# Interdisciplinary and Community-Based Approaches to Understanding and Confronting Femicide



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## Introduction

Highlighting approaches across academic disciplines and outside of academia improves our understanding of important social issues. This project focuses on diverse approaches to understanding *femicide* to improve research and public awareness around issues of gender-based violence (GBV).

## The Problem

Nearly one in three women experience gender-based violence in her lifetime. For too many women, this violence escalates to the point of femicide.

#### Research

Research attempts to collect data & understand the root causes of femicide. Scholars have coined different terms to conceptualize and spread awareness of distinct aspects of the problem.

*Femicide* identifies the murder/homicide of women because of their gender.<sup>2</sup>

*Feminicide/feminicidio* coined by Marcela Lagarde, analyzes the different levels of violence which includes the violation of women's rights, impunity, and institutional violence.<sup>3</sup>

About 12
women a day
are murdered
across Latin
America and the
Caribbean.

## **Community Advocacy**

Activism provides a pathway for demanding change and spreading awareness about violence against women. Activists engage with the community and institutions to affect social change.

## Legal Advocacy

Through judicial and legislative systems, nations can address femicide and punish acts of violence against women as a way to demonstrate their commitment and obligation to protect women and their rights.

## Media Coverage

The mass media shapes how the public views and understands femicide. This provides journalists with the ability to frame the issue in ways that can be harmful or beneficial.

## Art

Professional artists and activists use different mediums and techniques to bring attention to the pervasiveness of femicide. Art also provides a way for communities to process violence against women and grieve together.

## Common focus areas for organizations:

- justice for the intentionally murdered and disappeared women, and women subject to GBV;
- reform in penal codes;
- inform national and international communities;
- and organize programs to help emotional and physical recovery.

# Examples of organizations/groups addressing femicide and GBV:



Equipo Latinoamericano
de Justicia y Genero
(Latin America)

'Latin American Team for
Justice and Gender'



Regreso a Casa

(Mexico)

'Bring Our Daughters



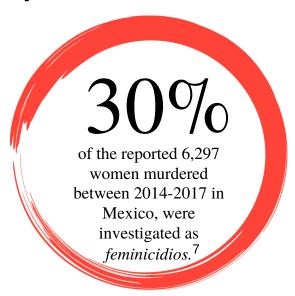
(Chile)

Some countries have revised their penal codes to allow for the prosecution of femicide as a distinct form of

## **Case Study Example: Mexico**

Mexico codified *feminicidio* in its
Penal Code as a crime in all 32 states
as a result of the Inter-American
Court of Human Rights "Cotton
Fields" ruling, condemning Mexico
for its ongoing resistance in
addressing *feminicidio*.

The efficacy of such law is yet to be determined.



## Some harmful reporting practices include:

- Victim-blaming,
- stereotyping,

homicide.

- sensationalism,
- perpetrator justification
- and apathy 8

## **Ethical guidelines for journalists:**

Global example:

 "Reporting on Violence
 Against Women and Girls:
 A Handbook For Journalists"
 by UN Educational,
 Scientific and Cultural
 Organization (UNESCO)

Regional example:
 "Coverage of Gender
 Violence Cases in Puerto
 Rico" edited by Norma
 Valle and Firuzeh
 Shokooh Valle (femicide
 journalists)



Street art in Mexico: Paste Up Morras (Paste Up Women)

Individuals and collectives place graphic art and feminist phrases in public spaces.9





Gathers women together in Mexico to commemorate women lost to femicide and GBV. The installation also traveled to Brazil.

## **Literature Cited**

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## **Conclusion:**

Each approach is unique in its expression, yet they depend on and interact with one another to increase awareness about femicide and gender-based violence. The interaction among the disciplines can be seen through the influence art and media have on creating new policy or academic literature and through the use of art as protest by activists. The different disciplines dependency on each other is crucial to spreading awareness about femicide and working towards finding an end to the violence against women.