

# Argentine newspapers and police news (1976-1983). The cases of *Diario Popular* and *La Prensa*

## *Prensa argentina y noticia policial (1976-1983). Los casos de Diario Popular y La Prensa*

**María Paula Gago**

Universidad de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina  
mariapaulagago@gmail.com

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### **Abstract**

*This article proposes to analyze the information treatment made by the Argentine newspapers La Prensa and Diario Popular about the criminal acts that occurred during the last Argentine military dictatorship (1976-1983). From the analysis carried out, it can be deduced that, although the rhetoric of the police genre was used to report illegal repression during the years 1976-1978, by 1982 the framing changed and police events were interpreted by the newspapers in a political key.*

### **Keywords**

*Dictatorship; Argentina; subversion; crime; newspapers*

### **Resumen**

El presente artículo propone analizar el tratamiento informativo que realizaron los diarios argentinos *La Prensa* y *Diario Popular* en torno a los hechos delictivos ocurridos durante la última dictadura militar argentina (1976-1983). Del análisis realizado se desprende que, si bien durante los años 1976-1978 se utilizó una retórica propia del género policial para informar sobre la represión ilegal, hacia 1982 el encuadre cambió y los acontecimientos policiales eran interpretados por la prensa en clave política.

### **Palabras clave**

Dictadura; Argentina; subversión; delito; diarios

## 1. Introduction

This work is part of a larger study (Gago, 2015) and its general objective is to comparatively analyze the explanations and the interpretive framework from which two Argentine graphic communication media of nationwide circulation –*La Prensa* and *Diario Popular*– reported on the issue of crime in the particular circumstances<sup>1</sup> of recent Argentine history: the last civic–military dictatorship (1976–1983).

In this sense, two particular objectives were established: (a) Identify, analyze, and understand argumentative focuses developed in each one of the newspapers, both in their editorial spaces and those destined to police information, in regards to supervision and methods of repression and control; and (b) comparatively track the modifications made to the framework of reports on crime in each one of the media studied from the beginning until the end of the dictatorship (1976–1983), based on certain journalistic cases considered representative.

The initial hypothesis poses that during the period 1976–1978, the media studied used police rhetoric to refer to not only “common crimes”, but also to “political subversion”. In 1982, there was a change in the interpretive framework and even common crimes that were not linked to the dictatorship were related to what came to be known as state terrorism. In other words, as of 1982, expressions are found in the news that show the emergence of suspicion on behalf of the press as to the actions of the dictatorial government.

Police news is a critical ideal tool, given that it is a mobile and dynamic frontier that serves as a critical and historical tool that articulates the state, politics, the subjects and literature (Ludmer, 1999). From this point of view, we think of police news as a political news (Martini, 2005; Saítta, 1998), and communication

media as political players (Borrat, 1989) and disseminators of social imaginaries (Baczko, 1999).

A qualitative methodology and discourse analysis tools were used, such as the Framing Theory and the News Theory. Two nationwide newspapers were analyzed from the point of view of their production conditions (Verón, 1993). *La Prensa* did not have a police section, but *Diario Popular* did. Therefore, the police chronicles were studied in the section with the same name as those pieces that explicitly addressed the issue of crime, violence, methods of repression and social control applied between 1976 and 1983.

## 2. Background

Argentina’s last military dictatorship (1976–1983) has been addressed in economic, political, and social terms as well as in the cultural sphere. However, there are still areas that require thorough studies. Police information in the press is one of them.

In regards to discourses on crime, the studies available address from the analysis of the police story in popular press from the beginning of the century (Saítta, 1998), as well as in literature (Ludmer, 1999; Link, 2003), research on the history of the changing discourses on punishment and the state tools of social control (Caimari, 2007) to even a great number of investigations that analyze the treatment of crime and the violence in daily life, just as it was configured in the press discourse in the last 20 years (among others Martini 2005; Martini & Pe-reyra, 2009; Martini & Contursi, 2015; Santagada, 2017) and studies on the fear of crime (Gil Calvo, 2003; Reguillo, 2006; Kessler, 2009).

A specific piece of background on the treatment of “subversive crime” in graphic communication media is found in Dosa et al. (2003), who analyze 2 publications of the editorial *Altántida*: *Somos* and *Gente* in 1976 and 1977. Likewise, Schindel (2012) analyzes newspapers with nationwide circulations during the state

terrorism and exposes the invisible massacre of the forced disappearance.

### 3. The Argentine military dictatorship (1976-1983)

The Military Junta that took power on March 24, 1976 –comprised of General Jorge Rafael Videla, Admiral Emilio Eduardo Massera, and Brigadier Orlando Ramón Agosti–, sought to create a “new order” in which they would impose the “validity of the values of the Christian morale”, that had supposedly broken down. They had a double objective: “control” the economy and discipline society (Acuña & Smulovitz, 1995; Canitrot, 1980).

One of the principle tools of the re-foundational project was the systematic plan of massive kidnappings of political opposers in clandestine detainment centers, then their torture, murder and disappearance, in a vast illegal repression that resulted in thousands of disappearances. The clandestine repressive practice did not only have as objective to silence opposers once and for all, it also achieved a certain social disciplining, deepening the depoliticization of the civil society and tore the ties of social solidarity that had grown in previous years (Borrelli, 2016).

In terms of communication media, the censorship was not established in 1976. It was organized slowly over a quarter century until it accelerated in 1974 (Avellaneda, 1986). The Military Junta that assumed power in 1976 established its own legal framework. On the same March 24, it published the Memo No. 19, which established:

...would be punished with prison of up to 10 years he who by any medium disseminates, reveals or propagates news, memos or pictures, with the purpose of perturbing, weakening or discrediting the actions of the armed forces, security forces or police forces.

Postolski & Marino (2006: 6) indicate that a “Free Service of Previous Review”<sup>2</sup> was created inside the Casa Rosada, “where one had to send a 3-copy set of each issue: one of these copies was returned with ‘corrections’, and the other two, were sent for ‘the analysis of posterior censorship’”. In terms of the graphic communication media, (Borrelli, 2016; Díaz, Giménez & Passaro, 2004) it’s indicated that Videla invited the boards of the top newspapers of the capital to a meeting on April 2, 1976; meetings that from then on would be held in smaller groups of two to three journalists.

The dictatorship was clear in its policy as to the press: media that criticized were intervened or closed; those that wanted to maintain some form of independence “were suppressed, and those that acted like addicts, were treated with care (...) and scenarios of privilege were considered for the sector” (Postolski & Marino, 2006: 8).

Contrary to other authoritarian regimes, there was no centralized censorship office in Argentina (Avellaneda, 1986). For this reason, the media did not work in “bloque” (Varela, 2001). In this sense, for the military regime, journalistic activity must not stop altogether. “Just the opposite, a ‘warm’ press was tolerated, that would execrate the ‘subversives’, but that at the same time would be moderately critical in its judgement of the country’s government” (Borrelli, 2016: 87).

### 4. Theoretical and methodological aspects

The journalistic material worked on was based on the proposal of Barthes (1993: 81) on the need for the corpus has to saturate a complete system of similarities and differences. In this sense, we selected *La Prensa* and *Diario Popular* for their circulation and environments of influence, and because they allow us to perform an analysis that compares the discourse

of the serious press and the yellow press. If in the 80's the discursive borders between both types of press tended to be fuzzy, given that it was more difficult to "differentiate the textual features of the publications traditionally defined as yellow or sensationalist from those classified as 'serious'" (Steimberg, 2000: 235), in the period of reference that delimitation was still current.

In addition, the yellow press is defined by its news content linked to what Ford, Martini & Mazziotti (1996: 78) called soft areas (arts & entertainment, general information, sports and police news), and is based on a narrative, casuistic, concrete, and personalized discourse. Meanwhile, the serious press privileges information from hard areas (national and international economy and politics) and appeals to the use of a type of informative and argumentative discourse. Considering this typology: we classified the newspaper *La Prensa* as serious press, and the *Diario Popular* as yellow press.

We took news articles on the anti-subversive movement, pertaining to the political agenda, but narrated as a police issue; the case of the Schoklender brothers, classified in the series of "parricide/horrific crimes"; and, finally, the case of the couple murdered with signs of torture, both from the police agenda. We chose these cases because: (a) they allow us to show three models of crime that co-existed in the journalistic stories during the period (1976-1983): subversives, murderers and "common criminals"; and (b) because via the study of these cases you can comparatively analyze the continuities and variations in the interpretative framework present in the serious press and the yellow press in terms of crime and violence.

The methodology of analysis used aims at describing and understanding. According to Kornblit (2002), upon performing social analysis we put ourselves within a paradigm of *comprehension* and not of explanation, which supposes that knowledge of the study subject provides the possibility to recreate what social groups

think, believe, and feel. On this basis and knowledge of the context, you can "interpret". At the same time, describing supposes breaking down complex conceptual structures that are not explicit and on which ideas and practices of certain groups are based that can be represented by the discourse. In summary, what we are trying to understand with the analysis are the meanings given by the social players (in this case the newspapers) based on the identification of these categories that organize the story.

On the other hand, the theoretical contributions of the police journalism genre (Caimari, 2007, 2012; Saïtta 1998) allowed for the identification of markers at different historical times, as well as categories linked to the theories of the crime (Kessler, 2004) and of social control (Garland, 2005), that allowed for the analyzing of stories of order in the context of a dictatorship.

The corpus of analysis is comprised of 17 articles. On the anti-subversive movement, we used 6 articles (3 from each newspaper): "3 terrorists were killed in a shootout in farm raid" (1976, June 22), *La Prensa*, p. 7; "17 guerrillas killed in Boulogne" (1976, July 3), *La Prensa*, p. 5; "Young terrorist killed yesterday in La Plata" (1977, April 22), *La Prensa*, p. 3; "10 extremists shot down" (1976, November 12), *Diario Popular*, p. 2; "Bloody clash". (1976, November 25), *Diario Popular*, back page; "Santa Fe: 3 extremists killed in two shootouts" (1977, February 13), *Diario Popular*, back page.

On the parricide, 8 articles published between May and June, 1981 were considered (5 from *Diario Popular* and 3 articles from *La Prensa*): "Couple's bodies found in a car trunk in Barrio Norte" (1981, May 14), *La Prensa*, p. 12; "Schoklender brothers arrested for suspected murder of parents" (1981, June 6), *La Prensa*, p. 5; "Schoklender brothers medical exam presented" (1981, June 8), *La Prensa*, p. 4; "Dirty secrets in the crime of the couple" (1981, June 3), *Diario Popular*, pp. 8-9; "The crime of parricide" (1981, June 4), *Diario Popular*, p.

9; "Parricide Perpetrators convicted" (1981, June 5), *Diario Popular*, pp. 8-9; "After the horror, a large sadness" (1981, June 7), *Diario Popular*, pp. 4-5; "A case for the psychiatrist" (1981, June 7), *Diario Popular*, p. 5. On common crime, 3 articles were considered, distributed in the following manner: Iglesias Rouco, J. (October 12, 1982). "Road to terror", *La Prensa*, p. 3; "Political ties ruled out in murder of young couple" (1982, October 13), *La Prensa*, p. 4; "The hand of the mafia is raised in the shocking double murder" (1982, October 12), *Diario Popular*, p. 10.

## 5. Corpus

To clarify the "reading contract" (Verón, 1985) of each medium, we took into consideration the hierarchized article supply, the format, the space that occupied the printed letter and the image. *La Prensa* is directed at a type of audience interested in political issues, of national and international nature, as well as economic topics. The newspaper itself was in sheet format, with more written text than images. Its design did not distinguish between police, political, or economic news. It was directed at a readership that preferred articles on international news and gave priority to the analysis made by the newspaper in terms of the national state of politics and economics. It was an explicitly anti-Peronist and anti-communist newspaper.

On the other hand, *Diario Popular* gave hierarchy to the police report, arts and entertainment and sports. It used a colloquial language and on the frontpage it balanced image with written text. It was directed at a readership of the masses, emphasizing the scandalous side of events. We must clarify that *Diario Popular*, contrary to *La Prensa*, presented a polished and didactic structure: the body of the newspaper was divided into sections. Plus, it was one of the first to incorporate color on the frontpage. In terms of its ideology, it favored anti-subversive movement. This stance is due to the fact that its founder was murdered

by the armed political group Montoneros in 1974.

For the differences in terms of the type of readership that each newspaper attracted, the serious press and the yellow press present different styles and criteria to construct their product.

### 5.1. *La Prensa* (1869)

*La Prensa* was founded in 1869 by José Clemente Paz. The newspaper was created to overcome the politicization that characterized the newspapers at that time. However, around 1874, Paz had participated in a "crusade" against the then president Avellaneda (Ulanovsky, 2005). From the appearance on the political scene of Juan Domingo Perón, he became a target of heavy criticism on behalf of the newspaper, which only worsened during the 1946 electoral campaign. The newspaper was expropriated by his government in 1951 (Panella, 2006). This event would mark the anti-Peronist and anti-communist discourse, of the newspaper. Díaz, Giménez & Sujatovich (2010) indicate that, from the last phase of the third administration of Peron until the end of the military dictatorship, the newspaper –at the hand of Gainza Paz– contributed to the discursive construction of the 1976 military coup, given that it understood that the military takeover did not represent a break of constitutional order, but rather it was the only institutional option possible. Despite the initial compromise with which *La Prensa* assumed the struggle with the subversive enemy, it did not leave behind its character of political activist to voice its discrepancies and indicate warningly to the Military Junta that which had to be corrected, thus adopting behavior described as "pendular journalism" (Díaz & Passaro, 2009). Despite the offering, the newspaper decided not to participate in Papel Prensa S.A. (Borrelli, 2011; Díaz & Passaro, 2009).

*La Prensa* positioned itself as a newspaper of reference, of conservative ideological tendency, directed at a middle-to-high-class readership.



Picture 1.



Source: *La Prensa*, June 20, 1976, Frontpage.

Picture 2.



Source: *La Prensa*, August 14, 1981, p. 4.

## 5.2. *Diario Popular* (1974)

During the absence of the newspaper *Crónica*, of Héctor Ricardo García, closed down by

the Isabel Perón government, the editors of the newspaper *El Día* of La Plata decided to re-launch their evening paper *El Diario* that, despite having a good structure and appearance, it did not achieve great success. For this reason, they transformed it into a tabloid for the masses, "with attention-grabbing headlines, few opinion pieces and simple language" (Ulanovsky, 2005: 56) aimed at circulation in the southern sector of Greater Buenos Aires.

Thanks to the hole that *Crónica* left in the market segment at which it aimed, sales of *Diario Popular* increased right away. The newspaper was founded on July 1, 1974 by David Kraiselburd, who was also the director of the newspaper *El Día of La Plata*. Coverage of police stories was the focus of the newspaper. With short articles and a polished appearance, it managed to make a place for itself in the market (Borelli, 2012). On July 17, 1974, Kraiselburd was murdered by a command group of Montoneros. From then on, his son Raúl Kraiselburd took charge of it and maintained a close relationship with the military government.

Picture 3.



Source: *Diario Popular*, November 12, 1976, Frontpage.

Picture 4.



Source: *Diario Popular*, February 7, 1979, frontpage.

## 6. Results

Before studying the cases, we must clarify some aspects. First, the use of official sources (police reports for the crime news and memos of the armed forces) are heavily used in the police stories and in the articles on subversion. It must be emphasized that the data coming from the official communications are those that legitimized the information published, and at the same time reinforce the frame with which the media reported on violence, crime and the methods of repression and social control.

Secondly, the period between 1976 and 1983 is dynamic in regards to the frame and the arguments that the press voiced in terms of crime and methods to control it. In this sense, it is emphasized that the degree of relationship with the political climate at the time will vary noticeably in each case analyzed. While in the case of the parricide, possible hypotheses were created in relation to the trafficking of arms that Schoklender (father) had under-

taken during the period, the press quickly framed the event as a police case without direct relation with state terrorism. This is different to the coverage of Marcelo Dupont's murder (case that we will explain later in the text), in which the press will begin to interpret in a political light events linked to the dictatorship, including, applying this framework to cases of the police agenda, without an apparent link to it.

### 6.1 Subversive delinquency (1976-1978)

During the bloodiest time (1976–1978), *Diario Popular* published news about subversion in National News, differentiating it from those of common crime. It used a police rhetoric and used key terms like "clashes", to tell about what was a policy of extermination planned by the State. For example: "An official press release said that in 2 clashes recorded in Santa Fe, 3 guerrillas were killed"<sup>3</sup>.

The newspaper gave indications that the events were not cases of common crime, but rather had political connotations. However, the visibility of the cases, together with the use of police-type rhetoric, allowed them to make the repressive plan perpetrated by the State seem natural.

In *La Prensa* that hierarchization was not possible given that the articles on subversion were on the same page as the police news, like robberies occurring in warehouses or the death of workers when a boiler exploded or the naming of the rectors that would be in charge of public universities. Nevertheless, in both newspapers the struggle against subversion was portrayed as a clash equal to the coercive power of the security forces and the armed guerrilla groups. For example: "three extremists killed (...) the episode occurred at 1:30pm when police forces surrounded the farm located on Street 30"<sup>4</sup>.

In the news series on the anti-subversive struggle, included in the subversive crime agenda, the newspapers studied used impersonal



language and passive voice thus taking the subject out of the action (person, number, mode and time) and emphasizing the action. For example: 10 extremists killed<sup>5</sup> or 3 terrorists were killed in a shootout during farm raid<sup>6</sup>. Just as Van Dijk says (1997: 63), those with power like the authorities, in this case, the security forces, tend to appear in first person when they carry out a neutral or positive action, while they are situated in the passive voice or implicated as agents of negative actions. Also reoccurring is the use of “quantification” -that is, the naming of the number of those that “are killed”- in the headlines, which highlighted the importance of the accuracy of the news. The combination of assertions and of quantifications in a discourse where neither the enunciator nor the receiver is explicitly identified, designates a contract where an objective and impersonal enunciator speaks the truth (Verón, 1985). Likewise, the figure of the subversive and the extremist, just as it is used in military discourse in terms of domestic enemies, managed to impose a story in regards to these political collectives as the national adversaries. Despite having different editorial focuses, the two media coincided on what is considered newsworthy, as well as in the characterization of the topics, people and types of events. According to Entman (in Koziner & Aruguete, 2016) the frame given to texts on the anti-subversive struggle is identified in key words like “seditious”, “criminals” versus “security forces”, “shootouts” and “clashes”.

In terms of that related to news sources, they were official memos disclosed by the security forces. The citing is direct, with an accurate degree of source identification: “by way of the press office of the Commanding General of the Army (...) the following information is released”<sup>7</sup>.

The ponderation performed from the discourse of the press is positive with the police forces as the military, who are presented as a homogeneous sector<sup>8</sup>, although they were assigned different areas of action. The military sectors appeared to be questioned in the role of service agents of the restoring of the inter-

nal social order in the struggle against subversion; the police forces must complement the anterior and must also act forcefully in the prevention and combat of common crime.

## 6.2. The parricide (1981)

On June 1, 1981 the bodies of the Schoklender couple (Mauricio Schoklender and Cristina Silva) were found. They were found in Barrio Norte, in the city of Buenos Aires, in the trunk of their own car. In little time it was known that they had been murdered by their own children: Mauricio and Pablo Schoklender. The motives for the crime revolved around an evil family history: the mother was an alcoholic and carried out an incestuous relationship with Pablo Guillermo, the younger son.

In regards to the players in the news, the couple was passive and the active role was taken on by the children and the police set to chasing them and imprisoning them. The case was classified by the press as a filicide-type crime that led to astonishment because it involved inhumane, animal-like murderers. The trope of the animalization was used over and over against by *Diario Popular*. For example, while the police looked for them, the newspaper said that a “military police operative to track the brothers down”<sup>9</sup> was launched.

The narration of criminal events shows a fundamental stylistic feature of genre: sensationalism, bloody and evil spectacle. *Diario Popular*, due to the contents that it gave priority in its agenda, exploited the morbid side of the case: “the engineer Mauricio Schoklender knew about the fact that his wife had sexual relations with one of his children, Pablo Guillermo, age 20”<sup>10</sup>. *La Prensa* used an informative discourse, with the objective of generating an effect of seriousness and objectivity: “the Schoklender brothers were arrested as suspected murderers of their parents”<sup>11</sup>.

We note the use of an authoritarian/repressive rhetoric used in the news series of that time inscribed in the agenda of subversive crime. The reason for this is, although the parricides were



not subversive, they were capable of mercilessly killing those who gave them life. *Diario Popular* published a statement –appearing in the afternoon paper *La Razón*– made by Doctor Osvaldo Loudet, psychiatrist with 20 years' experience at the Criminology Institute of the National Prison that, said *Diario Popular*, "has the best unique techniques to measure the magnitude of danger of the criminals"<sup>12</sup>. The main juridical question lies, for the newspaper, in if they were truly conscious of their actions. Because if they were crazy, they couldn't be sentenced, when the punishment for parricide was life in prison (Art. 80 of the Penal Code)<sup>13</sup>.

*La Prensa* also used the explanations of psychiatrists, which they featured in the police chronicles. However, in relation to the murders and common crime, they included police events due to the pressure applied by market dynamics and other communication media (Martini & Luchessi, 2004). In other words, when a police series was used in the news offer of the rest of the competitors, *La Prensa* also included it in its contents. Although, the emphasis that they gave to the news inscribed in the agenda of common crime was scarce, and this is verified in the amount of space the text takes up (one or two police chronicles on even pages that included 8 to 10 news articles).

### 6.3. The return of terror (1982)

The advertising executive Marcelo Dupont disappeared on September 30, 1982 and was thrown off a building under construction on Ocampo Street in Buenos Aires on October 7. The autopsy determined that he fell to the street dying, after having been tortured and subjected to abuses by his captors. The cadaver appeared covered in an impermeable sheet that covered a large part of his face and was found in front of a four-floor building construction in Palermo Chico. It was not just a mere police case and this is how it was seen by the media of that day.

Dupont was the brother of ex-diplomat Gregorio Dupont who, in September 1982, had collaborated with the brothers of Elena Holmberg,

as witness to the cause of death of the diplomat in December 1978. The responsibility of Holmberg's murder was assigned to Admiral Emilio Massera, who controlled the work groups that committed the majority of crimes during this period.

The murder of Dupont, was inscribed by the press in a series that brought back the subversive issue, which was now almost absent from the journalistic reports since the end of 1978. The novelty was that the newspapers covered these events from an interpretive framework that, in a pendular movement, abandoned the criminal rhetoric that they had used to report on the anti-subversive struggle and interpreted this type of murders in a political light. Likewise, the focus given to these cases, also used as an interpretive framework to report on murders that had no apparent relation to state terrorism. One example is the "crime on Viamonte Street"<sup>14</sup>.

In regards to Dupont's murder, in an article titled "The road of terror", *La Prensa* journalist, Jesús Iglesias Rouco, maintained that it was likely that the murder of the young couple was part of a destabilization campaign<sup>15</sup>. According to his arguments, everything indicated that Dupont's murder and the pressures being applied to his family constituted the first step towards the creation of a news atmosphere of terror, that would make an understanding between the different national sectors impossible in order to make serious changes in the country.

How can it be –asked Iglesias Rouco– that in the middle of the "Dupont affaire" scandal, while the whole country was watching that unfortunate family, a group of unknown people could chase and threaten one of its members, from a car, in downtown BA and with the utmost impunity? In the words of the journalist:

What is true is that over the last 10+ years under the wing of the anti-subversive struggle in Argentina an evil system has been put in operation called terrorism repression, by which the law of the right to defense was marginalized and a mechanism of complicities

and silence was created in which anything is possible. Today, in simple terms, we Argentines live –and sometimes die – under what's dictated in this system<sup>16</sup>.

According to the journalist, it was even likely that the murder of the young couple on Viamonte Street, some days before, was part of a destabilization campaign to impede or put obstacles in the road to democracy. "That is what happens (...) with the new flood of anonymous threats (...) that journalism has experienced over the last few weeks". It is worth noting, from the beginning of the case, *Diario Popular*, specialist in police issues, said that it was about "a payback regarding drug trafficking".

Contrary to what occurred in 1976–1978, a time in which the anti-subversive struggle was narrated as a crime issue, cases like that of Dupont and common crimes, like that of the couple on Viamonte Street, acquired political connotations.

## 7. Conclusions

The press discourse in 1976–1983 is dynamic in regards to violence and order. This is due to the fact that, beyond the editorial focus of each medium, there is a clear distinction between a first stage of persecution and censorship (that coincides with the anti-subversive struggle) and a second stage of monolithic dictatorial discourse breakdown that is accentuated after the defeat in the Falklands War, announcing the arrival of democracy (Varela, 2001).

In this sense, the use of police rhetoric to report on the subversive struggle, reducing it to a security issue, is explained based on the newsworthy criteria that were elaborated in accordance with discursive canons of a dictatorial government that, at the same time, deployed censorship mechanisms that worked restrictively for message production.

Nevertheless, in parallel to that frame a mediatic narrative of authoritarian/repressive nature was configured that served, in addition, to justify the request of maximum sentences for murderers that, although they were not equal to the subversives, they implied a heightened degree of threat to society.

After 1982, time at which the dictatorial monolithic discourse weakened, the media "discovered" the atrocities committed by the de facto government and began to report on the actions of out-of-control paramilitary groups that continued in operation, even when it was subversion. In relation to the latter, what does call attention is that, even when the frame given to the murders related to state terrorism was changed, the argumentative modes favorable to the repressive methods remained in operation (even during democracy) not only to justify the struggle against subversion but also to eradicate other types of crime. In fact, they continue, although with variations, in the current police chronicles on insecurity.

As a result, and taking into account that each moment in history has its own crimes (Ludmer, 1999), what is left to study is the analysis of argumentative focuses developed by the press in regards to crime starting in 1983. The purpose would be to identify the continuities and mutations, in regards to the dictatorial stage, that are deployed in the crime articles starting with the return to democracy, period which will conclude with the disappearance of the yellow coverage of crime and will give way to the appearance of the rhetoric of insecurity, linked to the social issue.

Finally, the academic studies that analyze the dynamics (fragmentary and tending to de-contextualize) from which the communication media create what is real, must contribute with proposals for a responsible and quality exercise of journalism. And this, in regards to the investigation's discovery, implies: (a) de-naturalize and make an issue of the interpretive frameworks that are autho-

ritarian and repressive in nature, like those described here, from which communication media represent and translate the otherness as another evil danger that must be exterminated; (b) respond to society's needs and expectations for information as well as market dynamics with changes to ethics, based on commitment, investigation, resource reliability, construction of accurate stories but also attractive "as literature and necessary for journalism" (Jiménez & Angulo, 2017: 300).

## Notes

1. The "particularity" of the period resides, following the definition coined by Bobbio et al. (2005) on the concept of dictatorship, in: the suspension of the constitutional guarantees and the de facto instauration that establishes martial law and the state of emergency as fundamental to social order.

2. The authors indicated that the application of these policies had different degrees of implementation. "The hardness of the first moment gave way to various instances of negotiation" (Postolski & Marino, 2006: 6). This way, the "Free Service of Previous Revision" stopped operations within a month.

3. 10 extremistas abatidos (1976, November 12). *Diario Popular*, p. 2.

4. Fueron muertos 3 terroristas en un tiroteo al allanarse una finca (1976, June 22). *La Prensa*, p. 7.

5. Abatióse en Boulogne a 17 guerrilleros. (1976, July 3). *La Prensa*, p. 5.

6. The "disputes and/or clashes" between armed forces and the police that completely exceeded the object of the investigation, are omitted in the newspapers (on the issue, see, among others Oliveira and Tiscornia, 1997).

7. Sórdidos entretelones en el crimen del matrimonio (1981, June 3). *Diario Popular*, pp. 8-9.

8. Sórdidos entretelones en el crimen del matrimonio (1981, June 3). *Diario Popular*, pp. 8-9

9. Detuvieron a los hermanos Schoklender, los presuntos asesinos de sus padres. (1981, June 6). *La Prensa*, p. 5.

10. Un caso para el psiquiatra (1981, June 7). *Diario Popular*, p. 5.

11. Un caso para el psiquiatra (1981, June 7). *Diario Popular*, p. 5.

12. The example refers to the murder of Luis Zamboni and his wife, Graciela Pagniez. Both appeared with their hands and feet bound, gagged, and with bullet holes in the head.

13. Iglesias Rouco, J. (October 12, 1982). Camino del terror. *La Prensa*, p. 3.

14. Iglesias Rouco, J. (October 12, 1982). Camino del terror. *La Prensa*, p. 3.

15. Iglesias Rouco, J. (October 12, 1982). Camino del terror. *La Prensa*, p. 3.

16. La mano de la mafia se alza en el espantoso doble asesinato. (1982, October 12). *Diario Popular*, p. 10.

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Sobre la autora

**María Paula Gago** es Posdoctorada en Ciencias Sociales (2017), CEA, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. Doctora en Ciencias Sociales (2016), Magíster en Comunicación y Cultura (2013), Profesora de Enseñanza Media y Superior (2013) y Licenciada (2007) en Ciencias de la Comunicación Social, FSO, Universidad de Buenos Aires. Es becaria posdoctoral en CONICET (2016-2018) y Profesora Adjunta Interina de Semiología (CBC-UBA) desde el año 2014.

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