Ciudad Juarez (Wright 2006, Kynčlová 2015) and the Indigenous women of Canada (Hawes et al 2023) are examples of how missing and murdered women can become invisible, not only to the state but to society as a whole. It would be disingenuous to state that the unwillingness to investigate or a generalised disregard for the lives of those women are the only factors at play in the case of the 'lost women' in this dataset. Unfortunately, there are situations in which information cannot be obtained: there is no way to identify the body, no witnesses, no family. It does not always boil down to unwillingness to investigate or reluctance to report. But it begs the question of which women are these, who live on the edges of society, whose deaths disappear into the lull of daily life, whose families might never be found to tell their stories. Those who live in the margins tell much about the society as a whole.

These lost women are not always nameless, however. This dataset also includes the cases in which women might have been identified, but with the information made

available it was impossible to know whether a crime would fit the definition of feminicide or not. I have tried to include those cases within the broader codes and discuss how they relate to cases in which the victim becomes almost invisible — what differentiates them? I also engaged with a degree of speculation in the cases in which there was some information to extrapolate from, bringing them in dialogue with other authors working on feminicide in Brazil and their analyses.

Differently from the previous chapters, in which I went through the characterisation of perpetrator, victim and context, in this chapter, I will focus on the absence of those characterisations — what is and is not given to the reader, and what assumptions and inferences the reader can make from it. Since the women in this dataset are often not described at all, I had to shift the threshold of the frequency of cases,[2] by asking: when information is given about the victim, what information is it? In this chapter, I saw the culmination of what I had already noted in the previous one — the individual characterisation is much smaller; that is, victim and perpetrator become eclipsed, hidden behind that is usually more known to the reporting: location, time, how the body was dressed, what is known about the area. The lines between what is known and what is supposed become blurred, and this blurring interested me: what does it say to the reader? What does the reader assume from it? What does this say about perceptions of those deaths (and lives)?

When reading through these cases in order to familiarise myself with the data, I encountered the hardest dataset to work with — most of the sentences that made it up were simple: a woman is killed using this weapon, the police is investigating. Despite this, in discourse analysis, it is possible to look at simple sentences and dissect them further. Any sort of text relies both on aspects that lay within the text (lexical chains, textual cues) and outside the text (shared expectations, cultural contexts), and those become even more relevant when the text moves from giving the reader direct information e.g. ‘Her sister declared: ‘Jane Doe worked very hard to provide for her children and loved them.’’, to giving the reader indirect information e.g. ‘Jane Doe worked two jobs as she had sole custody of her children.’

2 This means not all clusters reached the 5% threshold, as there were not enough descriptors for the threshold to hold. However, the clusters showed a meaningful difference from the previous two subsets.

Clusters	Number of cases
Cluster one: Criminal connection	227
Cluster two: Dead body	99
Cluster three: Travestis and trans women	50
Cluster four: Public bodies	21
Not applicable	772

Table 13. Number of cases coded in the dataset.

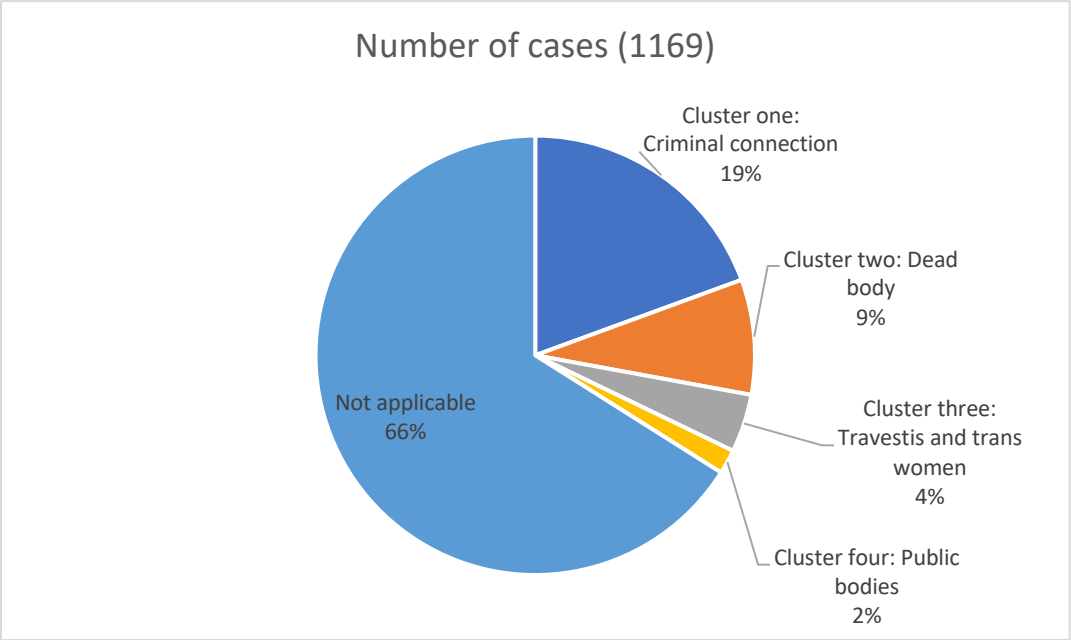


Figure 18. Percentage of each code in relation to overall numbers.

Thread one: perpetrator

The most notable aspect of this dataset is the absence of information regarding the perpetrator. This is unsurprising considering the theme of this subset: the lost women, whose deaths seem to exist in a place without answers, without future. The absence of the perpetrator does notin itself reveal an underlying intention in the text. It merely speaks to statistics — according to the Instituto Sou da Paz, over 50% of homicides in Brazil remain unsolved (2021). In the same report, the institute highlights that there are many initiatives that can be implemented to combat impute in the context of homicides in Brazil, including increasing shareable information between different states, establishing collective strategies between public security bureaus in the state and national level etc. In this context, absence of information on the perpetrators of the killing of women seems to follow a national trend and relate to a broader impunity problem in Brazilian society.

The exposure that the victims receive by having their bodies and violent deaths made open for consumption in the media environment is in opposition to the absence of the perpetrator. In this, Thurler's (2017) criticism becomes even more prominent. As I have highlighted previously, she criticises the focus that media reports give to the victims of feminicide versus the perpetrators; in general, articles focus much more on victims, their lives and images. And as I discussed in Chapters V and VI, when perpetrators appear, they are mostly portrayed as subjects who have emotions and feelings which dominate their behaviour. Their motives are personal and reveal underlying narratives of excess of feeling, of love, of out of control emotion. These narratives cover up misogyny, and instead reinforce normative interpretations of 'good' behaviour and of acceptable levels of control and possessiveness. It makes violence normalised by making the 'feelings' that cause it understandable to the reader.

In the case of 'lost women' the reader is faced with an incredibly absent perpetrator – Thurler's example in its maximum. As I will highlight below, the victim becomes exposed, particularly as a receptacle of violence, as a body. In contrast, if any information is given about perpetrators, it is one that emphasises

their existence as 'unknown threats' – e.g. hooded men, drive-bys, executions.[3] In the 'lost women' subset, the perpetrator characterisation that begins to gain more traction is the one I previously sketched out in chapter VI: the criminal background. When the perpetrator becomes an unknown threat, and the language used is one that elicits connections with organised crime, he becomes a stereotype – the drug dealer, the gangbanger.

However, the criminal background of the perpetrator is barely sketched out in the news reports that make up this subset of data. As I will examine when looking at the perpetrator thread in the 'lost women' cases, the lack of information about those involved in the murder was also counterbalanced by an interesting aspect – a mostly uniformly negative way of viewing all of those involved when any information was given. As I will discuss, the perpetrator was seen in a much more negative light in this subset when compared with the previous two. However, when the information about him appeared, it was often less about the perpetrator himself and more about the victim. The 'type' of perpetrator seemed to imply the same 'type' of victim.

While the perpetrator might be the one who is the 'criminal' the weight of that connection comes to rest on the victim, who becomes tainted by association. It would be difficult to answer whether the absence of the perpetrator versus the presence of the victim in these cases does more harm than good for perceptions of feminicide in contemporary Brazil. The reporting of violence is important and oftentimes also deployed in order to raise awareness and gather information to help with the investigation of violent deaths. It is my hope that these questions might inspire future researchers, especially in the field of criminology, to study the question further.

Threading victim and context

In the previous chapter, I have discussed how women become bodies of women — objects rather than subjects. In this subset of the data, this issue became even

3 I will discuss what does this means for the portrayal of these lost women when I examine the portrayals of the victim.

more prominent, with over 5% of cases describing victims as ‘body of a woman’. The women in this subset also have the violence done unto them described in the passive voice in over 90% of the cases — ‘woman is killed’, ‘woman is found dead’, shifting the violent action into passive reception of violence. As it was the case with the subset of not-feminicides, the subset of lost women the issue of having much less information to work with, especially in relation to the cases that were named feminicides. But the issue here is exacerbated by removing even the small moments of subjectivity that I mentioned before: names, ages and even how they died appear less and less. The most common presentation of cases in this subset follows the formula below:

Woman killed / found dead / murdered in <place>
Body of woman found dead in <place>
Body of woman killed is identified

Thurler highlights how this absence of victim information, allied with the passive voice, is in itself a form of victim-blaming (2017:486). Following on to Butler’s discussion on grievable lives, Thurler notes that victims get dehumanised when information about them is omitted, erasing their history and making it impossible for a reader to have empathy towards her (2017:494). If the reader does not recognise the victim as a victim but instead as an object, it becomes easier to ascribe into their bodies preconceptions and judgements. Due to the nature of reporting on cases with very little information, a schism, a separation between reader and victim is created. This is a fundamentally disempowering reading of the body and it can relate to Butler’s reading of the precarious body. Butler wants to understand the body as a site of exposure and of connectivity — bodies are bound up together, and they are exposed both to subjugation and exploitation, as well as justice, relief and love (2009:61). They are sites of action and feeling, regardless of how positive or negative. In the case of the ‘lost women’, bodies are portrayed not only as sites of subjugation and exploitation, but also as recipients of moral

judgement. Therefore, victim's bodies, if not portrayed as objects, are portrayed as unworthy subjects, as I will discuss below.

This section explores how the 'lost women' subset is characterised by two main readings of victims. One is the victim-object, the discarded body on the side of the road that evokes the discussions raised by Wright (2006) and Fragoso (2010) about female bodies perceived not only as sexualised, but as extremely disposable. The second one is the portrayal of the victim as a transgressor – not only sexually, but morally and socially – by highlighting her association with criminal activities, individuals and/or groups as a way to reinforce victim-blaming and further gender normativity. Both narratives reflect underlying normative systems, and furthermore, remove from these victims the possibility of being named victims of feminicide by distinguishing them from the grievable victims examined in chapter V4. In order to examine this further, I will first examine the idea of the victim-object, which was already somewhat present in the previous chapter, when I looked at the nude/seminude and sexually violated bodies of victims as central characterisations of women whose deaths were not named feminicide.

i. Executions and criminal connections

As I briefly mentioned when looking at the perpetrator thread in the 'lost women' cases, the lack of information about those involved in the murder was also counterbalanced by an interesting aspect – a mostly uniformly negative way of viewing all of those involved when any information was given. As I highlighted, the perpetrator was seen under a much more negative light in this subset when compared with the previous two. However, when the information about him appeared, it was often less about the perpetrator himself and more about the victim.

An example can be seen below:

4 Not that the victims of feminicide are not subjected to normative narratives – their own positions as victims are precarious, and their portrayals still rely extensively on sexist and misogynistic scripts that maintain feminicide as a crime of passion, a love story.

Mayara dos Santos, de 30 anos, estava em uma confraternização no quintal de uma casa, no bairro Interlagos. Três homens encapuzados e armados entraram no local atirando. Outras três pessoas foram atingidas pelos disparos. Duas delas continuam internadas e uma foi liberada. (...) Ainda segundo a PM, não havia nenhum mandado contra as pessoas que foram baleadas.

Em conversa com a reportagem da TV Gazeta Norte, na manhã desta segunda-feira (20), o delegado Fabrício Lucindo afirmou que o crime pode ter sido provocado por vingança. 'A gente está tratando o caso como possível crime de vingança. Os autores praticaram o crime motivados por vingança. (...)'

Mayara dos Santos, 30, was in a party in the backyard of a house, in the neighbourhood of Interlagos. Three masked and armed men entered the place shooting. Other three people were hit by the gunshots. Two remain in the hospital, while one was released. (...) According to the PM, there were no outstanding warrants against any of the people who were shot.

Talking with the TV Gazeta Norte, this Monday morning (20), the police officer Fabrício Lucindo stated that the crime could have been provoked by revenge. 'We are treating the case like a revenge crime. The perpetrators committed the crime motivated by revenge. (...)'

Mayara's murder is contextualised to the reader in ways that are different to the ones used in cases named feminicide and cases not named feminicide. The crime has no clear 'gender' reason (it is not domestic violence, nor are there elements of sexual violence available to the reader). Mayara herself does not seem to be spoken of directly, but the crime is framed as an execution, which implies that there could be gang-related or drug-trafficking related. Perpetrators appear as masked figures as I discussed in the previous section. And this implication can even be understood as acknowledged by the text when it goes on to state that 'there were no outstanding warrants' against any of the individuals. That is, the assumption was that they would have a potential outstanding warrant as this killing has the markings of gang violence. Furthermore, the text highlights how the crime seems to have been motivated by revenge – leaving it open to the reader to wonder what has Mayara done. Once again, despite not explicitly making a judgement about the victim, the

text relies on context clues and on a shared frame of reference with the reader to implicate Mayara in her own death.

This form of implication is particularly seen in situation in which women are perceived to be involved with criminal activities. The links between potential executions and gang-related elements often rely on vocabulary choices that give the reader the ability to make an inference – even the word execution is mostly used when referring to violence perpetrated between and within criminal groups. This choice of words and context clues serve a double function. One is to make it possible for anyone reading this to think about gang violence and organised crime. And these linguistics choices also allow for the news source to protect itself legally as there is no clear accusation that the victim was involved with something of a criminal nature. Another example of this can be seen below in the case of a woman shot to death in a friend's house:

De acordo com a polícia, Paula estava dormindo no apartamento de uma amiga quando o local foi invadido por dois homens, armados e encapuzados, que arrombaram a porta de entrada, foram até o primeiro andar do prédio, quebraram a porta do apartamento e a executaram.

A vítima foi atingida por pelo menos 12 tiros. O condomínio fica na Rua Manoel Aires de Lima, no bairro Aeroporto.

Ainda segundo informações da polícia, Paula Monique estaria sendo ameaçada de morte e, dois dias antes do crime, a casa de um familiar dela foi metralhada.

According to the police, Paula was sleeping at a friend's apartment when two masked and armed men came broken the gate, went to the first floor, broke down the door and executed her [Paula].

The victim was hit by at least 12 shots. The building is located in the Rua Manoel Aires de Lima, in Aeroporto neighbourhood.

Still according to the police, Paula Monique had her life threatened and two days before the crime, the house of a family member was shot with an automatic weapon.

Paula's life is being threatened. Her family member's house was shot with an automatic weapon. The men who broke in were masked and armed and searched for her specifically (meaning this was not random violence). All these elements

indicates that Paula has done something to upset criminals – but what that is unknown, and whether this 'something' is gendered is also unknown. What stays with the reader is the perception that Paula's choices led her to her death. Once again, it is possible to see the figure of Wright's public woman again.

Elements that have been previously seen in the cases not named feminicides appear again in the cases of 'lost women' though they are more common – for example, mentions of drug use more than double[5]. These elements are signifiers of what I have previously discussed to be perceived social failures, or even moral failures in the collective social norms. Therefore, by highlighting those elements, the text makes the victims less grievable by linking them to organised crime, drug trafficking and use etc. It is possible to say that this particular subset involves more women who are perceived to be 'transgressing' morality and social norms and that their lives then seem to be less worthy of mourning and grief by the reader and by society more broadly.

A Polícia Militar foi no local após ser abordada, na manhã deste domingo, durante ronda na região, por um grupo de sem-teto que afirmou ter visto uma mulher sangrando.

O Samu foi acionado e constatou que a vítima teria morrido há 5 horas. Ao lado dela tinha um isqueiro e um cachimbo usado para o consumo de drogas. De acordo com os militares, a mulher é conhecida como 'Veinha' e 'Tia'. Um suspeito está sendo procurado.

The Military Police went to the location after being told during patrol by a group of homeless people that they had seen a woman bleeding.

The Samu [ambulance service] was called and they stated the victim had been dead for 5 hours. By her side there were a lighter and a pipe used for the consumption of drugs. According to the PM, the victim is known as 'Veinha' and Tia'. The police is searching for an individual suspected of the crime.

5 It is important to note that the mentions of drug use here relate to both the victim, the perpetrator, and the context. As I have stated at the start of this chapter, the division between three separate clusters is not useful for this dataset because there is a lot less information being provided.

In the case above, it is possible to see that some signifiers are present in the text: the crime is reported by a group of homeless people, and the victim is laying next to drug paraphernalia. Furthermore, the victim does noteven have a name – she is known by the nicknames 'Veinha'[1] [sic] (old woman) and 'Tia' (aunt). While the text never explicitly disputes her status as a victim, the way it is constructed makes the responsibility of the perpetrator disappear into the victim's life and actions. The sentences are constructed in the following way: a woman is bleeding, police finds drug paraphernalia, she has no proper name. Only at the end it is possible to see a perpetrator – and then see the violence as coming from an outside force that is notthe victim's own life choices. The question of drug use muddies the waters for the reader, and the victim becomes suddenly one that is embedded into a life that is undesirable – and therefore, not a victim of feminicide, barely a victim at all.

This is not true only for drug use. As discussed by Macaulay, sometimes the lines between what is a gender motivated crime and drug trafficking motivated crime become blurred. She highlights the cases in which women who have relationships with men who are drug dealers are killed in order to enact revenge on the men (2021:53). Such cases are often not named feminicides as they are linked to organised crime and perceived to be fallout from 'a life of crime'. But they are gender-related as they reveal underlying assumptions about women as the property of men and also the particular vulnerability of women who inhabit social contexts characterised by social exclusion and, therefore, criminality. See the excerpt below:

A vítima, Gleice Rodrigues Rocha, 28 anos, teve os cabelos cortados antes de ser assassinada. O corpo dela estava jogado no meio da rua, ao lado de duas pedras ensangüentadas, aparentemente usadas para desferir os golpes fatais em sua cabeça.

Horas antes de ser morta, Gleice postou mensagens no aplicativo de celular, pedindo

The victim, Gleice Rodrigues Rocha, 28, had her hair cut before being murdered. Her body was thrown in the middle of the road, near two bloody rocks, apparently used to bludgeon her head until she died.

Hours before being killed, Gleice posted messages on an mobile app, asking for the number of a man whom she wanted to speak

1 A misspelled 'slang for 'velhinha', the diminutive of 'velha', which means old woman.

o contato de um homem com quem queria falar com urgência. Na mesma postagem, ela usou um emoji de choro, num indicativo de que já previa o crime do qual seria vítima.

Mãe de quatro meninas, com idades entre 06 e 11 anos, a mulher morta, segundo sua mãe, estaria usando drogas, após conhecer 'pessoas erradas'.

with urgency. In the same post, she used a crying emoji, indicating that she could foresee the crime which would befall her.

Mother of four children, with ages ranging between 6 and 11 years old, the dead woman, according to her mother was using drugs after hanging out with 'the wrong people'.

In the case above, Gleice is shown to be embedded in her own death too – the reporting states that she had used a crying emoji, which would then potentially signify that she knew her life was at risk. Furthermore, her mother states that she was 'hanging out with the wrong people' – once again shifting the responsibility of the death into Gleice herself. This constructs the victim as less-than, something I discussed in chapter II of this work – her life is less grievable because her behaviour is socially reprehensible. In this case, the victim's story being told is one of a public woman, much like Wright's formulation; she has strayed into public life, and a bad public life, and therefore she is enmeshed into her own fate. She does not deserve grief and mourning because she has brought this upon herself – this does not mean that the text has no echo of pity, as Gleice still is named and located in relation to her family. But it is a construction that still implies that the pity is because she lost her way – had she made different decisions, she'd have a different fate.

This is not the only way in which deaths associated with organised crime and drug trafficking are reported. Another common formulation can be seen below.

Mulher executada com 8 tiros era passageira em moto de assassi (...) Yasmin Beatriz Almeida Guedes, 18 anos, assassinada com ao menos oito tiros de calibre 32, na noite de ontem (28), na Rua João Trivellato, no Jardim Naschiville, na região do Colibri, conhecia o autor do crime e foi levada até o

Woman executed with 8 gunshot was the passenger on the murderer's motorcycle (...) Yasmin Beatriz Almeida Guedes, 18, was murdered with at least eight shot from a calibre 32 weapon, yesterday night (28), in João Trivellato street, Jardim Naschiville, in the região of Colibri. She knew the

local pelo próprio executor, segundo apurado pela reportagem. A vítima, que tinha várias passagens pela polícia, foi encontrada morta com capacete cor-de-rosa na cabeça. Testemunhas chegaram a flagrar um homem saindo do local numa motocicleta.

perpetrator and was taken to the location where the crime took place by her own executor, as investigated by this news report. The victim, who had a criminal record. was found dead with a pink helmet on her head. Witnesses reported a man leaving the scene in a motorcycle.

Duas mulheres e uma adolescente foram assassinadas no bairro de Lobato, em Salvador, nesta quarta-feira (4). Os corpos foram encontrados recostados no muro do Colégio Estadual Raymundo Matta ao lado de um carro carbonizado, provavelmente usado para o crime.

As vítimas, Geisiane Santos Jesus, 24 anos, Joice Amorim dos Santos, 22, e Júlia Vitória Ramos, 16, trabalhavam passando rifas. A adolescente estava grávida, segundo uma amiga, e era conhecida como Guêga. Todas foram encontradas com marcas de tiros, em sua maioria nos rostos.

Elas estavam em um prédio, em Santa Luzia do Lobato, onde moravam Geisiane e Joice, e foram retiradas do local por um grupo armado e executadas a poucos metros da casa de Júlia. Ainda não há identificação dos criminosos.Segundo moradores da região, Júlia mantinha um relacionamento com um traficante, que era procurado pelos assassinos.

Two women and a teenager were killed in the neighbourhood of Lobato, in Salvador, this Wednesday (4). The bodies were found resting against the wall of the Colégio Estadual Raymundo Matta alongside a torched car, probably used in the crime.

The victims, Geisiane Santos Jesus, 24, Joice Amorim dos Santos, 22, and Júlia Vitória Ramos, 16, worked selling raffles. The teenager was pregnant, according to a friend, and was kniwn as Guêga. They were all found with gunshot wounds, mostly in the face.

They were in a building in Santa Luzia do Lobato, where Geisiane and Joice lived, and were taken from the location by an armed group, being executed some meters away from Júlia's house. The perpetrators still have not been identified. According to neighbours, Júlia was in relationship with a drug dealer for whom the perpetrators were looking for.

ii. Dead body

In the previous chapter, I have explored the eroticisation of the dead female body and the ways narratives of sexual violence leave women's deaths exposed to the male gaze. In the cases of the lost women, the dead body also appears prominently as a form of describing them — however, the ways in which the body appears here have a different connotation. If in the previous subset, the information given about the sexual nature of the crimes left them open to an enmeshment of sex and death, here the bodies exist in a vacuum — of sex, of gender, of humanity. This is particularly true when the body is left in a public space, as seen in the case below:

Corpo de mulher é encontrado em parque urbano por funcionário durante limpeza, em Fortaleza.	*Body of a woman is found in urban park by worker during clean-up, in Fortaleza*

The same report goes to state, alongside a photo of the park with cyclists passing by:

O corpo foi retirado pela entrada lateral do Parque Rio Branco, na rua Capitão Gustavo, em Fortaleza.	*The body was removed by the side entrance of the Parque Rio Branco, on Capitão Gustavo street, in Fortaleza.*

In this report, the victim becomes an inconvenience to the public — it is found by the cleaning crew and removed. In this particular report, there is no use of 'the woman', with the closest recognition of victimhood being the use of 'the body of the victim'. The body could be substituted by anything whose presence would be distasteful for an urban park – a dead animal, a mound of trash. While in the previous chapter I have noted how victims of sexual violence are portrayed somewhat luridly to the reader, this woman receives no recognition of being anything beyond flesh.

This portrayal of the body as a disposable object – not sexualised, barely gendered, is seen in other cases of the subset, as seen below:

O corpo de uma mulher não identificada foi encontrado com cerca de nove marcas de disparos de arma de fogo na madrugada deste domingo (2) na Colônia Japonesa, no Bairro Novo Aleixo, em Manaus.	*The body of an unidentified woman was found with around nine gunshot wounds in the early hours of this Sunday (2) in the Colônia Japonesa, in the neighbourhood of Novo Aleixo, Manaus.*

In here once again it is possible to see how the body exists outside the realm of even sexually fetishised commodities (as highlighted by Fragoso (2010) and discussed in the previous chapter). The woman is completely absent, becoming an image of violence with no past or future — she is solely a body, but a body without embodiment or agency, a body in which society can impress any readings that it wants. The reader is given an image to look at — a body of a woman with nine shots. This leaves this woman open to any interpretation or prejudice of the reader: they might imagine her race, her age, her looks. They can make inferences — e.g. the nine shots could signal execution, which signals involvement with organised crime, which in turn makes the victim less sympathetic (as I will discuss below). The dead body, abandoned in public, becomes a horrific sight one wants to remove — the victim is no longer a subject of pity or sympathy, but instead, they are intensified in their precariousness.

Butler discussed how 'certain kinds of bodies will appear more precariously than others' (2009:53) based on normative frameworks that will portray certain lives as worth preserving and worth mourning. The dead body lying on the park or the road, unsightly, abandoned, does not seem worth preserving or mourning. It was to be removed, put away, out of sight. Removed from her position of subject, the woman becomes an object, but not a sexual one — she becomes a useless object, one in which not even the male gaze can derive pleasure from. In contrast with the bodies of the victims in the not-feminicide subset, the women here are not even seen as things, being instead are barely perceived in the fabric of society.

O corpo de uma mulher, ainda sem identificação, foi encontrado, na manhã desta quinta-feira (16/12), próximo a antiga fábrica da Coca-Cola, no Setor O de Ceilândia. (...) A vítima está coberta de sangue e os indícios apontam para morte provocada por arma branca. Ela está vestida com uma calça jeans e uma camiseta. Até por volta das 9h30, não foram passadas informações sobre se a vítima apresentava ferimentos aparentes, cor de roupa ou altura. Também não foi divulgado se ela estava com pertences. A peritos chegaram às 9h45 e iniciaram os trabalhos para colher vestígios que levem à autoria do crime.

The body of a woman, still unidentified, was found in the morning of this Thursday (16/12), near the old Coca-Cola factory, in the Sector O of Ceilândia. (...) The victim is covered with blood and all signs indicate the death was caused by a bladed weapon. She is wearing jeans and a t-shirt. Until 9h30, there have been no information on whether the victim had visible wounds, the colours of her clothes or her height. Nor was it stated if she had her belongings with her. The forensic team arrived at 9h45 and began working to collect information that could lead to an arrest.

This woman receives some degree of description – she wears jeans and a t-shirt and she is covered in blood. But what is seen once again here is Sontag's snapshot: while the image might elicit some feeling, there is no time for reflection, no elaboration. A body is found, life moves on. Joan Didion wrote about El Salvador in the 1980s that 'the dead and pieces of the dead turn up everywhere, everyday, as taken-for-granted as in a nightmare or in a horror movie' (1982:9). She meant of course, to highlight the everyday occurrence of violence, not to normalise it, but to demonstrate how it had become normalised. She meant to elicit the repulse, the shock of the reader who would say: how can this be?

However, Scheffer-Hughes, who made the same comparison in her book Death Without Weeping, asks: what if what Didion relates is not the aberration? She demands of the reader:

> What if the public routinization of daily mortifications and little abominations, piling up like so many corpses on the social landscape, provided the text and blueprint for what only appeared later to be aberrant, inexplicable, and extraordinary outbreaks of state violence against citizens? (1993:220)

Scheffer-Hughes focuses particularly on the enactment of state violence against the popular classes and the ways in which outbreaks are perceived to be out of the ordinary when they are turned towards the middle classes or other individuals perceived to be more, to use the terms of this thesis, 'grievable' (ibid.) But the matter-of-factly way in which certain crimes are portrayed in the media do seem to indicate that, under certain social conditions, a woman's body on an empty lot is routine. She wears jeans and a t-shirt, and tomorrow there will be another one, unnamed, killed by weapons unknown and who will be reported as a body laying inert somewhere.

This portrayal of the 'lost women' as dead bodies reflects one of my main engagements with the excerpts in this subset – seeing what was missing in them that I had seen in the two previous subsets. The lack of information could mean that these victims were killed for other reasons that were not gender-based, but I had no way of knowing. They could've been killed for any reason, but their bodies suggested an incredible lack of embodiment – they were emptied out of social meaning, becoming vessels for the desensitisation of the reader to violence.

However, there was another aspect of the victim portrayal which interested me. As I highlighted both at the start of this chapter and when examining perpetrators' portrayals in this subset, the 'lost women' were also portrayed as something else – as complicit in their own demise. If sometimes their dead bodies were empty canvasses of violence, sometimes they revealed agency: but one of a very specific sort, one that means that those women were not proper victims *because they had put themselves in the position of potential victims.*

iii. Travestis and trans women

An important aspect of the lost women dataset is that it also recorded the highest presence of trans women and travestis[2], with more than double any of the other subsets. While these numbers were quite small compared to the overall number of dead women reported, it is important to note how much more common they are in this subset than in any of the previous ones – and what this means for the perception of the violence against trans women and travestis in Brazil. As I noted in chapter IV, the country holds the highest rate of recorded violence against trans women in the world (Transgender Europe, 2021). Violence against the homeless population has also been on the rise, with an increase of 38% between 2019 and 2022 (Ipea, 2023). These two extremely vulnerable groups also face issues around reporting and recording the violence they suffer from (Trans Murder Monitoring, 2023) which means that numbers might still be higher than those reported.

The fact that trans women are featured more in cases in which there is very little information about the crime reflects the social inability of reckoning with the violence against LGBTQ+ populations. In the previous chapter, I highlighted the issues surrounding the sexualisation of women's bodies, and in this chapter I have even further discussed the disposability of the women in this particular subset of data. Trans women and travestis in Brazil are often sex workers, creating an intersection between transphobia and misogyny that makes their status as victims incredibly precarious. I have previous spoken about thinking of feminicide as a form of norm-enforcing violence. In the case of trans women and travestis, the transgressive nature of their lives is seen in their own embodiment – their gender identity, their sexuality, their whole lives becomes contested space for gender politics.

This is particularly prominent now with the advancement of 'gender ideology' discourses being promoted politically in Brazil (Moraes Teixeira and Bulgarelli, 2023). The politicisation of sexuality has been extensively discussed by Foucault in the first volume of his *History of Sexuality* (1998(1976):110), particularly when it

2 Travestis, I have stated before, are not the same as trans women, despite their similarities. For future reading, please refer to *Eu, travesti*, by Luísa Marilac and Nana Queiroz, Don Kulick's *Travesti: Sex, Gender and Culture Among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes* and *Vida Lixadas: Crime e Castigo nas Narrativas de Travestis e Transsexuais Brasileiras*, de Guilherme Gomes Ferreira.

comes to the concept of 'biopower' – the government's concern over the sanitary, sexual and penal control of individual bodies and the ways in which this control shifts from authoritarian to a more decentralised and social form. In the case of trans women and travestis, the control over any form of 'queering' in gender identity gets incorporated as a familial or individual concern over a moral issue. The politics of gender ideology become embedded in a variety of social practices and norms which impact the safety and protection of a variety of social groups.

For example, in 2020, Brazil abstained from voting in a UNCHR resolution focused on discrimination against women and girls (Maneo, 2020) due to the presence of clauses relating to the protection of human rights activists, sexual education, access to reproductive health information and services during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the previous year, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs send official instructions to diplomats stating they should promote 'the understanding of the Brazilian government that the word 'gender' refers only to biological sex: feminine or masculine' (Folha de São Paulo, 2019). All these policy instances reveal the myriad of ways in which anti-gender ideology politics can manifest itself.

This dramatically impacts trans and gender diverse people due to their high visibility as queer subjects. As LGBTQ+ identities become more and more marginalised and acquire not only political but moral significance, the lives of those who are visibly queer – and especially trns women and travestis, who are pushed into other forms of objectified visibility in sex work – become more precarious. This precariousness can be seen in reporting of killings of trans women and travestis, which are oftentimes grouped together under one article, as seen below:

Com marcas de disparos de armas de fogo, uma mulher trans de 21 anos foi encontrada morta em um matagal nessa quarta-feira (19/8). Daniele Rodrigues, segundo a perícia, foi atingida diversas vezes. O caso aconteceu no município de

With gunshot wounds, a 21 year ol trans woman was found dead in a wooded area this Wednesday (19/8). Daniele Rodrigues, according to the forensic investigators, was shot several times. This happened in the city

Crateús (CE). As informações são do Diário do Nordeste.

Esse já é o quarto crime contra a vida cometido contra pessoas trans apenas no mês de agosto.

A travesti Letícia Costa, de 29 anos, foi assassinada no dia 10, no centro de Fortaleza. Ela tinha ficado fora da cidade por quatro meses e, quando retornou, foi morta.

No dia 8, uma adolescente ainda não identificada pela SSPDS foi morta na Rua Dallas, no bairro Granja Lisboa. Pessoas informaram à polícia que ela teria entrado em um matagal com dois homens e, em seguida, foram ouvidos disparos de armas de fogo. Os suspeitos fugiram.

No dia 3, outra travesti foi morta, desta vez no bairro Bonsucesso. A identidade dela também não foi revelada, mas o crime aconteceu a 700 metros de uma unidade do Batalhão de Polícia de Meio Ambiente (BPMA).

of Crateús (CE). This information is being reported by Diároo do Nordeste.

This is the fourth crime against the life of a trans person in the month of August.

The travesti Leticia Costa, 29, was murdered on the 10th in the centre of Fortaleza. She had been away from the city for four months and was killed upon her return.

On the 8th, a still unidentified teenager was killed on Dallas street, in the neighbourhood of Granja Lisboa. The police was informed that she would have entered a wooded are with two men and, subsequently, gunshots were heard. The suspects ran away.

On the 3rd, another travesti was killed, this time in the neighbourhood of Bonsucesso. Her identity was also not revealed, but the crime happened 700 meters away from a Environment Police Batallion (BPMA [Portuguese abbreviation]).

In the article above, there are four murders reported: two travestis, one trans woman and one teenager whose gender identity is unclear. It is interesting to point out that in the only case that context is given to the reader (the case of the unnamed teenager), the victim is given agency in a way that seems to indicate complicity with her own death. The teenager enter a wooded area with two men – did she do so willingly? The text seems to indicate so, and this choice of words seems to reveal particular perceptions about the context of the crime, as per discussed in the criminal connection section of this chapter.

Even in cases in which there is a focus on one particular instance of violence against a trans woman reported, as below, the text is not adequate in its portrayal of the victim:[3]

Identificada transexual encontrada morta

Corpo da vítima estava amarrado e dentro do córrego no bairro São Conrado

(...)

A mulher trans encontrada morta na manhã desta terça-feira (29) estava com os documentos e foi identificada como [redacted] *[deadname], de 28 anos. O corpo foi localizado amarrado em uma árvore na Rua Praia Grande, no Bairro São Conrado. Quem visualizou foi um um casal que fazia caminhada na região.*

Transexual found dead is identified

Body of the victim was tied and in a brook in the São Conrado neighbourhood

(...)

The trans woman found dead this Tuesday morning (29) has her identification documents with her and was identified as [redacted] *[deadname], 28. The body was found tied up to a tree in the Praia Grande Street, in the neighbourhood of São Conrado. a couple who was hiking was the first to see the body.*

The text begins by identifying the trans woman as a 'transexual found dead', in another arguably form of objectification in the lines previous examined in this chapter. But further down, the text deadnames the trans woman, even though it has used she/her pronouns for her throughout the text. This linguistic choice indicates a narrow understanding of trans identities, and is in itself transphobic, further highlighting the transgressive nature of the woman – she has a male name, which reveals her as not-quite-a-woman to the reader. This deadnaming of the victim is in itself a transphobic and violent act which robs the victim from her dignity.

All these portrayals of trans and gender diverse bodies indicate how much the ideas of body-objects which are open to the public gaze are contained in the cases of lost women'. As I have discussed in this chapter, this unknown body whose existence is non-normative does not get the chance to be seen as a subject – much

3 Out of respect for the victim, and as to not perpetuate transphobia, I have blocked out the victim's deadname from the thesis.

less a subject deserving of characteristics of victimhood. If in the cases of feminicide I have highlighted how grievability is constructed by bringing forth victims with which the reader can recognise affective and virtuous bonds. In the case of trans women, the majority of the reporting creates a distance between the reader and the victim, giving the reader merely piles of transgressive bodies that are somehow to blame for their own victimisation.

iv. Public bodies: sex workers and homeless women

Finally, besides trans women and travestis, this subset was the one with the highest incidence of cases involving sex workers and homeless women. I have highlighted how sex workers have been portrayed in cases not named feminicide, but as I have discussed so far in this chapter, there are differences in the way similar victims and even similar clusters are portrayed across subsets.

These cases are few and far in between, but some aspects of their reporting do seem to reiterate some of the narratives that have emerged in the subset of 'lost women'. For example:

A perícia esteve no local e constatou que a causa da morte foi esmagamento craniano, provavelmente originado por golpes dos pedaços de caixa d'água manchados de sangue que se encontravam junto ao corpo. Os braços e punhos da vítima também apresentavam sinais de agressão.

Um morador que passava pelo lote vago, utilizado como atalho para o bairro Serrano, avistou o corpo da vítima por volta das 6h53 deste domingo. Ele relatou aos policiais que reconheceu a mulher como a mãe de seus

Forensics declared that the cause of death was bludgeoning of the skull, probably caused by using the pieces of a bloody water tank that were near the body. The arms and fists of the victim also had signs of violence. A man who passed through the empty lot as a short cut towards the neighbourhood of Serrano saw the body of the victim at 6:53am this Sunday. He told the police that he recognised the woman as his neighbours' mother and found her son-o-law, who confirmed her identity.

vizinhos e procurou o genro de Marinalva, que confirmou sua identidade.

Segundo o genro, Marinalva era usuária de crack e álcool e vivia praticamente como uma moradora de rua.

According to her son-in-law, Marinalva was a crack and alcohol user and lived practically as a homeless person.

Marinalva is both presented as a body-object (there is almost as much information about her as there is about the weapon which killed her) and as a drug user – the statement that she lived 'practically' homeless indicates that she experienced a high degree of vulnerability. However, the way the article is build – first the body, followed by it being recognised as Marinalva and then the declaration that she is a drug user and she lives on the streets is interesting. It seems that there is an effort into portraying Marinalva as ungrievable because of her position as a 'practically' homeless and as a consumer of crack. The recognition of this woman as a member of a family is immediately contrasted with her portrayal as a substance abuser.

This portrayal seems to follow the discussions that I have highlighted so far on how the existence of a victim of feminicide seems to follow epistemically violence norms. Marinalva will not be recognised as a victim of feminicide because her existence, going against social norms, turns her body ungrievable. She does not speak like he victims of cases named feminicide – she is not able to tell the story of a dedicated mother, a beautiful woman with a bright future ahead of her. Simultaneously, the violence to which she is exposed, and which gets relayed to the reader does not follow the same patterns as those in the not-feminicide case. She is once again a body lacking any embodiment, a blank slate for other's perceptions.

Another example of the disposability of women in the 'lost women' dataset is this snippet, which was contained within a different case:

Antes de ser morta, a vítima enviou mensagens para uma amiga dizendo que estava com medo do autor, que contava a história de um homem que havia matado

Before being killed, the victim messaged a friend saying she was afraid of the perpetrator, who told her a story about a man that had killed a sex worker. She [the

uma garota de programa. Ela chegou a compartilhar a localização dos dois e pediu à amiga que falasse com ela de uma em uma hora para saber como as coisas estavam.

victim] even shared her location and asked for her friend to check in on her in an hour.

This excerpt refers to an unnamed, unknown sex worker who was killed by another unknown subject. Her story does not even reach the news – the reader reads about it because another woman tells her story before being killed herself. This unknown sex worker is a ghost – disembodied both in the text and in her relationship to the victim of feminicide that tells her story. As a reader, one is sure whether this is true: was there even a sex worker who was killed? Is exactly this question that gave me pause. When thinking about women such as sex workers and homeless women who are subjected to lethal violence that does no teven reach the news, I became aware of how removed their bodies and their testimonies are from the Brazilian perspective on feminicide.

Even within a subset that is focused on specifically the women which stories are not told, bodies that seem to exist mostly as objects rather than as embodied subjects that had experiences beyond death – even within this subset these women barely exist.

Conclusion

This chapter tried to give space for an analysis of a group of women whose stories and experiences are characterised by absence. If in Chapters V and VI I have posited theoretical considerations through the analysis of different clusters of words, in this chapter I switched to proposing analyses that focus more on the structure of the text and what lies beyond it. By focusing on how 'lost women' have their lives condensed into absences (no information made available about her) or specific characterisations that emphasise her complicity in becoming 'lost' (e.g. a criminal

connection), I propose that their vulnerability to both lethal violence and epistemic violence relates to their precarious social position.

Butler highlights how:

> To say that a life is injurable, for instance, or that it can be lost, destroyed, or systematically neglected to the point of death, is to underscore not only the finitude of a life (that death is certain) but also its precariousness (that life requires various social and economic conditions to be met in order to be sustained as a life). Precariousness implies living socially, that is, the fact that one's life is always in some sense in the hands of the other. (Butler, 2016:89)

Understanding precariousness as part of living socially has implications for the idea of victimhood, especially in the case of 'lost women'. Through Butler's formulation, all lives become precarious to a certain extent – nonetheless, by being located within spaces that are in themselves precarious (homelessness, sex work), not only have their lives become more precarious, but their own identities. As I discussed in chapter II, it is exactly this vulnerability to precariousness that makes these women subjects of epistemic violence – they are unable to access the label feminicide, and often unable to access any identity at all. By being perceived as transgressing not only gender norms but social norms more broadly, these victims lose not only their grievability, but also their status as potential victims of feminicide. As I discussed in chapter V, when analysing the cases named feminicides, victims of feminicide ae sympathetic. Even when occupying difficult and often contradictory categories – like being both maternal and loving and also a fighter, for example – they are portrayed as tragic figures, as a sad story. In this subset, the opposite is seen – these women are not tragic, they are a warning: this is what happens when you engage with immorality, criminality and/or other transgressive behaviours.

Therefore, the subset of 'lost women' carries in itself an important consideration – these women are not considered to be full subjects. As highlighted by Fuentes, their bodies become part of the landscape of violence (2020) – they litter the space, they bring forth ugliness and pain. They also serve as a warning: this could happen to you. Fuentes states:

> these femicides emerge as criminal acts *between* gangs and delinquents: as one of my interlocutors explained: 'If the death is in the public sphere she is blamed, she is criminalised. She is blamed because 'why was she there?', or she is criminalized because 'surely she was involved in the *pandillas*''. In a reactivation of the racialised logics of blame and spatialised punishment that underpinned the genocidal civil war, this is represented as violence within blame-worthy social circles.

The 'lost women' become the ultimate examples of victim-blaming. While I highlighted in Chapter II and V that I did not find explicit examples of victim-blaming in the text, that is because these ungrievable victims do not even gain media space. Their status as substance abusers, involved in crime, homeless etc. forbids them from even having their deaths fully acknowledged. They become complicit in their death and it is this blame-worthy status that invisibilises them as subjects.

In 2024, a discussion took over many social networks: when faced with whether they would prefer to be alone in the woods with a bear or a man, women picked bears. The comments as I scrolled through my feed highlighted how they would be believed if they claimed they were attacked by a bear, that no one would ask what they were wearing or what they were doing to provoke the bear. This anecdote is interesting because it shows how aware women can be of how society perceives about gender violence. When Fuentes highlights the use of bodies as part of the landscape to 'warn' women of what can happen to them, she highlights the ways in which women know that being perceived as disobedient can result in violence.

When we contrast the 'lost women' to the victim section in Chapter V, it is possible to see how they are constructed as polar opposites. On one hand, we see that victims of feminicide are 'good' women, family-oriented, self-reliant, not vicimisers. On the other, we have the 'lost women' – those who victimise themselves by engaging in 'bad' behaviour. They are not granted any compassion; they are not even subjects. Fuentes' 'bodies in the landscape' become the 'bodies in the text'. As a woman, one can read the stories of 'lost women' as a cautionary tale. This is particularly true in the cases in which the victim is perceived to be engaging in criminal and/illegal behaviour.

Finally, the ‘lost women’ subset also showcases an important separation between the reader and the dead woman. By portraying these women’s deaths as the by-product of their ‘way of life’, the texts further the separation between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ women. The deaths of the women in this dataset are then not the same as the ‘tragedies’ examined in Chapter V. This makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the casual reader to perceive the insidious misogyny in both the cases. It sections these instances of violence – this is A, this is B. But it does not protect women. As I have discussed in Chapter V, ‘good’ women are also killed. The difference is that they are allowed to be recognised as victims of gender violence, while the women in this chapter are barely recognised as victims at all.

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CHAPTER VIII: CONCLUSION

Most of this conclusion was first drafted on a notebook, while I sat under the sun in a beach in Brazil. Just a bit further up the road, a rocky shoreline away, one woman was killed while out for a hike in 2020. She was known to some of my friends, and when she was murdered, I remember receiving texts about it. I grappled back and forth on whether I should include her death in this thesis. Her death, not a feminicide in the eyes of the media, but a feminicide to everyone else. When finishing this thesis, her ghost haunted my trip, my eyes looking over the hill, driving past the hiking routes signs, and seeing girls set out for their morning walks while I sat outside, writing under the sun. A different day, a friend telling me about visiting their grandmother's hometown, I felt that there was something familiar about the city, something in that name – it was one of the cities where a case I analysed took place, the victim's face, a bright smile that stayed with me in my sleep. So many ghosts now. My home country, brightly coloured on TV, faded photos from my childhood – my home country, a mausoleum.

In her work 'Framer Framed', photographer Trinh Minh-ha discuss how even 'true' representations imply acts of fiction and imagination, highlighting that 'fiction operates right in the heart of documentation' (1992:169). Butler further these considerations on the case of the media, highlighting that 'the image, which would supposedly deliver reality, delivers perception' (Butler, 2009: 115). In this thesis., I have sought to interrogate the 'reality' of feminicide in Brazil by engaging with how the phenomenon is experienced and perceived in the country. Experienced not by the victims themselves, as they cannot speak, but by those who stay behind – families, perpetrators, and also by members of a society in which women are victims of feminicide. I have done so with the clarity that my own perception, my own experience is entwined with this fiction, with the reality-making of feminicide. This is intentional, and part of the reason I have been firm in my considerations that this work is primarily a phenomenological one – if I cannot speak of the experience of

feminicide, I can speak of the experience of researching feminicide. Understanding that this phenomenon is experienced and perceived in ways that are similar and wildly different than my own was central to this project.

Overview of contributions

This study represents a new contribution to the study of feminicide that proposes to systematically analyse media reporting on different instances of killing of women – not solely feminicide. My quest was to unravel how feminicide—through examining portrayals of the crime, of the victims and of the perpetrator and trying to tease out the norms that govern both their lives and their deaths. In this, I have followed on to work of scholars such as Mbembe and Agamben who have analysed the different ways in which life and death are at mercy of regulations from the state and other social institutions. I have also engaged with scholars such as Butler and Rancière who have discussed how media reflects and shapes reality through the making of affects and perceptions.

Using a database collated through a mixed-method approach, I have analysed over 4,000 cases of feminicide in Brazil between the years 2019-2021, seeking to answer the question: how can we understand feminicide in Brazil? This question was based on criticisms both to the Brazilian Feminicide law and to approaches to feminicide that are primarily focused with enumerating what types of violence can fall under the realm of feminicide. In this work, I consider that feminicide must be understood phenomenologically, that is, through perception and experience – focusing on how it is seen, how it is spoken about, what feelings and judgements it elicits. I have contributed both theoretically and methodologically to the study of feminicide in Brazil.

Theoretically, I have proposed that feminicide must be conceptualised and understood as a form of norm-enforcing violence, following on to the work of conceptualising misogyny itself as norm-enforcing (Manne 2018). This norm-enforcement, however, does not operate solely on the enactment of violence upon female bodies – it is epistemically violent, following on to Fricker's debates on

epistemic and testimonial injustice. This epistemic violence manifests itself in removing from certain women the possibility of being recognised as grievable victims due to their transgression of normative scripts. Drawing from Manne's insights, I proposed to understand norm-enforcement not only through moral — manifesting in both actions and perceptions regarding femininity, women's experience and relationship dynamics. This conceptual framework paved the way for a comprehensive analysis of feminicide, portraying it not only as an act of violence but also as an act of naming, where gender norms play a pivotal role.

Understanding feminicide as norm-enforcing allowed me to see how even 'ideal' cases of reporting on feminicides – that is, cases that get called feminicides—are subjected to violently normative views of gender. By looking at how the narrative of feminicide gets told, I managed to unravel the love story of gender violence. That is, in contemporary Brazil, 'feminicide' is understood through the lens of a love tragedy rather than as a misogyny.

These narratives are so far removed from a serious engagement with the oppressive structures from which misogyny emanate that even cases that are not-feminicides can make use of the same elements. When comparing cases of domestic violence named feminicide with its not-feminicide equivalents, the overarching themes were the same. This shows how the love story of gender violence is pervasive and that the acquisition of the name 'feminicide' to speak of this type of murder does not change the ways in which victims and their stories are perceived socially. This contribution is particularly relevant to the literature on feminicide in Brazil and Latin America as it showcases the limitations of the 'naming' process.

The pervasiveness of the love story narrative also impacts victims of feminicide that are not engaging in normative relationship arrangements, victims of sexual violence etc. Because those narratives cannot be framed as love tragedies, these victims get excluded from the category feminicide. The fact that the Brazilian Feminicide Law does not explicitly include rape/murder as a case of feminicide contributes to this, because it allows those cases to be seen as separate from those of domestic violence. When in dialogue with other normative considerations—e.g.

heterosexuality, perceptions of one as a 'public woman' etc.—the category of feminicide becomes more and more inaccessible.

Even further, the normative narrative of feminicide as a love story makes feminicide inaccessible for victims that are not 'grievable'. I have highlighted how certain forms of transgressions even forbid women from accessing the name feminicide in the media narratives about their deaths – instead, their bodies become sites in which moral judgment makes them complicit in their own deaths. These women then become ungrievable, women who are living dead because of being perceived as transgressive, for example, by breaking with cisnormativity or by engaging socially or emotionally with criminality. Particularly, these women do not get to be named victims of feminicide and instead have their deaths become footnotes of violent daily life in Brazil.

I have explained that even being a victim of feminicide in Brazil, or being recognised as a grievable victim comes with its own set of normative constraints. I have noted that victims of feminicide are perceived to embody very specific gender narratives and that even in those terms, their deaths are still enmeshed with narratives of gender violence that make feminicide seem like the product of an excess of feeling. This means that women who are experiencing gender violence must be able to portray their experience within a very specific set of social dynamics if they want to be recognised as vulnerable to feminicide. It also means that victims who inhabit a 'limbo' – that is, who are not totally ungrievable but whose experiences differ from the love story of gender violence – are unable to access the name feminicide for their own experiences.

These complicated dynamics set up a necropolitics of feminicide in which the label feminicide, ascribed by state and media institutions over the bodies of women, is attainable but always remains somewhat out of reach. By layering the term feminicide with expectations around gender, family and feeling, Brazilian media makes it so that women are constantly having to abide by normativity in order to find that their deaths are being framed as a product of gender violence. Understanding these dynamics contributes to the overall field of feminicide in Latin America. Much like Rita Segato's conceptualisation of femigenocídio to highlight

the ways in which gender violence is public and intersects with broader issues of conflict, this work adds to the broader concept of feminicide. By teasing out the ways in which soecity's perception of feminicide relies on misogynistic narratives and patriarchal tropes around women's place in society, this thesis engages with other authors who have sought to highlight particular modalities of feminicide in the region.

In the case of Brazil, this is particularly important as it establishes dialogues with other authors who have focused on the media's portrayal of feminicide victims (Thurler 2017; Alvares 2018; Carvalhaes, Toneli and Monsano, 2018). By focusing on the normative (both morally and affective) aspects of media coverage, this thesis showcases how society still perceives such violence in patriarchal terms, despite its use of the correct nomenclature for it.

Overview of findings

As I have discussed in chapters V, VI and VII, the ways in which feminicide is portrayed in the media shapes the perception and the experience of the phenomenon in contemporary Brazilian society. I have divided my cases in three subsets of data: cases named feminicide (chapter V), cases not named feminicide but in which gender played a pivotal role (chapter VI) and cases in which there was not enough information to make an assessment (chapter VII). I have found that these cases are portrayed differently and seem to uphold different narratives about the violence they cover.

Cases which receive the name of feminicide have been shown to have more information out of all cases in the dataset. They are in their vast majority cases of domestic violence and are framed to the reader as situations full of emotion and feelings. Perpetrators of feminicide are perceived to be *in excess* – of love, of jealousy, of anger. The findings show that while terms such as feminicide and gender violence are used, the narratives around such crimes are still heavily based upon the perception that this is a crime of heightened passion and emotion ('the love story'). As discussed, an interesting finding was that many cases not named feminicide in

the media receive similar treatment – domestic violence cases are generally portrayed as the product of jealousy or the refusal to accept the end of a relationship. This is interesting because it demonstrates that these normative scripts in which feeling rather than misogyny is the driving force behind gender violence seem to be ascribed to cases both named feminicide and not feminicide.

The most notable difference between cases named feminicide and cases not named feminicide was the amount of information given about victims. In cases named feminicide, the victims were spoken of as being family-oriented, full of potential and of having both inner and outer beauty. However, even positive portrayals of victims were confusing and contradictory, holding them as simultaneously being fighters and warriors and being helpless and vulnerable. Those contradictory findings seem to indicate that to be perceived as a victim, one needs to be perceived as occupying a very narrow space socially – especially when other descriptors of the relationship serve to equalise the responsibility for the violence by portraying both victim and perpetrator as jealous, troubled and/or fighting.

Another interesting aspect of the not-feminicide subset is the existence of what has been termed sexual feminicide. Those crimes appear almost exclusively in this dataset and range from crimes in which the victim is known and identified to those in which the victim is described only as a dead body. Sexual feminicides are not explicitly included in the Brazilian Feminicide Law, and this seems to demonstrate that the lack of association of the experience of sexual feminicide with the legal category of feminicide.

Feminicide obviously relates to issues of both victimisation and vulnerability - women are of and are vulnerable to feminicide, and are considered this way by scholars, the media and society. This formulation is, of course, not wrong, but needs to be conceptually refined in order to be used as part of scientific research. Victimisation is used very clearly in the legal sense, but is used to represent a specific type of interaction:

> inherently, victimization implies an interpersonal power differential in which one party dominates another (Hagan, 1989). McMillan (2011) noted that violent

> victimization includes interactions in which individuals are unable to prevent or protect themselves from attack.(Borer, 2012)

This definition of victimisation, whilst seeming to exemplify a common-sense idea of what being a victim entails, raises very interesting questions in itself. It encapsulates a sense of inaction, of un-agency over the interaction which will result in violence - the inability of a subject to prevent and avoid being victimised seems to be intrinsically linked with domination and subjugation in a variety of senses. While there is no doubt when reading works on GBV that power differences need to be taken into account within the contexts in which GBV emerges, there have been several critiques over the past decades relating to issues of vulnerability, victimisation and agency.

I have proposed the feminicide must be conceptualised and understood as a form of norm-enforcing violence, following on to the work of conceptualising misogyny itself as norm-enforcing (Manne 2018). Due to the precariousness of social living, the existence of violent enforcement of norms over the female body is intersubjective in nature. And by articulating the enforcement of norms as enacted by the state, and the social enforcement of such norms estimated by the state apparatus, feminicide becomes interlinked with state practice. The experience of feminicide is never so far removed from normative entanglements that it is dissociated from the state, because it is in the state practice that norms become reinforced

Therefore, feminicide becomes a mechanism through which women's lives are regulated — the threat of violence enforces the importance of subscribing to particular gender norms, lest one wants to become a victim themselves. In this sense, feminicide is framed as norm-enforcing violence, and as such, it is also a constant danger. It is both the enactment and the threat of feminicide that helps sustain cultural matrixes of gender intelligibility, which in turn maintain the economic, social and political structures that are present in society. Victims of feminicide are in a double bind, because they need to adhere to gender norms in order to be recognised as victims of feminicide, but this adherence gives them no protection

against this violence. If anything, because their status as victims is so enmeshed with perceptions of relationships and feeling, their deaths reinforce the love story of gender violence.

On the other side, if they do not comply to the normative arrangements, they cannot be victims of feminicide. They might be victims of other crimes, and their bodies become sexualised and violated images open to the public consumption. This portrayal of women as not-victims of feminicide serves to exemplify what happens to 'good' and 'bad' women. If a woman is portrayed as a tragic figure, a beautiful soul cut in the prime of her life, she is a victim of feminicide. However, if she is a sex worker, or attacked during a hike, then her status as a 'good' women is displaced by the desire toi portray her as a sexualised and/or bruised subject.,

Even more, they might not be even portrayed as grievable, inhabiting what I have called here the category of 'lost women'. In this, their subjectivity is gone, and they are perceived merely as objects that do not elicit much of an emotional response on the reader at all. These are women whose lives are so precarious that they leave almost no impression behind in the collective imaginary. They are absences, rather than presences. They are not important enough to even consider that their subjectivity as women could have played a part in their deaths.

Therefore, feminicide becomes a mechanism through which women's lives are regulated — the threat of violence enforces the importance of subscribing to particular gender norms, lest one wants to become a victim themselves. In this sense, feminicide is framed as norm-enforcing violence, and as such, it is also a constant danger. It is both the enactment and the threat of feminicide that helps sustain cultural matrixes of gender intelligibility, which in turn maintain the economic, social and political structures that are present in society.

How to portray feminicide?

In this thesis I have discussed extensively how Brazilian media has portrayed women killed and the ways in which it uses or not the term feminicide. Throughout

my work, I was hoping I would find a case in which the narratives of love story, or the ideas of good/bad women, or the equalisers of conflict would not be present. I was seeking an 'ideal' case, something I could show to my reader. Unfortunately, that did not happen. However, I made note of a case in which the language used was promising. At the start of this work, I presented the case of Viviane, killed by her boyfriend.

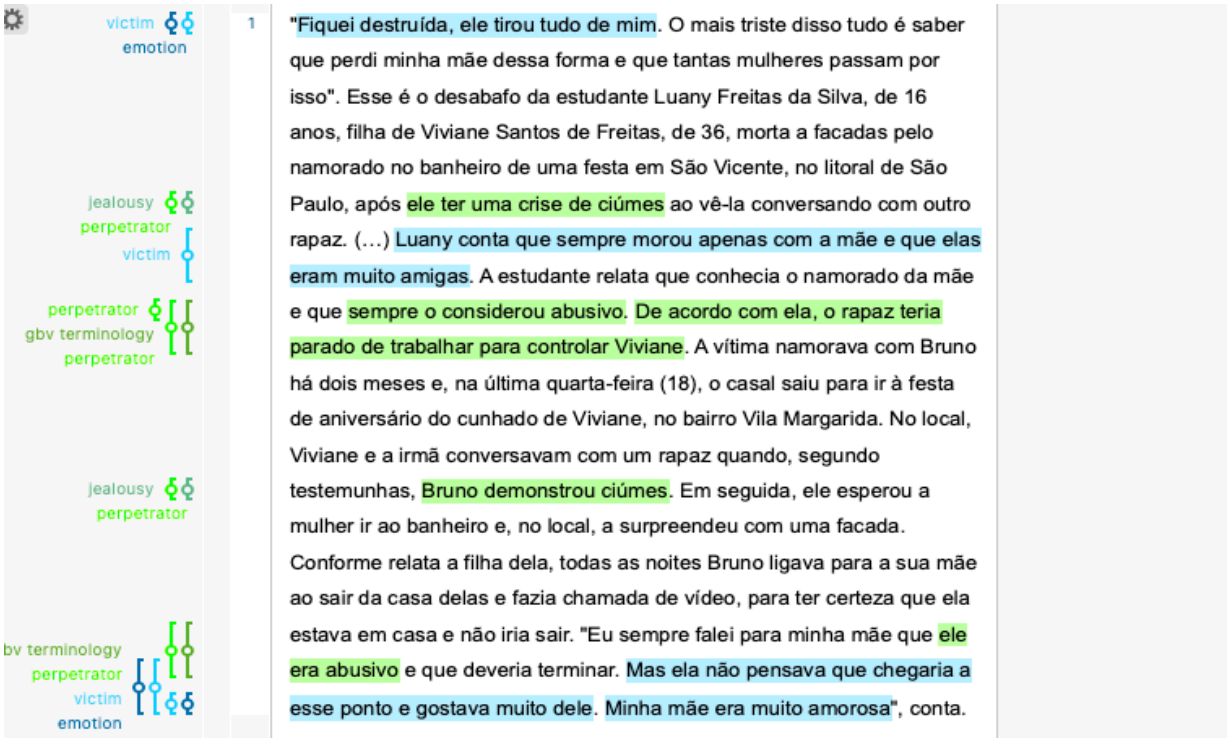


Figure 19. Viviane's case coded [in Portuguese}

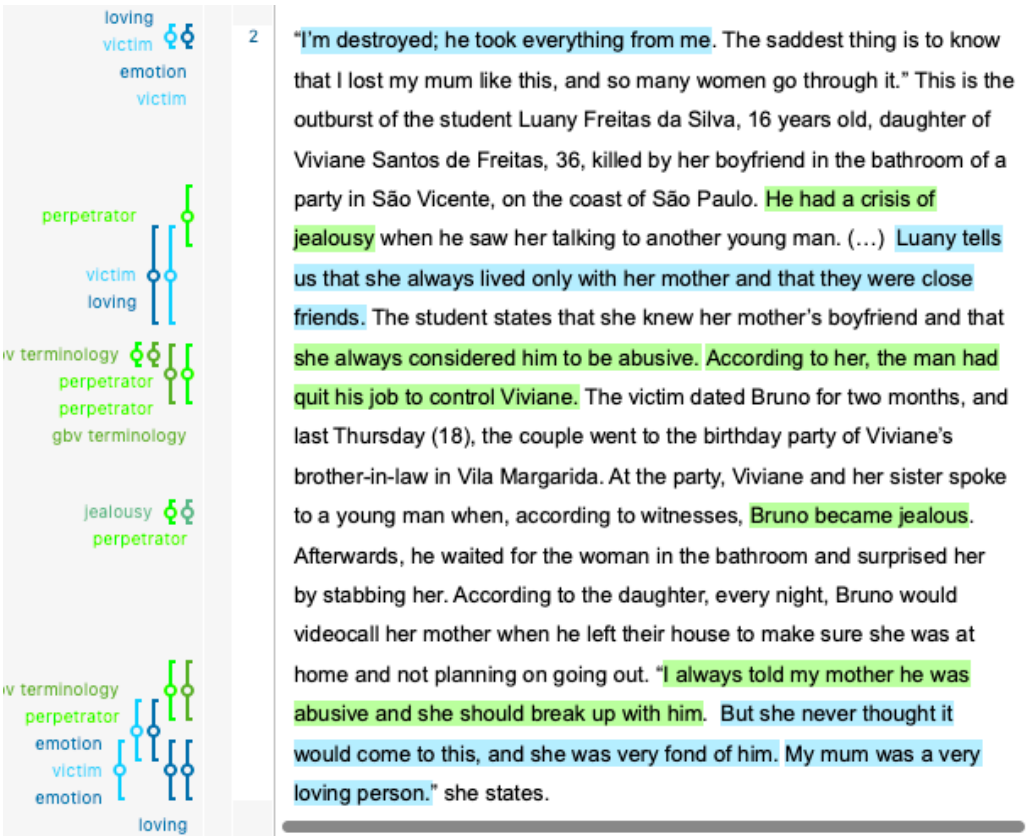


Figure 20. Viviane's case, coded [In English]

I used this to show how certain codes, such as 'loving', 'emotion', etc., would look in a text. But this case was the one in my dataset that consistently was coded under another code—'gender violence terminology' ('gbv terminology' in Figures 20 and 21. This code referred to the use of language around gender violence studies, such as 'abusive'. While Viviane's case still evokes a narrative of strong feeling, her daughter's words characterising the whole of the perpetrator's behaviour as abusive make him less sympathetic and relatable than other perpetrators examined in the dataset.

The use of wording that highlights how the underlying feeling underneath Viviane's murder is not love but instead control signals a perception of feminicide that emphasises misogyny instead of disguising it. Throughout this work, I have consistently focused on how the language being used is important in shaping how one relates to feminicide, how one conceptualises it and perceives it. In the case

above, there is the sketch of a more liberatory reading of feminicide. It centres the 'abuse' as the motivator for the crime rather than the jealousy. Viviane is still a tragic subject. There is nothing wrong with recognising the sadness and emotion that lie behind a violent death. The difference is that Viviane is a victim of abuse, not of love, not of an 'excess' caused by love. This reframing allows for the reader to extend the process of naming – not only rename feminicide, but change the way in which the whole scene is spoken about. Jealousy and excessive feeling become abuse, moving away from normative understandings of gender.

Unfortunately, this case is an outlier – even in cases in which expressions such as controlling and abusive behaviour showed up, those codes were buried among the much more prevalent codes of jealousy, unhappiness and troubled relationships. And in this case, Viviane is still gaining her value as a victim through her relationship with her daughter, her position as a mother and as a loving person, all very normative understandings of 'good' women.

However, I wanted to provide a start for alternate portrayals of gender violence that were not premised upon a love story. The centrality of normativity in my work matters because those norms need to be made explicit in order to be acknowledged as violent. By using the term 'abuse', Viviane's daughter changes the framing; it is the perpetrator that is at fault. Viviane should not owe him her affection, understanding or compliance with his unreasonable demands. The narratives of love and the narratives of griveability only work if the norms underlining them are taken for granted. By conceptualising feminicide as norm-enforcing, one needs to really reflect on why—why love, why a monster, why a victim. And in doing so, easy answers like jealousy become insufficient, and the central aspects of misogyny emerge.

Appendix 1

Large Language Models: an explanation

Large Language Models (LLMs) are a subset of deep learning, which in turn are a subset of machine learning, which is in itself a subset of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Machine learning, broadly speaking, is focused on pattern recognition in data, an deep learning focuses on 'unstructured' data, such as texts or images. LLMs are focused specifically on text, and in my research I used Generative Pre-trained Transformer 4 (GPT-4).

A large language model, such as GPT-4(Generative Pre-trained Transformer 4), operates based on a deep learning1 architecture known as a transformer. The main aspect of transformer architecture is that it allows the model to give different weights to parts of the input – this is called the 'attention mechanism'. This mechanism allows an LLM to 'see' relationships and dependencies between words in a sentence. In my methodology chapter, I highlighted how part of the process of using GPT-4 has been on training it how to 'read' the text to understand what data is relevant or not. It is exactly the core of 'attention mechanism' in LLMs that allow for this to be developed and used. In order for the model to 'read', it undergoes a process of 'tokenization', that is, the breaking of the input text into smaller units such as words or subwords. Those words and subwords are then assigned numerical representation that the model can understand.

Therefore, the starting line of an LLM is that it tokenises input so it can be 'read' and then, through the attention mechanism, it is able to weigh the tokens and

1 Deep learning uses neural networks, which are very powerful machine learning models. Neural networks can be conceptualised roughly as stacked layers of linear regression with non-linearities in between. This allows neural networks to model complex relationships between inputs and outputs.

establish relations between them. One of the central aspects of LLMs is the number of sources that they train on, requiring a similarly large amount of weights. The scale of these models contributes to their ability to generalize and complete a vast array of tasks.

However, an LLM's capabilities are developed through the training of these two elements. It is this process that I sketch below:

- Pre-training

After the model is established, it goes through a process called 'unsupervised learning'. In this process, the model is exposed to an exponential amount of textual sources, including websites, articles and books, among others. The goal of this unsupervised learning is that the model will learn how to predict the next word in a sentence or fill in missing words. It does so by understanding context and the way that words in a sentence relate to one another.

- Parameter tuning

Once the model has undergone the pre-training, it will be fine-tuned for different tasks. These include translating, answering questions, or summarising. In parameter tuning, the model develops more specific functions, which will, in turn, make it more effective as a whole. For example, fine-tuning translation supports the model's use in cross-language settings, like I did with Brazilian Portuguese sources and English output.

- Reinforced learning and fine-tuning

After being pre-trained and having parameters tuned, the model would be trained with a different method, namely reinforced learning. In this, positive values are

assigned to desired actions, whereas negative values are assigned to undesired actions, often using Markov decision processes (MDPs)2.

For GPT-4, reinforced learning is also done through what is called RLHF—reinforcement learning through human feedback. This basically means that humans are involved in reviewing the responses provided by the model and rating those responses. The model then aims to get more positive responses for every round of feedback.

Essentially, an LLM undergoes this training before it acquires it's final form. However, the availability of GPT through OpenAI also served to increase the reinforced learning of that LLM, and the development of GPT to it current iteration, GPT-4, benefitted from that. This is because GPT is known for its ability to perform zero-shot learning, meaning it can perform tasks without specific training for those tasks. This is achieved by leveraging the broad knowledge acquired during pre-training like semantic relationships to 'make up' for the lack of specific training. A fun example used by Stöffelbauer (2023) can be seen below:

> (…) you can ask an LLM to translate a sentence from German to English while responding only with words that start with 'f'.
>
> For instance, when asked to translate a sentence using only words that start with 'f', an LLM translated 'Die Katze schläft gerne in der Box' (which is German and literally means 'The cat likes to sleep in the box') with 'Feline friend finds fluffy fortress', which is a pretty cool translation, I think.

The model was not trained to perform this specific task, but it could 'figure out' how to do so. Because GPT-4 was not trained specifically to gather data from newspapers in Brazil about feminicide, it did make mistakes. This is why in Chapter

2 Markov decision processes serve as a model of decision-making in which the agent's actions change based on the environment. The idea is that the environment will impact what kind of reward the agent receives, allowing the agent to make varied decisions depending on the environment in which that decision is being made (for discussions on the complexity of such decisions, see Littman, Dean, and Kaelbing, 2013).

III, I highlight the importance of the iterative training process, so that I provided the model with 'examples' of corrected information when it made a mistake. This is called 'few-shot learning' and allows the model to execute more complex tasks like the ones required for this thesis. It is possible that future scholars wanting to use LLMs in a similar way to what I did in my thesis will find that their models will make less errors in the training stage.

Throughout my research, much was being discussed in the media and in higher education about the capabilities of AI, and its challenges to research and education3. There are many ethical concerns around AI and research (Lin, 2024; Nam and Qiong, 2023; Alasadi and Baiz, 2023), especially around transparency on the use of generative AI in writing. The primary function of this appendix was to demystify the capabilities of this type of AI and make its mechanisms more transparent, as well as highlight how the use of the GPT-4 model differs from the more widely used ChatGPT. I am aware that this research probably would not have been possible without the use of an LLM to process all the thousands of cases – or at least, not possible within the timeframe of a DPhil. As I stated in Chapter III, there are many other possible uses of deep learning models in feminicide research, and it is my hope that my research might arouse interest in further uses of these newly available tools.

Finally, during my time engaging with LLMs to do my research, I also became acutely aware of the dangers that AI poses in questions of gender. This ranges from deepfake pornographic images being used in conjunction with both revenge porn (Mania, 2024) and more overtly political messaging (Maddocks, 2020) to gender bias being perpetuated by AI itself (Leavy, 2018, Manasi et al., 2022). These have not escaped me while I was using subsets of AI to develop my own research—which is explicitly feminist and focused on criticising underlying sexist and misogynistic structures. Acknowledging how tools such as GPT-4 can be useful for feminist research cannot be done at the expense of recognising the limitations and even the dangers of such technology. It is my hope that feminist researchers continue to

3 Since 2023, the university has been releasing guidance on the use of AI and academic practice, which can be found in the Resource hub for the Centre for Teaching and Learning of the University of Oxford.

engage in the important debates being held around artificial intelligence so the usefulness can be increased and the limitations and harm decreased.

Appendix 2.

Detailed overview of discursive analysis

This appendix focuses on the qualitative coding done in this thesis. Its primary function is to provide an overview of how the discourse analysis of the sources was done. Qualitative coding is a multi-layered and multi-part process, in which the researcher goes through different cycles of examining the same data. This is done to allow for a rigorous examination of the data and to really refine the categories which are presented as a result of this examination.

I will start the appendix by prefacing that my thesis had a theoretical basis—I was looking at feminicide through Manne's proposal that misogyny is a form of norm-enforcing violence. However, I did not have an initial set of assumptions about whether and how norms would show up in the texts being examined in the thesis. While I was interested in Manne's understanding of normativity, and particularly interested in how that related to perceptions of feminicide, I opted not to work with grounded theory approaches and methods. Instead, I focused on letting the data guide my theoretical applications. In the case of my thesis, the data did show normativity and questions around affect and values, but it might not have been the case.

My approach to the coding processes was done in broadly four cycles of coding, without building up a theory of what I would find in the texts. In this appendix, I will examine each cycle and provide some examples of how the codes developed across the different cycles. Finally, I will sketch out some less developed ideas that did not bear fruition in this research but might interest other scholars engaging in gender violence research through discourse analysis.

First cycle of coding

This first cycle of coding is usually direct — it serves as the first in-depth familiarisation of the researcher with the data. Whereas during the process of extracting the texts from the internet and refining the extraction of the quantitative data I already could make notes and observe the data corpus, the first cycle of coding is essential for understanding what the data contains. The basis of my first coding cycle were the underpinning ontological and epistemological concerns of this research; that is, experience and perception through a feminist lens. As I discussed, this thesis is built on feminist epistemology and it is theoretically based on feminist theory, being concerned primarily with experience and perception. As there has been much work done previously by feminist scholars in the field, one of the coding methods I used for the first coding cycle was thematic coding.

Thematic coding consists in identifying parts of the text which are linked by common themes or ideas — in my case, themes and ideas that came from previous research on gender violence done by feminist and gender scholars. Such themes include for example, victim-blaming, jealousy, normalisation of violence, separation between public/private and other ideas that have been discussed extensively by feminist literature. Differently from a grounded theory approach, I was not looking at specific theories around the causes or impacts of gender violence, merely using broad themes. This was very useful in discarding some potential preconceptions I might have over the data; for example, instances of overt victim-blaming were not seen consistently enough to become a longstanding code. Instead, I sketched out categories such as criminal background of victim, sex worker and mother/family-oriented.

Nonetheless, I did not want the data to be seen only through the superimposition of themes over the text, but also what the text itself brought in terms of perception of feminicide itself. My research is not only a feminist theory project, but it is a phenomenological project. Therefore, in the first cycle of coding I simultaneously coded using Value coding, that is, the presence of value judgements, beliefs and/or attitudes in the text. I was interested in value coding partly because it worked well with thematic coding. Part of the thematic coding included elements that could be

perceived as having positive or negative value to the reader (e.g. victim-blaming) and it would be interesting to see whether the data showed any juxtaposition between them. My aim in using value coding was to see whether ideas of morality and affect could be found within the data. This was important because one of my initial assumptions, as a scholar engaging with feminist theory, was that those themes would be present. However, I did not know if they were present and could not assume their presence without engaging seriously with analysing the text.

Value coding was particularly present in statements given to the media by the police, family and/or friends of the victim or perpetrator. However, a more in-depth use of value coding could also be found in other aspects of the news including in what gets prioritised versus what gets hidden in the text. Value-coding can correspond to some of the findings in Thematic Coding, which left space for me to establish connections and discussions between these two forms of coding. This is particularly true of process that involve beliefs around gender, gender violence and victimhood, as seen below.

Underlying idea	Value embedded
Sex work	Yes - negative
'Himpathy'	Yes - positive
Mother/family oriented	Yes - positive
Criminality/	Yes - negative

It was through the first cycle of coding that some ideas started to be tested against the corpus of data. As I highlighted, questions emerged particularly around how to conceptualise 'victim blaming' and whether that category was an appropriate way of understanding victimhood and victim narratives in the case of media discourse around feminicide in contemporary Brazil. As I discussed in chapter V, in the cases that were named feminicide in the media, victims tended to be portrayed as virtuous, beautiful and in general, under a positive light. However, as discussed in chapters VI and VII, the ways in which victims were portrayed 'negatively' was not as explicit. This is where value coding was useful, because it considered the social

context in which the text was embedded—e.g. highlighting that a victim is a 'sex worker' for example.

Once I had started to familiarise myself with the data and had sketched out some categories in the first cycle of coding, I went over my notes of the coding process. Notes are useful for the researcher because they serve to mark thought processed as the data is analysed. They can be useful not only to revisit issues that found in the data, but also to indicate potential new avenues of exploration, cases that are harder to code etc. It is possible to see some examples of notes in the figures below.

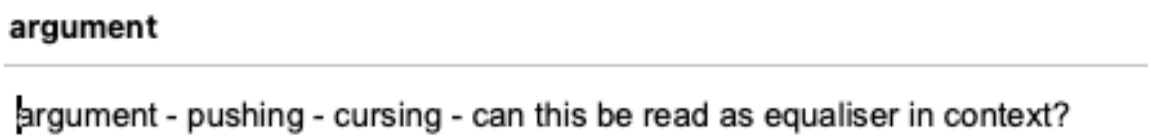


Figure 21. Example of note being written.

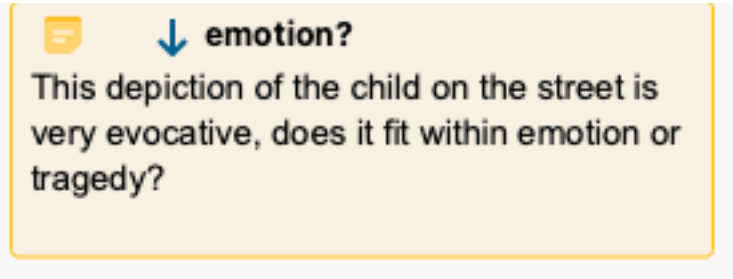


Figure 22. Example of note 1.

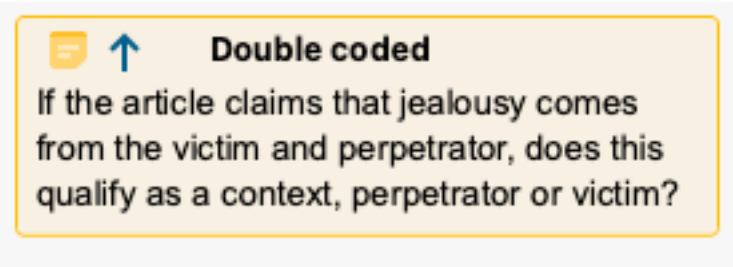


Figure 23. Example of note 2.

Second cycle of coding

The second cycle of coding is a lot more detailed than the first, as it is informed by both the first interaction with the data and the findings that it brings. In this cycle, one of my primary findings was the shaving off old assumptions — particularly those that came from Thematic coding which took into account previous literature and findings on gender violence. Of course, there were overarching themes that I was studying in the text, but the coding itself shifted away from finding themes into focusing more on what signalled those themes and that could be fit into the questions that I was raising: questions of perception and experience. In the second cycle of coding, I moved away from Thematic coding and focused on forms of coding which were first and foremost linked to perception and feeling — while Value coding continued to be used, I also applied Emotion coding, which is also a form of affective coding. Affective coding methods focus on primarily on the subjective aspects of the human experience and therefore were invaluable to my research. As the title suggests, emotion coding focuses on the emotional aspects of qualitative data, particularly in what pertains to interviews, interpersonal relationships etc.

In this part of the coding cycle, I was interested in emotion and feeling within the text; not merely in the declarations of family and friends, but also within the reporting itself, for example with the use of words such as 'tragedy/tragic', 'sad story' and so on. These indicators speak to my overall questions on understanding how feminicide is understood because they give the readers guidelines on how to feel about a particular story in the news. This is particularly relevant when analysing news sources, as there has been a growth in studies engaging with the relationship between emotion and journalism, both between journalist and their reporting (Blaagaard, 2013) and reporting and its readers (Beckett and Deuze, 2016).

There were some challenges to applying affective methods to news sources rather than more 'personal' types of data such as interviews or ethnographic work: first, there is concern in journalism regarding bias, and the presumption of objective reporting. This meant that outside of the quoting of sources (such as family or friends), much of the 'affective' is hidden in the text. However, this does notmean that the reporting is not emotional. As discussed by Beckett and Deuze, there are

several factors which draw journalists to use emotion as a tool, including changes in consumption of journalism and the technological landscape, which create economic incentives based on engagement (2016). The question is how to understand the use of emotion, its presence and potential intention in a text (see table below).

Passage	Potential coding choices	Questions asked
Diante de tamanha **brutalidad**e, **resta para Jéssica e os demais familiares recordar os momentos vividos juntos de Cintia**. 'O sorriso e a alegria dela ficam para todos nós. **Só Deus para nos consolar**. É o tipo de coisa que **nunca pensamos que iríamos passar.** Fica a **saudade** e o desejo para que a justiça seja feita'. In the face of such **brutality**, **all that remains for Jessica and the rest of her family is to remember the moments lived alongside Cintia**. '**Her smile and her her upbeat nature** stay with us. **Only God canbring us solace now**. **It's the kind of thing we never thought would happen.** We will miss her and we wish that justice is done.'	Brutality – emotion, out of the ordinary (?), context All that remains for Jessica and the rest of the family (…) – emotion, victim Her smile and upbeat nature – emotion, goodness and/or virtue, victim It's the kind of thing we never thought would happen. – out of the ordinary, victim (?)	Is there intention in using the word brutality? Is this being read emotionally by the reader? What is the function of something being classed as out-of-the-ordinary? Does this elicit a feeling? Should this be a code? Are families/friends of the victims to be classed alongside victims in the dataset? Do I count that as emotional impact?

Table 14.. Coding 'emotion' in a passage during cycle 2 of the coding process.

As seen in the table above, there are several mentions of feeling and affect in the excerpt highlighted. From the family's own words 'only God can bring us solace now' to stating that the family's only remaining choice is to remember the victim by—all these elicit feeling in the reader. But even more than that, a word such as 'brutality' is evocative.

Third cycle of coding

The third cycle of coding mainly consisted of refining and revisiting previously coded texts. Throughout the first cycles, oftentimes I encountered passages which were difficult to code (see below). This was either due to the fact that the passages could feasibly encompass more than one code (Figure 20) or that the act of coding required further examination to decide whether its interpretation was feasible within the parameters set for the coding.

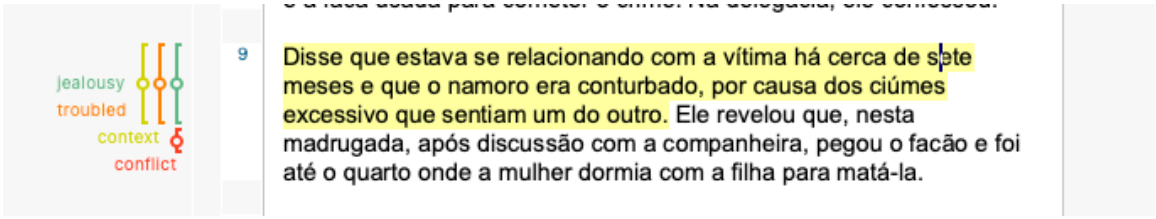


Figure 24. Example of a coded excerpt with two simultaneous codes.

The third coding cycle was also the stage in which the data began to be compiled in what would be its final form — that of an organised chapter. This meant that the process of compiling the data also brought potential challenges to the dataset; it brought forward issues of continuity and interpretation. The data did not need to merely exist, it needed to be organised in a systematic way in order to make its

relevance clear to the reader. This meant reviewing codes to be uniform and decide on the best way to present the information to the reader.

This was the moment in which I decided to organise my chapters into three axes. I noted that the codes were coalescing into three distinct 'groups' — one related to victims, the second to perpetrators and the final one related more broadly to the context in which the killing happened (a general term for the relationship context, the exact enactment of violence etc.). As it can be seen in the example on Figure 20, the excerpt could be coded both as jealousy (a perpetrator code) or as 'troubled'(a context code). As signalled by the highlight (yellow), I ended up classifying this as a context code, even if it involved mentions of jealousy due to the way the sentence was constructed and inserted in the text.

An overall look at the codes included some categories as seen below:

Victim

- Valorisation of the victim - this code included any excerpts in which the victim was valorised, her characteristics extolled as positive, or she was generally portrayed in a flattering and sympathetic manner.
- Abiding by gender norms - this code included excerpts in which the victim was portrayed through a gendered lens, e.g. as being a 'good mother'. In later iterations of the coding, this code changed to good/virtuous.
- Victim-blaming: This code considers situations in which the victim is perceived to be at fault or somehow causing her own victimisation.
- Criminal ties [victim] - this code was used when organised crime/drug trafficking links were attributed to the victim, for example, when the text would include 'she was known to have associations with organised crime'.

Perpetrator

- Valorisation of the perpetrator - this code was applied when the perpetrator was valorised, his characteristics were considered positive or he was generally portrayed in a flattering and sympathetic manner.
- Exceptional behaviour - this code was applied when behaviours or characteristics of the perpetrator were ‘excessive’, ‘exceptional’ or ‘outside of the norm’. In the final iteration of the code, this ended up being a subcategory of other codes, such as jealousy and regret.
- Jealousy – this code was applied when jealousy and/or jealous behaviour was attributed to the perpetrator. The final coding iteration also incorporated ‘excessive’ jealousy as a sub-category.
- Criminal ties [perpetrator] - this code was used when organised crime/drug trafficking links were attributed to the perpetrator

Context

- Relationship troubles - this was applied when the relationship between the parts was considered to be troubled, problematic and overall not harmonious.
- Conflict—This was applied when the violence or conflict in the relationship was attributed to both parts or considered to emanate from both parts in an equal manner. This code ended up also including words such as conflict/fights/arguments as they seemed to be used as ‘equalisers’
- Obfuscation - this code refers to when the text seems to be emphasising one aspect of the context over another, obfuscating aspects that might be relevant to the reader. This code ended up not being incorporated into the fourth cycle due to it being too open to interpretation. However, I did include obfuscation in my discussion of the data in the thesis.

Fourth cycle of coding

The fourth and final cycle of coding involved revising the entirety of the dataset once all chapters had been drafted. It was particularly interested in uniformity and clarification - that is, this final stage allowed me to look at the data as a whole. The codes were refined to become clearer, both in their names and in their definitions. For example, as mentioned previously, a code that indicated 'excessiveness' got broken down and incorporated into other codes (jealousy and regret) for clarity. This was done because the idea of excessiveness was fulfilling functions within narratives of regret and/or jealousy.

The fourth cycle was particularly helpful for the not-feminicide cases, because that allowed me to see the ways in which words played a role in indicating broader codes. For example, this is when I highlighted the use of the passive voice in the not-feminicide cases, after having made notes about its presence in the first three cycles of coding. But no new codes or new methods of coding were done in the fourth cycle, as it served more a sieve for the work done previously.

Appendix III: List of online newspapers used in the dataset

94fm Dourados
A Crítica
Acorda Cidade
Alagoas 24 Horas
Amazonas Atual
Bahia no Ar
Banda B
BHAZ
Brasil de Fato
Blasting News BR
Blog do Rodrigo Ferraz
BR104
Cáceres Notícias
Campo Grande News
Catraca Livre
A Cidade ON
Cidade Verde
Clic Camaquá
Clique Diário
Click Paraíba
ConJur Notícias
CNN Brasil
Correio 24 Horas
Correio Braziliense
Correio do Povo
Diário do Estado Goiânia

Diário do Grande ABC

Diário da Manhã

Diário do Nordeste

Dourados News

Estado de São Paulo

Estado de Minas

Extra

Farol Notícias

Folha de São Paulo

Foha do Progresso

Folha Vitória

Gaúcha Zero Hora

A Gazeta

GAZ

G1 Globo (and all its regional subsidiaries, e.g. GI Globo Rio de Janeiro)

O Globo

GP1

Hoje em Dia

Hypeness

iBahia

IG Notícias

IstoÉ

Imirante

JC Pernambuco

Jovem Pan

Jornal do Brasil

Jornal Cruzeiro

Jornal Dia a Dia Espírito Santo

Jornal Pequeno

Lance

O Livre

Massa News

Metrópoles

Mídia Bahia

O Município

NSC Total

ND Mais

NE10 Interior

Nova Imprensa

OCP News

Olhar Direto

O Pantaneiro

Paracatu News

Planeta Folha

Plantão dos Lagos

O Povo

Portal Engeplus

Portal do Holanda

Pragmatismo Político

Perfil News

Piauí Hoje

Ponte Jornalismo

O Progresso

R7 Notícias

A Rede

Rádio Jornal Pernambuco

Rádio Progresso

Record TV Online

Repórter Diário

Revista Marie Claire

Revista Capricho

Revista Claudia

RIC Mais

Rio Mafra News

Rio Mafra Mix

O São Gonçalo

Só Notícias THMais

O Tempo

TNH1

Tribuna Online

Tribuna do Norte

Tribuna de Petrópolis

TV Jornal

Voz da Bahia

A Voz da Serra

Visão Oeste

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