

Overview Report Discourse analysis of the **homicide** and the four **femicides** known as the “**Narvarte case**” media coverage.

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Introduction

ARTICLE 19



This report analyzes the coverage given to the Narvarte case by the newspapers *El Universal* and *La Jornada*, as well as the portals *SDP Noticias* and *SinEmbargo*. The analysis is approached from a human rights and intersectional gender perspective of the victim's representations and, to a lesser extent, the perpetrators.

Based on a discourse analysis that considers the contextual frameworks, we also examined how each newspaper established a narrative about the case. Indeed, the predominant narrative of each media (when there was one) frames the presentation of the information (based on certain intentionality), of those involved (which we analyzed as characters in a plot), and of the space where the events take place (Mexico City, Narvarte neighborhood as a residential neighborhood), to give a particular meaning to the crime. This framing can be outlined from what is said and what is not, the vocabulary used, the plurality of voices, or the absence of them. This methodology allows us to analyze how each media constructed the case and the variations between the versions. Thus, we can contrast the framing that focuses on a common crime narrative (robbery, drug-related, or organized crime) presented by *El Universal* with the narrative that emphasizes political crime (murder of a journalist and an activist) as presented by *SinEmbargo*, for example. The victims' representations and the variety of voices included, or not, were also analyzed from an intersectional gender perspective. In addition to gender; the analysis takes into account the occupation, the origin or nationality, the age, the appearance of the vic-

tims, as well as stigmatizing references and discourses included in the coverage (official rhetoric, other media discourses, voices of society, NGOs, other actors).

Methodological note

What we present is an analysis of each media outlet, highlighting the type of narrative used, the protagonists' configuration, the meaning given to the geographic space in which the multihomicide took place, and its socio-political implications. At some points, we emphasized the leaks detected in the media discourse and their stigmatizing effects. As shown below, the versions among the four media can be contrasted: regarding the crime and victims' description, the use of leaks, the inclusion degree of alternative voices to the Federal Attorney General's Office discourse (PGR, in its Spanish acronym), the degree of silence on the political crime as a line of investigation and the consequential silences about the possible involvement of political actors, among other issues.

The comparisons and observations formulated in this investigation take into account the importance of the right to information and truth as principles that should govern journalistic work based on ethics. With this analysis, we do not intend to criticize a media outlet but to point out the contrast between some practices and to recall the necessity of avoiding the re-victimization of people involved in a crime (as victims or perpetrators) to ensure media coverage in line with those rights.

Each media outlet was analyzed individually, highlighting the most noteworthy characteristics of each one's coverage. For example, the observations about *El Universal* or *SDP Noticias*' coverage regarding leaks, stigmatization, and predominance of criminal over political narrative could be applied

to media with similar characteristics (*La Razón, Reforma*)¹.

Similarly, the observations about *La Jornada* refer to a type of coverage that seems neutral but leaves out facets of the case, and those referring to *SinEmbargo* show reporting that emphasized the line of investigation of the case as a political crime and does not present stigmatizing tendencies.

Therefore, the aim is to analyze some examples of case coverage types, evaluating whether they expose people (victims or victimizers) and avoid or favor media judgments. It is about figuring out if they contribute to the right to information and the truth.

¹ In its report *Tribunales paralelos y exhibición mediática de las personas. El caso Narvarte*, ARTICLE 19 refers to a study of its own about the coverage of this case in the newspapers *La Razón, Reforma, El Universal* and *Milenio*: "The behavior is similar in three of the four newspapers analyzed. Twenty-five percent of the articles published by *La Razón* included information leaked to that media, while the percentage for *El Universal* was 23% and for *Reforma*, 34%. Only *Milenio* had a low percentage of articles published with leaked information or documents: 5%". ARTICLE 19, *Tribunales...*, op. cit., p. 67.

Media's coverage and the right to information and truth.

The four media's coverage can be placed at different points on an axis: at one pole there is coverage that takes into account the right to information, to the truth, and the principles of non-discrimination and respect for people's dignity. At the other pole there is stigmatizing coverage, with leaks, that does not respect the right to non-discrimination or people's dignity.

El Universal constructs a version based on leaks from the Attorney General's Office (PGJ) and on its own unsubstantiated statements, centered on the figure of Mile Virginia Martín, who is portrayed as a "bad woman", a foreigner, with possible links to criminals, whether house robbers or drug dealers.

La Jornada occupies an intermediate position among the analyzed media, with coverage that does not create a story. In some way, it seems to try to stay out of the accusations against the Duarte government as the possible instigator of a political crime. The coverage focuses on Rubén Espinosa; Nadia Vera remains in the background and the other women are left invisible.

The news portal *SDP Noticias* is also an intermediate case, but with particular characteristics: it gave extensive coverage to the aspects that could lead to investigating the case as a political crime and focused its graphic representations on Rubén Espinosa and Nadia Vera. Even if it tended to make them invisible, it did not systematically stigmatize the other murdered women. However, it did not avoid stigmatizing notes about Mile Virginia Martín. Although they seemed exceptional to a certain extent, they certainly biased the coverage against

her, describing her with very negative features in terms of gender, nationality, occupation, and possible links with criminals.

The news portal *SinEmbargo* reports the facts and focuses on the case as a political issue linked to the danger of being a journalist in Veracruz. The media also dismantles and questions the official versions of the Federal Attorney General's Office and the media that spread the leaks. It shows, for example, the contradictions in the versions that stigmatize Mile Virginia Martín. A common flaw of this media and the others analyzed, is the lack of gender perspective as well as the lack of knowledge of the femicide protocol, and of femicide itself.

El Universal

Since the first days, *El Universal* increasingly avoided the line of investigation of political crime, focusing on the professional work of Rubén Espinosa and the activism of Nadia Vera who had fled Veracruz due to threats. In the beginning, the newspaper reported some voices demanding further investigation regarding Governor Duarte. However, it limited itself to presenting this information without complementing it with data on the risky situation of journalists in Veracruz.

During the first week, the media coverage built a story centered on Mile Virginia Martín, which culminated with the revelation of her name and the dissemination of a picture that offered a superficial and stigmatizing image of her, on August 7th. The Attorney General's Office had already released her name and several media outlets published the same photo.

We can also observe that during the first week, the stories first focused on Espinosa's murder and made the women invisible, particularly Alejandra Negrete and Yesenia Quiroz. Another evident aspect from the beginning is that Rubén's and Nadia's portrayals were positive, which continued throughout the coverage. However, it did not point out the significant fact that the crime could have political motivations. No notes were published referring to the work carried out by Rubén or Nadia either. There were only two "humane" notes about Nadia, whose father's statements infantilized.

In the case of Yesenia Quiroz, there was a possible attempt to stigmatize her by referring to the fact that she was the distant niece of a former governor of Michoacán

accused of having ties to drug trafficking. This line has not followed, so we don't know if there was at any time the intention to suggest her alleged involvement with organized crime.

Since the beginning and throughout August 2015, the parallel story that served as a smokescreen for the Attorney General's Office (disseminated by media such as *La Razón*) to avoid the political crime line was based on the re-victimization of Mile Virginia Martín. It presented her as a "Colombian woman", with possible links to Colombian criminal groups, whether house thieves or drug traffickers. These connections established as possibilities without much substance come in addition to confusing statements about what was supposedly stolen from the apartment. Since robbery was first raised as a possible motive, it was attributed to Mile Virginia Martín, the ownership of a "luxurious" car and "ostentatious" objects, unaffordable for a model who "worked

little” or who had arrived in Mexico only four months before, with a tourist visa.

The twist of the story towards a revenge or passion crime transformed the object of the robbery into a suitcase that supposedly could have contained drugs (all these hypotheses being part of the PGR’s leaks). Likewise, the second phase of Mile Virginia Martin’s stigmatization went on to crudely associate her with prostitution. This was based on anonymous sources who said she offered her services on Internet pages and an anonymous report published on August 22nd that also cited anonymous sources who had seen her enter a bar with her “pimp” and offer her services there.

This type of victimization corresponds to the pattern used to re-victimize women who have been murdered or disappeared, as a means to spread the suspicion that they led a double life, that they deserved to die, and that their murder or disappearance is not worth investigating. In the case of Mile Virginia Martin, there are several factors of discrimination superimposed: gender, nationality, occupation, and physical appearance. There was also a supposedly lack of moral integrity, “demonstrated” due to the sexual relationship she had with a former police torturer, attributed by the PGR after the alleged confession of the first detainee.

Besides publishing the PGR’s leaks indirectly, sometimes through articles without specific sources, one of the resources used to stigmatize Mile was Daniel Pacheco Gutiérrez’s confession, the first person allegedly involved and detained. The newspaper never questioned it, even after the Human Rights Commission of the Federal

District (CDHDF, in its Spanish acronym) demanded that the PGR stop leaking information. The fact that the women’s murders have not been qualified as femicide constitutes another fault in the media coverage. El Universal mentioned that both detainees were accused of femicide, but it did not emphasize the need to follow the protocols nor gave adequate coverage to this particular issue.

Thus, by September 2015, *El Universal* had contributed (as had *Reforma* and *La Razón*) to spread the PGR’s version and added its own stigmatizing anonymous notes. Between 2016 and 2018, the case coverage was very limited. It did not seem willing to influence public opinion to demand justice or the clarification of the case, even though Karla Michele Salas (Nadia Vera, Mile Virginia and Yesenia Quiroz’s lawyer) criticised the investigation process in an interview with this media. There was no outline of criticism of the justice institutions (for example, with complementary reports) or any rectification by the newspaper (for example, regarding the anonymous chronicle of August 22nd, 2015 or the stigmatizing anonymous quotes that appeared in various notes), not even on the anniversaries of the crime nor when the CDHDF issued the 04/2017 Recommendation containing strong criticism of the Federal Attorney General’s Office and the Superior Court of Justice of the Federal District (TSJDF, in its Spanish acronym).

Reflections on *El Universal's* coverage

Among all the media analyzed, we can say that, as did *La Razón* and *Reforma* to a greater degree, *El Universal's* coverage stigmatized Mile Virginia Martín and the perpetrators in a particular way, characterizing them as guilty without considering the presumption of innocence. Its coverage shows the absence of a gender and human rights perspective. In addition to filtering information from the PCR, it added its own notes that contributed to misinforming public opinion and stigmatizing the victims.

We highlight the main problematic issues:

1. *El Universal* published multiple leaks from the PCR and added stigmatizing notes of its own accord.

2. Systematically revictimized Mile Virginia Martín using factors such as gender, nationality, occupation, physical appearance, and alleged criminal association, as well as prostitution. Between 2016 and 2018, it did not leave aside nationality nor present information to counteract the destruction of the victim's image.

3. Although it presented a positive configuration of Nadia Vera and Rubén Espinosa, it did not seek to link their work with the risk related to journalism in Veracruz, but rather avoided that topic.

4. Invisibilized women, especially at the beginning, and did not provide elements for the public to wonder why the femicide

protocol was not followed. Its coverage lacked a gender perspective.

5. It presented the alleged perpetrators from the PCR's point of view, without ever defending the presumption of innocence.

La Jornada

In our analysis of the articles published by *La Jornada* between 2015 and 2018 on the Narvarte case, here is what we observed: Until August 2nd, 2015, *La Jornada* did not publish any news related to the Narvarte case. Then, from its first article, it framed the murder of Rubén Espinosa in a broader context of impunity and danger for all people engaged in journalism in the state of Veracruz. It described the facts, trying to organize them, but the newspaper did not create a counter-narrative to the official version. For example, on August 5th, basic facts were narrated only to point out that the PGR did not rule out any line of investigation and that the homicide prosecutor's office had emphasized identifying Rubén's and Mile's background.

The description was neutral and non-critical, without providing useful elements that could help the reader problematize the institutional versions. Since August 11th, the focus has been mainly on the Veracruz governor, Javier Duarte, who made a statement on the case. The note offered a synthesis of the narrative construction about the victims, but the journalistic investigation did not show other elements that could provide a different version. *La Jornada* also presented the CDHDF's position, one of the most forceful at that time. It reported CDHDF's claims regarding lines of investigation inadequately carried out, especially those related to freedom of expression and femicides. By the end of August 2015, news about the Narvarte case had already lost visibility in the National section and could only be found in the Capital section.

In 2016, one year after the four femicides and the homicide, *La Jornada* published only one article from July 29th to August 31st. On June 22nd, 2017, on page 32 of the Capital section, a news item on the case appeared: "The CDHDF issues a recommendation against the PGR and TSJDF for omissions in the Narvarte case". In 2018, for the crime commemoration on August 1st, *La Jornada* published a note with the following title: "Requests to investigate the former head of Secretariat of Public Security's role". Only Nadia Vera and Rubén Espinosa were mentioned in it.

The mediatic construction of the victims

Every article left space for the testimonies of people who knew Rubén Espinosa to describe him. *La Jornada's* journalists framed the homicide in the continuum of violence suffered by Rubén Espinosa. From the beginning, *La Jornada* highlighted the link between the events and Rubén's work as a photojournalist as well as the risk Nadia was running because she was a human rights defender. On August 3rd, the first and only article *La Jornada* published about one of the women, signed by journalist Tania Molina Ramírez, was titled: "The activist Nadia Vera had fled the climate of violence in Veracruz".

The young Yesenia Quiroz Alfaro was only described as a student and model, with few lines dedicated to her, making her story invisible. The only article about Alejan-

dra Negrete, who worked as a maid in the apartment, was published on August 11th. It also published the Support and Training Center for Domestic Workers' position, denouncing how the victims' media coverage had made Alejandra Negrete invisible and how it reinforced her vulnerability just like all domestic workers. On August 12th, the name and a brief news item about Mile appeared: "The body of Colombian Mile Virginia Martín is delivered". There was no description of the woman's life story, only the mention of her nationality.

Reflections on *La Jornada's* coverage

The victims' media construction in *La Jornada* focused its attention on one of the victims: Rubén Espinosa. Most of the headlines and articles focused on him and, in the background, on Nadia Vera.

We highlight 6 main problematic issues:

1. The two victims, Rubén and Nadia, were described separately. It never constructed a common narrative in which Nadia's life story could reinforce Rubén's case, nor vice versa.

2. The newspaper's media construction of Rubén and Nadia was ambiguous and lacked data. It did not deepen in the critical points of the case narrative or in Rubén's decision not to ask for support from the State Protection Mechanism for human rights defenders and journalists. It failed to give a clear explanation that could pro-

vide elements to counteract the institutions' narrative.

3. There is no media coverage of the three other victims: Alejandra Negrete, Yesenia Quiroz, and Mile Virginia Martín. Their presence was made invisible, which reinforced their vulnerability and prevented the investigation of their murders on equal terms, on the one hand. On the other hand, it contributed to undermining the Narvarte case's strength.

4. Regarding the institutional positions, no counter-narrative was created to clarify the scenario and highlight how the leaks were systematically used by the Attorney General's Office to establish hypotheses disproved later. There was no critical description of circumstantial facts nor of the political implications, which prevented addressing Veracruz-related aspects of the investigation. It was only thanks to civil organizations and social mobilization that a more convincing narrative of the case was established.

5. The newspaper did not problematize the fact that the murders took place in a specific place, in this case, Mexico City, which had been considered a "safe harbor" for journalists.

6. The description of the alleged perpetrators, in particular of Daniel Pacheco Cutiérrez, was superficial. There was no investigative journalistic effort to present sufficient elements that could provide another version.

SDP Noticias

The leading trend of the *SDP Noticias* portal was to insist on the political crime line, repeating that Rubén Espinosa, in particular, had left Veracruz due to threats. However, they diffused some notes corresponding to leaks from the Attorney General's Office without questioning them directly, except through the publication of other types of information. The coverage can be considered objective, as it reported what happened, the progress of the investigations, the opinions of different actors: the PGR and Duarte, on the one hand; but also the National Human Rights Commission, the Human Rights Commission for the Federal District, the Inter-American Press Association, ARTICLE 19 and other actors, as well as the protests and demands for justice that took place throughout the period. This coverage specified the news sources and who was giving an opinion (about any of the victims and in what context).

However, on two occasions, they published without any filter information broadcasted by media such as *Televisa*, *La Razón* and *Ciro Gómez Leyva's* radio program, giving space to PGR's versions and the defendants' statements. Those were offensive to Mile Virginia Martín and directly or indirectly re-victimized all the murdered persons. Even when these notes were the exception (three or four) and although shortly after, they gave space to voices condemning the leaks, this was problematic (see the note of September 3rd where Abraham Torres Tranquilino's statement, the second detainee in the case, is transcribed with violent details).

The case coverage focuses primarily on Rubén Espinosa and the possible connections of the crime to Veracruz and Duarte in particular. It does not build a parallel story; it gives an account of the facts and various opinions. However, there is a tendency to make the women invisible, except Nadia Vera. The coverage lacks a gender perspective since it does not use the term femicide nor insists that the investigations comply with the corresponding protocol.

Throughout the coverage, from the first days it became evident that there was a discursive dispute over the interpretation of the case (PGR-Miguel Mancera [then head of government of Mexico City] vs. NGOs-journalists-Rubén's and Nadia's family). In several articles, the media outlet defended journalism and suggested the need for an investigation that followed the political line, without discarding the official versions. In this sense, it is worth mentioning the articles that mentioned statements from journalists, family members, ARTICLE 19 and claims of those who demanded justice in various public acts.

However, the coverage was contradictory regarding Mile Virginia Martín: while on August 6th it published part of an interview with her brother (in Colombia) explaining that she had come to Mexico to look for a better job opportunity as a model; on August 13th it quoted Pacheco's confession, heard on *Ciro Gómez Leyva's* program, in which the first accused attributed to Mile a sentimental and sexual relationship with Abraham Torres, the ex-cop who was arrested later. Similarly, the portal reproduced information from *La Razón* (the main dissem-

inator of PGR leaks) and a photo in which Mile Virginia Martín is supposedly seen with Torres at a party, intending to confirm the information that already referred to a possible link with the Zetas. That is to say that, although the coverage gave primacy to the political line of investigation, three times it gave excessive space to leaks from the PCJ that sought to stigmatize Mile in order to strengthen the version of the robbery, the link with the Zetas and a drug affair. *SDP Noticias* later took up statements by Mile's brother (who criticized the stigmatization of the Colombian nationality and defended his sister), adopting the respectful attitude of the beginning towards her again. Still, the fact is that the stigmatizing notes contributed to destroying the public figure and the dignity of a woman brutally murdered, as did other media (such as the Gómez Leyva program and the newspaper *La Razón*).

In general (apart from these problematic leaks) the *SDP Noticias* coverage managed to distance itself from the official discourse and be plural. It brought together diverse voices that gave their opinion on the case: journalists, NGOs, the CNDH and the CDHDF, relatives, and friends who insisted on the crime solving or who directly criticized the PGR for its terrible investigation and leaks.

The coverage from 2016 to 2018 was scarce (twenty notes), but maintained the line that raised the need to investigate the case as a political crime. In particular, in 2016, it is worth highlighting a note that reported on the arrest of a commander blamed for the leaks to the newspapers and media *La Razón*, *Reforma*, and *Televisa*. Like-

wise, in 2017, five notes dealt with the HRC's recommendation to the PGR and the SCP of the city, through statements from family members and Nadia and Rubén's lawyers, which demonstrates the portal's interest in the case. As for the information generated by the media itself, notes on the commemorations were published, reminding readers of the suspicions towards Duarte as well as the threats to Rubén Espinosa or the controversial aspect of the case (about the failures in the investigations). Another important aspect of this coverage is that they highlighted the importance of considering the crime as the bursting of the security bubble that Mexico City supposedly was: from the beginning to 2018, they insisted on the refuge place loss in their notes.

Regarding the configuration of the characters, as it has been said, the coverage focused on Rubén Espinosa and made the women invisible, except for Nadia Vera. This portal built a favorable description of Rubén as a photojournalist and as a person. It placed him in the risky context of journalists in Veracruz so that his murder acquired a paradigmatic nature. Rubén, a committed, talented photographer, was or could have been the victim of a governor who could not stand criticism or freedom of expression and was already burdened with thirteen deaths of journalists before Rubén's.

As for Nadia Vera, she is the woman we had more information about and it was positive: student, professional, cultural promoter, human rights defender, Rubén's friend, and also threatened in Veracruz. Their figures are the ones that mainly illus-

trated the articles that were published about the case.

As for Alejandra Negrete, she remained invisible. Those who gave her some visibility were #Yotenoombro members, who demanded justice for her, as well as for Yeseenia Quiroz, both more “mentioned” among the group of female victims configured by the media itself. Thus, Yeseenia’s portrayal was also blurred.

The case of Mile Virginia Martín would be similar, except for the stigmatizing notes already mentioned. In the beginning, articles referred to her as “the one of Colombian nationality” (not “the Colombian”) and left her in the shadows. Through the published leaks, she was viciously re-victimized with the transcription of the first two accused statements. Later, the portal achieved some balance thanks to Mile’s brother’s words, depicting her as a great person, “generous”. Nonetheless, this stereotyped coverage, without any filter, reproduced the stigmatization combining factors of nationality, gender, occupation, appearance, and alleged links with crime.

In general terms, as far as it refers to women, the coverage lacked a gender perspective, although it was less stigmatizing than in *El Universal*, of course, and even more careful in the handling of appellatives and references than in *La Jornada*, for example.

Reflections on *SDP Noticias*’s coverage

SDP Noticias coverage tended to be objective (in the sense that it presents facts and diverse voices) but on three occasions it pub-

lished leaks that stigmatized Mile Virginia Martín.

We highlight 2 problematic issues:

1. Coverage focused on Rubén Espinosa and left the murdered women in the shadows. Nadia Vera appeared in second place and was actively portrayed but a closer link between her activism and Espinosa’s work was not established.

2. Mile’s coverage tended first to non-stigmatization, although it later did so on three occasions with the publication of leaks also disseminated in other media (such as *La Razón*).

SinEmbargo

The news portal *SinEmbargo* dedicated almost daily coverage to the Narvarte case during August 2015. From the first article on August 1st, 2015, titled “Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection of the Federal District finds the bodies of 4 women and 1 man in an apartment in the Narvarte neighborhood”, the portal offered information that depicts a brutal crime scene.

SinEmbargo interviewed Rubén Espinosa on July 1st, 2015, a month before the multi-homicide. In the articles published immediately after the photojournalist’s murder announcement, the media outlet made Rubén’s words visible: his analysis of the political context of Veracruz and the modus operandi of the Duarte de Ochoa government to threaten or keep the media under restraint. Throughout August, each article reported and expanded on the facts’ key points, and created a narrative that clarified the political scenario. In addition, through a journalistic investigation, the probable motives of the murders were suggested, without ruling out any line of investigation.

Throughout August 2015, inconsistencies in the PCR investigation were identified and questioned, in particular, the following:

1. They try to dismantle the narrative about “the Colombian” Mile Virginia Martin and her alleged involvement in the robbery motive.

2. Concerning the investigation for an alleged robbery, they observed that the Mustang vehicle was abandoned without having been stolen.

3. Regarding the only detainee - Daniel Pacheco Gutiérrez, 41 years old and with a criminal record - they stated that it seemed improbable that he had been found, four days after the crime, at his home, with no signs of having fled.

4. On August 6th, the portal published the full text of a WhatsApp conversation the photojournalist Rubén Espinosa Beceril started with a friend on Friday, July 31st, minutes before two o’clock in the afternoon (14:00 hours), and that lasted until 14:13 hours of that day. *SinEmbargo*’s journalists presented the PCJDF’s version as contradictory because what it said implied that the homicide and the four femicides were committed in less than 49 minutes. To substantiate the questions, they consulted the lawyers of the victim’s families for their opinion. These questions, raised by the portal from the beginning of the case, remain open to this day: What relevant statements have been made by key witnesses about the case? Why not consider Nadia’s activism as an element that placed her in a vulnerable situation? Why not consider the violent and insecure context of Veracruz, as well as the direct aggressions from officials against student and activist groups, including Nadia?

5. *SinEmbargo* questioned the pro-government media which spread information leaked by the Attorney General’s Office and endorsed the versions without questioning them. Among these media, the newspaper *La Razón* was cited: “Who, surely, leaked the version to *La Razón*? The recently appointed Mancera’s spokesman and press chief, Julián Andrade Jardí”. *SinEmbargo* emphasizes

that Andrade was the former deputy editor of this newspaper.

6. To present the Narvarte case as a political crime, the coverage sought to establish a command-line through a more complex framework: it encouraged the investigators to focus not only on Governor Duarte but also on his closest entourage (like the Public Security Secretaries of Veracruz).

7. Just like it criticized and discredited some media's official versions such as *La Razón*, *SinEmbargo* took up and diffused other independent journalistic investigations that could help strengthen other lines of investigation, such as Daniela Pastrana's journalistic investigation.

The mediatic construction of the victims

Thanks to background research, *SinEmbargo* gathered Nadia Vera's statements as an activist and Rubén Espinosa's ones as a reporter from all the time they lived in Veracruz. The newspaper created a case narrative by foregrounding the victims' words and provided elements for the political motive of the crime.

Undoubtedly, there is a much lower number of articles regarding the other three murdered women: Alejandra Negrete Avilés, Yesenia Quiroz Alfaro, and Mile Virginia Martín. However, those written about their lives tried to deconstruct the stereotypes presenting Alejandra Negrete only as a domestic worker, Yesenia Quiroz as a su-

perficial make-up artist, and Mile Virginia Martín as a model and sex worker.

The portal deconstructed the figure of Mile Virginia as a sex worker, by making visible the incongruities of evidences that would define her as such. Since the beginning of August, *SinEmbargo* published articles to describe her through the voice of people who knew her.

The portal described Alejandra Negrete not only as a cleaning worker in her forties, mother of three children, who needed to work on weekends; but also as a "pretty woman who liked dancing" like her sister presented her during an interview.

The media considered it a fundamental point -argued by the Support and Training Center for Household Employees Civil Association- to create a common narrative for the five people murdered in the Narvarte and thus give more strength to the case, instead of approaching the stories individually.

Reflections on *SinEmbargo's* coverage

Thanks to a well-founded journalistic investigation, the coverage described the probable motives for the murders, without ruling out any line of investigation. The homicide and the four femicides in Narvarte were framed in a context of generalized violence experienced by the press in the state of Veracruz. The coverage exposed the structural and generalized violence in the state, showing the results of impunity and prevailing corruption. It also highlighted the favorable conditions in Mexico City for crimi-

nal conduct, breaking the myth that a violent country can count with safe places.

It questioned the Federal Attorney General Office's official versions and the its investigation inconsistencies *via* two strategies:

1. It strengthened other lines of research. It disseminated independent journalistic investigations in order to create a narrative contrast capable of providing evidence of the case's contradictions, as well as criticizing and dismantling the official versions of some media outlets.

2. To present the Narvarte case as a political crime, *SinEmbargo's* coverage attempted to establish a line of command through the construction of a more complex framework, which implies the possible intervention of other state agents. Through this narrative modality, it was possible to establish the idea that a crime perpetrated with such brutality and in a place that was considered safe can be generated and reproduced in a context of impunity, where the victim can be anyone: even a domestic worker.

Also, *SinEmbargo* kept giving extensive coverage to the case, not only in August 2015. In 2016 and 2017, days before the events commemoration, it wrote about it again and detailed all the contradictions that were still characterizing the case. In 2018 however, there is an evident decrease in the news.

The portal created a case's narrative built by foregrounding the victims' words and provided valuable elements to support the political motive of the crime. We highlight that the coverage created a common narrative among the five murdered people,

which may give greater strength to the Narvarte case: Instead of approaching the five victims individually, it sought to create a common thread among their lives. *SinEmbargo* made visible not only civil organizations or journalists protests but civil society demands in general, thus affirming the idea that the Narvarte case deeply shook a broad sector of the citizenry.

Nevertheless, we point out two problematic aspects of the coverage:

1. No headline refers to the category "femicide" nor are the murders of the four women explicitly named as femicides in the different notes.

2. The gender perspective regarding femicide is weak.

Final thoughts

The “Narvarte case” coverage in the media we analyzed is diverse, but we observed some common characteristics. The lack of a gender perspective or its marginal incorporation in the analysis (in the best of cases) limited the definition of the four women murders as femicide. This implies that the specificity of violence against women, necessary to report the facts and place them in a context of social and institutional misogyny, is not clearly understood. The latter explains, in part, the stigmatization of Mile Virginia Martín with sexist allusions and accusations about her private life, a common strategy of the General Attorney Office that was reproduced in *El Universal* and other media that we have already mentioned.

Likewise, the contrast between the various coverage analyzed suggests the need to reflect on the meaning of right to information and to the truth when the possibility that a crime may have a political background exists and when it involves journalists and activists. To what extent does political power limit the right to information and the truth? Why do some media accept or bend to these limitations and others ignore or evade them?

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