GILLIAN'S PLACE

Responsible Media Reporting of Gender-Based Violence and Gendered Issues:
Guide for Journalists

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

At Gillian's Place, we acknowledge and respect that the land on which we do this work is the traditional and unceded territory of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Peoples. We recognize that the work we do would not be possible without the historic stewardship of this land by Indigenous Peoples.

Niagara region is home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples, and this territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties within the land protected by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum agreement.

In our work to end gender-based violence, we have to always remember that Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people are subjected to disproportionately high rates of violence. Indigenous women are 12 times more likely to be murdered or missing than non-Indigenous women and 16 times more likely to be murdered or missing than white women. This violence is due to colonization, the legacy of residential schools, historic and ongoing child welfare practices, misogyny, patriarchy, and racism.

We are committed to ending the systems that permit gender-based violence and that result in racially-marginalized women, especially Indigenous and Black women; gender- and sexually-diverse folks; disabled women; women experiencing poverty; sex workers; and women with mental health needs experiencing disproportionately higher rates and more severe forms of gender-based violence.

May our missing sisters feel our breath on their faces from all of the four directions. May they inhale our love, capture our strength, and find their way home to us.

Written by:

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(she/her)

Author's Note

Throughout this Guide, there will be discussion about many of the issues and concerns disproportionately impacting members of gender- and sexually-diverse* communities, racially-marginalized communities, and those with lived experience with disability and mental health needs. Where it is not explicitly discussed, either because there is a dearth of research or the cited research has not actively considered these communities, it should always be understood that these disproportionate impacts exist.

Throughout the Guide, the phrase 'gender- and sexually-diverse' will be used to mean 2SLGBTQQIA+, LGBTQ+, and any similar variations of acronyms used to identify members of two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual/aromantic communities.

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WHY A GUIDE FOR JOURNALISTS?

No matter the issue being discussed, media plays an important role – arguably the most important role – in forming public opinion.

How events and stories are covered by the media has the potential to shape and reinforce not only opinion among the general public but also political and public policy and how governments address or do not address, as the case may be, the events and issues that are being covered (Morton et al. 2017, p. 6). The media are "key actors in shaping public discourse" (Sutherland et al. 2016, p. 1).

The tasks of making decisions about what to cover, how to cover it, whom to interview, what questions to ask, and when and where to print or broadcast the story is understood as framing (Mendes 2015, p. 47). Trimble (2017) describes framing as the "deliberate process" of determining what issues are most important to cover and how, and what issues are not newsworthy or will receive little coverage (p. 9). Through the use of framing, media are able to simplify and organize events and issues that are novel or complex by drawing on commonly understood categories and general stereotypes (ibid.).

The two categories of media framing that are commonly discussed are "episodic framing" and "thematic framing" (Dharmaraj 2021, p. 186; Tolley 2016, p. 117). In the coverage of gender-based violence (GBV), the public is most frequently exposed to episodic framing, which is described as the tendency to write about or broadcast events and issues as though they are unconnected, deviant, and solely about individual actors and circumstances (Dharmaraj 2021, p. 186; Tolley 2016, p. 117). Thematic framing, on the other hand, is framing that makes clear the connections of how events and issues are impacted by and fit into the bigger picture of societal trends and patterns (Dharmaraj 2021, p. 186) or are written about in a way that makes clear their historical, social, and economic context (Tolley 2016, p. 117). It is this thematic framing that is preferred and advocated for by feminist researchers and activists.

The literature review that was undertaken for this project indicates that the way issues and events are framed impacts various sub-topics of GBV and gendered issues.

Beyond framing, there is the degree to which stories and events are covered by the media. In *Covering Violence: A Guide to Ethical Reporting about Victims and Trauma* (2006), Roger Simpson and William Cote

acknowledge and discuss the importance of what they refer to as Act III stories (p. 133). After telling the story of the trauma victim or survivor or covering the court proceedings, what is missing? Throughout the literature that was reviewed for this project, it repeatedly comes up that what is severely lacking is coverage that provides broader sociological, historical, and/or economic contexts for a whole host of events (ibid.), including GBV and gendered issues.

When we can work with media to discuss alternatives for how issues and events are framed, who is interviewed, what questions are asked, and when and where stories are printed or broadcast, we can address meaningful change toward responsible reporting of GBV and gendered issues. When the media focus on responses to violence, they have a beneficial effect on victim-survivors. When the media focus on gender equity, they have a beneficial effect on everyone.

This Guide for Journalists is not meant to suggest that journalists do not know how to do their jobs. Rather, it is intended to provide journalists and broadcasters with tools and resources they may not otherwise have at their disposal when reporting on gender-based violence and gendered issues.

Notes:

WHY FOCUS ON WOMEN AND OTHER EQUITY-DESERVING GROUPS?

Very often, when work is undertaken to eliminate gender-based violence or to increase gender equality, we encounter questions about men.

It is true that men experience violence and that some men are not seen as equal to other men. In every instance discussed in this Guide – from sexual violence to intimate partner violence to online harassment to who is seen as 'expert' by the media – it is women; Indigenous, Black, and racially-marginalized people; disabled people; people living in poverty; and gender- and sexually-diverse people who experience more frequent and more severe forms of violence or inequality, particularly if one's identity is intersectional, e.g., a Black woman or a disabled white woman experiencing poverty or a queer Indigenous woman.

In every single instance, cisgender, straight, white, non-disabled men may experience some of these issues; however, they never fare as badly as women and other equity-deserving people, and the margin between cisgender, straight, white, non-disabled men and everyone else is vast.

Data from Statistics Canada tell us that while men do experience intimate partner violence

(IPV), women and gender- and sexually-diverse folks are disproportionately impacted by the most severe forms of IPV and that, regardless of the gender of the victim, the perpetrator is most likely to be a man (Jaffray 2020; Roebuck et al. 2020; Cotter 2021a; Jaffray 2021).

Bruckert and Law (2018) caution that, though the overall rates of GBV appear to be nearly equal, the fact that "the frequency, severity, consequences and context of IPV are gender-specific with distinct victimiza-tion experiences for women and men" is obscured (p. 134). Overall, 44% of women and 36% of men report having experienced IPV at some point since they were 15 years old (Cotter 2021a, p. 5); however, women suffer the most severe and injurious forms of IPV, including being more likely to be murdered by their intimate partner (Bruckert & Law 2018, p. 134). Data from UNESCO indicates that a partner or ex-partner commits 38% of murders against women, compared to 5% against men (Impe 2019, p. 95).

Statistics Canada data tells us that, of solved cases, 47% of women who were homicide victims in 2019 were killed by their intimate partner, and 6% of men who were homicide victims were killed by their intimate partner (Cotter 2021a, p. 3); however, it is unclear in

the Statistics Canada data what the gender is of the perpetrators of the homicides against men, and we know from Roebuck et al. (2020) that 55% of IPV involving same-sex partners involved a male victim and a male accused (p. 10). We also know that, of the IPV homicides that occurred from 1998 to 2017 between same-sex partners, 86% of them included a male victim and male offender (Roebuck et al. 2020, p. 10). Further, according to Statistics Canada data on family violence, men make up nearly 3.5 times more of the accused than do women (Conroy et al. 2019, p. 6). None of this is to suggest that IPV or family violence perpetrated by women is not a problem, rather that regardless of the sex of the victim/survivor, the perpetrators are overwhelmingly men.

In terms of online harassment experienced by journalists, an Ipsos survey (2021) found that 72% of media workers had experienced some form of harassment while doing their work over the last year. The harassment ranged from online threats or harassment to threats or harassment in person or by phone to being physically attacked (p. 5). More alarming, though not surprising, is that women, younger people, racially-marginalized people, and gender- and sexually-diverse people face disproportionately more online harassment than other groups (cisgender, heterosexual, middle-aged white men), and the harassment takes more severe and personal tones (Canadian Association of Journalists 2021, Ipsos 2021). It should be noted that the reality that women, racially-

marginalized, gender- and sexually-diverse, disabled, and young people's experiences are more frequent and severe than those of cis, straight, white non-disabled men is in line with much of what Statistics Canada found in relation to their surveys about experiences of IPV and sexual violence (Cotter 2021a, Cotter 2021b, Cotter & Savage 2019, Heidinger 2021, Jaffray 2020, Savage 2021a, Savage 2021b).

In a nationwide study of media workers released in May 2022, Pearson and Seglins found that rates of harassment are increasing; non-binary and transgender people are more likely than other groups to experience online harassment; women "encountered harassment and violence at every turn – by email, on social media, in the field and in the newsroom" (Pearson and Seglins 2022, p. 30); and women were more likely to be sexually harassed, be on the receiving end of hate speech, and be threatened and intimidated (ibid.). Again, this study indicated that harassment was more prevalent for women, younger workers, racially-marginalized workers, and gender- and sexually-diverse workers (ibid., p. 30-31); and the Ipsos (2021) study indicated that most harassment took the form of sexualized messages or images; physical threats; or comments related to gender identity, ethnicity, or nationality (p. 7), making the harassment personal, rather than being legitimate criticism (Canadian Association of Journalists 2021). Women received 90% of harassment based on gender, 76% of

harassment that targeted their appearance, and 75% of harassment that targeted their Indigenous status (ibid., p. 31).

All of this drives home the point that GBV is rooted in "historically unequal power relations between men and women" (Impe 2019, p. 96) and due to a patriarchal system that results in domination-based relationships with men as those who are dominant (ibid.). Globally, the overwhelming majority of victims of GBV are women (ibid.).

Even when we move from GBV to realities of gender equality in media representation, Kassova (2020a) finds that media featured men as experts and commentators about COVID-19 news four times more frequently than they featured women (p. 34). It is suggested that one of the reasons for this underrepresentation of women is that "status quo bias" (ibid.) results in journalists relying on "established sources" (ibid.) who are much more likely to be men than women.

In Kassova's (2020b) broader report on women's representation in the media, she found that the expertise of women has historically been marginalized and under-valued (p. 88) and that in the ten-year time period between 2005 and 2015, less than 20% of experts or commentators involved in news coverage were women (ibid.). This underrepresentation is most pronounced in television news and newspapers (Kassova 2020b, p. 89). In *fixed it*, Jane Gilmore (2019) finds that less than one quarter of news stories broadcast or written include

women, and women are fewer than 15% of quoted experts (p. 37). Even when discussing gender equality, men are more likely to be featured in stories than women (Kassova 2020a, p. 49).

When discussing with Tom McConnell, talk show host and Assistant Program Director at News/Talk 610 CKTB, the issue of being challenged by 'what about the men?' types of questions in response to under-taking work to eliminate GBV, he gave this example (speaking in gender binary terms): "Ninety-eight percent of breast cancer is [experienced by] women, and if we solve that, we probably solve male breast cancer as well. … If it's so overwhelmingly one side, we can probably – with insights and knowl-edge – we can probably fix the small, little bit on the other side."

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WHAT IS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE?

UN Women's definition of gender-based violence is:

> Gender-based violence (GBV) refers to harmful acts directed at an individual or a group of individuals based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms. The term is primarily used to underscore the fact that structural, gender-based power differentials place women and girls at risk for multiple forms of violence. While women and girls suffer dispropor-tionately from GBV, men and boys can also be targeted. The term is also some-times used to describe targeted violence against LGBTQI+ populations, when referencing violence related to norms of masculinity/femininity and/or gender norms (2022).

UN Women further defines violence against women and girls as:

> Violence against women and girls is defined as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, coer-cion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. Violence against women and girls encompasses, but is not limited to, physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family or within the general community, and perpetrated or condoned by the State (2022).

These definitions of GBV are the two that much of the literature references.

In thinking about forms of violence that disproportionately impact women and gender- and sexually-diverse folks, there are some additional definitions that we need to consider that fit under the umbrella of GBV.

Femicide is recognized internationally as the most extreme form of violence against women and girls. Its definition varies across disciplines and world regions, but broadly captures the killing of women and girls, primarily by men, *because* they are female (Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability 2020). It includes, for example, the killing of intimate partners (current or former), the killing of mothers by sons, and the killing of girls by fathers or brothers.

Intimate partner violence is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as "any behavior within an intimate relation-ship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relation-ship, including acts of physical aggression,

sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviors" (Krug et al. 2002). Within intimate partner violence, several types of abusive behaviour fall into broad categories of coercion and threats; intimidation; emotional abuse; economic abuse; using children; using male privilege; isolation; and minimizing, denying, and blaming. The abuse can be physical, verbal, and/or psychological.

The University of Ottawa defines sexual violence as any sexual act or any act targeting a person's sexuality, gender identity or gender expression, whether physical or psychological in nature, that is committed, threatened, or attempted against a person without the person's consent (uOttawa 2022). Sexual violence includes a variety of acts, including rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, indecent exposure, stalking, voyeurism, sexual exploitation, etc.

It should be understood that there can be some overlap between the above definitions. For instance, intimate partner violence can include rape, and intimate partner violence can also lead to femicide.

Many women – particularly women politicians, women journalists, and women who speak on issues related to feminism – are subjected to on-line harassment, abuse, and violence. Ottawa-based Tech Without Violence describes online harassment, online violence, or cyberviolence as:

> online behaviours that criminally or non-criminally assault, or can lead to

assault, of a person's physical, psychological or emotional well-being. It can be done or experienced by an individual or group and happen online, through smartphones, during Internet games, etc. Even though cyberviolence takes place online, it affects people offline and has real world implications. Some examples of cyberviolence include but are not limited to: online harassment, threatening, bullying, blackmailing, unwanted sexting, stalking, hate speech, luring, non-consensual sharing of images, [and] recording & distribution of sexual assault (2016).

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WHAT ARE GENDERED ISSUES?

According to the European Institute for Gender Equality:

> Gender issues include all aspects and concerns related to women's and men's lives and situation in society, to the way they interrelate, their differences in access to and use of resources, their activities, and how they react to changes, interventions and policies (2014).

Strictly speaking, this reads as an accurate definition of gendered issues. Issues related to women's and men's lives.

Generally speaking, what comes to mind when you think of gendered issues?

Childcare. The gender wage gap. Sexual harassment. The double shift. Feminine hygiene products. The glass ceiling. Maternity leave. Low-paid pink-collar work. Lack of political representation. Domestic violence. Maternal health. Beauty standards.

When we hear about or think of gendered issues, we typically think of women's issues, and these are some of the things that we think about as impacting only women or as 'women's issues.' But what about snow plowing? What about how neighbourhoods are built? What about economic recovery? What about medical research?

While this Guide has a heavy emphasis on the types of violence faced by cis and trans women and non-binary folks, it is important to consider all of the ways in which issues are gendered and disproportionately impact groups that do not fit the mould of "the default male" (Criado Perez 2019, p. 1).

Discussing gendered issues and gender equality and ensuring gender equity in news coverage is not about being an activist journalist or taking a feminist approach; it is simply good journalism, as it aims to give everyone equitable representation in news coverage (Impe 2019, p. 121).

Recommendations

Throughout this Guide, it is noted that there is a lack of discussion about larger societal issues and structures that impact GBV in all its forms and various gendered issues. To resolve this, journalists must ask themselves and those they are interviewing some version of: "What else is going on here? What might I be missing in telling this story because of my social location, experience, or knowledge (or lack thereof)?"

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MEDIA REPORTING ON MISOGYNY

Throughout the literature review conducted for this project, there was discussion about the media's reluctance or failure to frame issues and events within the broader context of misogyny.

There is a need to discuss the media reporting (or lack thereof) on misogyny because it is the effect of a patriarchal system of oppression.

In *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*, Kate Manne (2018) gives a very accessible explanation of misogyny. Claiming that women are subjected to misogyny can be demonstrated quite simply when a male counterpart is held up as a comparator. Holding fixed the intersections of identity related to race, class, sexuality, age, ability, etc., one need only demonstrate that the male counterpart is not or would not be subjected to the same hostility in terms of tone, quantity, frequency, or intensity. The hostility does not need to be disproportionately directed at women. It need only be gendered along some dimension. So, whilst a man or some men might be subjected to as much hostility, it is the features of the hostility (as noted above) that classify it as misogyny (pp. 69-70). For example, in Niagara, some male politicians

have had their homes vandalized with graffiti. None of the graffiti included gendered slurs, as did the graffiti found scrawled across the side of a woman politician's home.

There are a number of movements that encourage misogyny and have not been reported on appropriately in and of themselves or when they lead to deadly events.

Involuntary celibates (Incels). Pickup artists (PUAs). Men going their own way (MGTOW). Men's rights activists (MRAs).

This section focuses primarily on events tied to the incel movement and how they were (or were not) covered by the media. Still, it is important to define each of these movements and that they are connected to the wider concept of the "manosphere" (Bates 2021, pp. xiv-xv). In discussing this 'manosphere' and defining the movements within it, we hope to shed some light on the fact that the violence perpetrated by men against women and gender- and sexually-diverse people is not a series of aberrant, unrelated events, but are part of a societal structure that permits or, at least, does not adequately address and prevent the harms of patriarchy and misogyny.

Incels: Incels are a community of men who blame women – and the men who date

those women – for all that is wrong with their life. They are "the most violent corner of the so-called manosphere" (Bates 2021, p. 1), though there is a great deal of overlap between the various movements and communities. Incels are, because of being romantically/sexually rejected by women, "devoted to a violent hatred of women" (ibid.). It is also important to note that this community is generally made up of a majority of members who hold views that are far-right, white nationalist, or white suprema-cist in nature (ibid., p. 11). Women of colour are particularly targeted with violence and harassment, though they are not the objects of sexual desire for these men. Rather, they are women who would not be permitted to "breed" (ibid., p. 14) if incels had their way. The entire focus of these groups is violence against women for depriving men of that to which they feel entitled. Community members engage in shockingly little self-reflection to consider why they might be experiencing this rejection.

PUAs:

Pickup artists, as a movement, are not what we imagine when we think of cheesy pickup lines proffered by people in bars, hoping to get a date and maybe start a relationship. Instead, PUAs are a multi-million dollar, international industry of self-proclaimed experts (ironically, usually single) who sell their tips, tricks, boot camps, and books to men who have been unlucky in their romantic lives and are looking for advice.

Maybe this, so far, does not sound especially negative; however, when you do a deep dive into what is being sold, it ends up being advice on how to harass, stalk, and sexually assault women (Bates 2021, p. 56). While "incels despair of ever having sex, PUAs pursue it relentlessly" (ibid., p. 55), including if that means harming women to get the sex to which they feel entitled.

MGTOW:

Men going their own way are men who have decided that they want to be far away from women or, at least, far away from mean-ingful romantic relationships with women. They are men who might have friendships or one-night stands with women but gener-ally adhere to an isolationist approach to life (Bates 2021, p. 88). In comparison to the other communities/movements, MGTOWs are the least harmful, which is different from saying they are harmless, as their ideology is still based in the belief that women are "toxic and dangerous" (Bates 2021, p. 88).

MRAs:

The men's rights activist movement was co-opted and redirected from what used to be the "men's liberation movement" (Bates 2021, p. 110), which was supportive of feminist principles and intended to decon-struct harmful stereotypes and behaviours that are now commonly referred to as 'toxic masculinity' and the ways in which patri-archy also harms men. In the early 1990s,

the movement began opposing feminists and became a "reaction to diminishing social status of cisgender heterosexual white men, and the emergence of feminist and multi-cultural activism as a mainstream political force" (ibid., p. 113). Today, the online movement that uses this identifier (MRA) is just one part of an interconnected web of social media groups, forums, and organizations that portray women as conniving liars who are begging and deserve to be raped or worse (ibid., pp. 116-119).

These are all movements that blame women for their various woes and failings in life. These are all movements that actively promote the hatred of women. These are all men who hate women. Men who follow these movements have killed women for being women.

On December 6, 1989, Marc Lepine walked into a classroom at École Polytechnique screaming 'you're all feminists' before separating the women from the men and opening fire. He killed 14 women and injured ten women and four men.

It was years before this event began being discussed in and by the media as being anti-feminist or framed in the broader context of misogyny (Northcott 2019).

Influenced by Elliot Rodger, who – on May 23, 2014 – killed six people and injured fourteen in an act of revenge against all of the women who would not have sex with him, Alek Minassian – on April 23, 2018 – drove a van into a crowd of people on a busy Toronto street corner, killing ten and injuring 15 (Bates 2021, p. 36). Of the ten dead, eight were women, and – when interviewed by police – Minassian indicated that he was acting as part of the incel movement and taking revenge on women for rejecting him (ibid.).The media did not frame the events and background information leading to those events as misogyny.

A little more than one year later – on June 3, 2019 – Alex Stavropolous went to a Home Depot in Sudbury, Ontario, purchased a package of utility knives and then waited in the parking lot until a woman with a little girl and a baby were walking by (Bates 2021, p. 37). Stavropolous attacked them, causing injury to the woman and baby, because he "was angry at white women," and he wanted to know what it felt like to kill a little girl (ibid.).

The events were reported by many media outlets as 'random' even though he clearly told police that he was angry with white women for not having sex with him. Whilst the specific victims may have been randomly selected, the act itself was planned…and not framed by the media as misogyny.

Finally, although several more cases could be discussed, early in 2020, a 17-year-old boy – "inspired by the incel community" (Bates 2021, p. 38) – murdered Ashley Noell Arzaga and stabbed another woman in a Toronto massage parlour. In this instance, while the media reporting is light on discussion of misogyny, the police did lay the first known charge of 'incel' terrorism (ibid.).

As mentioned above, many more events could be cited and discussed. Even without citing and discussing those events, it remains clear that these movements and 'communities' must be taken seriously and when events like this happen – and there is no reason to think there will not be more – the media needs to consider the wider societal context that motivates or influences these events.

Reporting these stories as one-off aberrant events that are based on the actions of a single person who may or may not have mental health needs is irresponsible and dangerous. Particularly with respect to reporting these incidents as being due to mental illness, journalists need to consider how that stigmatizes people with mental health needs. They need also to consider and understand that people with mental health needs are far more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators. The reporting on these events are prime examples of how improvements in reporting could positively impact public understanding and opinion and potentially influence political and public policy.

As Bates (2021) states, "the media has the capacity to help delegitimize and undermine hate-fueled extremist ideologies, evicting them from general conversation, rather than propelling them to greater prominence" (p. 331).

And that will save women's lives.

Notes:

MEDIA REPORTING ON INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND TWO-SPIRIT PEOPLE

Within many topics included in this Guide, the differential and disproportionate impacts of various issues on Indigenous women and Two-Spirit folks are noted; however, it is important to dedicate a section of this Guide to a specific discussion of Indigenous issues and concerns; how they are represented in the media; and suggestions for ensuring improved representation.

The legacy of residential schools, Canada's child welfare system (including the Sixties Scoop and ongoing practices), gendered discrimination imposed through the Indian Act, the refusal to acknowledge Treaty rights, and a myriad of other systemic and structural issues continue to result in trauma and attempts to heal from integenerational trauma.

It is due to these genocidal acts and policies and their multi-generational impacts that Indigenous women and girls face violent and non-violent victimization at higher rates than any other population group in Canada (Heidinger 2021).

Some alarming statistics from Statistics Canada's 2018 survey of the experiences of intimate partner violence among First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women tell us:

- 61% of Indigenous women were more likely to experience some form of intimate partner violence compared with non-Indigenous women (44%);

- Indigenous women are more likely to experience each specific behaviour of intimate partner violence that was measured in the survey (i.e., every behaviour measured under the broader categories of emotional, financial, psychological, physical, and sexual abuse);

- Indigenous women are more likely than non-Indigenous women to have had two or more abusive partners in their lifetime (40% compared to 29%);

- 44% of Indigenous women experienced physical abuse by an intimate partner in their lifetime compared to 25% of non-Indigenous women; and

- Indigenous women are twice as likely as non-Indigenous women to experience sexual abuse by an intimate partner (Heidinger 2021).

When we consider the experiences of Indigenous gender- and sexually-diverse folks, we find from the same survey that:

- 86% of gender- and sexually-diverse Indigenous women and Two-Spirit folks experienced intimate partner violence in their lifetime (compared to 59% of non-Indigenous gender- and sexually-diverse women and non-binary folks); and

- the intersection of Indigenous identity with other socioeconomic and demographic characteristics adds risk and increases vulnerability to experiences of violence (Heidinger 2021).

In addition to intimate partner violence, which tends to happen out of sight and is often not reported to police (it should be noted that Indigenous women and Two-Spirit folks have a traumatic history with law enforcement that continues to this day), we know from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019a) that "Indigenous women and girls are 12 times more likely to be murdered or missing than any other women in Canada, and *16 times* more likely than [white] women" (p. 55, emphasis in original). We also know that, even where Indigenous Peoples are less than 10% of the population, the visible sex trade is 90% Indigenous children and youth (ibid.). An Ontario study found that 73% of Two-Spirit and gender-diverse Indigenous Peoples had experienced violence in some form due to transphobia. For 43% of Two-Spirit and gender-diverse

Indigenous Peoples, that violence was physical and/or sexual (ibid, p. 56).

In Chapter 1 of *Reclaiming Power and Place*, Dr. Robyn Bourgeois, Vice Provost, Indigenous Engagement and Associate Professor at Brock University, asks, "What is the source of the ideas that [make] i[t] okay to murder Indigenous women and girls?" (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 2019a, p. 102), and that is where and how the media can play a significant role.

Through responsible media reporting and building understanding of the experiences of Indigenous Peoples; the gendered experiences of Indigenous women, girls, and gender- and sexually-diverse folks; the violence to which they are subjected; and that they go missing and are murdered at much higher rates than any other population group in Canada, we can work toward achieving systemic and institutional change.

Several authors have written about the differences in media coverage related to portrayals of Indigenous victims and survivors of violence and non-Indigenous (specifically, white) victims and survivors of violence (Cripps 2021; Gilchrist 2010; Jiwani 2008; Jiwani & Young 2006; Strega et al. 2014).

The stories that are told (or not) and how they are told is crucial in examining the real-life consequences of actions that are taken or behaviour and attitudes that are expressed on the basis of what is being amplified in the

news media (Jiwani 2008, p. 2). The path to justice for Indigenous communities includes the ways in which Indigenous victims and survivors are either portrayed in or ignored by the media (Anderson & Robertson 2011; National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 2019a, p. 116).

Very often, stories of missing Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit folks are not told by the media or they are told in very limited ways with little exposure, e.g., being printed on the back page of a section of the newspaper (Cripps 2021; Gilchrist 2010; Jiwani 2008; Jiwani & Young 2006; Strega et al. 2014). At other times, media play a crucial role in spurring police onto taking Indigenous families seriously and undertaking investigations, as it is only when the case of a missing Indigenous woman gets media coverage that police begin to investigate (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 2019a, p. 651).

On average, missing or murdered white women receive three times more media coverage than do their Indigenous counterparts (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 2019a, p. 388; Gilchrist 2010), and it is Indigenous victims and survivors of violence who are most frequently blamed for the violence to which they are subjected or deemed unworthy of media coverage (Cripps 2021; Gilchrist 2010; Jiwani 2008; Jiwani & Young 2006; Strega et al. 2014).

The media frames that rely on the most culturally resonant terms about Indigenous communities are the most likely to influence readers and listeners by using language and images that are highly salient in the culture (Jiwani and Young 2006, p. 902). In addition to these sorts of media frames that perpetuate common stereotypes of Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people, media coverage that does get written or broadcast tends to frame the male perpetrators as deviant examples of masculinity (ibid., p. 901). This framing of GBV as aberrant behaviour of individual/independent actors not influenced by the broader societal context of misogyny and patriarchy is common across all story-telling about victims and survivors of GBV.

The circumstances that lead to the higher rates of violence perpetrated against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people are exceptionally rarely framed in the context of the ramifications of colonialism, racism, misogyny, class, etc. Doing so would lead to a greater understanding of the lived experiences of Indigenous women, girls, and gender- and sexually-diverse people and lead to potential solutions to reduce and eliminate the violence.

Recommendations

The recommendations for more responsible media reporting about Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people begin with the Calls to Action and a Call to Justice from the

Final Report on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) and the Final Report on the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2109b), respectively.

We understand that individual media outlets and, certainly, individual journalists cannot deliver on the full scope of the Calls to Action (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015) and Call to Justice (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 2019b). We include them here with the hope of raising further awareness and to have them help inform the work journalists do toward reporting responsibly on GBV and gender issues, particularly as they disproportionately impact Indigenous Peoples.

Final Report on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action #84-86

84. We call upon the federal government to restore and increase funding to the CBC/Radio Canada, to enable Canada's national public broadcaster to support reconciliation, and be properly reflective of the diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to:

   i. Increasing Aboriginal programming, including Aboriginal-language speakers.

   ii. Increasing equitable access for Aboriginal peoples to jobs, leadership positions, and professional development opportunities within the organization.

   iii. Continuing to provide dedicated news coverage and online public information resources on issues of concern to Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians, including the history and legacy of residential schools and the reconciliation process.

85. We call upon the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, as an independent non-profit broadcaster with programming by, for, and about Aboriginal peoples, to support reconciliation, including but not limited to:

   i. Continuing to provide leadership in programming and organizational culture that reflects the diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples.

   ii. Continuing to develop media initiatives that inform and educate the Canadian public, and connect Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

86. We call upon Canadian journalism programs and media schools to require education for all students on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015, pp. 292-297

Final Report on National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Call to Justice #6.1

6.1 We call upon all media, news corporations and outlets, and, in particular, government-funded corporations and outlets; media unions, associations, and guilds; academic institutions teaching journalism or media courses; governments that fund such corporations, outlets, and academic institutions; and journalists, reporters, bloggers, film producers, writers, musicians, music producers, and, more generally, people working in the entertainment industry to take decolonizing approaches to their work and publications in order to educate all Canadians about Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. More specifically, this includes the following:

i. Ensure authentic and appropriate representation of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, inclusive of diverse Indigenous cultural backgrounds, in order to address negative and discriminatory stereotypes.

ii. Support Indigenous people sharing their stories, from their perspectives, free of bias, discrimination, and false assumptions, and in a trauma-informed and culturally sensitive way.

iii. Increase the number of Indigenous people in broadcasting, television, and radio, and in journalist, reporter, producer, and executive positions in the entertainment industry, including, and not limited to, by:

○ providing educational and training opportunities aimed at Indigenous inclusion; and

○ providing scholarships and grants aimed at Indigenous inclusion in media, film, and music industry-related fields of study.

iv. Take proactive steps to break down the stereotypes that hypersexualize and demean Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, and to end practices that perpetuate myths that Indigenous women are more sexually available and "less worthy" than non-Indigenous women because of their race or background.

National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 2019b, pp. 187-188

In addition to the recommendations above, some of which can be implemented by local media outlets, we recommend that journalists develop relationships with Indigenous people and communities, including staff at Friendship Centres and with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit reserve communities, so that when journalists are looking for information or context about issues or events, they are not making a cold call to someone or to a group with whom they have not developed a trusting and mutually respectful relationship.

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MEDIA REPORTING ON FEMICIDE

For more than 30 years, the Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses (OAITH) has been working to ensure that the lives of those lost to femicide are remembered and to raise awareness about the violence experienced by women, girls, and gender- and sexually-diverse individuals at the hands of men (OAITH 2022).

For the last several years, in addition to compiling lists of femicide victims, OAITH has been conducting annual media analyses of the type of media coverage of each crime. In developing their methodology for these analyses, they identified eight common media frames – four positive and four negative (Morton et al. 2017, p. 9).

As an example of the impact of framing and when discussing femicide, which is "the intentional murder of women because they are women" (Hancock 2021, p. 1), Hancock makes clear that media framing impacts social awareness and understanding in positive or negative ways by increasing understanding or minimizing the issue and reinforcing commonly held – but incorrect – points of view (ibid., p.4).

The four positive frames developed by OAITH and their operationalization are:

- **Victim humanized:** describing and remembering the victim positively and acknowledging how she impacted the lives of others

- **Labelled a femicide:** labelling the murder as femicide or an example of violence against women

- **Picture of victim:** including a picture of the femicide victim in the news report

- **Gendered social problem:** contextualizing femicide as a social or political problem rooted in gender inequality and women's subordinate status (Morton et al. 2017, pp. 9-10).
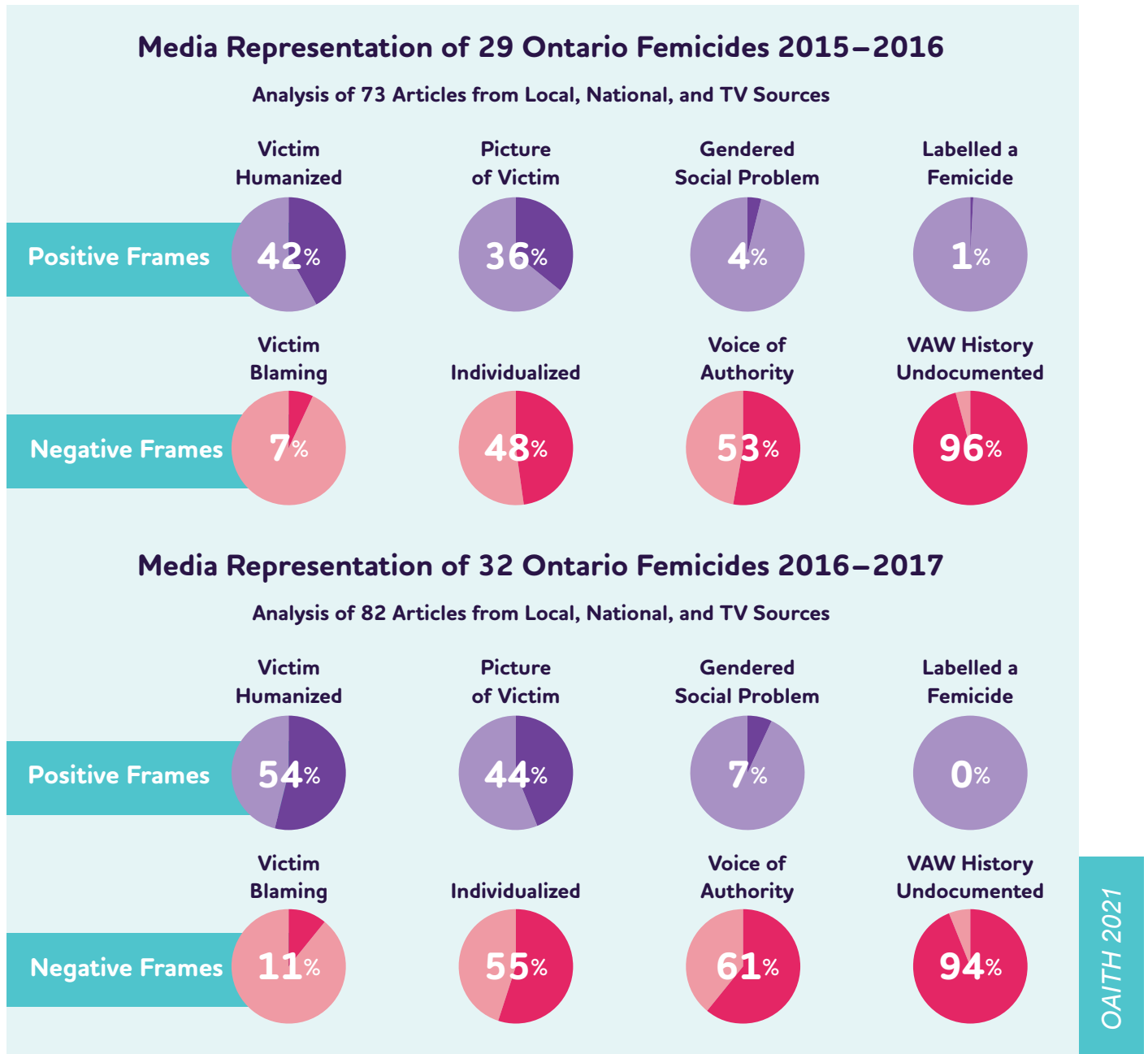
The four negative frames and their operationalization are:

- **Victim blaming:** attributing blame to the victim directly by emphasizing her role in the femicide or indirectly by excusing or justifying the perpetrator's actions

- **Voice of authority:** relying on traditional voices of authority, such as law enforcement, for interviews over the voices of friends, family, or experts in/advocates against GBV

- **Individualized:** portraying the incident as an isolated or seemingly random event

- **Violence against women (VAW) history undocumented:** failing to address any history of power and control, abuse, and/or violence by the perpetrator. This is particularly relevant as research suggests that a history of violence is one of the most significant risk-factors for femicide (Morton et al. 2017, p. 10).
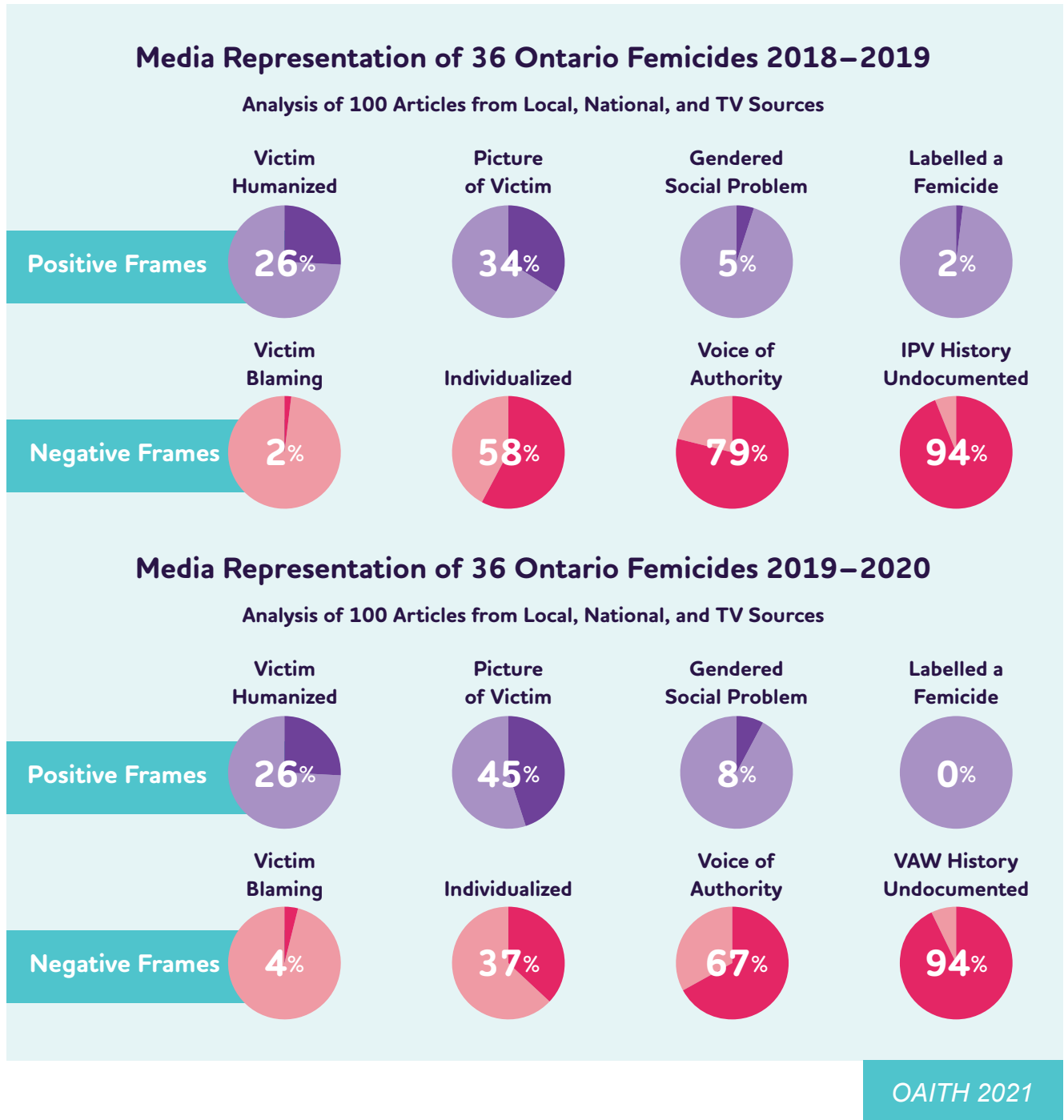
Every year, OAITH finds that – on average – the negative frames are far more pervasive than the positive frames, being used at nearly twice the rate overall (Morton et al. 2017, p. 11).

Following are infographics of media representation of Ontario femicides comparing the use of positive frames and negative frames:

Media Representation of 29 Ontario Femicides 2015–2016

Analysis of 73 Articles from Local, National, and TV Sources

	Victim Humanized	Picture of Victim	Gendered Social Problem	Labelled a Femicide
Positive Frames	42%	36%	4%	1%

	Victim Blaming	Individualized	Voice of Authority	VAW History Undocumented
Negative Frames	7%	48%	53%	96%

Media Representation of 32 Ontario Femicides 2016–2017

Analysis of 82 Articles from Local, National, and TV Sources

	Victim Humanized	Picture of Victim	Gendered Social Problem	Labelled a Femicide
Positive Frames	54%	44%	7%	0%

	Victim Blaming	Individualized	Voice of Authority	VAW History Undocumented
Negative Frames	11%	55%	61%	94%

OAITH 2021

Note:

There is no infographic available from OAITH's reports for 2017–2018.

Media Representation of 36 Ontario Femicides 2018–2019

Analysis of 100 Articles from Local, National, and TV Sources

	Victim Humanized	Picture of Victim	Gendered Social Problem	Labelled a Femicide
Positive Frames	26%	34%	5%	2%

	Victim Blaming	Individualized	Voice of Authority	IPV History Undocumented
Negative Frames	2%	58%	79%	94%

Media Representation of 36 Ontario Femicides 2019–2020

Analysis of 100 Articles from Local, National, and TV Sources

	Victim Humanized	Picture of Victim	Gendered Social Problem	Labelled a Femicide
Positive Frames	26%	45%	8%	0%

	Victim Blaming	Individualized	Voice of Authority	VAW History Undocumented
Negative Frames	4%	37%	67%	94%

OAITH 2021

The most prevalent positive frames across all four years depicted above are **victim humanized** and **picture of victim**. This is good news; however, the negative frames are, overall, far more prevalent, including: **individualized** or making it seem like a random or one-off event tied to the behaviour of specific individuals, rather than in the context of a larger social problem; relying on the **voice of authority**, rather than interviewing family, friends, and experts in GBV; and – overwhelmingly – not discussing a perpetrator's **history of GBV**, even to say that there is no history (which would be extraordinarily unusual, but would still work toward framing GBV and femicide as a broader societal issue).

The least commonly used frames are: **labelled a femicide**, framing the murder as a **gendered social problem**, and **victim blaming**. Failure to label these murders as femicides or frame them as a gendered social problem obscures the gendered nature of these crimes. When we ignore that this is a gendered issue, we limit the public's ability to fully understand the issue and advocate for better public policy. In the case of victim-blaming, while the percentages are low, it should be noted that they are still too high. Women and gender- and sexually-diverse folks who are Indigenous, living in deep poverty, living with mental health needs, etc. are far too often blamed for their circumstances, as are women and gender- and sexually-diverse folks who stayed with their abuser after he became

violent (Bruckert & Law 2018; Hancock 2021; Morton et al. 2017; National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 2019).

The annual media analyses from OAITH tells us that media are not currently reporting in a way that activists, experts, service providers, and victims/survivors and their families feel is responsible in addressing the issue of femicide as the broader societal issue that it is. Data from Statistics Canada and other sources noted throughout this Guide make it abundantly clear that GBV that leads to femicide is a gender issue. It is the result of patriarchy and misogyny, and the aftermath costs billions of dollars each year in health-care, mental health services, emergency shelters, and justice system resources.

When the media begins to frame femicide in the appropriate and necessary context, it will provide the general public with a better understanding of the issues, and it will help to inform public opinion and lead to better public policy and prevention methods.

Recommendations

1. Use the term femicide.

2. Language Do's and Don'ts

   i. Using non-sensationalist language, avoiding unnecessarily graphic portrayals of violent crime

   ii. No negative language to describe victim

   iii. No sympathetic language to describe perpetrator

   iv. Use correct terminology, name VAW as a crime, avoid euphemisms

   v. Avoid language that implies mutuality in the VAW, i.e., "domestic dispute"

   vi. Recognize power of the headline and do not reinforce gender stereotypes/myths

   vii. Use active language to reinforce perpetrator accountability & counter perpetrator excusing comments or descriptors of the perpetrator that imply that they are an exceptional deviation from the norm (i.e., "monster")

3. Include contact information for local and provincial resources for support for survivors of violence (e.g., crisis lines) and include typical warning signs and obstacles for women seeking to leave abusive partners

4. Contextualize femicide and VAW as a social problem not an isolated incident (use thematic framing) to link to gender inequality, misogyny, and prior violence

5. Examine femicide and VAW as social problems in reports that are not incident-based but look at the issue thematically

6. Include statistics & other contextual information including intersectionality. The inclusion of local statistics in particular may challenge misconceptions of certain areas as "crime-free" and therefore free of VAW

   i. History of prior male violence against women is number 1 risk factor and often relevant

7. Use appropriate imagery, (considering the type and placement) to ensure they do not objectify women

8. Use Expert Sources. Consult gender-based violence advocates and choose survivors and/or survivor advocates as sources & do not rely on "authorized knowers" or traditional voices including police, criminal justice system and state actors, court reports

9. Avoid using sources of information who are distant acquaintances from the victim and/or perpetrator and are unlikely to know background and circumstances. Do use close friends and family members

10. Do not assign responsibility for violence to women. Do not victim blame or exonerate the perpetrator – this can include:

i. Challenging myths that exonerate the perpetrator and/or blame the survivor and countering these portrayals

ii. Avoid perpetuating misunderstandings and stereotypes of who is at risk of VAW

iii. Avoid referencing women's behaviour before, during or after VAW

11. Report on non-physical manifestations of coercive control, many of which build up to the more severe forms of violence that are typically considered newsworthy

Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses 2021, pp. 2-9

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MEDIA REPORTING ON INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

When we consider the experiences of women and gender- and sexually-diverse folks who are Indigenous or who have lived experience with physical or cognitive disabilities, we see much higher rates of intimate partner violence (IPV) as well as higher likelihoods of having more than one partner in their lifetime who is abusive (Heidinger 2021; Savage 2021a).

To further illustrate the varying rates of IPV, here are some recent statistics:

- more than half of women with a disability have experienced IPV (Savage 2021a, p. 4);

- 74% of Indigenous women with disabilities and 71% of gender- and sexually-diverse people with disabilities have experienced some form of IPV (Savage 2021a, p. 9);

- Arab (44%), Black (42%), and Latinx (47%) women experience higher rates of IPV than does the total of visible minority women (29%) (Cotter 2021b, p. 5);

- 61% of Indigenous women have experienced IPV (Cotter 2021b, p. 4; Heidinger 2021, p. 4);

- 3 in 5 trans women experienced IPV since the age of 16 (Trans PULSE Canada 2021);

- 56% of trans women had a partner that insulted, swore, shouted, or yelled at them (Trans PULSE Canada 2021);

- 29% of trans women had a partner push, shove, shake, or pin them down (Trans PULSE Canada 2021);

- 24% of trans women were threatened with harm by a partner (Trans PULSE Canada 2021);

- 33% of trans women were forced or pressured to engage in sexual activity when they did not want to (Trans PULSE Canada 2021);

- 86% of gender- and sexually-diverse women experienced lifetime IPV (Heidinger 2021, p. 6);

- young women (18-24) are five times more likely to report that their partner sexually assaulted them (Savage 2021b, p. 4); and

- young women are three times more likely to be physically assaulted by their intimate partner (Savage 2021b, p. 4).

A common theme throughout the literature is that, regardless of the target of GBV or IPV, the media often reports incidents as though they are individual or one-off events, rather than connected to patriarchy, colonialism, racism, misogyny, class, able-ness, etc. Systemic and structural issues are ignored and responsibility is placed on the behaviour of individuals – sometimes the perpetrators, but often the victims or survivors.

When we talk about the importance of the media's role in shaping public policy and opinion, it is important to note that dealing with the aftermath of IPV was estimated in 2009 to cost more than $7.4 billion annually (Howard 2021a, p. 2). Adjusted for inflation, that number is $9.8 billion at the time of writing this Guide. Furthermore, more than half of women who have experienced IPV said at least one abusive act happened at or close to their workplace (ibid). Of women who experienced IPV, nearly 40% said it made it challenging to get to work and 8.5% indicated they had lost employment because of it, meaning IPV threatens women's ability to maintain economic independence (ibid.) and threatens to drive them into poverty, or further into poverty, because of that loss.

When media does not address the wider systemic and structural issues related to IPV, these economic losses are also framed as the victim or survivor's fault and there is no larger policy discussion about the costs (healthcare, justice, etc.) of dealing with IPV after women have been harmed.

Recommendations

1. Provide resources and fact sheets for journalists looking for definitions and statistics to give context to reporting on individual instances of violence.

2. Ensure accountability for domestic violence is assigned to perpetrators.

3. Require accuracy in terminology, such as naming domestic violence clearly, rather than calling it a 'tragedy' without naming the alleged crime.

4. Avoid sensationalism.

5. Eschew stock images that perpetuate myths about domestic violence.

Gilmore 2019,
p. 256

Notes:

Responsible Media Reporting of Gender-Based Violence & Gendered Issues: Guide for Journalists

MEDIA REPORTING ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE

"Women should avoid dressing like sluts in order not to be victimized."

That is the sage advice of Toronto Police Constable Michael Sanguinetti when he was speaking to a small group of students at York University.

What was she wearing? How much did she have to drink? Why was she there? What was she doing walking alone? Why did she leave her drink unattended? Didn't she know what was going to happen if she went there? How hard did she fight to try to stop it? Did she even say 'no'? Why didn't she report it right away?

These are the questions that, while maybe not asked outright by the media (though, sometimes, they are), are certainly answered in much media reporting about sexual violence. And they are the questions that Constable Sanguinetti was alluding to when he suggested that women avoid dressing like "sluts."

All of these efforts to victim-blame even whilst women live by a "rape schedule" (Valenti 2007, p. 63) to avoid being victimized. A "rape schedule" is the way in which women organize their lives and take the precautions they take to not get raped (ibid.).

Walk with keys between your fingers. Talk on the phone (or pretend to) when you are walking alone. Cross the street if you are being followed by someone or you get a bad 'vibe' from the man walking toward you. Look up, but do not make eye contact. Do not go for a run at night. If you do go for a run at night, do not run alone. If you do run alone, do not listen to music (so you can hear someone approaching).

Returning to data from Statistics Canada, we learn that:

- women and men are victimized based on their gender identity, gender expression, or perceived gender (Cotter & Savage 2019, p. 3);

- women are more likely to experience sexual assault, unwanted sexual behaviour in public, unwanted behaviour online, and unwanted behaviour in the workplace, and women were more likely to experience multiple incidents (Cotter & Savage 2019, p. 3);

- young women and gender- and sexually-diverse women are most likely to experience unwanted sexual behaviour in public (Cotter & Savage 2019, p. 9);

- gender- and sexually-diverse men were four times more likely to experience

unwanted sexual behaviour in public than cisgender heterosexual men (Cotter & Savage 2019, p. 9);

- 88% of women and 62% of men indicated that unwanted sexual behaviour in public was most often perpetrated by a man they did not know and who was acting alone (Cotter & Savage 2019, p. 9);

- risk factors that increased the likelihood of sexual assault include being young, being gender- and/or sexually-diverse, being Indigenous, and/or having a disability (Cotter & Savage 2019, p. 16);

- 63% of bisexual women and 58% of bisexual men have been sexually or phys-ically assaulted (Cotter & Savage 2019, p. 16), with women being more likely to experience sexual assault and men being more likely to experience physical assault (ibid., p. 17), and women more likely to experience multiple incidents of assault (ibid., p. 18);

- 95% of women who had been sexually assaulted and 87% of men who had been physically assaulted experienced that violence at the hands of a man (Cotter & Savage 2019, p. 19);

- 44% of women who had experienced sexual assault said the perpetrator was a stranger or someone they know only by sight whilst another 44% said their perpe-trator was a friend or acquaintance (Cotter & Savage 2019, p. 20), the remaining 12% of women who have experienced

sexual assault know their perpetrator in some other way (co-worker, etc.);

- gender- and sexually-diverse people are more than twice as likely as cisgender heterosexual people to experience unwanted sexual behaviours in public, online, and at work (Jaffray 2020, p. 3);

- trans folks are more likely than cis folks to experience unwanted sexual behaviours in public, online, and at work (Jaffray 2020, p. 3);

- bisexual women are four times more likely than heterosexual women to have been sexually or physically assaulted (Jaffray 2020, p. 7); and

- gender- and sexually-diverse people are more likely to suffer injuries from both sexual assaults and physical assaults than their cisgender heterosexual counter-parts (Jaffray 2020, p. 7).

Given these statistics and what we know about systems of patriarchy, misogyny, racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and other forms of stigma and oppression, we know that individuals who commit sexual assault do it because of a power imbalance. They commit these acts because they perceive their victim as unequal to or lesser than them (Howard 2021c).

Sexual violence does not happen because the victim or survivor 'asked for it.' It is because of *advice* like Constable Sanguinetti's; the broader issues of victim-blaming; and the lack of understanding of

the societal context that permits sexual violence that Heather Jarvis and Sonya Barnett created 'SlutWalk' (Mendes 2015, p. 1). We know that what someone is wearing has nothing to do with whether or not sexual violence is perpetrated against them (Brockman & Wyandt-Hiebert 2013). We know this because girls and women of all ages, from all walks of life, in any variety of scenarios, no matter what they are wearing – from bikinis to burkas, from summer dresses to sweat pants, from onesies and diapers on babies and toddlers to long skirts and saris on teenage girls and senior citizens – are sexually assaulted and, it is exceedingly important to point out, most often by someone the victim/survivor knows (Cotter & Savage 2019, p. 20; Valenti 2007, p. 64).

In the same way that the impacts of IPV come with significant costs, dealing with the aftermath of sexual violence was esti-mated in 2009 to cost more than $4.9 billion annually (Howard 2021c, p. 2). Adjusted for inflation, that number is $6.5 billion at the time of writing this Guide. And sexual assault is the only violent crime in Canada that is not in decline (ibid.).

When sexual violence is not reported on by the media in a responsible manner, feelings of guilt, shame, embarrassment, and concerns about not being believed or of being dismissed (Howard 2021c, pp. 8-9) are further entrenched or legitimized (when they should not be, of course).

When SlutWalk first launched, mainstream media coverage did frame it as a movement that challenged rape culture, victim-blaming, slut-shaming, etc. (Mendes 2015, pp. 86-89); however, there was little analysis or explanation as to what this meant and, over time, the mainstream media coverage shifted to coverage of that which was more salacious (e.g., how some people were dressed). Where SlutWalk was most accu-rately discussed was in some opinion columns in mainstream media and in femi-nist blogs, magazines, and newsletters (Mendes 2015, p. 87). Whilst it is a very good thing that some alternative media provided more in-depth analyses of SlutWalk events around the world, it is still problematic, as these alternative media are just that. Alternative. Mainstream media are missing an opportunity to educate and inform.

In the content analysis that Mendes (2015) conducted, only 5% of mainstream media news articles explicitly discussed that rape is a crime of power, not passion (p. 102). If the public at large is going to understand sexual assault as not being provoked by women, whether it be their perceived behaviour, what they're wearing, or where they are, the media is going to have to move away from narratives of blame and begin to put the onus on perpetrators and the societal context that permits sexual violence (ibid.). As discussed above, framing stories in the context of societal and structural issues that permit sexual violence has the potential to

inform politics and public policy, which could lead to better supports for victims.

Issues of victim-blaming and slut-shaming are far more common when sexual violence is perpetrated against racially-marginalized women (Indigenous, Black, and other women of colour), particularly if those women are sex workers, have lived experiences with disability or mental health needs, or experience poverty. In addition to racially-marginalized women not being considered "newsworthy victims" (Gilchrist 2010), Kendall (2020) discusses the notion that Black women are considered "un-rapeable" (p. 56) and that, due to long histories of racism, hypersexualization, and fetishization, racially-marginalized women are rarely presumed innocent (ibid., pp. 50, 55, 57). The realities of racism, fetishization, and hypersexualization call into question not only if racially-marginalized women are newsworthy victims, but if they are victims at all (Cripps 2021; Gilchrist 2010; Jiwani 2008; Jiwani & Young 2006; Kern 2019, p. 151; Strega et al. 2014). Racially-marginalized women's humanity – because of racism and how especially Indigenous, Black, and Asian women have been used throughout history to satisfy the desires of white men ("comfort women" (Kendall 2020, p. 53), for example) – is routinely delegitimized by law enforcement, media, and the wider public, because of those very same racist notions that have been accepted as fact. This is – without any doubt – an area where responsible media reporting could assist in breaking

down these stereotypes and ensuring that racially-marginalized women have access to the same services and receive the same coverage as white women (even as there are improvements to be made to all media coverage of this issue).

The media coverage of sex workers who are victims of sexual violence (and the law enforcement and justice system response to them) is possibly the most egregious, particularly if those sex workers are Indigenous, Black, or trans. There is a broad stereotypical perception that sex workers cannot be raped; that if people are performing sex work, then there is no coercing or forcing them to be engaged in any sexual act. Of course, this ignores several issues, including that engaging in sex work is consensual. It also ignores the circumstances that led to someone engaging in sex work, such as poverty, addiction, childhood trauma, etc.

Gilchrist (2010) discusses the newsworthiness of Indigenous victims of sexual and other violence and argues that racially-marginalized and women experiencing poverty are most often depicted as being to blame for their victimization (p. 376). Engaging in what is considered a 'risky lifestyle' is enough to cast doubt on a victim's experience of sexual violence. Returning to many of the questions posed at the beginning of this section of this Guide, if a woman is considered to have had too much to drink, dressed too provocatively, or engaged in sex work, then she bears some responsibility for her victimization. "[M]ale offenders are guilty

only to the extent that their female victims are innocent" (ibid.).

Media portrayals of victims of sexual violence "demonstrate how media reinforces existing demarcations between those deserving help and those who, by their own actions, consign themselves to marginalized and degenerate spaces" (Strega et al. 2014, p. 9). As noted elsewhere, Strega et al. (2014) point out that media coverage of violence against Indigenous sex workers does not include discussion of the structural factors (poverty, sexism, racism, colonialism, intergenerational trauma, etc.) that lead to some Indigenous people entering sex work, and especially at an earlier age and in larger numbers (comparatively) than any other population (p. 8).

When incidents of sexual and gender-based violence are reported as one-off or isolated events, it is not only a disservice to the victims and survivors of these attacks, but also a disservice to their communities and to the general public, as it impedes their ability to have the best understanding of the wider societal context that creates the conditions for these attacks.

It is a similar disservice when social movements form for the purpose of calling out patriarchy, racism, misogyny, victim-blaming, slut-shaming, and other systemic issues that permit sexual violence, and the media reports include only "short skirts and sensation stories" (Mendes 2015, p. 122) that cater to the cis straight male gaze, rather

than covering the purpose of the walk and showing photos of all of the people not in "slutty outfits" (ibid., p. 123).

When media reports of sexual violence against racially-marginalized women, women experiencing poverty, women with lived experience with disability or mental health needs, women who are sex workers, and all other women who are subjected to legacies and ongoing systems of patriarchy, racism, colonialism, classism, ableism, and misogyny without acknowledging those legacies and systems, it is a disservice to victims and the community.

A change in attitudes and behaviour is demonstrated with some results that came out of the *metoo. Movement*, which was created by Tarana Burke several years before it became a hashtag (Burke 2021). In 2017, in the aftermath of allegations against the now-convicted Harvey Weinstein, the hashtag #MeToo took off on social media after a tweet from American actress Alyssa Milano, but the *metoo. Movement* was established in 2006 by Tarana Burke and was intended to provide better support, programming, and funding to girls and women of colour who had experienced sexual violence (Burke 2021; Fileborn & Loney Howes 2019; Howard 2021b).

Whilst there is always a great deal of discussion and criticism about whether or not social media activism accomplishes much, and it always generates backlash, as demonstrated in several of the articles in Fileborn

and Loney-Howes' (2019) book, there is little question that the *metoo. Movement* has had some positive impact on people's attitudes and behaviour related to sexual violence, though these impacts should not be over-stated (Fileborn & Loney-Howes 2019, p. 338). More than anything, it certainly started conversations that there had not been room for in the past and not just conversations through traditional and social media, but conversations with family, friends, coworkers, etc. The *metoo. Movement*, as widely publi-cized via social media, has resulted in some positive impacts around men listening to women, men reflecting on their own inter-actions and behaviour with women, and men contributing to social change (Fileborn & Loney-Howes 2019, pp. 285-286). The *metoo. Movement* may have had a more significant impact on younger men (ibid., p. 287). Readers are cautioned about the chal-lenges with survey-based research and the permanency of any impacts, particularly if there is not consistent levels of awareness, but this still makes the point that if media, which is more of a constant in people's everyday lives than social media move-ments, covered GBV and gendered issues with discussions about societal and struc-tural contexts, it would have an impact on the general public's awareness and under-standing of these issues, and it might motivate more people to make the changes that are necessary to eliminate GBV for all potential victims and advocate for appro-priate and meaningful public policy to address gendered issues.

Recommendations

#MeToo and the Politics of Social Change

Chapter 14: Journalist Guidelines and Media Reporting in the Wake of #MeToo

- Regarding signposting to support, a stan-dard piece developed by each publication could be inserted into articles, listing websites that offer support for those who have experienced sexual violence.

- To avoid negative gender stereotypes, consider how a story is being framed and ensure language used does not hold women responsible for the actions of men.

- To avoid blaming victim-survivors, recognize how these myths are potentially implied and reinforced through media reporting.

- Ensure the use of terms such as 'victim,' 'survivor,' or 'victim-survivor' or legal terms such as 'complainant' is consistent when referring to victim-survivors.

- To avoid excusing perpetrators, do not include extraneous material (family, career, etc.) about a perpetrator and consider how doing so may influence readers. Similarly, do not passively quote from the defendant's legal team but rather interrogate their position.

- To make the perpetrator visible, use the active voice, and ensure that the perpe-trator is the subject of the writing.

- Use statistics to highlight the reality of sexual violence (particularly around stranger rapes), educate the public, and ensure sexual violence is framed as violence against women.

Royal in Fileborn & Loney-Howes 2019, pp. 231-232

Covering Violence

Guidelines for Journalists who Cover Violence

Reporting about Rape

- Put the case in the context of patterns of sexual crimes in the community and province. At times, report these patterns as stories in their own right.

- Avoid ways of describing details that reinforce stereotypes.

- Include details that may help others avoid assault.

- Mention details that get across the seriousness and horror of the crime.

- Name local agencies that help survivors and families and explain laws on sexual offenses.

Simpson & Cote 2006, pp. 269-275

Covering Rape & Sexual Violence

Rape is one of the most traumatising experiences a human being can endure. In many cultures, there is an added stigma of shame or social ostracisation. Reporters should take special care when approaching interviewees. In extreme cases, insensitive reporting can lead to suicide, or murder by relatives or perpetrators.

Sexual violence doesn't only mean rape, but can involve any kind of unwanted sexual activity — in a family, a relationship, or a marriage, as well as in an attack by a person unknown to the victim. It can happen anywhere, from the privacy of people's homes, to noisy playgrounds; from deserted streets to bustling nightclubs; from prison cells to battlefields.

Following are some considerations (in addition to what is already outlined in this Guide) when covering stories about sexual violence:

- **DISEMPOWERMENT:** The person whose experience you are reporting has been violated in a very particular way. The victim might feel dirty, humiliated and powerless — and also fear reprisals by the attackers.

- **WAR:** Throughout history, sexual violence has been a brutal accompaniment to armed conflict. Increasingly, it is now also understood as an explicit weapon of war. Be prepared to hear survivors speak of such experiences. While bringing usual journalistic caution to

bear, listen carefully and with respect to what they say.

- **INTERVIEWING:** Try to interview the victim alone. It can be overwhelming to face a pack of journalists and their accompanying translators, photographers, producer and fixers. Use as a small a crew as possible and when possible operate any equipment yourself. Discourage others who are not close to the victim from being present. These might include soldiers, elders, community leaders, aid workers, villagers. Ask if the subject wants family members present. Avoid having children nearby — they do not need to listen to the account.

- **INTERVIEWER'S GENDER:** A woman who has been raped often feels more comfortable with a female interviewer, although of course some men can establish a comforting rapport. Ask how the subject feels, and if she's uneasy with a male reporter, ask a female colleague to do the interview.

- **SHAME:** Feelings of shame and humiliation are at the core of any survivor's story. Be aware that there can be more at stake. In much of the Muslim world, and in some African countries, husbands, relatives, and neighbours can disown or even murder a raped woman. You may want to mask the subject's identity to avoid social and violent repercussions.

- **PRESSURE:** Never put pressure on victims of sexual violence to tell their stories. Do not promise that publication or filming will improve the victim's life or change policy.

- **ANONYMITY:** Never name a survivor without that person's explicit and informed consent. In many countries, it is now against the law to name a rape victim. The use of a first name only or a pseudonym is not always enough to mask someone's identity. Through the Internet, your report will be accessible everywhere, not only to audiences back home. Consider obscuring features such as job, age or village — and be careful not to leave identifiers in the report by mistake.

- **OBSCURING DETAILS:** Film your interviewee from behind and against a strong light, or in shadows. Be careful with silhouettes of the face or from the side, or with digital blurring or mosaic techniques, as images can now often and quite easily be enhanced on computers.

- **BLAME:** It is common for rape victims to feel they are to blame for what happened to them. News reports that imply this might be true can be deeply damaging to the subject. Exercise great caution when you depict the incident or accusations.

- **DETAILS:** In some cases, graphic details told sensitively can have a positive impact, leading to legal action or policy change. But be very careful with such descriptions. Will they enhance your story, or further humiliate the victim?

- **LOCAL NORMS:** In some cultures, touching or making eye contact with

victims could cause offence. Brief yourself on culturally appropriate euphemisms. Some subjects may not want to hear or use the word "rape." Male reporters should be careful about interviewing a raped woman in private behind closed doors, as this might cause further social stigma.

- **HELP:** Your story may trigger memories of rape or sexual assault for readers and audiences. Consider including details of where they can find help.

Brayne 2007, pp. 7-8

Language Check

DO Use "said,'" "according to," or "reports" and attribute the words to a specific speaker. Rather than presuming when to use the word "alleged," seek advice on when it is legally required in specific contexts. Alternatively, when reporting after criminal charges have been laid, you can use language such as: "who has been charged with the sexual assault of" OR "who has been charged in relation to."

DON'T Overuse words like "alleged" or "claimed." Excessive use of these words can imply disbelief of the survivor on the part of the reporter. The language used depends on the context. Not using alleged in some contexts can have serious legal implications and could even leave a survivor open to being sued by an abuser. When in doubt, consult with a lawyer.

DO Use the descriptor that an interviewee prefers, such as "survivor," or "person who experienced sexual assault." Many people may prefer the term "survivor" because it conveys agency and resilience. Others may prefer "person who has been subjected to sexual assault" because it doesn't define an individual solely in relation to an experience of sexual violence. "Complainant" is another option if the survivor has filed legal charges.

DON'T Default to the descriptor "victim" unless this is the wording an interviewee prefers. Many people feel "victim" has negative connotations.

DO Respect the survivor's autonomy by using language of their choice, e.g., "sex work" versus "prostitution." Use the survivor's appropriate gender pronouns. Ask the interviewee what gender pronouns they use (She? He? They?).

DON'T Refer to communities with language they don't use to describe themselves.

DO Use more neutral language like "shares," "says," or "tells" to describe a survivor telling their story.

DON'T Use phrases like "the survivor admits/ confesses" to describe a report of sexual assault. This language implies responsibility or shame on behalf of the survivor. Words like "confesses" also subtly frame an assault story as a salacious sexual encounter.

DO Use language that places the accountability for rape or other forms of sexual assault with the perpetrator, e.g, "He raped

her." (Understanding that for legal purposes, you may have to add the word "allegedly" when applicable.) Alternatively, within the context of an ongoing criminal trial you can use "he's alleged to have raped her," or "the complainant says he raped her."

DON'T Describe sexual assault as belonging to the survivor (i.e., "her (the survivor's) rape"), and don't use phrases like "she was raped" or "a rape occurred" without identifying the role of the perpetrator. The connotation of "her assault" and "her rape" is that the rape belongs to the survivor and removes the perpetrator's accountability.

DO Use language that accurately conveys the gravity of sexual assault.

DON'T Downplay the violence of sexual assault, or suggest some forms of assault are more serious, e.g., "The survivor was unharmed." "The survivor was not physically hurt."

DO Use words that make it clear that sexual assault is violent and non-consensual, e.g., "...oral rape." "...sexual assault." "...was subjected to sexual assault." If there is a valid need to describe the specifics, ensure that they speak to the violent nature of the act, but avoid needlessly including salacious details of the assault, e.g., "forced mouth onto [the survivor's specific body part]."

DON'T Use euphemisms or gentle words to describe sexual violence. Euphemisms: "engaging in" or "sex scandal." Gentle language: "fondle" or "caress," "private parts."

DO Use language that conveys that sexual assault is not sex, it is violence, e.g., "rape" or "sexual assault."

DON'T Use language that describes sexual violence as sex, e.g., "oral sex," "sexual activity," "kissing," "sex that was forced," "non-consensual sex."

DO Make the perpetrator the subject of the sentence and assign the verb to them. This is also how police are encouraged to write their reports, i.e., "The police report that the perpetrator forced the survivor to…"

DON'T Make the survivor the subject of the sentence and assign the verb to them, e.g., "The victim performed fellatio against their will."

Framework Check

DO Recognize the unique life experiences of each survivor. If applicable, include details of their personal and communal strength.

DON'T Play into the "tragic victim" stereotype or rescue narratives, e.g., emphasizing that the survivor has had a tragedy in their life rather than their courage or resilience.

DO Ensure that survivors and anti-sexual assault advocates, especially those from marginalized communities, are afforded space to speak about the issue. If you don't have access to the survivor's side of the story, speak to violence against women experts, and rely on police and court documents, to keep the story balanced.

DON'T Focus solely on police, legal, and perpetrators' voices when reporting on sexual assault.

DO Depict sexual assault as a serious crime.

DO Ensure that every detail you include about the assault serves to honour the survivor's story or to contextualize sexual assault in broader culture. If a graphic detail does neither of these, it doesn't need to be in the story.

DON'T Sensationalize sexual assault or depict it in a gratuitous or voyeuristic way, e.g., using words such as "sex scandal," "controversy," or including salacious details.

DO Focus on why it is an act of sexual assault and what the circumstances were that led to the person who was sexually assaulted accessing justice or supports. Contextualize sexual assault as part of the larger problem of sexual violence and gender-based violence.

DON'T Focus the discussion on a survivor's clothing, addictions, employment, marital status, sexuality, past relationships, or involvement in the sex trade industry. This can imply that responsibility lies with the survivor for making poor decisions or that they were "asking for it."

DO Include biographical details about the perpetrator. Ensure if you do, they do not feed into suggesting their innocence.

DON'T Exonerate or dismiss the violence of perpetrators by focusing on facts that make them appear to be "unlikely" rapists. Unnecessary emphasis on a perpetrator's community standing, race, religion, mental health struggles, class position, employment, etc. may suggest a bias towards their innocence, e.g., describing the perpetrator as an "upstanding citizen" who volunteers in the community.

DO Recognize that perpetrators may hold a position of power over the person that they sexually assaulted. This could be social power (such as the power that comes with being male, white, middle class, etc.) OR power specific to the relationship between the perpetrator and survivor (such as teacher/student, employer/employee, etc.).

DON'T Suggest that a report of sexual assault between individuals of differing positions of power is an attempt to tarnish a public figure or a stunt of a "jilted ex-girlfriend."

DO Focus on the harm done to the survivor. Sexual assault has long-term financial, social, economic, physical, and spiritual impacts.

DON'T Focus entirely on community or family reactions, which often focus on exonerating or sympathizing with the perpetrator.

DON'T Solely emphasize the impact on the perpetrator and their community's reputation.

DO Contextualize sexual assault as a result of systems, oppression, and attitudes that exist in all communities and cultures. One of the important principles on which the

Canadian criminal legal system is based is the presumption of innocence until guilt is proven, and that the past few decades has seen a significant number of convictions overturned, often when the accused is a member of a marginalized community.

DON'T Use a survivor or perpetrator's social location, i.e., ethnic background, religion, as a rationale for sexual violence, e.g., suggesting newcomers to Canada who commit sexual violence do not know any better, that it's a part of their 'culture' or that sexual violence is an "imported" problem.

DO Consider how oppression and inequality make people in marginalized communities more vulnerable to sexual violence and poses challenges to their accessing supports.

DON'T Assume all survivors are the same.

DON'T Suggest that people in marginalized communities are themselves to blame for experiencing disproportionately high levels of sexual violence.

DO Take sexual violence that is enacted online, such as threats and harassment, seriously.

DON'T Dilute or downplay sexual violence online by identifying "bullying" or "cyberbullying" as the sole problem. When "bullying" or "cyberbullying" become the focus of discussions, other factors such as racism, sexism, transphobia, as well as the context of sexual violence, are left out of the picture.

DO Convey that sexual assault always has an impact on all survivors, whether financial, physical, mental, spiritual, or emotional.

DON'T Assume that members of some communities are less affected by sexual assault, e.g., people with disabilities, men who are sexually assaulted, people who are sexually assaulted while detained or incarcerated.

DO Recognize that everyone has the right to be safe and access supports.

DON'T Suggest that there are "good" or "bad" survivors of sexual violence or individuals who "deserve" to be assaulted.

DO Recognize that sexual assault does not define a survivor's entire identity.

DON'T Imply the survivor is tarnished, ruined, or has "lost their innocence."

DO Ensure that interviewees will move the conversation forward on rape culture or sexual violence.

DON'T Interrupt broadcast interviews about sexual violence by allowing texters or callers to voice their doubts or misgivings about the veracity of the survivor's account. This can derail an important conversation about sexual violence.

Imagery Check

DO Use imagery that appropriately illustrates the article, e.g., an exterior shot of a building at the university where the story took place. You can also check in with a survivor about using imagery of their choice. Use imagery that illustrates resilience.

DON'T Use stock imagery that emphasizes the actions of the survivor, e.g., using photos of women drinking to illustrate a story on sexual assault suggests that women invite sexual assault by doing so.

DON'T Use stock photos that portray violence in a salacious way. Many people have experienced violence in their own lives and already know what it looks like; a reminder is not needed, e.g., a photo of a woman with two black eyes.

DO Use images of survivors from diverse communities.

DON'T Assume that survivors of sexual violence come from only one community.

*Femifesto 2015,
pp. 9-15*

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MEDIA REPORTING ON WOMEN IN POLITICS

Just as the media's role in forming public opinion about GBV is critical, so too is its responsibility in shaping attitudes about women's leadership (both its desirability and its existence) by producing and reproducing stereotypes and gendered expectations about women's place and roles in society (Di Meco 2019, p. 9).

Questions about a woman's family obligations and how they will conflict with the political role she is seeking are all too common and are illustrative of the "public man/private woman binary" (Trimble 2017, p. 10) that dictates how gender is regulated and performed. Questions, comments, and critiques about a woman's marital/relationship status, family status, appearance, dress, tone and octave of her voice, and her ability to keep a smile on her face for all of eternity are commonplace for women in politics, and they are not things that are focused on to any great degree for men in politics. In fact, when they are, men are given a pass or commended about the very same things for which women are criticized or chastised (Trimble 2017, p. 122).

As with other issues discussed in this Guide, several academics point out that what the public learns about politicians and politics is produced, shaped, and informed by the mainstream media (de Geus et al. 2021, p. 32; Goodyear-Grant 2013, p. 8; Trimble 2017, p. 9). As discussed by Di Meco (2019), it is often pointed out that even when media coverage is not outright sexist, it continues to reflect gendered framing where women are seen as women first and who happen to be involved in politics (p. 12). Goodyear-Grant (2013) also discusses this when she says that the news is very rarely explicitly sexist, rather media coverage is framed as gender-neutral when, in fact, those frames are historically masculine (p. 5). This framing makes sense given our long history of relying on what Criado Perez (2019) discusses as the "default male," where *male* is considered the norm and *female* is considered the other (p. xii; Di Meco 2019, p. 18) and that the news is dominated by men, particularly in reporting on politics, reinforcing the "masculine character of the news" (Goodyear-Grant 2013, p. 109; Trimble 2017, p. 11).

Following from the public man/private woman binary noted above, politics has historically been constructed as the domain of men (both in who is a politician and who covers politics) (Goodyear-Grant 2013, pp. 110, 119). "Masculinity sets the standard for

political leadership" (ibid.) and when women enter politics, they are scrutinized both for not acting enough like and also acting too much like men. For example, with something as common as speaking, powerful speech is associated with masculinity (Trimble 2017, p. 188). When men speak, their speech is ranked as more knowledgeable, convincing, and trustworthy than when women speak, even when the content of the speech is identical (ibid.). "Political women are censured for speaking too softly, too diplomatically, too much, too pointedly, too passionately, or in a manner critical of patriarchy or other hegemonic power structures" (ibid).

As with other issues described above, the media relies on "culturally accessible gender stereotypes that derive, in part, from deeply rooted gender schemas" (Goodyear-Grant 2013, p. 109). The most fundamental of these stereotypes go, again, back to the public man/private woman binary, which does not imagine women as politicians and results in the explicit gender identification of women politicians as women first and not simply politicians (Trimble 2017, p. 223).

Whilst women are regularly accused of playing the gender card for discussing their personal experiences in politics (Trimble 2017, p. 3), the media deals that very card themselves every time a politician is labelled as the 'female candidate' or the 'woman leader' or anything that modifies her title and position by first announcing her gender (Trimble 2017, p. 223).

This stereotyping of women politicians and those who do not fit the norm of being male, heterosexual, and white is summed up nicely in de Geus et al.'s *Women, Power, and Political Representation* (2021):

> The media trivialize women's political presence by using women's aesthetics as a discursive strategy to convey their dissonance from what a leader looks like… [B]y emphasizing and scrutinizing women politicians' looks and wardrobe, the media divert the focus from the substance of what women leaders offer. … Women candidates receive more coverage about their sex and minority candidates receive more coverage about their race than do white men running for political office (pp. 150-151).

Due to the pervasive sexism and misogyny experienced by women in politics, not to mention the racism, ableism, etc. by people whose identities intersect in ways that are not white, cisgender, heterosexual, non-disabled, and male, "women politicians need to be especially deliberate in deciding how they will relate to the media and address the stereotypes and expectations that come with their gender identity" (Di Meco 2019, p. 18). And therein lies the rub, because – as mentioned above – when women adopt various characteristics, be they ways of speaking or ways of dressing, to be perceived as serious contenders, they are then perceived as cold, aggressive, too competitive, unfeminine, and unlikeable (ibid). But, again, when women candidates try to talk about the skills or traits

they bring to the role that are characteristically feminine, such as compassion, the media and, ultimately, consumers of media perceive them as weak (ibid., p. 19).

It is commonplace for women candidates and politicians' family status to be scrutinized by the media whilst the same is not generally true for men (Trimble 2017, p. 103). And we find ourselves with not only a double standard here but also a double bind. The double standard is that the families of men in politics – when not ignored – generally serve to humanize and benefit the men (Di Meco 2019, p. 20), whereas a woman's family, particularly if she has young children, raises questions about her ability to take on a role in politics (ibid.). The double bind is that women are simultaneously perceived as not fit or capable for politics because they have children and are perceived as incapable of understanding a variety of issues if they do not have a partner and children (Trimble 2017, pp. 106-107).

Whilst the media has the power to begin to change the narrative about understandings of gender and gender roles, with limited time and resources, they more often continue to rely on these stereotypes, given how straightforward their understanding is by the general public. The simplest way to get past this is to consider if what is being written about a woman would be written about a man, and – maybe most strikingly – if a position would be modified in writing or broadcast with 'man' or 'male' the same way media is inclined to do with 'woman' or 'female.'

Recommendations

Ms. Prime Minister: Gender, Media, and Leadership

News writers could help normalize the presence of women in politics by refraining from using nouns that gender and, instead, using gender-neutral prefixes and descriptors like *they, person,* and *individual*.

Exercise greater awareness of the impact of "gender grammar," the words used to describe women politicians (and other professionals). It is possible to relay a woman's leadership story in a dramatic and compelling manner without minimizing her accomplishments or questioning her capacity for leadership because of her gender identity.

1. **Control Timing and First Impressions:** "Ascension stories" make for powerful first impressions and, if journalists are using this storytelling technique, the tropes and judgements they introduce will likely be echoed throughout a woman's tenure in office. Be aware of the impact of storylines borrowed from fables, science fiction, or melodrama.

   Consider telling a different story. If a particular angle is firmly locked in by competitor media outlets, try exposing any overt or implicit sexism evident in the stories being told. Think about how the story would be told about a man in the same circumstances.

2. **Challenge and Change the Gender Grammar for Political Leadership:** Words and phrases that explicitly identify the gender identity of a politician are both helpful and harmful to women's political ambitions. The media deal the gender card every time something is plainly labelled as the act of a *female* leader or *woman* politician. Refrain from gendering political nouns, as one rarely sees *man* or *male* in front of *leader, politician, councillor, mayor,* or *prime minister*. Gendering political (or other leadership-related) nouns for women, but not for men, suggests that their gender is the focal point or otherwise relevant to the story and is more important than their ideas or accomplishments.

Whilst "first woman" can be helpful, as it draws attention to women's historic underrepresentation in political life, it should not be assumed that gender equality has magically been achieved because a woman has been elected or, certainly, when a second or third woman is elected. Use the opportunity to highlight histories of exclusion and expose the gendered power structures impeding women's representation.

3. **Craft a New Type of Family Strategy:** Politicians, the media, and the general public are equally as likely to place undue emphasis on the family status of a woman politician and either ignore the family status of her male counterparts

or ascribe only positive qualities to the family status of her male counterparts, regardless of what is that status.

Campaign spin that works to reify heteronormative traditional nuclear families or to critique opponents' not heteronormative or not-so-nuclear families should be questioned by the media. This is a productive way of exposing damaging tactics directed at divorced or childless women (or men, for that matter).

Provided it is being done equitably, journalists should write about families, not least as a way of showing that politicians' public and private lives, like everyone else, are integrated and inseparable.

4. **Perform Embodied Leadership:** The physical appearance of any highprofile politician is routinely scrutinized for the political messages it conveys.

It would help a great deal if journalists would stop focusing on women politicians' shoes, hair, or jewelry and refrain from making gratuitous references to the ways in which certain bodies differ from the leadership prototype of the robust, physically imposing, suit-and-tie-wearing, white heterosexual man. Emphasizing a politician's sexual desirability demeans both the role and its inhabitant, as does questioning one's sexual orientation.

As for the news media, should online obscenities directed at a sitting politician

be discussed in mainstream media accounts? This is a difficult question to answer, but it is shocking that much of the sexist and misogynistic treatment of women politicians goes unchallenged by respectable news outlets. A virtue of the "unlovable press" is its willingness to expose unfair treatment.

5. **Act Allegorically:** Allegorical language is ubiquitous, as illustrated by the prevalence of war and sport metaphors in news about politics and also in discussions/debates between politicians. Media can be thoughtful about how they use allegorical language. For instance, words like *shrill, angry, hysterical*, or *catfight* are not seen when discussing male politicians going *into battle*.

Consider the impact of assessments when positioning women within the battle frame. Again, the practice of gendering nouns unfairly situates the performance within the body, thereby questioning its authority and authenticity. Women politicians' electoral performance can be empowered and legitimized by war allegories if news writers are careful to watch their gender grammar.

Trimble 2017, pp. 87 and 222-228

How Traditional Media Outlets Can Change the Frames on Gender & Politics

1. **Ensure diversity in the newsroom:** When more female journalists are in decision-making roles, women politicians are more likely to receive coverage that is fair in tone and quantity.

Almost everywhere, however, newsrooms are male-dominated and while the number of women who graduate in media-related studies has grown, female journalists are often confined to reporting on education and lifestyle, or quit the job after a few years, as they clash with the newsroom sexist culture, the glass ceiling towards higher management positions and the difficulty balancing family and 24-hour news cycles.

2. **Provide gender-sensitive media training to journalists:** Provide training to staff at all levels in recognizing and addressing gender bias in their own concepts, language, choice of panelists, interview setting and visual materials. For example, debates where all candidates are sitting have an equalizing effect on women, who are on average shorter than men and give the visual impression of being "weaker" in debates where male and female candidates are standing side by side.

3. **Adopt gender-sensitive indicators for media coverage of male and female politicians:** Adopting gender-sensitive indicators for media coverage of male and female politicians can be helpful in improving fairness in the coverage of female politicians and political candidates. Quantitatively, coverage of female politicians should aim at being at least proportional to their relative presence in governance, as this would go a long way in normalizing the idea of female leadership and empower young women to consider a political career for themselves.

    Qualitatively, coverage of female politicians should ensure that journalists are treating female political candidates and politicians fairly and without replicating gender stereotypes. As the American feminist, journalist and political activist Gloria Steinem notes: "The most workable definition of equality for journalists is reversibility. Don't mention her young children unless you would also mention his, or describe her clothes unless you would describe his, or say she's shrill or attractive unless the same adjectives would be applied to a man".

4. **Establish media awards for gender-sensitive reporting:** Another instrument that can be useful in promoting gender-sensitive reporting is media awards that reward best practices from individual journalists, as well as media outlets; such awards have been implemented by nonprofits like the International Women's Media Foundation or the United Nations.

5. **Challenge gender stereotypes around women and power:** Traditional media has a responsibility to challenge gender stereotypes by showing more gender non-stereotypical images and stories, ensuring time and space are dedicated to disseminating the findings of available research on the benefits of gender equality and shining a spotlight on a more diverse set of leadership styles.

    Di Meco 2019,
    pp. 42-45

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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ONLINE

Given that the way we consume information has changed dramatically over the years, it is important to discuss the phenomenon – that we have only seen increase – of violence against women in online spaces.

Consumers of media have several "touchpoints" (Kassova 2020b, p. 33) with the news. For our purposes in this section, it is important to understand the relevance of touchpoints three through five (as described below and depicted on page 56).

Outputs, news consumption, and individual impacts are where we witness the most widespread online violence against women and its impacts, and it is primarily (though not exclusively) carried out through social media channels and platforms.

Outputs are described, in part, by Kassova (2020b) as the content or news coverage that uses women as story protagonists, including as victims and survivors, and considers how they are portrayed (p. 34). **News consumption** captures information about how and where women consume news and at what levels (ibid.). For instance, women consume less news than men, and

they consume more of their news via social media platforms than do men (ibid., pp. 53-54). Finally, touchpoint five outlines **individual impacts** of news media, including the relevance of, interest in, and awareness of news items in relation to gender (in)equality and gendered issues (ibid., p. 34).

As discussed above, the way that news is framed (outputs) impacts public opinion and understanding of what is being covered and, in the case of GBV and gendered issues, it has a disproportionate impact on those who are or are most likely to be directly impacted by these issues. With women consuming more of their news via social media platforms, they are also more frequently seeing the comments of other users and what those comments say about the subject or object of the news coverage, which intensifies the individual impacts of the news coverage.

Returning again to statistics gathered by Statistics Canada, we learn that nearly 20% of women and nearly 15% of men experienced online harassment, and women are more likely to know who the perpetrator is (Cotter and Savage 2019, p. 3), which leads to the conclusion that the nature of behaviour directed at women is different from that directed at men (ibid., p. 13). And, whilst a higher number of women than men knew who their perpetrator/s was/were, most

online harassment is carried out by perpetrators who are strangers to the target/victim of the harassment (ibid.).

In an effort to protect themselves from online harassment, nearly 30% of women and just shy of 20% of men have blocked (other people's) or deleted (their own) accounts (ibid.). Although it appears that experiences of online harassment are relatively similar for women and men, there are specific and gendered motives for the harassment. For instance, the most commonly experienced behaviours by both women and men were being sent messages or images that were

sexually explicit or suggestive or being sent e-mails or messages that were threatening or aggressive (Cotter and Savage 2019, p. 11). Although men did not experience these behaviours as frequently as women, it was men's sexual orientation (being bisexual or gay) that was the most significant risk factor in their being harassed online (ibid., p. 12). Regardless of the gender or perceived gender of the target, being younger, Indigenous, gender- or sexually-diverse, disabled, or not married (single, separated, or divorced) increased the likelihood of experiencing online violence (ibid.).

3 Outputs	4 News Consumption	5 Individual Impacts
% of stories leading on protagonists who are women (e.g. women in power)	Reach: % of women reached	% of all who are aware of overall gender inequality generally
Portrayal of women	Engagement: % of women who are engaged with the content (e.g. commented, shared, liked)	% of women who feel that news topics/stories/genres are relevant to them
% of experts on screen/ online who are women		% who feel the news' breadth, depth, tone, & immediacy meet their sandards
Implicit or explicit coverage of gender equaliy issues		% who trust in the news/ think that the news is balanced
Gender-responsive content		% who feel they are better reflected in the news
Gender transformative content		% who act on inequality issues (e.g. compaigning, signing petitions)

AKAS 2020 in Kassova 2020b, p. 33

The Women's Media Center describes online abuse as:

> a diversity of tactics and malicious behaviors ranging from sharing embarrassing or cruel content about a person to impersonation, doxxing, stalking and electronic surveillance to the nonconsensual use of photography and violent threats. The

online harassment of women, sometimes called Cybersexism or cybermisogyny, is specifically gendered abuse targeted at women and girls online. It incorporates sexism, racism, religious prejudice, homophobia and transphobia (2014)

and offers this image to depict tactics, legal issues, and impacts of online abuse:

Women's Media Center, 2014.
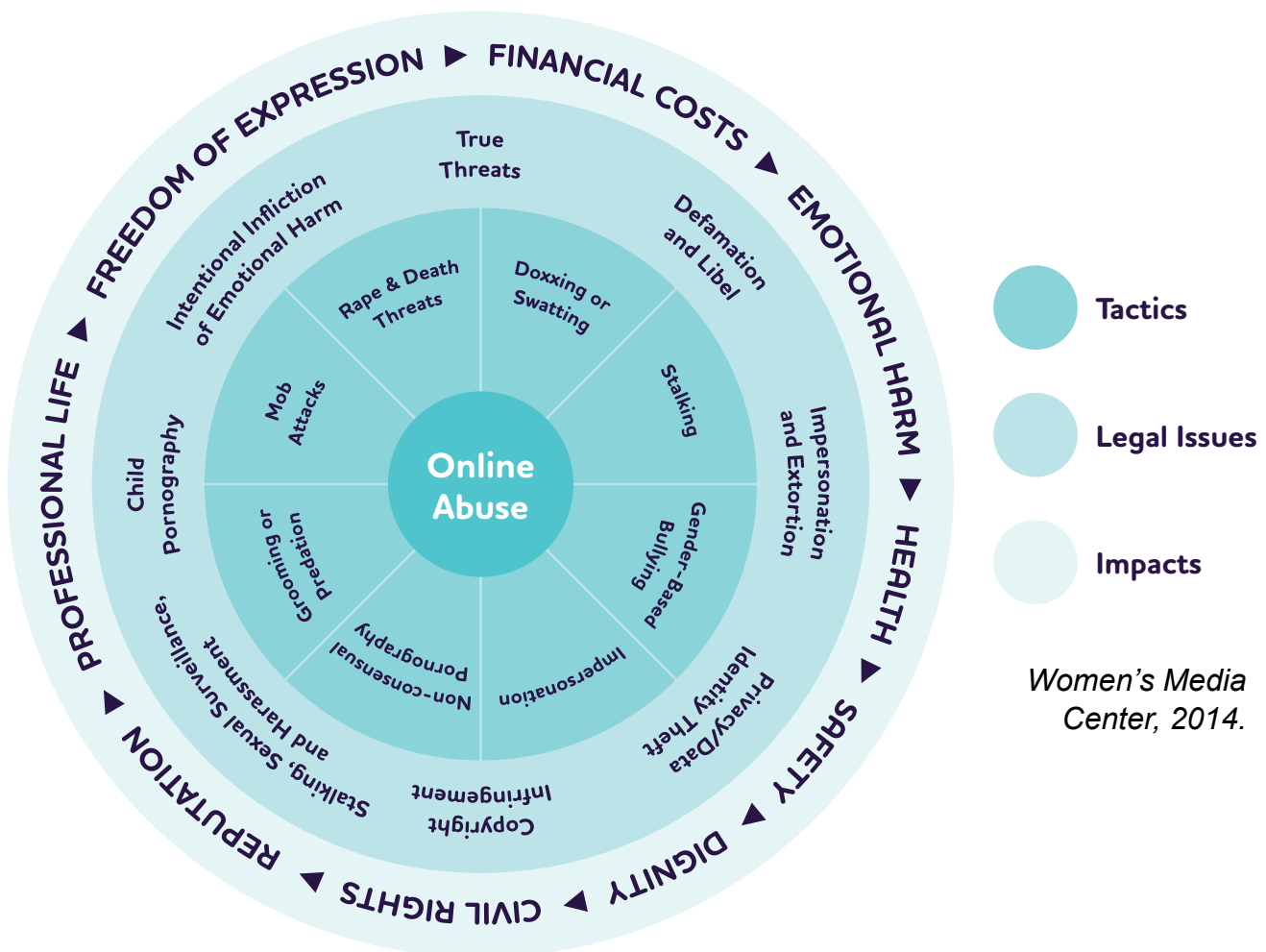
Because most of the terms are self-explanatory or easily defined, this image is being used to depict the range and seriousness of online violence. It is imperative to point out that online abuse does not happen only to

those with a public profile, and it is equally necessary to consider how it is covered by media and often carried out on the social media channels (by way of comments, generally) of media outlets.

Notes:

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN POLITICIANS AND JOURNALISTS

It is important to discuss violence against women politicians and women journalists because:

• The abuse, harassment, and intimidation we see directed toward women politicians is very similar to the categories of behaviour we see in abusive personal relationships (Alberta Council of Women's Shelters 2021, p. 19);

• We know that, whilst women politicians have been the targets of abuse, harassment, intimidation, and violence for years (de Geus et al. 2021, Jankowicz 2022, Krook 2020, Poland 2016, Sobieraj 2020), women journalists are experiencing a greater than ever volume of abuse, harassment, intimidation, and violence (Ipsos 2021, Jankowicz 2022, Pearson and Seglins 2022, Poland 2016, Sobieraj 2020, Women's Media Center 2019); and

• Subjecting women to this kind of behaviour is a threat to both democracy and to a free press, as victims and survivors of this abuse reduce their presence on social media, stop writing about or talking about various issues, consider leaving journalism or politics, and do decide to leave journalism or politics (de Geus et al. 2021, Impe 2019, Jankowicz 2022, Ipsos 2021, Poland 2016, Sobieraj 2020, Women's Media Center 2019).

As noted in all of the literature that addressed abuse, harassment, intimidation, and violence against women politicians and women journalists, the experience is significantly worse – in volume and tone – for racially marginalized people, gender- and sexually-diverse people, disabled people, and certainly if one's identity intersects in multiple ways.

In *Haters* (2016), Bailey Poland discusses the routine in which she engages several times a week to track and keep records of what those who harass and threaten her are saying and doing (p. 119), as do many women who are subjected to campaigns of harassment, abuse, and intimidation. In a similar vein to women having a "rape schedule" (Valenti 2007, p. 63) to avoid being victimized (discussed in the **Media reporting on sexual violence section** above), women are also engaging in additional labour or "safety work" to stay safe on-line (Jankowicz 2022; Poland 2016, p. 118-121; Sobieraj 2020, p. 63-81; Women's Media Center 2019).

Online harassment, abuse, intimidation, and violence is costing women their productivity and impacting their mental health.

As noted above, one of the most concerning things about the harassment and abuse of women politicians is how similar it is to IPV.

Whilst the tactics differ (to some degree), the categories of behaviour are the same (Alberta Council of Women's Shelters 2021, p. 19).

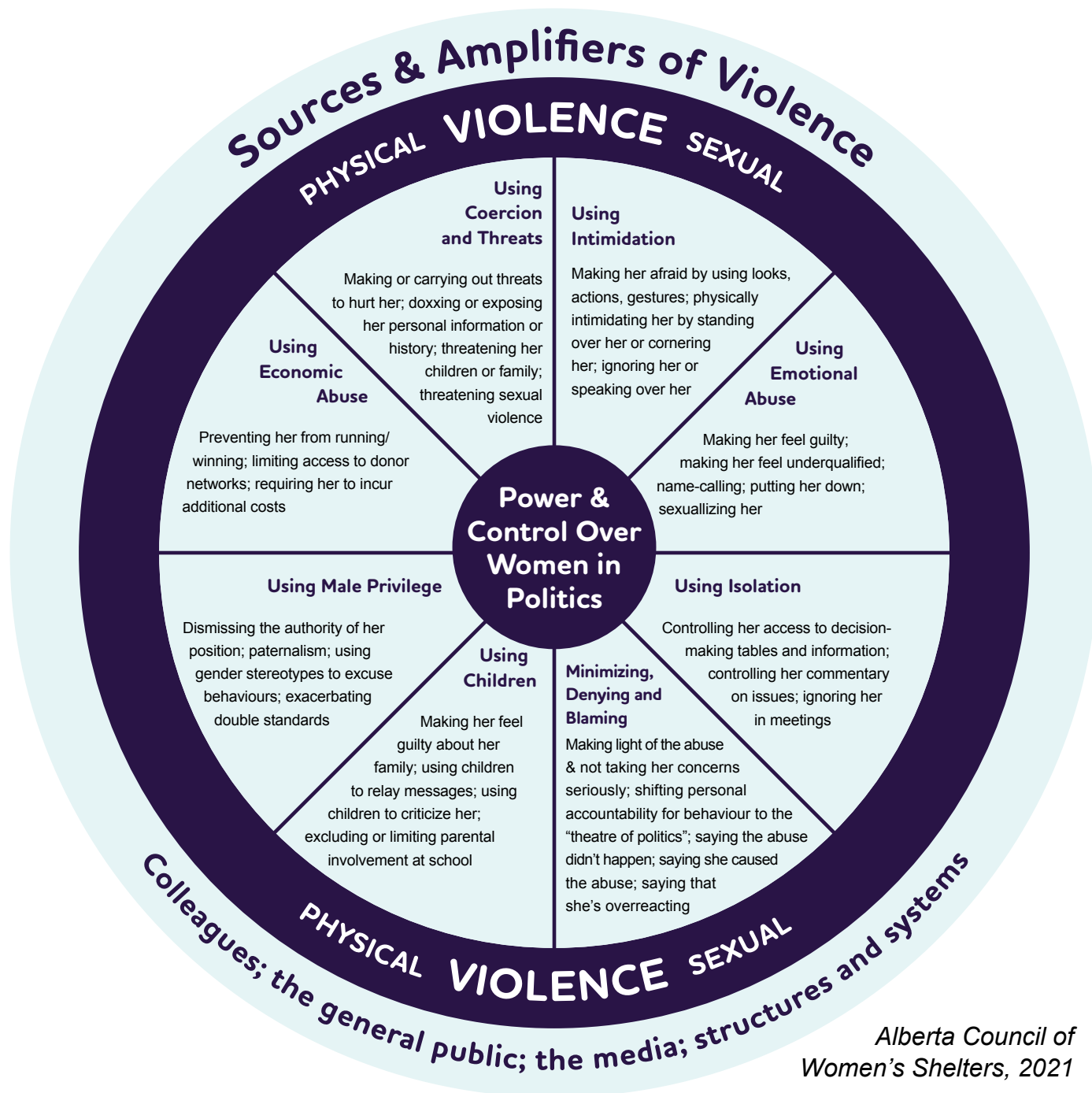Shared here is the Power and Control Wheel that is used to describe the categories, tactics, and – by extension – impacts of IPV. Not every victim or survivor of IPV will be subjected to all of these behaviours, but the Power and Control Wheel depicts several categories of behaviour, including how the behaviour may escalate.

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE SEXUAL

Using Coercion and Threats
Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt her ● threatening to leave her, to commit suicide, or report her to welfare ● making her drop charges ● making her do illegal things

Using Intimidation
Making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures ● smashing things ● destroying her property ● abusing pets ● displaying weapons

Using Emotional Abuse
Putting her down ● making her feel bad about herself ● calling her names ● making her think she's crazy ● playing mind games ● humiliating her ● making her feel guilty

Using Economic Abuse
Preventing her from getting or keeping a job ● making her ask for money ● giving her an allowance ● taking her money ● not letting her know abut or have access to family income

Power and Control

Using Isolation
Controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, where she goes ● limiting her outside involvement ● using jealousy to justify actions

Using Male Privilege
Treating her like a servant ● making all the big decisions ● acting like the "master of the castle" ● being the one to define men's and women's roles

Using Children
Making her feel guilty about the children ● using the children to relay messages ● using visitation to harass her ● threatening to take the children away

Minimizing, Denying and Blaming
Making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns seriously ● saying the abuse didn't happen ● shifting responsibility for abusive behaviour ● saying she caused it

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE SEXUAL

Brass & Hazlett, 2018.

Based on research conducted by the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters (2021), the Power and Control Wheel was adapted to identify the tactics that are most commonly used against women politicians in an effort to silence them, diminish their work or desire to do their work, or drive them out of politics entirely.

Sources & Amplifiers of Violence

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE SEXUAL

Power & Control Over Women in Politics

Using Coercion and Threats

Making or carrying out threats to hurt her; doxxing or exposing her personal information or history; threatening her children or family; threatening sexual violence

Using Intimidation

Making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures; physically intimidating her by standing over her or cornering her; ignoring her or speaking over her

Using Economic Abuse

Preventing her from running/ winning; limiting access to donor networks; requiring her to incur additional costs

Using Emotional Abuse

Making her feel guilty; making her feel underqualified; name-calling; putting her down; sexuallizing her

Using Male Privilege

Dismissing the authority of her position; paternalism; using gender stereotypes to excuse behaviours; exacerbating double standards

Using Children

Making her feel guilty about her family; using children to relay messages; using children to criticize her; excluding or limiting parental involvement at school

Minimizing, Denying and Blaming

Making light of the abuse & not taking her concerns seriously; shifting personal accountability for behaviour to the "theatre of politics"; saying the abuse didn't happen; saying she caused the abuse; saying that she's overreacting

Using Isolation

Controlling her access to decision-making tables and information; controlling her commentary on issues; ignoring her in meetings

Colleagues; the general public; the media; structures and systems

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE SEXUAL

Alberta Council of Women's Shelters, 2021

Note that an extra outer ring has been added to this adaptation of the Power and Control Wheel to denote both sources and amplifiers of the violence to which women politicians are subjected (Alberta Council of Women's Shelters 2021, p. 17-18). Violence against women politicians is both enacted by and responded to by colleagues, constituents, media, and structures and systems (ibid).

As noted by Trimble (2017), there is a balance to be found in covering and discussing harassment and abuse directed at women politicians (p. 227). Not every instance needs to be covered and would only serve to continue to victimize the politician who is the target. That said, it is important for the general public to be aware of the environment in which women politicians are currently forced to operate.

Further, as was seen most tragically with Jo Cox, a British MP, the harassment, abuse, and intimidation described in the Power and Control Wheel adapted by the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters (2021) can escalate. Jo Cox was murdered by Thomas Mair, who "held views that provided him with a motive – utterly misplaced of course – to kill her" (Cobain 2016). In Niagara, behaviour endured by women and racially-marginalized politicians and public servants includes harassment via social media platforms, e-mail, and telephone; sexual harassment and innuendo; racial epithets directed at children of politicians; sexually suggestive voicemails; threatening behaviour; graffiti on homes; and rocks through windows.

Whilst much of what precedes is about women politicians, there are many authors who are drawing parallels between women politicians and women journalists in terms of the abuse they endure and its impacts. Specifically, there are several recent studies and surveys that detail the online violence, abuse, harassment, and intimidation to which women journalists are being subjected and that it has been increasing.

The Women's Media Center, in a 2019 report, calls it out plainly and says that "[t]aking online harassment seriously is at the core of an inclusive newsroom and a critical step toward ensuring free speech for all" (p. 1).

In a 2021 survey by Ipsos, 72% of media workers indicated they had experienced some form of harassment while doing their work over the last year. The harassment ranged from online threats or harassment to threats or harassment in person or by phone to being physically attacked (p. 5). More alarming, though not surprising, is that women, younger people, racially-marginalized people, and gender- and sexually-diverse people face disproportionately more online harassment than other groups (cisgender, heterosexual, middle-aged white men), and the harassment takes more severe and personal tones (Canadian Association of Journalists 2021, Ipsos 2021). It should be noted that this is in line with what Statistics Canada found in relation to their surveys about experiences of IPV and sexual violence (Cotter 2021a, Cotter 2021b, Cotter & Savage 2019, Heidinger 2021, Jaffray 2020, Savage 2021a, Savage 2021b).

In a nationwide study released in May 2022, Pearson and Seglins found that rates of harassment are increasing; non-binary and transgender people are more likely than other groups to experience online harassment; women "encountered harassment

and violence at every turn – by email, on social media, in the field and in the newsroom" (Pearson and Seglins 2022, p. 30); and women were more likely to be sexually harassed, be on the receiving end of hate speech, and be threatened and intimidated (ibid.). Again, this study indicated that harassment was more prevalent for women, younger workers, racially-marginalized workers, and gender- and sexually-diverse workers (ibid., p. 30-31); and the Ipsos (2021) study indicated that most harassment took the form of sexualized messages or images, physical threats, or comments related to gender identity, ethnicity, or nationality (p. 7), making the harassment personal, rather than being legitimate criticism of a journalist's work (Canadian Association of Journalists 2021). Women received 90% of harassment based on gender, 76% of harassment that targeted their appearance, and 75% of harassment that targeted their Indigenous status (ibid., p. 31).

In addition to all of this being concerning because of the potential for the behaviour to escalate and become more violent, we have to discuss it in terms of the impacts it has even before it potentially escalates. Women report higher rates of psychological harm (Pearson and Seglins 2022, p. 30) from seemingly inescapable harassment, and at least twice as many women as men increased security at work and/or home, left their residence, changed their contact information, and/or quit social media (ibid.). Ipsos (2021) reports that "the impact of harassment experienced on the job has severe

personal effects and industry-wide consequences" (p. 4).

> "People talk unironically of their right to free expression whilst doing everything in their power to hurt, humiliate and silence any woman with a voice or a platform, screeching abuse at us until we back down or shut up. They speak of censorship but say nothing of the silencing in which they are engaged" (Penny 2013 in Mendes 2015, p. 179).

And this is precisely the point. The people who engage in this kind of behaviour are aiming to silence and drive women out of politics and journalism or – at a minimum – create a chilling effect for other women who might consider entering politics or journalism.

As noted above, several authors discuss harassment, intimidation, and abuse of women politicians and women journalists as threats to democracy and a free press (de Geus et al. 2021, Impe 2019, Jankowicz 2022, Ipsos 2021, Poland 2016, Sobieraj 2020, Women's Media Center 2019). In her book, *Credible Threat*, Sarah Sobieraj (2020) outlines most succinctly the "three distinct democratic disturbances created by the prevalence of identity-based attacks online" (p. 115), which include: a pattern of deterioration in political discourse (e.g., drawing sexually suggestive cartoons about women politicians and calling them 'political cartoons' or, of course, vandalizing someone's home and justifying it because the woman politician who lives there with her family holds different

political views than you do); the chilling effect on women wanting to get involved in politics, whether it be in running for political office or supporting other women to do so; and circulating disinformation/misinformation that erodes trust in our electoral processes (e.g., spreading false information about elected officials not actually being elected).

Given the nature of our work today, it is not feasible to tell women to just remove themselves from social media when doing so could have a significant impact on their livelihood or ability to communicate their message.

In considering both the traumatic impacts on women and the threats to democracy and a free press, we must find ways to minimize and call out, but also not amplify, the cybersexist harassment to which women are subjected.

Recommendations

What Online Harassment Tells Us About Our Newsrooms: From Individuals To Institutions

RECOMMENDATIONS: What Newsroom Leaders Can Do

1. **Commit to understanding the relationship of inclusivity, online harassment, and free speech in your newsroom:** Start with data. Meaningful improvement starts with having the right data, which means marshaling resources for data collection. Climate surveys are essential, as – unlike quantitative

surveys that measure diversity – they can provide valuable information on whether journalists feel supported in their jobs, feel safe from online and other harassment, and see growth opportunities within the newsroom.

Data should first be shared internally, to build trust and ensure accountability in-house, but it should also be used to set targets and goals, and shared publicly to increase accountability.

2. **Make support policies and resources clear and accessible:** There are two primary ways to support journalists in media environments in which toxicity and abuse are pervasive. First, provide them with guidance and, if possible, training in digital safety and privacy best practices. Second, have a clear cultural commitment to supporting targeted journalists. Supportive newsroom managers and editors can make a big difference, but beyond that, there should be tech, legal, and health resources available as well when staff need assistance. Survivors need to be central to the design of support programs.

Many journalists don't know what, if any, resources are available to them. Is there a way to have a third party monitor the content of comments? Is there a way to determine if the tactic of harassment is illegal and, if so, are there resources available to support legal action if desired? Does a company's

health insurance policy cover the costs of work-related therapy? Is there an IT department and, if so, do they conduct digital security best practices training? Will the company pay for reputation tracking services to help reduce the chances of impersonation and doxxing? Does the company offer any support to freelancers? Newsroom policies and practices should be well-defined, published, updated, and circulated.

Policies should be communicated to reporters during orientation, and staff should receive regular reminders that the newsroom is unreservedly behind them and that they will not face negative repercussions for reporting harassment, whether that harassment originates externally or internally.

A public commitment to an affected journalist is also advisable.

3. **Rethink notions of "objectivity":** When newsroom leaders make space for and support a variety of experiences and responses to harassment, they are, in some sense, leaving behind the old journalistic standard of a singular "objective" viewpoint. And this is okay, as even journalists of different ages have different experiences and perspectives. Younger journalists are often digital natives who may spend much of their time online. For them, harassment can have far more damaging effects than for an older reporter who is more habituated

to switching off the computer and living offline when work winds down. These differences are not to be ignored but embraced. Establish "reverse mentorship" programs to orient senior staff to digital native realities.

4. **Make journalists' safety a company-wide priority:** Addressing the negative impacts of online harassment requires multidimensional responses. In large institutions, tech, legal, marketing, and editorial departments need to be working together to find the best support and response solutions. In smaller media companies, where those divisions may not be relevant, a leadership commitment to understanding and providing support is even more critical. In some cases, even when harassment is recognized, a news organization may lack the resources to, say, assign a full-time security officer to its reporters or investigate every incident of harassment. Newsroom managers should function as a buffer between reporters and their harassers, reviewing social media posts and having someone from the newsroom liaise with the technology companies on whose platforms the abuse is unfolding.

5. **Work with social media companies to develop escalation channels:** It is often the case that online harassment is happening across a broad range of social media platforms. Media companies that restrict their responses to just their

own platform fail to provide the kind of support that journalists being harassed and threatened need. A media company has more influence and a greater ability to engage with social media companies than journalists as individuals do. The time to develop relationships and escalation channels for journalists at risk is not when they are under attack but before an incident occurs. If media companies were to band together to negotiate better escalation channels when one of their journalists is being attacked, their amalgamated influence would likely be greater still.

Women's Media Center 2019,
pp. 12-16

Notes:

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WOMEN AS EXPERTS

In 2020, Luba Kassova authored two studies (2020a; 2020b) that discussed several issues related to gender equality in news coverage, including the representation (or lack thereof) of women as experts.

Kassova (2020a) found that media featured men as experts and commentators about COVID-19 news four times more frequently than they featured women (p. 34). It is suggested that one of the reasons for this underrepresentation of women is that "status quo bias" (ibid.) results in journalists relying on "established sources" (ibid.) who are much more likely to be men than women. In Kassova's (2020b) broader report on women's representation in the media, she found that the expertise of women has historically been marginalized and undervalued (p. 88) and that in the ten-year time period between 2005 and 2015, less than 20% of experts or commentators involved in news coverage were women (ibid.). This underrepresentation is most pronounced in television news and newspapers (Kassova 2020b, p. 89). In *fixed it*, Jane Gilmore (2019) finds that less than one quarter of news stories broadcast or written include women, and women are fewer than 15% of quoted experts (p. 37).

Whilst Kassova notes that women are over-represented in telling stories as homemakers, students, and parents (Kassova 2020b, p. 89), they continue to be underrepresented in political news coverage in comparison to their actual numbers in political positions (2020b, p. 107). Multiple academic studies, using a variety of methodologies, have consistently found that women are substantially underrepresented in news coverage, especially in newspapers (Kassova 2020b, p. 101). Women are not represented in news coverage in proportion to their number or level of involvement in society (ibid.).

Even in the case of news coverage related to gender equality, men are more likely to be featured in stories than women (Kassova 2020a, p. 49). If this continues to be true and if "gender equality issues are not [truly] front of mind for journalists, other opinion formers or decision makers" (Kassova 2020b, p. 113) when we know how critical the media is in forming public opinion and influencing public policy, then we face an enormous obstacle in ever achieving true gender equality.

We are not seeing journalists connect gender equality issues to issues that are of public concern (Kassova 2020b, p. 119); they are not considering how issues might impact women differently than they impact men; and Caroline Criado Perez (2019) provides

numerous examples of issues that we do not commonly think of as gender issues that are, in fact, gender issues. In her book, *Invisible Women*, Criado Perez (2019) discusses a variety of issues that fall into the categories of daily life, the workplace, design, healthcare, and public life. She points out that, for instance, snow clearing is a gender issue (Criado Perez 2019, pp. 29-46) and how prioritizing clearing roads of snow over clearing sidewalks disproportionately impacts women and drives up healthcare costs for women (p. 31), because women are more likely than men to be pedestrians, and pedestrians are three times more likely to suffer injuries due to icy conditions than are motorists (ibid.).

If journalists and editors use a gender lens to analyze and report all stories, it is highly likely that they will find ways to report the stories that improve gender equality (or at least bring more attention to it), including if the people they speak to about these issues are women. Even better if, in the case of snow clearing as a gender issue, they are speaking with women engineers and planners.

Several studies have found that journalistic sourcing is biased toward a narrow range of sources who are most likely to be middle-aged, middle-class, and predominantly white men (Kassova 2020b, p. 90). When asked, some Niagara-based media folks indicated this was because they would be looking for the 'foremost expert' on a topic. Of course, given the continued challenges with the representation of women and racially-marginalized

folks in senior leadership roles, it would be uncommon to find anyone other than white men in these senior leadership roles. Further, when journalists are looking for someone to quote or speak to, it is reasonable to think they could just as easily look to people who simply are well-educated and informed about the issue and can speak about it, rather than being the 'foremost expert' (who likely will not be found in Niagara), and that it will be easier to find women and racially-marginalized people when journalists do not rely on traditional ways of sourcing experts.

Recommendations

The Missing Perspectives of Women in the News

Recommendations aimed at news providers at a glance

Key strategic recommendations

1. Ensure that your organization puts in place tools to answer two burning strategic questions:

   a. What drives improved portrayal of women in the news?

   b. Which news features carry the potential to increase women's empowerment?

   Introduce and measure news consumption and impact-based indicators to measure women's engagement with news, the impacts of news on women at

an individual and societal level, and how these impacts change in response to a more gender-balanced news offering.

2. Incorporate more qualitative assessment when measuring all gender equality indicators to understand the messages women are decoding from their representation in news. Consider combining efforts with other news providers and funders to develop and adhere to an industry-wide gender news tracker, measuring the performance, perceptions and needs of women across the whole value chain of news production, consumption, and impacts.

3. Disaggregate audience data by sex to develop an understanding of women's news needs and preferences. Craft news stories in response to this knowledge.

4. Redress the deep gender imbalance in political news coverage, newsrooms' most influential output, increasing the proportion of women as protagonists and contributors.

5. Ramp up advocacy efforts for gender equality in news, particularly targeting powerful opinion formers (including journalists) and making effective use of narrative frames around ethics, business success, audience relevance and reputation. Support social campaigns and education programs to combat discriminatory social and cultural norms and encourage journalists to see themselves as change agents.

6. Use more images of women in news, increasing the proportion that depict women as empowered.

7. Build awareness of gender imbalance in the news through education programs in secondary schools and support the teaching of gender equality as a compulsory module in news journalism courses at tertiary level.

8. Introduce women leaders in the news industry awards to champion women role models in decision-making positions in journalism and inspire younger generations of women.

9. Focus communications and advocacy initiatives on young people, as this age group is most supportive of gender equality.

Recommendations focusing on newsgathering: Women as sources of news expertise

10. Compile lists of women contributors and experts for journalists to use.

11. Measure the proportion of women experts featured in the stories reported by your news organization to reveal how gender-balanced or otherwise your content is.

12. Make women's share of quoted voice in the news as experts match or exceed the share of women attaining master's degrees in your community/province/country.

13. Aim to increase women's share of quoted voice in agenda-setting beats such as economy and politics to achieve parity by 2025, using behavioral nudges and insights from case studies.

14. Make newsroom journalists aware of existing male biases in the choice of sources and experts and in news stories, through the use of monitoring and debiasing tools.

15. Set an expectation of gender parity for expert panels on all platforms including television and radio.

Recommendations focusing on news outputs: Women protagonists

16. Measure the proportion of women protagonists featuring in the stories reported by your news organization to reveal how gender-balanced or otherwise your content is.

17. Use the broadest possible definition of a woman protagonist to include both individuals and groups.

18. Capture the proportion of women protagonists in different news beats and work towards increasing the proportion of women protagonists in agenda-setting news beats such as politics and the economy.

19. Specifically, set targets for women protagonists in the political and government news genre to ensure that your organization's representation of women

in politics reflects their true position in society.

20. When capturing the proportion of women protagonists, apply a qualitative lens to quantifications to distinguish between, for example, victims and empowered individuals. Ensure a fair proportion of empowered women in news coverage, to act as role models for young girls and women in society.

21. Make journalists aware of research on existing gender biases in reporting crime and violence which reveal the harsher treatment of women as perpetrators of crime along with greater social tolerance of crimes against women.

22. Introduce a gender-neutral checklist of principles to follow when portraying victims and perpetrators of crime in news stories to redress the biased portrayal of women.

Recommendations focusing on news outputs: Coverage of gender equality

23. Make journalists aware of the existing bias towards featuring more men than women in gender equality stories. Redress this bias by actively looking for women protagonists to lead on gender equality coverage.

24. Provide education and training for journalists to facilitate multi-perspective gender equality thinking, leading to more impactful coverage that links multiple

gender equality themes into an overarching narrative.

25. Support the teaching of gender equality as a compulsory module for students of news journalism.

26. When reporting on gender equality issues, link coverage with issues such as employment, education, the economy, politics, or healthcare, which are more salient to decision makers and the public.

27. Encourage journalists to link different global issues together, such as the impact of gender inequality on poverty and/or climate change.

28. Promote gender equality by compiling existing guidelines and toolkits that address gender-sensitive reporting, the reporting of violence against women and gender equality activism.

29. Plan coverage on the editorial calendar to highlight gender inequality, using, for example, International or National Women's Days, to achieve highest impact, but do not limit coverage to gender inequality to these days.

30. Frame issues of gender inequality by exposing the discrepancy in prominence between men and women, using percentage differences or highlighting the extent to which men's voices and experience are amplified over those of women.

Kassova 2020b,
pp. 29-31

Notes:

DIVERSITY IN MEDIA

"To gain a full understanding of how well-represented women are in news, we need to examine women's interaction with all elements of news production and consumption."

(Kassova 2020b, p. 33).

As discussed in the **Violence against women online** section of this Guide, we return to a discussion of Kassova's (2020b, p. 33) touchpoints with the news. At every touchpoint, there is a gender equality indicator as well as notes about impact.

Organizational resources are women's first touchpoint with the news and include staff, management, and ownership of the news outlet. It is often assumed that improvements in gender balance in the newsroom and management will result in a more balanced representation of women in news coverage (Kassova 2020b, p. 34).

The **newsgathering** touchpoint is about the representation of women as experts, reporters, spokespeople, and more general news sources. When newsgathering considers gender equality, news reporting is more likely to be gender-sensitive and transformative (ibid.).

Outputs are described, in part, by Kassova (2020b) as the content or news coverage that uses women as story protagonists, including as victims and survivors, and considers how they are portrayed (p. 34).

News consumption captures information about how and where women consume news and at what levels (ibid.). For instance, women consume less news than men, and they consume more of their news via social media platforms than do men (ibid., pp. 53-54).

Touchpoint five outlines **individual impacts** of news media, including the relevance of, interest in, and awareness of news items in relation to gender (in)equality and gendered issues (ibid., p. 34).

The **opinion-former/influencer-based impacts** focus on news coverage that leads to an increased awareness of gender issues and more awareness about gender equality (Kassova 2020b, p. 34). As noted several times in this Guide, the media are a key opinion former/influencer group (ibid.).

Lastly, **decision maker-based impacts** lead to transformative societal changes. News coverage can encourage behaviours from politicians to act on or advance gender equality issues (Kassova 2020b, p. 34).

1 — Organizational Resources

Organization is explicit about their gender sensitivity approach

Gender diversity of the workforce

% of journalists who are women

% of women in leadership/ management team

% of women in high-profile newsroom beats (e.g. politics)

2 — Newsgathering

% of women used as source of expertise

% of reporters who are women

% of news sources on the ground who are women

3 — Outputs

% of stories leading on protagonists who are women (e.g. women in power)

Portrayal of women

% of experts on screen/online who are women

Implicit or explicit coverage of gender equaliy issues

Gender-responsive content

Gender transformative content

4 — News Consumption

Reach: % of women reached

Engagement: % of women who are engaged with the content (e.g. commented, shared, liked)

5 — Individual Impacts

% of all who are aware of overall gender inequality generally

% of women who feel that news topics/stories/genres are relevant to them

% who feel the news' breadth, depth, tone, & immediacy meet their standards

% who trust in the news/ think that the news is balanced

% who feel they are better reflected in the news

% who act on inequality issues (e.g. compaigning, signing petitions)

6 — Influencer-based Impacts

% of infuencers who rate gender inequality issues as important

Number of influencers engaged in gender inequality issues

Number of stories featuirng protagonists who are women and/or issues/topics relevant to women that have been ampified by media

Gender issue-related debates triggered by news reports

Recognition of media providers for gender equality efforts

Journalism awards

7 — Decisionmaker-based Impacts

Individual decisionmaker-based impacts; policymakers/officials propelled to act on a gender equality issue as a result of story coverage

Debates in parliaments and other decisionmaking bodies triggered by stories relevant to women/ advancing gender equality

Positive changes in the narrative

Laws/policy/strategy changes as a result of a gender relevant issue

Kassova 2020b, p. 33

A cursory understanding of these seven touchpoints women have with the media and news coverage makes clear the many reasons why diversity in media is important; however, several studies and reports indicate that there is a serious lack of diversity in media.

How can many of the impacts above be achieved if journalists and broadcasters are still predominantly cisgender, heterosexual white men? If men are not considering the news they are writing or talking about through a gender lens, how can gender equality be advanced? What are the impacts on women readers/viewers/listeners when most stories are written or broadcast by men who bring a different view of the world to their work?

When raised with some local media workers that journalism and broadcast news (including in Niagara) is predominantly white men, a few of them challenged that assertion; however, it is well-documented to be the case.

In Kassova's report on the *Missing Perspectives of Women in News* (2020b), she tells us that, although some progress has been made, men still make up the majority of journalists globally (p. 64), and that women's underrepresentation in media is more evident in governance and decision-making roles (p. 65), making news coverage "decisively biased towards men's perspectives (p. 16). In *fixed it* (2019), Gilmore finds that almost every study in

Australia, Canada, the U.K., and the U.S. has found that approximately 70% of news articles are written by men and that men are quoted, photographed, and have their achievements discussed at a much higher rate (p. 37). "Women are seen, heard or read about in less than one quarter of stories produced and they make up less than 15 per cent of quoted experts" (ibid.). As found in several other studies and reports, women journalists tend to be found most often in lifestyle, celebrity, and health beats, whilst men are significantly overrepresented in politics, sport, and finance (ibid.). Callison and Young (2020) discuss the findings of long-term statistical reports that tell us that newsrooms continue to be predominantly white and that, whilst there has been some progress on gender parity, editorial and executive positions remain largely white and male (p. 17).

Also suggesting there has been some progress on diversity in newsrooms and leadership positions is Erin Tolley, who – in *Framed* (2016) – cites various studies that indicate the following:

- only one-third of newsroom editorial positions are held by women;

- national English-language columnists are predominantly (75%) men;

- journalists who have minority backgrounds make up only 3% of the newspaper, radio, and television sector;

- visible minorities represent only 5.9% of editors and producers in newsrooms;

- visible minorities represent only 3.6% of senior management roles in newsrooms; and

- a 2004 cross-Canada survey found that visible minorities and Indigenous people made up only 3.4% of news staff (pp. 14-15).

In *Taking Care: A Report on Mental Health, Well-Being & Trauma among Canadian Media Workers* (2022), Pearson and Seglins point out that 81% of their survey respondents were white, and that there is an "ongoing diversity and inclusion problem in Canadian media" (p. 33). They also cite the newsroom diversity survey conducted by the Canadian Association of Journalists that indicates that newsrooms are mostly comprised of white people (75%) and that there are no Latin American, Middle Eastern, or mixed race staff in 90% of newsrooms (Pearson & Seglins 2022, p. 33; Canadian Association of Journalists 2022, p. 6). In terms of gender, these two reports tell us that the representation of transgender journalists is less than 1% (Pearson & Seglins 2022, p. 34; Canadian Association of Journalists 2022, p. 6) and that while – among survey respondents – the majority of journalists in the newsroom are women, their presence is primarily in part-time and internship roles, rather than full-time and leadership roles (Canadian Association of Journalists 2022, p. 6).

When looking at the results of the *Canadian Newsroom Diversity Survey* (Canadian Association of Journalists 2022), it is important to note the low response rate (p. 2) and that the national averages cited in the survey are being driven by a small number of large newsrooms (p. 6). These large newsrooms tend to have greater racial diversity, but most Canadian newsrooms tend to be whiter than the audiences they serve (ibid.).

The Toronto Star, for instance, which owns the Niagara Dailies, shared that 68.5% of its full-time staff is white, 22.8% are of Asian descent, and none of the Star's full-time staff are Indigenous (Canadian Association of Journalists 2022, p. 5). The Toronto Star's gender balance is split at 47.6% each of people who identify as women or as men, with 4.8% identifying as non-binary or choosing not to disclose their gender identity.

Looking at only Niagara, though, we see a starker picture in terms of diversity. At the St. Catharines Standard, there are no women in supervisory positions; the full-time staff is 71.4% men and all of the staff are white (Canadian Association of Journalists 2022). At the Niagara Falls Review, we see the same results in terms of race in that 100% of the staff are white. With respect to gender, 75% of the full-time staff are men, and two-thirds of the supervisory roles are held by men (ibid.). At Niagara this Week, we see a little more diversity in that supervisory roles are evenly split between women and men, and there is representation among the full-time staff of Black and Asian journalists; however, 70% of Niagara this Week's full-time staff and 100% of its part-time staff are men (ibid.). We are also aware that Niagara

this Week employs a disabled woman among its full-time journalists, and we are not aware of any of the dailies having disabled journalists on staff.

The local talk radio station's weekday show personalities are entirely white men. The news is covered by men and women who are white, and their weekend and evening shows are led by men and women, with only one show being led by an Indigenous man (and aired across two other markets).

Admittedly, it is difficult to know if increasing diversity in newsrooms and media leadership would change the representation of women and other equity-deserving groups in news coverage, because just as Goodyear-Grant (2013), Kassova (2020b), and others found that there is no "sex-of-journalist difference" (Goodyear-Grant 2013, p. 116) in how news is covered or that it makes little difference in the gender balance of news coverage (Kassova 2020b, p. 75), it has also been found that there is little difference in how news is covered by white journalists versus how it is covered by journalists who are racially-marginalized (Tolley 2016, p. 183). All of the cited sources imagine the lack of difference is due to the pervasiveness of the white male point of view and notions of objectivity.

Where progress can be made is in adopting strategies that are inclusive, rather than simply focused on diversity, and by rethinking what it means for news coverage and journalists to be objective.

Recommendations

What Online Harassment Tells Us About Our Newsrooms: From Individuals To Institutions

RECOMMENDATIONS: What Newsroom Leaders Can Do

1. **Commit to understanding the relationship of inclusivity, online harassment, and free speech in your newsroom:** Start with data. Meaningful improvement starts with having the right data, which means marshaling resources for data collection. Climate surveys are essential, as – unlike quantitative surveys that measure diversity – they can provide valuable information on whether journalists feel supported in their jobs, feel safe from online and other harassment, and see growth opportunities within the newsroom.

   Data should first be shared internally, to build trust and ensure accountability in-house, but it should also be used to set targets and goals, and shared publicly to increase accountability.

2. **Acknowledge bias and begin engineering around it:** All of us hold stereotypes, prejudices, or unconscious biases about groups of people that shape how we view members of those groups. Unfortunately, simply raising awareness of these biases or acknowledging they exist is not sufficient to eliminate or unlearn them. In fact,

raising awareness, studies suggest, may exacerbate biases. What is needed is institutional change that does not rely on changing people's individual behaviors: designing processes and systems engineered around biases in order to facilitate fairer outcomes. Create and share benchmarks for change and establish mechanisms for accountability.

Bias also influences job reviews and promotions. If there are fewer women and people of color in senior positions, has an effort been made to really figure out why? When and why are they leaving or not getting promoted? "Burnout" is not in and of itself a reason for staff churn. Solutions could include appointing a central decision maker to allocate work for junior staff assisting more senior staff, rather than letting the senior staff choose juniors directly. Middle managers are also often catalysts for change who can both model and reward career-enhancing behavior.

Performance reviews can benefit from bias evaluation. Women of color often receive worse evaluations than their white colleagues, and yet evaluation processes themselves are not subject to analysis.

3. **Genuinely embrace difference as an asset:** Leadership must commit to clarity and diversity in hiring. Newsroom leaders should be clear that the hiring process must include a diverse slate of candidates. This can be achieved by creating relationships with groups representing women and journalists of color to expand networks. Alternatively, institutions can make it a priority to diversify their staff and support that intention with benchmarks and metrics.

Move from "diversity" to inclusivity. It is possible for an organization to be diverse but not inclusive. Diversity often means inviting people into a space and expecting them to perform in "traditional" ways. Inclusivity, on the other hand, means that "traditional" ways evolve so that norms change. That difference is highly salient to how institutions and leaders respond to threats posed by online harassment.

4. **Desegregate coverage and diversify viewpoints and perspectives:** Managers must also take the initiative to develop their talent pipeline, even in the face of time and resource constraints. There are two primary areas of focus in doing this: increasing minorities' and women's bylines and other credits in "hard news" areas and sections where clear deficits exist, and addressing imbalances in visual representation and sourcing. Both factors are measurable and lend themselves to easy tracking and benchmarking. Junior reporters, paired with a more veteran reporter, can be assigned to cover big stories. Inviting different people into key meetings and rotating leadership of meetings to

generate new and different story ideas are other productive steps. Newsroom leaders can also call on normally quiet colleagues to ensure their voices are heard.

When more voices are present, the tone of coverage can shift. Rather than hide emotional responses in the name of objectivity, journalists are encouraged to bring their "true selves" to the table.

Women's Media Center 2019, pp. 12-16

The Missing Perspectives of Women in the News

Recommendations focusing on organizational resources: Diversity in the workplace

1. Ensure that a comprehensive suite of policies addressing gender equality is in place and that its implementation is the responsibility of a nominated senior leader. Policies should specifically cover gender equality, gender bias in recruitment, parental leave, return to work, sexual harassment, childcare assistance, flexible working, and training and development.

2. Prioritize childcare policies and flexible working provision as these are particularly likely to have a significant positive impact.

3. Consider raising awareness of and tackling the gender pay gap through pay audits.

4. Include specific, time-limited goals relating to gender equality in the organization's corporate strategy, attaching targets for each element of the news production and consumption value chain. Focus initially on demonstrably achieving gender parity in organizational resources by specific dates.

5. Monitor all elements of your gender equality strategy on an ongoing basis along the whole value chain of news production, consumption, and impacts, using regular audits and a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators and methodologies.

6. Aspire to gender parity in the governance structure of your organization.

7. Consider gender quotas in recruitment as a tool for redressing gender balance in news.

8. Ensure that the leadership is committed to improving gender equality throughout the organization. Create a gender or women's editor.

9. Tackle gender blindness in the governance structure and senior leadership of your organization, as well as in newsrooms, through a comprehensive gender-sensitivity training program for men and women, covering all possible gender equality indicators along the whole news value chain.

Recommendations aimed at news providers at a glance

10. Ensure that your organization puts in place tools to answer two burning strategic questions:

    a. What drives improved portrayal of women in the news?

    b. Which news features carry the potential to increase women's empowerment? Introduce and measure news consumption and impact-based indicators to measure women's engagement with news, the impacts of news on women at an individual and societal level, and how these impacts change in response to a more gender-balanced news offer.

11. Incorporate more qualitative assessment when measuring all gender equality indicators to understand the messages women are decoding from their representation in news. Consider combining efforts with other news providers and funders to develop and adhere to an industry-wide gender news tracker, measuring the performance, perceptions and needs of women across the whole value chain of news production, consumption, and impacts.

12. Tackle the representation of women in ownership and governance structures by introducing an indicator aimed at achieving gender parity on governing boards. Measure the impact of predominantly male ownership structures on the culture of news organizations and on the gender balance in news.

13. Disaggregate audience data by sex to develop an understanding of women's news needs and preferences. Craft news stories in response to this knowledge.

14. Redress the deep gender imbalance in political news coverage, newsrooms' most influential output, increasing the proportion of women as protagonists and contributors.

15. Build awareness of gender imbalance in the news through education programs in secondary (high) schools and support the teaching of gender equality as a compulsory module in news journalism courses at tertiary level.

16. Introduce women leaders in the news industry awards to champion women role models in decision-making positions in journalism and inspire younger generations of women.

17. Focus communications and advocacy initiatives on young people, as this age group is most supportive of gender equality.

Kassova 2020b,
pp. 29-31

Covering Violence

Guidelines for Journalists who Cover Violence

Reporting about Rape

1. Recognize the vitality and resiliency in all communities. Honor the diversity of experiences in every group, and disdain easy assumptions about whether people are able to cope with their conditions.

2. Respect the wisdom represented in often-neglected communities and regularly include their members in stories.

3. Seek ways to enable people to tell of their experiences.

4. Trust the authentic voice of a person who has experienced difficult conditions.

5. Report about subtle as well as obvious forms of prejudice, but learn about both from the perspective of people who see them as threats in their own lives.

Simpson & Cote 2006,
pp. 269-275

When working with immigrants and refugees, consider the following recommendations:

• Become familiar with local organizations that work with new immigrant populations. Discuss emerging trends and issues with them. Find out the media needs of the community and organization. Create collaborative relationships with agencies and maintain them over time for best results—Mutual trust and functionality are key for a win-win relationship.

• Get to know the new immigrant populations in your area and gather research and knowledge about their story. Be aware of country conditions, ongoing struggles, and relevant groups (ethnicity, religion, political, etc.). Grant community leaders and service providers expert status and ask them to serve as consultants to help ensure the authenticity of your information and understanding.

• Respect the legal, emotional, and economic vulnerability of your sources. Take every precaution that anonymity is maintained, as needed. Be proactive in investigating any potential risks that disclosure can bring to your sources.

• Expect that new immigrant populations will have some history of trauma. Prepare individuals by giving them as much information about your questions and the structure of your interview as possible. Begin and end interviews with neutral, grounding questions.

• Allow individuals time to emotionally process information presented. Discontinue or redirect questioning if your subject appears emotionally overwhelmed or disassociated (frozen or disconnected from reality). Plan for breaks.

• Trauma is encoded in the language in which it occurs. For the most accurate and emotionally valid interview, provide

interpretation in the language of origin, even if the individual is able to communicate bilingually.

- In the best situations, sources will be connected with and supported by mental health and/or legal advocates. If a source is unfamiliar with such services, provide specific information whenever possible.

- In terms of what you write, provide as much information and power to your source as possible. Secure consent ahead of time, and offer a final review of the story before publication. Openly communicate your perspective and focus for the piece. Allow sources to terminate their participation and retain the rights to any information provided.

- Be aware that sources may have experienced trauma in their country of origin and/or during their journey to their new home, where they may also experience victimization.

- Some sources may not have the privilege of telling you the truth for a variety of reasons (their legal situation, protecting another community member, pressure from family, etc.). This may have nothing to do with their feelings about you as a journalist, your story or publication, or even about their own morality. New immigrant communities are often in survival mode and can only concern themselves with self-protection. It is your responsibility as a journalist to check the veracity of the reports in a respectful and non-judgmental manner.

Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma 2014

Framed: Media and the Coverage of Race in Canadian Politics

1. When writing stories that mention the socio-demographic characteristics of racially-marginalized candidates, be sure to also mention the backgrounds of white candidates. If we are to get away from whiteness being assumed unless readers/listeners/viewers are told otherwise and actually embrace diversity and inclusivity, then if the race of a racially-marginalized person is considered relevant to a news story, so too should the race of a white person.

2. Work to integrate diversity issues into "mainstream" stories about Canadian politics. This will avoid racially-marginalized candidates being relegated to coverage about 'famous firsts,' 'model minorities,' 'cultural curiosities,' and 'ethnic politicking.' White candidates are rarely mentioned in stories about 'minority' or 'ethnic' issues unless the story is about how they will win the 'ethnic' vote. This has the effect of narrowing the range of voices that speak to various political issues and gives the impression that racially-marginalized candidates only care about 'their own' issues.

3. Give some consideration to how assumptions and stereotypes influence your interpretation of the reality around you. We all use information

shortcuts; however, the achievement of fair, balanced, and reflective coverage demands that journalists take steps to mitigate their reliance on faulty heuristics. Just as *The Canadian Press Stylebook* asks journalists to consider if they would write something about men that they are considering writing about women, so too should journalists ask themselves if they would write something about a white person that they are considering writing about a racially-marginalized person.

4. Ask questions about the extent to which racial considerations influenced the story topic, narrative arc, language and metaphor use, image and source selection, as well as placement, tone, and prominence of the news coverage. Include a frank assessment of the extent to which subtle, implicit, or hidden racial assumptions may influence news judgment. Traditional narratives must be revisited and journalists need to question the narratives that have dominated the coverage of racially-marginalized candidates and people to date.

Tolley 2016, pp. 202-203

Notes:

MEDIA OBJECTIVITY

With what we know about diversity in media, we will look at how it impacts objectivity in media reporting.

We need to explore this, at least in part, because many people intuit that GBV and gendered issues reported by women journalists or broadcasters are covered in a way that we would consider more responsible; more accurate; and/or more in-depth so as to take into consideration the various ways in which patriarchy, misogyny, racism, ableism, etc. impact these issues.

Whilst it is generally understood that increasing the number of women in newsrooms is a positive move toward increasing diversity, several studies and reports find that there is no "sex-of-journalist difference" (Goodyear-Grant 2013, p. 116) in how news is covered. Kassova (2020b) found that there is a lack of evidence that increasing the number of women in the newsroom makes any difference in gender balance in the news coverage (p. 75). Regardless of the number of women journalists, the most recent studies suggest that only up to one-third of news coverage featured women protagonists (ibid.). Even in the UK and the US, where gender diversity in newsrooms is at or near parity, the bias toward men as protagonists is persistent (ibid., p. 77).

In *Gendered News* (2013), Elizabeth Goodyear-Grant finds that the causes of gender bias or lack of gender sensitivity in news coverage are "too deeply ingrained and complex for staffing reforms to be an effective solution" (p. 116). Goodyear-Grant (ibid.) goes on to say that male-dominated professions tend to result in women conforming to workplace norms and routines rather than confronting them (p. 116). Kassova (2020b) also finds that it might be similarities in attitudes toward being a journalist that 'force' women to adopt and be judged by men's values and standards (p. 78). Let us remember that a male-dominated profession would also mean that many women journalists were taught by men in the classroom.

Why does any of this matter? Why does it matter if newsrooms are male-dominated? Why does it matter if – even where newsrooms are reaching gender parity – women journalists are reporting news based on men's values and standards? Why does it matter that nearly half of all Canadian newsrooms are exclusively staffed by white journalists (Canadian Association of Journalists 2022, p. 5)?

"Show me a man who thinks he's objective, and I'll show you a man who's deceiving himself" (Luce in Wallace 2019, p. 56).

In its efforts to remain completely objective, journalism has long been taught and practiced as journalists taking a 'view from nowhere,' in that they are strictly observers and are able to remain objective by not holding a particular view of their own; or by being able to set their viewpoint entirely to the side on the issues on which they report. As a historically male-dominated profession and with men being considered rational (whilst women are typically considered emotional), male subjectivity is what we have come to consider 'objectivity' (Spender 1980, p. 61). However, several authors, including Candis Callison and Mary Lynn Young (2020) and Lewis Raven Wallace (2019) have begun to write about the harms of journalistic objectivity.

The view from nowhere cannot be completely objective as it stems from the social location of the journalist, the media outlet, and conventional journalistic practices (Callison & Young 2020, p. 45). Too often, 'bias' is interpreted as differences between journalists or between the journalist and the person or people about whom they are writing, when it should be a recognition of the journalist's knowledge, expertise, and life experience (ibid., p. 11), as it is in much academic research when researchers 'situate themselves in the research' to make clear where they are coming from and how it may impact the research they are conducting.

As Wallace says in *The View from Somewhere* (2019), "[d]ispensing with the myth of objectivity is not about rejecting the possibility of truth altogether; it's about accepting the possibility of multiple truths" (p. 178). Discussing larger social issues and structures when covering stories does not mean the story is no longer truthful or accurate. Rather, it provides a more complete picture of why GBV continues to happen or why we still have not achieved gender equality or why Indigenous people continue to be victimized at higher rates than white people or are more likely to live in poverty.

To provide an example, we have long read history books that are written from the perspective of the colonizers, rather than from the perspective of the colonized. When we began to read and learn Canada's history from the perspective of the colonized, it is safe to say that we came to understand Canada differently and that we developed an understanding of the systemic racism and other barriers still faced by Indigenous people today.

The colonizers will say that what they wrote is the truth, and some of it may be, at least from the perspective of the colonizers, but we have come to understand that it is not the complete truth. The stories that those who are colonized share with us are also the truth.

Jody Santos, an award-winning journalist and documentary filmmaker and who has reported for print and television news for more than 20 years, writes in *Daring to Feel* (2009) that some biases are healthy; that we should be outraged at the number of women

who will be abused by a partner in their life-time; that journalists should oppose violence, rather than be compelled to tell both sides of a story and sanitize the brutality of life events, including war (p. xv). She asks why news media tell stories of intimate partner violence as singular events, rather than as the "deva-stating epidemic" (ibid.) it is. Santos finds, through her research and discussion by psychologist Rebecca Campbell that "rape cannot truly be understood from a position of emotional neutrality, of academic 'objectivity,' because these problems are, at their core, emotional" (Santos 2009, p. xiv). "Journalists who have been socialized to unquestionably seek objectivity through balance must recog-nize that, in most cases, anti-woman violence cannot be balanced" (Santos 2009, p. 4).

In a column written for TIME magazine in 2010 and quoted in *Trauma Journalism: On Deadline in Harm's Way* (Massé 2011), James Poniewozik provides an analysis of how the craft of journalism can co-exist with compassion:

> News organizations are still beholden to a concept of objectivity that has little to do with the word's actual meaning. Real objectivity does not mean having no opinion or voicing no point of view. It means seeking, recognizing and inter-preting facts even when they conflict with one's preconceptions or desires. What journalists and the people who talk about them call objectivity is more like neutrality – often a false and labored one – intended to avoid offending the audience or sources (or advertisers)…. The days of pretending that journalists are dispassionate infobots are ending. And that's good: trust built on openness is stronger than trust built on an agreed-upon fiction. We are seeing the death throes of the unsustainable concept of "objectivity." (Poniewozik in Massé 2011, p. 185)

When journalists come from different back-grounds and have different lived experiences, and management permits them to take a view from somewhere, we will end up with more truthful, accurate, and complete stories.

Recommendations

What Online Harassment Tells Us About Our Newsrooms: From Individuals To Institutions

RECOMMENDATIONS: What Newsroom Leaders Can Do

1. **Rethink notions of "objectivity":** When newsroom leaders make space for and support a variety of experiences and responses to harassment, they are, in some sense, leaving behind the old journalistic standard of a singular "objec-tive" viewpoint. And this is okay, as even journalists of different ages have different experiences and perspectives. Younger journalists are often digital natives who may spend much of their time online. For them, harassment can have far more damaging effects than for

an older reporter who is more habituated to switching off the computer and living offline when work winds down. These differences are not to be ignored but embraced. Establish "reverse mentorship" programs to orient senior staff to digital native realities.

Standards around other issues, such as reporting on sexual assault, also have much more room to evolve. Many journalists are taught to report on an alleged assault only if it has first been reported to the authorities. But over the past few years, with the revelations of so many stories of assault that went unreported to law enforcement, and with greater public understanding of racial bias in the criminal justice system, the news industry has witnessed "a complete upending of whether we can trust the authorities or their version of events." Women are telling their stories and voicing their opinions. And despite the harassment they face, many women have decided they will no longer be silent.

Women's Media Center 2019,
pp. 12-16

Covering Violence

Guidelines for Journalists who Cover Violence

1. Beware of news conventions that routinely provide a political or religious "balance" to stories but end up serving only to demean what the victim has said.

2. Respect people's desire for silence, but do more to encourage those who want to speak to tell their stories with your help.

Simpson & Cote 2006,
pp. 269-275

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TRAUMA REPORTING AND VICARIOUS TRAUMA

Covering trauma is traumatic. It really is as simple as that.

Until very recently, not much consideration has been given to the vicarious trauma that might be experienced by journalists, photographers, editors, and other media workers. In addition to that, all of the journalists, photographers, and broadcasters interviewed for the project that resulted in this Guide indicated they received no training about how to interview trauma survivors or how to address the vicarious trauma they might experience.

In a study done in May 2022, Pearson and Seglins found that in both journalism schools and the workplace, media workers are not receiving much, if any, trauma training. Ninety percent of survey respondents received no trauma training while studying journalism; 85% have not received any trauma training in the workplace; and only 33% of managers and executives indicated they had received any trauma training (Pearson and Seglins 2022, p. 28).

Of the journalism schools that responded to the national survey, only Carleton University (where one of the study co-authors teaches) has a full course on trauma training (the course launches in 2023) (Pearson and Seglins 2022, p. 28). Other institutions that responded to the survey indicated they are beginning to include mentions, workshops, modules, and other training formats that discuss trauma and reporter safety, with some offering an intersectional perspective on trauma (ibid.). This is all good news for media workers and their efforts to tell the stories of trauma victims and survivors; however, not one of the institutions surveyed offered any programming about journalists' personal mental health and well-being, and this impacts how well the stories of trauma victims and survivors can be told, as well as impacting the long-term health of media workers.

"Journalists are professional first responders to crisis and disaster. But they're among the last of those groups to recognize the psychological implications of that responsibility" (Brayne 2007, p. 1).

Whilst it is imperative that journalists, broadcasters, photographers, and editors learn how to interview trauma victims and survivors, it is equally important that they recognize the potential impacts of vicarious trauma, including how it might impact both their professional and personal lives.

In *Trauma Journalism: On Deadline In Harm's Way*, it is noted that no matter how objective one tries to be in their reporting, other people's trauma begins to take a toll,

especially if one does not have the tools to address their response to sharing the traumatic story (Masse 2011, p. 35).

How anyone, including a journalist or photographer or editor, experiences trauma varies depending on their past experiences, their personality, and how they processed what they witnessed and/or reported (Brayne 2007, p. 10).

"We are human beings first and journalists second. That means we too can hurt – whatever our belief in journalistic 'objectivity'" (Brayne 2007, p. 11).

Every media worker with whom we spoke for this project indicated that while there has been more of an effort to provide mental health resources for journalists, photographers, editors, and broadcasters, there is still hesitation to access those services. Much of the literature that addressed this indicated that there is a significant level of distrust among journalists about making such disclosures in their workplaces (Masse 2011, p. 133; Pearson and Seglins 2022, pp. 24-25).

What follows are recommendations for reporting about trauma survivors and/or reporting on traumatic events and then a list of recommendations for coping with and appropriately addressing vicarious trauma experienced by media workers. Media workers cannot cover traumatic stories well if they do not have the resources to take care of their own mental health and well-being.

Recommendations for Reporting about Trauma Survivors and/or Reporting on Traumatic Events

When reporting on any of the issues discussed in this Guide or interviewing someone who has been subjected to violence or experienced some other trauma (loss of a loved one, catastrophic event, etc.), there are some specific tips for trauma-informed interviewing.

Trauma Reporting:

A Journalist's Guide to Covering Sensitive Stories

General key points for covering sensitive stories:

1. **Prepare.** Know the basics of the story, check facts meticulously when you are there. Inaccuracy will cause distress.

2. **Acknowledge.** When covering a bereavement, a sincere 'sorry' for what has happened is a decent thing to say.

3. **Attitude.** Approach with humanity. Be attentive, sensitive, and respectful. Expect varied responses and reactions and always treat people with dignity.

4. **Empathy.** Think how you would feel in their position. Never fake, avoid over-empathizing, and maintain professional boundaries.

5. **Fatigue.** They may be exhausted and in turmoil. Make allowances: avoid over-filming, speak clearly, allow breaks, check they are comfortable with what you are asking of them.

6. **Language.** Avoid saying 'I know how you feel.' You don't. Don't diagnose, blame, criticize, or make assumptions.

7. **Control.** Traumatic events can disempower. Always stop and think: how can I give them some control over how I am working with them? Explain, involve, but don't overwhelm.

8. **Listen.** Use active listening skills. Listen rather than talk. Do not rush people or appear distracted by your phone or deadline.

9. **Manage expectations.** Be open, honest, and transparent. Be clear on consent.

10. **Emotional reactions.** Do not provoke tears, but don't be afraid of them. Sit quietly. If they break down, ask what you can do to help.

11. **Interview.** Prepare them for what you would like to ask, listen to their opinions. Avoid being overly interrogative. If they relive an event, allow your questions to draw them gently back into the 'here and now.'

12. **Re-visiting.** Don't assume they 'get over it.' Apply the same level of consideration when you re-visit people's sensitive stories.

13. **The story.** Be mindful of how you word your report. Avoid language of blame or sensation. Contact them after the story has been published or broadcast to thank them.

14. **Look after yourself, and each other. It matters.** [There will be more on this point and the impact of trauma on journalists in the training program.]

Healey 2020,
pp. 199-200

Covering Violence

Guidelines for Journalists who Cover Violence

Understanding Traumatic Injury

• Expect a range of emotional responses from witnesses and survivors.

• Share control with people who have suffered trauma.

• Do not say that a person has post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) unless you have a medical confirmation and the person's permission.

• Know the three symptoms of severe emotional injury – intrusive memories, heightened anxiety, and avoidance of reminders.

• Expect that anger and shame may be part of a person's response to a traumatic event.

Making the Interview Sensitive and Effective

- Respect the other person's efforts to regain balance after a horrible experience.

- Be careful about conveying secondhand information in the interview – both to the interviewee and to readers and viewers.

- Respect the other person's need to focus on her or his present circumstances.

- Set the stage for the interview by carefully informing the person about your identity, your reasons for doing the interview, and how the interview might be used.

- Explain the ground rules.

- Share as much control with the interviewee as possible.

- Anticipate emotional responses, and allow the subject to make decisions about stopping or temporarily halting the interview.

- Listen carefully.

- Review the salient points of the interview with the subject.

- Take time to assess any personal response to the interview and discuss that response with others.

- Keep these guidelines in mind when doing anniversary interviews.

Writing about Survivors of Trauma

- Bear in mind that accuracy is essential if the reporter on a story about a survivor is to retain his or her trust and that of the survivor's family and friends.

- Avoid repeating the details of an assault or other tragedy weeks or months later unless good reason exists for doing so.

- Avoid the shorthand words--prostitute, homeless--that stereotype and detract from the complexity of a person's life.

- Build the story on details carefully chosen to humanize and give dignity to the subject of the profile.

- Consider how graphic details will affect survivors when considering which ones to use. Is the detail essential to telling the story?

- Look for opportunities to tell Act II stories, the accounts of resilient individuals who have found ways to respond to traumatic injury.

- Look for ways to build social context into reporting about individuals.

Pictures and Sounds of Trauma

- Do not knowingly allow a live broadcast of a killing, whether homicide or suicide, especially in close-up and showing wounds and blood.

- Build in a delay of several seconds during live transmissions to allow managers to

make a decision about whether to show something.

- Insist that photographers and photo and graphics editors join other editors or news directors in deciding which images to air or publish.

- Be sure relatives have been notified before announcing or showing the identity of a person who has been killed.

- Give viewers of television news reports enough advance warning of what they are about to see so that someone can leave the room, remove children, or change the channel.

- Remember that children may be able to see a photo in a newspaper left lying around or may watch a television report when adults have left the television on.

- Think about the relative effects of photos published on the front page and inside pages of a newspaper, as well as of images in color versus in black-and-white. Something that might be too graphic for someone (especially a child) glancing at a front page could be less troublesome inside.

- Tell the whole story – before, during, and after – of what happened to the human being involved, not just the death, no matter what photos or footage are used.

- Show tape of a death or other traumatic event once if it meets standards, but do not use file tape in subsequent telecasts.

- Discuss the decision, how it affected survivors and the public, and whether the staff should have handled anything differently as soon as deadline pressures ease. The more discussion there is of these experiences, the more likely a news organization is to avoid thoughtless miscues in the future.

- Do not assume that these, or any other guidelines or policies, will save anyone from agonizing about what to show and not show. They will not and perhaps should not.

We also urge news organizations to recognize that their photographers are the most vulnerable of all employees to traumatic injury and that editors endure an emotional wallop when they view a stream of graphic, troubling images, few of which will reach the public. Teams and their managers can agree that it is alright to switch monitors off, or at least to look away, when a particularly graphic feed is coming in. That sensitivity should apply to sound, which can be heard throughout an editing room, as well as images. Finally, those who must view or hear troubling images should be encouraged to take frequent breaks outside the workroom.

Reporting about Children

- Do not assume that children are emotionally well after a traumatic event, even though they may appear to be responding normally.

- Avoid actions at the scene that may frighten children. Cameras and

microphones can be intimidating. Even a journalist's scowl may communicate fear to a watching child.

- Avoid making an attractive or available child witness or survivor into a "poster child."

- Involve the child and their parents in your discussion about what you are reporting and how you are doing it.

Most victims of abuse find it empowering to tell a reporter about their experience. They may find disclosure uncomfortable in the short term but over time will value being interviewed. Reporters have who covered abuse cases have offered these suggestions for interviewing survivors:

- Decide on a policy about naming victims and apply it fairly. In the priest sexual abuse scandal, the Boston Globe promised anonymity to any victim who requested it.

- Find supporting evidence for stories of abuse before publishing the name of an allegedly abusive adult.

- Approach survivors carefully, looking for evidence of ability to cope with the emotional pain of disclosure. Doing interviews will not help some survivors. Indeed, the interview may do more harm than good.

- Begin the interview with a careful explanation of ground rules, including such matters as whether the person will be named and how the interview will be used.

- Allow the survivor to stipulate the rules for his or her participation, including having a therapist or other representative present during the interview.

- Do not revisit courtroom testimony that may cause the survivor more pain.

- Focus the interview on the survivor's efforts to recover from the abuse, rather than on the abuses.

- Provide information about support groups and agencies that assist survivors, because reports of abuse of children move other victims to speak out. Provide lists of books, articles, Web sites, and videos that can help a person find help or decide how and whether to speak about such a personal experience.

Simpson & Cote 2006, pp. 269-275

Recommendations for Coping with and Appropriately Addressing Vicarious Trauma

Covering Violence

Guidelines for Journalists who Cover Violence

Reporting about Rape

- Remind yourself that you will see and hear things for which you are not prepared.

- Concentrate on the tasks at hand.

Managing details carefully may help alleviate the stress of the event.

- Remember that a calm demeanor will be helpful to people affected by an event; when interviewing or photographing people in this situation, concentrate on their words and maintain eye contact.

- Find a way to talk about what you've seen and heard, and about your emotional responses, after the assignment.

- Consider contacting a therapist if symptoms persist.

Reporting at the Scene of Violence

- Be aware that local public safety planning for tragic events should consider who will respond, what needs will be urgent, and what long-term help the community will require.

- Discuss with peers and editors how to balance job duties and how to respond to those in need at the scene-whether to help, interview, or leave people alone.

- Recognize the dangers associated with dispersal of chemical or biological agents. Learn about the risks before approaching the scene.

- Be sure that your communication equipment is working and available to reporters and photographers, and the media organization should have a plan for how staffers in the field will communicate with editors and other reporters.

- Take note of your own emotional reactions, appreciate that the intensity of reporting may delay those reactions, and know ways to address emotions when they surface.

- Respect the impact of trauma on people at the scene; they may be disoriented and have difficulty expressing themselves.

- Check with authorities before telling viewers that a devastated area has particular needs; one person's cry for a blanket can lead to mountains of donated but unneeded blankets.

Simpson & Cote 2006,
pp. 269-275

Taking Care: A Report on Mental Health, Well-Being & Trauma Among Canadian Media Workers

There are many difficult and complex challenges involved in improving well-being and mental health in the Canadian news industry. There are no simple solutions. Different individuals and organizations are each at their own particular places of awareness, comfort, support and response.

1. Develop post-pandemic plans

News organizations of all sizes must plan to protect employee mental health in the wake of the global pandemic. We must address the unique toll that two-plus years of profound disruption and covering monumental suffering and death has

had on workers. We must also re-eval-
uate and adjust traditional workflows
to ensure some of the positive lessons
of the pandemic are not lost. Plans for
employee reintegration and resumption of
"regular work" should seriously consider:

a. Flexibility in remote work
    arrangements.

b. Introducing additional paid time off
    as annual wellness days.

c. Special focus on safe social events
    to create opportunities for team
    reintegration.

d. Intentional efforts to welcome, inte-
    grate and mentor recent hires who
    may have never previously met
    colleagues in person while working
    remotely.

e. Ensuring ongoing access to personal
    protective equipment and safe
    workspaces.

2. **Improve education and training**

In newsrooms: News organizations
should train and educate managers,
supervisors and assignment staff, as
well as all newsroom and frontline teams
on the science of well-being, mental
health and the impact of trauma. This
training should practically address the
unique challenges, jobs, culture and
experiences of news professionals with
a view of protecting and promoting
well-being. The primary goal should be

to enhance newsroom literacy around
mental health and form the foundation
for enhancing newsroom practices in the
day-to-day.

Newsrooms should also hold anti-
racism and inclusion training for all staff
and cover the costs of participation for
regular freelance contributors.

In journalism schools: Journalism
schools and educators should build and
incorporate training on journalist mental
health and trauma-aware reporting into
the core curricula of post-secondary
college, undergraduate and graduate
level programs. This training should
practically address the specific chal-
lenges journalists-in-training will face,
including newsroom culture issues. The
primary goal should be to enhance each
program's literacy around mental health
and prepare students for real-world
reporting scenarios. Training in mental
health first aid is also recommended for
journalism instructors to better support
students affected by their reporting
assignments.

3. **Foster in-house expertise**

News leaders should acknowledge
they are not the experts — and that
they don't have to be. Rather, they
should hire professional mental health
advisers to help inform and guide their
newsrooms on industry best practices.
For instance, the BBC employs a chief
medical health officer, an organizational

psychologist, and a nurse to work with news teams on psychological health and safety. ABC Australia employs a social media well-being adviser. ABC also employs a registered psychologist who leads internal training and conducts routine post-deployment assessments with news crews. Reuters, NPR and Al Jazeera all retain specialists to oversee internal peer support networks to offer specialized, "journalist-focused" counselling services.

4. **Improve culture & work/life balance**

Well-being of people should be formally adopted as a core organizational value within news organizations and other media outlets. Well-being should be included in formal editorial standards and practices, alongside the needs for ensuring facts, fairness, accuracy, etc. News organizations should ensure employees use available time off, eat lunch, take breaks, and unplug from technology. One critical way of accomplishing this is by asking managers and other newsroom leaders to model self-care by establishing clear expectations and boundaries around off-hours expectations.

5. **Establish protocols to protect health**

Newsrooms should adopt and promote practices aimed at preventing harm from burnout, stress, overwork, and exposure to trauma. They should include:

a. Clear protocols on what to do when an employee needs a break from story coverage.

b. Assignment plans that consider psychological risks before, during and after filing/deployment.

c. Prioritization of rest, decompression, and processing time in the wake of heavy stories.

d. Protocols and policies that address the higher rates of harassment, stress, PTSD and other issues among women. Strategies can involve flexible work hours, on-site childcare, private childcare benefits, signage promoting dedicated help for women who may be experiencing domestic violence, as well as reminders in the office of harassment protocols and how to access support.

e. Regular training of all staff on health and safety.

f. Devising clear protocols and supports for handling harassment of staff, be it online, in the field or within the workplace.

g. Acknowledging that workers come from different backgrounds with their own unique experiences and baggage, and that these differences mean that not everyone will react the same way to an assignment. Modelling and advocating for boundary-setting can help promote

better health and greater newsroom diversity.

6. Rethink alcohol

News organizations, unions and associations should rethink their relationship with alcohol, including within the workplace, as gifts and at work-related celebrations. As indicated in the *Taking Care* report, Canadian media workers are at higher risks of developing harmful substance and alcohol habits and dependencies. Finding other ways of gathering or celebrating without alcohol will help promote a culture focused on improving well-being.

7. Launch peer support programs

Canadian news organizations, unions and industry associations should implement peer support networks to provide systems for dialogue and assistance for news professionals who are struggling. This model is in place at BBC, ABC Australia, Reuters, NPR and elsewhere where employees trained in basic mental health first aid assist their colleagues to offer empathetic listening or refer them to professional counselling or other supports. This peer-to-peer framework offers quick, easily accessible, confidential mental health support that does not require an employee in need to speak to a manager or take time off to go to a doctor/counsellor.

While this method does not replace therapy, it does quickly refer people

in crisis to professional support. Moreover, the training of designated peer supporters enhances know-how and mental health literacy across organizations, helping to educate, break down stigma and normalize discussion about mental health, while accelerating the culture change needed within the industry.

Additionally, news organizations should actively support the creation of employee resource groups to improve working conditions for marginalized workers, such as Black, Indigenous, and other racially-marginalized workers, women, 2SLGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities and older workers. The volunteers who drive these initiatives should be granted time during their paid working hours for these efforts.

8. Improve & expand benefits

News organizations and unions should provide enhanced mental health benefits to all employees and ensure those benefits are openly and widely promoted. That includes:

a. Advertising available benefits in newsletters, regular emails, and plain-language posters in newsroom common areas.

b. Compiling and promoting a referral list for reputable counsellors, psychologists, massage therapists, etc. within the community to make

it easier and more convenient for employees to access them.

c. Extending benefits to all employees, including providing coverage for those who work part-time, casual, contract or on a freelance basis, or paying premiums on top of wages to assist in all workers having access to private medical benefits.

d. Reviewing existing employee assistance programs to ensure they offer counselling services that are designed for news professionals and responsive to their unique circumstances.

e. Reviewing existing counselling services to ensure they address the specific needs of racialized, Indigenous and gender-diverse media workers.

f. Ensuring that in-house and external counselling supports are both "journalism-aware" and trauma-informed. Psychologists who understand and specialize in working with news professionals are both rare and in high demand. Canadian news organizations, unions and associations should explore working together to help train and build a network of clinicians with expertise in helping media workers (similar to efforts underway in the United States led by the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma).

9. **Seek employee input**

News organizations should be open-minded about the struggles their employees face, and work to create a collaborative environment in which mental health issues can be discussed without stigma or shame. Managers and executives should conduct regular internal mental health surveys and audits to better understand employee needs and challenges as well as to identify areas where well-being can erode. In performing this exercise, they should be mindful that different workers and job roles have different concerns, vulnerabilities, and exposure levels.

Pearson & Seglins 2022, pp. 42–44

Trauma & Journalism: A Guide for Journalists, Editors & Managers

Most people cope well with trauma – especially if they have good social, family, and team support.

Those who do find they're not recovering well shouldn't shy away from getting support, professional if necessary. It can make a big difference.

And, crucially, be aware that being open to emotional experience can make you a better reporter. After all, if you can't empathise with those whose story you're reporting, you won't be able truly to reflect their experience.

Maintaining Resilience — Self-care

The most important ways of keeping yourself emotionally on an even keel are also what you should sensibly do for your physical health.

- The British military have a phrase for a key part of self care: "Three Hots and a Cot". In other words, try to eat well and healthily three times a day, and — especially — get enough sleep. Surviving on too little sleep is nothing to boast about. It affects your physical and emotional well-being AND your journalistic judgement.

- Establish a standard routine of healthful habits. There's good research to show that even small amounts of gentle exercise are an effective antidepressant. Experts now say a 30-minute walk does you as much good as a 30-minute run, so the exercise doesn't have to be heavy. Bad eating habits and dehydration also have an instant effect on mood. Drink lots of water.

- Take breaks — and encourage others to do so. A few minutes or a few hours, or on a longer project a day or two away from the story, helps the body and the brain to process and assimilate more healthily what it's experiencing.

- Know your limits — and be especially careful in the early stages of your career when you're keen to establish your reputation, and still ready to agree to most things. If you've been asked to undertake a difficult or dangerous assignment that you'd rather not do, don't be afraid to say so.

- To be a journalist can mean taking risks and placing yourself in situations of sometimes extreme discomfort. There's a job to be done, and there are places and times when those who deal professionally with trauma need to be tough, and to repress emotions. But it's not a good idea to maintain the stiff upper lip forever.

- Acknowledging feelings and choosing to talk about emotions at the appropriate moment is not a sign of weakness. On the contrary, when done well, an appropriate and informed post-event or post-assignment discussion with peers — and, when trust is sufficient, with caring managers and editors — is an expression of resilience.

- Talking, and especially connecting with other human beings, helps the brain to make sense of trauma and tragedy, with time to come to terms with it, and to move on. It is as if, in computer terms, the memory is moved from active processing to be archived safely on the hard drive. From there, it can be recalled in the future without re-triggering the emotional distress of the actual traumatic moment.

- Find someone who is a sensitive listener. It can be an editor, or a peer, or your partner. But you must trust that this person will not pass judgement on you. It might for example be someone who has faced a similar experience. Support your colleagues in the same way — and let them talk.

- Learn how to deal with routine stress. Find a hobby, exercise, take time out for

reflection, spend time with your family or with close friends — or all four. Find things that make you laugh.

- Try deep-breathing. Take a long, slow, deep breath to the count of five, then exhale slowly to the count of five. Imagine this as a circular movement, breathing out excess tension, and breathing in relaxation.

- You can also use your imagination to take yourself to what in trauma therapy is sometimes called an internal "safe place" — somewhere warm and nurturing and relaxed, like a beach, or a beautiful mountainside, or somewhere in nature.

- Take care with alcohol. It's fine in moderation, but if you find you are using it to help you block out memories or as a way to get to sleep, then you need to think carefully about your situation and perhaps ask for help.

- Understand also that, sometimes, what you've been through may overwhelm your capacity to cope — and keep an eye out for delayed reactions. Journalists and programme-makers who feel they have managed well for years, covering difficult stories, might find that something relatively small suddenly tips them over the edge. If that happens, don't bottle it up, but talk to colleagues and perhaps seek professional support.

- If you find yourself becoming negative about your job or yourself after covering traumatic events, internal self-talk such as "I'm useless" or "What a wimp" needs to be challenged and replaced with a more positive and appropriate assessment. If this is hard to do, then talk with someone to help you shift things.

Brayne 2007,
pp. 11-17

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A

Ableism: discrimination in favour of able-bodied people

Acts of physical violence: slapping, hitting, kicking, choking, etc.

C

Cisgender: denoting or relating to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with the sex by which they were identified at birth

Classism: prejudice against or in favour of people belonging to a particular social class

Coercive control: a pattern of controlling behaviours that create an unequal power dynamic in a relationship. These behaviours give the perpetrator power over their partner, making it difficult for them to leave

Colonialism: the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically

Colonization: the action or process of settling among and establishing control over the Indigenous people of an area

Colonizer: a country that sends settlers to a place and establishes political control over it;

a person who settles among and establishes political control over the Indigenous people of an area

Consent: permission for something to happen or agreement to do something

Controlling behaviour: can include every-thing from directly telling someone what they can or cannot do (e.g., isolating a person from family and friends, depriving them of identity documents, monitoring their move-ments, and limiting their access to financial resources, employment, education, or medical care) to more discreet methods like guilt-tripping, gaslighting, possessiveness. Attempts to maintain control, authority, and/or decision-making power over other people and situations

Cyberbullying: the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature

Cyberstalking: intrusive and threatening harassment of a person; behaviour in which someone harasses or stalks a victim using electronic or digital means, such as social media, email, instant messaging (IM), or messages posted to a discussion group or forum. Examples include but are not limited to: sending manipulative, threatening, lewd or harassing emails from an assortment of

email accounts; hacking into a victim's online accounts (such as banking or email) and changing the victim's settings and passwords

Cyberviolence: online behaviours that criminally or non-criminally assault, or can lead to assault, of a person's physical, psychological, or emotional well-being. It can be done or experienced by an individual or group and happen online, through smartphones, during Internet games, etc. Even though cyberviolence takes place online, it affects people offline and has real-world implications. Some examples of cyberviolence include but are not limited to: online harassment; threatening; bullying; blackmailing; unwanted sexting; stalking; hate speech; luring; non-consensual sharing of images; and recording and distribution of sexual assault

D

Deadname/deadnaming: calling a transgender person by their birth name when they have changed their name as part of their gender transition

Deepfake: production of a video and using software to substitute one person's face for another. This technique can be used to create fake news or damage the reputation or credibility of a journalist (or politician or another public figure)

Denial of Information attack/DoI attack: amplifying messages through autonomous software – bots – thereby drowning an information channel in false or distracting information. Access to genuine information becomes more difficult. This massive disinformation tactic is used to discredit journalistic information

Distributed Denial of Service attack/ DDoS attack: aims to incapacitate a server, a service, or an organization by overloading bandwidth or monopolizing all resources to exhaustion

Domestic violence: a pattern of behaviour in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviours that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender. It can occur within a range of relationships including couples who are married, living together or dating. Domestic violence affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels

DoubleSwitch: hacking an account, stealing the identity of a journalist (or politician or other public figure) and then disseminating fake news or information in order to discredit the journalist (or politician or other public figure)

Doxxing: online researching and publishing of private information (address, social insurance number, etc.) about a person in order to cause them harm

E

Economic abuse: making or attempting to make a person financially dependent by maintaining total control over financial resources, withholding access to money, and/or forbidding attendance at school or employment

Emotional abuse (verbal and psychological): includes but is not limited to insults, belittling, constant humiliation, intimidation (e.g., destroying things, etc.), cyberbullying, threats of harm or threats to take away children

Equality*: the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities; each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities

Equity*: the quality of being fair and impartial; recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome (whilst the resources and opportunities themselves might not be equal)

Regarding the distinction between equality and equity: sometimes sameness of treatment (equality) does not result in proportional fairness (equity)

Equity-deserving groups: communities with identified barriers to equal access, opportunities, and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination, and actively seek social justice and reparation

F

Femicide: definition varies across disciplines and world regions, but broadly captures the killing of women and girls, primarily by men, because of their gender

Feminism: belief in and advocacy for the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes expressed especially through organized activity on behalf of women's rights and interests

G

Gaslighting: psychological manipulation of a person, usually over an extended period of time, that causes the victim to question the validity of their own thoughts, perception of reality, or memories. It typically leads to confusion, loss of confidence and self-esteem, uncertainty of one's emotional or mental stability, and a dependency on the perpetrator

Gender: refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviours that a given culture associates with a person's biological sex. Behaviour that is compatible with cultural expectations is referred to as gender-normative; behaviours that are viewed as incompatible with these expectations are referred to as gender non-conforming

Gender- and sexually-diverse: refers to all the diversities of sex characteristics, sexual orientations, and gender identities, without the need to specify each of the identities, behaviours, or characteristics that form this plurality

Gender-based cyberbullying: comprises a spectrum of behaviours, including stalking, bullying, sexual harassment, defamation, hate speech, and exploitation

Gender-based violence: refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power, and harmful norms. Gender-based violence (GBV) is a serious violation of human rights and a life-threatening health and protection issue

Gender dysphoria: refers to discomfort or distress that is associated with a discrepancy between a person's gender identity and that person's sex assigned at birth (and the associated gender role and/or primary and secondary sex characteristics)

Gender equality: the state in which access to rights or opportunities is unaffected by gender

Gender expression: an individual's presentation, including physical appearance, clothing choice and accessories, and behaviour that communicates aspects of gender or gender role. Gender expression may or may not conform to a person's gender identity

Gender identity: a person's deeply-felt, inherent sense of being a boy, a man, or male; a girl, a woman, or female; or an alternative gender (e.g., genderqueer, gender non-conforming, boygirl, ladyboi) which may or may not correspond to a person's sex assigned at birth or to a person's primary or secondary sex characteristics. Since gender

identity is internal, a person's gender identity is not necessarily visible to others. 'Affirmed gender identity' refers to a person's gender identity after coming out as transgender or gender non-conforming or undergoing a social and/or medical transition process

Grooming: when someone builds a relationship, trust, and emotional connection with someone else (often a child, young person, or someone who is vulnerable) so they can manipulate, exploit, and abuse them. People who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited, or trafficked. Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender, or race

H

Harassment: any improper and unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected to or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person

Hate: intense hostility and aversion usually deriving from fear, anger, or sense of injury; extreme dislike or disgust

Hate crime: a hate crime is one in which hate is the motive and can involve intimidation, harassment, physical force, or threat of physical force against a person, a group, or a property

Homicide: a person commits homicide when, directly or indirectly, by any means, they cause the death of a human being. Homicide is culpable or not culpable. Homicide that is not culpable is not an offence. Culpable homicide is murder

or manslaughter or infanticide. A person commits culpable homicide when they cause the death of a human being by means of an unlawful act; by criminal negligence; by causing that human being, by threats or fear of violence or by deception, to do anything that causes their death; or by willfully frightening that human being, in the case of a child or sick person

Homophobia: irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality or gay people

Human trafficking: recruiting, moving, or holding victims to exploit them for profit, usually for sexual reasons or forced labour. Traffickers can control and pressure victims by force or through threats, including mental and emotional abuse and manipulation

I

Incel: a member of an online community of men who consider themselves unable to attract women sexually, typically associated with views that are hostile toward women and men who are sexually active with women

Intergenerational trauma: when the experiences of parents affect the development of their children, grandchildren, and other descendants. It can show up biologically, socially, mentally, or emotionally

Intersectional/intersectionality: the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine,

overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups

Intimate partner violence: behaviour by an intimate partner or ex-partner that causes physical, sexual, or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse, and controlling behaviours

M

Mass report: reporting the account of a journalist (or politician or another public figure) as abusive. Once the call is made on social networks, the reporting becomes massive, leading to the (legitimate) account being closed

Men's rights activist: an antifeminist movement that claims to seek equal treatment between the sexes, but mostly focuses on antifeminism and deriding women, especially feminists. Men's rights advocacy (MRA) is centered around a group of misogynistic blogs and forums usually dubbed the "manosphere"

Misandry: dislike of, contempt for, or ingrained prejudice against men (i.e., the male sex)

Misogyny: dislike of, contempt for, or ingrained prejudice against women (i.e., the female sex)

Modern slavery: control exercised by one person over another, including but not limited to: forced marriage, domestic servitude, debt bondage, contractual slavery, forced child labour, the recruitment of child soldiers

N

Non-binary: denoting or relating to gender or sexual identity that is not defined in terms of traditional binary oppositions such as male and female or homosexual and heterosexual

O

Objective/objectivity: (of a person or their judgment) not influenced by personal feelings or opinions in considering and representing facts

Online bullying: (usually) anonymous, massive, or permanent attacks or comments with the sole purpose of harming an individual

Online harassment: a form of violence that occurs on the internet

Online violence: the use of online digital devices or services to engage in activities that result in physical, psychological, or emotional self-harm, or cause harm to another person

P

Patriarchy: a system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it

People smuggling: the illegal crossing of a border for remuneration, constituting a unique contractual relationship

Physical abuse: hurting or trying to hurt a partner by hitting, kicking, burning, grabbing, pinching, shoving, slapping, hair-pulling, biting, denying medical care or forcing alcohol and/or drug use, or using other physical force. A physically abusive relationship can include: damaging property when angry (throws objects, punches walls, kicks doors, etc.); pushing, slapping, biting, kicking, or choking; abandoning a partner in a dangerous or unfamiliar place; scaring a partner by driving recklessly; using a weapon to threaten or hurt a partner; forcing a partner to leave their home; trapping a partner in their home or keeping them from leaving; preventing a partner from calling the police or seeking medical attention; hurting the children; and/or using physical force in sexual situations

Poverty: lacking enough resources to provide the necessities of life – food, clean water, shelter, and clothing. Poverty also includes a lack of access to health care, education, and transportation

Psychological abuse: refers to any act or omission that damages the self-esteem, identity, or development of the individual. It includes, but is not limited to, humiliation, threatening loss of custody of children, forced isolation from family or friends, threatening to harm the individual or someone they care about, repeated yelling or degradation, inducing fear through intimidating words or gestures, controlling behaviour, and the destruction of possessions

Q

Queer: an umbrella term that individuals may use to describe a sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression that

does not conform to dominant societal norms. Historically, it has been considered a derogatory or pejorative term and the term may continue to be used by some individuals with negative intentions. Still, many gender- and sexually-diverse individuals today embrace the label in a neutral or positive manner. Some youth may adopt 'queer' as an identity term to avoid limiting themselves to the gender binaries of male and female or to the perceived restrictions imposed by lesbian, gay, and bisexual sexual orientations

R

Racism: prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of being identified with a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized

Rape: any act of sexual penetration without consent, carried out with violence, threat, or by surprise, whether with the penis, finger, or another object. Every rape is a sexual assault, but not every sexual assault is necessarily rape

Rape culture: a society or environment whose prevailing social attitudes have the effect of normalizing or trivializing sexual assault and abuse

Rape schedule: a concept in feminist theory used to describe the notion that women are conditioned to place restrictions on and/or make alterations to their daily lifestyles and behaviours as a result of constant fear of sexual assault. These altered behaviours may occur consciously or unconsciously

Reproductive coercion: a collection of behaviours that interfere with decision-making related to reproductive health

Revenge porn: non-consensual dissemination of intimate images, online public sharing of sexually explicit content without the consent of the person concerned, often for the purposes of revenge

S

Safety work: similar to a rape schedule, this is work that women and people who experience various forms of oppression engage in to ensure they are safe online. It includes but is not limited to making social media accounts private, blocking accounts that are abusive, taking screenshots for a file in case behaviour escalates, altering what is discussed on social media accounts, etc.

Settler: a person who moves – by choice – with a group of others to live in a new country or area

Sex: refers to a person's biological status and is typically categorized as male, female, or intersex (i.e., atypical combinations of features that usually distinguish male from female). There are a number of indicators of biological sex, including sex chromosomes, gonads, internal reproductive organs, and external genitalia

Sex work/sex worker: a person who provides sex work, either on a regular or occasional basis. The term is used in reference to those who work in all areas of the sex industry

Sexism: prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination, typically against women, on the basis of sex

Sexual assault: non-consensual physical contact (e.g., touching forced kissing, etc.) with violence, coercion, or threat. Not every sexual assault is rape, but every rape is sexual assault

Sexual harassment: any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature

Sexual orientation: a component of identity that includes a person's sexual and emotional attraction to another person and the behaviour that may result from this attraction. An individual's sexual orientation may be lesbian, gay, heterosexual, bisexual, queer, pansexual, asexual, some orientation not listed here, or none of these. A person may be attracted to men, women, both, neither, genderqueer, androgynous, or have other gender identities. Sexual orientation is distinct from sex, gender identity, gender role, and gender expression

Sexual violence/abuse: any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or other act directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting. It includes rape and other forms of sexual coercion, forced sexual intercourse with others, pornography, etc.

Slut-shaming: the action or fact of stigmatizing a woman for engaging in behaviour judged to be promiscuous or sexually provocative

Smuggling of migrants: the illegal crossing of a border for remuneration, constituting a unique contractual relationship

Stalking: the act or crime of willfully and repeatedly following or harassing another person in circumstances that would cause a reasonable person to fear injury or death especially because of express or implied threats

Subjective/subjectivity: based on or influenced by personal feelings, tastes, or opinions

Survivor: a person who copes with a bad situation, traumatic event(s), or affliction and who gets through; a person who manages to live through a situation that often causes death

T

Technology-facilitated gender-based violence: actions or behaviours by one or more people that harm others based on their sexual or gender identity or by enforcing harmful gender norms. This action is carried out using the internet and/or mobile

technology and includes stalking, bullying, sexual harassment, defamation, hate speech, and exploitation

Toxic masculinity: a set of attitudes and ways of behaving stereotypically associated with or expected of men, regarded as having a negative impact on men and on society as a whole

Trafficking in persons: the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, or the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation

Transgender: denoting or relating to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender does not correspond with their birth sex

Transphobia: irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against transgender people

Trauma: an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape, or natural disaster. Immediately after the event, shock and denial are typical. Longer term reactions include unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships, and even physical symptoms like headaches or nausea

Troll/trolling: people referred to as 'trolls' post comments online to try to provoke controversy

V

Verbal abuse: a type of psychological/mental abuse that involves the use of oral, gestured, and written language directed to a victim. Verbal abuse can include the act of harassing, labelling, insulting, scolding, rebuking, or excessive yelling towards an individual

Vicarious trauma: a process of change resulting from empathetic engagement with trauma survivors. Anyone who engages empathetically with survivors of traumatic incidents, torture, and material relating to their trauma, is potentially affected

Victim: a person harmed, injured, or killed as a result of a crime, accident, or other event or action

Victim blaming: a devaluing act that occurs when the victim(s) of a crime or an accident is held responsible — in whole or in part — for the acts or crimes that have been committed against them

Victim-survivor: acknowledges the reality of vulnerability and triumph as well as the need to acknowledge various connected oppressions that can further complicate the already traumatic experience of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and abuse

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