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Media Representation of Social Work: Lessons from a Transnational Research.



***Recent Media Representation of Social Work
and Domestic Violence in Italian Newspapers.***

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**This speech is focuses on Media Representation
on Social Work and Domestic Violence in two
important Italian newspapers,
La Repubblica and *Il Giornale*,
covering the period from 2012 to 2013
which differ in values, reading population, style.
I will present the main results (work in progress)**

Methodology

- **Thematic analysis: content and format**
- categories for analysis of newspapers' items on DV towards women are: section of the newspaper in which it appears, style of the newspaper article, focus on descriptions and opinions on social workers' performance, descriptions and opinions on other professions.
- In this way, a thematic analysis was applied to include the representation of the victims, parents, assumed perpetrators, police, social services, health services, voluntary sector organisations.
- Finally, a comparison of the perspectives of the different newspapers, and of intersectional factors follows.

la Repubblica

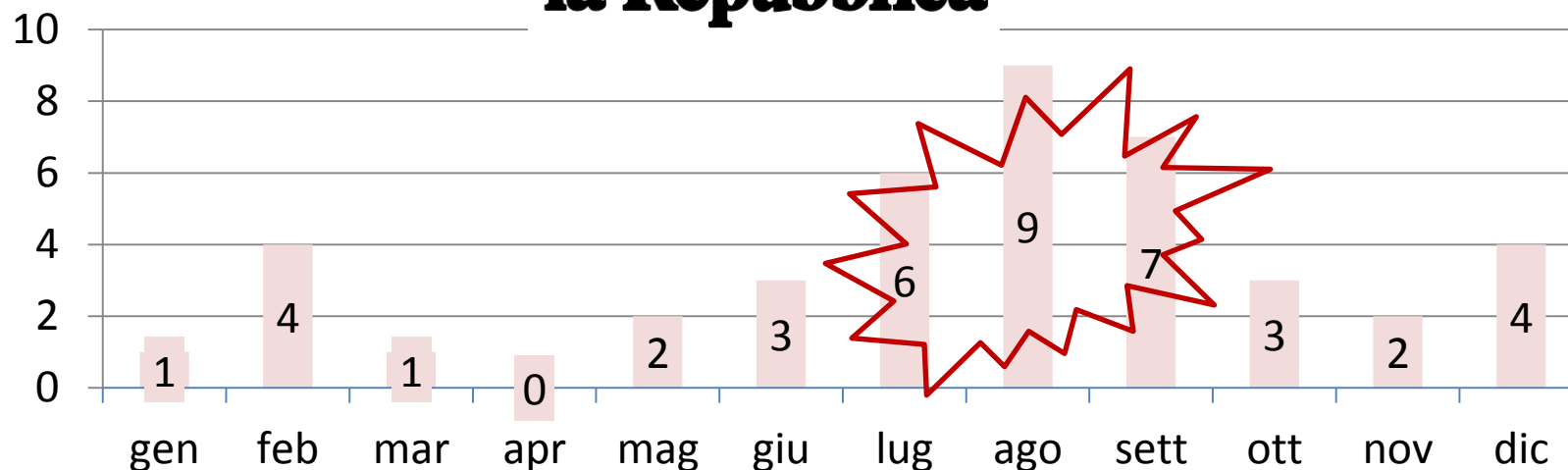
	2012	2013
TOTAL ARTICLES THAT REFER TO SOCIAL WORKERS	43	42
S. W. IS MENTIONED MANY TIMES	9	4
S. W. IS MENTIONED ONLY ONCE	34	38
ARTICLES ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	1	11
CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS (OFTEN ABUSED)	22	10
ADULTS	11	12
OLDER PEOPLE	0	4
MIGRANTS	3	0
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES	2	3
OTHER	4	2

il Giornale

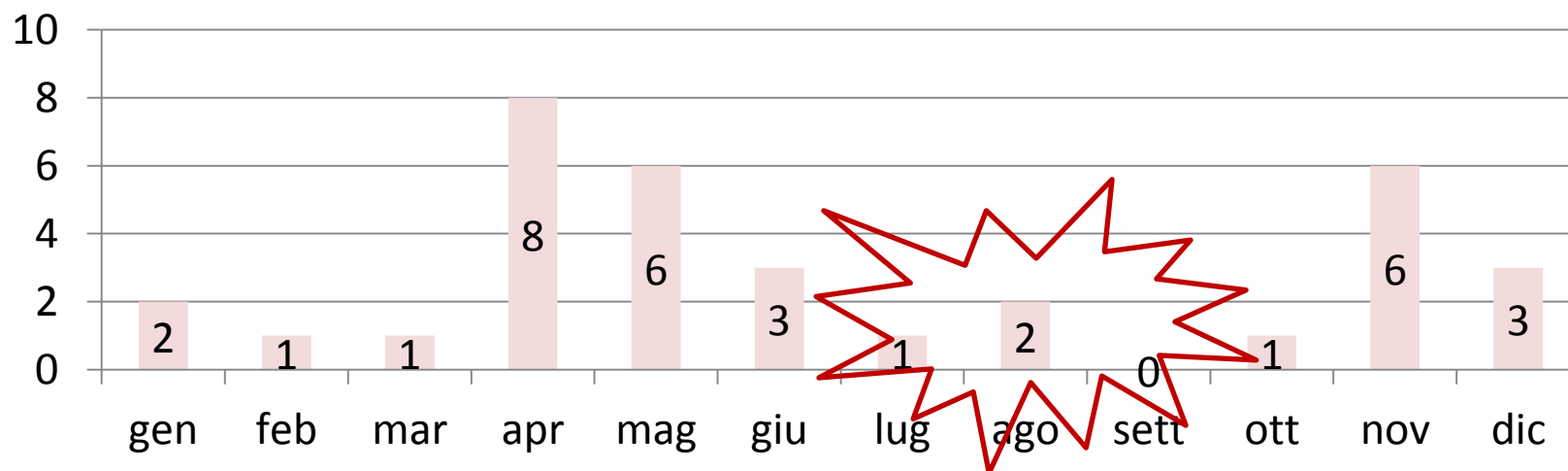
	2012	2013
TOTAL ARTICLES THAT REFER TO SOCIAL WORKERS	24	33
S. W. IS MENTIONED MANY TIMES	5	7
S. W. IS MENTIONED ONLY ONCE	19	26
ARTICLES ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	2	2
CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS (OFTEN ABUSED)	12	14
ADULTS	5	9
OLDER PEOPLE	0	3
MIGRANTS	0	1
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES	0	1
OTHER	5	3

Newspapers Coverage on social problems 2013

la Repubblica



il Giornale



The media judgment

la Repubblica

- 2012:
 - AS 13/43: «Positive» evaluation only in 1 «supported by social services» VS «Only seven lines text in aseptic stile of bureaucracy»)
- 2013
 - AS 19/42: «positive» evaluation only in 2 «with the help of psychologists and social workers» VS «he was afraid that social services taken away the children »

The media judgment

il Giornale

- 2012:

- SW in 16/24 articles, “Positive” evaluation only in 2: «Social workers have worked with the family of the young girl» VS «tremendous power in the hands of the SS able, with their opinion, to alter the balance affective of families’ »

- 2013

- SW in 25/34 articles. Positive evaluation only in 6: «Social workers did a good job and they have followed him with care and expertise» VS «Where are Social Workers?»)

A case in point: the case of Rosi. The Facts.

- Rosi, a young woman aged 26, was killed after yet another fight with strokes of knife by the former partner in front of their two years old son in July 2013.
- The man had been repeatedly denounced by the woman. The allegations were about abuse in the family and were not about stalking.
- Both complaints were filed by the investigating judge at the request of the prosecutor because the lady, heard again by investigators, downplayed the facts.
- The family has sued the state to have been abandoned and this was an announced murder.
- In 2014 the man has been sentenced to 30 years in jail



Palermo: a man kills his ex-partner

la Repubblica

10/07/2013

- Rosy Bonanno was the 25 years old victim. Her former partner killed her with over ten stab wounds. He was the father of her child who is now two years old. The 40 years old man, Benedetto Conti, was arrested in Villabate. He was reported twice for stalking. The victim's mother: *"Two years of unuseful complaints. (...). Everybody has this murder in conscience"*.

An aunt of the victim also stated that Rosy denounced him for sexual assault. (...)

According to the woman, **social services** were considering whether to transfer in a community Rosi and the child, to protect them: *"But if they had to protect my daughter they had to lock up him, not my daughter!"* cries the Rosi' mother.

il Giornale

Stalker kills after six complaints ignored

emphatic and emotional style



Now who says to a Rosi' mother with **no more tears** that justice has something else to worry about? That the prosecutors in Palermo, the one that digs on the major unsolved mysteries of the negotiations (**with the Mafia**) and massacres, could not get lost behind a little ignoble story about exhausted love affairs, anger, threats and daily violence? (...) **The State forgot her. But her persecutor didn't.** They could not wait, but they waited instead. And now perhaps begin the farce to understand where the six (not one ,but six) complaints of Rosi Bonanno are stranded, and who has the blame for not having taken seriously. *"It is an announced crime - says Teresa, the mother of Rosi - they knew the end of it. **Social Workers**, the Police knew everything, we mishandled her complaints, since two years we were denouncing violence, threats, intimidation "*.

- complaints ignored, and he kills his ex- partner: you have it on your conscience (11/07/2013)
- **social workers** requested a foster home for her and the child(11/07/2013)
- Rosi, a death foretold, no one has done anything to avoid it (11/07/2013)
 - Other articles
- the 2 year old son is now entrusted to the maternal grandparents (23/07/2013)
- woman murdered in front of her son; mother' Rosi say: the **municipality abandoned us** (15/08/2013)

- The stalker kills after six complaints ignored.
- The prosecutor of Palermo is not acting: a man stabs the former in front of son. (11/07/2013)

Other articles:

- Boom of violence against women staying at home, **but have tripled aid requests.** (19/11/2013)
- One Hundred woman killed **by (untrue) love.** (16/10/2013)
- To understand love **in order to cure hate.** (21/10/2013)

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Leggi all'interno a pagina 7

FONDATA DA GIROLAMO ARONZONI

GIORNALE DI SICILIA

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Leggi all'interno a pagina 7

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POLITICA E GIUSTIZIA. Epifani al centro: la corda può spezzarsi. Renzi all'attacco. Grillo: al voto

Il caso Mediaset blocca le Camere, il governo trema

Bagarre dopo che la Cassazione ha fissato al 30 luglio il giudizio su Berlusconi. Pdl: lavori fermi per 24 ore. Si del Pd tra le divisioni → PAG. 2-4

LA RIFORMA NECESSARIA

Bruno Vespa

In Italia non esiste la Ragione di Stato: il problema è che non esiste uno Stato o comunque un'istituzione. Lo Stato come viene concepito nella nostra democrazia occidentale, in Italia il marino che ha ucciso Bin Laden sarebbe stato processato per omicidio volontario. Non a caso da noi sono tutti i capi dei servizi segreti o dei reparti più esposti nella lotta alla criminalità che il delitto di omicidio non finisce in un processo.

→ SEQUELA A PAG. 4

L'INTERVISTA
POLITO:
ELEZIONI
ANCORA
LONTANE

→ PAG. 2

TRAGEDIA A PALERMO. La vittima, 26 anni, massacrata con sette coltellate



UCCIDE LA SUA EX DAVANTI AL FIGLIO ERA STATO DENUNCIATO

Un discusso di Villabate di 56 anni, Benedetto Conti, ha ucciso ieri mattina a coltellate l'ex convivente, Rosy Bonanno, 26 anni. L'omicidio nella zona tra via Villagrazia e via di Toffano, davanti agli occhi del figlio di due anni. L'uso del pargolo della donna: lo avevamo denunciato più volte. → PAG. 5

PALERMO. Sindaca su 22 colpi per mezzo milione



Rapine violente a negozi e anziani, banda sgominata

Confessano tre capi già in cella: in manette 13 gregari. Altri due sono ricercati → PAGINE 17-18

FORMAZIONE. Lo ha disposto la Corte dei Conti

Inchiesta su Ciapi, sequestrati beni per 15 milioni

Sigilli a immobili, auto e fondi legati a uno dei progetti finiti sott'inchiesta → PAG. 6

MODIFICHE ALL'ARS
Legge antiparentopoli
C'è il divieto ai coniugi

LO RIVELA UNO STUDIO
Lo smog può causare il tumore ai polmoni

MAORI IN SVIZZERA
Suicidio assistito
Ma non era grave

GIORNALE DI SICILIA
Presentata la guida ai ristoranti dell'isola

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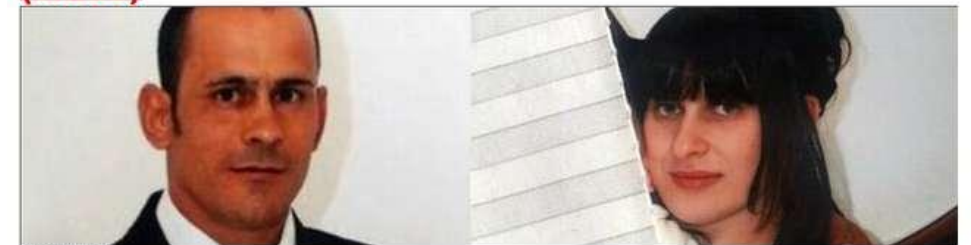
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Invio

Tragedia a Palermo, uccide la ex fidanzata a coltellate La madre di lei: era violento, avevamo paura... (video)



Omicidio in via Orecchiuta nella zona di via Villagrazia. La vittima è Rosy Bonanno, 26 anni. La polizia ha fermato l'ex, Benedetto Conti, che l'avrebbe assassinata al termine di un litigio. Secondo gli investigatori il delitto sarebbe avvenuto davanti al figlio di due anni. La donna viveva in casa dei genitori, lui a Villabate. Lui sarebbe stato denunciato sei volte per stalking. Dopo il fermo ha detto di aver ingerito veleno

VIDEO INDAGINI NELLA ZONA DI VIA VILLAGRAZIA DI ROSSELLA PUCCIO / FOTO LE FOTO DELLA COPPIA

The case of Rosi is in the headlines only in local newspapers

You Tube

- FILE NEWS. IT (<https://youtu.be/YqJ-AOzJFCs>) **violence against women**, killed a girl from former partner in Palermo **1.263 views in a day**
- GIORNALE DI SICILIA (<https://youtube/MgCfHef9XAQ>) yet another femicide: He kills the former partner in front of the child. He had six complaints of stalking **6.367 views in a day**
- AMORE CRIMINALE (Love crime) (<http://www.rai.tv/dl/RaiTV/programmi/media>) Duccio Camerini (actor) read law court documents of case of Rosi **722 views**

Facebook and network.

- Facebook - Foundraising group "We help the Rosi family" - **513 like** –
- Facebook group do not touch children: they are angels - **30.695 like** -
- **AVAAZ.ORG PETIZIONE DELLA COMUNITA' «Uno Stato vicino alle famiglie. NON TOGLIAMO IL BAMBINO DI ROSY BONANNO ALLA FAMIGLIA MATERNA. FIRMA ANCHE TU!» 135 like**
- **BLITZ NEWS «Palermo, Rosi Bonanno's son will in adoption: "Grandparents are too poor " 17 like**

Discussion

- There are few explicit and direct references to social workers, they are often defined as operators of the Town City, the State: "*the mayor sends in place even social workers*".
- In many articles return to the "**they**" that implicitly recalls the clear role that social workers and social services have had in this affair ("*they have done everything possible, with few tools available, to avert the tragedy*").

Discussion

- the newspaper La Repubblica reported two declarations by social workers:
- “We have *not underestimated* the case, we have done everything possible; We *could not imagine* a tragic epilogue so [...] Our task was to protect the child, who was well cared by family members, and also the pediatrician has confirmed [...] *we do not have instruments* in front of the length of bureaucracy, there are times that *do not depend on us*”. (defensive attitude)
- While Il Giornale reiterates that the murder could be considered "a crime announced" because S.W. and Police knew the situation.

Discussion

- How are social workers represented in Newspapers?

"***They widen their arms***", a gesture which in Italian means "impotence".

They do not go to the house of citizens: "*We were told that there would be a social worker, but we did not see anyone*".

- They know the risks that the woman ran, but **they do nothing**: "Social workers, police, everyone knew it all the time, but no one has done anything".

Discussion

- **They are still considered as children thieves:** "It's better you do not appeal to social services in the country if you are afraid that you spread the voice; (there is a national toll free number; advertising also goes on TV)".
- Moreover, in the newspaper articles lacks any reference to the laws and the social policies that govern the actions of social workers and social services: it's missing a focus on information.
- It is never stated that social workers can't make any statement on the situations of the people who they care by the rules of social services and according to the Code of Ethics of profession.

Service Television? Infotainment: Television of pain

- A research on "bad practices" on television (Observatory of Pavia, 2014), commissioned by the Order of Journalists, has analyzed all the TV broadcast to highlight the problems.
- The sample consists of the telecasts information content (excluding News/TG and their headings) in which were debated topics of crime and legal proceedings or stories of individual or social discomfort. (DV, Abuse, social disadvantage).
- Programs that combine and intertwine typical elements as "information" genre to others dealing with «entertainment»: **infotainment**.
- Research examined the programs, with the mentioned characteristics, on the seven national broadcast televisions RAI 1, Rai 2, Rai 3, Rete 4, Canale 5, Italia 1 and La7.1 The period covered is the quarter between 15th of September and 15th of December 2014.

Service Television? Infotainment: Television of pain

The logic of infotainment: tv service, false educational goal, social protest, indignation, anger, investigative contribution, sharing of morality et cetera.

These programs are not addressed to children and teenagers, but they are broadcast "in the time slot (time band) in which it is assumed that minors are watching television without the presence of an adult (prime time programming from 16.00 to 19.00 - Italian Code TV and minors). However, every day TV tells stories using horrific and macabre details. They use special effects like slow motion and replay.

The paradox of the participation

- Rarely social workers are invited to speak as experts. More often are invited psychiatrists, psychologists, lawyers and judges.
- Anyway, when social workers are invited, the presenter of the program (not always a journalist) asked social workers to speak only on the case, while the social worker wants to talk about social problems.
- So the conductor turns more questions to the social worker, but only to other experts...

Conclusion

- Newspapers still show social workers as children thieves, alluding to their role as unresponsive bureaucrats, or vanished
- The talk shows and TV shows (“Le iene”, “Chi l’ha visto?”, “Pomeriggio 5” etc.) aim to raise the level of the share using the way to convey the objective facts and news they contribute to create the Moral Panic phenomenon and to strengthen the processes of social exclusion.
- A questions be raised: How can social workers and social work researchers work with the media?