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Patricia Green.

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Narrative, fiction and crime: the de(re)construction of the female victim in perpetrator.

Mg Patricia Veronica Green,

UNSAM.

pgreen@unsam.edu.ar patsy_green@hotmail.com

The following article explores the intrinsic relationship between crime fiction and the news genre, specifically focusing on the category of *les fait divers* in the emerging *feuilleton* media the XIX in France, in order to evaluate how its contemporary appropriation by the media reveals its influence in the construction and shaping public opinion at the service of hegemonic discourses of social power structures. At the same time, the study presents an interdisciplinary approach that integrates the concepts of feminist critique and discourse with those of narrative analysis and framing so as to examine how the construction of the female perpetrator reveals the links between the narrative representation of crime as a framework practice that is mediated by *les fait divers* between their overlapping epistemological questions. In addition, the study performs a revision of the theory of *les fait divers* in order to problematize how their discursive nature and order influences public opinion as regards an emblematic crime featuring a female perpetrator, centering on the way its literary aesthetic aspects such as their self-referential and closed narrative structure invites a feminist deconstruction of its gaps, its contradictions and the encoded messages through cultural and artistic practices and products configuring disruptive and resistant responses to the framing of female perpetrators. and of feminist cultural .and artistic resistant practices and production as responses to the crime.

Key words: Deviance; fait divers; female perpetrator; genre.

Introduction

The study addresses the need of a thorough analysis of the social political and cultural factors that shaped the narrative configuration of news and information on the portrayal of the crime in terms of its representation. In this sense, contemporary academic productions such as the article written by Deborah Strafford Reisinger (2007) focused on a co-activated and communicative approach to the re-writing of *les faits divers* as discursive sites that engage literary and cinematic productions. in addition, Sandrine Boudana's (2011) work on a specific tragic event related to discrimination and racism configures an analysis of the facts that validates - from a social and cultural framework- the political nature of *les faits divers* as triggering off counter and hegemonic debates. In view of Bel's (1997) analysis of the analogies between real crimes, their deployment through *les fait divers*, the overall

purpose of this study is the reading of news genre alongside the reading of crime fiction—the detective novel—so as to identify their mutual and interrelated aspects that foreground the perspectival and constructed nature of facts and events in order to reveal how their shared norms and codes enable the rewriting of crime (histories) as artistic forms that challenge hegemonical discourses on crime and perpetrators.

Finally, in her article on the media treatment of Nahar Galarza's case Rocio Rovner (2020) employs a feminist discourse analysis, whereby her multiple media and press citations greatly contributed towards my own selection and classification of *fait divers*

The framing of the true crime narrative and its analysis through the implementation of *les fait divers* that exposes the need of a de(re)construction of the omissions, the gaps and silences that evidence the institutional and mediatic complicity with the structures of political power and their counter hegemonic operations against the feminist agenda.

Crime fiction and scientific thought: from surface to depth.

Uncovering the cryptic nature of the *monstrous*

The device of the *fait divers*, while originally belonging to the journalistic genre, was employed as a sort of rhetoric feature to convey information on diverse or public facts generally connected to abnormal or natural events involving ordinary people, an issue that raises the doubt regarding the nature of its meaning, as ambiguous or imprecise. In this sense the following social and literary approaches present different definitions that illustrate their complexity as regards their function and order, while simultaneously pointing at their powerful link to the narrative construction of an experience or event in the real world. Roland Barthes (1964) describes their capacity to sketch the aberrant or the “monstrous”, configuring what the immanence or “a total information” inherent in the tale (p189). In addition, Deleuze ascribes “immanence” as a narrative quality that is “nonreductive, destabilizes meaning, and undermines a thematic reading” (Deleuze & Guattari, as cited in Hein, 2018.p143) . In addition, Chevalier defines the *fait divers* as “the disparate, the composite, the heterogeneous, what escapes any classification” (Chevalier 2003, as cited in Boudana (2011, p.4), while Bourdieu (2016) states their apolitical nature and function while

As vehicles of incidental occurrences, these self-referent micronarratives present a close knitted structure that encloses the cryptic nature of the monstrous and the tragic within.

The interrelations between fact and fiction: The detective genre and the *fait divers*

The contextualization of the emergence of the *fait divers*' reveals how their origins were simultaneous with the development of scientific discourse of the XIXC and contemporary literary studies. Indeed, Edgar Allan Poe was greatly influenced by the *Positivism* (2015), the philosophical ideology of August Comte, who sustained that the direct experience of the world enabled the production of data or facts, and the exclusion of metaphysical thought or speculation. In this light, I will examine how the *faits divers* can be employed as narrative tools that disrupt the homogeneous and hegemonic social discourses about crime. Defined as micro tales about reality, they expose their paradoxical status in that they rely on the aesthetics of fiction, that involves the perspective or the framing of events in the reproduction and delivery of those true facts aligned with the monstrous and aberrant.

As a matter of fact, this article brings together the analysis of Edgar Allan Poe famous detective short story's known as *The Mystery of Marie Roget* (1842) so as to analyse how narrative configuration aimed at the representation of real facts reveals the link between facts and their indexation in fiction, as framing devices employed towards the solving of the crime. Inspired by a real murder case that took place in New York, that of Mary Louise Roger, in the summer of 1841, a young saleswoman at John Anderson's Tobacco Emporium in Manhattan, who disappeared and was then found foaming in floating in the Hudson River. Initially, the insertion of excerpts drawn from the York press in the story shows how the *fait divers* constitute themselves in indexes whose circumstances help the detective Auguste Dupin, to develop a method of deductive reasoning whereby the formulation of several conjectures about the real murder are projected onto the fictional narrative frame. Indeed, an analysis of the story reveals for the most part the relation between detective fiction and the news genre follows. David Bel (1997) claims about the function of these *fait divers*, in that they seem to "contradict" (p.6) each other, thus indicating the complexity of delivering the essence, the real nature of facts without incurring in distortion or deviance. Whilst on the other hand, the speculations, deductions and conjectures in Dupain's path toward the solving of the mystery were successful to bring the tale to a close, the apparent solving of the case is explained through a series of postulates proving Dupain's assertiveness in his theoretical assumptions validating the theory of probability. Notwithstanding the fact that Poe's theoretical assumptions about the mystery were thwarted by a last minute confession, his great belief on the workings of chance together with the element of surprise brings about the confirmation of that which escapes ratiocination, the unpredictable, and the unassailable, the element of surprise (chance) and its peculiarities which belong to the kingdom of the subjective and the perceptual.

Contextualizing the construction of the female perpetrator

On the December 29th, 2017, Nahar Galarza, a 21-year-old female resident of the city of Gualeguaychu, in the province of Entre Rios, shot and killed Fernando Pastorizzo. Seven months later, she was sentenced to life imprisonment, charged with first degree homicide of her boyfriend.

The contextualization of Nahar Galarza's crime, starting with the mediatization of the case and the express trial that followed, demonstrates the patriarchal capitalist power structures operating through the press and the social media in complicity with the law enforcement and legal institutions. Right from the start, the social media and the press targeted her in the role of an unconventional female victimizer, thus displacing the myth of the of the helpless and agentless female, and inscribing her instead as someone who transgresses the conventional gender boundaries, an aberrant example of a social deviant. Moreover, her stigmatization represents a covert counter-hegemonic attack against the struggles and conquests of the contemporary Argentine feminist movement, namely those that account for the supreme court's sanctioning of *femicide* as a legal figure in November of 2012, reinforced and strengthened by 2015 massive feminist protest **niunaménos**, against femicide and towards the visibilization of female violence and murder.

The following list presents my own selection of the most relevant excerpts published in order to perform a narrative analysis as well as a discursive examination that traces linguistic inscription of symbolic violence in the construction of the female perpetrator. In addition, the analysis focuses on how the immanent and closed narrative structure of the *fait divers* reveals the fissures, the gaps and the contradictions that invites a de(re)construction of the cryptic function of the aberrant and its power to conceal the real. stigmatization of female perpetrators.

The revenge on the “feminist pandemic”: the construction of the androicide discourse or *machicidlo*

One of the first excerpts from the national newspaper *Clarín*, states that “the nineteen year old girl who killed her ex-boyfriend, had spent the night in a psychiatric institution”

The statement seems to suggest the inscription of the murder as an example of social deviance in women, an issue that requires a medical intervention or approach, a widely employed method of institutional control of women aimed at bypassing the issue of gender.

On the other hand, Sergio Rondoni Caffa, the Prosecutor, conveys the complexity and contradiction immanent in the case when he states that “The gunpowder test performed on Nahar's hands proved negative”(2018).

In addition, Sol Martínez - Nahir's best friend- confirmed that "she had punched Fernando on the face on account of his attack on the young girl", a declaration that opens a pathway towards the investigation of the perpetrator as victim of gender-based violence (Martin Galarza,2018).

Furthermore a local newspaper announces the Court of "Justice's dismissal of Nahir Galarza's charges against her father"(for the homicide of her boyfriend) "but will investigate the paternal uncle for sexual abuse"(Los Andes,2022), thus marking another pathway leading to the investigation of the close circle of friends and relatives in view of the concealment of instances of sexual abuse and violence experienced by Nahir.

Finally, on January 7th 2022, the *Infobae* news portal informs that Nahir had urged her defense lawyer, Raquel Hermida Leyenda to "file charges against the corruption that holds me captive "(Rodolfo Palacios, 2022), an issue that would actually invite a further analysis of the operations involving a web of systemic institutional complicity and corruption.

Conclusion

The study performs a critical review of the relation between real crime and its narrative mediation and manipulation, revealing the links between fiction and non-fiction genres in their representation of reality and in their advocacy of truth. While most of cultural and political responses to the treatment of the perverse mediatization of Nahir Galarza configure academic productions, and articles in web journals and magazines, such as the ones in *Revista Anfibia* (UNSAM) and *Feminacida*, the lack of serious and compromised feminist engagement on the case reveals the underlying threat of sexist violence and its toxic deployment and pervasive influence on the cultural and artistic production. Indeed, the analysis of *les fait divers* presents them a fruitful and potential source for the creation of the *dark zones* which, as fictional devices, provide new angles, inscribe conjectures and create controversial and disruptive visions that destabilize and displace the official history of Nahir.

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