Identity in Journalism: Evidence from News Reporting of Violence Against Women

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Abstract

This paper investigates whether reporter identity shapes news content and reader behavior. Using data on the universe of murders with female victims in Italy from 2006 to 2022, matched with associated newspaper articles, I measure gender differences in reporting. I construct novel, validated narrative indices capturing two opposing reporting styles: victim-centered narratives, which focus on the victim and provide information on support resources, and perpetrator-centered narratives, which emphasize the perpetrator's motives, like jealousy or a fit of rage. To adjust for variation in the stories and topics covered, I exploit the conditionally random assignment of journalists to crime events based on newsroom schedules. The results show substantial gender differences in reporting, with female journalists more likely to use victim-centered narratives and less likely to use perpetrator-centered narratives. Combining reporter assignment with provincial readership data in a staggered difference-in-differences design, I show that higher exposure to articles by female reporters after a murder increases calls to the helpline number for violence against women. I provide experimental evidence to support the victim-centered narratives as a key mechanism: victim-centered framing increases the perceived prevalence of help-seeking behavior, shifting norms around seeking support. By contrast, perpetrator-centered narratives lead to higher engagement among male readers while generating backlash among female readers, suggesting that identity-driven and audience-maximizing motives may reinforce one another.

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"You are the interpreters to the women of the country
as to what goes on politically in the legislative national life,
and also what the social and personal life is at the White House"
Eleanor Roosevelt at her first women-only press conference, 1933

1 Introduction

During her tenure as First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt held 348 press conferences exclusively for female journalists, promoting the idea that female journalists were better intermediaries for delivering news to female audiences. Nearly a century later, many newsrooms have been changing their composition along similar lines, with outlets like the *New York Times* and *The Atlantic* hiring predominantly women and Black reporters in the past 10 years.[1] This trend, combined with the growing influence of news influencers who make personal identity a central feature of their delivery (Forman-Katz et al., 2025), has made understanding whether reporter identity shapes not just representation, but reader behavior, a first-order question.

Yet this question has been explored mainly by looking at differences in political ideology across outlets (Puglisi and Snyder, 2015), leaving the role of identity of reporters within the same newsroom largely unexplored, assuming that reporters' monetary and ideological incentives are aligned with those of their employers. In reality, journalists retain substantial discretion over story framing and may face identity-specific incentives that could become supply-side determinants of news content and, given the well-documented influence of media on public opinion and behavior (DellaVigna and La Ferrara, 2015), a novel channel through which identity can persuade readers at scale.

This paper documents that journalists' gender identity substantially shapes news content and, in turn, readers' behavior, focusing on Violence Against Women (VAW) in Italy as the empirical setting. In this context, gender identity is especially salient as VAW crimes are predominantly perpetrated by men against women. Moreover, the social stakes are high: in 2023 alone, approximately 51,100 women were killed by intimate partners or family members (UN, 2024)[2], making the media's role in shaping public awareness and victim behavior a first-order policy issue.

A first challenge in investigating gender differences in reporting is to measure reporting style

[1] The *New York Times* increased the share of female and minority journalists by 10 percentage points (2024 DEI report). Similarly, *The Atlantic* and the *Washington Post* increased the share of minority reporters by 10 and 5 percentage points, respectively (The Atlantic 2025 DEI report, The Washington Post's Workforce Demographics).

[2] In Italy, the share of women murdered by a current or former intimate partner has increased by 10 percentage points over the past decade, and despite having one of the lowest overall homicide rates in the European Union, Italy records the highest number of female murders (Statista, 2022a; Statista, 2022b).

meaningfully. Existing outlet-level measures of slant or topic selection are too coarse to capture the narrative choices that reporter identity is most likely to influence. Instead, I develop two narrative indices rooted in guidelines for VAW reporting and theoretical contributions from psychology and communication studies (Henley et al., 1995; Carlyle et al., 2008). I construct two indices that capture Victim-Centered (VC) and Perpetrator-Centered (PC) narratives in a novel dataset of news articles covering murders with female victims in Italy between 2006 and 2022. Crucially, these narratives capture the gendered nature of the crime: VC narratives focus on the victim and contextualize the crime within the broader phenomenon of VAW (*"after twenty years of violence and threat"*). PC narratives instead foreground perpetrators' motives, like referencing jealousy or fits of rage (*"intense disputes fueled by jealousy and accusation regarding her relationship with another man"*).

To isolate gender differences in reporting, I compare articles by female and male reporters assigned to otherwise similar crimes within the same newsroom. Crucially, in Italian newsrooms, the assignment of journalists to news is orthogonal to crime characteristics, addressing the potential selection of reporters into crime stories. Specifically, driven by the urgency of covering the crime quickly, newsrooms assign reporters to crimes based on work schedules and geographic proximity, generating quasi-random variation in the gender of reporters covering a crime.

The results reveal sizable gender differences in reporting among journalists within the same newsroom, with female journalists using more victim-centered narratives and fewer perpetrator-centered ones. Specifically, female journalists score on average 0.1 standard deviations higher on the VC index and 0.04 standard deviations lower on the PC index than their male counterparts. Breaking these differences down, I find that women are 17% more likely to refer to a murder as a femicide and 70% more likely to mention resources available to victims, while men are 14% more likely to attribute the crime to jealousy or a fit of rage. These differences remain stable even when including crime fixed effects to address potential correlations between reporters' schedules and crime characteristics, and when focusing on just the first articles about the crime. Crucially, I find no gender differences in reporting on homicides with male victims. This placebo exercise highlights the role of identity in driving these differences and excluding other differences across reporters' gender, like women more empathetic towards victims.

I then turn to investigate the second main question: do these differences in reporting influence readers? To test this, I study whether exposure to female versus male journalists affects help-seeking behavior, measured as weekly calls to the national gender-based violence prevention helpline across

Italian provinces since 2013. Identification exploits two sources of exogeneity: the random timing and location of murders and the quasi-random assignment of first reporters to crimes. To ensure the latter, I construct the treatment variable using only the first five articles per newspaper and crime written in the two weeks after a crime, before editorial preferences can influence reporter selection. I then estimate the effect of early exposure to articles by female reporters, weighted by provincial newspaper circulation, using a generalized difference-in-differences design with staggered treatment.

The results show that helpline calls increase more after crimes are covered by a larger share of female reporters, showing that not only does gender identity shape news content, but it also meaningfully influences readers. The results are substantial: having one additional article written by a woman for each crime and newspaper leads to a 17% increase in helpline calls, corresponding to roughly one additional call per province and week. These estimates are robust to alternative estimators (Chaisemartin and D'Haultfœuille, 2024), not driven by pretrends, general crime trends, or by an increase in crime coverage driven by female reporters. Placebo exercises using placebo murders and murders with male victims show that the results are not driven by differences across places with different female reporters exposure or general crime reporting.

There are two potential channels for this helpline effect. An indirect channel where female readers may be more attentive to or more easily persuaded by articles written by women, echoing the literature on descriptive representation and role models (Beaman et al., 2009; Miller and Segal, 2019). A direct channel where the different narratives female reporters employ may increase awareness of resources and update readers' perceptions of help-seeking norms, reducing informational and social barriers to calling (Bursztyn et al., 2020b). I provide evidence in favor of the latter in two ways. First, I replace the female exposure measure with narrative-specific measures and show a positive, significant effect of VC narratives on calls, whereas PC narratives have no significant effect. Second, I isolate the effect of the different narratives through a pre-registered online experiment.

I recruit 1600 Italian respondents and randomly assign them to read the same newspaper article about a murder, varying the narratives they see: either perpetrator-centered or one of two victim-centered alternatives. I find that VC narratives increase respondents' perceived prevalence of help-seeking behavior among VAW victims only when mentioning pre-existing violence and help-seeking and that this is especially true for women. Conversely, there is no effect of providing information on resources on this outcome. I interpret this evidence as consistent with a descriptive social

norms channel whereby learning that other women seek help normalizes the behavior and lowers its perceived social cost (Bursztyn et al., 2020b). Investigating the effects of narratives on attitudes, I find that PC narratives increase empathy toward the victim while VC narratives decrease empathy toward the perpetrator.

Finally, I investigate readers' preferences over different narratives to provide evidence on the potential monetary returns of reporters to use different narratives. For this purpose, in the experiment, I look at readers' retention rates of readers'—the probability of using the same newspaper in the future—and click-through engagement—the probability of clicking on other articles. I find that while PC narratives alienate female readers they generate higher click-through engagement among male readers compared to VC narratives.

I interpret all this evidence through the lens of a model of identity-motivated journalists. If reporters were driven purely by monetary incentives and had access to the same profit-maximizing information within their newsroom, we would expect no systematic differences in narrative choice across gender. Conversely, if journalists' identity played a role in writing decisions, e.g., by journalists caring about the utility of in-group readers, we could also observe reporters from the same outlet using different narratives, as is the case in the setting studied here.

These identity-driven motives enter the journalist's utility function in two ways: through readership maximization, with in-group readers' preferences differing from those of out-group readers, and through altruistic motives, given that in-group readers benefit from some narratives in ways beyond their preferences. The difference-in-difference analysis and the experiment provide evidence on both these aspects, suggesting that audience-maximizing and identity-driven altruistic motives may reinforce each other, amplifying gender differences in narrative choice.

This paper contributes to the literature on the determinants of news content and media narratives. On the one hand, existing papers have highlighted the role of demand-side factors in influencing media slant, like readers' political preferences (Gentzkow and Shapiro, 2010; Puglisi and Snyder, 2011), and how these can lead to different degrees of slant depending on the characteristics of the media market (Mullainathan and Shleifer, 2005; Gentzkow and Shapiro, 2006).[3] On the other hand, works focusing on supply-side factors have mainly provided evidence on the influence of media ownership (Martin and McCrain, 2019; Mastrorocco and Ornaghi, 2025; Cage et al., 2025; Durante and Knight, 2012).

[3]See Puglisi and Snyder (2015) and Gentzkow et al. (2015) for reviews of the empirical and theoretical literature on the drivers of media slant.

I shift the focus to another component of news production: journalists. The few empirical studies focusing on journalists' contribution to media slant have provided evidence of a moderate to small effect of journalists' ideology on news slant compared to the role of outlets (Cage et al., 2025; Boxell and Conway, 2022).[4] In this paper, I move away from a political ideology and instead focus on gender identity. Contrary to the findings of these studies, this paper provides novel evidence showing that journalists' gender is the main driver of crime narratives about VAW and that these differences also persist within outlets with different political alignments.[5]

This paper also contributes to the literature on the effects of media on readers' behaviors and attitudes by providing, to the best of my knowledge, the first evidence of the effects of reporter-specific narratives. A central finding of this literature is that politically slanted media affects individuals' political preferences, whether through exposure to different outlets (DellaVigna and Kaplan, 2007; Ladd and Lenz, 2009) or to different topics (Chiang and Knight, 2011; Grossman et al., 2022).[6] My findings are more closely related to works on the effect of media exposure on crime-related outcomes (Mastrorocco and Minale, 2018; Banerjee et al., 2019; Moreno-Medina et al., 2025).[7] In line with these findings, I show that exposure to different narratives leads to changes in attitudes and behavior, providing the first evidence of identity-driven persuasion in the media.

In other contexts, many papers have investigated the role of identity in shaping individual preferences and behavior in politics (Chattopadhyay and Duflo, 2004; Beaman et al., 2009), firms (Matsa and Miller, 2013; Bertrand et al., 2019), and the judiciary (Harris and Sen, 2019; Miller and Segal, 2019).[8] At the same time, the evidence on whether this descriptive representation translates into substantive representation for in-group members is mixed.[9] This paper provides novel evidence on this in the context of journalism providing evidence that the identity of workers can have a direct effect on consumers by directly affecting the product.[10]

[4]On the theoretical side, Baron (2006) is the first to propose a framework in which journalists have discretion when producing news, leading to media bias arising from their private information about news.

[5]These results are in line with the preliminary evidence on the drivers of the representation of women and minorities in the media Ash et al. (2021). Further, they relate to studies investigating whether external elements influence media content through their effects on journalists, such as connections (Xu, 2024; Dellavigna and Hermle, 2017).

[6]See also Enikolopov et al. (2011), Martin and Yurukoglu (2017), and Durante et al. (2019). DellaVigna and Gentzkow (2010), Prior (2013), and DellaVigna and La Ferrara (2015) provide a review of media effects.

[7]In addition to the references above, see, e.g., Jensen and Oster (2009), Chong and La Ferrara (2009), La Ferrara et al. (2012), Baum et al. (2018), Kearney and Levine (2015), Colagrossi et al. (2023), and Belguise and Monterosa (2025), which focus on the effect of media on women-related outcomes like fertility and emancipation.

[8]These works build on social identity theory (Tajfel et al., 1971; Turner et al., 1979) and its introduction into economics by Akerlof and Kranton (2000).

[9]See (Wängnerud, 2009) for a review of studies on female descriptive representation in politics.

[10]This is different from similar papers on substantive representations, that mainly provide evidence on this through a role model channel (Dee, 2007; Flabbi et al., 2019; Porter and Serra, 2020).

This paper further contributes to the literature on information framing and persuasion. A large body of work has documented the effects of framing on perceptions (Andre et al., 2024), attitudes (Iyengar, 1991; Chong and Druckman, 2007), and policy preferences (Alesina et al., 2023). Most closely related are papers on the effect of media narratives and rhetorical devices (Schwarz et al., 2022; Djourelova, 2023; Moreno-Medina et al., 2025). I contribute to this literature by providing evidence that victim-centered narratives shape perceived social norms around help-seeking behavior,[11] and that narratives trigger empathy toward either the victim or the perpetrator,[12]

Finally, I contribute to the literature on gender-based violence. A substantial body of work has studied the economic determinants of intimate partner violence (Aizer, 2010), the role of legislation and enforcement (Ferraz and Schiavon, 2022; Sviatschi and Trako, 2021), and the role of gender norms, including evidence that entertainment media can shift norms and reduce VAW prevalence (Banerjee et al., 2019; González and Rodríguez-Planas, 2020; Green et al., 2020). This paper complements this literature by providing the first evidence that media narratives affect help-seeking behavior among VAW victims.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides information about journalism and violence against women in Italy. Section 3 describes the data and the construction of the text-based measures for the narratives. Sections 4, 5, and 6 describe the empirical strategies and experiment, and report the results on gender differences in reporting and the effect of identity-driven reporting on help-seeking, perceptions, and attitudes. Section 7 discusses the results and their implications, and Section 8 concludes.

2 Institutional Context

Italy's media landscape is characterized by a few influential national newspapers and several more local ones. The leading national newspapers are more popular in the north, while in the South of Italy regional and local newspapers dominate the media scene. These newspapers are generally smaller and focus more on local news while still covering the main national ones[13].

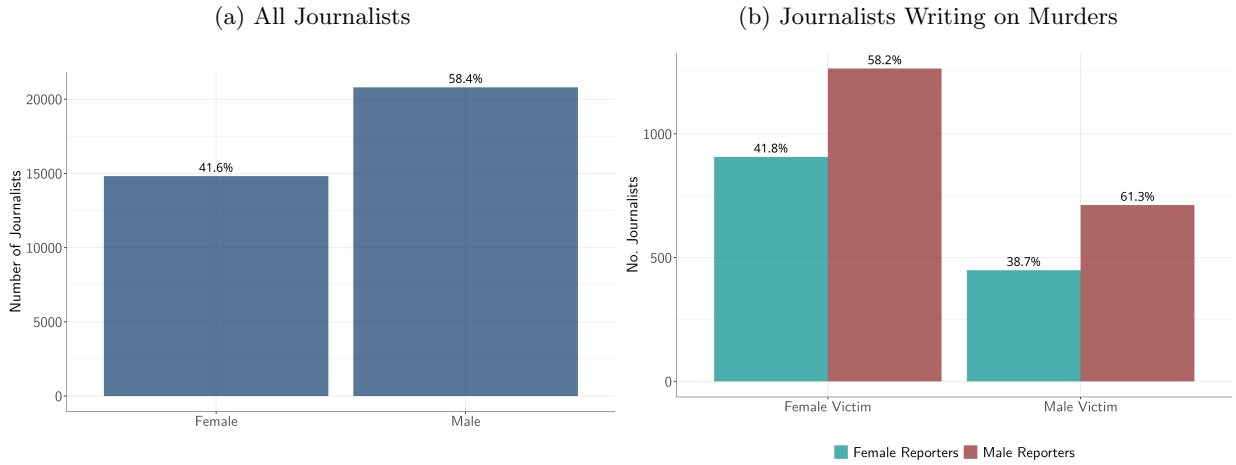
The Italian journalism job market, like in many other countries, has been relatively rigid over the last 20 years due to the decline in newspaper popularity and, consequently, in revenues. This has led

[11] See Bursztyn et al. (2020a) and Bursztyn et al. (2020b).

[12] At the same time, I do not find any evidence of this leading to an increased demand for government intervention, as the growing literature on the role of perspective-taking and empathy in shaping policy preferences would predict (Adida et al., 2018; Kalla and Broockman, 2023; Adida et al., 2025).

[13] See Appendix Table A.18 for information on newspapers and their readership.

Figure 1: Gender Composition of Journalists



Notes. Gender composition of journalists in Italy. Panel (a) reports the number of journalists separately by gender in the full population of Italian journalists. Panel (b) reports the number of journalists writing about murders separately by gender of the victim and of the journalist.

to limited hiring of young journalists, resulting in a predominantly homogeneous newsroom, with a prevalence of male journalists both overall and in crime sections, as shown in Figure 1. In particular, editors-in-chief and editors at the head of news sections tend to be older male journalists[14], who support a traditional writing style where the *storytelling* plays a more significant role than accurate reporting (Post, 2023).

Italian newsrooms are organized hierarchically. Larger newspapers are typically led by an editor-in-chief who oversees several section editors, each responsible for a specific topic or theme like politics, economy, or crime. The crime section, for example, consists of a specialized team of journalists responsible for investigating and writing articles on crimes. Each level of this hierarchy faces different incentives that shape the editorial output of a newspaper. The editor-in-chief sets the overall editorial line, weighing the newspaper's ideological positioning, often correlated with that of the owner, against its financial needs. Specifically, they need to consider what is newsworthy and what is likely to maximize readers' engagement, such as click-through rate, or retention. Next, section editors act as intermediaries between the main editor and reporting journalists. In practice, they decide on article titles, monitor journalists' output, and, jointly with the editor-in-chief, determine which stories to run, with incentives broadly aligned with those at the top.

Finally, reporters are tasked with gathering the necessary information and writing the text of the article. In doing so, they face a broader set of incentives. While they still aim to maximize

[14]There are only two newspapers with a female editor-in-chief among all newspapers.

readers' engagement and adhere to the newspaper's positioning, they also have personal preferences over how to frame events that, in the extreme case, could even lead them to switch media outlets and move to more ideologically aligned ones (Cage et al., 2025). The fact that reporters retain meaningful discretion over article content and style could therefore lead to detectable differences in writing choices across reporters with different characteristics or preferences.

When news outlets receive news from a wire agency, they must respond quickly, especially if it qualifies as breaking news and needs prompt reporting, as is the case with crime news. Section editors, therefore, assign the story to the reporter in the crime unit who is both on duty and geographically closest to the event.[15] The assigned reporter then writes an article drawing on information from the wire agency and, in some cases, any newspaper informants. Finally, section editors review the piece, assign a title, and publish it with the authorization of the editor-in-chief. The same happens with crime developments in the following days, as long as the crime is covered by the crime unit.

Turning to crime, Italy is among the safest countries in Europe in terms of murders. As of 2022, it had the lowest murder rate per 100,000 inhabitants in the European Union, less than half that of France and equal to 75% of Germany's (Statista, 2022b). At the same time, in 2022, it was estimated to be the country with the highest number of femicides in the European Union, with 120 murders, followed by France and Germany, with 118 and 113 femicides, respectively. The trend of these murders in Italy, as in Europe, is also striking in Italy. Appendix Figure A.10a plots the number of murders per year and shows that while the number of murders with male victims has decreased sharply in the past 20 years, the number of murders with female victims has decreased by a smaller margin and remained stable in the past 10 years. Moreover, the prevalence of murders by the current or ex-intimate partner has been increasing since 2017, reaching 60% of murders with female victims.

Finally, it is also worth noting that the setting of crimes with female victims in Italy is particularly suited to investigating the role of journalists' identities. As mentioned above, violence against women is a very salient issue in Italy. On top of this, media representation of these crimes has increasingly been central to public debate. Feminist activists argue that the media tend to exhibit empathy toward the perpetrator and make extensive use of episodic framing, for instance, by focusing on specific factors that might have led to the crime, like a fit of rage, mental or economic

[15]The assignment process is different when the crime becomes front-page news or a story of *national interest*. At this point, journalists outside the crime unit are assigned to cover the story depending on their expertise.

problems, or some action of the woman[16]. Moreover, these crimes primarily involve Italians and show few systematic differences across age, region, or socioeconomic status. The topic is therefore predominantly framed around gender, allowing me to isolate the role of gender identity while abstracting from other characteristics and considerations that may lead to different writing choices.

At the same time, while this is an ideal setting to study this question, similar conditions could arise in other contexts where an in-group/out-group divide, other than political ideology, is salient, and where the journalist identifies with one of the groups involved. Such a scenario emerged in American newsrooms after the murder of George Floyd in 2020. The event highlighted an ideological struggle within American journalism: Black journalists advocated for a more explicit commitment to social justice in reporting by, e.g., framing events as manifestations of systemic racism, while others defended traditional norms of neutrality. This suggests that the tension between identity and professional norms documented in this paper for gender and crime reporting is not unique to this context, but could extend many domains of public life.

3 Data and Measurement

In this section, I describe the main data sources used in the analysis of media representation of violence against women and the methodology to extract victim-centered and perpetrator-centered narratives. In particular, Section 3.1 provides a detailed description of the data used, and Section 3.2 describes the methodology used to extract narratives from text and the validation.

3.1 Data

This paper leverages several data sources. First, I collect data on murders of women, then I match this data with newspaper articles and available metadata. Finally, I combine this corpus with additional province-level data, e.g., help-seeking and crime rates.

Murders. An individual-level dataset of murders is unavailable from official sources like the Ministry of the Interior. Therefore, I use two different sources to compile a list of murders where the victim is a woman occurring in Italy. First, I collect information about these murders from the association *Casa Donne*[17], which writes annual reports containing information about murders involving

[16] In a recent article by *The Guardian* the president of a feminist association argued for a change in how media portray perpetrators, and to "put an end to journalism that still emphasizes the point of view of the murderer, explaining what motivated him to kill a woman" (Kassam, 2023).

[17] https://www.casadonne.it/

women reported in the press that can be categorized as VAW. In particular, I extract information about the date and place of the event, the victims' and perpetrators' names, nationalities, and relationships. Finally, I validate and complement this data with the list of murders involving women from 2018 from *Femminicidio Italia*[18], a website focusing exclusively on providing information about these events.

The final sample comprises 1,989 murders of women from 2006 to 2022. Appendix Table A.19 reports the summary statistics for the murders in my data. It shows that most victims and perpetrators are Italian—77% and 83%, respectively—and that around 87% of these murders are either committed by the partner of the victim or by a relative. To check the completeness of this newly constructed data, I compare the yearly average with the yearly national average of murders with female victims from the Italian National Statistical Office (Appendix Figure A.11). The largest discrepancy is in 2006 when the national average is almost twice the average in the new data. However, the difference between the two averages shrinks considerably over time. The decrease in the discrepancy is driven by murders where the gender of the victim is not among the reasons for the homicides, like robberies, which went from around 50 to less than 15 events per year.

Second, I collect data about murders with male victims by extracting this information from newspaper articles on these events, leveraging the large language model. For this purpose, I have the model reading each article and instruct it to classify whether the article is about a murder of real people, thus excluding fictional ones, and it happened in Italy. Further, I ask it to classify whether the victim is a woman or a man and to extract the names of the victim and the perpetrator, their relationship, the location where the murder happened, and the date[19]. Next, I manually clean the names, relationships, and locations of any spelling mistakes and map the locations to their respective municipalities. I identify a total of 5393 murders, of which around 7% are perpetrated by a relative and 8% by the intimate partner.

Corpus of Newspaper Articles. As a next step, I collect articles from Italian newspapers about these murders from *Factiva*. I include in my sample the most-read national newspapers, excluding from the count local news outlets, as well as the two most popular newspapers for each province (See Appendix Table A.18). To retrieve the articles of interest, I query *Factiva* separately for each year by searching the name of the victim or the perpetrator combined with the root of

[18] https://femminicidioitalia.info
[19] See Appendix E for further details

words like "murdered", "killed", or "dead".[20] Similarly, for the articles about murders with male victims I query words like "killed", "murder", "homicide", and "dead", and leveraging the tags available in *Factiva* I collect a total of 18127 articles, after removing articles that are not about murders happening in Italy as described in Appendix Section E.

Appendix Figure A.13a shows the total number of articles on murders with female victims over time, which has been increasing over the years, with a sharp increase in 2015.[21] The reason for this jump in the number of available articles lies in the availability of newspapers before that year. Indeed, Appendix Figure A.15 shows that until 2014, only five newspapers are in the sample, while from 2015 on, the pool of newspapers increases. Additionally, from Figure A.13, it is evident that some years have particularly high numbers of articles. This can be explained by looking at the distribution of the number of articles per newspaper-event in Appendix Figure A.16a. Indeed, while the large majority of events are covered by fewer than 10 articles per newspaper, the distribution has a long tail, suggesting that some events get more attention. The reason for this is that some cases become viral because of the victim's characteristics—e.g., the victim is young—or of the difficulty of the case—e.g., uncertainty on the identity of the perpetrator.

A sub-sample of articles has information about the reporter who authored it, for a total of 2710 reporters. For these reporters, I collect information from the National Journalist Order, an organization to which journalists have to subscribe to work as such.[22] In particular, I retrieve information about journalists' date of birth, region of residence—which coincides with the region where they work—, the date when they first subscribed to the order, and whether they are *Professionisti* or *Pubblicisti*, i.e., journalists working only as such or those who occasionally contribute to newspapers. I code the reporter's gender from their name. Appendix Table A.20 reports the summary statistics for journalists' characteristics separately for female and male reporters. The Table shows that the majority of reporters are men (58%) and live in Northern Italy (49%). Moreover, even within newspapers, female reporters are, on average, 4 years younger than male reporters and consequently have less experience. Figure A.13b reports the number of articles on murders with female authors by year, separately for female and male journalists, and shows that while there are consistently more male reporters covering these kinds of stories, the difference between male

[20] The matching rate between the murders in my sample and those for which I find the newspaper articles is 98.31%.

[21] See Appendix Figure A.16 for murders with male victims.

[22] It is important to note that this subscription requirement is only a formality since the organization has limited power to enforce subscription. This results in individuals who do not subscribe to the order still contributing to newspapers. However, this issue is limited in my sample, where 80% of reporters are subscribed to the order.

and female reporters has been narrowing over the years[23]. Additionally, the majority of articles in the sample are authored by journalists who write articles on both crimes with female and male victims.[24] Finally, I match newspapers with yearly data about their readership in each Italian province, using data from *Accertamenti Diffusione Stampa*.

Additional Data. Finally, I collect information about gender norms and calls to the VAW helpline number in Italy from the Italian Statistical Office (ISTAT).

The helpline number for violence against women was an initiative of the Department of Equal Opportunities, launched in 2006 to support women who are experiencing violence, including psychological violence or stalking, both within and outside the family. The number is active 24 hours a day and closely collaborates with anti-violence centers to connect women in need with anti-violence centers in their areas[25]. Data on calls are available from 2013 for each province and week. Appendix Figure A.18 shows the distribution of calls, and it highlights the sparse nature of the variable, with the majority of province-week observations having zero or one calls.

As a proxy for gender norms, I use information on female labor-market outcomes, at the year and region level on the share of households with children in which the woman does not work. To validate this proxy, I calculate the correlation between this variable and the level of agreement or acceptability of at least one stereotype about traditional gender roles, sexual violence, and stereotypical behavior within the household. I report the results in Appendix Table A.22, which shows that all these measures have correlations above 70% with the share of households without working women, further validating this variable as a proxy for gender norms.

3.2 Measuring Victim- and Perpeptrator-Centered Narratives

In this section, I propose a keyword-based approach to quantify reporting practices about homicides with women as victims. First, I provide an overview of the existing guidelines for reporting episodes of violence against women, both worldwide and in Italy. Then, building on these guidelines and the linguistic literature on the topic, I describe the method applied to measure reporting practices and extract narratives.

[23] Appendix Table A.21 shows the distribution of female reporters by newspaper.

[24] Appendix Figure A.17 shows the distribution of the share of articles about murders with female victims per reporter, considering reporters who authored more than 5 articles in my sample.

[25] See https://www.1522.eu/?lang=en for additional information.

Guidelines on Reporting about Violence Against Women. Journalists often rely on professional guidelines from journalists' organizations or news agencies as broad references for reporting. The main example of these guidelines is the *Associated Press* Stylebook, described by its editor as a *toolbook* that proposes "a set of standards and practices that safeguards AP stories from bias and inaccuracies." At the same time, there is often flexibility in adopting these guidelines as newsrooms need to adapt to the preferences of their audiences and want to abide by the principle of freedom of information that is often affirmed by journalists' ethics codes.[26]

This can lead to challenges in consistently enforcing these rules.For these reasons, guidelines for reporting on violence against women, issued by numerous international and national organizations,[27] are often non-mandatory, allowing for a lot of freedom of journalistic writing.

The main principles guiding these guidelines are closely related to works in linguistics, social psychology, and communication that have theorized the effect of different frames and rhetorical devices on responsibility attribution (Ryan et al., 2006). For instance, many of these works highlight how the use of passive voices leads to diminishing perpetrators' responsibility (see Henley et al. 1995; Bohner 2001; De Freitas et al. 2017). Similarly, other studies suggest that one of the reasons for the lack of social responsibility regarding VAW is that these crimes are often reported with information that diminishes perpetrators' culpability, e.g., by mentioning the victim having another relationship or wanting to separate. Additionally, these studies highlight the preference for episodic framing, i.e., focusing on single events rather than placing them in a broader context (Carlyle et al. 2008; Palazzolo and Roberto (2011); Carlyle et al. 2014). Moreover, existing works emphasize the importance of defining violence as a societal and public health issue since this type of thematic framing can lead to higher policy mobilization and support for victims (Iyengar 1991; Maxwell et al. 2000; Carll 2003).

Following these works, the journalistic guidelines can be summarized in a few common principles. On the one hand, they suggest avoiding the use of passive voice and *perpetrator-centered* narratives, such as mitigating factors that can reduce perpetrators' responsibility and perpetuate stereotypes, for example, framing the crime as the result of someone snapping, mentioning a betrayal, or mental and financial problems. On the other hand, they encourage journalists to adopt victim-centered narratives by contextualizing the crime, e.g., reporting pre-existing patterns of abuse, and referring

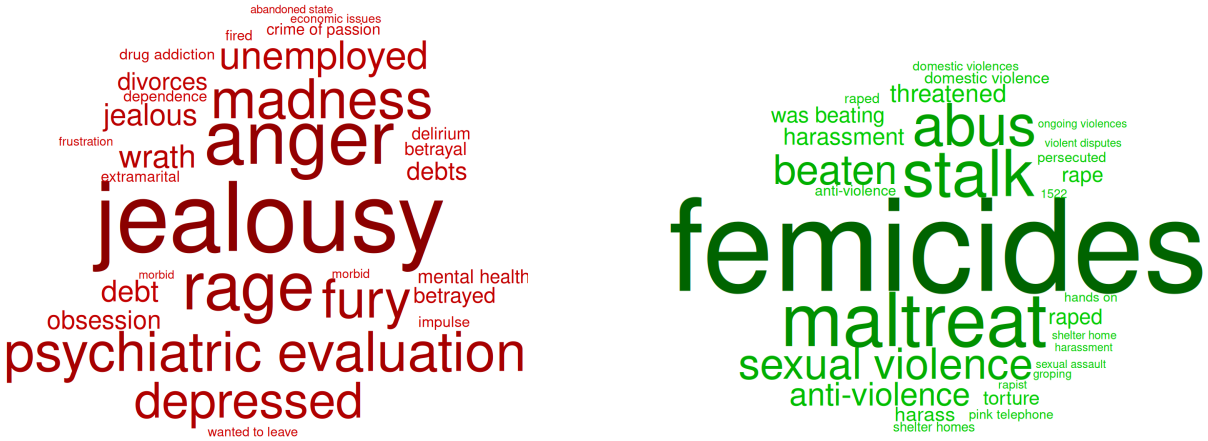
[26] As an example, the Italian ethics code (*Testo Unico dei Doveri del Giornalista*) states that "Journalists' activity is inspired by the principle of freedom of speech affirmed in Italian Constitution [...] Journalists defend each person's right to information and freedom of expression.

[27] See UNESCO (2019), Zero Tolerance UK, Warren et al. (2024), UNDP (2022), FNSI (2017).

Figure 2: Most Frequent Dictionary Words

(a) Perpetrator-Centered

(b) Victim-Centered



Notes. Word clouds of the most frequent words appearing in articles, separately by practices that enter the perpetrator-centered narratives and those entering the victim-centered narratives. Words plotted in a larger font appear more frequently.

to the broader phenomenon of violence against women, for instance, by mentioning related data or information on existing resources to help women.[28]

Dictionary Approach. For the purpose of my analysis, I aim to isolate different topics described in the guidelines and highlighted by the literature in linguistics and communication. I create different dictionaries to capture the topics that the aforementioned sources suggest reporters should mention or avoid in articles about violence against women. In particular, I create six dictionaries, each capturing one of the following Perpetrator-Centered narratives: *fit of rage*, *jealousy*, *betrayal*, *end of the relationship*, *financial*, and *mental problems*.

Then, to isolate Victim-Centered narratives, I create a dictionary that captures mentions of pre-existing sexual violence, containing words like "stalking", "abuse", or "rape", and one recording mentions of resources for countering violence against women, e.g., anti-violence centers or the helpline number 1522. To ensure that the dictionaries are exhaustive, I use word embeddings to isolate the words that are closest in similarity to the seed dictionaries and enrich them with the terms with the highest similarity score and that are related to the topic of each dictionary.

[28]The *Manifesto di Venezia* (FNSI, 2017) posits that this practice often follows from an *abuse* of the mandate of "reporting the substantial truth about facts" included in the journalists' ethics code. They argue that this mandate leads to over-engaging in superfluous details that translate into perpetrator-centered narratives and spectacularization.

Figure 2 plots the most frequent words of the dictionaries that appear in the articles, separately for practices that enter the perpetrator-centered and the victim-centered narratives. The Figure shows that words indicating jealousy and framing the crime as the result of the perpetrator snapping are the most common for the perpetrator-centered narratives, while femicide and maltreatment are the most used for victim-centered narratives. The full list of words for each dictionary is reported in Appendix Table C.1.

Finally, I created an indicator that equals 1 if the article contains the word "femminicidio" and 0 otherwise. I pre-process the text of the articles by lowering cases and removing the names of the author, the victim, and the perpetrator, as well as the names of regions and municipalities. Then, for each word in the dictionaries, I first mask the keywords if they appear in expressions that do not refer to the reporting practice. For instance, for mentions of rape, I remove all instances where rape refers to the general phenomenon but not to the crime itself, e.g., "sexual violence episodes as serious as rape" or "181 cases of rape". Additionally, I mask all instances where the word is preceded by a negative adverb within a three-word distance, such as "she was not raped. After masking these expressions that could potentially confound the final measure, for each dictionary k and article a, I create an indicator capturing the presence of one or more words from the dictionary:

$$Y_a^k = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } w^k \in a \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \tag{1}$$

Finally, I aggregate these indicators into two measures. First, I create a *Victim-Centered* (VC) index that averages indicators for pre-existing violence, "femminicidio", and resources. Second, I construct a *Perpetrator-Centered* (PC) index by averaging the indicators for the remaining dictionaries.[29]

Validation. The key advantage of using a dictionary approach when the goal is to isolate specific concepts is that it cleanly isolates the element of interest, minimizing the noise that other methods would introduce. For instance, using similarity in word embeddings to capture the topics described above would capture more elements than just the objective topics, even with embeddings trained on the specific corpus. Indeed, it is likely that the *fit of rage* and *pre-existing violence* dictionaries have high similarity with embeddings of words like *killed* or *murdered*, increasing the measurement error in the similarity measures. Similarly, given the co-occurrence of the topics in the articles, it

[29] Appendix Section C.1 shows some example articles with different values for each index.

Table 1: Validation Dictionary Approach

Topic	F1 Score		
	Dictionary-LLM (1)	Dictionary-Human (2)	Human-LLM (3)
Panel A: Perpetrator-Centered			
Mad Outburst	0.779	0.832	0.795
Jealousy	0.918	0.907	0.877
Econ. Difficulties	0.888	0.915	0.920
Mental Health Prob.	0.895	0.838	0.966
Infidelity	0.960	0.970	0.891
End of Relationship	0.860	0.861	0.867
Panel B: Victim-Centered			
Past Violence	0.856	0.900	0.842
Info on VAW Resources	0.954	0.955	0.945

Notes. Weighted F1 scores pairs of coding approaches. Column 1 reports the F1 score between the main approach (the dictionary-based annotation) and the classification by the LLM, Column 2 that between the main approach and the human annotation, and Column 3 the F1 score between the human and LLM annotation. Scores range from 0 to 1, where 1 indicates perfect agreement.

is unlikely that a topic model can isolate these concepts. Moreover, the resulting measures can be easily interpreted, making the use of a dictionary an attractive method to create measures to be used in causal inference. A final concern could be that the keyword schema I use is not accurate enough and misses many instances, including many false positives.s were the case, an alternative approach could be to use a large language model (LLM) to annotate the articles. To compare the performance of the current approach with that of an LLM, I perform two validation exercises. First, for a sample of 1000 articles, I ask an LLM to annotate them if the different topics are present in the article, giving it a definition of the topics instead of the keyword schema, as shown in the prompt in Appendix Section C.2.1.[30] I calculate the F1 score, weighted to account for the classes' imbalance, between the indicator in 1 and classification by the LLM and human annotators, and between the human and LLM annotations, and report everything in Table 1.

The table shows that the F1 score is always around or larger than 0.85, except for detecting mentions of mad outbursts. Looking at the confusion matrices for each of the topics reported in Appendix Table C.2, it emerges that what drives the F1 score away from 1—for all topics—is the number of *false positives*, namely the instances that the dictionary approach detects as *False* and the LLM annotates as *True*. Looking more closely at these instances, it emerges that the LLM

[30] I use `gpt-4.1-mini` as a large language model.

often makes over-inferences about information that is not directly reported in the texts, despite being explicitly told not to engage in over-inference.[31] This tendency of over-inference by the LLM is confirmed when looking at the classification by human annotators. Indeed, the weighted F1 score between the results of the main method and human annotations is similar to the one compared to the LLM for most dictionaries, and even higher for topics that are more likely to be over-inferred, like *mad outburst*.

Additionally, it could be that the presence of these topics does not capture major differences in what the articles focus on, making any difference irrelevant. To alleviate this concern, I provide proof-of-concept validation using an LLM. Namely, I randomly select 5 events covered by articles that score either high on the victim-centered dimension—index larger than 0.7—and low on the perpetrator-centered dimension—index lower than or equal to 0.33—or low on the VC index and high on the PC one, using only the sample of first and second articles for each event-newspaper, where journalists have less time to include their considerations in the articles. Then, I create summaries of the articles using the prompt reported in Appendix Section C.2.2.

Table 2 reports the pairs of summaries with the corresponding score for two crimes[32]. Despite the articles in the same row being on the same crimes, the elements chosen for the summary by the LLM are very different depending on the values for the indexes. For instance, summaries of articles with a high VC index always refer to gender-based violence as a widespread phenomenon in Italy, also mentioning initiatives to counter it or the lack of these. This is not the case in summaries of articles with a high PC index, which instead tend to focus more on the back story of the perpetrator and the victim and mention separation, jealousy, or rage as possible motives. Finally, the summaries with high victim-centered index always contain the word *femicide*, whereas the rest often refer to the crime as *incident* or *voluntary homicide*.

Overall, these summaries show that the articles with different index values are indeed different in terms of the aspects of the crime they focus on. On the one hand, articles with a high VC index focus more on the victim and on framing violence against women as a broader societal problem. On the other hand, those with a high PC index discuss the possible motives of the perpetrator and the specific situation of the individuals involved. This reinforces the confidence that the topics and indexes constructed with the current methodology are indeed valid for capturing the differences outlined in the guidelines and the existing literature on the topic. As a final step of the validation,

[31] Appendix Section C.2.1 reports some examples of *false positive* articles annotated by the LLM.
[32] Appendix Section C.2.2 reports more examples and the text of the full articles.

Table 2: Pairs of Summaries of Articles about the Same Crime

High VC Index—Low PC Index	Low VC Index—High PC Index
[VICTIM], a 50-year-old INPS employee, was murdered in her 30-square-meter apartment in the Lorenteggio area of Milan by her husband of 20 years, [PERPETRATOR]. After returning from a month-long vacation, the couple got into a violent argument, resulting in him stabbing [VICTIM] [...] Neighbors reported previous violent altercations between the couple, highlighting a history of abuse and threats. Authorities describe the case as emblematic of a deeply troubled family dynamic characterized by unreported violence, emphasizing the importance of women seeking help from anti-violence centers and law enforcement in such situations. This is the second femicide in Milan within a short period [...]	In Milan, a man named [PERPETRATOR], 53, confessed to killing his wife, [VICTIM], 50, after a violent argument that escalated tragically. The couple had a history of intense disputes fueled by jealousy and accusations regarding [VICTIM]'s relationship with another man, which had driven a wedge between them. On the day of the murder, despite a seemingly peaceful morning, a heated argument led to [PERPETRATOR] attacking [VICTIM] with 23 stab wounds in a fit of rage. [PERPETRATOR], who has a history of violence, described the incident with vague recollections, claiming he lost control during the confrontation after [VICTIM] insulted him.[...]
[PERPETRATOR] is suspected of premeditating the murder of his ex-wife, [VICTIM] [...] Reports suggest [VICTIM] had been subjected to threats and abuse in the months leading up to the tragic incident, with periodic mutual complaints filed from 2011 to 2012. A planned flash mob is scheduled to commemorate [VICTIM]'s sacrifice and protest against femicide, while the region has pledged financial and support assistance for her daughters.	[VICTIM], a 41-year-old nurse and mother of two, was shot and killed by her ex-husband, [PERPETRATOR], a 42-year-old security guard, in a violent incident near Ostia in Rome. The couple was divorced, and [VICTIM] had previously reported his violent behavior to the police. The ex-husband, who was not accepting the separation, chased [VICTIM] in his car [...] The violent and tumultuous separation had led to mutual accusations and legal disputes between the couple but had not involved reported threats of gun violence prior to the tragic event.

Notes. Pairs of LLM-generated summaries of articles about the same crime. The articles in the left column have a victim-centered index higher than 0.7 and a perpetrator-centered index lower than or equal to 0.33. The converse is true for articles reported in the right column. Highlighted in yellow are the parts captured by the highest-scoring index.

I ask a research assistant to classify 40 pairs of articles, selected with the same procedure as above, into victim and perpetrator-centered categories. Looking at the results of the classification, the human annotator agrees with the index classification for 80% of the pairs of articles, thus increasing confidence that the indexes correctly capture the different narratives.

Lastly, I investigate the trends of these practices by plotting the two indexes over time in Appendix Figure A.19. The Figure shows that the prevalence of the PC index decreases over time, while that of the VC index increases, suggesting a general trend toward a more victim-centric narrative of these crimes. Additionally, Appendix Figure A.20 shows that the increasing trend in the VC index is more pronounced for female reporters, while there are more muted differences across reporters' gender in the PC index.

4 Gender Differences in Crime Reporting

In this section, I investigate gender differences in reporting about murders with female victims. I start by investigating this question descriptively by looking at whether an LLM-based classifier can correctly predict the gender of the reporter from the article text. In particular, I finetune a BERT classifier trained on an Italian corpus on the sample of articles on female murders to predict reporters' gender and create out-of-sample predictions using a cross-fold procedure. The model achieves an out-of-sample accuracy of 0.61, suggesting that writing style contains statistically meaningful information about reporters' gender.[33] However, the predictive approach alone does not fully isolate these differences, as they could be driven by crime characteristics or other confounders. Therefore, in the rest of this section, I present the identification strategy (Section 4.1), the results (Section 4.2), and additional analyses and robustness tests (Section 4.2).

4.1 Empirical Strategy

The empirical strategy is a regression analysis that leverages a set of fixed effects to isolate the effect of authors' characteristics on reporting. A major concern in this analysis is that reporters with different characteristics select into murders to cover based on their preferences for specific crime characteristics. For instance, it could be that women prefer to write about murders in which the perpetrator is the intimate partner of the victim. If this were the case, any gender differences

[33] I plot in Appendix Figure A.2 the distribution of predicted probabilities of articles being authored by a female journalist separately for articles authored by female and male journalists. The figure shows that predicted and real gender of the journalist are correlated, suggesting potentially meaningful gender differences in the language used in VAW reporting.

in mentions of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator would be due to differences in case selection.

This concern is partially mitigated by the exogenous assignment of crime journalists to events within each newspaper in the first few days after the murder happens. Indeed, in each newspaper, when a new murder occurs, the story is assigned to the reporter within the crime unit who is on duty when the murder news arrives to the newspaper and who is in the region where the crime happened. A similar process applies as long as the news remains within the crime unit—i.e., it is not covered by the political, opinion, or judicial news sections. Moreover, the vast majority of crimes are covered by only one or two reporters per newspaper: Appendix Figure A.16b reports the distribution of the number of reporters for each newspaper who cover the same crime. The figure shows that the large majority of crimes are covered by only one or two reporters per newspaper, thus mitigating this concern. I check that the reporters' assignment is orthogonal to crime characteristics, conditional on the newspaper, by performing some balance checks on the sample of articles with known authors. I run the following regression for the whole sample and separately for the first, second, third, and fourth articles within each newspaper:

$$Y^k_{ajyn} = \beta FemaleRep_j + \alpha_{ny} + \varepsilon_{ajyn} \tag{2}$$

where Y^k_{ajyn} indicates characteristics k of the murder reported in article a written by reporter j in newspaper n at time t. On the right-hand side, $FemaleRep_{ajyn}$ is a binary variable indicating if the reporter writing the article is a woman or a man; α_{ny} are newspaper-year fixed effects. A final concern in the identification of gender differences is that male and female journalists have different characteristics, and the observed effect is rather due to the combination of these other characteristics than to gender itself. Appendix Table A.20 shows the summary statistics for reporters' characteristics and the gender differences along these dimensions. The table shows that indeed female and male reporters are different, with women being younger, less experienced, and less likely to be from the North. For this reason, in Section 4.2, I also investigate differences in reporting along other dimensions and whether the gender effect still persists when accounting for these differences.

Table 3 reports the results of the balance test. Columns 1 and 2 report the mean of each variable separately for female and male reporters, while Columns 3 and 4 report the simple difference in means and the coefficient β from equation 2 for the whole sample. From Column 3, it emerges that

Table 3: Balance Test on Reporter's Gender

	Average		Difference in Means			
Variable	Female Reporters	Male Reporters	Without FE	With FE		
	All	All	All	All	Art. 1	Art.5
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Victim Italian	0.852	0.836	0.017**	-0.002	0.004	0.032
	(0.355)	(0.371)	(0.007)	(0.015)	(0.019)	(0.046)
Perpetrator Italian	0.786	0.801	-0.015*	-0.004	-0.013	0.043
	(0.41)	(0.399)	(0.008)	(0.024)	(0.018)	(0.049)
Perpetrator Partner	0.368	0.36	0.008	0.011	0.024	-0.071
	(0.482)	(0.48)	(0.007)	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.045)
Perpetrator Relative	0.105	0.102	0.003	0.005	0.01	0.01
	(0.307)	(0.303)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.008)	(0.014)
Relationship Missing	0.399	0.412	-0.013*	-0.015	-0.02	0.008
	(0.49)	(0.492)	(0.007)	(0.016)	(0.021)	(0.041)
First Article - Female Vict.	0.318	0.325	-0.006	-0.013		
	(0.466)	(0.468)	(0.009)	(0.02)		
Second Article - Female Vict.	0.149	0.138	0.011	0.007		
	(0.356)	(0.345)	(0.007)	(0.004)		
First Article - Male Vict.	0.566	0.634	-0.068***	-0.046		
	(0.496)	(0.482)	(0.012)	(0.043)		
Second Article - Male Vict.	0.152	0.159	-0.007	-0.009		
	(0.359)	(0.366)	(0.009)	(0.007)		
Victim Female	0.597	0.583	0.014**	0.007		
	(0.491)	(0.493)	(0.007)	(0.018)		

Notes. Balance test of crime and article characteristics along reporters' gender for articles on murders with female victims. *First Article* and *Second Article* are indicators for whether the article is respectively the first or the second one about a specific crime in the same newspaper, presented separtely for murders with male and female victims. Columns 1 to 4 report the results for the whole sample, and Columns 5 and 6 report the results separately for the first and fifth articles, respectively. Columns 1 and 2 report the mean and standard deviation of crime and article characteristics separately for Female and Male reporters. Column 3 reports the simple difference in means between Female and Male reporters. Columns 4 to 6 report the difference in means after taking out newspaper-year fixed effects. Standard errors in Columns 4 to 6 are clustered at the newspaper level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

there are some small differences between cases covered by female and male reporters. For instance, women are less likely to cover cases where the perpetrator is Italian but more likely to cover crimes with an Italian victim. However, all of these differences disappear when newspaper-year fixed effects are included.[34] Importantly, after including the fixed effects, there are no differences between male and female reporters in the probability that they are assigned to the first or second article about a crime with either female or male victims. Additionally, female and male reporters write about crimes with female and male victims to a similar extent. Finally, Columns 5 and 6 show that crime characteristics of crimes reported by female and male reporters are similar even when just looking at the first and fifth articles.

Overall, this evidence suggests that the authors' characteristics are orthogonal to crime characteristics. However, it could still be that crimes' characteristics are correlated with the time of the crime, and that, reporters' working hours are correlated their gender. For instance, it could be that male reporters are more likely to work at night, when intimate partner violence crimes are more likely to occur. If this were the case, then accounting for newspaper-year fixed effects would not be sufficient to leverage the exogenous assignment of reporters to news. For these reasons and since I do not observe reporters' working hours, I include crime fixed effects to compare differences in reporting holding constant crime characteristics. The final regression I run is the following:

$$Y_{a(e)jyn} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 FemaleRep_j + \alpha_{ny} + \alpha_r + \alpha_e + \varepsilon_{a(e)jyn} \tag{3}$$

where $Y_{a(e)jyn}$ is the indicator for the presence of any words in the dictionaries described in Section 3.2 in article a about crime e written by journalist j in year y and newspaper n; the explanatory variable is $FemaleRep_j$ which indicates that the article is written by a female journalists, and the coefficient of interest is β_1, which indicates differences in outcomes between female and male journalists. As aforementioned, I include newspaper-year and reporter's region fixed effects, α_{ny} and α_r, to account for the selection of reporters into cases, and crime fixed effects, α_e, to account for additional potential correlations between crime and reporters characteristics. Standard errors, $\varepsilon_{a(e)jyn}$, are clustered at the newspaper-year level.

Table 4: Gender Differences in Reporting

	Victim-Centered Index				Perpetrator-Centered Index			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Female Reporter	0.169***	0.129***	0.145***	0.132***	−0.067**	−0.058**	−0.048*	−0.043*
	(0.032)	(0.030)	(0.029)	(0.025)	(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.024)
Age				0.001				0.004***
				(0.001)				(0.001)
Observations	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587
R^2	0.007	0.118	0.130	0.425	0.001	0.058	0.064	0.352
Mean Y	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.121	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.086
SD Y	0.214	0.214	0.214	0.214	0.126	0.126	0.126	0.126
Newsp × Year FE		X	X	X		X	X	X
Reporter Reg. FE			X	X			X	X
Crime FE				X				X

Notes. Differences in the use of reporting practices between Female and Male reporters. Columns 1 to 4 report the results for the victim-centered index, standardized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1, capturing the use of practices complying with the guidelines on reporting about VAW; Columns 5 to 8 report the results for the perpetrator-centered index, standardized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1, capturing the use of practices that do not comply with such guidelines. Columns 1 and 5 report the OLS regression; Columns 2 and 6 include newspaper times year fixed effects; Columns 3 and 7 add reporter's region fixed effects; Columns 4 and 8 also include crime fixed effects and controls for author's date of birth. Standard errors are clustered at the newspaper-year level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

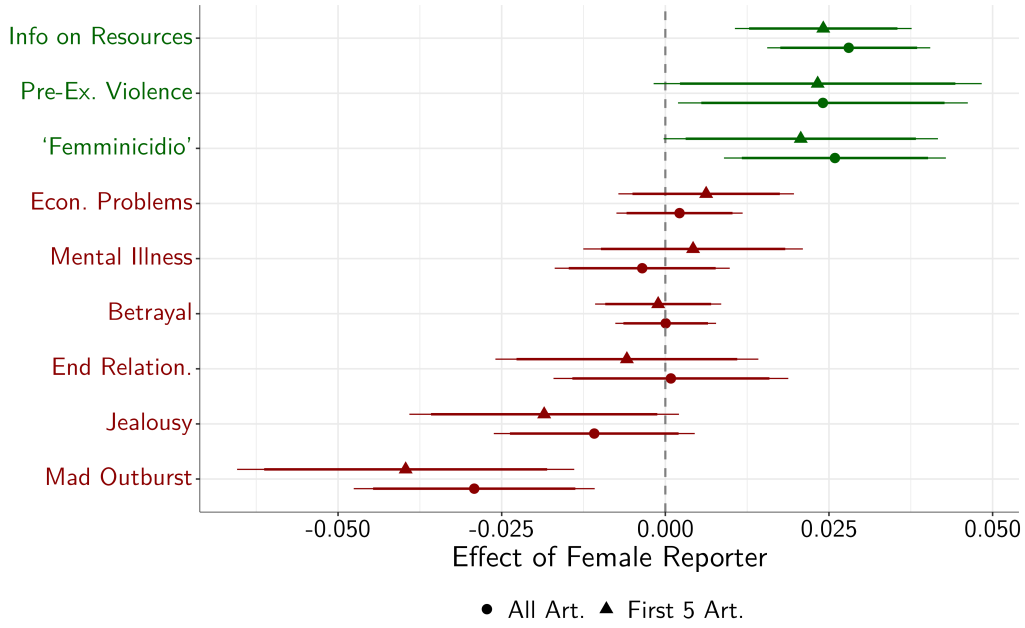
4.2 Results

Table 4 reports the results from equation 3 in which the main explanatory variable is an indicator for the reporter being a woman. Columns 1 and 5 report the results from the simple OLS regression of reporters' gender on the indexes for victim-centered and perpetrator-centered narratives, standardized to have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. Columns 2-3 and 6-7 add newspaper times year and reporter's region fixed effects to leverage the exogeneity of reporters to cases. The results from these columns show that female reporters are more likely than male ones to use victim-centered narratives and, at the same time, less likely to use perpetrator-centered narratives. The results are stable across all specifications and robust to the inclusion of crime fixed effects and to controlling for reporters' date of birth, while the R^2 increases substantially, suggesting that these gender differences persist when accounting for differences in crimes. In particular, the results from these two columns show that female reporters have a VC index that is 0.13 standard deviations higher than that of male reporters. At the same time, their PC index is 0.04 standard deviations lower than that of male reporters.[35]

[34]To further test this assumption of exogeneity, Appendix Tables A.1 and A.2 look at differences in reporters along other characteristics, like age and gender norms. In line with the assumption, the tables show that there are few to no differences in reporters' age and proxies for gender norms in the region of residence.

[35]To investigate whether these gender differences in text are also reflected in differences in headlines, in Appendix Table A.3, I report the results from the same specification using as outcomes the VC and PC indexes constructed using headlines instead of the main article text. The table shows that while the sign on the coefficients for female reporters is the same as that of Table 4, the magnitude is much lower in magnitude and mostly non-significant. This

Figure 3: Effect of Female Reporters on Reporting Practices



Notes. Effect of female reporter on topic presence in articles. Regressions include newspaper-year, crime, and reporter's region fixed effects, and for coefficients represented by dots, are run on a sample that includes only the first 5 articles for each crime. Errors are clustered at the newspaper-year level, and the figure shows 95% and 90% confidence intervals. The coefficients colored in green indicate practices that form the victim-centered index, while the coefficients in red are those that form the perpetrator-centered index.

As a next step, I break down the effect of the reporter's gender by topic. Namely, I run regression 3 using an indicator for each reporting topic separately as an outcome. I plot the resulting coefficients in Figure 3 with both 90% and 95% confidence intervals. The results show that female reporters are around 2.5 percentage points more likely than male reporters to mention words referencing pre-existing sexual violence, to call the crime a femicide, and to provide information about resources to counter VAW. On the contrary, male reporters are between 3 and 4 percentage points more likely to mention a fit of rage and between 1 and 2 percentage points more likely to mention jealousy. Relating these estimates to the average prevalence of these practices, the results suggest that female reporters are 17% percent more likely than male reporters to call the crime a femicide and 70% more likely to report information on help resources. On the other hand, male reporters are around 14% percent more likely than female reporters to mention a mad outburst and jealousy.

These gender differences suggest that journalists are identity-motivated and prefer narratives that reflect their in-group's point of view or that are more helpful to them. However, differences in writing across journalists could also be driven by multiple other factors. First, female journalists are younger than male journalists (Appendix Table A.20). I test whether the differences are due to age rather than gender differences in Appendix Table A.5. While younger reporters are less likely to use PC narratives, the coefficient on reporters' gender remains significant, suggesting that age is unlikely to fully explain the gender differences. Similarly, it could be that female reporters come from more progressive regions. Appendix Table A.6 shows that reporters from regions with more conservative gender norms are less likely to use victim-centered narratives and more likely to use perpetrator-centered ones, although this effect disappears when including crime fixed effects. Still, as with the age differences, the coefficient on female reporters remains stable and significant, suggesting that norms alone cannot explain the gender differences.

Next, it could be that the effect is entirely driven by women working for progressive newspapers. To account for this, Appendix Table A.7 shows that reporters in progressive newspapers are more likely to use victim-centered narratives, with the coefficient on gender remaining significant and similar in magnitude to the main results. Additionally, the gender differences persist within both progressive and conservative newspapers, as well as within different age and norms groups (Appendix Figure A.3), suggesting that while all these characteristics may drive part of the observed

suggests that while headlines may reflect the content of the articles, ultimately, they are chosen using different criteria and are likely to capture mainly the preferences of section editors, as described in Section 2.

gender differences in reporting, they cannot fully explain these differences.

An alternative explanation could be that women who become journalists are of *higher quality* than their male colleagues, following the finding by Ashraf et al. (2024) that women may face higher barriers to entry in male-dominated industries. To test this hypothesis, I look at differences in reporting on murders where the victim and the perpetrator are men, removing the identity channel for female journalists. Appendix Figure A.1 reports the results using as outcomes the perpetrator-centered practices, including an indicator for the presence of sensationalist language.[36] The figure shows that there are no differences in reporting between male and female journalists, suggesting that women are not more likely to comply with guidelines in general.

Finally, it could be that women's writing style generally differs from men's in crime reporting. To rule this out, I run the same predictive exercise presented at the beginning of this section on the sample of articles with male victims. The model achieves an accuracy of 0.53, close to random guessing. This is also reflected in the distribution of predicted probabilities for female reporters, which is very similar across both female and male reporters (Appendix Figure A.2b).

Robustness. I show that the results on gender differences in reporting are robust to a series of alternative specifications and sample restrictions. First, I consider the probability of at least one topic for each index appearing in the article. Appendix Table A.4 shows a similar pattern to the main results with the standardized index. In particular, female reporters are 3.9 percentage points more likely to mention at least one topic that complies with the guidelines and 2 percentage points more likely not to mention any topic that does not comply with the guidelines.

Additionally, I further address the concerns that there may be selection of journalists into crimes for articles after the first one. For this purpose, I create a variable capturing the order of release of articles about the same crime within the same newspaper (e.g., first article, second article, etc.). To account for the possibility of selection in follow-up articles for potential variation in the narrative of crimes over time, I show that the results are robust to the inclusion of article order times crime fixed effects (Column 2 of Appendix Tables A.8 and A.9) and to restricting the sample to the first or first five articles per newspaper-crime (Column 2 in Appendix Tables A.10 and A.11). Moreover, I show that the results are robust to different fixed effects and clustering options (Appendix Tables A.8 and A.9). Also, it could be that the effect is driven by a few popular crimes that attract media attention due to their characteristics. To account for this, in Column 6

[36] I cannot include the indicators for victim-centered practices as they are specific to murders with female victims.

of Appendix Tables A.8 and A.9 I include weights for the inverse of the number of articles about the same crime in each newspaper and exclude crimes that are covered by more than 10 articles in the same newspaper (Column 6 in Appendix Tables A.10 and A.11). The results hold even with these changes in the specifications. Finally, Appendix Tables A.10 and A.11 show that the results are stable to restricting the sample to murders by the intimate partner and Italian perpetrators, and to including only reporters who appear in my sample as authors of both crimes with female and male victims.

5 Effects on Exposure to Crime Narratives on Help-Seeking

This section shows that how reporters write is consequential for readers' behavior. First, it show that higher exposure to articles written by female reporters increases help-seeking behavior by VAW victims, proxied by calls to the Italian helpline to counter VAW. Next, it provides evidence that this effect is driven by victim-centered narratives. Section 5.1 describes the empirical strategy, Section 5.2 reports the results, discusses the mechanisms and the robustness checks.

5.1 Empirical Strategy

A natural question that follows the analysis in the previous section is: do these different narrative choices matter, or are they simply a way for reporters to express their writing preferences? To answer this question, I investigate whether exposure to articles on female murders written by female reporters affects help-seeking behavior, measured through the number of calls to the VAW helpline. To correctly capture exposure to female reporters, I combine the articles data with information about their readership in each province and year. I construct the exposure measure for each province (p) and week (yw) as the share of articles written by a woman in a week, where articles are weighted by the lagged market share of the newspaper in that province:

$$FRExp_{pyw} = \sum_n \frac{\sum_a \mathbf{1}\left[FemaleRep_{a(e)nyw}\right]}{TotArt_{nyw}} MktShr_{np,y-1} \tag{4}$$

where $FemaleRep_{a(e)nyw}$ is an indicator of whether article a about crime e in newspaper n and in week yw is written by a woman, $TotArt_{nyw}$ is the total number of articles about those types of crime by n in week yw, and $MktShr_{np,y-1} = \frac{Readership_{np,y-1}}{\sum_n Readership_{np,y-1}}$ is the market share of newspaper n in province p and year $y-1$. This way, the measure captures only newspapers read in a specific

province and weighs them for their relative popularity in that province. $FRExp_{pyw}$ captures the exposure to articles by female reporters in p and yw, considering articles about *any* female murders.

The coefficient from an OLS regression of helpline calls on this measure is likely to be biased.[37] Therefore, I leverage a generalized difference-in-differences design with a continuous treatment as an empirical approach, relying on the within-newspaper exogeneity in the assignment of journalists to murders, combined with the random timing of these events. A primary concern regarding the timing and location of the murders is that they are more likely to occur in places that already have high crime rates. To alleviate this concern, I show that there is no correlation between the prevalence of murders of female victims and that of male victims ($Pearson\,\rho = 0.02$). Additionally, Appendix Figure A.21 shows that while the distribution of the number of murders with female victims in each province and month is heavily concentrated on 1, that of murders with male victims is more spread out, as these murders tend to cluster in places and time. Finally, Appendix Figure A.22 shows that murders with female victims are not correlated with other crime rates.

To avoid considering reporters selected to cover such crimes, I construct the exposure measure using only the first five articles for each crime and newspaper if these articles were published in the same week as the murder or the following one. Moreover, I consider as *treated* only provinces where the murder occurs. Finally, each province remains *treated* for a limited period after the murder, as provinces can be treated more than once in my sample.[38] Indeed, while the majority of provinces witness only one crime each year (Appendix Figure A.12a), big cities are likely to experience up to 13 murders each year. At the same time, two murders rarely happen within the same month (Appendix Figure A.12b). Additionally, since I focus only on exposure to female reporters in the first five articles, any effect found over a longer time window would likely be biased by additional coverage. The main regression of interest is as follows:

$$Calls_{pyw} = \delta_1 FemExp_c^{5Art.} + \delta_2 FemExp_c^{5Art.} \times PostMurder_{pyw} + \alpha_p + \alpha_m + \alpha_i + \varepsilon_{pcyw} \qquad (5)$$

where $Calls_{pyw}$ is the number of calls in each province and week. $FemExp_c^{5Art.}$ is the treatment for crime c, i.e., the measure of exposure to articles by female reporters, considering the first five articles for each newspaper and crime in the first two weeks following the crime, and $PostMurder_{pyw}$

[37] Recall that the exogenous assignment of reporters to crimes holds only for the first few articles following the crime. Therefore, selection of reporters into articles could arise for follow-up pieces, particularly for articles by reporters outside of the crime unit, e.g., editors may ask female reporters to write opinion articles about cases that become popular, which are also more likely to lead to an increase in calls.

[38] I use an eight-week window around the murder in the regression analysis and a fifteen-week window in the event-study.

is an indicator for the period after the murder. α_p, α_m, and α_i are province, month, and time-from-murder fixed effects. Errors ε_{pcyw} are clustered at the province level.

The main assumption for δ_2 to causally estimate the effect of initial exposure to female articles on calls in a standard difference-in-differences design is that, absent a murder and its subsequent coverage by newspapers, calls in provinces with different exposure to female murders would have followed the same trajectory. To test this assumption, I run the event-study regression described below and look at the presence of pre-trends. However, settings with a continuous treatment require a *stronger* version of the parallel trends assumption, which requires that units treated with different doses of treatment would have reacted similarly at every *dosage* of the treatment (Callaway et al., 2024). In this context, this means that provinces with different likelihoods of being exposed to female reporters would have reacted similarly had they been exposed to the same share. To partially capture potentially different reactions to articles, I include in regression 5 the proxies for gender norms at the regional level. Moreover, given that each province is treated more than once, with province fixed effects, I can leverage the within-province variation in female reporters' exposure, addressing this concern.

Finally, I run an event study regression using a binarized version of the treatment and the estimation outlined by Chaisemartin et al. (2024) and Chaisemartin and D'Haultfœuille (2024) to account for units switching treatment status and for the bias introduced by heterogeneous treatment effects across cohorts in staggered DiD designs, as highlighted by Goodman-Bacon (2021) and Callaway and Sant'Anna (2021):

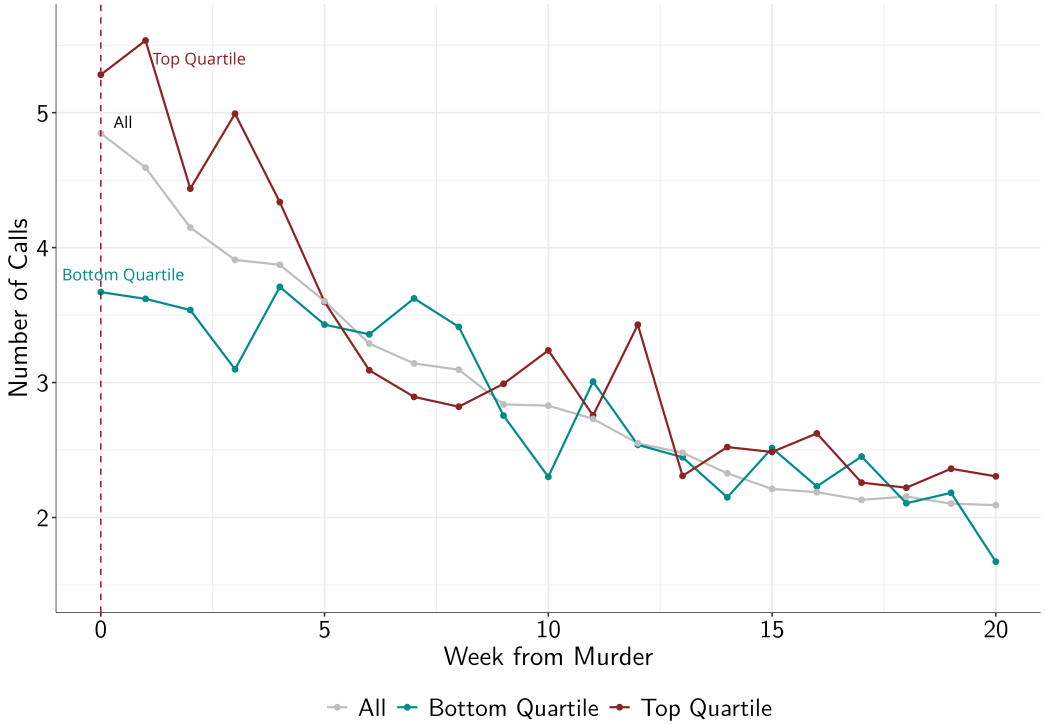
$$Calls_{pyw} = \sum_{i \in [-5,10]} \delta_i Treat_c^{TopQ} \times W_{yw+i} + \sum_{i \in [-5,10]} \lambda_i Treat_c^{BottomQ} \times W_{yw+i} + \alpha_p + \alpha_m + \alpha_i + \varepsilon_{pywc} \quad (6)$$

where $Treat_c^{TopQ}$ and $Treat_c^{BottomQ}$ are indicators of whether the crime has the exposure measure in the top quartile or the bottom quartile of the treatment distribution, and W_{yw+i} is an indicator for being in week $yw + i$.

5.2 Results

The results from the OLS regression reported in Appendix Table A.12 show a positive effect of exposure to female reporters on calls, which is statistically significant across all specifications and for different outcome specifications, except for the logarithmic transformation. In particular, Column 5 shows that an increase of 50 percentage points in the exposure measure, corresponding to an additional article written by a woman per crime in the first two weeks after a crime, is associated

Figure 4: Calls to Helpline in the Weeks after Murder by Exposure to Female Reporters



Notes. Time series of the number of calls in the province of the murder in the 20 weeks after the murder happens. The time series is plotted considering all province-week observations and separately for observations with the female reporters' exposure measure in the bottom and top quartiles of its distribution.

Table 5: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Helpline Calls

	At Least 1 Call				Number of Calls (Poisson)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Fem. Exposure^{5Art}× Post	0.106	0.116*	0.116*	0.140*	0.246	0.302*	0.302*	0.426
	(0.068)	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.072)	(0.177)	(0.183)	(0.181)	(0.299)
Fem. Exposure^{5Art}	−0.047	−0.083	−0.083		−0.078	−0.271	−0.270	
	(0.059)	(0.057)	(0.057)		(0.187)	(0.168)	(0.167)	
Observations	6980	6980	6980	6980	6980	6980	6980	6905
R^2	0.268	0.282	0.282	0.393	0.535	0.564	0.564	0.567
Mean Dep. Var.	0.741	0.741	0.741	0.741	3.668	3.668	3.668	3.668
Mean Expl. Var.	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208
Province FE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Window FE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month FE		X	X	X		X	X	X
Crime FE				X				X

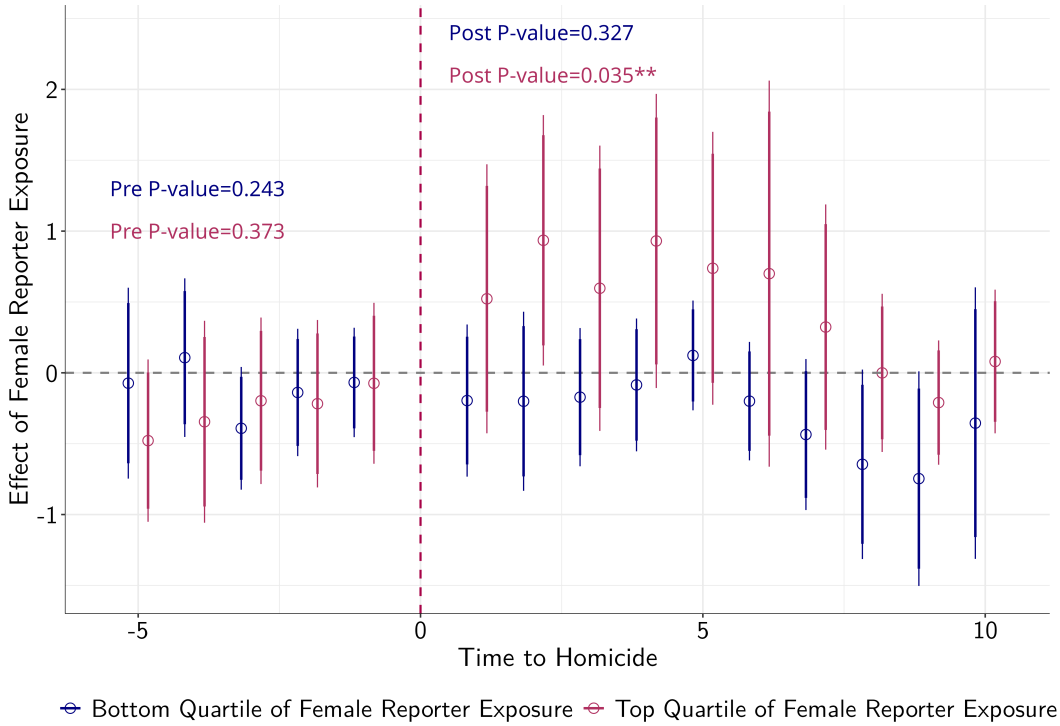
Notes. Effect of exposure to female reporters on calls estimated in a difference-in-differences design in an eight-week window around the murder. Columns 1 to 4 report the linear probability estimate of there being at least one call (extensive margin). Columns 5 to 8 report results using the number of calls as outcomes and a Poisson model. Columns 1 and 5 report the OLS and Poisson estimates, including province and weeks-from-murder fixed effects, while Columns 2 and 6 also add month fixed effects, and Columns 3 and 7 control for the proxy for gender norms and the total number of articles. Columns 4 and 8 also include crime fixed effects. The R^2 in Columns 5 to 8 corresponds to the pseudo R^2 calculated for the Poisson regression. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

with a 0.12 increase in calls, or a 7% increase. The magnitude of this effect is around half of the effect of having a murder in the same week and province, and 80% of that of having a murder in the same region, suggesting the occurrence of a murder is the main driver of the increase in calls. The evolution of calls in the weeks after a murder, in the same province of the murder, reported in Figure 4 shows a similar pattern. After the murder of a woman, calls in the same province increase. However, the increase is larger in provinces with high exposure to female reporters in the first 5 weeks following the murder.[39]

Next, I estimate the two-way fixed effect regression (5), looking at both the probability of at least one call and the total number of calls in an eight-week window around the murder. To account for potential differences in treatment effects depending on the level of the treatment received, I also include a proxy for gender norms in the region of the murder. The results reported in Table 5 confirm the positive effect of exposure to female reporters on calls and suggest a much stronger relationship than the one highlighted in Table A.12. Columns 1 to 4 show the results for the probability of at least one call. The coefficient on the interaction is positive and significant across all specifications, with the estimate in Column 3 suggesting an increase of 12 percentage points in

[39] Appendix Figure A.4, which plots the number of calls residualized on province fixed effects, shows that this is true only for articles on murders of women, while there is no difference across female or male reporters' coverage for articles on murders with male victims.

Figure 5: Event Study: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Helpline Calls



Notes. Calls to the help-line number before and after a murder happens in the same province for increasing exposure to female reporters in the first two articles covering the crime. The figure plots the coefficient from equation 6 using two binarized versions of the treatment: being in the bottom quartile and the top quartile of the distribution. The regression includes province and month fixed effects. It shows 95% and 90% confidence intervals constructed clustering errors at the province level. Overlaid text reports the p-value from an F-test for the joint significance of the four pre- (top left) and post-murder (top right) coefficients: * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

the probability of at least one call associated with higher female reporter exposure after the murder of a woman in the province of the murder. Second, I investigate the effect on the number of calls. One potential issue when using the number of calls and a linear model is that the distribution of calls is skewed towards zero(Appendix Figure A.18). To account for this, I use a Poisson model and report the results in Columns 5 to 8 of Table 5.[40] As with the probability of at least one call, the coefficient is positive and significant across all columns. Assuming an increase of one article per newspaper and crime written by a female reporter—corresponding to a 50 percentage points increase in the female exposure measure—, the number of calls increases by 17% corresponding to around one additional call for each province and week. Columns 4 and 8 also include crime fixed effects to account for crime-specific characteristics that might affect the number of calls, obtaining similar results despite the conservative specification.

Finally, in Figure 5, I report the coefficients from the event study regression 6 with the two

[40] Appendix Table A.15 reports the results using the zero-inflated Poisson model to further alleviate this concern.

Table 6: Effect of Exposure to Narratives on Helpline Calls

	Number of Calls (Poisson)					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Victim-Cent. Narr.^{5Art}× Post	0.466***	0.485***	0.491***			
	(0.150)	(0.177)	(0.177)			
Victim-Cent. Narr.^{5Art}	0.473**	−0.052	−0.055			
	(0.185)	(0.142)	(0.142)			
Perp.-Cent. Narr.^{5Art}× Post				−0.301	0.018	0.022
				(0.429)	(0.500)	(0.496)
Perp.-Cent. Narr.^{5Art}				1.644***	0.618**	0.619**
				(0.344)	(0.292)	(0.289)
Observations	6980	6980	6980	6980	6980	6980
R^2	0.538	0.564	0.564	0.537	0.564	0.564
Mean Dep. Var.	3.668	3.668	3.668	3.668	3.668	3.668
Mean Expl. Var.	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.081	0.081	0.081
Province FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Window FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month FE		X	X		X	X

Notes. Effect of exposure to victim-centered (Columns 1 to 3) and perpetrator-centered narratives (Columns 4 to 6) on calls estimated in a difference-in-differences design in an eight-week window around the murder. All columns report the results from a Poisson regression, including province and weeks-from-murder fixed effects. Columns 2-3 and 5-6 also add month fixed effects and control for the proxy for gender norms. The R^2 corresponds to the pseudo R^2 calculated for the Poisson regression. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

versions of the binarized treatments, accounting for observations switching treatment status. Reassuringly, the figure shows no effect of the treatment in the weeks before the murder for both treatment variables. Moreover, being in the bottom quartile of the distribution of exposure to articles by female reporters has no effect on calls, also in the weeks after the murder, while being in the top quartile of the distribution leads to an increase in calls equal to around one more call for each province and week in the first four weeks following the murder. Overall, this evidence points towards a positive and sizable effect of exposure to female reporters on help-seeking behavior in the weeks following the murder of a woman.

Mechanisms. A potential explanation for this effect is that higher exposure to female reporters could have a direct effect on readers through the *product*. Given the evidence in Section (4) on differences in narrative choices by female and male reporters, it may be that narratives used by female reporters change perceptions around VAW and help-seeking, triggering higher calls. To investigate this, I create a measure of initial exposure to victim-centered and perpetrator-centered narratives following the construction of the main treatment variable. In Appendix Table A.14, I

show that the measure for exposure to female reporters is positively correlated with the measure for exposure to VC narratives and negatively correlated with the one for PC narratives, confirming higher exposure to female reporters means that readers are more exposed to VC narratives and less to PC ones. Next, I run the difference-in-differences regression 5 using the measure of initial exposure to narratives as an outcome and report the results in Table 6. The results show a positive and significant effect of initial exposure to victim-centered narratives on calls (Columns 1 to 3) and a non-significant effect of initial exposure to perpetrator-centered narratives (Columns 4 to 6), providing evidence of a direct effect of victim-centered narratives on calls.

Alternatively, the effect occurs via exposure to female news producers. Echoing the literature on role models, female readers may be more attentive to news written by female reporters or more likely to react to an article when seeing the name of a woman, leading to more calls (Miller and Segal, 2019; Beaman et al., 2009). I rule out this mechanism in Appendix Table A.13, showing that the positive effect on calls is driven by female reporters who use victim-centered narratives, while there is a null effect for those who do not use such narratives. Finally, it could be that greater female reporter coverage leads to more coverage of the crime. To rule this out, in Appendix Figure A.5 I show that there is no difference in the number of articles on female murders in the weeks after the first two between places with high versus low exposure to female reporters after the crime.

Taken together, all this evidence points towards the effect of exposure to female reporters on calls being driven by the narratives they use rather than by a role model effect or increased salience or volume of reporting. However, given the endogeneity of narratives to reporters' gender, this setting does not allow me to identify the effect of different narratives on readers' behavior. Therefore, in Section 6, I complement this analysis by providing experimental evidence on both the mechanisms underlying the effect of victim-centered narratives on calls and outcomes that cannot be measured in observational data.

Robustness. This section presents additional robustness checks reported in Appendix Section A.6 to further corroborate the results presented in the previous section. First, to rule out that the effect may be driven by general exposure to articles by female reporters on crime, I use as a placebo the sample of murders with male victims for which there are no gender differences in reporting. I construct a similar treatment using articles on murders with male victims and show in Appendix Figure A.6 that there is no effect of higher exposure to female reporters on calls for murders with male victims. Additionally, I find no significant effect of higher female coverage using placebo

murders that replicate the murder distribution across provinces each year (Appendix Figure A.7).

A potential problem with the difference-in-differences analysis presented above is the possibility of spillovers, which would violate the stable unit treatment value assumption (SUTVA). Indeed, if higher exposure to female reporters leads to more calls in the province where the crime occurs, the same may also occur in other provinces exposed to the same or similar news. In this context, any positive effect of higher female exposure would likely attenuate the estimates presented in the previous section. Still, I check for the presence of potential spillovers by looking at the effect of female exposure on neighboring provinces and show in Appendix Figure A.8 that the positive effect of increasing exposure to female reporters is less pronounced than in Figure 5 and is non-significant, mitigating concerns about the SUTVA. Overall, this analysis shows that the main effect of higher exposure to female reporters is observed only in the province where the crime occurred, where the event is particularly salient, and people might therefore be more attentive to such crimes. One possible explanation for this is that people living in the same province are more likely to fully read articles about femicides, while those in provinces where the event is less salient are less likely to do so. If this were the case, the effect of journalistic narratives would affect only respondents in the province of the crime, thereby alleviating any concern about SUTVA violations.

Next, in Appendix Tables A.15 and A.16, I provide evidence that the results are robust to varying the number of articles used to compute the female exposure measure, with coefficients similar in magnitude to the main ones. I also show that the results hold when excluding crimes occurring within 10 weeks of another crime in the same province (Appendix Figure A.9). Finally, in Appendix Table A.17, I show that the results hold when including gender norms times year fixed effects, and controlling for the total number of murders with female victims, the total number of female reporters on other murders, and other crime rates in each province-year.

6 Experimental Evidence on VC and PC Narratives

This section provides experimental evidence to investigate the effects of different crime narratives on individuals' attitudes, preferences, and beliefs, and to shed further light on the mechanisms underlying narratives' effects on readers uncovered in the previous section. Additionally, to better understand the drivers of reporters' narrative choices, I investigate the effects of different narratives on engagement as a proxy for reporters' monetary and career incentives. Section 6.1 describes the experimental design and Section 6.2 reports the results.

6.1 Experimental Design

I conduct an online experiment with 1600 Italian respondents.[41] Appendix Figure B.2 reports some summary statistics about the sample. The figure shows that the sample is balanced across gender, but it is unbalanced across dimensions like age and political affiliation. In particular, while the sample accurately captures abstention levels in Italy, it is heavily skewed towards the left and the right is under-represented, leading progressive gender norms to be over-represented (Appendix Figure B.5).[42] Respondents are also most likely to use websites of newspapers and social media to stay informed and are equally distributed across Italy once accounting for the population of provinces (Appendix Figures B.3 and B.4).

The goal of the experiment is to overcome the limitation of observational data in terms of data availability and to cleanly identify the effect of narratives on various outcomes. For this reason, respondents are randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions, each containing the same newspaper article and a different narrative reflecting the gender differences uncovered in Section 4.[43] In the *Control* group, respondents read only the baseline article, either on crime A or crime B. The first treatment, *Perpetrator-Centered (PC) Treatment*, provides background on the possible motives of the perpetrator, highlighting the two most distinctive aspects of male reporters' writing: jealousy and a fit of rage. Next, I create two versions of the VC narratives treatment to capture the two different pieces of information provided by news articles. First, the *Episodic Victim-Centered (EVC) Treatment* focuses on the pre-existing violence between her and the perpetrator and her actions, like seeking help. Next, the *Thematic Victim-Centered (TVC) Treatment* provides information on help resources and data about violence against women in Italy.[44] All treatments are reported both in Italian and English in Appendix Section E.2.1.

I focus on four different outcomes. First, I elicit attitudes towards the victim and the perpetrator by using a version of the empathy-thermometer question by Alrababa'h et al. (2021). Second, I look at preferences for government intervention by asking respondents to sign a *simulated* petition

[41] The experiment was run in February and March 2026, pre-registered at the AEA RCT Registry (AEARCTR-0017870) and approved by the IRB at Harvard University. Appendix Table B.14 shows that respondents' characteristics are balanced across treatments.

[42] At the last national elections held in 2022, the right-wing coalition won with 44% of votes, while the left-wing coalition obtained 26% of votes. The share of people who did not turnout was around 36%.

[43] The articles rely on real news articles about crimes where the names of the people involved are changed.

[44] This distinction of victim-centered narratives into the background of the victim (episodic framing) and information on the context (thematic framing) is important from both a policy and theoretical perspective. From a theoretical perspective, the literature in political science and linguistics predicts that framing news in an episodic versus a thematic way affects whether the crime is perceived as an isolated event or a signal of a more systematic issue, and, consequently, preferences for government intervention and perceptions (Iyengar, 1991). Additionally, if these narratives lead to different effects, the distinction would also be important for journalists and policymakers.

to increase the resources dedicated to supporting policies that counter violence against women.[45] Third, I measure the perceived prevalence of VAW (non-incentivized) and help-seeking through police reporting and helpline calls (incentivized) in the province where the respondent resides.[46] Finally, I test the treatments' effect on engagement with the newspaper. I rely on two metrics used in newsrooms to measure engagement: retention and click-through rate. To proxy retention, I measure respondents' willingness to return to the newspaper (*declared retention*) by asking whether they would use the same outlet for crime information. Second, I mimic the visual layout of news articles in online newspapers by adding links below the main article to other articles they can click on, and record their clicks to simulate a click-through rate.

6.2 Experimental Results

The increase in helpline calls following higher exposure to VC narratives documented in Section 5 could be due to several factors. First, victims may underestimate the extent of the phenomenon and perceive their experience as isolated, reducing their willingness to seek help. VC narratives may correct this misperception and, consequently, affect victims' behavior, in line with a large body of literature on misperceptions of the prevalence of social problems (Kuziemko et al., 2015; Alesina et al., 2018). Second, victims may simply be unaware of the existence of help resources, in which case providing information about those resources should be enough to increase their take-up (Daponte et al., 1999; Bettinger et al., 2012). Finally, there may be misperceptions about other women's likelihood of help-seeking. Therefore, providing information about this behavior could help normalize it and lower its perceived social cost (Bursztyn et al., 2020b).

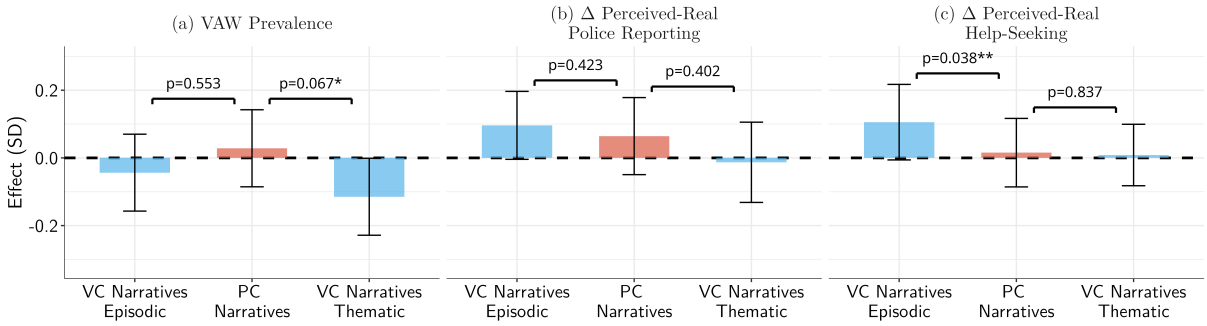
To investigate these mechanisms, in Figure 6 I test whether exposure to different narratives affects perceptions of the prevalence of violence against women, police reporting of such crimes, and help-seeking behavior, proxied by helpline calls.[47] Panel (a) shows that the TVC treatment reduces the perceived prevalence of VAW relative to other treatments, suggesting that respondents overestimate the extent of the phenomenon rather than underestimate it. Next, Panels (b) and (c) show episodic victim-centered narratives increase perceptions of police reporting and helpline calls compared to PC narratives, whereas this is not true for TVC narratives. This suggests that,

[45] To increase the stakes of the outcome, I tell them I will report to a parliamentary commission the share of respondents who signed the petition.

[46] For perceptions of help-seeking, I have access to the real corresponding data. Therefore, I incentivize the questions by offering a monetary reward if their guesses are close to the true value, and I use the deviation of their guesses from the true value as the outcome. I report the full questionnaire in Section E.2.2

[47] As pre-registered, I test whether the victim-centered treatments increase perceptions about these variables compared to perpetrator-centered narratives.

Figure 6: Effect of Narratives on Perceptions of VAW and Help-Seeking



Notes. Perceptions about prevalence of VAW (Panel a) and deviations between perceived and real police reporting (Panel b) and help-seeking behavior (Panel c), separately by treatment. The outcomes are measured as prevalence among 10000 inhabitants in the province of the respondents and then standardized to have mean equal 0 and standard deviation equal 1. The figure reports confidence intervals at the 90% level and p-values for each VC treatment against the PC treatment, coming from a regression of the outcomes on all treatment groups excluding the control, and other observables from a t-test between each treatment and the control: * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

rather than increasing awareness of help resources, VC narratives increase awareness of help-seeking behavior and could lead to normalizing it and reducing the perceived social cost of doing so. In line with this interpretation, Appendix Tables B.4 and B.5 show that the effect is entirely driven by female respondents and respondents with daughters, who are more sensitive to the topic.[48]

Next, in Figure 7, I investigate the narrative effects on standardized empathy, as a proxy for attitudes, separately by treatment.[49] I find that respondents in the EVC treatment feel more empathetic towards the victim compared to the control. However, this is also true for perpetrator-centered narratives, contrary to what is hypothesized by the linguistic literature on this topic (Palazzolo and Roberto, 2011; Carlyle et al., 2014).[50] Moving to empathy towards the perpetrator, Panel (b) shows that there is no statistically significant effect of seeing perpetrator-centered narratives compared to the control, whereas victim-centered narratives lead to a decrease in empathy towards the perpetrator with respect to both the control and the PC treatment. In Appendix Figure B.1, I also look at the treatment effect on the share of respondents signing the petition as a proxy for preferences for government intervention. I find a null effect of all treatments on

[48] In Appendix Section B.2, I show that the results on the main outcomes are robust across different sample restrictions, such as when excluding respondents who failed at least one attention check, or when dropping variations of the treatments. The only relevant thing to note is that the effect of the victim-centered narrative on perceptions of help-seeking is stronger when the victim goes to the authority to seek help, strengthening the interpretation of the mechanism through the social norms channel.

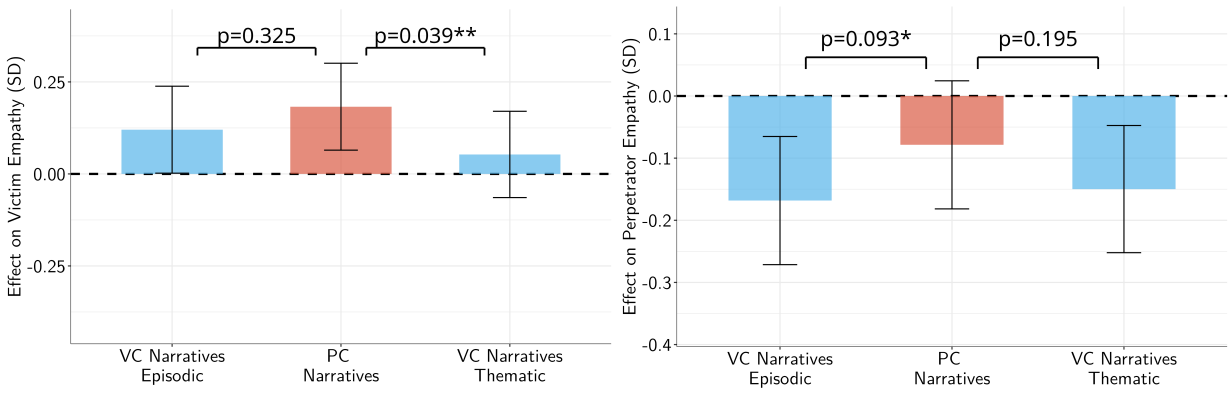
[49] Regression results are reported in Appendix Tables B.1 and B.2.

[50] One potential explanation for this pattern could be the skewness to the left of the sample: given that, from a legal perspective, jealousy falls into the futile motives category in the context of murders, most progressive individuals might feel closer to the victim if they read about it. However, Appendix Table B.1 shows that the effect is stable across all subgroups, including left- and right-leaning respondents.

Figure 7: Effect of Narratives on Empathy towards Victim and Perpetrator

(a) Empathy towards the Victim

(b) Empathy towards the Perpetrator



Notes. Standardized Respondents' attitudes separately by treatment. Panel A reports the results for empathy towards the victim, while Panel B for empathy towards the perpetrator. Empathy is measured on a scale from 0 (*not feeling close*) to 100 (*feeling very close*) and then standardized to have mean equal 0 and standard deviation equal 1. The figure reports confidence intervals at the 90% level and p-values for each VC treatment against the PC treatment, coming from a regression of the outcomes on all treatment groups excluding the control, and other observables from a t-test between each treatment and the control: * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

willingness to sign the petition, rejecting the hypothesis from Iyengar (1991) that thematic framing increases preferences for government intervention in this context.

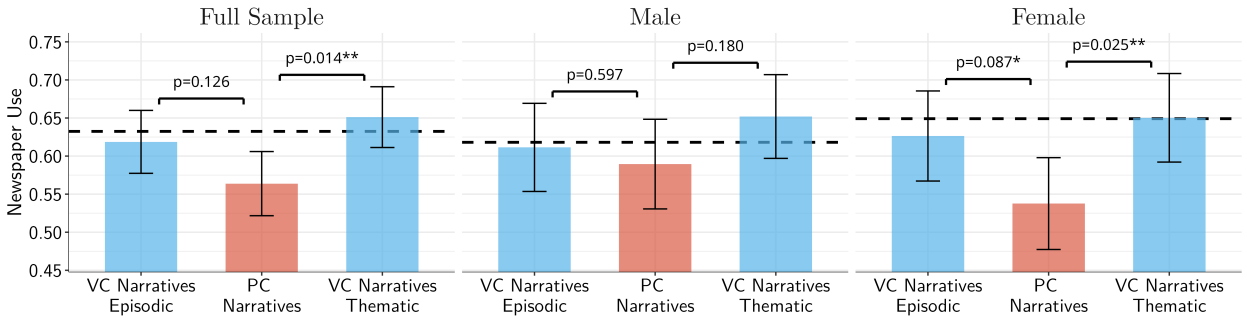
Finally, I investigate the potential engagement returns from narratives. The left panels in Figure 8 show that when looking at the full sample, PC narratives lead to a lower declared retention rate, but generate a higher click-through rate. To better understand these dynamics, I investigate the effect on engagement separately by gender. The results for male and female respondents show substantial heterogeneity: while the negative effect of perpetrator-centered narratives on retention is driven entirely by female respondents, the positive effect on the click-through rate of the same treatment compared to the other two is driven exclusively by men. This suggests that newspapers face a potential trade-off when choosing the framing of such news: perpetrator-centered narratives risk alienating female readers and reducing their future readership, while abandoning them in favor of victim-centered narratives means forgoing the higher click-through engagement they generate among male readers.

7 Discussion

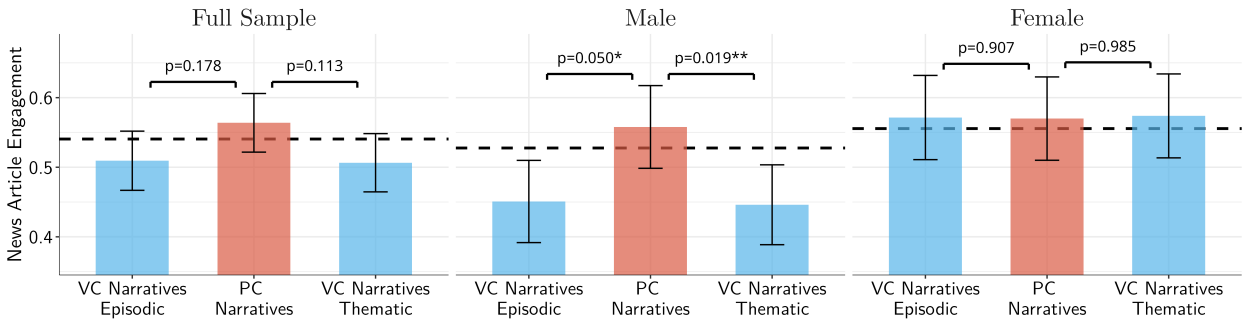
Taken together, the results presented here provide robust evidence that journalists are identity-motivated when choosing narratives in crime reporting, leading to an identity-driven persuasion

Figure 8: Effect of Narratives on News Engagement by Gender

(a) Declared Retention Rate



(b) Click-Through Rate



Notes. Engagement metrics by treatment, presented for the full sample and separately by gender. Panel (a) reports the results for the declared retention rate, measured as the willingness to use newspapers in the future. Panel (b) reports the results for click-through rate, measured by monitoring respondents' clicks on another article linked at the bottom of the main one. The dashed black horizontal line corresponds to the average outcome in the control group. The figure reports confidence intervals at the 90% level and p-values for each VC treatment against the PC treatment, coming from a regression of the outcomes on all treatment groups excluding the control, and other observables from a t-test between each treatment and the control: * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

channel operating through these narratives that shapes help-seeking behavior and attitudes. To better interpret the results of the paper, in Appendix Section D I propose a model of identity-motivated journalists in which journalists decide which narratives to use, accounting for readers' preferences and the direct effects of these narratives on readers. As in a standard probabilistic voting model (Lindbeck and Weibull, 1987), journalists maximize monetary returns from narratives by computing the share of readers they would capture, given the distribution of readers' preferences, which differ across groups. Moreover, I assume that the reader's identity mediates how they are directly affected by narratives, and I include the utility of in-group readers in that of journalists.[51]

In the absence of identity concerns among journalists, the optimal narrative depends solely on maximizing readers' utility from both groups, leading all journalists to converge on the same narrative, assuming they share the same consumer base.[52] Conversely, if journalists are also driven by identity motives, namely, if their utility increases with that of their in-group, they do not always choose the profit-maximizing narrative.[53] Specifically, journalists choose the narrative that benefits their group rather than the profit-maximizing one when they either strongly care about their group's utility or when the narrative is more likely to be their group's preferred one.

When interpreting the results through the lens of this model, the evidence in Section 4 shows that journalists are not driven solely by reader-maximizing motives. Instead, since the results show that female and male reporters systematically choose different narratives when reporting on female murders, they are also likely to be driven by identity motives. In the model, this follows from two components of readers' utility functions: first, exposure to a specific narrative can affect readers differently across groups; second, readers from different groups have different preference distributions over narratives. The results in Sections 5 and 6 provide evidence of the realization of these two conditions in this setting.

The analysis in Section 5 shows that higher initial exposure to female reporters following the murder of a woman leads to a significant increase in calls to the VAW helpline, equal to 1 additional call per province and week. Two channels could underlie this effect. First, an indirect channel

[51]This component combines insights from the literature on social identity in psychology and economics, which suggest that group identity affects individuals' choices and behavior (Turner et al., 1979; Akerlof and Kranton, 2000)), with that on other-regarding preferences (Andreoni and Miller, 2002; Fehr and Schmidt, 2006) and social identity (Tajfel et al., 1971; Chen and Li, 2009), suggesting that individuals are more likely to favor in-group members.

[52]The optimal narrative depends on the preferences of the largest group among readers (Lindbeck and Weibull, 1987; Grossman and Helpman, 1996; Persson and Tabellini, 2002).

[53]Works in social psychology (Tajfel and Turner, 2004) and in economics (Chen and Li, 2009; Shayo, 2009) show that individuals are more likely to favor members of their in-group when identity is salient. However, other studies provide mixed evidence on in-group bias in contexts where decision-makers also need to account for other incentives (Depew et al., 2017; Ash et al., 2022; Guo et al., 2023), as is the case here, where journalists need to account for monetary incentives as well.

operating through the identity of the reporter: echoing the broader literature on descriptive representation, it could be that female readers are more attentive to, or more likely to be persuaded by, articles written by women (Miller and Segal, 2019; Beaman et al., 2009). Second, a direct channel operating through content: the different narratives female reporters employ may increase awareness of resources and update readers' perceptions of help-seeking norms, thereby reducing informational and norms-related barriers to calling the helpline. Additional analyses provide evidence in favor of the latter interpretation. Replacing the female exposure measure with narrative-specific ones shows a positive, significant effect of victim-centered narratives on calls, while the effect of perpetrator-centered narratives is small and non-significant. Additionally, the positive effect of exposure to female reporters is driven only by those who use victim-centered narratives, suggesting a direct effect of such narratives on help-seeking behavior.

The experimental evidence reported in Section 6 allows me to disentangle the different potential mechanisms behind this narrative-induced change in behavior. The results show that providing information about victims' behavior increases perceptions of reporting and help-seeking, whereas providing information about the prevalence of the phenomenon or help resources does not have the same effect, nor does it correct any underestimation of the phenomenon. Further, the effect is driven by women and is larger for respondents with at least one daughter, whose perceptions of help-seeking norms are most socially relevant. I interpret this evidence as supporting a social norms channel (Bursztyn et al., 2020b) as a rationalization of the results in the observational analysis: by making help-seeking behavior visible, victim-centered narratives can shift perceived social norms around seeking formal assistance. Additionally, experimental evidence shows that perpetrator-centered narratives increase empathy towards the victim as much as victim-centered ones.[54] On the other hand, while PC narratives do not impact empathy towards the perpetrator, VC narratives lead to a significant decrease in this variable, making the choice of narrative unclear in this dimension.

Finally, the results on engagement reveal an important asymmetry with direct implications for reporters' incentives. Perpetrator-centered narratives make female readers less likely to return to the outlet, while simultaneously generating higher click-through engagement among male readers, reflecting the model's assumption that readers from different groups have different preferences over narratives. This creates a trade-off for news organizations: maximizing short-term digital en-

[54]This effect is driven mostly by women, for whom this issue is particularly salient, in line with the broader framing literature showing that framing effects can be reversed or amplified when an issue is highly culturally charged and when audiences have strong prior attitudes (Druckman, 2001; Chong and Druckman, 2007).

gagement would make reporters lean toward perpetrator-centered framing, while retaining female readership pulls in the opposite direction. This tension could partially explain the gender differences in narrative choice: if female reporters prioritize retaining female readers and male reporters prioritize online engagement, narrative choices could partly reflect same-gender audience-maximizing behavior, consistent with the logic of Gentzkow and Shapiro (2010). This interpretation would predict that female reporters cater to female audiences and male reporters to male ones, reinforcing identity motives when the in-group readers' preferred narrative coincides with the one that benefits them, as the model predicts. While this may contribute to the narrative choice, it is unlikely to be the main driver. Newspapers typically have access to subscription data at the outlet level and cannot measure readers' characteristics at the article level, making it unlikely that individual reporters systematically optimize for their gendered audiences.

While I cannot fully disentangle these supply- and demand-side factors, the evidence presented in this paper highlights differences in how journalists from different demographic groups contribute to news production, and that these differences have measurable consequences. This finding speaks directly to ongoing debates about diversity in media. If the gender composition of a newsroom shapes how stories are told, then policies aimed at increasing demographic diversity in journalism are not merely matters of representation but potentially consequential interventions in the information environment, with downstream effects. This is particularly relevant given the rapid rise of news influencers, creators who make personal identity a primary element of their news delivery. Among adults under 30, nearly four in ten now regularly get their news from such figures, with young audiences increasingly drawn to the intimacy and authenticity of personality-led content over traditional outlets (Forman-Katz et al., 2025; Owen, 2026). As reporter identity becomes ever more central to how information reaches the public, understanding the mechanisms through which it shapes narratives and reader behavior is increasingly relevant for both media research and policy.

8 Conclusion

Among the many transformations the media industry is undergoing, the increasing relevance of who tells the news stands out against a general trend of AI-driven standardization and profit-oriented reporting. The importance attributed by media outlets to diversity and the increasingly relevant role of news influencers both signal that reporter identity is becoming a defining feature of the information landscape.

This paper provides novel evidence that reporter identity shapes news content and, in turn, readers' behavior. Focusing on coverage of violence against women in Italy, the analysis estimates gender differences in reporting relying on the exogenous assignment of journalists to crime stories. Female journalists are significantly more likely to adopt victim-centered narratives, contextualizing crimes within broader patterns of gender-based violence and referencing available support resources, while male reporters rely more heavily on perpetrator-centered narratives that foreground motives such as jealousy or fits of rage.

These differences are not merely descriptive but directly affect readers' behavior. An additional article by a woman for each crime and newspaper leads to a 17% increase in calls to the national VAW helpline in the aftermath of a murder. Evidence from the online experiment further suggests that the mechanism operates through narrative framing rather than reporter gender per se: victim-centered narratives increase the perceived prevalence of help-seeking, potentially lowering the perceived cost of help-seeking.

The findings of this paper are relevant beyond the Italian context of crime reporting. Similar dynamics are likely to manifest wherever reporter identity intersects with socially salient topics, as illustrated by ongoing debates over race-related reporting in the United States. Additionally, with the increased reliance on large language models within newsrooms and the potential depersonification of news, it is crucial to understand the value-added by journalists in news production. My findings suggest that journalists are better interpreters of in-group readers' preferences and are more likely to use narratives that are also beneficial to these readers, highlighting the need for further research on this topic to understand the consequences of technological changes that lead to either personalization or standardization of news.

Finally, this paper highlights a potential trade-off within newsrooms between engagement-maximizing narratives and those that affect readers' behavior in a beneficial way. This tension makes the policy implications of the paper far from straightforward. Increasing the share of female reporters may not be sustainable on its own, as it relies on in-group identity to drive narrative choices rather than addressing the underlying incentive structure. More broadly, it remains unclear whether and how outlets could be nudged toward narratives that benefit readers without distorting reporters' incentives or compromising editorial independence. This highlights the need for further research to better understand reporters' incentives and the factors that shape their narrative choices beyond outlet-level directives, as these could have important policy implications and provide insights into how to design and implement potential news policies.

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A Additional Results

A.1 Balance Tables on Other Reporters' Characteristics

Table A.1: Balance Table for Reporter's Age

	Mean		Difference in Means	
	Young Reporters	Old Reporters	Without FE	With FE
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Article Length	486.371	513.57	-27.199**	-14.271**
	(199.603)	(234.491)	(5.525)	(5.857)
Victim Italian	0.854	0.841	0.012	-0.001
	(0.353)	(0.365)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Perpetrator Italian	0.777	0.802	-0.025**	0.008
	(0.416)	(0.399)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Perpetrator Partner	0.511	0.58	-0.069**	-0.018^{+}
	(0.5)	(0.494)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Perpetrator Relative	0.154	0.127	0.027**	0.003
	(0.361)	(0.332)	(0.008)	(0.009)
Relationship Missing	0.168	0.128	0.041**	0.004
	(0.374)	(0.334)	(0.008)	(0.008)
First Article	0.286	0.332	-0.047**	0.013
	(0.452)	(0.471)	(0.011)	(0.012)
Second Article	0.135	0.148	-0.013^{+}	-0.003
	(0.342)	(0.355)	(0.009)	(0.009)

Notes. Balance test of crime and article characteristics along reporters' age. *Article Length* is the number of words in each article; *First Article* and *Second Article* are indicators for whether the article is respectively the first or the second one about a specific crime in the same newspaper. Columns 1 and 2 report the mean and standard deviation of crime and article characteristics separately for reporters who are younger or older than 40. Column 3 reports the simple difference in means between young and old reporters. Column 4 reports the difference in means after taking out newspaper-year and reporter's region fixed effects. Standard errors in Column 4 are clustered at the newspaper-year level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.2: Balance Table for Reporter's Gender Norms

Variable	Difference in Means	
	Without FE	With FE
	(1)	(2)
Article Length	-350.538**	-240.024*
	(99.596)	(114.869)
Victim Italian	1.589**	1.639**
	(0.16)	(0.187)
Perpetrator Italian	1.881**	1.114**
	(0.186)	(0.199)
Perpetrator Partner	0.263+	0.247
	(0.226)	(0.254)
Perpetrator Relative	0.01	-0.097
	(0.148)	(0.168)
Relationship Missing	0.018	0.361*
	(0.16)	(0.165)
First Article	1.214**	1.07**
	(0.213)	(0.244)
Second Article	0.359*	-0.072
	(0.159)	(0.193)

Notes. Balance test of crime and article characteristics along reporters' region of residence gender norms, proxied by the share of couples in which only the husband works. *Article Length* is the number of words in each article; *First Article* and *Second Article* are indicators for whether the article is respectively the first or the second one about a specific crime in the same newspaper. Column 1 reports the simple correlation between gender norms and crime and article characteristics. Column 2 reports the correlation after taking out newspaper-year fixed effects. Standard errors in Column 2 are clustered at the newspaper-year level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

A.2 Additional Results on Gender Differences in Crime Reporting

Table A.3: Gender Differences in Article Headlines

	Victim-Centered Index				Perpetrator-Centered Index			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Female Reporter	0.058**	0.041	0.053**	0.019	−0.032	−0.035	−0.037*	−0.015
	(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.025)	(0.026)	(0.021)	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.020)
Age				−0.001				0.002
				(0.001)				(0.001)
Observations	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587
R^2	0.001	0.076	0.080	0.300	0.000	0.038	0.040	0.278
Newsp × Year FE		X	X	X		X	X	X
Reporter Reg. FE			X	X			X	X
Crime FE				X				X

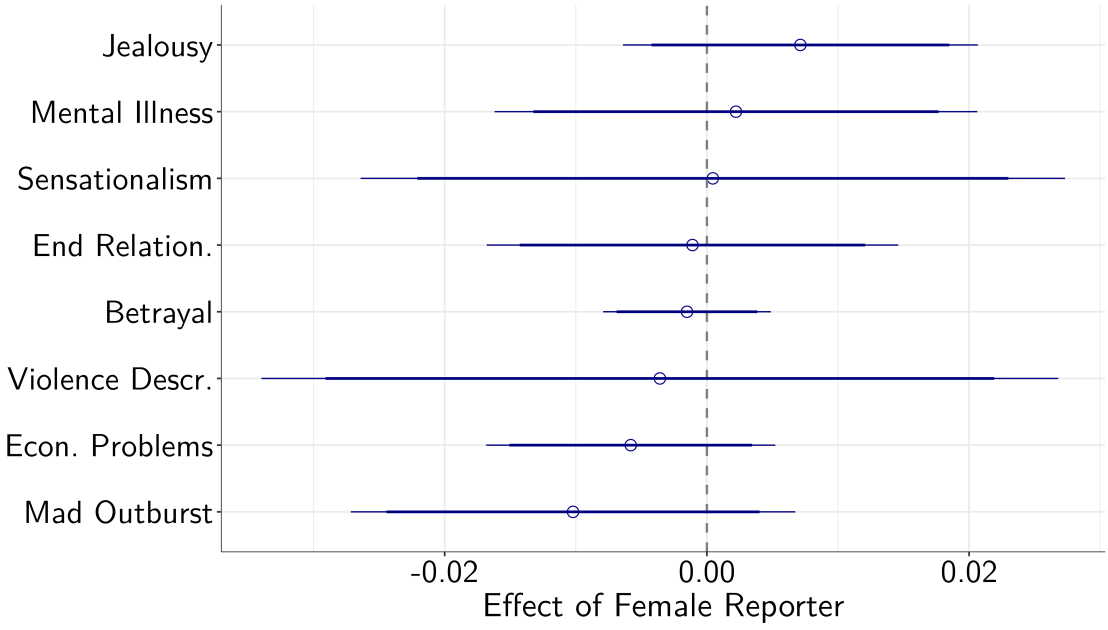
Notes. Differences in the use of reporting practices in headlines between Female and Male reporters. Columns 1 to 4 report the results for the victim-centered index, standardized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1, c, capturing the use of practices complying with the guidelines on reporting about VAW; Columns 5 to 8 report the results for the perpetrator-centered index, standardized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1, capturing the use of practices that do not comply with such guidelines. Columns 1 and 5 report the OLS regression; Columns 2 and 6 include newspaper times year fixed effects; Columns 3 and 7 add reporter's region fixed effects; Columns 4 and 8 also include crime fixed effects and controls for author's date of birth. Standard errors are clustered at the newspaper-year level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.4: Gender Differences in Reporting—Alternative Outcome Specification

	Victim-Centered Index				Perpetrator-Centered Index			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Female Reporter	0.056***	0.039***	0.046***	0.039***	−0.031**	−0.029**	−0.023*	−0.019
	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Age				0.000				0.002***
				(0.001)				(0.001)
Observations	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587
Adj. R^2	0.004	0.066	0.077	0.288	0.001	0.036	0.039	0.187
Mean Dep. Var.	0.287	0.287	0.287	0.287	0.382	0.382	0.382	0.382
Newsp × Year FE		X	X	X		X	X	X
Reporter Reg. FE			X	X			X	X
Crime FE				X				X

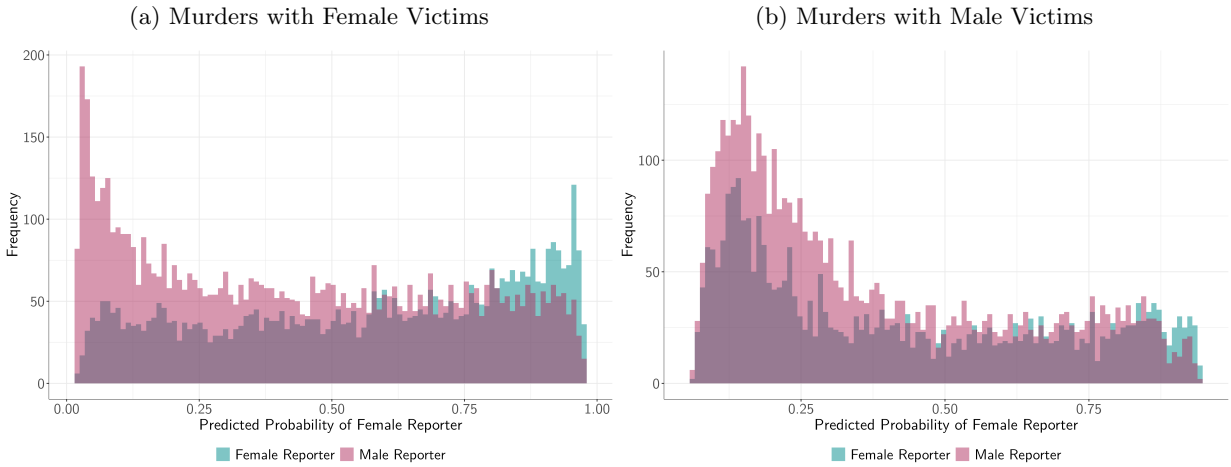
Notes. Differences in the use of reporting practices between Female and Male reporters. Columns 1 to 4 report the results for at least one topic in the victim-centered index; Columns 5 to 8 report the results for at least one topic for the perpetrator-centered index. Columns 1 and 5 report the OLS regression; Columns 2 and 6 include newspaper times year fixed effects; Columns 3 and 7 add reporter's region fixed effects; Columns 4 and 8 also include crime fixed effects and controls for author's date of birth. Standard errors are clustered at the newspaper-year level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Figure A.1: Gender Differences in Reporting on Murders with Male Victim



Notes. Gender differences in reporting about murders of male victims. All regressions include newspaper-year, crime and reporter's region fixed effects. The reporting practices used are the same that compose the perpetrator-centered index from the analysis of murders with male victims with two additions. First, an index for sensationalistic language; second, an index capturing description of the violence that occurred in the murder. Errors are clustered at the newspaper-year level, and the figure shows 95% and 90% confidence intervals.

Figure A.2: Predicted Probability of Female Reporter by Real Reporter's Gender



Notes. Distribution of the predicted probabilities of each article being written by a female reporter plotted separately by *real* reporters' gender. The predicted probabilities are computed with a finetuned BERT classifier trained on an Italian corpus. Panel (a) shows the predicted probabilities for articles on murders with female victims, while Panel (b) shows those for articles on murders with male victims.

A.3 Additional Differences in Reporting across Reporters' Characteristics

Table A.5: Differences in Reporting Across Reporters' Age

	Victim-Centered Index				Perpetrator-Centered Index			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Age<50	−0.015	−0.056*	−0.041	−0.019	−0.040	−0.018	−0.027	−0.046*
	(0.032)	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.026)	(0.027)	(0.026)
Female Reporter				0.131***				−0.048**
				(0.026)				(0.024)
Observations	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587
R^2	0.000	0.115	0.126	0.424	0.000	0.057	0.063	0.351
Newsp × Year FE		X	X	X		X	X	X
Reporter Reg. FE			X	X			X	X
Crime FE				X				X

Notes. Differences in the use of reporting practices between reporters younger and older than the average reporters' age. Columns 1 to 4 report the results for the victim-centered index, standardized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1, c, capturing the use of practices complying with the guidelines on reporting about VAW; Columns 5 to 8 report the results for the perpetrator-centered index, standardized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1, capturing the use of practices that do not comply with such guidelines. Columns 1 and 5 report the simple OLS regression; Columns 2 and 6 include newspaper times year fixed effects; Columns 3 and 7 add reporter's region fixed effects; Columns 4 and 8 also include crime fixed effects and controls for author's gender. Standard errors are clustered at the newspaper-year level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.6: Differences in Reporting across Reporters' Region Norms

	Victim-Centered Index				Perpetrator-Centered Index			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Reg. Norms	1.493*	0.859	−2.919***	−2.647***	1.746**	2.062**	0.588	0.375
	(0.863)	(0.917)	(0.897)	(0.903)	(0.802)	(0.950)	(1.002)	(1.016)
Female Reporter				0.120***				−0.069***
				(0.030)				(0.026)
Age				0.003*				0.006***
				(0.001)				(0.001)
Observations	7731	7731	7731	7731	7731	7731	7731	7731
R^2	0.005	0.109	0.410	0.413	0.005	0.066	0.371	0.373
Newsp × Year FE		X	X	X		X	X	X
Crime FE			X	X			X	X

Notes. Effect of reporters' gender norms, proxied by norms in their region of residence. Columns 1 to 4 report the results for the victim-centered index, standardized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1, c, capturing the use of practices complying with the guidelines on reporting about VAW; Columns 5 to 8 report the results for the perpetrator-centered index, standardized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1, capturing the use of practices that do not comply with such guidelines. Columns 1 and 5 report the OLS regression; Columns 2 and 6 include newspaper times year fixed effects; Columns 3 and 7 add crime fixed effects and Columns 4 and 8 include controls for reporters' characteristics like gender and date of birth. Standard errors are clustered at the newspaper-year level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

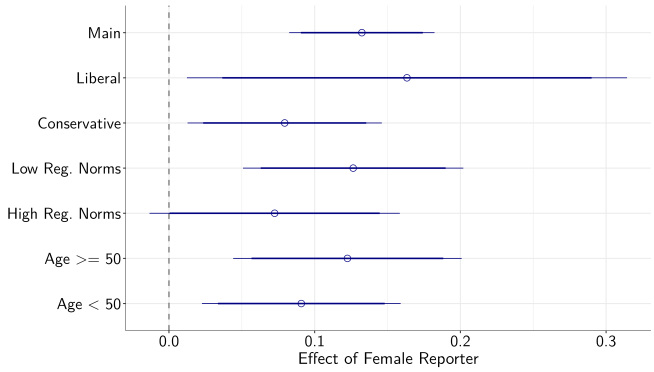
Table A.7: Differences in Reporting across Newspaper Ideology

	Victim-Centered Index			Perpetrator-Centered Index		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Liberal	0.053	0.083**	0.127**	0.016	−0.037	−0.038
	(0.055)	(0.042)	(0.056)	(0.056)	(0.025)	(0.027)
Female Reporter			0.137**			−0.054**
			(0.056)			(0.026)
Age			−0.001			−0.003**
			(0.002)			(0.001)
Observations	9048	9048	9048	9048	9048	9048
R^2	0.001	0.412	0.422	0.000	0.337	0.341
Crime FE		X	X		X	X
Year FE		X	X		X	X
Reporter Reg. FE			X			X

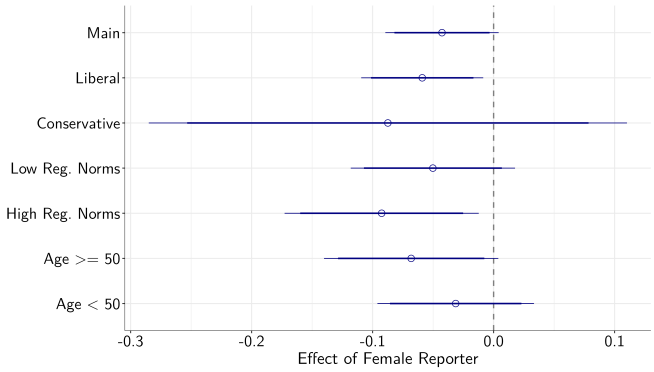
Notes. Differences in the use of reporting practices between progressive and conservative newspapers. Columns 1 to 3 report the results for the victim-centered index, standardized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1, c, capturing the use of practices complying with the guidelines on reporting about VAW; Columns 4 to 6 report the results for the perpetrator-centered index, standardized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1, capturing the use of practices that do not comply with such guidelines. Columns 1 and 4 report the OLS regression; Columns 2 and 5 include crime and year fixed effects, while Columns 3 and 6 add reporters' characteristics among the controls. Standard errors are clustered at the newspaper level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Figure A.3: Gender Differences in Reporting by Sub-Groups

(a) Standardized Victim-Centered Index



(b) Standardized Perpetrator-Centered Index



Notes. Effect of female reporter on the victim-centered—Panel (a)—and perpetrator-centered indexes—Panel (b) –, standardized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1. All regressions include crime and reporter's region fixed effects. Regressions run on the samples of progressive and conservative newspapers also include year fixed effects, while the remaining ones include newspaper times year fixed effects. The top coefficient shows the effect of the main specification. The estimates labeled as "Progressive" and "Conservative" come from regressions on the group of conservative and Progressive newspapers. Those labeled "Low Region Norms" and "High Region Norms" are from regressions on the sample of reporters living in regions with gender norms below and above the median level, while the final ones from regressions run on the sample of reporters older or younger than 50 years old. Errors are clustered at the newspaper-year level, and the figure shows 95% and 90% confidence intervals.

A.4 Robustness Checks on Gender Difference in Crime Reporting

Table A.8: Gender Differences in Reporting Alternative Specification—VC Index

	Main	Art. Order×Crime FE	Crime×Newsp FE	Crime×Year Clust.	Crime×Auth. Clust.	Weghted
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Female Reporter	0.128***	0.125***	0.123***	0.128***	0.128***	0.142***
	(0.025)	(0.028)	(0.030)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.033)
Observations	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587
R^2	0.424	0.362	0.587	0.424	0.424	0.575
Newsp × Year FE	X	X		X	X	X
Reporter Reg. FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Crime FE	X			X	X	X

Notes. Differences in the use of reporting practices between Female and Male reporters in the victim-centered index. Column 1 reports the results from the main specification; Column 2 adds fixed effects for whether the article is the first, second, etc. on the same crime in newspaper n; Column 3 includes crime times newspaper fixed effects; Column 4 has standard errors clustered at the crime times year level; Column 5 adds weights for the inverse number of articles for each newspaper-crime. Standard errors are clustered at the newspaper-year level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.9: Gender Differences in Reporting Alternative Specification—PC Index

	Main	Art. Order×Crime FE	Crime×Newsp FE	Crime×Year Clust.	Crime×Auth. Clust.	Weghted
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Female Reporter	−0.055**	−0.044*	−0.065**	−0.055**	−0.055**	−0.032
	(0.023)	(0.025)	(0.029)	(0.022)	(0.023)	(0.030)
Observations	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587	10587
R^2	0.351	0.314	0.520	0.351	0.351	0.508
Newsp × Year FE	X	X		X	X	X
Reporter Reg. FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Crime FE	X			X	X	X

Notes. Differences in the use of reporting practices between Female and Male reporters in the perpetrator-centered index. Column 1 reports the results from the main specification; Column 2 adds fixed effects for whether the article is the first, second, etc. on the same crime in newspaper n; Column 3 includes crime times newspaper fixed effects; Column 4 has standard errors clustered at the crime times year level; Column 5 adds weights for the inverse number of articles for each newspaper-crime. Standard errors are clustered at the newspaper-year level in all columns except for Column 4 (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.10: Gender Differences in Reporting Alternative Samples—VC Index

	Main	First Art.	First 5 Art.	IPV	Italian Perp.	No Viral Events	All Crimes Rep.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Female Reporter	0.128***	0.156***	0.118***	0.160***	0.127***	0.135***	0.063*
	(0.025)	(0.046)	(0.031)	(0.039)	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.035)
Observations	10587	3391	7004	6006	8045	6577	6804
R^2	0.424	0.646	0.486	0.447	0.456	0.499	0.476
Mean Dep. Var.	−0.000	0.091	0.050	0.163	0.019	0.071	−0.052
Newsp × Year FE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reporter Reg. FE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Crime FE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Differences in the use of reporting practices between Female and Male reporters in the victim-centered index. Column 1 reports the results from the main specification; Column 2 restricts the sample to the first article for each crime in each newspaper; Column 3 restricts the sample to articles within 10 days from the first one in each newspaper; Column 4 to murders committed by the (ex-)partner; Column 5 to Italian perpetrators; Column 6 excludes events that are covered by more than 10 articles per newspaper. All columns include newspaper-year, reporter's region, and crime fixed effects, with the exception of Column 3, which includes newspaper-crime and reporter's region fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the newspaper-year level in all columns except for Column 4 (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Table A.11: Gender Differences in Reporting Alternative Samples—PC Index

	Main	First Art.	First 5 Art.	IPV	Italian Perp.	No Viral Events	All Crimes Rep.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Female Reporter	−0.055**	−0.056	−0.058*	−0.066**	−0.067**	−0.059*	−0.091***
	(0.023)	(0.039)	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.028)	(0.031)	(0.031)
Observations	10587	3391	7004	6006	8045	6577	6804
R^2	0.351	0.610	0.414	0.346	0.348	0.413	0.418
Mean Dep. Var.	−0.000	0.161	0.093	0.110	0.054	0.126	0.035
Newsp × Year FE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reporter Reg. FE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Crime FE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Differences in the use of reporting practices between Female and Male reporters in the perpetrator-centered index. Column 1 reports the results from the main specification; Column 2 restricts the sample to the first article for each crime in each newspaper; Column 3 restricts the sample to articles within 10 days from the first one in each newspaper; Column 4 to murders committed by the (ex-)partner; Column 5 to Italian perpetrators; Column 6 excludes events that are covered by more than 10 articles per newspaper. All columns include newspaper-year, reporter's region, and crime fixed effects, with the exception of Column 3, which includes newspaper-crime and reporter's region fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the newspaper-year level in all columns except for Column 4 (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

A.5 Additional Results on Exposure to Crime Narratives and Help-Seeking

Table A.12: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Helpline Calls—OLS

	Number of Calls				Log. Calls	Std. Calls	Poisson
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Female Rep. Exposure	0.317*	0.305*	0.121**	0.119**	0.006	0.035**	0.058**
	(0.173)	(0.168)	(0.055)	(0.055)	(0.010)	(0.016)	(0.025)
Murder (Prov-Week)		3.178***	0.258**		0.024	0.075**	0.051**
		(1.185)	(0.103)		(0.018)	(0.030)	(0.020)
Murder (Reg-Week)				0.074**			
				(0.032)			
Observations	56443	56443	56443	56443	56443	56443	56443
R^2	0.000	0.016	0.690	0.690	0.538	0.690	
Mean Dep. Var.	1.724	1.724	1.724	1.724	1.724	1.724	1.724
Mean Expl. Var.	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208
Province FE			X	X	X	X	X
Month FE			X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of exposure to female reporters on calls. Columns 1 to 4 report the OLS estimate using the number of calls as outcomes. Column 1 reports the simple OLS estimate; Column 2 controls for a murder happening in the same week; Column 3 and 5 to 7 add province and month fixed effects; Column 4 controls for a murder happening in the same region and week fixed effects. Column 5 uses the logarithm of calls as an outcome, Column 6 uses the normalized number of calls, and Column 7 uses a Poisson regression. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.13: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Helpline Calls—Different Narratives

	Number of Calls (Poisson)					
	Articles with No VC Narratives			Articles with VC Narratives		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Fem. Exposure^{5Art}× Post	0.081	0.201	0.201	0.511*	0.453*	0.454*
	(0.261)	(0.301)	(0.299)	(0.270)	(0.237)	(0.237)
Fem. Exposure^{5Art}	−0.293	−0.310	−0.309	0.519*	−0.098	−0.098
	(0.229)	(0.207)	(0.206)	(0.309)	(0.261)	(0.260)
Observations	6980	6980	6980	6980	6980	6980
R^2	0.536	0.564	0.564	0.538	0.564	0.564
Mean Dep. Var.	3.668	3.668	3.668	3.668	3.668	3.668
Mean Expl. Var.	0.142	0.142	0.142	0.066	0.066	0.066
Province FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Window FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month FE		X	X		X	X
Gender Norms			X			X

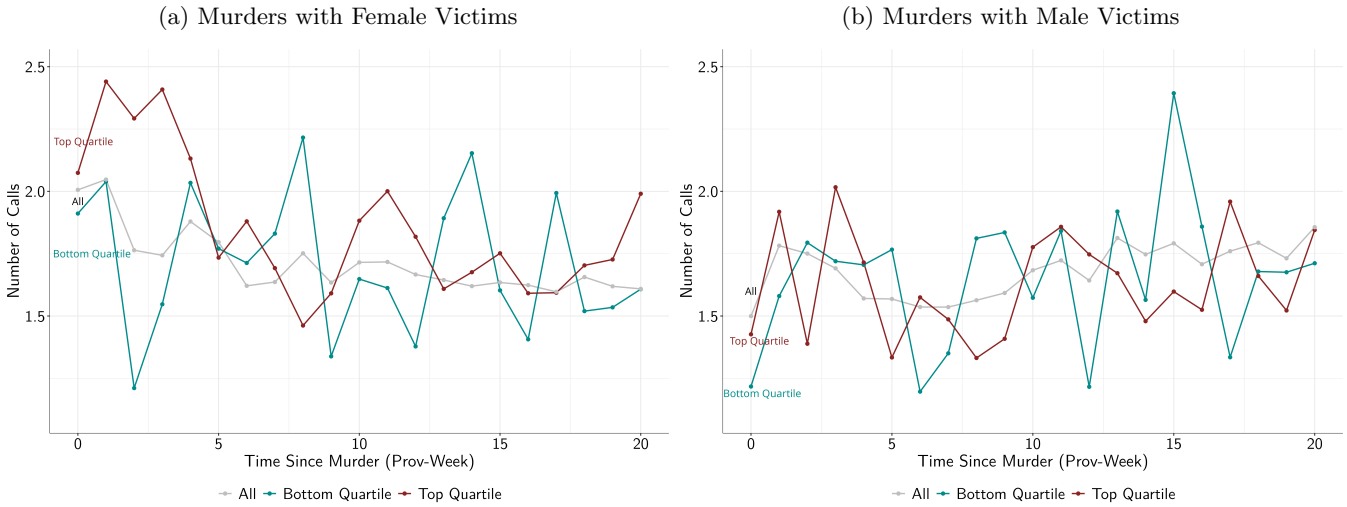
Notes. Effect of exposure to female reporters on calls estimated in a difference-in-differences design in an eight-week window around the murder. Columns 1 to 3 capture the effect of exposure to female reporters who do not use victim-centered narratives, while Columns 4 to 6 the effect of exposure to female reporters who use victim-centered narratives. All columns include province and weeks-from-murder fixed effects, while Columns 2 and 5 also add month fixed effects, and Columns 3 and 6 control for the proxy for gender norms. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Table A.14: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Narratives

	Victim-Centered Narratives			Perpetrator-Centered Narratives		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Female Rep. Exposure	0.087***	0.061***	0.061***	−0.022	−0.077***	−0.077***
	(0.020)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.017)
Region Gender Norms			−0.176			0.110
			(0.296)			(0.348)
Observations	56443	56443	56443	56443	56443	56443
R^2	0.000	0.054	0.054	0.000	0.013	0.013
Mean Dep. Var.	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.072	0.072	0.072
Mean Fem. Rep. Exposure	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208
Province FE		X	X		X	X
Month FE		X	X		X	X

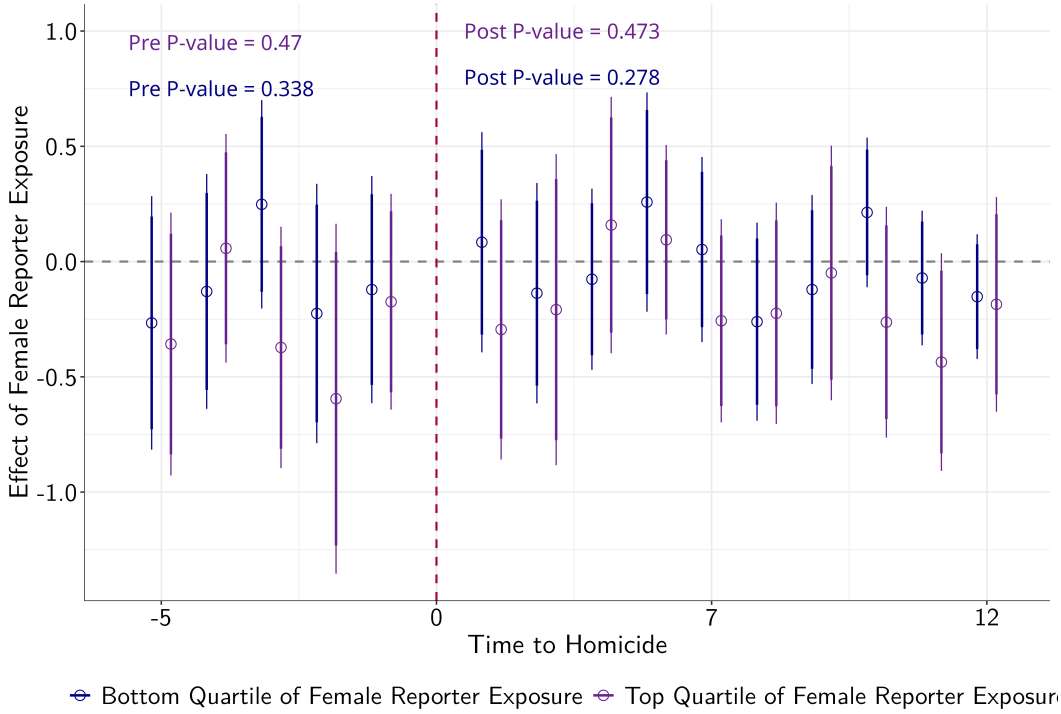
Notes. Effect of exposure to female reporters on victim-centered (Columns 1 to 3) and perpetrator-centered narratives (Columns 4 to 6). Columns 2-3 and 5-6 include province and month fixed effects. Columns 2-3 and 5-6 also add month fixed effects, and Columns 5 and 6 control for the proxy for gender norms. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Figure A.4: Calls to Helpline in the Weeks after Murder by Exposure to Female Reporters



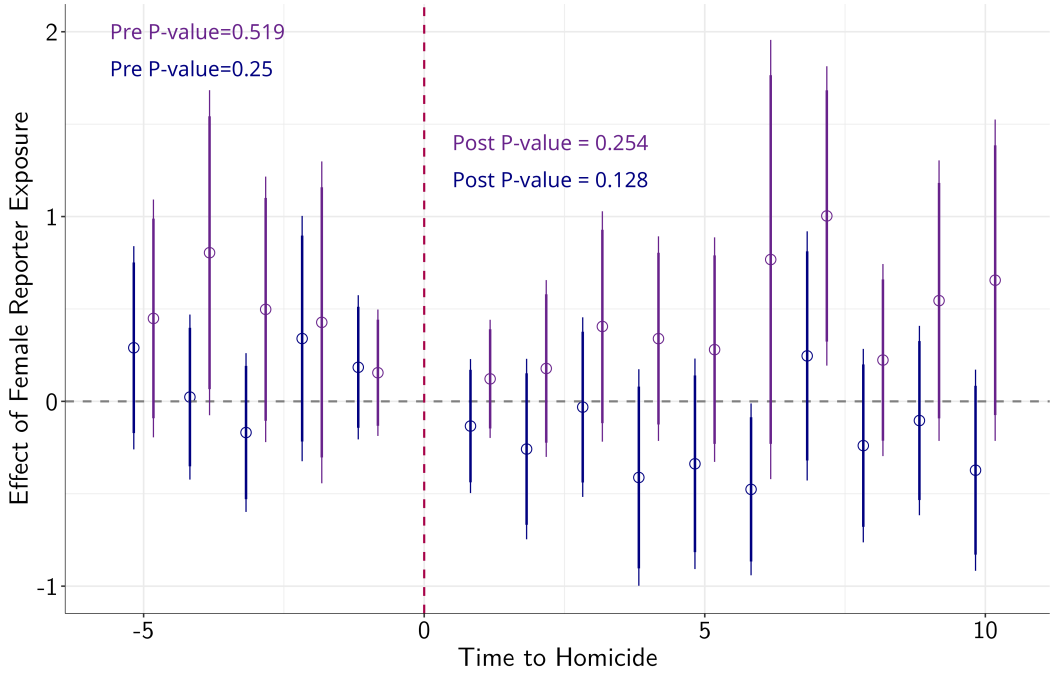
Notes. Time series of the number of calls, after taking out province fixed effects, in the province of the murder in the 20 weeks after the murder happens. The time series are plotted considering all province-week observations and separately for observations with the female reporters' exposure measure in the bottom and top quartile of its distribution. Panel (a) shows the trend of calls to the helpline in provinces where a murder with female victims occurs and after such murder, while Panel (b) plots the same for murders with male victims.

Figure A.5: Event Study: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Number of Articles



Notes. Number of articles before and after a murder happens in the same province for increasing exposure to female reporters in the first five articles covering the crime. The figure plots the coefficient from equation (6) using as an outcome the number of articles weighted by the newspapers market share. The regression includes province and month-fixed effects. It shows 95% and 90% confidence intervals constructed clustering errors at the province level. Overlaid text reports the p-value from an F-test for the joint significance of the four pre- (top left) and post-murder (top right) indicators.

Figure A.6: Event Study: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Calls—Male Victims



Notes. Calls to the help-line number before and after a murder happens in the same province for increasing exposure to female reporters in the first five articles on crimes. The figure plots the coefficient from equation (6) separately for murders with male victims. The regression includes province and month-fixed effects. It shows 95% and 90% confidence intervals constructed from clustering errors at the province level. Overlaid text reports the p-value from an F-test for the joint significance of the four pre- (top left) and post-murder (top right) indicators.

A.6 Robustness Checks on Exposure to Crime Narratives and Help-Seeking

Table A.15: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Calls: Alternative Treatments

	Poisson Model					
	Main	1 Art.	2 Art.	3 Art.	4 Art.	Zero-Infl. Poisson
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Fem. Exposure^{XArt}×Post	0.302*	0.014	0.126	0.211	0.261	0.431***
	(0.182)	(0.158)	(0.174)	(0.197)	(0.195)	(0.098)
Fem. Exposure^{XArt}	−0.270	−0.104	−0.131	−0.216	−0.280*	−0.267
	(0.169)	(0.147)	(0.152)	(0.173)	(0.167)	(0.230)
Gender Norms	−1.469	−1.563	−1.458	−1.434	−1.443	−1.286
	(1.938)	(1.918)	(1.927)	(1.926)	(1.929)	
Observations	6980	6969	6980	6980	6980	6980
R^2	0.564	0.562	0.563	0.564	0.564	
Mean Dep. Var.	3.668	3.668	3.668	3.668	3.668	3.668
Mean Expl. Var.	0.209	0.167	0.189	0.199	0.204	0.209
Province FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Window FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month FE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Crime FE						X

Notes. Effect of exposure to female reporters on calls estimated in a difference-in-differences design in an eight-week window around the murder. Column 1 reports the results from the main specification. Columns 2 to 5 show results using different treatments. In particular, the treatment in those columns is computed using the first 1, 2, 3, and 4 articles, respectively. All specifications include province, week-from-murder, and month fixed effects, and control for the proxy for gender norms. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.16: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Calls (Extensive Margin): Alternative Treatments

	At Least One Call				
	Main	1 Art.	2 Art.	3 Art.	4 Art.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Fem. Exposure^{XArt} X Post	0.116*	0.068	0.079	0.106*	0.103*
	(0.067)	(0.053)	(0.055)	(0.061)	(0.062)
Fem. Exposure^{XArt}	−0.083	−0.027	−0.048	−0.064	−0.085*
	(0.057)	(0.043)	(0.043)	(0.048)	(0.049)
Observations	6980	6969	6980	6980	6980
R^2	0.282	0.282	0.282	0.282	0.282
Mean Dep. Var.	0.741	0.741	0.741	0.741	0.741
Mean Expl. Var.	0.208	0.166	0.188	0.198	0.204
Province FE	X	X	X	X	X
Window FE	X	X	X	X	X
Month FE	X	X	X	X	X

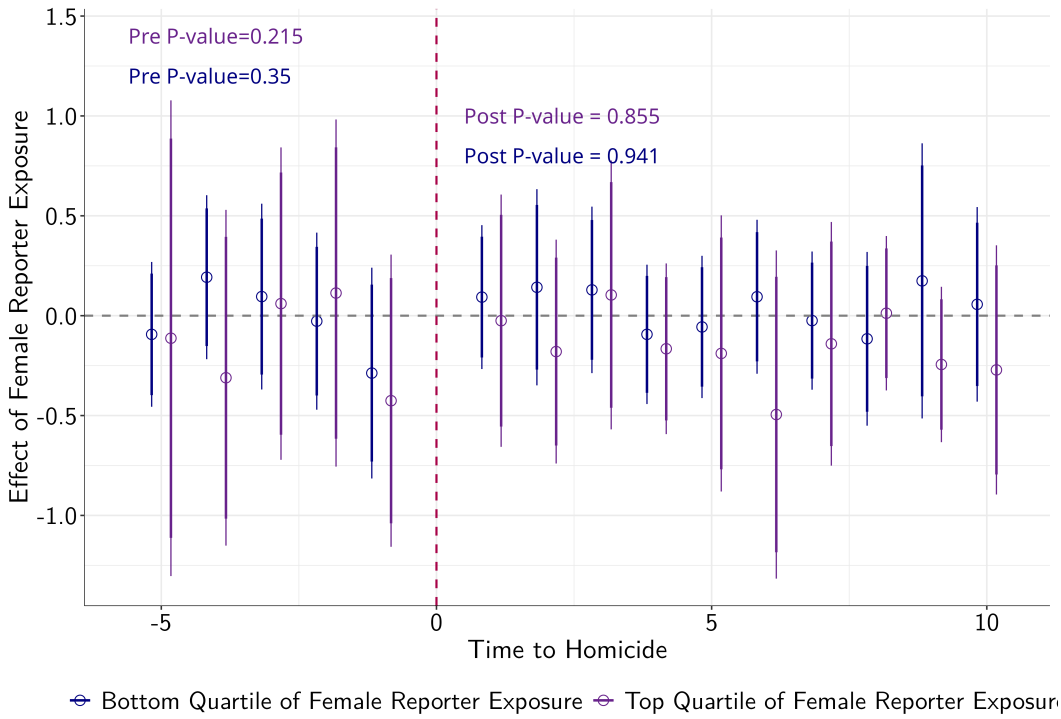
Notes. Effect of exposure to female reporters on the probability of at least one call estimated in a difference-in-differences design in an eight-week window around the murder. Column 1 reports the results from the main specification. Columns 2 to 5 show results using different treatments. In particular, the treatment in those columns is computed using the first 1, 2, 3, and 4 articles, respectively. All specifications include province, week-from-murder, and month fixed effects, and control for the proxy for gender norms. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A.17: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Calls: Alternative Specifications

	At Least 1 Call				Number of Calls (Poisson)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Fem. Exposure^{5Art}× Post	0.120*	0.116*	0.115*	0.114*	0.291	0.308*	0.305*	0.299
	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.207)	(0.185)	(0.181)	(0.185)
Fem. Exposure^{5Art}	−0.083	−0.084	−0.083	−0.088	−0.288	−0.269*	−0.272	−0.270
	(0.055)	(0.056)	(0.056)	(0.057)	(0.191)	(0.163)	(0.167)	(0.177)
Murders in Province-Year		−0.000				0.005		
		(0.003)				(0.008)		
Crime Female Rep.			−0.007				−0.011	
			(0.006)				(0.012)	
Observations	6980	6980	6980	6924	6980	6980	6980	6924
R^2	0.284	0.282	0.283	0.279	0.568	0.564	0.564	0.564
Mean Dep. Var.	0.741	0.741	0.741	0.741	3.668	3.668	3.668	3.668
Mean Expl. Var.	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208	0.208
Province FE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Window FE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Month FE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gender Norms×Year FE	X				X			
Other Crime Rates				X				X

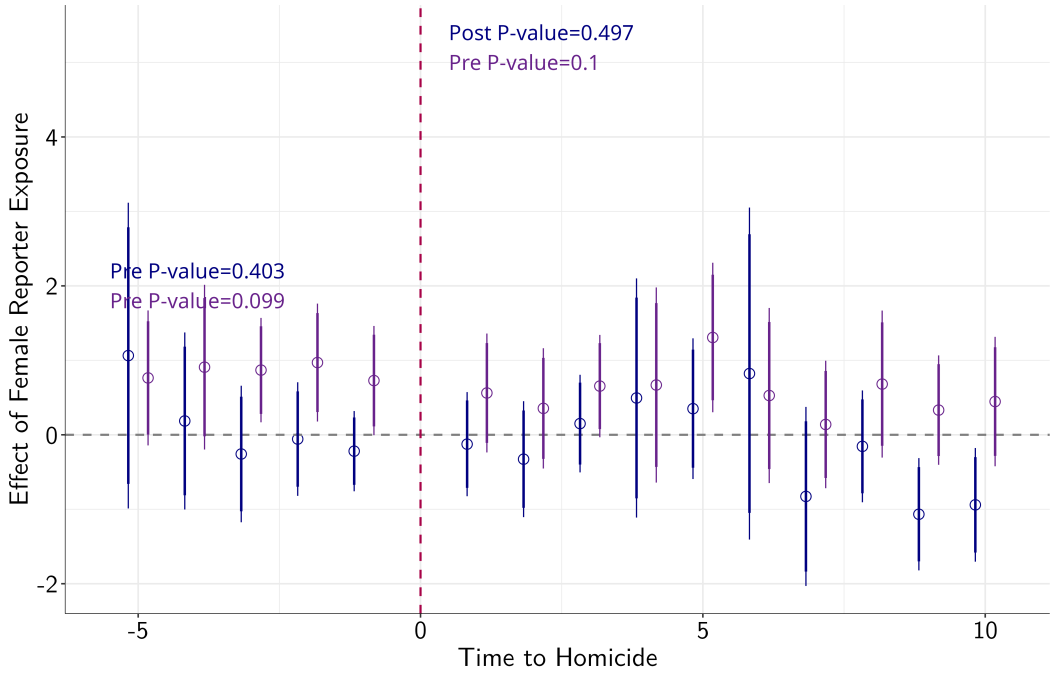
Notes. Effect of exposure to female reporters on calls estimated in a difference-in-differences design in an eight-week window around the murder. Columns 1 to 4 report the linear probability estimate of there being at least one call (extensive margin). Columns 5 to 8 report results using the number of calls as outcomes and a Poisson model. All columns include province, month, and week-to-murder fixed effects. Columns 1 and 5 also include gender norms times year fixed effects; columns 2 and 6 control for the total number of murders in each province-year, and columns 3 and 7 control for the number of female reporters writing on murders with male victims that individuals are exposed to in each province-year. Finally, columns 4 and 8 control for other crime rates. The R^2 in Columns 5 to 8 corresponds to the pseudo R^2 calculated for the Poisson regression. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Figure A.7: Event Study: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Calls—Placebo



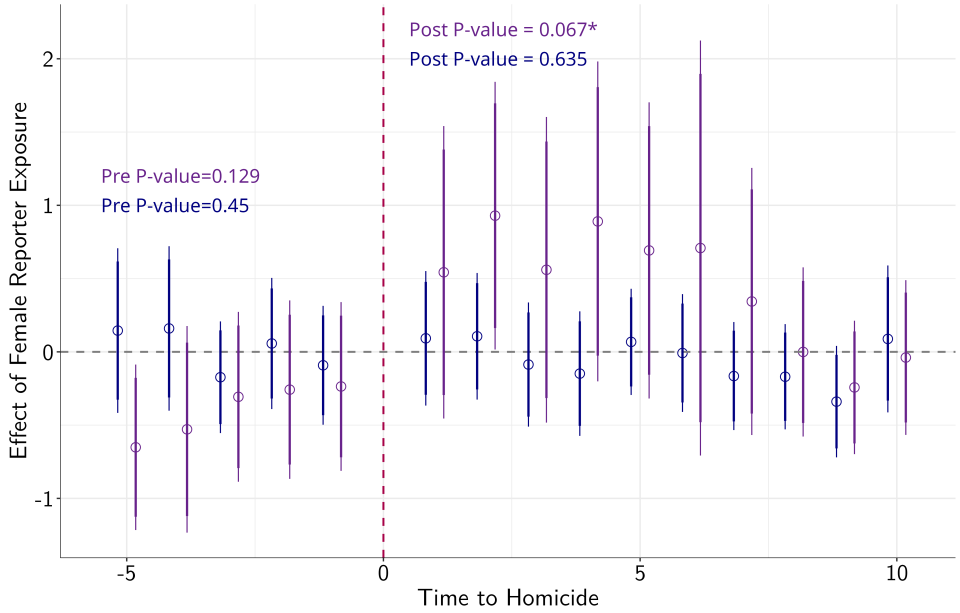
Notes. Calls to the help-line number before and after a placebo murder happens in the same province for increasing exposure to female reporters in the first five articles covering crimes. The figure plots the coefficient from equation (6) for placebo murders. The regression includes province and month-fixed effects. It shows 95% and 90% confidence intervals constructed clustering errors at the province level. Overlaid text reports the p-value from an F-test for the joint significance of the four pre- (top left) and post-murder (top right) indicators.

Figure A.8: Event Study: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Calls—Neighboring Provinces



Notes. Calls to the help-line number before and after a murder with a female victim occurs in a neighboring province for increasing exposure to female reporters in the first five articles covering crimes. The figure plots the coefficient from equation (6) where each province is treated if a murder occurs in a neighboring province. The regression includes province and month-fixed effects. It shows 95% and 90% confidence intervals constructed clustering errors at the province level. Overlaid text reports the p-value from an F-test for the joint significance of the four pre- (top left) and post-murder (top right) indicators.

Figure A.9: Effect of Female-Reporters Exposure on Calls—No Overlap



Notes. Calls to the help-line number before and after a murder happens in the same province for increasing exposure to female reporters in the first five articles covering the crime. The figures plot the coefficient from equation (6) using two binarized versions of the treatment: being above or below the 25^{th} percentile or the median of the exposure measure. The regressions include province and week-fixed effects and exclude crimes occurring within 10 weeks of the previous one in the same province. The plots show 95% and 90% confidence intervals constructed clustering errors at the province level. The overlaid text reports the p-value from an F-test for the joint significance of the four pre- (top left) and post-murder (top right) indicators.

A.7 Additional Tables and Figures

Table A.18: Most Read Newspapers per Region

Newspaper	Diffusion	Ideology
Corriere della Sera	260357	Progressive
Repubblica	136321	Progressive
Avvenire	100802	Conserative
La Stampa	97800	Progressive
Il Messaggero	70021	Conserative
Il Resto del Carlino	67155	Conserative
Il Fatto Quotidiano	50515	Progressive
Il Gazzettino	47987	Conservative
La Nazione	44224	Conservative
Il Giornale	32461	Conservative
Messaggero Veneto	30045	–
Il Secolo XIX	26366	–
Il Tirreno	24349	–
Il Mattino	24328	–
Gazzetta di Parma	23575	–
L'Arena	23092	Conservative
La Nuova Sardegna	22356	Progressive
Il Giornale di Vicenza	21360	Progressive
Il Giorno	20605	Conservative
Il Piccolo	15514	–
Il Manifesto	13356	Progressive
Quotidiano di Sicilia	11206	–
Gazzetta del Sud	11145	–
Corriere Adriatico	9507	Progressive
Nuovo Quotidiano di Puglia	8465	–
La Provincia Pavese	7962	Progressive
La Tribuna di Treviso	7722	Progressive
La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno	7610	Progressive
Gazzetta di Reggio	6063	Progressive
Nuova Gazzetta di Modena	5803	Progressive
La Nuova di Venezia e Mestre	5687	Progressive
La Nuova Ferrara	4621	Progressive

Notes. List of Italian newspapers in the sample (most read national newspapers and two most read newspapers per province). *Diffusion* indicates the number of newspaper copies sold in 2022 all over Italy.

Table A.19: Summary Statistics—Murders with Female Victims

Variable	Mean	SD	N
2-4	(1)	(2)	(3)
Victim Italian	0.77	0.42	1969
Perpetrator Italian	0.83	0.37	1860
Perpetrator Partner	0.66	0.47	1861
Perpetrator Relative	0.21	0.41	1861
Relationship Missing	0.06	0.25	1989
North	0.38	0.49	1989
South	0.30	0.46	1989
Center	0.18	0.39	1989

Notes. Summary statistics of murders with female victims. *North*, *Center*, and *South* indicate whether the region where the crime happened is in the North, Center, or South of Italy.

Table A.20: Summary Statistics—Reporters

		Average		Difference in Means	
Variable	Total	Female Reporters	Male Reporters	Without FE	With FE
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
(6)					
Region Gender Norms	0.301	0.301	0.3	0	-0.002
	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.001)	(0.007)
Year of Birth	1971.627	1973.964	1969.943	4.021***	3.675***
	(10.06)	(8.807)	(10.559)	(0.154)	(0.546)
Start Year	1999.815	2001.814	1998.374	3.441***	3.009***
	(10.111)	(9.045)	(10.583)	(0.155)	(0.761)
North	0.468	0.454	0.478	-0.023***	0.016
	(0.499)	(0.498)	(0.5)	(0.008)	(0.064)
South	0.22	0.21	0.227	-0.017	-0.021
	(0.414)	(0.407)	(0.419)	(0.006)	(0.035)
Liberal	0.62	0.586	0.644	-0.057***	-0.051*
	(0.485)	(0.493)	(0.479)	(0.007)	(0.029)
Conservative	0.266	0.297	0.243	0.054***	0.053*
	(0.442)	(0.457)	(0.429)	(0.007)	(0.03)

Notes. Summary statistics of reporters for the whole sample and separately for female and male reporters. The last two columns show the difference in mean between female and male reporters, with and without newspaper times year fixed effects. *Region Gender Norms* indicates the share of households for each region in which only the woman is working. *North* and *South* indicate the region of residence of the reporter.

Table A.21: Female Reporters by Gender and Newspaper

Newspaper	Art. by Female Reporters	Female Reporters	Share Female Reporters
	(1)	(2)	(3)
CDS	0.39	150	0.41
La Stampa	0.29	124	0.36
Giornale	0.47	48	0.35
Repubblica	0.44	180	0.41
Il Gazzettino	0.47	97	0.46
Il Mattino	0.45	119	0.45
Il Secolo XIX	0.35	26	0.39
Nuovo Quotidiano di Puglia	0.38	28	0.46
La Nazione	0.41	99	0.45
Gazzetta di Parma	0.50	7	0.50
Il Resto del Carlino	0.48	93	0.43
Il Messaggero	0.53	104	0.45
Fatto Quotidiano	0.39	27	0.38
Il Piccolo	0.26	12	0.38
Avvenire	0.26	25	0.32
La Nuova Sardegna	0.36	29	0.41
Corriere Adriatico	0.41	35	0.41
La Nuova Venezia	0.34	11	0.41
Messaggero Veneto	0.56	22	0.45
La Provincia Pavese	0.42	9	0.43
Il Tirreno	0.52	16	0.50
Il Manifesto	0.48	4	0.33
La Nuova Ferrara	0.28	3	0.30
Il Giornale di Vicenza	0.24	10	0.32
L'Arena	0.51	13	0.36
La Tribuna di Treviso	0.67	4	0.67
La Gazzetta di Reggio	0.73	4	0.57
Il Giorno	0.42	20	0.53
La Gazzetta di Modena	0.41	2	0.29
Gazzetta del Sud	0.50	6	0.46
Quotidiano di Sicilia	0.19	1	0.33

Notes. Female reporters by newspaper. Column 1 reports the share of articles written by female reporters in each newspaper. Columns 2 and 3 report the number and share of female reporters in each newspaper, respectively.

Table A.22: Correlation Between Proxy for Gender Norms and Gender Norms

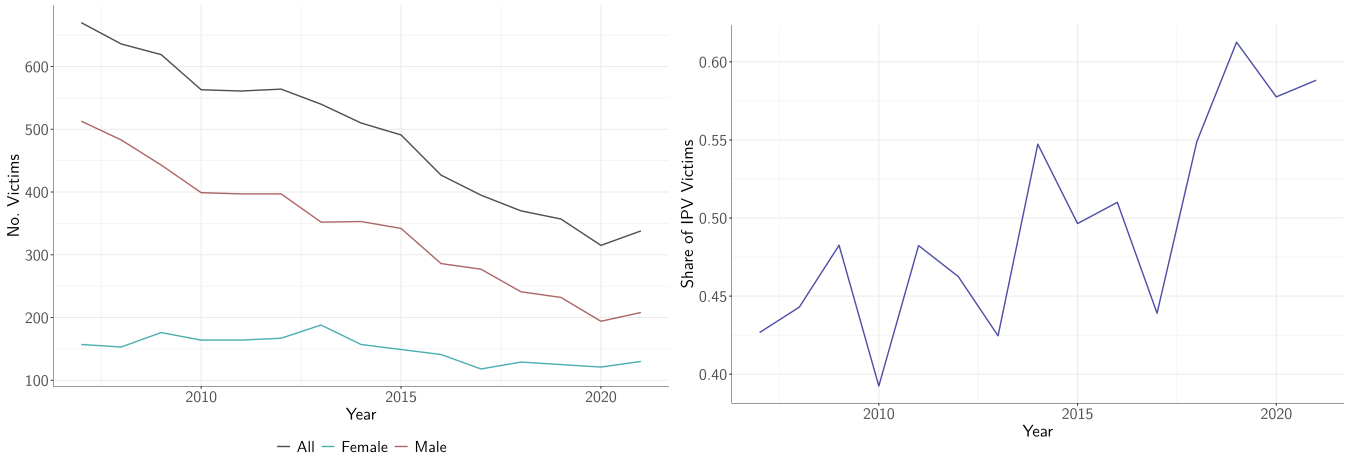
	Stereotypical Behavior	Support for Traditional Gender Norms	Stereotypes about Sex. Violence
Share of HH with no Woman Working	0.766	0.785	0.710

Notes. Pearson correlation between the proxy for gender norms in 2018, namely the share of households with couples where only the man is working, and survey-based measure of stereotypical behavior—e.g., for women, it is less important to have a career –, support for traditional gender norms—e.g., men should provide economically for their family –, and acceptability of intimate partner violence—e.g., it is acceptable to slap a woman if she has been cheating.

Figure A.10: Number of Articles with Male Victims over Time

(a) Number of Murders

(b) Share of IPV Murders with Female Victims



Notes. Time series of victims of homicide in Italy from 2006 to 2021. Panel (a) plots the number of victims of voluntary homicides in Italy, both overall and separately by gender, while Panel (b) plots the share of female victims murdered by their ex- or current intimate partner.

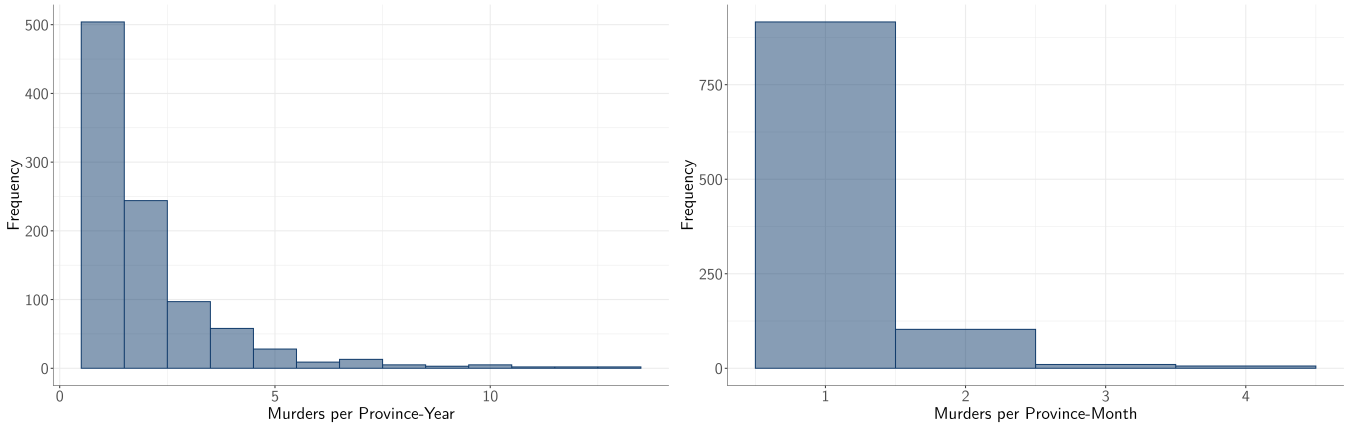
Figure A.11: Number of Murders with Female Victims

Notes. Number of murders with female victims plotted separately for the national average, calculated using data from the Italian National Statistical Office, and the events in the newly compiled dataset.

Figure A.12: Distribution of Murders

(a) Murders per Year-Province

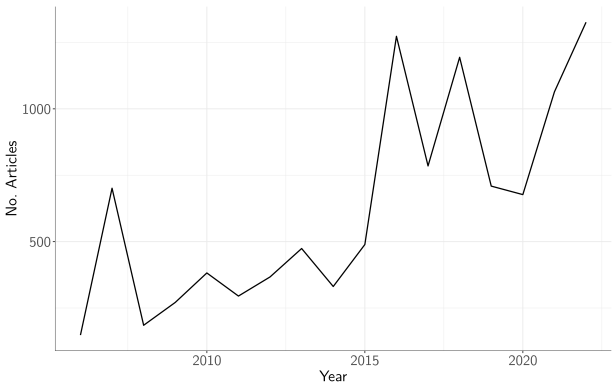
(b) Murders per Month-Province



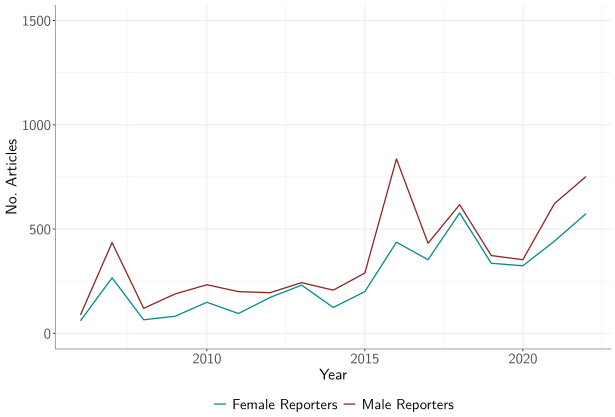
Notes. Histogram of number of murders with female victims in each province and year (Panel a) and in each province and month (Panel b).

Figure A.13: Time Series of Articles on Murders with Female Victims

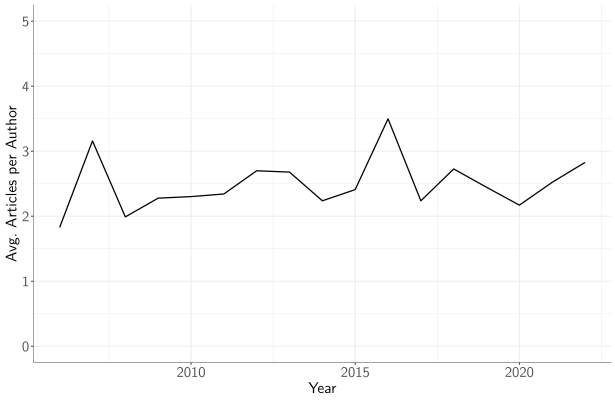
(a) Total Number of Articles



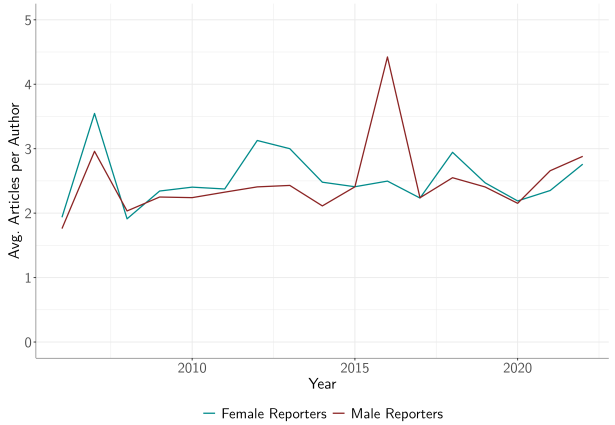
(b) Number of Articles by Reporter's Gender



(c) Number of Articles per Reporter



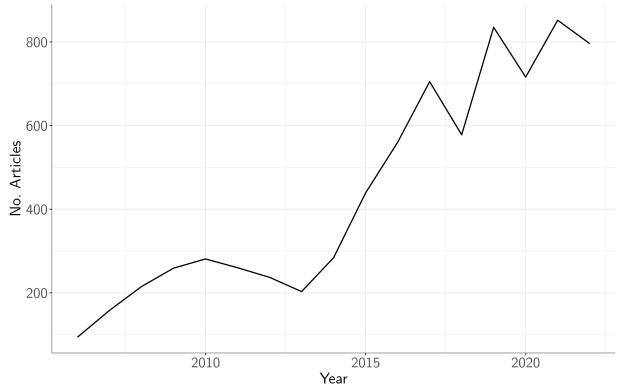
(d) Number of Articles per Reporter by Gender



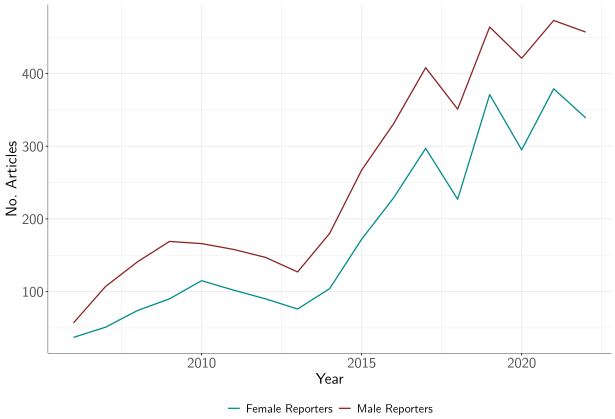
Notes. Number of articles on murders with female victims plotted by year. Panels (a) and (c) report the total number of articles by year and the average number of articles per reporter over time, respectively. Panels (b) and (d) report the total number of articles and the average number of articles per reporter over time, separately for female and male reporters.

Figure A.14: Number of Articles with Male Victims over Time

(a) Total Number of Articles



(b) Number of Articles by Reporter's Gender



Notes. Total number of articles on murders with male victims plotted by year. Panel (a) shows the total number of articles by year, while Panel (b) shows the total number of articles separately for female and male reporters.

Figure A.15: Share of Articles for each Newspapers

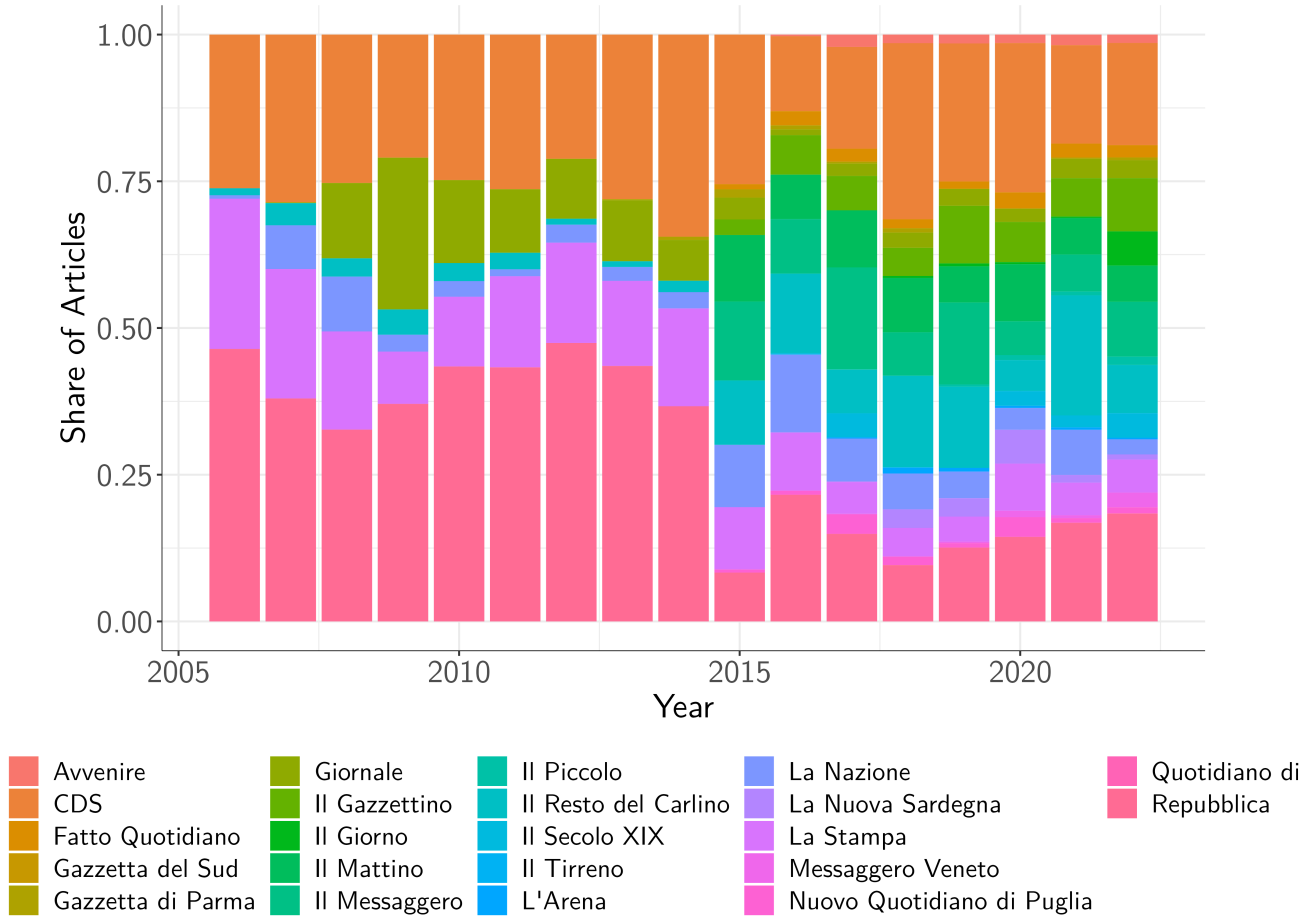
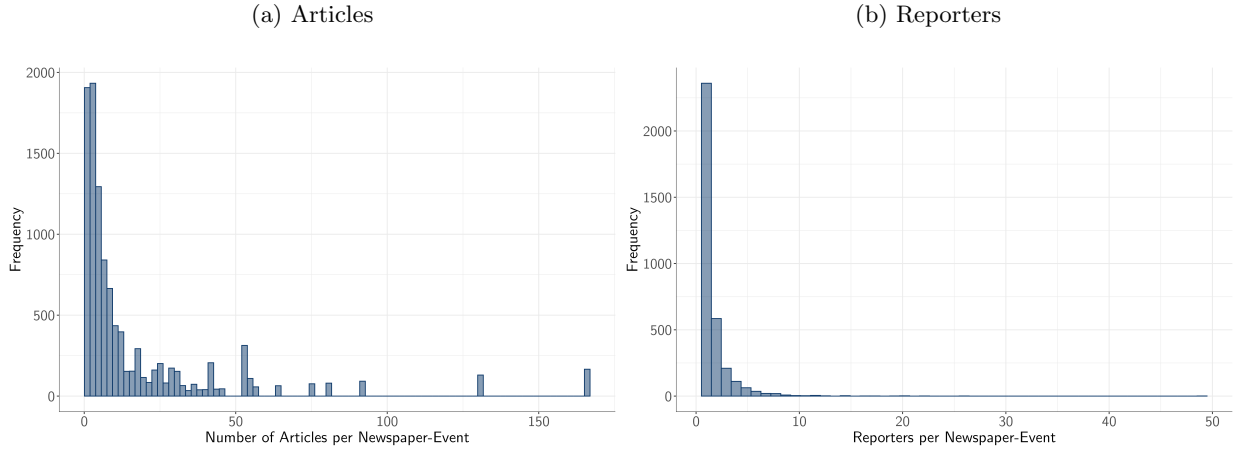
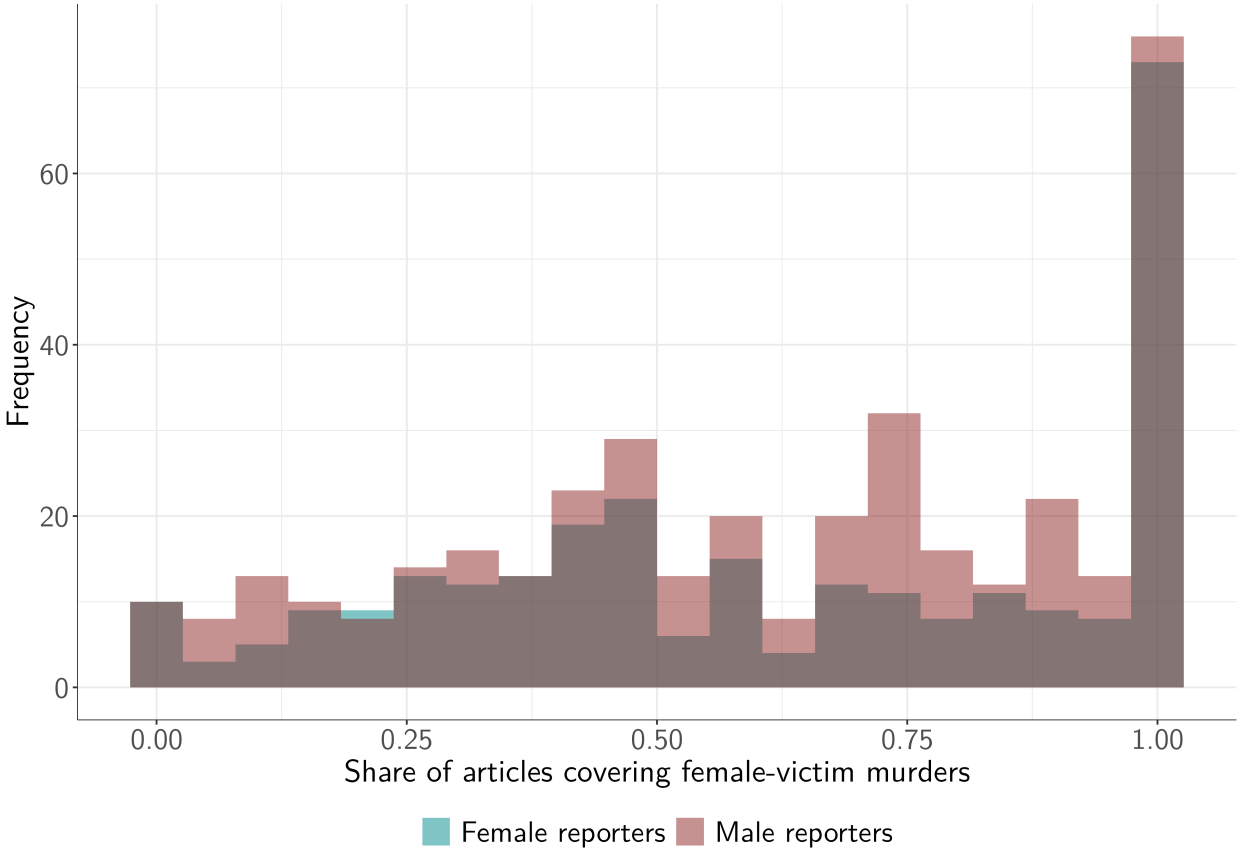


Figure A.16: Distribution of Articles and Reporters per Newspaper-Event



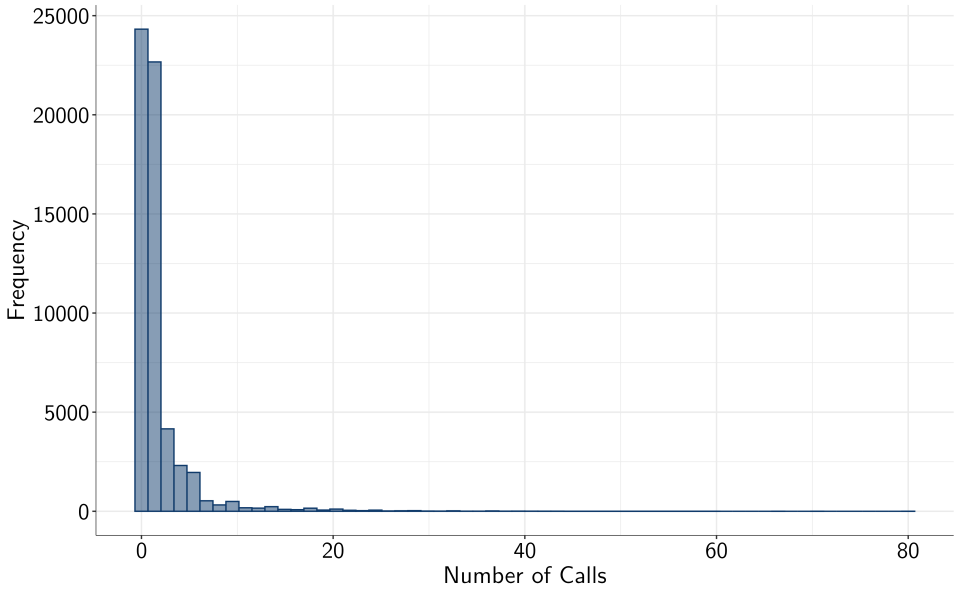
Notes. Frequency of number of articles (Panel a) and reporters (Panel b) for each newspaper and crime in the sample of articles on murders with female victims.

Figure A.17: Distribution of Share of Articles on Crimes with Female Victims



Notes. Distribution across reporters of the share of articles about murders with female victims, over the total number of articles in the sample, that each reporter writes about, separately by reporters' gender. The figure considers only reporters who authored more than 5 articles.

Figure A.18: Distribution of Helpline Calls



Notes. Histogram of the number of calls to the 1522 helpline number in each week and province, from 2013 on.

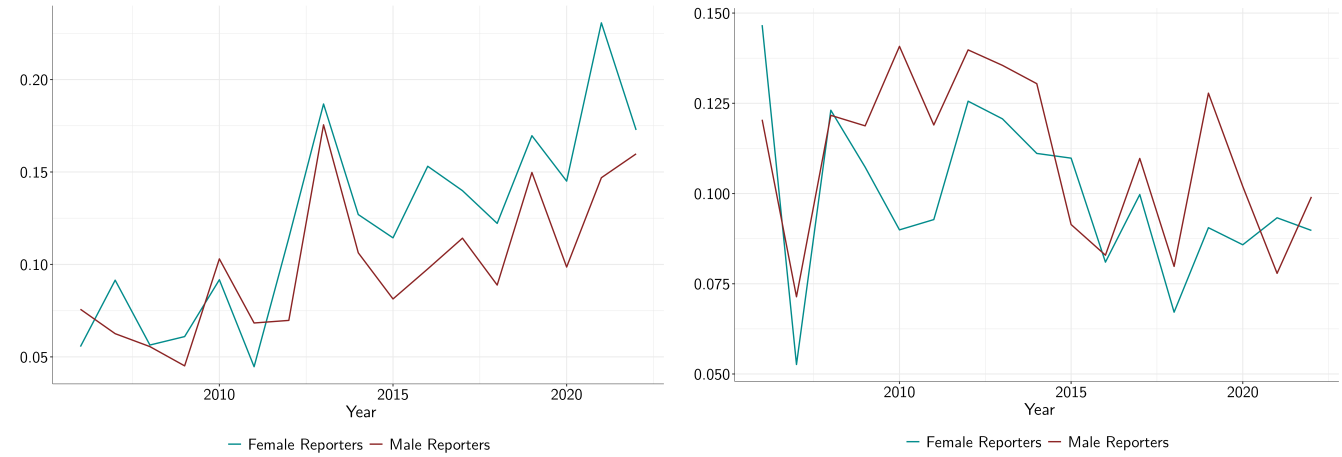
Figure A.19: Narrative Indexes over Time

Notes. Average indexes for victim-centered and perpetrator-centered with the guidelines on representation of VAW plotted by year.

Figure A.20: Trend in Reporting Practices by Gender

(a) Victim-Centered Index

(b) Perpetrator-Centered Index

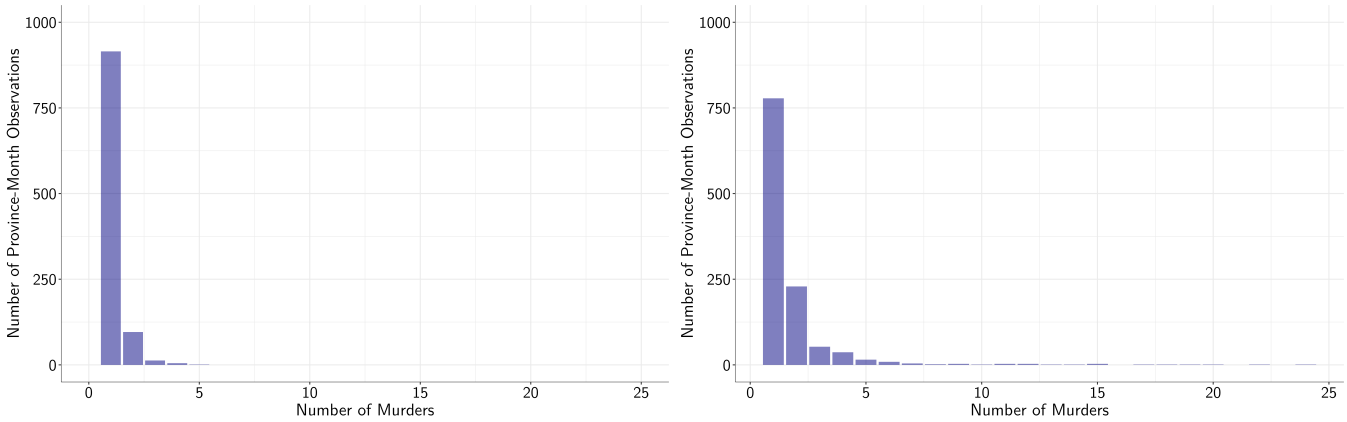


Notes. Victim-centered and perpetrator-centered indexes plotted by year separately for male and female reporters. Panel (a) shows the victim-centered index, while Panel (b) shows the perpetrator-centered index.

Figure A.21: Number of Murders in each Province and Month

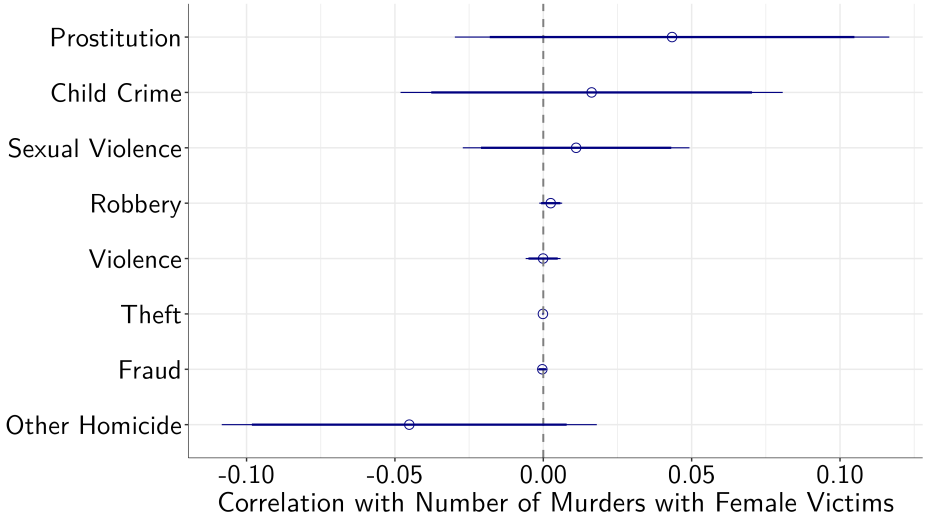
(a) Murders with Female Victims

(b) Murders with Male Victims



Notes. Number of murders in each province and month, for province-month observations that have at least one murder. Panel (a) plots the province-months observations for murders with female victims, while Panel (b) plots murders with male victims.

Figure A.22: Correlations Between Murders with Female Victims and Crime Rates



Notes. Correlation between the number of murders with female victims and other crime rates in each province and year. All regressions include province and year fixed effects and the figure shows 95% and 90% confidence intervals.

B Additional Experimental Results

B.1 Additional Results on Narrative Effects

Table B.1: Effect of Narratives on Empathy towards the Victim

	Full Sample		Females	Males	Has Daughter	No Daughter	Left-Wing	Right-Wing
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	77.286***	67.654***	71.995***	66.464***	76.096***	67.401***	70.898***	76.285***
	(1.091)	(2.137)	(3.077)	(2.845)	(7.181)	(2.310)	(3.003)	(5.416)
PC Narr.	3.833**	3.548**	3.767*	3.400	4.198	3.639**	3.920*	−1.678
	(1.509)	(1.472)	(1.977)	(2.178)	(3.846)	(1.562)	(2.130)	(4.714)
EVC Narr.	2.522*	2.273	1.274	3.120	−0.169	2.378	2.403	−1.125
	(1.457)	(1.422)	(2.004)	(2.040)	(4.263)	(1.511)	(2.077)	(4.657)
TVC Narr.	1.111	0.705	1.274	0.193	3.768	0.461	1.703	−5.175
	(1.568)	(1.534)	(2.118)	(2.230)	(4.288)	(1.643)	(2.200)	(4.365)
Observations	0.005	0.062	0.057	0.045	0.183	0.050	0.054	0.074
R^2	1508	1508	722	786	141	1367	692	160
Controls		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of different narratives on the empathy towards the victim measured on a scale from 1 (*not feeling close*) to 100 (*feeling very close*). Columns 1 and 2 report the results for the full sample, Columns 3 and 4 separately for female and male respondents, Columns 5 and 6 separately for respondents with at least one daughter or with no daughters, and Columns 7 and 8 separately for left and right-wing respondents. Columns 2 to 9 control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.2: Effect of Narratives on Empathy towards the Perpetrator

	Full Sample		Females	Males	Has Daughter	No Daughter	Left-Wing	Right-Wing
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	11.068***	13.455***	10.294***	13.294***	13.784**	13.268***	11.930***	14.221***
	(0.996)	(1.587)	(2.008)	(2.336)	(5.542)	(1.692)	(2.438)	(3.323)
PC Narr.	−1.506	−1.170	−1.824	−0.219	−4.915	−0.914	−1.242	3.276
	(1.316)	(1.304)	(1.628)	(2.004)	(4.773)	(1.361)	(1.847)	(4.353)
EVC Narr.	−3.225***	−3.098**	−1.499	−4.648***	−8.073*	−2.637**	−3.703**	−4.281
	(1.220)	(1.204)	(1.668)	(1.729)	(4.799)	(1.243)	(1.623)	(3.402)
TVC Narr.	−2.871**	−2.649**	−0.860	−4.201**	−4.941	−2.500*	−1.552	−0.083
	(1.277)	(1.263)	(1.673)	(1.875)	(4.616)	(1.315)	(1.799)	(3.899)
Observations	0.006	0.035	0.020	0.033	0.094	0.035	0.030	0.060
R^2	1508	1508	722	786	141	1367	692	160
Controls		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of different narratives on the empathy towards the perpetrator measured on a scale from 1 (*not feeling close*) to 100 (*feeling very close*). Columns 1 and 2 report the results for the full sample, Columns 3 and 4 separately for female and male respondents, Columns 5 and 6 separately for respondents with at least one daughter or with no daughters, and Columns 7 and 8 separately for left and right-wing respondents. Columns 2 to 9 control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.3: Effect of Narratives on Perceived Prevalence of VAW

	Full Sample		Females	Males	Has Daughter	No Daughter	Left-Wing	Right-Wing
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	0.028	0.105	0.734***	0.080	0.136	0.103	0.449***	−0.330
	(0.056)	(0.119)	(0.175)	(0.152)	(0.676)	(0.129)	(0.144)	(0.220)
EVC Narr.	−0.072	−0.037	0.043	−0.123*	0.455**	−0.081	−0.086	−0.042
	(0.066)	(0.063)	(0.109)	(0.069)	(0.208)	(0.073)	(0.090)	(0.163)
TVC Narr.	−0.143**	−0.113*	−0.223**	−0.045	0.308	−0.151**	−0.162*	−0.162
	(0.065)	(0.061)	(0.087)	(0.078)	(0.196)	(0.064)	(0.091)	(0.150)
Observations	1137	1137	550	587	108	1029	529	122
R^2	0.004	0.211	0.112	0.128	0.249	0.203	0.186	0.280
Controls		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of different victim-centered compared to perpetrator-centered narratives on perceived prevalence of VAW-related crimes among 10000 women in the respondents' province. Columns 1 and 2 report the results for the full sample, Columns 3 and 4 separately for female and male respondents, Columns 5 and 6 separately for respondents with at least one daughter or with no daughters, and Columns 7 and 8 separately for left and right-wing respondents. Columns 2 to 9 control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.4: Effect of Narratives on Perceived - Real Prevalence of Police Reporting

	Full Sample		Females	Males	Has Daughter	No Daughter	Left-Wing	Right-Wing
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	0.064	0.230*	0.839***	0.077	0.338	0.236*	0.300**	0.163
	(0.052)	(0.137)	(0.136)	(0.172)	(0.497)	(0.136)	(0.138)	(0.272)
EVC Narr.	0.032	0.044	0.104	−0.022	0.419*	0.014	0.007	−0.187
	(0.060)	(0.055)	(0.097)	(0.065)	(0.234)	(0.068)	(0.079)	(0.200)
TVC Narr.	−0.077	−0.054	−0.131	0.002	0.166	−0.073	−0.049	−0.293
	(0.071)	(0.064)	(0.098)	(0.101)	(0.198)	(0.069)	(0.095)	(0.209)
Observations	1138	1138	551	587	108	1030	529	122
R^2	0.002	0.065	0.047	0.027	0.175	0.062	0.060	0.119
Controls		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of different victim-centered compared to perpetrator-centered narratives on the difference between perceived and real prevalence of police reporting of VAW-related crimes among 10000 women in the respondents' province. Columns 1 and 2 report the results for the full sample, Columns 3 and 4 separately for female and male respondents, Columns 5 and 6 separately for respondents with at least one daughter or with no daughters, and Columns 7 and 8 separately for left and right-wing respondents. Columns 2 to 9 control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.5: Effect of Narratives on Perceived - Real Prevalence of Help-Seeking

	Full Sample		Females	Males	Has Daughter	No Daughter	Left-Wing	Right-Wing
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	0.015	−0.008	0.463***	−0.059	0.199	−0.022	0.083	−0.362
	(0.053)	(0.121)	(0.139)	(0.145)	(0.435)	(0.116)	(0.151)	(0.227)
EVC Narr.	0.090*	0.101**	0.161**	0.016	0.490**	0.060	0.064	0.064
	(0.051)	(0.048)	(0.079)	(0.067)	(0.205)	(0.053)	(0.086)	(0.139)
TVC Narr.	−0.007	0.011	−0.024	0.018	0.109	−0.002	0.022	0.069
	(0.050)	(0.052)	(0.088)	(0.074)	(0.169)	(0.055)	(0.074)	(0.161)
Observations	1138	1138	551	587	108	1030	529	122
R^2	0.002	0.068	0.041	0.021	0.176	0.070	0.055	0.079
Controls		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of different victim-centered compared to perpetrator-centered narratives on the difference between perceived and real prevalence of calls to the VAW helpline among 10000 women in the respondents' province. Columns 1 and 2 report the results for the full sample, Columns 3 and 4 separately for female and male respondents, Columns 5 and 6 separately for respondents with at least one daughter or with no daughters, and Columns 7 and 8 separately for left and right-wing respondents. Columns 2 to 9 control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Table B.6: Effect of Narratives Declared Retention

	Full Sample		Females	Males	Has Daughter	No Daughter	Left-Wing	Right-Wing
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	0.632***	0.679***	0.771***	0.641***	0.666***	0.690***	0.740***	1.088***
	(0.025)	(0.050)	(0.074)	(0.067)	(0.219)	(0.053)	(0.074)	(0.121)
PC Narr.	−0.069*	−0.063*	−0.104**	−0.024	−0.086	−0.061	−0.082	−0.207*
	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.052)	(0.050)	(0.129)	(0.037)	(0.054)	(0.109)
EVC Narr.	−0.014	−0.009	−0.020	0.002	0.266**	−0.035	−0.028	−0.079
	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.051)	(0.049)	(0.117)	(0.037)	(0.052)	(0.094)
TVC Narr.	0.019	0.023	0.008	0.041	0.104	0.018	0.012	−0.185**
	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.051)	(0.048)	(0.121)	(0.036)	(0.051)	(0.093)
Observations	0.004	0.021	0.033	0.034	0.158	0.018	0.014	0.152
R^2	1508	1508	722	786	141	1367	692	160
Controls		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

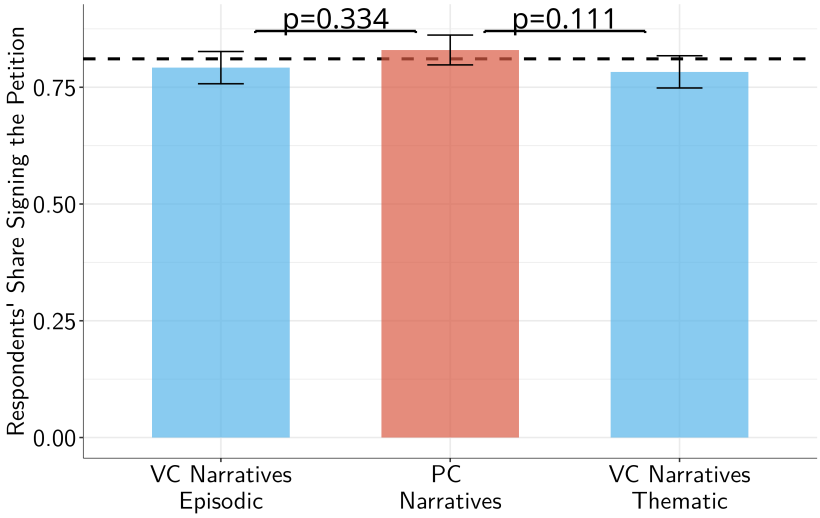
Notes. Effect of different victim-centered compared to perpetrator-centered narratives on the probability of using the newspaper in the future for crime information. Columns 1 and 2 report the results for the full sample, Columns 3 and 4 separately for female and male respondents, Columns 5 and 6 separately for respondents with at least one daughter or with no daughters, and Columns 7 and 8 separately for left and right-wing respondents. Columns 2 to 9 control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Table B.7: Effect of Narratives on Click-Through Engagement

	Full Sample		Females	Males	Has Daughter	No Daughter	Left-Wing	Right-Wing
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	0.541***	0.394***	0.414***	0.353***	0.242	0.384***	0.479***	0.389***
	(0.026)	(0.051)	(0.076)	(0.069)	(0.219)	(0.054)	(0.076)	(0.145)
PC Narr.	0.023	0.012	0.012	0.020	−0.213	0.037	0.011	−0.207*
	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.051)	(0.050)	(0.133)	(0.037)	(0.053)	(0.113)
EVC Narr.	−0.031	−0.038	0.004	−0.081	−0.126	−0.028	−0.082	−0.240**
	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.052)	(0.050)	(0.127)	(0.038)	(0.053)	(0.111)
TVC Narr.	−0.034	−0.046	0.010	−0.100**	−0.061	−0.046	−0.061	−0.161
	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.053)	(0.049)	(0.122)	(0.038)	(0.052)	(0.111)
Observations	0.002	0.056	0.064	0.062	0.156	0.060	0.031	0.071
R^2	1508	1508	722	786	141	1367	692	160
Controls		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of different victim-centered compared to perpetrator-centered narratives on the probability of clicking on a new article. Columns 1 and 2 report the results for the full sample, Columns 3 and 4 separately for female and male respondents, Columns 5 and 6 separately for respondents with at least one daughter or with no daughters, and Columns 7 and 8 separately for left and right-wing respondents. Columns 2 to 9 control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Figure B.1: Share of Respondents Signing the Petition



Notes. Share of respondents who sign the petition, separately by treatment. The dashed black horizontal line corresponds to the average outcome in the control group. The figure reports confidence intervals at the 90% level and p-values for each VC treatment against the PC treatment, coming from a regression of the outcomes on all treatment groups excluding the control, and other observables from a t-test between each treatment and the control: * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.: * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

B.2 Robustness Checks on Experimental Evidence on Narrative Effects

Table B.8: Robustness: Effect of Narratives on Empathy towards the Victim

	Main	Screened	Video Screened	Crime A	Crime B	No EVC 1	No EVC 2	No EVC 3
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	72.466***	72.422***	71.745***	71.598***	73.184***	72.634***	72.397***	72.868***
	(1.469)	(1.586)	(1.541)	(1.990)	(2.515)	(1.696)	(1.577)	(1.472)
PC Narr.	3.494***	3.080***	4.084***	3.927*	3.183*	3.524***	3.516***	3.475***
	(1.112)	(1.133)	(1.160)	(2.009)	(1.803)	(1.104)	(1.110)	(1.110)
EVC Narr.	2.356*	2.448*	2.922**	3.123	1.773	2.449	2.651	2.159
	(1.408)	(1.371)	(1.482)	(2.377)	(1.998)	(1.589)	(1.701)	(1.412)
TVC Narr.	0.624	0.588	1.040	0.949	0.599	0.626	0.607	0.617
	(1.607)	(1.635)	(1.626)	(2.705)	(2.095)	(1.590)	(1.584)	(1.605)
Observations	1508	1443	1447	751	757	1380	1315	1454
R^2	0.067	0.070	0.072	0.075	0.083	0.069	0.072	0.069
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of different narratives on the empathy towards the victim measured on a scale from 1 (*not feeling close*) to 100 (*feeling very close*). Columns 1 report the results for the main specification, Columns 2 and 3 exclude respondents who failed at one attention check, and the AI screening, respectively; Columns 4 and 5 use only respondents randomized in Crime A or Crime B, and Columns 6, 7, and 8 exclude each of the variations for EVC treatment. All Columns control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.9: Robustness: Effect of Narratives on Empathy towards the Perpetrator

	Main	Screened	Video Screened	Crime A	Crime B	No EVC 1	No EVC 2	No EVC 3
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	12.588***	11.768***	13.035***	10.816***	14.181***	12.104***	12.430***	12.480***
	(1.427)	(1.453)	(1.438)	(1.924)	(2.920)	(1.455)	(1.540)	(1.439)
PC Narr.	−1.071	−0.627	−1.025	−3.689*	1.182	−1.123	−1.057	−1.049
	(1.133)	(1.135)	(1.167)	(1.901)	(1.933)	(1.131)	(1.146)	(1.134)
EVC Narr.	−2.994**	−2.913**	−2.745**	−5.511***	−1.495	−2.975**	−3.038**	−2.960**
	(1.221)	(1.229)	(1.301)	(1.804)	(2.502)	(1.427)	(1.364)	(1.243)
TVC Narr.	−2.612**	−1.987*	−2.853**	−3.601**	−2.196	−2.665**	−2.650**	−2.621**
	(1.141)	(1.077)	(1.181)	(1.813)	(1.865)	(1.126)	(1.148)	(1.141)
Observations	1508	1443	1447	751	757	1380	1315	1454
R^2	0.037	0.035	0.040	0.045	0.071	0.035	0.039	0.037
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of different narratives on the empathy towards the perpetrator measured on a scale from 1 (*not feeling close*) to 100 (*feeling very close*). Columns 1 report the results for the main specification, Columns 2 and 3 exclude respondents who failed at one attention check, and the AI screening, respectively; Columns 4 and 5 use only respondents randomized in Crime A or Crime B, and Columns 6, 7, and 8 exclude each of the variations for EVC treatment. All Columns control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.10: Robustness: Effect of Narratives on Willingness to Sign the Petition

	Main	Screened	Video Screened	Crime A	Crime B	No EVC 1	No EVC 2	No EVC 3
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	0.725***	0.726***	0.721***	0.737***	0.715***	0.713***	0.718***	0.730***
	(0.033)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.059)	(0.038)	(0.034)	(0.040)	(0.030)
EVC Narr.	−0.028	−0.025	−0.022	−0.035	−0.021	−0.031	−0.015	−0.034
	(0.024)	(0.027)	(0.025)	(0.041)	(0.034)	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.025)
TVC Narr.	−0.046**	−0.053**	−0.047**	−0.039	−0.048	−0.049**	−0.047**	−0.045**
	(0.020)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.033)	(0.037)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)
Observations	1138	1089	1094	564	574	1010	945	1084
R^2	0.099	0.099	0.106	0.090	0.122	0.105	0.092	0.099
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of different victim-centered compared to perpetrator-centered narratives on preferences for government intervention, measured as the share of respondents who are willing to sign a petition to increase resources to counter VAW. Columns 1 report the results for the main specification, Columns 2 and 3 exclude respondents who failed at one attention check, and the AI screening, respectively; Columns 4 and 5 use only respondents randomized in Crime A or Crime B, and Columns 6, 7, and 8 exclude each of the variations for EVC treatment. All Columns control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Table B.11: Robustness: Effect of Narratives on Perceived Prevalence of VAW

	Main	Screened	Video Screened	Crime A	Crime B	No EVC 1	No EVC 2	No EVC 3
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	0.725***	0.726***	0.721***	0.737***	0.715***	0.713***	0.718***	0.730***
	(0.033)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.059)	(0.038)	(0.034)	(0.040)	(0.030)
EVC Narr.	−0.028	−0.025	−0.022	−0.035	−0.021	−0.031	−0.015	−0.034
	(0.024)	(0.027)	(0.025)	(0.041)	(0.034)	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.025)
TVC Narr.	−0.046**	−0.053**	−0.047**	−0.039	−0.048	−0.049**	−0.047**	−0.045**
	(0.020)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.033)	(0.037)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)
Observations	1138	1089	1094	564	574	1010	945	1084
R^2	0.099	0.099	0.106	0.090	0.122	0.105	0.092	0.099
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of different victim-centered compared to perpetrator-centered narratives on perceived prevalence of VAW-related crimes among 10000 women in the respondents' province. Columns 1 report the results for the main specification, Columns 2 and 3 exclude respondents who failed at one attention check, and the AI screening, respectively; Columns 4 and 5 use only respondents randomized in Crime A or Crime B, and Columns 6, 7, and 8 exclude each of the variations for EVC treatment. All Columns control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01.

Table B.12: Robustness: Effect of Narratives on Perceived - Real Prevalence of Police Reporting

	Main	Screened	Video Screened	Crime A	Crime B	No EVC 1	No EVC 2	No EVC 3
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	−0.006	−0.003	−0.002	−0.017	0.021	0.004	−0.009	−0.005
	(0.110)	(0.102)	(0.106)	(0.146)	(0.156)	(0.103)	(0.124)	(0.114)
EVC Narr.	0.041	0.032	0.043	0.103	−0.022	0.021	0.024	0.067
	(0.055)	(0.060)	(0.049)	(0.086)	(0.097)	(0.080)	(0.064)	(0.057)
TVC Narr.	−0.056	−0.048	−0.063	−0.004	−0.127	−0.053	−0.054	−0.055
	(0.065)	(0.068)	(0.065)	(0.099)	(0.098)	(0.065)	(0.065)	(0.066)
Observations	1138	1089	1094	564	574	1010	945	1084
R^2	0.067	0.063	0.069	0.060	0.102	0.071	0.061	0.068
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of different victim-centered compared to perpetrator-centered narratives on the difference between perceived and real prevalence of police reporting of VAW-related crimes among 10000 women in the respondents' province. Columns 1 report the results for the main specification, Columns 2 and 3 exclude respondents who failed at one attention check, and the AI screening, respectively; Columns 4 and 5 use only respondents randomized in Crime A or Crime B, and Columns 6, 7, and 8 exclude each of the variations for EVC treatment. All Columns control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

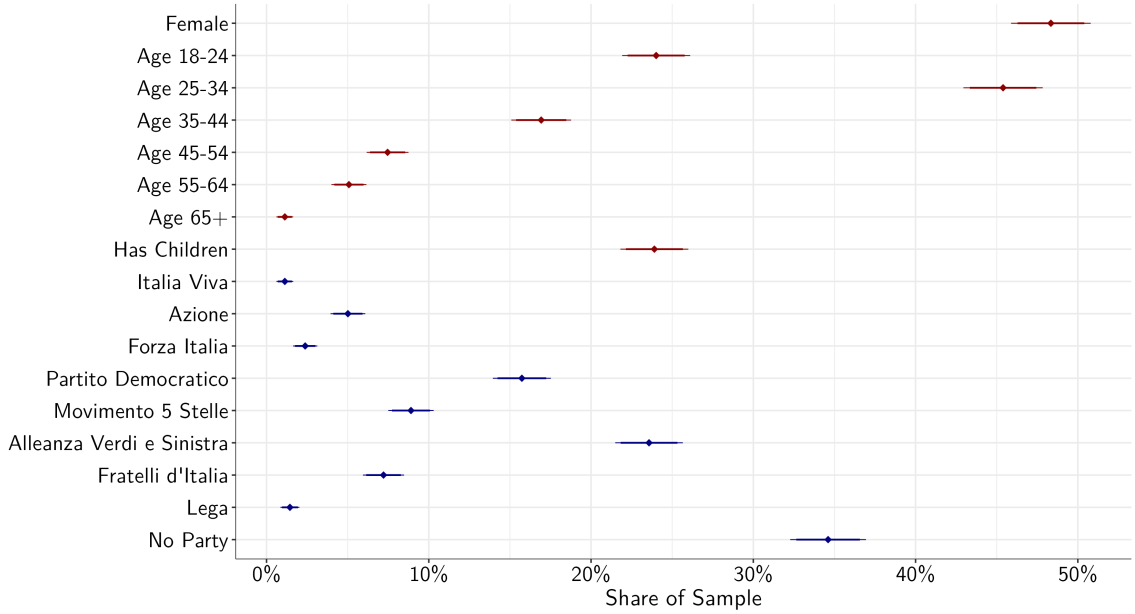
Table B.13: Robustness: Effect of Narratives on Perceived - Real Prevalence of Help-Seeking

	Main	Screened	Video Screened	Crime A	Crime B	No EVC 1	No EVC 2	No EVC 3
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Intercept	−0.180**	−0.186**	−0.173**	−0.196**	−0.192	−0.152*	−0.176*	−0.179**
	(0.085)	(0.080)	(0.080)	(0.099)	(0.148)	(0.089)	(0.098)	(0.087)
EVC Narr.	0.093*	0.102**	0.090*	0.181**	0.137	0.036	0.125*	0.120**
	(0.048)	(0.052)	(0.048)	(0.079)	(0.147)	(0.060)	(0.068)	(0.051)
TVC Narr.	0.011	0.027	0.001	−0.013	0.024	0.014	0.010	0.010
	(0.052)	(0.057)	(0.057)	(0.073)	(0.102)	(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.052)
Observations	1138	1089	1094	564	574	1010	945	1084
R^2	0.075	0.074	0.075	0.065	0.109	0.075	0.071	0.079
Controls	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes. Effect of different victim-centered compared to perpetrator-centered narratives on the difference between perceived and real prevalence of calls to the VAW helpline among 10000 women in the respondents' province. Columns 1 report the results for the main specification, Columns 2 and 3 exclude respondents who failed at one attention check, and the AI screening, respectively; Columns 4 and 5 use only respondents randomized in Crime A or Crime B, and Columns 6, 7, and 8 exclude each of the variations for EVC treatment. All Columns control for the respondent's gender, whether they have a daughter, political affiliation, and an aggregated proxy for gender norms, unless the covariate is used to determine the subsample. Standard errors are clustered at the province level (in parentheses): * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

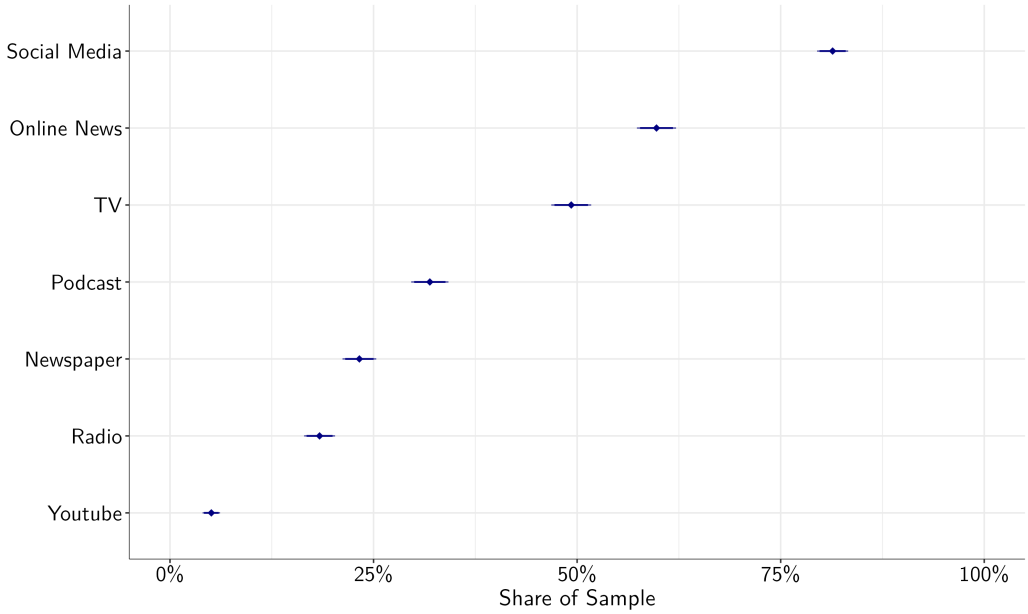
B.3 Additional Information on Experimental Sample

Figure B.2: Respondents' Socio-Demographic Characteristics



Notes. Respondents socio-demographics characteristics. The figure reports confidence intervals at the 90% and 95% level.

Figure B.3: Respondents' Use of News Sources



Notes. Respondents use of news sources. The figure reports confidence intervals at the 90% and 95% level.

Figure B.4: Geographical Distribution of Respondents

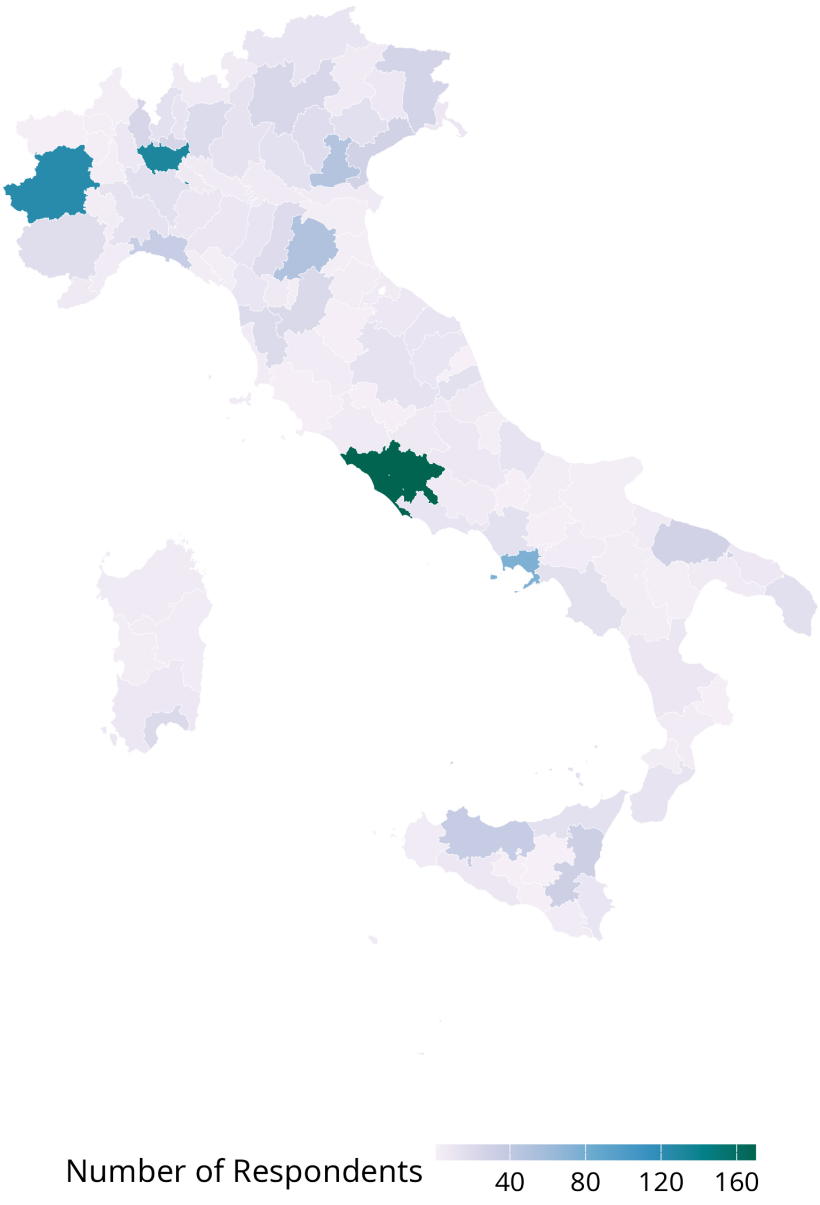
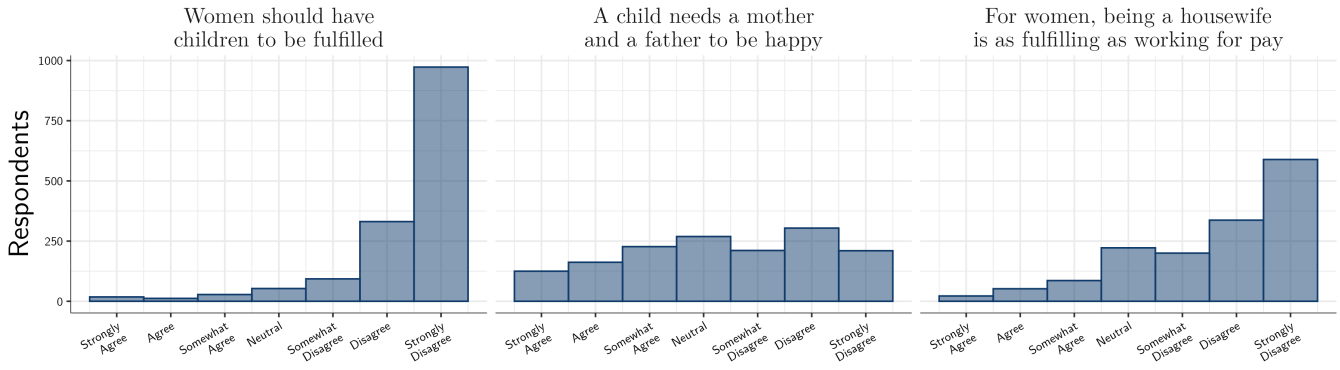


Figure B.5: Respondents Gender and Family Norms



Notes. Distribution of respondents across different levels of agreement with statements proxying gender and family norms. The questions come from the World Value Survey.

Table B.14: Balance Table: Respondents' Characteristics across Treatments

Variable	Control	PC Narrative	EVC Narrative	TVC Narrative
Female	0.462	0.494	0.498	0.480
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)
Age 18-24	0.245	0.246	0.221	0.249
	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.022)
Age 25-34	0.441	0.474	0.478	0.423
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)
Age 35-44	0.173	0.148	0.182	0.174
	(0.019)	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Age 45-54	0.094	0.065	0.055	0.085
	(0.015)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.014)
Age 55-64	0.041	0.053	0.045	0.065
	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.012)
Age 65+	0.005	0.015	0.020	0.005
	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.004)
Has Children	0.240	0.228	0.217	0.271
	(0.030)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.033)
Italia Viva	0.013	0.005	0.015	0.012
	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Azione	0.043	0.068	0.047	0.042
	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.011)	(0.010)
Forza Italia	0.023	0.025	0.022	0.025
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.008)
Partito Democratico	0.163	0.123	0.164	0.179
	(0.019)	(0.016)	(0.018)	(0.019)
Movimento 5 Stelle	0.112	0.080	0.070	0.095
	(0.016)	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.015)
Alleanza Verdi e Sinistra	0.217	0.248	0.239	0.239
	(0.021)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.021)
Fratelli d'Italia	0.074	0.068	0.075	0.072
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Lega	0.010	0.015	0.017	0.015
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
No Party	0.344	0.368	0.351	0.321
	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.023)
News: TV	0.520	0.494	0.498	0.460
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)
News: Radio	0.196	0.175	0.167	0.197
	(0.020)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.020)
News: Newspaper	0.209	0.228	0.244	0.249
	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.022)
News: Social Media	0.809	0.827	0.806	0.813
	(0.020)	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.019)
News: Online News	0.612	0.589	0.570	0.619
	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.024)
News: Podcast	0.301	0.358	0.323	0.294
	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.023)	(0.023)
News: Youtube	0.046	0.048	0.047	0.062
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.012)
WVS 1: Women as Mothers	6.306	6.424	6.286	6.475
	(0.059)	(0.052)	(0.066)	(0.048)
WVS 2: Traditional Family	4.276	4.474	4.323	4.301
	(0.094)	(0.090)	(0.094)	(0.093)
WVS 3: Women as Housewives	5.518	5.609	5.535	5.706
	(0.078)	(0.076)	(0.079)	(0.075)
Observations	392	399	402	402

C Keyword-Based Measure

C.1 Examples of Articles

In this section, I present examples of articles that score high on victim- and perpetrator-centered narratives. The articles have been modified to remove all information that could identify the people involved. I highlight the pieces of text that contribute to the corresponding index.

- **Victim-Centered Index** = 1: Milan – Murdered by Her Husband in the Bedroom with 23 Stab Wounds, After Twenty Years of Violence and Threats. This is how [VICTIM], [...], met her tragic end in her 30-square-meter apartment in Lorenteggio, a southern suburb of Milan. Her killer, [PERPETRATOR], [...] with minor prior offenses for resisting a public official and insulting an officer. After denying everything for hours, he finally confessed at 4 AM when the inconsistencies in his version of events became impossible to sustain. According to the head of Milan's homicide squad, who conducted the investigation alongside the prosecutor, the man displayed a "cold and calculated" demeanor in his attempt to cover up the murder. Investigators reconstructed the events leading up to the crime: the couple had returned on Saturday from a month-long vacation in Pantelleria and had a violent argument on Sunday morning. It was just one of many fights between them, as neighbors later recounted. During the altercation—[PERPETRATOR] later confessed—[VICTIM] allegedly threatened him with an iron. In response, he savagely attacked her with a kitchen knife. After the murder, he staged an elaborate deception to mislead the investigation. He left the house and wandered the neighborhood for three hours—shopping for groceries, buying pastries, chatting with acquaintances, and stopping at a bar to play slot machines. In the meantime, he managed to dispose of the murder weapon and his bloodstained clothes in a storm drain two kilometers away, where they were unlikely to be found. Around 3 PM, [PERPETRATOR] returned home and called emergency services and the police, claiming he had found the door open and his wife lying in a pool of blood. His story was eerily similar to what had happened in 1995 when [VICTIM] had been stabbed and her husband had called for help, claiming he had found the door open and his wife bleeding. Back then, she did not report him, and from that moment on, their life together was marked by endless arguments, shouting, and threats. The entire neighborhood was aware—neighbors could hear the screams coming from the ground-floor apartment. Yet no one ever intervened to protect her. Just two months ago, on November 5, the police had been called to break up another violent dispute. According to

Table C.1: Full List of Keywords per Dictionary

Topic	Words
Mad Outburst	*'raptus', 'rabbia', 'delitto d'impeto', 'impeto omicida', 'gesto d'impeto', 'gesto di impeto', 'omicidio di impeto', 'impeto di rabbia', 'impeto di gelosia', 'impeto di odio', 'impeto di follia', 'impeto di violenza', 'in un impeto', 'impeto nervoso', 'violenza cieca', 'violenta e irrazionale', 'impeto di gelosia', 'impulso', 'furia', 'perde la testa', 'ira', 'collera', 'furore', 'furibondo', 'infuriato', 'fuori di sé', 'fuori di senno', 'fuori di se', 'delirio', 'follia', 'pazzia', 'collera', 'irrefrenabile', 'foga omicida', 'foga di uccidere', 'frustrazione', 'furente'*
Jealousy	*'gelosia', 'ossessione', 'rivale in amore', 'geloso', 'morbosa', 'morboso', 'delitto passionale'*
Economic Difficulties	*'difficoltà finanziarie', 'difficile situazione lavorativa', 'crisi lavorativa', 'disoccupato', 'precario', 'licenziato', 'debiti', 'debito', 'perso il lavoro', 'indebitato', 'difficoltà economiche', 'problemi finanziari', 'instabilità economica', 'questioni economiche', 'ristrettezze economiche', 'preoccupazioni economiche', 'difficile situazione economica', 'difficile condizione economica', 'difficoltà finanziaria', 'precarietà economica'*
Mental Health Problems	*'salute mentale', 'disturbi psicologici', 'dipendenza', 'tossicodipendenza','alcolismo', 'abuso di sostanze', 'abuso di alcol', 'abuso di alcool', 'abuso di alcolici', 'abuso di droghe', 'depressi*', 'ossessivo compulsivo', 'disturbo di personalità', 'disturbi di personalità', 'narcisis*', 'disturbo psicologico', 'uso di sostanze', 'disturbi mentali', 'psicopatologici', 'perizia psichiatrica', 'dissociativi', 'psicopatologiche', 'malattia mentale', 'malato mentale'*
Infidelity	*'relazione segreta', 'infedeltà', 'scappatella', 'flirt*', 'tradimento', 'tradito', 'adultera', 'adulterina', 'extraconiugale'*
End of Relationship	*'stato lasciato', 'voleva lasciare', 'divorzi*', 'terminare la relazione', 'terminato la relazione', 'porre termine alla relazione', 'porre fine alla relazione', 'fine relazione', 'chiudere relazione', 'chiuso relazione', 'crisi coniugale', 'annullamento del matrimonio', 'crisi di coppia', 'coppia in crisi', 'crisi matrimoniale', 'crisi relazionale'*
Past Violence	*'violentata', 'violenti litigi', 'liti violente', 'violente liti', 'litigate violente', 'violente litigate', 'litigi violenti', 'violenza sessuale', 'violenza domestica', 'violenze domestiche', 'aggredita' 'minacciata', 'perseguitata', 'perseguitate', 'aggressione sessuale', 'aggressioni sessuali', 'maltratta*', 'molesta*', 'abus*', 'stuprare', 'stupratore', 'stuprata' ,'molestie', 'stalk*', 'sevizia*', 'palpegg*', 'molestia', 'stupro', 'mani addosso', 'picchiava', 'picchiata'*
Information on Resources	*'antiviolenza', 'anti-violenza', 'anti-violenza', 'anti stalking', 'antistalking', 'anti-stalking', 'casa rifugio', 'case rifugio', 'telefono rosa', '1522'*
Femicide	*'femminicidi*'*

Milan's police chief, this case is "emblematic of a toxic family dynamic, where violent relationships remain hidden." It is the story of a woman abandoned to her fate, without support to escape a life of terror. "There are now legal measures in place. Victims of stalking must turn to anti-violence centers and alert the police, who have the authority to issue warnings to violent men." But few women do. "In the past year alone, I have personally met with 38 men who were reported for violence by their wives and partners. The system works. Yet in Milan, we receive hundreds of calls reporting violence against women, and many of them do not come forward until it is too late." For this reason, he stressed, "the most important thing is to raise awareness among women: they must ask for help." [VICTIM]'s murder is the second femicide in Milan in just a few days. On Friday, another woman, [VICTIM] was found dead in her home. Her killer was an occasional acquaintance, [PERPETRATOR], who murdered her with a bottle in a drug-fueled rage.

- *Victim-Centered Index* = 0.667: The father of the woman killed in Milan recounts that the aggressor had already tried to strangle her last August and that he had beaten her "until he broke her eardrum," forcing her to be hospitalized. For this reason, on August 29th, the victim had filed a complaint (never withdrawn). On May 28, 2006, the woman was stabbed three times in the condominium [...] 134 Victims of femicide in Italy in 2013 alone. This is the highest figure in the last ten years. The percentage of family abuse or violence and by ex-partners actually reported is only 11%. Thousands of stalking complaints filed from August 1, 2013, to July 31, 2014. Since 2009, they have exceeded 51 thousand.

- *Victim-Centered Index* = 0.667: The husband confesses, already accused of rape [...] [PERPETRATOR] returned from Germany to commit the crime, where he had found work. They saw him drink sambuca at the bar and then head towards the town's exit. A few minutes later, gunshots were heard coming from the area of the Todis supermarket. Screams. And a rush of people. The first to notice the two corpses were some supermarket employees. On the asphalt, in a pool of blood, among scattered shopping bags, were two women: mother and daughter of Albanian ethnicity, but of Kosovar origin [...] The carabinieri only needed to speak with some witnesses to direct the investigation towards the woman's husband, [PERPETRATOR] [...] long at odds with his wife, who had recently been reported for sexual violence and was undergoing separation proceedings. A family situation irreparably compromised after the woman accused her husband of molesting their eldest daughter. The Avezzano court had imposed a

restraining order on the man to stay away from his wife and daughters. It took the carabinieri two hours to track down and arrest the Kosovar, intercepted at a roadblock while trying to leave the town in a Fiat Punto, where a gun was found. A double femicide. [...] According to the first information gathered by the carabinieri, led by the provincial commander, the crime matured in a family context steeped in violence and abuse by the man. The farm laborer's hand was armed, who only occasionally did odd jobs in the countryside and who had recently moved to Germany, with the intention of "punishing" the wife who had reported him. The Kosovar had returned a few days ago to complete the separation procedure. His wife [...] had instead stayed to live with their children in the nearby fraction. A terrible story, with few shadows left now. [PERPETRATOR] confessed during the night to the public prosecutor. He admitted to firing the shots. Although it is still unclear what prompted him to also aim the gun at his daughter. Everything, in any case, suggests a premeditated murder. The man waited at the bar, drinking sambuca. Then, seeing the two women leave the supermarket, he headed towards them, brandishing a weapon. He fired repeatedly, without saying a word. In the insane belief of washing some kind of honor.

- *Perpetrator-Centered Index* = 0.7: He disposed of the evidence, throwing the knife into a storm drain and hiding his clothes behind some plants two kilometers from home. He created an alibi, wandering around the neighborhood from 11 AM to 3 PM on Sunday—doing the groceries, buying pastries, playing slot machines, and greeting as many acquaintances as possible. He vehemently denied being the murderer of his wife, [VICTIM] who had been brutally killed in their bedroom with 23 stab wounds. Then, at 4 AM, he broke down: "I was the one who killed her. I'm sorry, and I regret what I've done," reads the arrest order.Jealousy, resentment, and violence—this was the constant pattern in [VICTIM] and [PERPETRATOR]'s life. [...] In the concierge lodge of the building where they had continued to live, their fights were incessant. In November, the police had intervened twice to defuse the situation, but the help of doctors from the local mental health center had produced no results. [PERPETRATOR] known for his hot temper and with prior offenses for resisting and insulting a public official, would beat [VICTIM] with a broomstick, accusing her of spending too much time on Facebook. In 1995, he had stabbed her in the back and then staged the same charade for the police as he did two days ago: "I came home, found the door open, and [VICTIM] was lying on the floor." This time, however, one stab wound wasn't enough. He attacked her with uncontrollable rage, "then showed remarkable composure in executing an

effective cover-up plan," said the homicide squad chief. [VICTIM] and [PERPETRATOR] had returned on Saturday from a month-long vacation in Pantelleria, and everything at home seemed calm. In his statement, [PERPETRATOR] claimed: "We woke up in a good mood, we even made love. We had breakfast, then [VICTIM] started insulting me." [PERPETRATOR] remembered exactly what his wife had said—but not how he had reacted. And the 23 stab wounds on [VICTIM]'s body? "I didn't even realize it. I remember I had just grabbed a knife in the kitchen because I wanted to peel an orange. The argument continued, and suddenly I found myself in the bedroom with the knife in my hand. After yet another insult, I lost my temper and started stabbing her repeatedly—I don't know how many times." Noticing he had a wound on his hand and his clothes were covered in blood, he stuffed everything into a supermarket bag and got rid of it. Then he focused on his alibi: "I went twice to the pastry shop to buy babà, withdrew 50 euros from an ATM, played the slot machines, and won 70 euros." He even went grocery shopping—buying salad for his wife, who had already been dead for hours

- *Perpetrator-Centered Index* = 0.6: The man feared that the child was not his. A positive pregnancy test triggered suspicion. "You betrayed me." Bellagio (Como)— The idea that his partner had a lover obsessed him. Saturday night, faced with a positive pregnancy test, jealousy shook him and blinded him. It drove him mad. The thought that his partner might be expecting a child from another man transformed a calm [...] into a murderer. The murderer of his woman, strangled with an electric cable, and perhaps also of his child. Autopsy will determine whether [VICTIM]—divorced and already mother of two children and grandmother of two grandchildren—, was indeed expecting a child. That evening there was a crescendo of accusations, culminating in the truck driver's mad act, who, in a fit of rage, grabbed an electric cable and tightened it around his partner's neck. He strangled her from behind, not looking into her eyes as she died. The carabinieri from the Bellagio barracks immediately reached the house where the two lived together: in reality, [PERPETRATOR] only spent weekends there, as work in inner Switzerland (canton of Thurgau) occupied him on other days of the week. Questioned by the prosecutor, the truck driver admitted his responsibilities and said he killed out of jealousy revealing the news of the pregnancy test and the suspicion of betrayal. Tomorrow, the autopsy will probably be performed. A preliminary analysis confirmed death by suffocation caused by the cable tightened around the neck. A bruise on the woman's face, dating back to a few days earlier, was also noted.

- *Perpetrator-Centered Index* = 0.6 They were separating. The victim was found by her children. The investigation had found that marriage had long been in crisis, she suffered abuse but had never reported it. The testimony. The little ones called an aunt screaming: "Hurry, Mom won't move." Smoking one cigarette after another, [PERPETRATOR] seems calm, alternating between silences and statements. Investigators are surprised by his attitude since only a few hours have passed since the tragedy that destroyed his family. [PERPETRATOR][...] was arrested last night for voluntary manslaughter and taken to prison. Also yesterday, in the evening near Albano, another boy witnessed the injuring of his mother, struck in the head with a statuette by her husband, then stopped by the carabinieri. Another marriage in crisis, like that of the teacher with the marshal, according to the woman's family members, questioned by the police. "They argued often, for a while it seemed they had reconciled. They had started the separation process. She was a beautiful woman, and he was very jealous," say the neighbors. Perhaps yesterday the woman gave the marshal an ultimatum to leave the house. But this time, [PERPETRATOR] in a fit of rage according to investigators, pounced on her, bludgeoning her with the hammer taken from the garage. Then he left and drove to the police station to turn himself in.

C.2 Validation

C.2.1 Keyword Schema

Prompt Topic Classification: " You are an assistant for annotating documents. Your task is to read a newspaper article about a murder and identify and annotate when the article mentions one of the following topics. Please note: if words related to these topics appear in contexts that do not concern the crime itself, or if they are mentioned negatively — for example, to deny that the crime is linked to these topics — they must not be annotated as present. Please strictly follow what is stated in the article and do not make assumptions or inferences that are not supported by explicit mentions. The topics are:

- Mad Outburst: if the motive for the crime is attributed to loss of control, a sudden outburst, madness, anger, etc.
- Jealousy: if the motive for the crime is attributed to jealousy, possessiveness, or a crime of passion

- Economic issues: if the motive for the crime is attributed to financial problems, money, or debts
- Infidelity: if the motive for the crime is attributed to cheating, infidelity, adultery
- Mental health problems: if the motive for the crime is attributed to mental disorders, psychological imbalance, or psychiatric illnesses
- End of the relationship: if the motive for the crime is attributed to a breakup, end of the relationship, separation
- Past violence: if the article mentions that the crime provides information about the violent past of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, this can include sexual violence, but also stalking, beatings, or violent arguments
- Information on resources to combat violence against women: if the article mentions resources available to victims of violence against women, such as helplines, assistance centers, NGOs

If a topic is present according to the criteria above, return True; otherwise, return False."

Table C.2: Confusion matrices for all categories

	Mad Outburst		**Jealousy**		**Econ. Diff.**		**Infidelity**	
LLM	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F
Dict. T	142	56	92	17	43	19	20	9
Dict. F	184	618	73	818	120	818	44	927
	Mental Health		**End of Rel.**		**Past Violence**		**VAW Resources**	
LLM	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F
Dict. T	67	11	125	29	126	53	26	2
Dict. F	116	806	133	713	87	734	59	913

Notes. Confusion matrices for all the dictionaries, comparing dictionaries and LLM-based classifications. Rows represent the dictionary-based classification predictions and columns represent the LLM-based classification predictions, where T means True (category detected) and F means False (category not detected).

Examples of *False Positive* articles: In the following, I report some *false positive* articles, i.e., articles that are annotated as 0 by the dictionary-based approach and as 1 by the LLM. I highlight the parts that prompted the LLM to tag the articles as part of the positive class. The articles have been modified to remove all information that could identify the people involved.

- **Mad Outburst:** The alarm to 113 came at 10:45. On the sleepy morning in [...] desperate screams were heard. Two police cars arrived with four officers on board. They climbed over the protective wall using a ladder provided by a neighbor and headed toward the basement tavern where everything seems to have happened: "Open the door, open the door" the officers shouted several times when they realized that the killer was still inside the villa. From inside, no answer, no sound. Even the screams had stopped. But while the firefighters were working to break down the door to the basement level, [PERPETRATOR] suddenly came out from another entrance. He was wearing black combat boots, military trousers, a green T-shirt, a leather belt, and a gardener's mask. In his hands, he held a large kitchen knife, still bloody, and he ran toward his car. He was nearly two meters tall, frightening. The firefighters moved aside, while the police fired several shots. The man, given emergency assistance by the 118 medical team, arrived already dead at the hospital. Behind him he had left the decapitated body of [VICTIM]. He was probably still attacking her. It is hard to say with certainty what exactly happened. Pending the investigation, the villa was seized by the prosecutors. The order was carried out by the police. [...]. The residents of the villa arrived at [...] last night shortly before 9 p.m., returning quickly from vacation in an SUV. The house had been lent to [PROSECUTOR] by his colleague in exchange for doing some small maintenance jobs. But the killer's real passion was knives, the same ones that had alarmed [VICTIM] and that ultimately cost her her life on a quiet Sunday morning in August.

- **Mad Outburst:** Three shots with his service pistol: two to kill his wife, one to take his own life. A terrible family tragedy unfolded yesterday afternoon in [...], in front of their two children, aged six and seven. It was the children who called the neighbors and raised the alarm. Everything happened in a matter of minutes, shortly after 4 p.m., following an argument ("increasingly frequent in recent weeks," neighbors told investigators) within the walls of their home. [PERPETRATOR], pulled out his service pistol and fired at his wife [VICTIM]. She tried to defend herself: the first bullet hit her hand, the second, the fatal one, severed her femoral artery. She bled to death in the hallway of their home, by

the time he was already dead. Moments after shooting her, he put the pistol to his temple and shot himself in the living room. The gunshots were also heard by neighbors in the surrounding apartment buildings. The two children ran screaming to some of the neighbors, who then helped investigators reconstruct the family situation. [...] "They no longer got along, they wanted to separate," a neighbor recounted. "This afternoon our children were doing homework together at our house, and she was there too. Then they went back home, and in just a few minutes, everything went to hell."

- **Past Violence:** Thirty-one days. That is how long [PERPETRATOR] remained locked inside a cell—from the early hours of Sunday until yesterday, shortly before 2 p.m., when [PERPETRATOR], accompanied by his lawyers, walked out through the main gate of the detention facility. He was released at the request of the very same public prosecutor, who had had him jailed on charges of murdering his elderly mother [VICTIM]. "There are no longer grounds for keeping him in custody," and so [PERPETRATOR] left the facility to return to his home, where, for the time being, he must remain under house arrest—at least until the Court of Cassation rules on the appeal filed by his lawyers. Outside the prison, [PERPETRATOR] made no statements. With a long beard and a worn, exhausted face, he walked straight ahead. "This ruling," the lawyers explained, "confirms what we have been arguing for days: that there are no grounds for pre-trial detention." They also confirmed that they had already filed an appeal with the Supreme Court against the Appeals Court's decision to extend custody by sixty days. The prosecutor's request for his release came after a new inspection, on Tuesday the 17th, of the second-floor apartment at [...]. Officers from the mobile squad and forensic experts from Rome searched again for possible biological traces. During the inspection, a computer [PERPETRATOR] had given to his sister and some documents were seized. It is the same apartment where, according to the prosecutor, the murder of [VICTIM] took place at the climax of a quarrel with her son [PERPETRATOR]. According to the accusation, a violent argument escalated to the point where the son allegedly struck his mother, causing her to fall and die. He has always denied this. He denies having touched her and denies being responsible for her death. He admits the argument and says that when he found her on the floor, motionless, he panicked and thought of staging a robbery. But why such a fierce quarrel? Money, it seems—after yet another request for money from his mother, according to the prosecution. It is a case whose true contours still need to be established. Crucial to this will be what emerges from the forensic medical examination of the cause of death, as early

indications suggest that it may not have been a violent death.

C.2.2 Indexes

Prompt to summarize articles:

"You are an expert summarizer of newspaper articles. I would like you to summarize the key content of the following articles in one or two paragraphs in English. Please, leave out any personal considerations and make sure to stick to what's reported by the article.[55]"

[55] I include the last sentence since the LLM always included how a sentence like "This incident underlines the urgent need for action against gender-based violence in Italy" at the end of each summary, even for articles without any mention of the phenomenon of gender-based violence in Italy.

Table C.3: Pairs of Summaries of Articles about the Same Crime

High VC Index—Low PC Index	Low VC Index—High PC Index
Three femicides occurred in a short span of time in Italy, with one in Tuscany and two in Lombardy. In Tuscany, Nicola Stefanini called the emergency services to confess he killed his 46-year-old girlfriend near Monterotondo Marittimo. [...] In Lombardy, a married couple of Albanian origin was discovered dead in an apparent murder-suicide in Calino. Additionally, in Vigevano, a 59-year-old man killed his 39-year-old girlfriend before surrendering to the police the next day. These incidents come amidst a growing concern over gender-based violence in Italy, illustrated by other recent cases [...]	A man identified as Nicola Stefanini, 48, killed his partner, [PERPETRATOR], 46 [...] Stefanini immediately called emergency services to confess the crime and was found by the police next to the victim's body [...] The couple had a turbulent relationship marked by arguments and Stefanini's irascible character. The motive behind the murder remains unclear, and Stefanini has been arrested for voluntary homicide. The incident is part of a series of femicides in Italy, with other cases reported in Brescia and Vigevano involving intimate partner violence leading to tragic outcomes. [...] In a separate incident in Cazzago San Martino, Calino (Brescia), a couple of Albanian origin were found dead in an apparent murder-suicide. The husband allegedly strangled his wife before taking his own life, leaving behind a letter explaining his actions driven by jealousy.[...]
There was another tragic femicide of [VICTIM] in Iglesias, Italy, at the hands of her husband, [PERPETRATOR], who did not accept her request for separation. Despite having previously reported him to the authorities, [VICTIM] was fatally stabbed during a confrontation after picking up her children from her husband. The incident highlights the persistent issue of gender-based violence and femicide in Italy, as evidenced by a recent ruling against the Italian state by the European Court of Human Rights for not adequately responding to a similar case in the past. The lack of support for victims of domestic violence, including the absence of anti-violence centers in Sardinia, further exacerbates the situation and calls for more resources and awareness to combat this ongoing problem.	In Iglesias, Italy, a 46-year-old man named [PERPETRATOR] killed his 32-year-old wife, [VICTIM], after an argument that ended on the staircase of their two-story house in the city outskirts. The couple, who were parents to three children, were in the midst of a tense separation which was due to be finalized with a divorce in a few days. The trigger for the violence is believed to have been the impending separation, causing [PERPETRATOR] to fatally stab and throw his wife down the stairs where she was later found by emergency services covered in blood. [...]

Notes. Pairs of LLM-generated summaries of articles about the same crime. The articles in the left column have a victim-centered index higher than 0.7 and a perpetrator-centered index lower than or equal to 0.33. The converse is true for articles reported in the right column. Highlighted in yellow are the parts captured by the highest-scoring index.

D A Model of Identity-Motivated Journalists

I model the decision of journalist j about narrative $s_j \in \{s^{AN}, s^{BN}\}$ they will use in their articles,[56] accounting for readers i's utility from reading articles with narratives s_j. Journalists and readers can belong to groups B or A—$j, i \in \{A, B\}$—with size ρ and $1-\rho$, respectively.

Readers decide on whether to consume news with narrative s_j by maximizing the following utility function

$$U_i(s_j) = -|s_j - \hat{s}_i| + \phi_i(s_j) \tag{7}$$

When making their news consumption choice, they consider the direct cost of reading an article with a narrative that is different from their preferred one, $\hat{s}_i$. This direct effect can be thought of as the benefit they get from consuming news they find engaging or align with their values. The preferred narrative $\hat{s}_i$ can equal either s^{AN} or s^{BN} and is stochastic, with a probability distribution that can differ across reader groups. Formally:

$$\mathrm{P}\Big(\hat{s}_i = s^{AN} \mid i = A\Big) = \alpha_A \quad \text{and} \quad \mathrm{P}\Big(\hat{s}_i = s^{AN} \mid i = B\Big) = \alpha_B, \quad \alpha_A, \alpha_B \in (0,1) \tag{8}$$

Where I assume that $\alpha_A > 0.5 > \alpha_B$.

Moreover, they also consider the indirect cost or benefit of reading an article with narrative s_j, $\phi_i(s_j)$. This indirect effect on their utility can be thought of as *material* or psychological effect of consuming news with a specific narrative, which depends on their identity as in Akerlof and Kranton (2000). For instance, in articles about violence against women, where gender is a salient identity dimension, if a woman who is in a violent relationship reads an article that is more victim-centred or reports information on resources, she might be more willing to seek help (Daponte et al., 1999; Bettinger et al., 2012) or become less accepting of VAW (Banerjee et al., 2019), and this might ultimately benefit her. On the contrary, if she reads an article that is more perpetrator-centred, she might be less likely to seek help, which will ultimately harm her. Similarly, men may benefit from perpetrator-centred writing as it diminishes men's responsibility in perpetrating VAW (Smith and Frieze, 2003). The structure of this additional component depends on the group to which the readers belong. In particular, I assume that if $i = B$, then they benefit from $s_j = s^{BN}$ and incur a cost if $s_j = s^{AN}$, with the opposite being true if $i = A$. Formally,

[56] I assume without loss of generality that $s^{AN} > s^{BN}$.

$$\phi_B(s_j) = \begin{cases} \tau & \text{if } s_j = s^{BN} \\ -\tau & \text{if } s_j = s^{AN} \end{cases} \qquad \phi_A(s_j) = \begin{cases} -\tau & \text{if } s_j = s^{BN} \\ \tau & \text{if } s_j = s^{AN} \end{cases} \tag{9}$$

Where $\tau > 0$ is a constant parameter, such that $\tau \geq \frac{s^{AN} - s^{BN}}{2}$. This latter assumption implies that the magnitude of the indirect effect is large enough to compensate for the loss from reading an article with a narrative different from the readers' preferred one.[57] Appendix Section D.1 derives all results under the alternative case $\tau < \frac{s^{AN} - s^{BN}}{2}$, showing that the main propositions also hold in this scenario.

I now turn to the journalists' maximization problem. Knowing readers' utility function, $U_i(s_j)$, they decide on the narratives to use by maximizing the following

$$W_j(s_j) = \iota_j \Big[\rho \, \mathrm{P}\big(U_B(s_j) \geq U_B(s_{-j})\big) + (1-\rho) \, \mathrm{P}\big(U_A(s_j) \geq U_A(s_{-j})\big)\Big] + (1-\iota_j) \, \mathbb{E}\big[U_{i=j}(s_j)\big] \tag{10}$$

As anticipated, journalists account for two main factors when choosing narratives. First, they want to maximize the *monetary returns* from writing in terms of engagement, namely, to maximize the share of readers that, if they implement $s_j = s_j^*$, prefer s_j^* to s_{-j}, as in models of probabilistic voting (Lindbeck and Weibull, 1987). Namely, this part captures the returns from writing an article using narratives that readers prefer to alternative ones. Second, journalists also altruistically care about the expected utility of readers from their in-group, $\mathbb{E}\big[U_{i=j}(s_j)\big]$ (Andreoni and Miller, 2002; Turner et al., 1979). For instance, female journalists may care about the well-being of their female readers who face issues with violent partners and, thus, have an interest in including information on resources to counter VAW in their articles. Finally, these two components enter journalists' utility functions with different weights determined by $\iota_j \in [0, 1]$, and these weights can differ across journalist groups.

Decision Rule for Narrative Choice. Journalists choose narrative s^{BN} over s^{AN} if their utility from s^{BN} is larger than their utility from s^{AN}—$W_j(s^{BN}) \geq W_j(s^{AN})$. Namely, they follow the decision rule

$$\iota_j \Big[\rho \, \mathrm{P}\Big(U_B(s^{BN}) \geq U_B(s^{AN})\Big) + (1-\rho) \, \mathrm{P}\Big(U_A(s^{BN}) \geq U_A(s^{AN})\Big) - 1\Big] + (1-\iota_j)\Big[\mathbb{E}\Big[U_{i=j}(s^{BN})\Big] - \mathbb{E}\Big[U_{i=j}(s^{AN})\Big]\Big] \geq 0$$

[57] See Appendix D.2 for the derivation of the threshold for τ.

This yields the two different decision rules for groups A and B:

$$DR_j(s^{BN}) = \begin{cases} \iota_A(2\rho-1) + (1-\iota_A)\Big[(1-2\alpha_A)(s^{AN}-s^{BN}) - 2\tau\Big] \geq 0 & \text{if } j = A \\ \iota_B(2\rho-1) + (1-\iota_B)\Big[(1-2\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN}) + 2\tau\Big] \geq 0 & \text{if } j = B \end{cases} \tag{11}$$

Next, I move to the characterization of the narratives chosen by journalists. I start by characterizing the scenario where journalists from both groups face the same decision rule, namely, when

$$\iota_A(2\rho-1) + (1-\iota_A)\Big[(1-2\alpha_A)(s^{AN}-s^{BN}) - 2\tau\Big] = \iota_B(2\rho-1) + (1-\iota_B)\Big[(1-2\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN}) + 2\tau\Big]$$

This equality leads to the following proposition.

Proposition 1. *Assuming a positive and large enough indirect effect of narratives ($\tau > \frac{s^{AN}-s^{BN}}{2}$), journalists from both groups face the same decision rule if they only care about monetary returns ($\iota_A = \iota_B = 1$). Additionally, the optimal narrative is $s_B^* = s_A^* = s^{BN}$ if $\rho \geq 0.5$, and vice-versa.*

Therefore, in the case of purely readership-maximizing journalists, we should observe the same narrative in articles written by journalists from different groups. On the contrary, if we observe journalists from different groups choosing different narratives, then at least one group of journalists is *identity-motivated*, namely, journalists from that group also care about maximizing the utility of their in-group—$\iota_A < 1$ or $\iota_B < 1$. Additionally, the narrative chosen depends on the type of readers of the newspaper.

As a next step, I characterize the equilibrium allocation of writing styles in which journalists pick the writing practice that has a positive indirect effect on their in-group—$\phi_{i=j}(s_j) = \tau$.

Proposition 2. *Assume that at least one group of journalists is identity-motivated, $\iota_A < 1$ or $\iota_B < 1$. In this scenario, the optimal combination of narratives is $(s_A^*, s_B^*) = (s^{AN}, s^{BN})$ if and only if one of the following parameter combinations realizes:*

- $\rho \leq \frac{1}{2}$ *and* $\frac{2(1-\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})}{1-2\rho} \geq \frac{\iota_B}{1-\iota_B}$
- $\rho \geq \frac{1}{2}$ *and* $\frac{2\alpha_A(s^{AN}-s^{BN})}{2\rho-1} \geq \frac{\iota_A}{1-\iota_A}$

Proof. See Appendix D.2. □

In other words, the conditions of Proposition 2 imply that journalists choose the narrative that benefits their in-group if their in-group represents the majority of the population of readers. Alternatively, they choose that narrative if either they increasingly care about maximizing the utility of their in-group—$\iota_{A,B}$ low enough—or if the probability of the in-group utility-maximizing narrative is also more likely to be their group's preferred one. Namely, a higher α_A strengthens the altruistic incentive for A journalists to use AN narratives, while a lower α_B strengthens the altruistic incentive for B journalists to use BN narratives. Reader preference heterogeneity and identity motives are therefore complements in sustaining the in-group-maximizing allocation.

D.1 Results under $\tau < \frac{s^{AN}-s^{BN}}{2}$

This section derives the decision rules and propositions for the case $\tau < \frac{s^{AN}-s^{BN}}{2}$, in which the indirect welfare effect is not large enough to dominate taste. In this case some readers prefer a style that is welfare-reducing for their group, and the group-specific preference parameters α_A and α_B enter both the monetary-return and the altruistic components of the journalist's objective.

When $\tau < \frac{s^{AN}-s^{BN}}{2}$, a group-$B$ reader with $\hat{s}_B = s^{AN}$ (probability α_B) prefers s^{AN} even though it harms them, because the taste gain outweighs the welfare loss. Hence,

$$P\Big(U_B(s^{BN}) \geq U_B(s^{AN})\Big) = 1 - \alpha_B,$$
$$P\Big(U_A(s^{BN}) \geq U_A(s^{AN})\Big) = 1 - \alpha_A.$$

Therefore, the decision rule becomes

$$DR_j(s^{BN}) = \begin{cases} \iota_A\big[2\rho(1-\alpha_B) + 2(1-\rho)(1-\alpha_A) - 1\big] + (1-\iota_A)\Big[(1-2\alpha_A)(s^{AN}-s^{BN}) - 2\tau\Big] \geq 0 & \text{if } j = A \\ \iota_B\big[2\rho(1-\alpha_B) + 2(1-\rho)(1-\alpha_A) - 1\big] + (1-\iota_B)\Big[(1-2\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN}) + 2\tau\Big] \geq 0 & \text{if } j = B \end{cases} \tag{12}$$

As in the main decision rule 11, the monetary-return is the same for both journalist groups, mirroring the fact that they share the same readership data, but in this case, it depends both on the newspaper share of readers of each group and on their probability of the preferred narratives, α_A and α_B

$$M(\alpha_A, \alpha_B, \rho) \equiv 2\rho(1-\alpha_B) + 2(1-\rho)(1-\alpha_A) - 1.$$

Proposition 1.2. *Assuming* $\tau < \frac{s^{AN}-s^{BN}}{2}$*, journalists from both groups face the same decision rule if they only care about monetary returns* ($\iota_A = \iota_B = 1$)*. The optimal narrative is* $s_A^* = s_B^* = s^{BN}$ *if*

$$\rho(1-\alpha_B) + (1-\rho)(1-\alpha_A) \geq \tfrac{1}{2},$$

i.e., $\rho \geq \frac{\frac{1}{2}-(1-\alpha_A)}{\alpha_A-\alpha_B} = \frac{2\alpha_A-1}{2(\alpha_A-\alpha_B)}$*, and* $s_A^* = s_B^* = s^{AN}$ *otherwise.*

In this scenario, the optimal allocation now depends also on the group-specific probability for readers' preferred narrative, α_A and α_B. In particular, a wider preference gap $\alpha_A - \alpha_B$ makes the threshold smaller, so a less male-skewed readership suffices for s^{BN} to be profit-maximizing. Importantly, since the threshold is the same for both journalist types within the same newsroom, within-newsroom divergence still requires identity motives.

Proposition 2.2. *Assume that at least one group of journalists is identity-motivated,* $\iota_A < 1$ *or* $\iota_B < 1$*. The optimal combination of narratives is* $(s_A^*, s_B^*) = (s^{AN}, s^{BN})$ *if and only if one of the following parameter combinations realizes:*

- $M(\alpha_A, \alpha_B, \rho) \leq 0$ and $\dfrac{(1-2\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})+2\tau}{-M(\alpha_A,\alpha_B,\rho)} \leq \dfrac{\iota_B}{1-\iota_B}$,
- $M(\alpha_A, \alpha_B, \rho) \geq 0$ and $\dfrac{(2\alpha_A-1)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})+2\tau}{M(\alpha_A,\alpha_B,\rho)} \geq \dfrac{\iota_A}{1-\iota_A}$.

Compared with Proposition 2, the conditions under low τ are more complex because α_A and α_B now appear in both the monetary-return term M and the altruistic terms. The qualitative message is however similar: when one narrative is more profitable than the other, the less profitable narrative is chosen if its benefits from the altruistic part of the decision rule are high enough to offset the low profitability, or if the journalist increasingly cares about the utility of their group.

D.2 Additional Derivations

Derivation of Threshold for τ: To compute the threshold value for the parameter τ, I focus on the intermediate case in which the preferred narrative of readers does not coincide with the one that benefits their group. For instance, I assume that $\hat{s}_B = s^{AN}$. In this scenario, readers from group B prefer $s_j = s^{AN}$ if the following expression is satisfied:

$$U_B(s^{AN}) \geq U_B(s^{BN})$$
$$-|s^{AN} - \hat{s}_B| - \tau \geq -|s^{BN} - \hat{s}_B| + \tau$$
$$-\tau \geq s^{BN} - s^{AN} + \tau$$
$$\tau \leq \frac{s^{AN} - s^{BN}}{2}$$

Therefore, if readers' preferred narrative is the same as the one harming their group, then they would get a higher utility under this narrative with respect to the alternative that benefits them if and only if the magnitude of the benefit/cost is small enough to be compensated by the taste-based gain. On the contrary, if the magnitude of the benefit/cost is large—$\tau \geq \frac{s^{AN}-s^{BN}}{2}$—the utility-maximizing narrative is always the one with a positive indirect effect on readers.

Proof of Proposition 2: I start by focusing on the scenarios in which journalist A chooses s^{AN} as preferred practice, namely when

$$\iota_A(2\rho - 1) + (1 - \iota_A)\Big[(1 - 2\alpha_A)(s^{AN} - s^{BN}) - 2\tau\Big] \leq 0$$

Note that since $\tau \geq \frac{s^{AN}-s^{BN}}{2}$, $\Big[(1 - 2\alpha_A)(s^{AN} - s^{BN}) - 2\tau\Big] \leq -2\alpha_A(s^{AN} - s^{BN})$, which is ≤ 0.

Therefore, one condition for the LHS of the decision rule to be negative is $\rho \leq 0.5$. Alternatively, if $\rho > 0.5$ then it must be that

$$\iota_A(2\rho - 1) + (1 - \iota_A)\Big[(1 - 2\alpha_A)(s^{AN} - s^{BN}) - 2\tau\Big] \leq \iota_A(2\rho - 1) - (1 - \iota_A)\,2\alpha_A(s^{AN} - s^{BN}) \leq 0$$

Given that $\tau \geq \frac{s^{AN}-s^{BN}}{2}$, it is sufficient to show that the second inequality holds, which is true if $\frac{\iota_A}{1-\iota_A} \leq \frac{2\alpha_A(s^{AN}-s^{BN})}{2\rho-1}$.

Moving to the choice of journalists from group B, they choose s^{BN} as preferred practice if

$$\iota_B(2\rho - 1) + (1 - \iota_B)\Big[(1 - 2\alpha_B)(s^{AN} - s^{BN}) + 2\tau\Big] \geq 0$$

Since $\tau \geq \frac{s^{AN}-s^{BN}}{2}$, $\Big[(1-2\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})+2\tau\Big] \geq 2(1-\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})$, which is always ≥ 0. Therefore, one condition for $s_B^* = s^{BN}$ is $\rho \geq 0.5$. Alternatively, if $\rho \leq 0.5$ then it must be that

$$\iota_B(2\rho-1)+(1-\iota_B)\Big[(1-2\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})+2\tau\Big] \;\geq\; \iota_B(2\rho-1)+(1-\iota_B)\,2(1-\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN}) \;\geq\; 0$$

which is true if $\frac{2(1-\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})}{1-2\rho} \geq \frac{\iota_B}{1-\iota_B}$.

Finally, since the two conditions for $s_A^* = s^{AN}$ and $s_B^* = s^{BN}$ involving ρ are mutually exclusive, we have $(s_A^*, s_B^*) = (s^{AN}, s^{BN})$ with one of the following combinations of parameters:

- $\rho \leq \frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{2(1-\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})}{1-2\rho} \geq \frac{\iota_B}{1-\iota_B}$
- $\rho \geq \frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{2\alpha_A(s^{AN}-s^{BN})}{2\rho-1} \geq \frac{\iota_A}{1-\iota_A}$

□

Proof of Proposition 2.2: In the scenario where journalist A chooses s^{AN} the decision rule becomes

$$\iota_A\, M + (1-\iota_A)\Big[(1-2\alpha_A)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})-2\tau\Big] \leq 0.$$

Since $\tau < \frac{s^{AN}-s^{BN}}{2}$ and $\alpha_A > 0.5$, $(1-2\alpha_A)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})-2\tau$ is always negative. Therefore, one condition for the LHS to be negative is $M \leq 0$, which is equivalent to $\rho \leq \frac{\frac{1}{2}-(1-\alpha_A)}{\alpha_A-\alpha_B} = \frac{2\alpha_A-1}{2(\alpha_A-\alpha_B)}$.

Alternatively, if $M \geq 0$, which arises when ρ is high enough to make narrative BN profit-maximising, it must be that the following inequality is satisfied for journalist A to choose AN

$$\frac{(1-2\alpha_A)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})+2\tau}{M(\alpha_A,\alpha_B,\rho)} \geq \frac{\iota_A}{1-\iota_A}$$

Moving to the choice of journalist B, they choose s^{BN} as preferred practice if

$$\iota_B\, M + (1-\iota_B)\Big[(1-2\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})+2\tau\Big] \geq 0.$$

Since $\tau > 0$ and $\alpha_B < 0.5$, the altruistic term $(1-2\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})+2\tau$ is always positive. Therefore, journalist B always chooses $s_j = s^{BN}$ if BN is profit-maximizing, namely $M > 0$.

When $M \leq 0$, meaning when narrative AN is profit-maximizing, then, the following condition must be satisfied for journalist B to still prefer BN

$$\frac{(1-2\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})+2\tau}{-M(\alpha_A,\alpha_B,\rho)} \leq \frac{\iota_B}{1-\iota_B}$$

Finally, since the two conditions for $s_A^* = s^{AN}$ and $s_B^* = s^{BN}$ involving ρ are mutually exclusive, we have $(s_A^*, s_B^*) = (s^{AN}, s^{BN})$ with one of the following combinations of parameters:

- ≤ 0 and $\dfrac{(1-2\alpha_B)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})+2\tau}{-M(\alpha_A,\alpha_B,\rho)} \leq \dfrac{\iota_B}{1-\iota_B}$
- $\geq \frac{1}{2}$ and $\dfrac{(1-2\alpha_A)(s^{AN}-s^{BN})+2\tau}{M(\alpha_A,\alpha_B,\rho)} \geq \dfrac{\iota_A}{1-\iota_A}$

□

E Aditional Information on Data and Experiment

E.1 Additional Information on Data Construction

To compile the dataset about murders with male victims, I leverage `gpt-4o-mini` through the OpenAI API. In particular, I loop through all the articles and extract information using the following system prompt:

"You are an honest classifier. You receive an Italian news excerpt in the user prompt. You should classify if the news is related to a murder involving real people or not. You should classify the news positively if it is explicitly about the murder of a real person taking place in Italy as the main topic. You should classify negatively if the text generally mentions murders, e.g., in political discussions, or if it mentions other crimes, e.g., attempted murder, killing of animals, or murders that occur in fictional contexts, e.g., movies. If it is a murder news, you should also extract the name of the perpetrator and the victim if it is mentioned and set the respective field to None otherwise. Moreover, you should classify whether the victim is a woman or a man when possible. You should classify it positively if the victim is female. You should classify it negatively if the victim is a man. If you don't have this information, just return None. If the city or region where the murder occurred is explicitly mentioned, you should also extract it and set the respective field to None otherwise. If the murder date is explicitly mentioned, you should extract it or set the respective field to None otherwise. Suppose the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator is mentioned. In that case, you should extract it and fill the respective field with one of the following values: partner, ex-partner (if the perpetrator is the partner or ex-partner of the murder victim), relative, ex-relative (if the perpetrator is the relative or ex-relative of the murder victim), acquaintance. If this is not mentioned, set the field to None. Please return for each user prompt an output in the custom Newsclassification format, which is inherited from Pydantic."

This allows me to classify the articles as being about a real murder happening in Italy, and it having a male victim. Additionally, if the article is classified as a real murder, I ask the model to extract the names of the victim and perpetrator, the city where the murder occurred, and the date. I also ask it to extract the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, suggesting the values to input. Finally, I specify the format of the output, mentioning that it should follow a JSON schema as defined by Pydantic. This way, I ensure that the output of the model always has

the same structure, with each field containing the corresponding information.

E.2 Experimental Design

E.2.1 Treatments

Figure E.1: Control: News Articles for Crime A

(a) Italian Version

La Gazzetta di Qualtrics

12 Ottobre, 2021

Uccisa Fuori Dal Lavoro: Catturato Il Colpevole

La mattina del 29 Settembre 2021, Giancarlo Pellicani ha ucciso la moglie, Linda Amato con quattro colpi di pistola. L'omicidio è avvenuto fuori dall'azienda in cui lei lavorava.
Dopo l'agguato, Pellicani era fuggito prima a bordo della sua Jeep grigia, poi aveva cambiato mezzo e si era allontanato con la Vespa per poi far perdere le sue tracce nelle campagne a piedi.
Nella notte, ha cercato di entrare nella sua abitazione da una finestra. I Carabinieri, che sorvegliavano il luogo, hanno sentito alcuni rumori, sono entrati e hanno sorpreso e arrestato l'omicida.

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(b) English Version

Qualtrics Gazette

October 12, 2021

Woman Killed Outside Her Workplace: Murderer Caught

On the morning of September 29, 2021, Giancarlo Pellicani killed his wife, Linda Amato, with four gunshots. The murder took place outside the company where she worked.
After the attack, Pellicani first fled in his gray Jeep, then switched vehicles and continued on a Vespa, eventually disappearing into the countryside on foot.
That night, he tried to enter his house through a window. The Carabinieri, who were monitoring the area, heard some noises, went inside, and caught and arrested the murderer.

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Figure E.2: Control: News Articles for Crime B

(a) Italian Version

La Gazzetta di Qualtrics

13 Aprile, 2021

Uccisa Sul Pianerottolo Di Casa: Catturato Il Colpevole

Il 9 Aprile 2021, Valerio Bianchetti, guardia giurata di 51 anni, ha ucciso l'ex moglie Agnese Deprospo con otto colpi di pistola.
L'omicidio è avvenuto sul pianerottolo del palazzo in cui viveva la donna. Bianchetti era uscito dal proprio appartamento armato. Ha raccontato che era solito portare con sé la pistola d'ordinanza, perché temeva che qualcuno potesse entrare in casa e rubarla.
I poliziotti lo hanno arrestato nella sua casa, dove si era rifugiato dopo l'omicidio, ed è stato portato in carcere dove è avvenuta la convalida davanti al GIP.

© 2021 La Gazzetta di Qualtrics

(b) English Version

Qualtrics Gazette

April 13, 2021

Killed On Her Doorstep: Perpetrator Captured

On April 9, 2021, Valerio Bianchetti, a 51-year-old security guard, killed his ex-wife Agnese Deprospo with eight gunshots.
The murder took place on the landing of the building where the woman lived. Bianchetti had come out of his own apartment armed. He said he usually carried his service pistol because he feared someone might break in and steal it.
Police officers arrested him in his home, where he had taken refuge after the murder, and he was taken to prison, where the charges were confirmed before the investigating judge (GIP).

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Figure E.3: Episodic Framing Perpetrator: News Articles for Crime A

(a) Italian Version

La Gazzetta di Qualtrics

12 Ottobre, 2021

Uccisa Fuori Dal Lavoro: Catturato Il Colpevole

La mattina del 29 Settembre 2021, Giancarlo Pellicani, accecato dalla rabbia, ha ucciso la moglie, Linda Amato con quattro colpi di pistola. L'omicidio è avvenuto fuori dall'azienda in cui lei lavorava.
Dopo l'agguato, Pellicani era fuggito prima a bordo della sua Jeep grigia, poi aveva cambiato mezzo e si era allontanato con la Vespa per poi far perdere le sue tracce nelle campagne a piedi.
Nella notte, ha cercato di entrare nella sua abitazione da una finestra. I Carabinieri, che sorvegliavano il luogo, hanno sentito alcuni rumori, sono entrati e hanno sorpreso e arrestato l'omicida.
Giancarlo Pellicani, negli ultimi tempi, era diventato particolarmente geloso, temendo le nuove frequentazioni della moglie potessero compromettere la loro relazione. Ha ammesso di aver premuto il grilletto perché non riusciva ad accettare di vederla allontanarsi.

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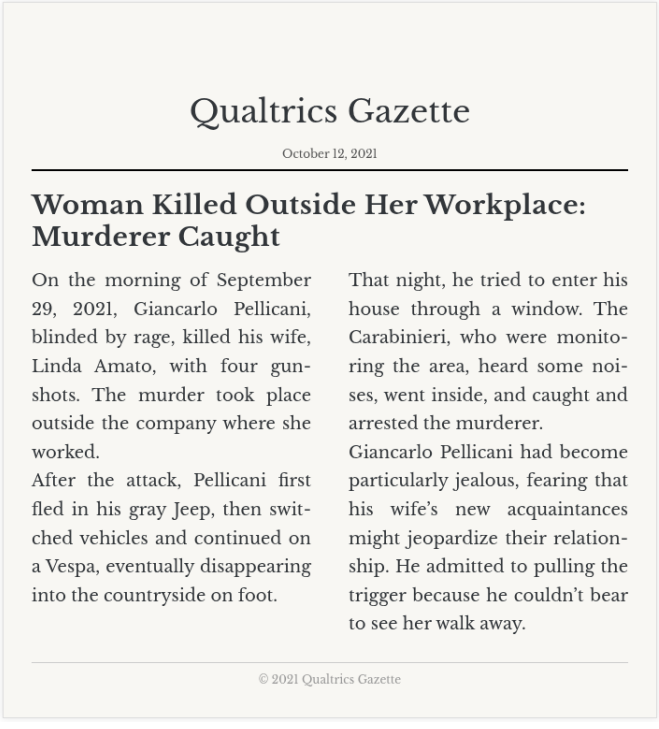
(b) English Version



Qualtrics Gazette

October 12, 2021

Woman Killed Outside Her Workplace: Murderer Caught

On the morning of September 29, 2021, Giancarlo Pellicani, blinded by rage, killed his wife, Linda Amato, with four gunshots. The murder took place outside the company where she worked.
After the attack, Pellicani first fled in his gray Jeep, then switched vehicles and continued on a Vespa, eventually disappearing into the countryside on foot.
That night, he tried to enter his house through a window. The Carabinieri, who were monitoring the area, heard some noises, went inside, and caught and arrested the murderer.
Giancarlo Pellicani had become particularly jealous, fearing that his wife's new acquaintances might jeopardize their relationship. He admitted to pulling the trigger because he couldn't bear to see her walk away.

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Figure E.4: Episodic Framing Perpetrator: News Articles for Crime B

(a) Italian Version

La Gazzetta di Qualtrics

13 Aprile, 2021

Uccisa Sul Pianerottolo Di Casa: Catturato Il Colpevole

Il 9 Aprile 2021, Valerio Bianchetti, guardia giurata di 51 anni, ha ucciso l'ex moglie Agnese Deprospo con otto colpi di pistola, acciecato dalla gelosia.

L'omicidio è avvenuto sul pianerottolo del palazzo in cui viveva la donna. Bianchetti era uscito dal proprio appartamento armato. Ha raccontato che era solito portare con sé la pistola d'ordinanza, perché temeva che qualcuno potesse entrare in casa e rubarla.

I poliziotti lo hanno arrestato nella sua casa, dove si era rifugiato dopo l'omicidio, ed è stato portato in carcere dove è avvenuta la convalida davanti al GIP.

Nelle settimane precedenti, Valerio Bianchetti aveva iniziato a vedere l'ex moglie con un altro uomo e racconta in lacrime di essersi ingelosito in quanto sperava di convincerla a tornare sui propri passi. Sarebbero state la gelosia e l'idea di perderla a scatenare la furia omicida.

(b) English Version

Qualtrics Gazette

April 13, 2021

Killed On Her Doorstep: Perpetrator Captured

On April 9, 2021, Valerio Bianchetti, a 51-year-old security guard, killed his ex-wife Agnese Deprospo with eight gunshots, blinded by rage.

The murder took place on the landing of the building where the woman lived. Bianchetti had come out of his own apartment armed. He said he usually carried his service pistol because he feared someone might break in and steal it.

Police officers arrested him in his home, where he had taken refuge after the murder, and he was taken to prison, where the charges were confirmed before the investigating judge (GIP).

In the weeks prior, Valerio Bianchetti had begun seeing his ex-wife with another man, and tearfully recounted that he had become jealous because he had hoped to persuade her to come back to him. It was allegedly jealousy and the fear of losing her that triggered his murderous rage.

Figure E.5: Episodic Framing Victim: News Articles for Crime A—Version 1

(a) Italian Version

La Gazzetta di Qualtrics

12 Ottobre, 2021

Uccisa Fuori Dal Lavoro: Catturato Il Colpevole

La mattina del 29 Settembre 2021, Giancarlo Pellicani ha ucciso la moglie, Linda Amato con quattro colpi di pistola. L'omicidio è avvenuto fuori dall'azienda in cui lei lavorava.
Dopo l'agguato, Pellicani era fuggito prima a bordo della sua Jeep grigia, poi aveva cambiato mezzo e si era allontanato con la Vespa per poi far perdere le sue tracce nelle campagne a piedi.
Nella notte, ha cercato di entrare nella sua abitazione da una finestra. I Carabinieri, che sorvegliavano il luogo, hanno sentito alcuni rumori, sono entrati e hanno sorpreso e arrestato l'omicida.
Linda Amato era già andata dai carabinieri per raccontare che il marito le aveva messo le mani addosso ma non erano risultati gli elementi necessari per far scattare il Codice rosso. Temendo per la sua incolumità la donna si era quindi trasferita da un'amica.

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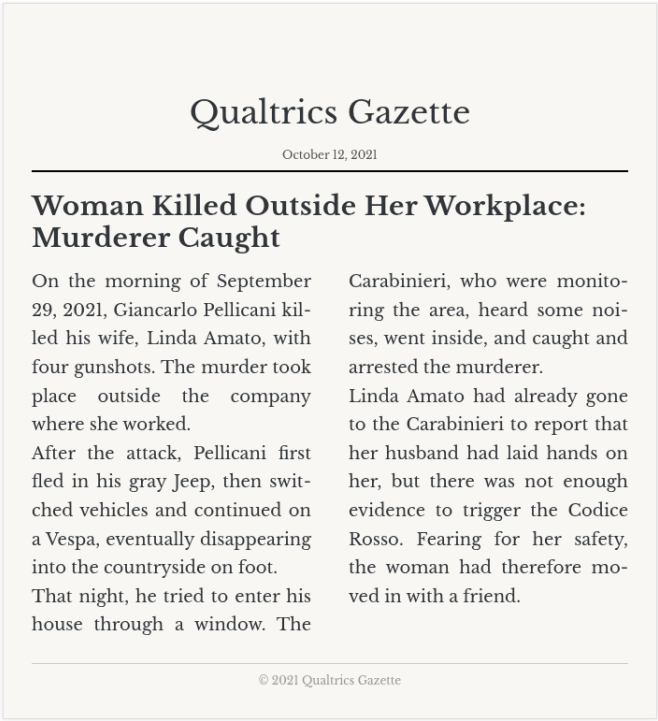
(b) English Version



Qualtrics Gazette

October 12, 2021

Woman Killed Outside Her Workplace: Murderer Caught

On the morning of September 29, 2021, Giancarlo Pellicani killed his wife, Linda Amato, with four gunshots. The murder took place outside the company where she worked.
After the attack, Pellicani first fled in his gray Jeep, then switched vehicles and continued on a Vespa, eventually disappearing into the countryside on foot.
That night, he tried to enter his house through a window. The Carabinieri, who were monitoring the area, heard some noises, went inside, and caught and arrested the murderer.
Linda Amato had already gone to the Carabinieri to report that her husband had laid hands on her, but there was not enough evidence to trigger the Codice Rosso. Fearing for her safety, the woman had therefore moved in with a friend.

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Figure E.6: Episodic Framing Victim: News Articles for Crime A—Version 2

(a) Italian Version

La Gazzetta di Qualtrics

12 Ottobre, 2021

Uccisa Fuori Dal Lavoro: Catturato Il Colpevole

La mattina del 29 Settembre 2021, Giancarlo Pellicani ha ucciso la moglie, Linda Amato con quattro colpi di pistola. L'omicidio è avvenuto fuori dall'azienda in cui lei lavorava.
Dopo l'agguato, Pellicani era fuggito prima a bordo della sua Jeep grigia, poi aveva cambiato mezzo e si era allontanato con la Vespa per poi far perdere le sue tracce nelle campagne a piedi.
Nella notte, ha cercato di entrare nella sua abitazione da una finestra. I Carabinieri, che sorvegliavano il luogo, hanno sentito alcuni rumori, sono entrati e hanno sorpreso e arrestato l'omicida.
Linda Amato aveva confidato alle amiche che l'uomo la picchiava spesso. Era già andata dai carabinieri per raccontare che il marito le aveva messo le mani addosso e temendo per la sua incolumità, la donna si era quindi trasferita da un'amica.

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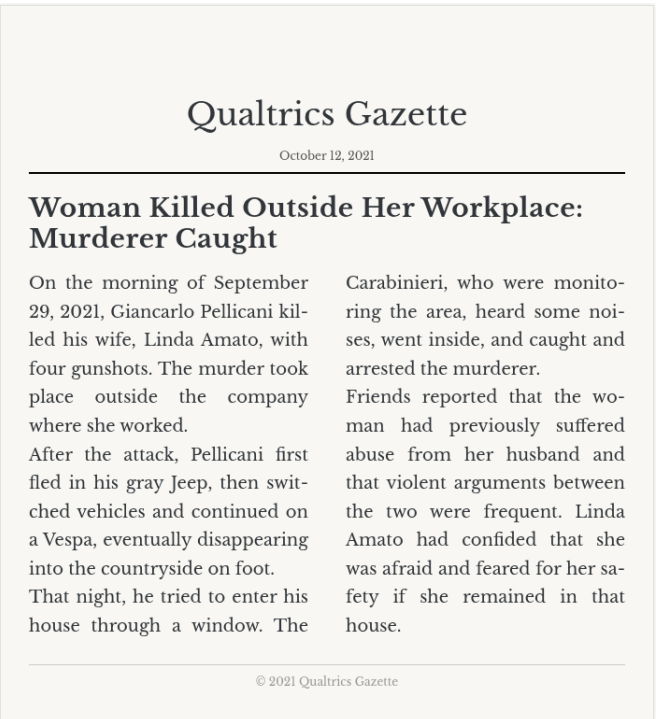
(b) English Version



Qualtrics Gazette

October 12, 2021

Woman Killed Outside Her Workplace: Murderer Caught

On the morning of September 29, 2021, Giancarlo Pellicani killed his wife, Linda Amato, with four gunshots. The murder took place outside the company where she worked.
After the attack, Pellicani first fled in his gray Jeep, then switched vehicles and continued on a Vespa, eventually disappearing into the countryside on foot.
That night, he tried to enter his house through a window. The Carabinieri, who were monitoring the area, heard some noises, went inside, and caught and arrested the murderer.
Friends reported that the woman had previously suffered abuse from her husband and that violent arguments between the two were frequent. Linda Amato had confided that she was afraid and feared for her safety if she remained in that house.

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Figure E.7: Episodic Framing Victim: News Articles for Crime A—Version 3

(a) Italian Version

La Gazzetta di Qualtrics

12 Ottobre, 2021

Uccisa Fuori Dal Lavoro: Catturato Il Colpevole

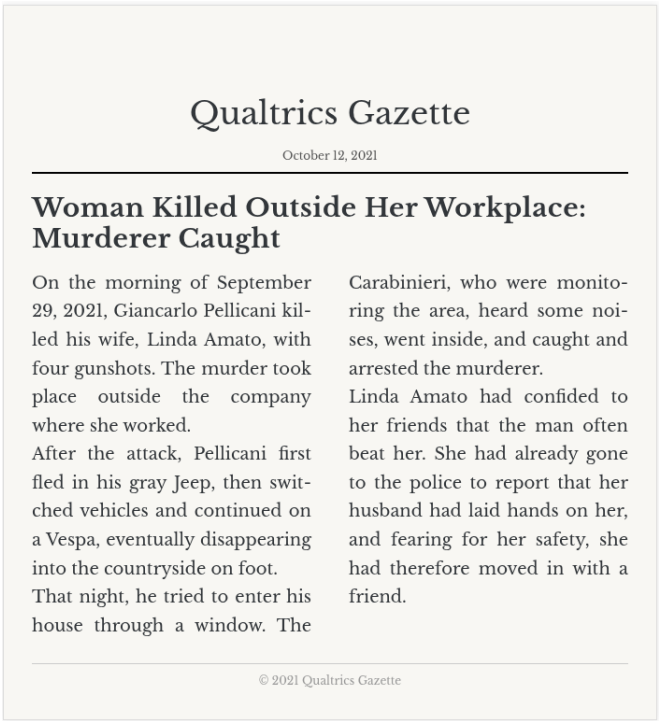
La mattina del 29 Settembre 2021, Giancarlo Pellicani ha ucciso la moglie, Linda Amato con quattro colpi di pistola. L'omicidio è avvenuto fuori dall'azienda in cui lei lavorava.

Dopo l'agguato, Pellicani era fuggito prima a bordo della sua Jeep grigia, poi aveva cambiato mezzo e si era allontanato con la Vespa per poi far perdere le sue tracce nelle campagne a piedi.

Nella notte, ha cercato di entrare nella sua abitazione da una finestra. I Carabinieri, che sorvegliavano il luogo, hanno sentito alcuni rumori, sono entrati e hanno sorpreso e arrestato l'omicida.

Le amiche riferiscono che già in passato la donna avrebbe subito maltrattamenti da parte del coniuge ed erano frequenti le liti violente tra i due. Linda Amato aveva confidato che aveva paura e che temeva per la sua incolumità in caso fosse rimasta in quella casa.

(b) English Version



Qualtrics Gazette

October 12, 2021

Woman Killed Outside Her Workplace: Murderer Caught

On the morning of September 29, 2021, Giancarlo Pellicani killed his wife, Linda Amato, with four gunshots. The murder took place outside the company where she worked.

After the attack, Pellicani first fled in his gray Jeep, then switched vehicles and continued on a Vespa, eventually disappearing into the countryside on foot.

That night, he tried to enter his house through a window. The Carabinieri, who were monitoring the area, heard some noises, went inside, and caught and arrested the murderer.

Linda Amato had confided to her friends that the man often beat her. She had already gone to the police to report that her husband had laid hands on her, and fearing for her safety, she had therefore moved in with a friend.

Figure E.8: Episodic Framing Victim: News Articles for Crime B—Version 1

(a) Italian Version

La Gazzetta di Qualtrics

13 Aprile, 2021

Uccisa Sul Pianerottolo Di Casa: Catturato Il Colpevole

Il 9 Aprile 2021, Valerio Bianchetti, guardia giurata di 51 anni, ha ucciso l'ex moglie Agnese Deprospo con otto colpi di pistola.

L'omicidio è avvenuto sul pianerottolo del palazzo in cui viveva la donna. Bianchetti era uscito dal proprio appartamento armato. Ha raccontato che era solito portare con sé la pistola d'ordinanza, perché temeva che qualcuno potesse entrare in casa e rubarla.

I poliziotti lo hanno arrestato nella sua casa, dove si era rifugiato dopo l'omicidio, ed è stato portato in carcere dove è avvenuta la convalida davanti al GIP.

Agnese Deprospo aveva segnalato ai Carabinieri atteggiamenti molesti — tra cui telefonate insistenti, messaggi e richieste di incontro — chiedendo l'attivazione del Codice rosso per stalking, che sarebbe dovuto entrare in vigore di lì a qualche settimana.

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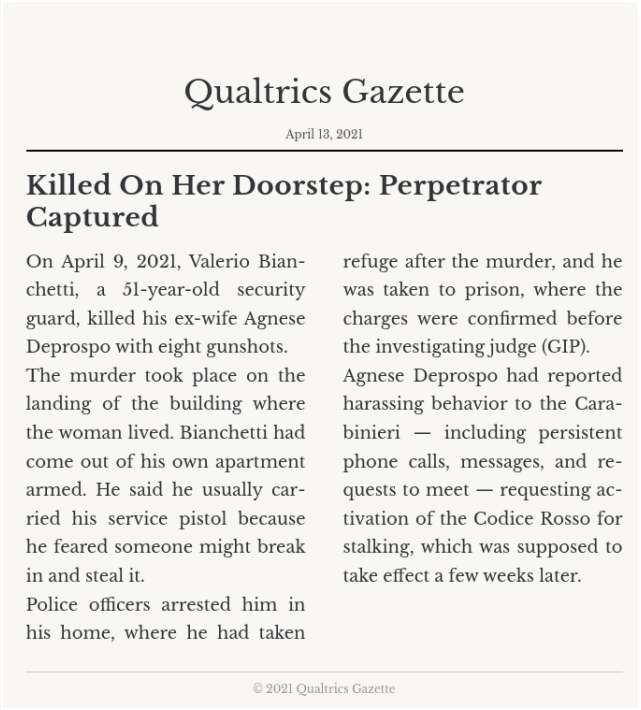
(b) English Version



Qualtrics Gazette

April 13, 2021

Killed On Her Doorstep: Perpetrator Captured

On April 9, 2021, Valerio Bianchetti, a 51-year-old security guard, killed his ex-wife Agnese Deprospo with eight gunshots.

The murder took place on the landing of the building where the woman lived. Bianchetti had come out of his own apartment armed. He said he usually carried his service pistol because he feared someone might break in and steal it.

Police officers arrested him in his home, where he had taken refuge after the murder, and he was taken to prison, where the charges were confirmed before the investigating judge (GIP).

Agnese Deprospo had reported harassing behavior to the Carabinieri — including persistent phone calls, messages, and requests to meet — requesting activation of the Codice Rosso for stalking, which was supposed to take effect a few weeks later.

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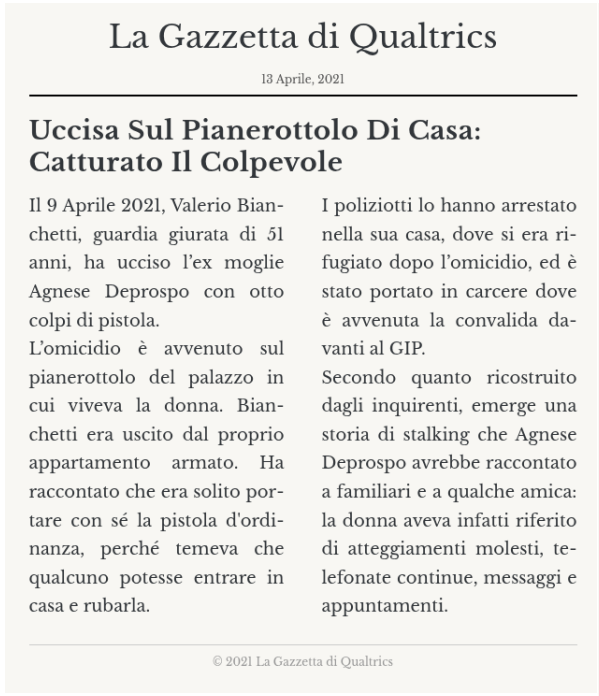
Figure E.9: Episodic Framing Victim: News Articles for Crime B—Version 2

(a) Italian Version



La Gazzetta di Qualtrics

13 Aprile, 2021

Uccisa Sul Pianerottolo Di Casa: Catturato Il Colpevole

Il 9 Aprile 2021, Valerio Bianchetti, guardia giurata di 51 anni, ha ucciso l'ex moglie Agnese Deprospo con otto colpi di pistola.

L'omicidio è avvenuto sul pianerottolo del palazzo in cui viveva la donna. Bianchetti era uscito dal proprio appartamento armato. Ha raccontato che era solito portare con sé la pistola d'ordinanza, perché temeva che qualcuno potesse entrare in casa e rubarla.

I poliziotti lo hanno arrestato nella sua casa, dove si era rifugiato dopo l'omicidio, ed è stato portato in carcere dove è avvenuta la convalida davanti al GIP.

Secondo quanto ricostruito dagli inquirenti, emerge una storia di stalking che Agnese Deprospo avrebbe raccontato a familiari e a qualche amica: la donna aveva infatti riferito di atteggiamenti molesti, telefonate continue, messaggi e appuntamenti.

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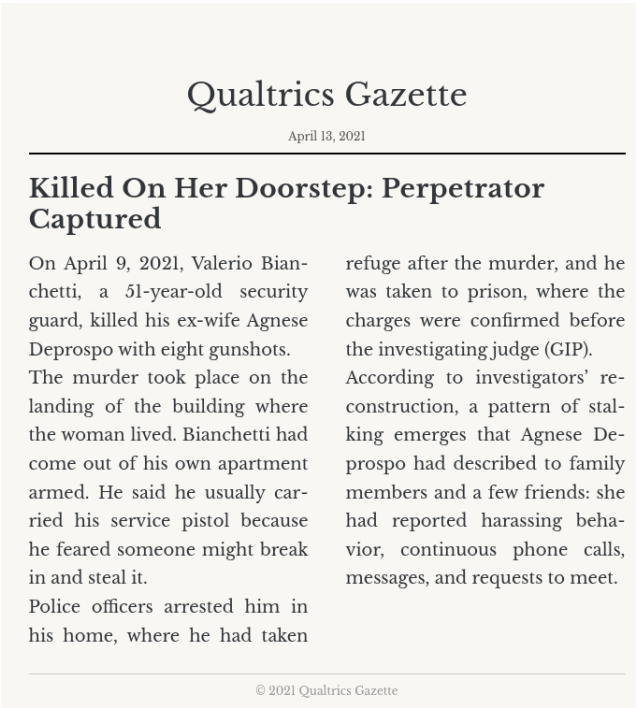
(b) English Version



Qualtrics Gazette

April 13, 2021

Killed On Her Doorstep: Perpetrator Captured

On April 9, 2021, Valerio Bianchetti, a 51-year-old security guard, killed his ex-wife Agnese Deprospo with eight gunshots.

The murder took place on the landing of the building where the woman lived. Bianchetti had come out of his own apartment armed. He said he usually carried his service pistol because he feared someone might break in and steal it.

Police officers arrested him in his home, where he had taken refuge after the murder, and he was taken to prison, where the charges were confirmed before the investigating judge (GIP).

According to investigators' reconstruction, a pattern of stalking emerges that Agnese Deprospo had described to family members and a few friends: she had reported harassing behavior, continuous phone calls, messages, and requests to meet.

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Figure E.10: Thematic Framing: News Articles for Crime A

(a) Italian Version

La Gazzetta di Qualtrics

12 Ottobre, 2021

Uccisa Fuori Dal Lavoro: Catturato Il Colpevole

La mattina del 29 Settembre 2021, Giancarlo Pellicani ha ucciso la moglie, Linda Amato con quattro colpi di pistola. L'omicidio è avvenuto fuori dall'azienda in cui lei lavorava.

Dopo l'agguato, Pellicani era fuggito prima a bordo della sua Jeep grigia, poi aveva cambiato mezzo e si era allontanato con la Vespa per poi far perdere le sue tracce nelle campagne a piedi.

Nella notte, ha cercato di entrare nella sua abitazione da una finestra. I Carabinieri, che sorvegliavano il luogo, hanno sentito alcuni rumori, sono entrati e hanno sorpreso e arrestato l'omicida.

In totale in Italia nel 2021 sono state uccise 100 donne in ambito familiare, mentre secondo i dati del Viminale nel 2024 i femminicidi in ambito familiare sono stati 109. Inoltre, sono aumentate del 12% rispetto al 2021 le richieste di aiuto al numero anti violenza e stalking 1522.

(b) English Version

Qualtrics Gazette

October 12, 2021

Woman Killed Outside Her Workplace: Murderer Caught

On the morning of September 29, 2021, Giancarlo Pellicani killed his wife, Linda Amato, with four gunshots. The murder took place outside the company where she worked.

After the attack, Pellicani first fled in his gray Jeep, then switched vehicles and continued on a Vespa, eventually disappearing into the countryside on foot.

That night, he tried to enter his house through a window. The Carabinieri, who were monitoring the area, heard some noises, went inside, and caught and arrested the murderer.

In total, 100 women were killed in domestic settings in 2021, while according to data from the Ministry of the Interior, in 2024 the number of domestic femicides rose to 109. Furthermore, calls for help to the anti-violence and stalking hotline 1522 increased by 12% compared to 2021.

Figure E.11: Thematic Framing: News Articles for Crime B

(a) Italian Version

La Gazzetta di Qualtrics

13 Aprile, 2021

Uccisa Sul Pianerottolo Di Casa: Catturato Il Colpevole

Il 9 Aprile 2021, Valerio Bianchetti, guardia giurata di 51 anni, ha ucciso l'ex moglie Agnese Deprospo con otto colpi di pistola.

Il femminicidio è avvenuto sul pianerottolo del palazzo in cui viveva la donna. Bianchetti era uscito dal proprio appartamento armato. Ha raccontato che era solito portare con sé la pistola d'ordinanza, perché temeva che qualcuno potesse entrare in casa e rubarla.

I poliziotti lo hanno arrestato nella sua casa, dove si era rifugiato dopo l'omicidio, ed è stato portato in carcere dove è avvenuta la convalida davanti al GIP.

In totale in Italia nel 2021 sono state uccise 100 donne in ambito familiare, mentre secondo i dati del Viminale nel 2024 i femminicidi in ambito familiare sono stati 109. Inoltre, sono aumentate del 12% rispetto al 2021 le richieste di aiuto al numero anti violenza e stalking 1522.

(b) English Version

Qualtrics Gazette

April 13, 2021

Killed On Her Doorstep: Perpetrator Captured

On April 9, 2021, Valerio Bianchetti, a 51-year-old security guard, killed his ex-wife Agnese Deprospo with eight gunshots.

The murder took place on the landing of the building where the woman lived. Bianchetti had come out of his own apartment armed. He said he usually carried his service pistol because he feared someone might break in and steal it.

Police officers arrested him in his home, where he had taken refuge after the murder, and he was taken to prison, where the charges were confirmed before the investigating judge (GIP).

In total, 100 women were killed in domestic settings in 2021, while according to data from the Ministry of the Interior, in 2024 the number of domestic femicides rose to 109. Furthermore, calls for help to the anti-violence and stalking hotline 1522 increased by 12% compared to 2021.

E.2.2 Survey Questions

Attitudes Toward Victim and Perpetrator

1. How do you feel about the victim? A score between 50 and 100 means that you feel emotionally close to her, while a score between 0 and 50 means that you do not feel emotionally close to her. Choose 50 if you do not have a particularly strong opinion either way. There is no right or wrong answer, as people may experience different emotions regarding these events. Remember, your answer to this question does not necessarily reflect your opinion about the sentence.

   [Slider: 0—100]

2. How do you feel about the perpetrator? A score between 50 and 100 means that you feel emotionally close to him, while a score between 0 and 50 means that you do not feel emotionally close to him. Choose 50 if you do not have a particularly strong opinion either way. There is no right or wrong answer, as people may experience different emotions regarding these events. Remember, your answer to this question does not necessarily reflect your opinion about the sentence.

   [Slider: 0—100]

Sentence and Compensation Evaluation

3. For these types of crimes there is a lot of variation in judicial decisions regarding years of sentences. The minimum sentence is around 8 years while the maximum is a life sentence (usually around 30 years). The perpetrator was sentenced to 15 years of prison. Please indicate on the following scale whether you think the sentence is too lenient (0), fair (5) or too harsh (10).

   [Slider: 0—10, where 0 = too lenient, 5 = fair, 10 = too harsh]

4. In case of murders, the Ministry of Justice compensates the victim's relatives. The compensation can range between EUR 40,000 and EUR 100,000. In this case, the Ministry gave the family EUR 60,000. Please indicate on the following scale whether you think the compensation is too low (0), fair (5) or too high (10).

   [Slider: 0—10, where 0 = too low, 5 = fair, 10 = too high]

Policy Support

5. In November 2023, the Parliament approved unanimously a law to counter violence against women, which included regulations regarding facilitating preventive measures such as admonition and restriction orders, education programs of police forces and the judiciary, educational programs in schools, and support for anti-violence centers. At the same time, the law does not include any additional resources dedicated to this matter. You will now have the possibility to sign a simulated petition asking for devoting some of the funds allocated to crime prevention to implement this law in the 2027 Budget Law. We will communicate to the Parliamentary commission on femicide and any form of gender-based violence the share of participants who signed this petition, namely, the number of participants who signed the petition over the total number of participants completing the survey in percentage.

   [Button: I want to sign the petition]

Beliefs About Violence Against Women

6. Out of 10,000 women aged 18 to 80 in the province where you live, how many do you think have experienced any form of violence (beating, stalking, or sexual violence) in 2024? Please provide your best guess.

   [Slider: 0—10,000]

7. Out of 10,000 women aged 18 to 80 in the province where you live, how many contacted the anti-violence and stalking helpline to seek help in 2024?

   [Slider: 0—10,000]

   Note: In the questions above, participants have the chance to receive a 5 bonus if their answers are close to the correct number. A random subsample of all study participants will be selected (1 in 25). For each of these participants, a computer will check whether their answers match the correct ones. If at least one of the two answers is within 5 percentage points above or below the exact value, that participant will receive the bonus.

8. Out of 10,000 women in the province where you live, how many do you think have reported crimes involving any form of violence (beating, stalking, or sexual violence) in 2024?

   [Slider: 0—10,000]

Engagement with the Article

9. Now we will show you again the article you saw earlier, as it would appear on the newspaper's website. This means that if you click on the links below the article, you will automatically be redirected to the corresponding article (still within the questionnaire). You can continue interacting with the articles as much as you like, and at any point, proceed with the rest of the questionnaire by clicking the Next Page button.

   [TREATMENT ARTICLE]

   Other articles from the Gazette:

   - *Focus on Violence Against Women: Inside the ISTAT Report* (Clickable)
   - *Femicide: "Help, I've Been Stabbed" — The Last Words of Lorena, Killed by Her Husband in Brescia* (Clickable)
   - *Asti, Murder of tobacconist Emanuele Bianchi: 30-Year Sentences for the 5 Defendants Confirmed on Appeal* (Clickable)

10. If you were on social media, would you like, dislike, report, or share the article? Please select at least one of the following options.

    - *Like*
    - *Dislike*
    - *Report the article*
    - *Share the article*
    - *None of the above*

11. Would you use the news outlet publishing the articles that you saw in this survey as a source of information for crime news?

    - *Yes*
    - *No*