



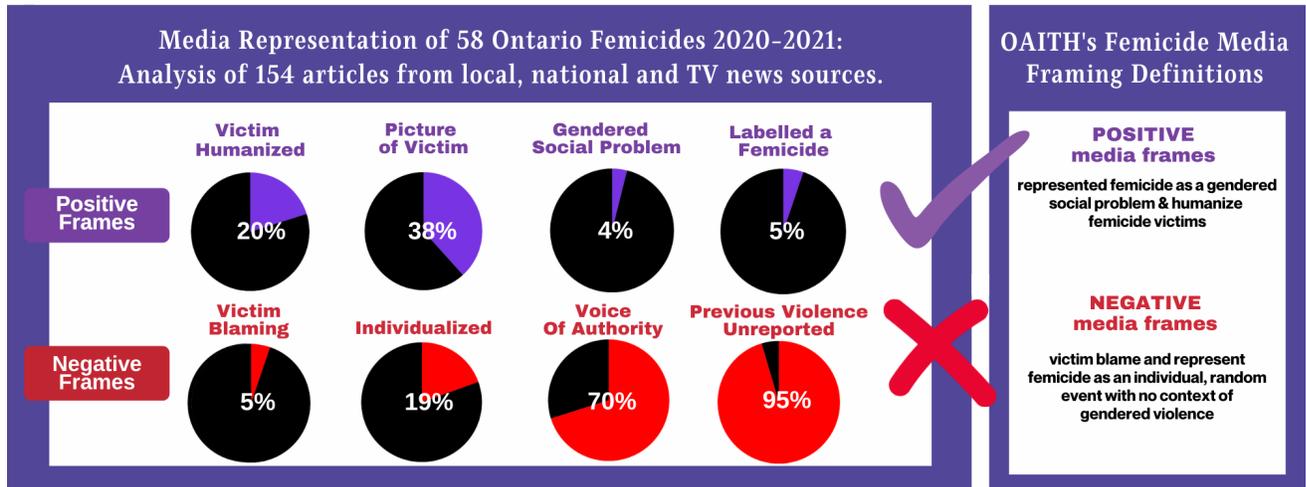
Ontario Association of Interval & Transition Houses

**Femicide Media Analysis
2020-2021**

In Partnership with: Our work on femicide reporting is done in partnership with Dr. Mavis Morton, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Guelph and Emma Kelly, Master's Candidate, Criminology and Criminal Justice Policy, University of Guelph.

**UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH**

A Critical Examination of Mainstream News' Framing of Ontario Femicides 2020-2021



Above is a summary of the way mainstream media reported on Ontario femicides during 2020-2021. A total of 58 femicides (2020-2021) were examined by studying 154 news items from three mainstream media sources (national newspapers, local newspapers, and TV news). Findings were categorized using positive or negative frames, as identified in previous research:

Positive Frames:

Victim Humanized: Describing and remembering the woman positively and acknowledging how she impacted the lives of others.

Picture of Victim: A positive or neutral picture of the woman in the news report.

Gendered Social Problem: Contextualizing femicide as a social and/or political problem rooted in gender inequality.

Labelled a Femicide: Labelling the murder as a femicide or specifically as violence against women.

Violence Against Women (VAW) Help Information: Information about women's shelters or other violence against women resources and supports.

Negative Frames:

Victim Blaming: Attributing blame to the victim directly or indirectly by emphasizing her role in the femicide, or indirectly by excusing/justifying the perpetrator.

Individualized: Portraying the femicide as an individual aberration, isolated or seemingly random event and not connected to larger societal issues.

Voice of Authority: Relying on traditional voices of authority, such as law enforcement and government officials to be cited over or instead of the voices of friends, family or violence against women experts.

[OAITH Media Reporting Recommendations](#)

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Previous Violence Against Women Unreported: Failing to report any history of power and control, abuse and/or violence against women by the perpetrator. This is particularly relevant, as research suggests that history of violence is the most significant risk-factor for femicide.

Racialisation: Misrepresentation or stereotyping of people into groups by reference to their skin colour or physical features, or race/ethnicity.

All Media Sources Summary

A total of 58 Ontario femicides (2020-2021) were examined by studying 154 news items from three mainstream media sources (national newspapers, local newspapers and TV news).

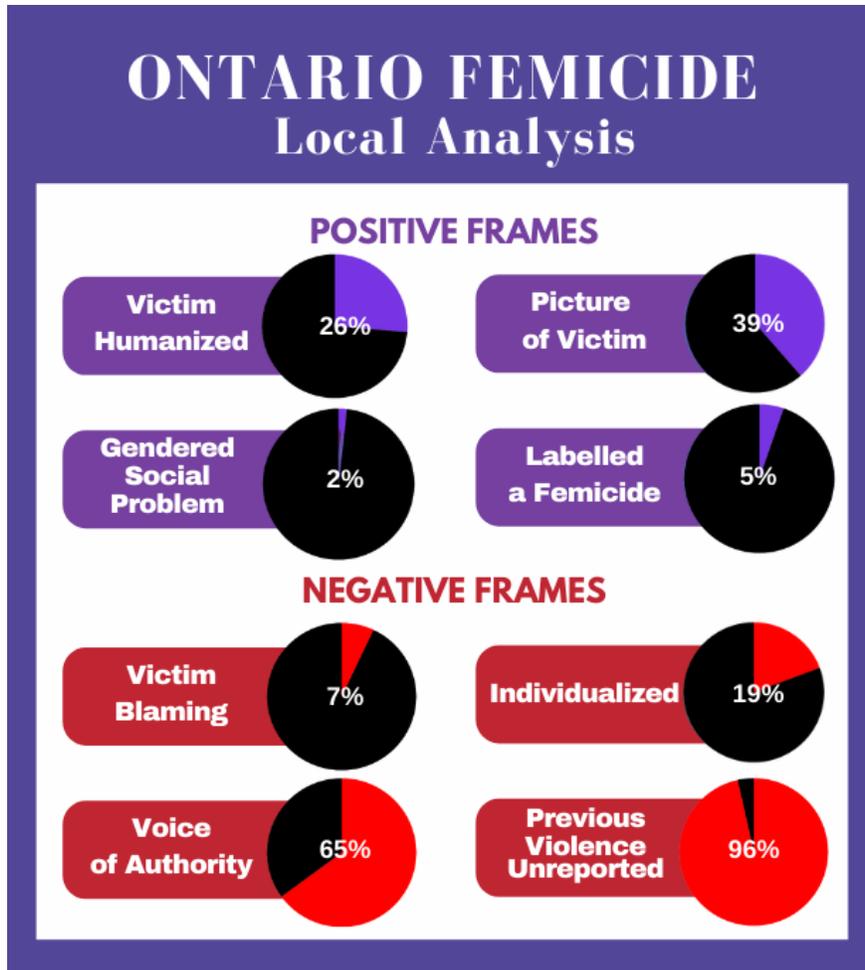
This heat map display ([Tableau](#)) identifies with purple and red diamonds the positive and negative frames identified in three different media reports for each of the 58 women and girls murdered between November 2020-2021. A purple or red diamond is found directly under the horizontal framing categories on the left of the Tableau display if there was evidence of this frame in that news report.

Click on any of the purple or red diamonds in the [Tableau](#) display to connect with each media report that was analyzed.

Local News Sources Summary

Click on any purple or red diamond in the [Tableau](#) display to connect with each news report that was analyzed.

A total of 57 local news sources were examined. Local news sources appear to have done the best job overall of positively framing the femicides over the last five years (2016-2021). This year 39% of local sources included a positive picture of the woman. While still infrequent, 5% of local news sources labelled the case as a form of gender based-violence although not explicitly labelled as a femicide. When compared to TV sources and national newspapers, local sources were less likely to report previous violence. Ninety-six percent of the time, local sources did not report past histories of violence against women. Just over one quarter of local sources humanized the woman and local news sources were more likely to victim blame than TV and national newspapers.

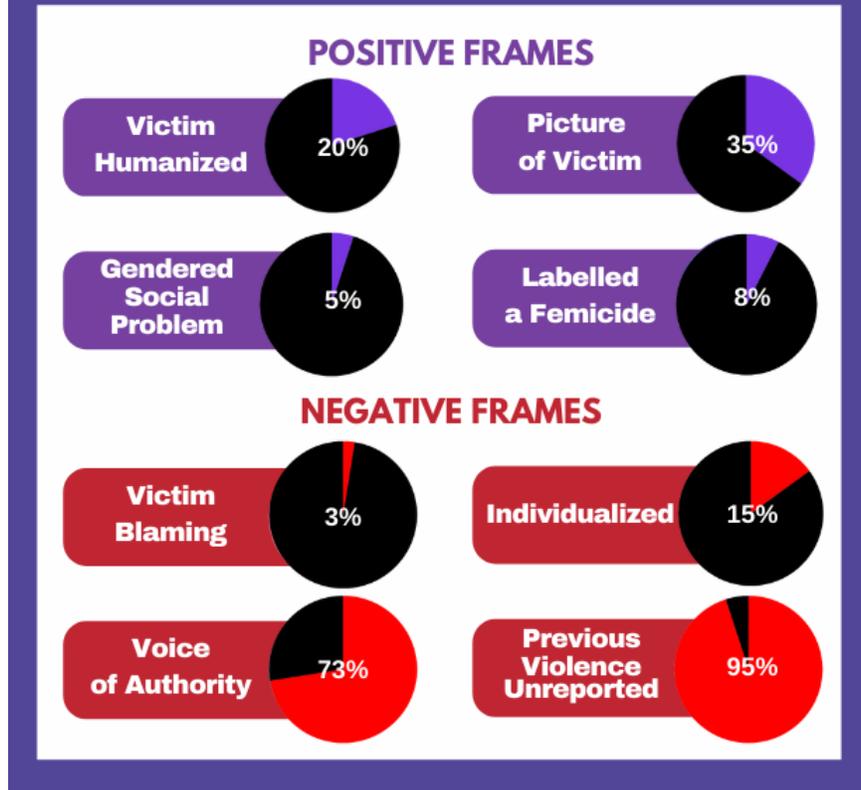


National News Sources Summary

Click on any purple or red diamond in the [Tableau](#) display to connect with each news report that was analyzed.

Out of 58 femicides identified in mainstream news, 31% of femicides received no national news coverage. A total of 40 national news sources were examined. National Sources were least likely to include a positive picture of the victim, and only included language to humanize the victims in 20% of the articles examined. National sources were the least likely to place blame on the victim. Although infrequently, national sources were more likely than TV or local sources to provide information to identify that the femicide was the result of a gendered social problem and they were the most likely to label her murder as a form of gender-based or domestic violence.

ONTARIO FEMICIDE National Paper Analysis



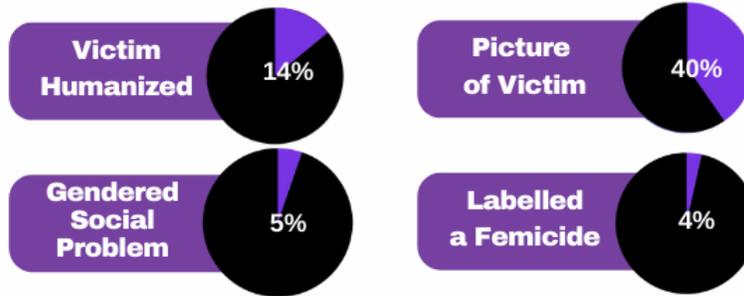
Television News Sources Summary

Click on any purple or red diamond in the [Tableau](#) display to connect with each news report that was analyzed.

A total of 57 television news sources were examined. Compared to local and national newspapers, TV sources did the best job of including a positive picture of the woman (40% of the time). Yet, they were the least likely to include language that would humanize the woman. TV sources were most likely to rely on police and other traditional voices of authority rather than violence against women experts or the victims' friends and family. TV sources labelled the case as domestic or gender-based violence in only 4% of sources.

ONTARIO FEMICIDE TV Analysis

POSITIVE FRAMES



NEGATIVE FRAMES

