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In March of 2015, a group of feminist writers and academics in Argentina organized a marathon reading event, using the slogan “Ni Una Menos” (“Not One Woman Less”), to speak out against the growing number of femicides. Less than three months later, more than 250,000 Argentines flocked to the Plaza del Congreso in Buenos Aires to participate in the first #NiUnaMenos demonstration. #NiUnaMenos has since transformed into a transnational feminist movement, extending across Latin America and beyond, and shifting the conversation about gender violence in digital and physical spaces.

This interdisciplinary, mixed-methods study explores the online and offline communications of the #NiUnaMenos movement as an effective form of feminist resistance. I analyze key texts from the first two months of the movement, including social media posts, posters, and the official manifesto. Specifically, I argue that #NiUnaMenos was so successful in bringing about cultural change because of the way it was able to reach the masses, not solely feminist activist groups, by employing a unique set of discursive dichotomies in digital and physical spaces. Ultimately, the movement's strategic use of discourse allowed it to successfully resist patriarchal violence, help women reclaim their own bodies, and spark a cultural shift toward gender equality.

WRITE, TWEET, MARCH: HOW ARGENTINA'S #NIUNAMENOS  
EMPLOYED DISCOURSE IN DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL  
SPACES TO REACH THE MASSES

by

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Argentine feminist movement #NiUnaMenos originated in part from a marathon reading event in March 2015 in which writers, journalists, activists, and artists spoke out against femicide through readings and performances (Torres et al.). The event was soon followed by the gruesome murder of 14-year-old Chiara Paez, just a few weeks pregnant, who was killed by her boyfriend and buried in his family's garden (Pomeraniec). Quickly, the lengthy prose of feminists simplified into three words shared on Twitter by journalist Marcela Ojeda: “NOS ESTAN [sic] MATANDO”<sup>1</sup> (@Marcelitaojeda). From the initial reading event to what became a viral social media conversation to the historic demonstrations, #NiUnaMenos strategically employed discourse—in both digital and physical spaces—to resist patriarchal violence, help women reclaim their own bodies, and spark a cultural shift toward gender equality.

The movement's first demonstration, held June 3, 2015, in Buenos Aires, drew approximately 250,000 participants (Rodríguez 153). Since then, #NiUnaMenos has transformed into a transnational feminist movement, extending to Chile, Costa Rica, Bolivia, and beyond Latin America (“19 O”). While the movement continues to fight for

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<sup>1</sup> “THEY'RE KILLING US” (all translations, unless otherwise noted, are mine)

widespread political change, its success can be seen in the cultural shift that has occurred in Argentina and across Latin America and the global visibility and influence it has garnered. #NiUnaMenos did not form out of isolation; decades of work by feminists helped build the foundation for the movement and its success (“Carta orgánica”). However, as author and film director Susana Nieri explains, “[L]o que produjo el #NiUnaMenos es que ya no seamos las mismas”<sup>2</sup> (Nieri 166). #NiUnaMenos was so successful because of how it was able to communicate in a way that reached and resonated with the masses, not solely feminist activist groups.

My thesis draws from feminist theory, communication studies, critical theory, and social media and digital media theory—and employs critical discourse analysis, among other methods—to examine the online and offline communications of the #NiUnaMenos movement as an effective form of resistance. I argue that the movement’s feminist discourse—the written texts, speeches, images, and combinations of text and image produced by the organizing collective and participants—strategically balanced a unique set of “discursive dichotomies” in order to successfully reach and resonate with both activist groups and the general public. Collectively, the discourse of the movement was political, but nonpartisan; intellectual, yet accessible; and deeply connected to the history of Argentina and the country’s feminist lineage, while maintaining a focus on the future and adapting to twenty-first century needs. The discourse expressed urgency, with long-term vision; focused on the collective, while highlighting individual stories; and often appeared spontaneous, yet was organized and strategic. The modes of communication

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<sup>2</sup> “[W]hat #NiUnaMenos produced is that we were no longer the same women.”

were both digital and physical, or online and offline. While the dichotomies may seem oppositional at first, I argue that they were in fact complementary of one another, and were the key to the movement's success. This discursive strategy, paired with the diffusion of messages across a variety of digital and physical channels, spurred the movement's success in reaching and resonating with the masses, which, in turn, enabled #NiUnaMenos to successfully resist patriarchal violence, help women reclaim their own bodies, and spark a cultural shift toward gender equality.

This project focuses on the first two months of the movement, from the first marathon reading event on March 26, 2015, through the June 3 demonstration. I analyze a variety of texts—from social media posts to handmade posters to the manifesto—their diffusion, and the overall social and political impact in Argentina. While the movement spread to over 120 cities and towns across the country, I focus specifically on Buenos Aires, the country's capital, which served, and continues to serve, as the epicenter of the movement (Rodríguez 153).

Victoria DeFrancisco proposes in *Gender and Discourse* that we focus on research and scholarship that “place power and resistance at the centre of analysis . . . place emphasis on revealing violence against women . . . allow us to make links among local acts of oppression and global feminist movements; and truly emancipate the oppressed” (52). In the same way, the objective of this project is to analyze one of the most important feminist movements of the twenty-first century in order to contribute to a larger body of scholarship that explores feminist activism, patriarchal violence, and the ongoing social and political struggles that women face worldwide.

Before I continue, I would like to clarify some definitions that are central to my project. First, femicide is defined by scholar Diana Russell as “the killing of females by males *because* they are females.” Examples include “rape murders; murders of women and girls by their husbands, boyfriends, and dates for having an affair, or being rebellious, or any number of other excuses,” among others (Russell). While femicide is not a commonly used term in the United States, it has become increasingly common in Latin America, in part due to #NiUnaMenos.

Second, I define discourse as a “communicative event” (van Dijk 4). I am interested in how the movement’s success is tied to its use of language, and therefore analyze individual texts or statements and the sum of those texts and statements. A more detailed explanation of my approach to discourse analysis is offered in the methodology section.

Third, I draw from bell hooks and Rita Segato for my definition of patriarchy. According to hooks, “Patriarchy is a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence” (*Understanding Patriarchy* 1). Patriarchy doesn’t just negatively impact women; it is “the single most life-threatening social disease assaulting the male body and spirit in our nation” (*Understanding Patriarchy* 1). In *La guerra contra las mujeres*, Segato describes it as the “relación de género basada en la desigualdad”<sup>3</sup> and “la estructura política más

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<sup>3</sup> “gender relationship based on inequality”

arcaica y permanente de la humanidad”<sup>4</sup> (18). Understanding the patriarchy, how it functions as a political-social system, and how it impacts both men and women is critical to my understanding of the work of #NiUnaMenos.

Finally, I would like to mention that when referring to #NiUnaMenos, I include the hashtag symbol as part of the movement’s name. While the movement has been referred to with and without the hashtag symbol, by both the collective and outside groups, I have intentionally chosen to write #NiUnaMenos as a hashtag when referring to the movement because of the importance of the hashtag in the beginning months, both in online and offline spaces. In addition, a key text for my project, Paula Rodríguez’s *#NiUnaMenos*, uses the hashtag when referring to the movement. The movement’s current website, [niunamenos.org.ar](http://niunamenos.org.ar), launched within the past year, does not use the hashtag when referring to the movement. However, through my research, I can see that during the initial months of the movement, the hashtag was integral and formed part of the movement’s name. I will further discuss the function of hashtags—in digital and physical spaces—throughout my project.

## **Historical Context**

The historical context in which #NiUnaMenos is situated is critical in understanding the movement and its discourse. As Barbara Sutton writes in her book *Bodies in Crisis: Culture, Violence, and Women's Resistance in Neoliberal Argentina*, the history of the country has been marked by political, economic, and social instability, from

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<sup>4</sup> “the oldest, most permanent political structure of humanity”

the centuries spent under Spanish rule to independence in 1816 and the subsequent nation building to today's economic crisis:

For many individuals in the country the notion of crisis has been both a part of contemporary everyday life and a longer-term reality . . . Many Argentines have painfully learned that there is no such thing as stable ground. Certainty and security are elusive. (3)

The most notable period of instability in recent decades is the seven years of military dictatorship from 1976-1983 in which it is estimated that up to 30,000 Argentines were killed by the government, or “disappeared,” because they held political and social beliefs that threatened the military junta and its conservative ideals. Out of this period of state-sponsored terrorism emerged Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo, a group of mothers of the disappeared that began to publicly protest the military government and demand the reappearance of their children (*The Mothers of Plaza De Mayo*). As Sutton explains, their impact cannot be understated:

These women's tenacious activism and their demands before international organizations called the world's attention to the military's systematic violations of human rights and challenged the dictatorship when few people dared to do so. These organizations also helped craft a collective language and understanding of human rights, memory, identity, and justice that are still crucial in contemporary Argentina and that have served as a source of inspiration and strategy for social movements that came afterward. (23)

Las Madres remain active to this day, coming together every Thursday in front of the Casa Rosada to demand justice for the disappeared, “reivindicar su memoria y pedir por

otras causas”<sup>5</sup> (“Madres de Plaza de Mayo repudian”). As I will demonstrate throughout my thesis, their influence and “collective language” can be seen in #NiUnaMenos.

While las Madres remain a highly visible group, and one that helped lay the foundation for women’s (but not specifically feminist) activism, it is important to note that there were a number of feminist groups active before the dictatorship. *Cuando el feminismo era mala palabra* by Mónica Tarducci, Catalina Trebisacce, and Karin Grammatico provides an overview of the second wave of feminism in Buenos Aires, from the 1970s through the 1980s, including the years of dictatorship. La Unión Feminista Argentina (UFA), Movimiento Feminista Argentino (MLF), and Muchacha del Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST) are highlighted as some of the important groups who built a foundation of feminist activism before the dictatorship (15). While these organizations were only active for a handful of years, their influence is still felt today:

Fueron pequeñas, en comparación con las organizaciones revolucionarias de entonces, y de duración relativamente corta, apenas unos cuatro o cinco años, en el mejor de los casos. Pero a pesar de la circunstancia modesta de su expresión, fueron ellas las que sentaron las bases fundamentales para los feminismos contemporáneos. (15)

They were small, in comparison to the revolutionary organizations of the time, and of relatively short durations, just four or five years, in the best of cases. But despite the modest circumstance of their expression, it was these organizations that established the fundamental foundation for contemporary feminisms. (15)

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<sup>5</sup> “reclaim their memory and petition for other causes”

During the dictatorship, many of these groups went underground, and many of their public-facing activities were suspended (30). Grammatico writes, “[L]as mujeres dicen haber optado por tareas practicadas en solitario como leer, investigar, soñar; ejercicios realizados individualmente que no prosperaban en acciones colectiva de mayor alcance”<sup>6</sup> (63). In the early 1980s, these women began to emerge once again to organize public meetings and demonstrations (84). In 1984, after the return to democracy, activist groups celebrated the International Day of the Woman at the Plaza del Congreso in Buenos Aires. The first Encuentro Nacional de Mujeres took place in Buenos Aires in May of 1986 (156). Since then, these annual meetings have taken place each year, in different cities across the country, and are distinguished by “la autonomía, el autofinanciamiento, el funcionamiento en talleres horizontales pensados como espacios para discutir, compartir, y conocerse entre mujeres”<sup>7</sup> (154). The *encuentros* provide a space for women to come together, share experiences, and exchange ideas as they relate to problems that women face in Argentina. Approximately 1,000 women attended the very first *encuentro* in 1986. At the 2018 event, held in Trelew, there were 65,000 participants (“Historia del encuentro”). As Tarducci writes, these annual gatherings are a “fenómeno único en el mundo, entre otras cosas por su continuidad de tiempo, su masividad, y el amplio

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<sup>6</sup> “The women say they had opted for work practiced in solitude, like reading, researching, dreaming; exercises realized individually that did not become collective actions with a broader reach.”

<sup>7</sup> “autonomy, self-financing, the functioning of horizontal workshops designed as spaces for women to discuss, share, and get to know one another”

espectro de mujeres que se reúnen, y por sobre todas las cosas, por el fuerte impacto que produce en la vida de las mujeres que concurren”<sup>8</sup> (154).

The #NiUnaMenos *carta orgánica*, available on its website, specifically highlights the legacy of feminist activism that the movement draws from, mentioning las Madres and the *encuentros*, among others:

Al calor de esas voces se consolida el Colectivo Ni Una Menos, con sus muchas expresiones regionales, como parte de un movimiento histórico, que tuvo y tiene hitos organizativos fundamentales en las tres décadas de Encuentros Nacionales de Mujeres y en la Campaña Nacional por el Derecho al Aborto legal, seguro y gratuito. Y que también se reconoce en las Madres y Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo . . . Nuestras libertades y capacidades vienen de esa tenacidad que se acumula históricamente. (“Carta orgánica”)

Inspired by these voices the Collective Not One Woman Less is consolidated, with many regional expressions, as part of an historic movement, that had and has fundamental, organizational milestones in the three decades of the National Meetings of Women and in the National Campaign for Legal, Safe, and Free Abortion. And that also is recognized in the Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo . . . Our liberties and capacities come from that tenacity that is accumulated historically. (“Carta orgánica”)

In my interview with Marcela Fuentes, associate professor of performance studies at Northwestern University and a former member of one of the later #NiUnaMenos collectives, she echoed this sentiment, explaining that “everybody came from a particular legacy . . . that’s how they knew how to do things.” Groups like UFA, MLF, and Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo set the stage for #NiUnaMenos to emerge in the large-scale way that it did.

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<sup>8</sup> “unique phenomenon in the word, among other things for its continuity, its massiveness, and the wide spectrum of women that meet, and above everything, for the strong impact that it has produced in the lives of women who attend”

However, despite this strong history of women-led and feminist activism, Argentina has remained a patriarchal society in which women face discrimination and violence in both the private and public spheres. The manifesto read at the first demonstration stated that in 2014, a woman was killed every 30 hours, and from 2008 to 2015, the media in Argentina covered more than 1,800 femicides (“3 de junio 2015”). According to data from La casa del encuentro, a nonprofit organization that fights against gender violence and supports victims, there have been 2,952 femicides from 2008-2018 in Argentina, or roughly one femicide every 32 hours. An estimated 3,717 children have been left without a mother, with more than 64 percent of those children being minors.

The domineering influence of the Catholic Church on the lives and bodies of women in Argentina cannot be ignored. Graciela Di Marco writes, “In the Argentinian case, Catholic Integralism would be the key actor in the counteroffensive to women’s rights. Starting with the coups of the 1930s, the Catholic Church increasingly influenced every aspect of life” (132). As a friend and American expat living in Argentina told me, the number of Catholic churches in the country parallels or exceeds that of protestant churches in the United States’ Bible Belt, and statues of *la Virgen* can be found in countless public spaces and institutions. *La Virgen*, the virgin mother of Jesus, “embodies the church’s femininity ideal,” which can be described as “the selfless woman, the sacrificing mother, and the dedicated wife” (Sutton 31). Therefore, given the church’s stance on gender roles, as well as its views on sexuality and reproduction, “the Catholic Church hierarchy has decried the feminist movement and its challenge to sexist oppression” (Sutton 31). Despite the strong tradition of women’s activism in Argentina,

patriarchal social and political forces, such as the Catholic Church, can be equally as strong.

Women's activism has had some success in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries in bringing about legislative change. The "quota law" of 1991 "established that a minimum of 30 percent of political party candidates to electoral positions must be women"; Law 24.828 of 1997 "incorporates homemakers to the retirement system"; and Law 26.485 of 2009, one of the laws that the collective mentions specifically, "aims to provide integral protection to prevent, sanction and eradicate violence against women in the realms in which they develop their interpersonal relations" (Sutton 29). However, legislative change does not translate directly to cultural change. Sutton writes that "ingrained cultural beliefs and habits are not erased by legislative act, and the institutions that are supposed to enforce the laws often fail to do so" (28). Sutton's critique has been echoed by #NiUnaMenos leaders and participants. In theory, the state has passed legislation to protect women. In practice, the state has failed women and should be held responsible. As Sutton explains, "[T]he intersecting influences of the patriarchal state, the Catholic Church, *machista* (male-dominated) culture, and economic havoc have promoted various forms of social control, manipulation, and abuse of women's bodies" (7). Understanding the intersection of these forces is critical in my analysis of #NiUnaMenos and how its discourse is used as a form of resistance against these forces.

## Literature Review

An analysis of the discourse of #NiUnaMenos does not fit nicely into just one discipline; rather, it requires an interdisciplinary, mixed methods approach. This project draws from gender studies and feminist theory, social media/digital media theory, and some of Foucault's ideas related to power. In the following section, I discuss my methodology, which includes critical discourse analysis, distant reading, and interviews. The researchers and theorists whose works form part of the bibliography are from Latin America, Europe, and North America. Below is a brief summary of key ideas, theorists, and texts, and their significance in the project. I engage with these sources further in the analysis.

### *Gender studies and feminist theory*

There are several key feminist ideas that guide my work. First, modern Western societies are patriarchal societies, in which, as bell hooks describes, “[M]ales are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females . . .” (*Understanding Patriarchy* 1). In *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, hooks writes that this concept of “male supremacy” stems from the “Western philosophical notion of hierarchical rule and coercive authority . . . It is this belief system that is the foundation of which sexist ideology and other ideologies of group oppression are based” (118). Understanding these unequal gender relations, and their connection to violence, is critical to my work. Second, gender is a social construct. Judith Butler writes, “[G]ender is an act which has been rehearsed, much as a script survives the particular actors who make use of it, but which requires individual actors in order to be actualized

and reproduced as reality once again” (“Performative Acts” 526). As Butler explains in *Bodies that Matter*, these are discursive acts; performativity can be understood as the “reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains” (2). Butler’s definition of discourse is broader than the definition I use for this project; nevertheless, we can assert a relationship between language and gender.

Third, because gender is performative, we can challenge gender and gender hierarchies. As Sara Salih explains, there are “opportunities for the subversion and destabilization of existing gender hierarchies from within those structures” (22). The goal of #NiUnaMenos is precisely this: to use language as resistance to dismantle the patriarchy. This destabilization and dismantling is so important because it is the patriarchy that has produced violence against women in Argentina and across the world. In an interview with *El Ciudadano*, Argentine-Brazilian anthropologist and feminist intellectual Rita Segato argues that it is the patriarchy’s mandate of masculinity that tells men they need to be strong and powerful in order to maintain the patriarchal power structure. Because of economic and social precarity—both of which we have seen in Argentina in recent history—men turn to violence, often violence toward women, to fulfill this mandate. As hooks explains, “[W]orking men are fed daily a fantasy diet of male supremacy and power” (*Feminist Theory* 121). However, in Western capitalistic societies, most working men have little to no power at work and in other public spaces. Therefore, “they are taught to expect that the private world, the world of home and intimate relationships, will restore to them their sense of power, which they equate with masculinity” (121). Although femicide includes the killing of women outside of the

home, we know that the vast majority of women in Argentina are killed by men that they know, most often at home (La casa del encuentro). Thus, this idea of men restoring their power inside of the home certainly resonates when it comes the femicide in Argentina.

While I draw from several of Butler's classic works, like *Bodies That Matter*, I also incorporate thoughts and ideas from recent discussions that have taken place among Butler and her feminist colleagues in Argentina. In 2019, Butler visited la Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero (UNTREF) in Buenos Aires for a discussion with current members of the #NiUnaMenos collective. Additionally, a conversation between Butler, Virginia Cano, and Laura Fernández Cordero was recently published as the book *Vidas en lucha*. Therefore, Butler's presence can be felt throughout my project.

While individuals like Butler, Segato, and hooks help provide a broad understanding of feminism and gender violence, the work of Argentine feminists and their ideas can be seen throughout my project. As I mentioned earlier, the work of Barbara Sutton, an Argentine women's and gender studies scholar who is now a faculty member at University at Albany, is essential in understanding how the patriarchal state has oppressed women, as well as the ways in which women have responded with feminist resistance. *Cuando el feminismo era mala palabra* is another key text by Argentine feminists that explores the history of feminism in Argentina from the 1970s through the 1980s. The book highlights the rich diversity in feminist activism, and the large number of organizations that have been active in Argentina, even during the dictatorship. As Tarducci et al. write in the introduction:

. . . [N]o reconocer las genealogías es letal para cualquier movimiento emancipatorio . . . Conocer el pasado no es un ejercicio de mera nostalgia, sino que es también la posibilidad de ver las continuidades y descubrir, con asombro, que muchas veces nuestras antecesoras ya reflexionaron y llevaron a la práctica cuestiones que creemos invenciones recientes. (9)

. . . [N]ot recognizing the genealogies is lethal for any emancipatory movement . . . Knowing the past isn't an exercise of mere nostalgia, but is also the possibility of seeing continuities and discovering, with amazement, that many times our predecessors already reflected on and brought to practice questions that we thought were recent inventions. (9)

As they argue, an understanding of the history of feminism is critical to the understanding of current movements, such as #NiUnaMenos.

### *Social media and digital media theory*

As it relates to social media and digital media theory, there are three main ideas from current literature in the field that guide my analysis. First, Hester Baer writes, “Digital platforms offer great potential for broadly disseminating feminist ideas, shaping new modes of discourse about gender and sexism, connecting to different constituencies, and allowing creative modes of protest to emerge” (18). Digital media, particularly social media channels, allow for feminist discourse to permeate society, rather than being confined to traditional feminist spaces. Second, as Zeynep Tufekci writes, social media is an effective tool of resistance that is often used to threaten hegemonic power structures (xxii, 124). Further, the digital is most effective when used with the physical. Baer writes, “crucial to this redoing of feminism is the interplay between digital platforms . . . and local protests” (16). I argue #NiUnaMenos was so successful because of the way it employed discourse in both new digital spaces *and* traditional physical spaces.

While my project explores the important role that digital media, specifically Twitter, played in #NiUnaMenos, a significant portion of the Argentine population in 2015 did not have easy access to the internet. The book *Jóvenes, transformación digital y formas de inclusión en América Latina* explores the use of and access to digital media across Latin America, as well as the opportunities for education and democratic participation presented by these new media. As an American who has spent limited time in Latin America, this work is essential in understanding the unique digital media landscape in Argentina and the surrounding region. A key point that is demonstrated throughout the articles in this book is that while digital media is growing in use and importance across Latin America, one cannot ignore the digital divide that still exists. Therefore, while I explore digital discourse in my project, I also recognize that some populations were and still are excluded from these online conversations.

#### *Critical theory and power*

My understanding of power relations and how discourse is used as a form of resistance draws from Michel Foucault's ideas related to power and the ways in which discourse and power intersect. Key texts include *The History of Sexuality*, in which Foucault writes, "[D]iscourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it" (110). Foucault highlights the "multiplicity of points of resistance" that are always present in power relations, and the way that discourse can act as a form of resistance (95, 101). I also reference commentary on Foucault, particularly Sara Mills' *Michele Foucault*. Mills writes that Foucault is less concerned with oppression and more interested in resistance to

power: “Foucault’s bottom-up model of power, that is his focus on the way power relations permeate all relations within a society . . . allows an analysis which focuses on individuals as active subjects, as agents rather than as passive dupes” (31). In the same way, this project focuses on the ways in which women actively participated in resistance, a resistance that bubbled up from the bottom, and how these acts of resistance helped produce social and cultural change.

I would like to note that Foucault’s use of the word “discourse” in his writing can be viewed as contradictory. Mills writes, “Foucault himself defines [discourse] in a number of different ways throughout his work” (42). At times, Foucault uses the term to describe a set of statements; in other works, he views discourse as the rules and practices that structure the statements (42). For this project, I am most interested in the statements themselves. I analyze individual statements, or texts, and look at the collective impact of these statements. When I refer to discourse, I am not referring to the larger “system which structures the way that we perceive reality” (43), but rather, as Teun A. van Dijk writes, a “communicative event” (4). Therefore, while I draw from some of the ideas of Foucault, my definition of discourse is not in perfect alignment with some of his definitions of the term.

### *#NiUnaMenos*

In addition to the texts that provide the theoretical framework for my project, Paula Rodríguez’s *#Niunamenos* will serve as a foundational book for my understanding of the movement, its key players, and its timeline. *#Niunamenos* is a collection of reflections, texts, and interviews from #NiUnaMenos collective members, families

affected by femicide, artists, writers, politicians, health services workers, and other organizers and activists. The book is key in establishing a timeline for the movement and identifying the leaders and organizers behind the scenes. It also sheds light on the high level of strategy behind the movement's communications, and the ways in which messaging was deliberated and debated. I tried to contact Rodríguez for an interview, but unfortunately, I was not able to speak with her.

## **Methodology**

As literary scholar Ted Underwood writes, “Since human affairs are also a continuum, we should feel free to use whatever mixture of methods gives us leverage on a particular problem” (531). In the same way, I argue that studying the discourse of the movement requires a mixed-methods approach. I use Critical Discourse Analysis to analyze individual texts, distant reading to analyze large corpora of tweets, and interviews with members of the founding collective to understand the discourse from the perspective of the authors. Most of the texts I analyze were produced by the founding collective; however, particularly in chapter four, I look at some of the communications from the individuals who participated in (but did not help organize) the movement. I selected texts that I consider to be central to the beginning months of the movement.

I use a definition of discourse proposed by Teun A. van Dijk in *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. Van Dijk writes, “‘discourse’ is here meant in the broad sense of a ‘communicative event,’ including conversational interaction, written text, as well as associated gestures, facework, typographical layout, images and any other ‘semiotic’ or multimedia dimension of signification” (4). The objects of study in my

project include written text, speeches, images, and the combination of text and image. I utilize Critical Discourse Analysis, or CDA, because, “CDA takes a particular interest in the relation between language and power” and “emphasizes the need for interdisciplinary work” (Wodak 2, 10). Although CDA is often used to study and deconstruct hegemonic discourse, Etsuko Kinefuchi argues, alongside others, that CDA can be employed to analyze discourses of resistance, such as that of #NiUnaMenos. Kinefuchi writes, “Deconstructions are important, but it is one side of a coin; we also need narratives of culture, relationships, and intercultural communication that guide us in the building of a better world,” adding that, “CDA has given far less attention to the question of alternative discourses that promote a more equal and just world” (213, 216). I agree with Kinefuchi that CDA should be used increasingly to study discursive strategies of resistance.

Drawing from the ideas of van Dijk, as well as Ruth Wodak, I use the following four questions to guide my analyses of texts: What are the key messages? What words are used, and what do they connote? What words and messages are absent? How are social actors represented? In addition, I am interested in how texts are shared and distributed, particularly via social media, and the ways in which texts are reworked and repackaged to reach new audiences.

While most of my objects of study are written texts, made up mostly of words, not images, I also analyze objects that consist of both text and visual elements. For example, I analyze the #NiUnaMenos logo, a cartoon that became an important symbol of the movement, tweets with photos, and the handmade posters at the June 3 demonstration. To conduct these analyses, I draw from multimodal CDA, which is “interested in showing

how images, photographs, diagrams and graphics also work to create meaning” (Machin and Mayr 9). With MCDA, “the choices made by the author” are critical to the analysis (Machin and Mayr 9). Similar to conducting CDA or a close reading, each choice made by the author is purposeful and therefore forms part of the analysis. Drawing from the ideas of Machin and Mayr, I use MCDA to guide my analysis of the visual elements in my objects of study. I explore the individual visual elements in an image (objects and setting), how they are composed (what is in the foreground versus the background), and the ideas and values they communicate (51, 52, 54).

In order to conduct a macroanalysis of digital discourse, I use distant reading to study large corpora of tweets. The term “distant reading” was first coined in 2000 by literary scholar Franco Moretti in his article for the *New Left Review*. In 2005, he published the book *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History*, which introduced the concept in more detail, to a broader audience (1). In direct contrast to close reading, distant reading “aims to generate an abstract view by shifting from observing textual content to visualizing global features of a single or multiple text(s)” (Jänike et al. 227-228). Instead of conducting a thorough analysis of one text, distant reading allows researchers to identify patterns and make connections within a text or among numerous texts. While this method originated in literary studies, it is used across the humanities, and draws from the social sciences (Underwood 530). My approach to distant reading for this project is simple. I am specifically interested in the words and phrases that frequently appear in tweets, what they connote, and how they contribute to the movement’s discourse. I used MassMine, a command line tool designed for

researchers to simplify the collection and use of data from online sources such as social media networks, and Voyant Tools, a web-based reading and analysis environment for digital texts, to conduct my analyses. Specifically, I used MassMine to collect tweets and their data (number of retweets, favorites, etc.). From there, I used Voyant Tools to help visualize my data and identify the most frequently used words and phrases in a dataset. Voyant Tools presents data in charts and word clouds that rely on word frequency data to identify the most used words in a dataset. However, it is important to mention the limitations to this methodology. Because my research is limited to Buenos Aires, I narrowed all Twitter searches by location, which in turn only produced datasets of tweets from individuals who had shared their geolocation data. Additionally, some Twitter accounts who may have participated in #NiUnaMenos are private, or have since been deleted. Finally, favorite, retweet, and follower counters are constantly in flux, making it difficult to determine the reach of a tweet in the time period it was first published. Therefore, while the data that MassMine was able to collect was very valuable to my work, there are limitations to working with social media platforms in this way. My datasets are just a sample of the Twitter activity that took place. Twitter data included in this project was scraped during the spring and summer of 2019. The screenshots of individual tweets that you will see throughout my thesis were taken on the same day, Oct. 26, 2019, for consistency.

Additionally, I conducted interviews with Argentine women who were part of the movement's founding collective to gain a better understanding of the discourse from the perspective of the authors. I use the term "founding collective" to refer to the group of

about 20 women in Buenos Aires that helped kick-start the movement in May of 2015 and organized the first demonstration. In my interview with founding collective member Agustina Paz Frontera, she told me that after the demonstration, the group split, and many women became involved with other groups or organizations. The Buenos Aires collective has evolved over the years, and the majority of the women who were involved in the founding collective have left for various reasons (Frontera; Abbate). Because my research focuses on texts produced by the founding collective, most of the interviewees were members of that original collective, but are no longer directly involved with #NiUnaMenos today. Interviewees include María Pía López, sociologist, writer, teacher, and member of the founding collective who organized the first *maratón de lectura*; Agustina Paz Frontera, journalist and member of the founding collective who created the flyer for the *maratón de lectura* and helped manage the Facebook page; Florencia Abbate, author and member of the founding collective who also helped manage the Facebook page; Marcela Ojeda, journalist and member of the founding collective who tweeted “NOS ESTAN [sic] MATANDO”; Florencia Alcaraz, journalist and author and member of the founding collective; Marcela Fuentes, associate professor of performance studies at Northwestern University and a member of a later collective (from 2016-2018) who helped with performance; and Cecilia Palmeiro, a professor at New York University Buenos Aires and a current (but not original) member of the current collective.

### **Motivations and Implications**

My interest in this topic stems from my interest in gender studies, an area that I have explored throughout my master’s program, as well as my professional background

in communications, a field I have worked in for nearly six years. Additionally, this project reflects my desire to produce timely, relevant, and impactful scholarship that explores the cultural, social, and political issues of today, within a Latin American context. Perhaps the most important motivating factor behind this research is my own personal experience as a woman. While not a victim of *machista* violence, I have witnessed the devastating impact of gender violence in my community and personal networks, and remain frustrated by the lack of widespread, organized resistance against femicide and gender violence in the United States.

While there are many studies related to #NiUnaMenos and the ways in which social media has been used to help organize and grow the movement, I have yet to find a study that focuses specifically on the movement's discourse and its intersection with gender and power, both online and in physical spaces. Given the success of the movement thus far, I believe it is critical to understand how the women of #NiUnaMenos used discourse as a form of feminist resistance, and how that resistance helped enact cultural change in Argentina.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of this project, my analysis has implications not only for Latin American literary and cultural studies, but also for women's and gender studies, communication studies, and the growing field of digital media studies. Understanding feminist discourse—and successful discursive strategies—is increasingly important as women worldwide continue to face discrimination, violence, and other human rights abuses. The ways in which we communicate about these issues have real-world impacts on the lives and bodies of women. The growing use of social media

channels and the discourse taking place in digital spaces will also continue to be of interest—and will need to be better understood—as communication, organization, and activism occurs increasingly online and not just in person. Ultimately, this project could expand into a doctoral dissertation, perhaps focusing on the discursive evolution of the movement over time, or the ways in which similar feminist movements in other Latin American countries have strategically employed discourse.

### **Thesis Structure**

In order to best present my research and tell the story of the movement's discourse in the beginning months, my project is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction

Chapter II: *La maratón de lectura*

Chapter III: Momentum-building on Twitter

Chapter IV: *El 3 de junio*

Chapter V: Conclusions

Chapter II will take a closer look at the phrase “Ni Una Menos” and the key texts of the marathon reading event. Chapter III will analyze the Twitter conversation that occurred between the marathon reading event and the first demonstration, specifically Ojeda's tweet on May 11 that kick-started the movement, the #DeLaFotoALaFirma campaign, and other digital discourse that helped build momentum before June 3. Chapter IV will focus on the June 3 demonstration, including the manifesto that was read, the handmade posters that peppered the streets, and the Twitter activity that took place. To conclude, I

discuss implications of my research, the project's limitations, and the ways in which this research could evolve in the future.

CHAPTER II  
*LA MARATÓN DE LECTURA*

In Rodríguez's *#NiUnaMenos*, journalist and activist Agustina Paz Frontera describes the tipping point in March 2015 that spurred what has become known as the first official *#NiUnaMenos* event: *la maratón de lectura*. After a string of high-profile femicides, the body of 19-year-old Daiana García was found, coincidentally on the same day that marked ten years since the disappearance of Florencia Penacchi, another young Argentine woman (16). García's remains were found in a trash bag on the side of the road, and the suspect committed suicide soon after disposing of her body (Riera). The brutality of García's death, and the way in which it was played out in the media, would later be described by author, activist, and then-director of the Museo del Libro y de la Lengua María Pía López as "la punta del iceberg"<sup>9</sup> ("MARATÓN NI UNA MENOS"). The week García's body was discovered, López and fellow feminist activists began to organize a marathon reading event, or *maratón de lectura*, to take place at the Museo del Libro y de la Lengua, part of the Biblioteca Nacional in Argentina (Rodríguez 16). A few months earlier, the women had organized a similar event advocating for legal, free, and safe abortion (Frontera). The promotional flyer, created by Frontera, featured an image of a deserted road littered with trash and the title "Ni Una Menos," the phrase which would

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<sup>9</sup> "the tip of the iceberg"

later become the slogan that spurred the movement (Torres et al.). The description of the event was simple and direct: “Escritores, periodistas, activistas y artistas convocan a una maratón de lectura, proyecciones y performance contra el femicidio en la Plaza Spivacow el 26 de marzo a partir de las 16 horas. Av. Las Heras Y Austria”<sup>10</sup> (Torres et al.).

This chapter takes a closer look at the *maratón de lectura* by focusing on some of the key texts from the event that helped set the discursive tone for the movement. First, I discuss the slogan “Ni Una Menos,” including its history and connotations. Second, I examine López’s opening remarks at the event. Third, I analyze one of the key texts from the event, “Que la rabia nos valga” by Marta Dillon and Virginia Cano, that in recent years has reached new audiences in a unique way. This chapter seeks to better understand the discourse of the very first #NiUnaMenos event, and how that event helped construct a narrative that would reach the masses.

### ***La consigna: Ni Una Menos***

An analysis of the discourse of the #NiUnaMenos movement must begin with an analysis of the three words themselves: Ni Una Menos (Not One Woman Less). However, through various interviews with members of the collective, as well as my own investigation of sources, the origin of these three words remains unclear. Some news articles have claimed that the “Ni Una Menos” slogan comes from the Mexican poet and feminist activist Susana Chávez Castillo, who fought against the growing number of

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<sup>10</sup> “Writers, journalists, activists, and artists will convene a marathon of readings, screenings, and performance against femicide at the Plaza Spivacow on March 26 at 4 p.m. Avenues Las Heras and Austria.”

femicides in Ciudad Juárez in the mid-1990s and is credited with creating the phrase “ni una muerta más”<sup>11</sup> (Nájar). However, during my interview with founding collective member Agustina Paz Frontera, she told me that the phrase was not derived from the Mexican feminist movement, explaining, “Eso es una interpretación que hizo una periodista una vez, y no viene de allí.”<sup>12</sup> According to Frontera, her fellow collective member (and now journalist colleague) Vanina Escales chose the phrase “Ni Una Menos” for the *maratón de lectura*, and her selection of these three words was not related in any way to the Mexican feminist movement. Unfortunately, my efforts to interview Escales were unsuccessful. However, I was able to get in contact with Florencia Alcaraz, a collective member and friend of Escales, and I asked her specifically about the origins of *la consigna*. Here is what she told me:

El nombre Ni Una Menos surgió a partir de un texto de la periodista y feminista María Moreno, que escribió un texto que decía algo así como, “Las mujeres de la bolsa somos muchas y salimos de ella para que no haya ni una menos.” Había escrito ese texto, y a partir de un intercambio de chats y de conversaciones entre las que estamos en ese grupo, Vanina Escales sintetizó la convocatoria para la maratón de lectura en tres palabras que fue “Ni Una Menos.” Después, mucho más tarde, nosotras nos enteramos que había un poema de una periodista mexicana que justamente denunciaba los femicidios en Juárez y que fue asesinada y que también decía “ni una menos.” No lo sabíamos. Tiene que ver con la constelación feminista, las coincidencias políticas transnacionales.

The name Ni Una Menos emerged from a text by the journalist and feminist María Moreno, who wrote a text that said something like, “We women of the bag are many, and we leave the bag so that there would be not one woman less.” She had written that text, and from an exchange of chats and conversations among those who were in the group, Vanina Escales synthesized the call for the marathon reading event in three words that were “Not One (Woman) Less.” After, much later, we found out that there was a poem by a Mexican journalist that actually

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<sup>11</sup> “not one more woman dead”

<sup>12</sup> “That is an interpretation that one journalist made one time, and it doesn’t come from there.”

denounced the femicides in Juárez and that was killed and that also said “not one woman less.” We didn’t know. It has to do with the feminist constellation, the political, transnational coincidences.

According to Alcaraz, the phrase actually came from journalist María Moreno. Her text “Mujeres de la bolsa” has been referred to—by the collective itself, a year later—as the “texto-grito-convocante”<sup>13</sup> for the *maratón de lectura* (Ni una menos). The text was shared on the #NiUnaMenos Facebook page on March 18, 2015, the same day the event flyer was first shared. The phrase that Alcaraz quoted is in the second line of the text. Moreno also repeats “ni una menos” at the end, writing, “Que la bolsa se transforme en el símbolo del luto popular y el compromiso porque no haya *ni una menos*”<sup>14</sup> (Ni una menos). Based on what Alcaraz told me, it appears that Moreno had either shared the text with her colleagues as the event was being organized, and it was then selected as a *convocatoria* text, or perhaps she was specifically asked by the collective to write a *convocatoria* text. From there, Escales decided to take the phrase “Ni Una Menos” and use it as the slogan or title for the event. Alcaraz said that it was later on when they realized Susana Chávez Castillo—who she refers to as a journalist, although she was known primarily as a poet and activist—had used the phrase as well.

In conducting a Twitter search for #NiUnaMenos for the year prior to the *maratón de lectura*, it can be seen that “Ni Una Menos” was used as a hashtag in tweets by Argentine feminists and feminist groups. For example, @SomosMarea\_ tweeted about

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<sup>13</sup> “text-cry-call”

<sup>14</sup> “May the bag transform in a symbol of popular mourning and of commitment because there is not, not one woman less.”

violence toward women in January 2014, sharing a photo of a newspaper article about a recent femicide and writing, “Es urgente q se declare la Emergencia Nacional x violencia hacia las mujeres.#Niunamenos x ser mujer en la Argentina.”<sup>15</sup> In November of 2014, @raquelvivanco, who is currently followed by several of the founding collective members on Twitter, shared an event flyer for a feminist march and tweeted, “25N – 17hs. @LasMuMaLa Marchamos de Congreso a Plaza de Mayo contra la violencia hacia las mujeres #NiUnaMenos.”<sup>16</sup> Therefore, it is clear that the phrase itself was not new, and had already been used by feminist groups in Argentina as a rallying cry against violence toward women. Given the exchange of ideas that exists among feminists in Latin America, it seems likely that the “ni una muerta más” rallying call that appeared in Mexico in the 1990s made its way to South America, helped to inspire feminist discourse in the region, and evolved into “ni una menos.”

Regardless of the origin, an analysis of the three words themselves is still critical to understanding the overall discourse of the movement. Instead of “ni una muerta más,” like the Mexican feminist movement, Argentine feminists chose “Ni Una Menos,” or “Not One Woman Less.” The central message of these two phrases is essentially the same: We will not stand for any more femicides. However, I would argue that there are small, yet important, nuances that make these messages distinct. “Ni una muerta más” places the focus on the dead woman, which, in turn, could be read as a more somber or

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<sup>15</sup> “It’s urgent that a national emergency is declared for violence against women.#NotOneWomanLess for being a woman in Argentina.”

<sup>16</sup> “25 N – 17hs. @LasMuMaLa We march from the Congress to Plaza de Mayo against violence toward women #NotOneWomanLess.”

hopeless message. On the other hand, “Ni Una Menos” focuses on the woman who is still alive, and what is lost when we lose that life. I argue it speaks more to the value of women, their contributions, and the gaping holes that are left in communities that have “one less woman.” Thus, while #NiUnaMás is a hashtag used by feminist activists in Mexico and other countries (@Fridaguerrera), the selection of “ni una menos” by the Argentine group appears strategic. I argue that the collective intentionally chose to focus on the potential loss of a woman, and the loss that it is for society as a whole, rather than on the woman who is already dead.

While the #NiUnaMenos movement was formed to resist *machista* violence toward women, we see that the word “mujer,” or woman, is absent. “Ni Una Menos” uses the feminine article “una,” but not “mujer.” I think the absence of this word serves several functions. First, it keeps the slogan concise. It is short enough to be transformed into a hashtag, written in large letters on a poster, printed on a T-shirt, etc. “Ni Una Menos” packs more punch, and is easier to say, than “Ni una mujer menos.” It can be personalized by to have different meanings: “ni una madre,” “ni una hermana,” “ni una esposa menos.” However, the feminine “una” may not be inclusive enough, especially for individuals who identify as non-binary. While #NiUnaMenxs (with the gender-neutral “x” replacing the feminine “a”) does not appear to have gained the same traction as #NiUnaMenos, the hashtag has been used recently on Twitter by Argentine groups (@colecsexogenero).

The use of “Ni Una Menos” in Mexico, Argentina, and elsewhere, not just after March 2015 but before, demonstrates how the #NiUnaMenos movement is situated as

part of the broader, decades-long, transnational feminist activism that has been taking place in Latin America. As of late, feminists have used the word “marea,” or tide, to describe this larger movement that has extended throughout and beyond South and Central America and Mexico. In a 2019 talk with members of the current #NiUnaMenos collective at la Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero (UNTREF) in Buenos Aires, Judith Butler expressed her fondness for this term:

. . . I like this figure of la marea, the tide . . . because in the United States and in the United Kingdom and maybe in Germany or Australia, we say there was the first wave of feminism, and the second wave, and then maybe there’s the third wave . . . It only tells a certain history, in a certain part of the world, and mainly in English. So, I’m not sure whose history that is. But la marea as a tide, right, it comes, it recedes, it comes again, and it recedes. It meets another tide, and it produces another constellation. It’s dynamic, it’s not a set of stages. It’s an ongoing dynamic, the future of which is not really known or predictable. (“Judith Butler en la UNTREF”).

Butler’s description of *una marea* that comes and goes explains why the origins of “Ni Una Menos” are muddy. #NiUnaMenos as a movement is part of a larger feminist wave across many countries in which distinct movements come together, share ideas, and produce new constellations. Therefore, trying to pin down the creation of the phrase “Ni Una Menos” to a specific time and place is challenging. It is most likely that the phrase was used by feminists across Latin America for a number of years before it became the transnational feminist rallying call that we know and recognize today.

### ***La maratón: Opening Remarks***

The marathon reading event on March 26 began with opening remarks from María Pía López, who helped host the event given her role at the time as museum director. Her nearly three-minute introduction not only set the tone for the event, but it provided a discursive foundation for the movement in the coming months. In conducting an analysis of this text, as well as the other text that will be discussed later on in the chapter, I focus on four guiding questions that were introduced in my explanation of the methodology: What are the key messages? What words are used, and what do they connote? What words and messages are absent? How are social actors represented? Thanks to a YouTube video of the entire reading event published on the #NiUnaMenos YouTube channel, I was able to listen to and watch López speak (“MARATÓN NI UNA MENOS”). While López did not read her introduction from a written document, it appears to be a prepared piece, and one that served as a way to contextualize the event.

One of Lopez’s first key messages is that it was a string of high-profile femicides, culminating with the death of Daiana García, that propelled the women to organize the event. From the start, we see the importance of naming individual women who have been victims of femicide and sharing their stories. Throughout the beginning months of the movement, it can be seen that the organizers strive to find an equilibrium between focusing on individual stories of women, and sharing information and statistics that speak to the widespread problem, such as, “A woman is killed every 30 hours in Argentina” (“3 de junio 2015”). In her talk at UNTREF, Butler discussed this individual vs. collective tension that we see:

I love the story form. There's no politics without the story. But if we only tell individual story after individual story, without asking what is the link among the stories, what is the link among the individuals, without making the link among individuals, then we become a series of activist individuals, rather than a political community. ("Judith Butler en la UNTREF")

García's story is powerful because human stories are powerful. But if it is an isolated story, as Butler describes, its ability to build community and have a far-reaching impact is limited. By mentioning García's case and contextualizing it as part of a larger issue of femicide that has plagued the country, López is able to demonstrate the breadth and depth of the problem, while still telling the personal, human story that often resonates with people.

López then specifically states that discussions about organizing a series of actions in response to femicide first originated on social media. In my interview with López, she told me that Facebook served as the primary channel for communication and organization for the event. I find it interesting that López makes certain to highlight the role of social media in her opening remarks. Specifically, she says, "Lo que nosotras pensamos, con algunas compañeras que están aquí, y otras que están llegando, en principio desde las redes sociales, fue que era necesario comenzar a realizar un conjunto de acciones."<sup>17</sup> López communicates the key message that this is a grassroots event, organized by *compañeras*, not governmental institutions, *desde las redes sociales*. I argue that the organic and spontaneous nature in which the movement originated gave the collective

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<sup>17</sup> "What we thought, with some colleagues who are here, and others who are arriving, at first from social media, was that it was necessary to begin to carry out a group of actions."

more credibility with the general public. By describing conversations among colleagues on social media, López conveys authentic organization.

López says that the women will plan and execute future actions designed to place pressure on public institutions and society as a whole. However, she does not specifically name political parties or governmental groups; her message is political, but nonpartisan. We see that blame is placed widely on a variety of public institutions, as well as Argentine society as a whole. López specifically criticizes Argentina for its “umbral de tolerancia muy alta.”<sup>18</sup> She states that femicide is merely the tip of the iceberg; it is one of many forms of violence toward women that have been normalized. As with other key communications during the first months of the movement, López directly criticizes the culture that continues to accept and normalize a variety of violent acts toward women.

A key point of López’s opening remarks is that women are not solely victims of physical violence; they are also victims of a type of discursive violence that places blame on them and their lifestyles, instead of on their aggressors. She asserts:

. . . [N]o sólo son víctimas de la violencia asesina, sino que además son sistemáticamente culpabilizadas. Lo que vemos en los casos de cualquier joven que aparezca asesinada, es que lo primero que se enteró es su conducta, su ropa, sus palabras, su vida, y, se la convierte en objeto, donde desguace muy carroñero. Esta moda de tratar las palabras, de tratar los cuerpos en relación a las palabras, nos parece una violencia absolutamente condenable.

. . . [T]hey aren’t just victims of murderous violence, but also are systematically blamed. What we see in the cases of any woman who appears dead, is that the first thing we find out about is her conduct, her clothes, her words, her life, and she is converted into an object, where she is dismembered in a vile way. This way of treating words, of treating bodies in relation to words, we think is an absolutely condemnable violence.

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<sup>18</sup> “very high threshold of tolerance”

While she doesn't specifically mention the media, we see in the manifesto read at the June 3 event that the #NiUnaMenos collective does criticize Argentine media for the way they cover stories of femicide and focus on what women wear, who they spend time with, etc. ("3 de junio 2015"). López makes a strong statement here: While femicide is a heinous crime, the way in which women have been "sistemáticamente culpabilizadas" is also "una violencia absolutamente condenable." I find it interesting that López seems to have even harsher words for the discursive violence that has occurred against women, and spends more time on the topic. In my interview with López, she said, "La violencia se escribe de algún modo en el discurso para después ejercerse de otros modos."<sup>19</sup> She explained that discursive conditions can often set the stage for violence to take place. And while femicide is the bloodiest form of violence, it is not the only form. López said in her remarks that "la cosificación, la degradación, la humillación, el menoscabo"<sup>20</sup>—all discursive in nature—are also modes of misogynistic violence that can culminate in forms of violence that are more physical. López focuses on the discursive violence because she understands that discourse helps to inform our reality. The root cause of the physical violence toward women is the repetition of violent discursive acts that create and sustain patriarchal society.

This discursive violence presents an opportunity for López and her colleagues, a group of journalists, authors, communicators, and activists, to use discourse in a new way; that is, to employ language as a form of resistance, one that seeks to rewrite the

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<sup>19</sup> "Violence is written in some way in discourse so that it can later exercise itself in other ways."

<sup>20</sup> "objectification, degradation, humiliation, undermining"

script of gender relations and gender violence. Toward the end of her remarks, López says, “Si estamos acá reunidas hoy, es también para empezar a pensar juntos, otro modo de tratar las palabras.”<sup>21</sup> From the very beginning of the movement, the organizers recognize the power of discourse. Wodak writes that “language can be used to challenge power, to subvert it, to alter distributions of power in the short and long term” (10). The *maratón de lectura* represented a first step in the organization of the movement, a foundational one that cemented the role of discourse as an effective strategy of feminist resistance.

Now that I have discussed the key messages of the text, I continue my analysis by looking at the most frequently used words in López’s opening remarks and the ways in which these words support the key messages. Table 1 (see below) shows the top four words used and their respective counts. I compiled these word counts by transcribing López’s remarks from the YouTube video “MARATÓN NI UNA MENOS 26 de marzo de 2015,” saving the text as a PDF document, and then using the search function to identify terms that repeated throughout the text.

Table 1

Frequently Used Terms in María Pía Lopez’s Opening Remarks at *la maratón de lectura*

<b>Term</b>	<b>Count</b>
Violencia(s)	8
Palabras	6

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<sup>21</sup> “If we are gathered here today, it is also to start to think about, together, a new way of treating words.”

Acción(es)	5
Asesinada/asesinatos/asesina	5

I draw three main conclusions from identifying these words and analyzing their use within the context of López’s remarks. First, López emphasizes the aggression and brutality that women face by repeating “violencia” and words like “asesinada,” “asesinatos,” and “asesina.” I argue these words force the audience to awaken to the disturbing reality of patriarchal violence. Second, as discussed earlier, she highlights the power of “palabras,” the way in which they have enacted violence on women, and the ways in which they can be reworked as an act of resistance to create a new narrative—and ultimately a new reality—with regard to femicide, gender violence, and gender relations in Argentina. Third, López emphasizes collective action with the repetition of “acciones.” She states that, in addition to using discourse as resistance, another objective of the marathon reading event is “pensar un conjunto de acciones que nos permitan detener un espiral de violencia que todas padecemos.”<sup>22</sup> The event at la Biblioteca Nacional, while well attended, was designed for a specific, narrow audience, one that most likely had been involved in feminist activism for some time and was familiar with feminist concepts. López understood the importance of moving beyond this kind of reading event to plan strategic actions that will attract a broader audience and help spur political change.

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<sup>22</sup> “to think of a group of actions that permit us to stop the spiral of violence that we all suffer from”

It is important to highlight some additional messages that appear to be missing, as well as discuss the representation of people. Like many other texts I examine, there is no mention of the aggressors, or the men who are inflicting violence on women. It is not men who are blamed, but rather public institutions and society as a whole. As Segato explains in an interview with *El Ciudadano*, it is the “mandate of masculinity” that is to blame, not men themselves; in fact, men, as well as women, are victims of this mandate. Therefore, the problem is a societal problem, which implies a shared responsibility among all Argentines. The problem is widespread and collective, and so is the solution. Additionally, I argue the absence of criticism of men reflects a desire of the movement to not isolate men. #NiUnaMenos relies on the participation of men, as well as women, in order to produce cultural change. We see a similar strategy with how López addresses public institutions. She does not criticize certain parties, groups, or government officials, but rather calls for change across all of society, recognizing that an “us versus them” mentality will not be helpful in producing change.

One interesting observation is that while the word “femicidio” is used once in the text, other key feminist concepts and vocabulary like “patriarcado,” “machista,” and “feminista” are absent. Given the audience at this kind of event, it seems as though a more high-level, feminist discourse would be used by López in her introduction. In speaking with both López and former member of the founding collective Florencia Abbate, it is apparent that the collective was highly strategic in its selection of feminist vocabulary. On one hand, as Abbate told me, the collective tried to introduce new words like “femicidio” and “violencia machista” into the public discourse to change the ways

that people thought about violence against women. Yet on the other hand, as López described to me, there was a concerted effort, particularly in the manifesto, to avoid complex terms like “patriarcado” in order to better reach the masses. Due to the variety of print and broadcast media present at the event—we know this from the news coverage of the event that are still accessible online (Torres et. al; “Visión 7”)—I argue López was aware that her remarks would be shared more broadly and thus constructed a message that would be accessible to the general public. Additionally, while other texts draw a stronger connection to Argentina’s history, these historical references are largely absent from López’s remarks. One explanation is that she was limited by time. However, López does briefly discuss the way gender violence has been systematically accepted and normalized in Argentina, alluding to a societal pattern that has been created over time.

To conclude my analysis of the opening remarks, I would like to discuss the representation of social actors. As I mentioned earlier, women are represented as victims of both systematic physical violence and discursive violence. However, they are also represented as individuals with agency, with the word “acción(es)” being repeated in the piece. López emphasizes the need for continued action to resist the patriarchy. She also emphasizes collective feminist action, with phrases like “nosotras creemos,” “estamos acá reunidas,” y “todas padecemos.” Not only do these phrases demonstrate the collective thought and action that is already occurring, but, as described by David Machin and Andrea Mayr in their work on critical discourse analysis, the pronoun “us” can be used to “align us alongside or against particular ideas” (84). Using “nosotras,” or we, and verbs that are conjugated in the “nosotras” form, brings passive observers alongside the

*compañeras*, inviting them to join in these efforts of resistance. In my interview with López, she talked about the victim vs. agency struggle that we see playing out here in her opening remarks. While she didn't specifically address her remarks, she told me about the victim-agency discussion that the collective engaged in early on during the movement:

Una de las primeras discusiones que hubo allí fue una discusión sobre cómo considerar, cómo nombrarnos, cómo pensarnos. María Moreno había propuesto hacer un manifiesto que decía somos todas mujeres de la bolsa . . . Otras compañeras como Marta Dillon y Virginia Cano dijeron, “No, no somos mujeres de la bolsa, somos sobrevivientes, estamos vivas y el lugar de enunciación que tenemos que darle este movimiento, no puede ser nunca el de ser víctimas, sino de personas que construyen una autonomía frente a esta condición de víctima y deciden no hacerlo”.

One of the first discussions was about how to consider, how to name us, how to think about us. María Moreno had proposed a manifesto that said that we are all women of the bag . . . Other colleagues like Marta Dillon and Virginia Cano said, “No, we're not women of the bag, we're survivors, we're alive, and the place of declaration that we have to give this movement can never be that of being victims, but rather that of people that will construct an autonomy in opposition to this condition of victim and decide not to do it.”

The founding collective decided not to define themselves as victims, but rather position themselves as subjects with agency and autonomy (López). This in itself can be seen as an act of resistance—a rewriting of the gender relations script.

### **‘Que la rabia nos valga’**

As previously mentioned, “Que la rabia nos valga” (“So that our anger is worth it”), written and read by Virginia Cano and Marta Dillon, stands out as a key text of the marathon reading event in part because of the way it positioned Argentine women both as

individuals with agency and as a collective group with power. Additionally, it was shared in unique ways beyond the marathon reading event to reach new, larger audiences.

Therefore, I have chosen to conclude this chapter with an analysis of “Que la rabia nos valga.” I was able to watch Cano and Dillon read the essay thanks to the previously mentioned YouTube video of the *maratón de lectura* that is still available (“MARATÓN NI UNA MENOS”). Additionally, Virginia Cano posted the full text on her Facebook page the day after the event.

To open the text, Cano and Dillon write:

Yo no soy la mujer de la bolsa. Por eso estoy acá, frente a ustedes, leyendo este texto y respirando todo nuestro dolor, nuestra lucha y nuestra esperanza.

Yo no soy la mujer de la bolsa, porque esa (entre otras) es Daiana, quien ya no está, y nada debería borrar lo insustituible de su ausencia, lo irrecuperable e insuplantable de su muerte violenta a manos de un feminicida.

Nosotras no somos las mujeres que ya no están. Pero todas ellas nos atraviesan. Nos duele su ausencia. Activa en nuestro cuerpo la memoria de las propias heridas . . . (Cano)

I am not the woman of the bag. That’s why I’m here, in front of you all, reading this text and breathing in all of our pain, our fight, and our hope.

I am not the woman of the bag, because she, among others, is Daiana, who is no longer here, and nothing should erase the irreplaceability of her absence, the irretrievability and irreplaceability of her violent death at the hands of a murderer of women.

We are not the women who are no longer here. But all of them pierce us. Their absence hurts us. It activates in our body the memory of our own injuries . . . (Cano)

Cano and Dillon make an important distinction right from the beginning of the text, one that contradicts the message of Moreno’s “Mujeres de la bolsa”. They write that we are

not “mujeres de la bolsa,” the women whose cadavers were found in trash bags. We have the privilege of still being here today, fighting for the equality of women. We are not the victims. Yet we do share a common history and memory with these victims of femicide. Women are connected to one another through their shared stories and scars, and the death of one woman brings to light the abuses that we all have suffered. Thus, while Cano and Dillon are clear that all women have been victims of *machista* violence in one way or another, they do not present themselves as victims in the same way that Daiana García is a victim. However, all women share a “tajo común,” a “common cut,” which ultimately serves as a tool for women to use their collective anger in positive ways to enact change; they write, “[A]hí es dónde se funde el sentido de nuestra lucha.”<sup>23</sup>

After establishing a foundation of collective injury, anger, and action, Cano and Dillon reach a critical message in their argument: The root of femicide is the patriarchal, heteronormative society in which we live. They assert, “Ellas, las que ya no están, nos confrontan con el límite más cruento de un sistema hetero-patriarcal que nos quiere sumisas, devotas, calladas, temerosas.”<sup>24</sup> Here, in contrast to other texts, we do see the introduction of the “heteropatriarchal system,” a concept that may be unfamiliar with those outside of feminist circles, and a term that López specifically tried to avoid using. However, the two women concisely and directly explain the concept and its impact on women: It is a system that subjugates women in many ways, with the most extreme form being femicide. Cano and Dillon establish an important connection between femicide—

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<sup>23</sup> “[H]ere is where the sense of our common fight is found.”

<sup>24</sup> “They, the women who are no longer here, bring us face-to-face with the most bloody limit of a heteropatriarchal system that wants us submissive, devoted, quiet, and afraid.”

something no woman in the audience would have experienced personally—and all other aggressions that women experience on a regular basis, but may brush aside. This is a critical message, not just for this event but for the movement overall, because it emphasizes the point that femicides are not one-off, random events that are the result of a small group of mentally-deranged men. As Segato explains in an interview with *El Ciudadano*:

. . . [L]a mayor cantidad de violaciones y de agresiones sexuales a mujeres no son hechas por psicópatas, sino por personas que están en una sociedad que practica la agresión de género de mil formas pero que no podrán nunca ser tipificadas como crímenes.

. . . [T]he majority of rapes and sexual aggressions toward women are not done by psychopaths, but rather by people who are in a society that practices gender aggression in a thousand different ways that would never be classified as crimes.

Violence toward women is the direct result of Argentina's patriarchal society, and femicides represent the culmination of a variety of aggressions that have been normalized. If we understand femicides to be the culmination of aggressions that most women experience on a regular basis, then *all* women are at risk of femicide.

Further, if femicide stems from the patriarchy, then in order to eliminate femicide, the patriarchy must be dismantled. Cano and Dillon emphasize that this work to destroy the patriarchy is not new; the women at this event are part of a long lineage of feminist activists. While subjugation is part of our shared history, so is resistance. They write:

Pero nosotras somos también las de la mano pesada, las gordas que revientan las calzas, somos las que podemos correr, las que gritan como las locas de la Plaza. Somos las que buscamos la potencia de la horda y en el abrigo de la tribu nos

hacemos fuertes. En la tradición de la Furia Trava, de nuestras guerrilleras, de las Amazonas del Bajo Flores escrachando a los golpeadores y en la de aquellas que tensaban el arco sobre el pecho ausente, venimos a poner el cuerpo, estos cuerpos que gozan y cogen y sufren y se celebran y pelean, cuerpos soberanos que deciden contra todo, que se plantan y dan el grito para que suene con otros.

But we are also those of the heavy hand, the fat ones who burst through their hose, we are those that can run, those that scream like the crazy women of the Plaza. We are those that search for the power in the horde and the shelter of the tribe that makes us strong. In the tradition of the Furia Trava, of our guerillas, of the Amazonas of the Bajo Flores protesting the men who hit women and in the tradition of those that tighten the bow over our absent chest, we come to put the body, these bodies that enjoy themselves and fuck and suffer and are celebrated and fight, sovereign bodies that decide against everything, that they plant themselves and cry out so that they can be heard with others.

One key group mentioned by Cano and Dillon are Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo, referred to as “las locas de la Plaza.” The term “las locas” was originally used to negatively describe these women, but is now accepted and celebrated with pride (“Madres de Plaza de Mayo La historia”). As discussed in the introduction, this group was, and still is, critical in establishing a tradition of women-led activism. Cano and Dillon also mention the women of Bajo Flores, referring to the group of single mothers, all beaten by ex-partners, who helped feed poor youth in one of Buenos Aires’ poorest neighborhoods (Vales).

Establishing these connections to other activist groups is important for a few reasons. First, it serves as a way of honoring and recognizing the women who have come before them, and in turn, inviting those women to take part in the movement. Second, it helps with identity formation. For example, most Argentines know of las Madres and their legacy. In referencing and aligning themselves to these women, the identity of this new movement begins to take shape, and becomes comprehensible and accessible for the

public. Finally, positioning #NiUnaMenos as part of a larger, interconnected group builds on what Segato describes, from her perspective as an anthropologist, as the necessity to resurrect the history of women, one that “pone su acento en el arraigo y en relaciones de cercanía”<sup>25</sup> (*La Guerra* 27). Segato argues, “Lo que debemos recuperar es su estilo de hacer política en ese espacio vincular, de contacto corporal estrecho y menos protocolar, arrinconado y abandonado cuando se impone el imperio de la esfera pública”<sup>26</sup> (*La Guerra* 27). The women of #NiUnaMenos understand how important collaboration and coordination among women are to the success of the movement, and thus these messages of collectivity are present from the beginning.

Cano and Dillon are clear: They are not interested in baby steps. They want to reinvent the system. The text ends with a call to women to turn their anger into “palabra, arma y refugio frente a la hostilidad-cis-normativa.”<sup>27</sup> This is a call for collective action against Argentina’s patriarchal society. The act of collective resistance that Cano and Dillon are calling for is rooted in feminist anger, which itself serves as an act of resistance. In a society in which women are expected to be quiet, kind, passive, and submissive, Cano and Dillon recognize the collective anger shared by women, and urge women to embrace this anger and use it to enact change.

Having discussed the key messages of this text, I now shift to my analysis of words. Table 2 (see below) highlights the four most frequently used words in the text and

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<sup>25</sup> “places its emphasis on a sense of belonging and relationships of closeness”

<sup>26</sup> “What we should recover is its style of doing politics in that linked space, of close physical contact and less protocolled, forgotten and abandoned when it is set in the empire of the public sphere.”

<sup>27</sup> “word, weapon, and refuge in the face of cis-normative hostility”

their respective counts. I compiled these word counts by saving the full text of “Que la rabia nos valga” (taken from Virginia Cano’s Facebook post) as a PDF document, and then using the search function to identify terms that repeated throughout the text.

Table 2

Frequently Used Terms in ‘Que la rabia nos valga’

<b>Term</b>	<b>Count</b>
Nosotras	11
Nuestro/a(s)	9
Cuerpo	8
Herida(s)	7

Overall, these words reflect the key messages that I have discussed. As we see with the repetition of “nosotras” and “nuestro/a(s),” collectivity is perhaps the most important message of the text. While the text begins with García and her individual story, the authors immediately link her story to our collective story as women, specifically the ways in which we are all affected by patriarchal violence, and the ways in which we must all fight back.

The word “cuerpo,” or “body,” is repeated eight times in the text, and “herida,” or “wound or injury,” is repeated seven times. These words, as well as words like blood and scar, help to create an image of physical violence. Even though it is the body of Daiana that the authors first refer to, they connect the violence exerted on her body to “nuestros cuerpos,” and discuss the scarring of *machista* violence that has marked all of our bodies.

As Sutton explains, an exploration of the body is central to any discussion or analysis of the subjugation of women. She writes, “Converging systems of power and inequality shape and organize the ways diverse women experience their bodies; how society conceives of, regulates, or controls women’s bodies; how women’s bodies interact with other bodies; and how they become enmeshed in political processes” (5). Human history is marked by the abuse and control of women’s bodies. For women in Argentina, even if they have not experienced physical violence, their bodies have been the object of regulation or control; for example, perhaps by the church and its views on sexuality and reproduction. Cano and Dillon’s message—that the patriarchy seeks to control women’s bodies, and that, therefore, women’s bodies are at war—is critical to the movement. For women to organize and resist, they must understand the ways in which their bodies are being abused, controlled, and manipulated. In her discussion of body politics, Sutton also writes, “Social forces, while extremely powerful, do not completely determine women’s embodied existence and practices. Women, as embodied subjects, have agency and can use their bodies as tools and vehicles of resistance” (5). Women’s bodies exist as sites of both violence and resistance. Thus, when Cano and Dillon say that women’s bodies are at war, they are not simply saying that women are the target of “enemy fire,” but that women can employ their bodies as weapons to fight back.

What is missing in this text? Similar to López’s opening remarks, men are not specifically referenced, and the government is not specifically mentioned. Additionally, despite the way in which the Catholic Church continues to subordinate women, there is no specific reference to Catholicism. I think the women are strategic in terms of not

isolating particular groups of women; they understand that all women must come together in a way they have not before in order to enact real change. Another concept or word that is absent from the text is “machista.” While complex feminist terms like “heteropatriarcado” and “hetero-cis-normativo” are included, “machista,” a term that would likely be more recognizable, is left out. It remains unclear why this word was not used; however, as the interviews I conducted demonstrate, we do know that the women were very selective about the words that were used (López; Abbate).

In terms of the representation of social actors, I will summarize a few findings that have been briefly discussed throughout my analysis. First, women are represented as bodies that have been scarred; there is an emphasis on the physical body and the ways in which all women have been victims of patriarchal violence, in one form or another. Similarly, women are represented as individuals at war and under constant threat of the ultimate form of patriarchal violence: femicide. However, it is not a narrative without hope. Women are strategically represented as a collective group. Shared experience is emphasized, so that women will work together to fight the patriarchy. Women are represented as part of an important lineage. The connection to las Madres and other groups is highlighted, so that women draw inspiration, encouragement, and strategy from those who have built the foundation of Latin American feminist activism. Additionally, women are represented as angry, strong-willed, determined, and fed-up. In this way, the text offers an alternative to hegemonic femininity as prescribed by the patriarchy (e.g. passive, submissive). Women are also represented as “las otras,” but not in the way we tend to think about “otherness.” Cano and Dillon write, “Nosotras queremos ser las otras,

las fugitivas del heteropatriarcado, las que aprietan fuerte la herida para detener la sangre con la que nos quieren disciplinar. Nos-otras, queremos otras vidas, otros mundos.”<sup>28</sup>

This representation of women reflects a desire to create new, just, and equitable forms of living as women.

After the text was read at the *maratón de lectura*, Cano shared the full text of “Que la rabia nos valga” on her personal Facebook page on March 27, and it was shared 268 times (as of Oct. 26, 2019) (Cano). It was also shared on Twitter (@martadillon). However, other than some sharing on Facebook and Twitter, and a few news articles that shared portions of the text (Tentoni; Monfort and Mariasch) I cannot find extensive online sharing of this text. This is particularly interesting because, two years later, a 35-second abbreviated version of “Que la rabia nos valga” was included on Miss Bolivia’s 2017 album *Pantera*. Miss Bolivia, whose real name is Paz Ferreyra, is an Argentine musical artist who has reached international stardom with her unique blend of cumbia, reggae, hip hop, and electronic music (“Miss Bolivia”). She’s also a recognized activist, and, particularly with *Pantera*, does not shy away from using her platform to spread feminist messages and fight against systemic patriarchal violence (Miss Bolivia). The “Que la rabia nos valga” track on the *Pantera* album is an abbreviated version of the original text and is read by Dillon, not Miss Bolivia. The track immediately follows Miss Bolivia’s (feminist) hit “Paren de matarnos” (“Stop killing us”). Therefore, for those listening to the entire album in order, either digitally or with a physical CD, Dillon’s

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<sup>28</sup> “We want to be the other, the fugitives of the heteropatriarchy, those that press strongly on the wound in order to stop the blood that they want to discipline us with. Us-others, we want other lives, other worlds.”

voice would be heard immediately after one of the most popular songs on the album.

Additionally, the YouTube video of “Que la rabia nos valga” on the official Miss Bolivia YouTube page has garnered more than 36,000 views (as of Oct. 26, 2019). Below is the full text of the “lyrics”:

Yo no soy la mujer de la bolsa,  
por eso estoy acá.  
Yo no soy la mujer de la bolsa,  
porque esa mujer ya no está.

Ésas, las que ya no están,  
son la herida que desmadra a todas las heridas,  
y de ese tajo común se alimenta nuestra rabia.

Nosotras, con lágrimas en los ojos,  
y el cuerpo en situación de guerra,  
nosotras decimos ¡BASTA! (Miss Bolivia)

I am not the woman of the bag,  
That is why I am here.  
I am not the woman of the bag,  
because that woman is not here.

Those women, those who are no longer here,  
are the injury that exceeds all of the injuries,  
and from this common cut our anger is fed.

We, with tears in our eyes,  
and our body in situation of war,  
we say, ENOUGH! (Miss Bolivia)

While this text is only a portion of the original, it concisely communicates some of the key points that were just as timely and relevant in 2017 as they were in 2015. First, the text paints a powerful picture of a woman in a trash bag, her body disposed of like a piece of garbage. Second, it emphasizes the shared experience of women, with phrases like

“tajo común” and “nuestra rabia.” It includes the message that our bodies are in a situation of war. The track ends with a firm “¡BASTA!” Women are collectively and publicly saying enough is enough, and they are demanding change.

So how did Cano and Dillon’s words end up on *Pantera*? In a March 2017 interview with *Rolling Stone Argentina*, Miss Bolivia explains that before she became an artist, she worked as a psychologist, and wrote occasionally for the newspaper *Página 12*, where Dillon worked as editor. They developed a professional relationship, and from there became involved in feminist activism together. Miss Bolivia tells *Rolling Stone*:

A Marta la admiro en su pluma, en su cabeza, en su corazón y en sus ovarios. Es una referencia, un modelo de lucha para mí. Pensaba que estaba bueno incluir su presencia y su voz más que yo recitando algo de ella. Le pedí si no me podía mandar sus escritos y llegamos a esta versión que se llama “Que la rabia nos valga”. Me parecía que estaba re bueno como coda de “Paren de matarnos”.

I admired Marta for her writing, her head, her heart, and her ovaries. She is a reference, a model of fighting for me. I thought that it was good to include her presence and her voice rather than me reciting something of hers. I asked her if she could send me her writing and we came up with this version that it is called “So that our anger is worth it.” I thought it was really good as a coda to “Stop killing us.”

Miss Bolivia refers to “Que la rabia nos valga” as a “coda,” or, “in musical composition, a concluding section . . . that is based, as a general rule, on extensions or reelaborations of thematic material previously heard” (DeVoto). Therefore, the two are meant to be listened to together; “Paren de matarnos” is made complete by “Que la rabia nos valga.”

The inclusion of “Que la rabia nos valga” in *Pantera* is a perfect example of the ways in which the texts produced by the #NiUnaMenos collective were repackaged and reshared across a variety of channels. Digital media and the collaborative spirit of the

women of #NiUnaMenos allowed texts to break free from their original context and purpose to be shared with the masses. Originally, “Que la rabia nos valga” was read at a relatively small public event for a specific audience. The piece is poetic, intellectual, and not necessarily accessible to the masses. However, two years later, Miss Bolivia and Dillon were able to come together, strip down the text to a few of its central messages, and, in attaching it to a song with broad appeal and a simple, yet strong, message, make it more accessible to Argentines. By using Dillon’s voice—and not her own—Miss Bolivia provides a higher level of visibility for Dillon, her colleagues, and the #NiUnaMenos movement.

To conclude, while the *maratón de lectura* event was limited in terms of scope and audience, it set the discursive tone for the movement. In the event’s texts, we see several discursive dichotomies that drive the movement’s success in reaching the masses: the discourse is political, but not partisan, and intellectual, but not out of reach for the general public. It recognizes and respects the country’s strong feminist lineage, while envisioning new modes of feminist activism. It shares powerful individual stories, and then connects them to a larger, collective experience. The discourse appeared organic and spontaneous, yet we start to see the seeds of an organized, strategic movement. With regard to the digital vs. physical dichotomy, digital media does not play a large role at this first event. However, we do see the emerging role of digital media in three ways: Facebook is used to help organize the event, López mentions the role of social media in her opening remarks, and digital media such as YouTube is employed to share “Que la rabia nos valga” with a broader audience. Throughout the different texts, their discursive

dichotomies, and the sharing in online and offline spaces, a common thread emerges: the power of discourse. From the humble beginnings of the movement, we see that the women of #NiUnaMenos recognize the power of language and employ discourse as a form of resistance.

### CHAPTER III

#### MOMENTUM-BUILDING ON TWITTER

In the weeks following the *maratón de lectura* on March 26, there was little public-facing activity. While conversations continued on Facebook, a follow-up event to the marathon had yet to be organized (Frontera). However, the femicides continued, and on May 11, Chiara Paez’s dismembered body was found (Pomeraniec). In anger, frustration, and dismay, journalist Marcela Ojeda tweeted, “Actrices, políticas, artistas, empresarias, referentes sociales ... mujeres, todas, bah.. No vamos a levantar la voz? NOS ESTAN [sic] MATANDO”<sup>29</sup> (see figure 1) (@Marcelitaojeda). Within just a couple of hours, Ojeda and other journalists and activists had organized a demonstration to take place on June 3, at 5 p.m., in downtown Buenos Aires, and began using the hashtag #NiUnaMenos (@Marcelitaojeda).



Figure 1. Marcela Ojeda’s “NOS ESTAN MATANDO” Tweet

<sup>29</sup> “Actresses, politicians, artists, business women, public figures ... women, everyone, bah.. We’re not going to raise our voice? THEY’RE KILLING US.”

In this chapter, I continue my chronological analysis of #NiUnaMenos' discourse by focusing on the period of time before the demonstration, from May 11 to June 3. I begin with an analysis of the tweet that kick-started the movement. Then, I discuss the #DeLaFotoALaFirma hashtag on Twitter that introduced the first set of demands and helped sustain the movement's momentum. Finally, I use Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis to analyze some of the key visual elements that appeared during this time—specifically the #NiUnaMenos logo and an illustration by Argentine cartoonist Liniers—and were shared throughout the digital media landscape and the physical landscape of the city.

Before entering into my analysis, it is important to mention that while social media played a critical role in the movement, it was not social media alone that sparked such a massive response from Argentines and others across Latin America. In my interview with Agustina Paz Frontera, she told me that she has never, and will never, use Twitter. While she acknowledged the role of social media, she highlighted the decades of work by feminist groups that helped lay the foundation for #NiUnaMenos to become a massive social movement:

La importancia de la viralización por redes sociales no hubiese sido nada si no había, la verdad, una historia de movilización feminista en Argentina. Porque la gente que movilizó el 3 de junio, no era solamente personas sueltas identificadas con la temática. No era todas señoras de su casa, que les llegó por Twitter, o que les llegó por la tele, y se hizo eco de lo que pasaba en las redes sociales. No, movilizó un montón de las organizaciones políticas también.

The importance of social media viralization would not have been anything if there had not have been, truth be told, a history of feminist mobilization in Argentina. Because the people that mobilized on June 3, it was not just people that loosely identified with the topic. It was not just women in their homes, that received the

message on Twitter, or from TV, and then the message spread from what was happening on social media. No, a ton of political organizations also mobilized.

As I mentioned in the introduction, there has been numerous active feminist organizations in Argentina in recent decades (Tarducci et al. 110). Without this already established network, I (and others) argue that it would have been much more difficult for the movement to attract so many Argentines in such a short period of time, regardless of their social media capabilities or communications strategy.

Additionally, while social media can be employed to enact positive change, it can also be used as a weapon to cause division, intolerance, and hate among different groups. In her book *Apuntes para las militancias*, María Pía López talks about the dangerous echo chambers that can exist in these spaces. She writes, “Las redes sociales, de apariencia democrática, acentúan la ficcionalización, producen entornos cerrados, en general no permeados por disidencias, cultivados por creyentes que comparten una misma narración”<sup>30</sup> (59). At first, Twitter may appear to be a democratic space in which everyone has a voice and all viewpoints are present. Yet often, it is an anti-democratic space, with widespread misinformation and users only following those who represent their own beliefs. In the 2019 Netflix documentary *The Great Hack*, we see how social media data can be used to influence elections, including the 2015 election in Argentina, and how social media use raises significant privacy concerns (Amer and Noujaim). Therefore, while I argue that Twitter was used in a positive way to spread the message of

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<sup>30</sup> Social media, although it appears democratic, highlights fictionalization, produces closed environments, in general not permeated by dissidence, cultivated by followers who share the same story.”

#NiUnaMenos and ultimately work to improve the lives of women in Argentina and elsewhere, there are negative impacts of social media that must be acknowledged.

Additionally, I would like to mention that for this specific project, Twitter is the only social media platform that forms part of my research. While Facebook was used by the founding collective to help organize the movement, and to communicate with groups in other cities and towns across the country, it is much more difficult to scrape data from Facebook and other social media platforms. Therefore, given the role of Twitter in #NiUnaMenos, and the relatively easy access to its data, I have focused specifically on this social media platform.

### **‘NOS ESTAN MATANDO’**

As Andrea de Aurrecochea et al., write, “El lugar que ocupan las tecnologías digitales es el de ser aceleradoras, potenciadoras de los cambios”<sup>31</sup> (47). I argue that it is difficult to find a better example of social media’s role as an accelerator than the case of Ojeda’s tweet on May 11. Within two and a half hours of the first tweet, the June 3 event had been organized (@Marcelitaojeda, “La violencia deja”). The next day, flyers started to circulate (@Marcelitaojeda, “Estos son”). Within a week, an official Twitter account (@NiUnaMenos\_) had been created, and the #DeLaFotoALaFirma (#FromThePhotoToTheSignature) hashtag campaign had been created to pressure politicians who had posed with the #NiUnaMenos posters (@NiUnaMenos\_, “Es hora”). Ojeda’s tweet was incredibly instrumental in the organization of the movement, and

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<sup>31</sup> “The space that digital technologies occupy is that of being accelerators, enhancers of change.”

continues to be lauded to this day by her colleagues. On May 11, 2019, four years after the original tweet, several members of the founding collective took to Twitter, of course, to recognize and remember the tweet that kick-started the movement. Ingrid Beck retweeted the original tweet and wrote, “Hace 4 años, Marcela nos convocaba a hacer algo. Y bueno, entre muchas otras cosas, nos juntamos, salimos a la calle y gritamos #NiUnaMenos”<sup>32</sup> (@soyingridbeck). Valeria Sampedro shared a portion of the Twitter conversation that ensued the morning of May 11, writing, “El hilo, justo antes de pasar a la 59uenos59 por DM. Aquel 11 de mayo de 2015 la convocatoria de @marcelitaojeda empezaba a materializarse.. #NiUnaMenos <3”<sup>33</sup> (@SampedroVale). Even four years later, as key messages, hashtags, and organizational leadership have changed, Ojeda’s tweet is regarded by many as a central text of the movement, and the beginning of what has become a transnational tide of feminism.

First, I think it is important to analyze the use of punctuation in the tweet. Ojeda is a seasoned journalist who undoubtedly has an expert command of Spanish grammar; but here, her punctuation is sloppy. The tweet is missing an accent mark in “están,” the ellipsis after “bah” only has two periods, and there is no period at the end of the tweet, although punctuation is used at the end of other sentences in the tweet. While punctuation is often not precise in social media posts, it is interesting that two hours later, when Ojeda announces the details of the demonstration, she uses perfect punctuation. While I believe

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<sup>32</sup> Four years ago, Marcela called upon us to do something. And well, among many other things, we got together, we went out into the streets, and we cried #NotOneWomanLess.”

<sup>33</sup> “The thread, just before taking the conversation to DM. That May 11 of 2015 the call of @marcelitaojeda was starting to materialize. #NotOneWomanLess <3”

her punctuation was authentically sloppy, reflecting the rushed rage she felt in the moment, I argue that the incorrect punctuation of the first tweet played a strategic role in the start of the movement by conveying haste, and in turn, a sense of urgency. We see these messages of urgency in a variety of #NiUnaMenos texts that followed, often with words like “ya,” “ahora,” and “basta.” Instead, this first tweet uses punctuation, not words, to set the tone for the movement and cement this message of urgency into the discourse of the movement, which in turn helped produce change. The punctuation also reflects the kind of authenticity that I argue was refreshing to Argentines. #NiUnaMenos did not begin as a highly organized movement with a strategic communications plan, although I would argue that it ultimately became a strategic, organized operation. Instead, it began spontaneously—as many of the women I met with described it—with a hastily-written tweet. I argue the spontaneous and organic nature in which the movement started helped establish credibility with the general public.

In addition to the urgency vs. long-term vision and spontaneous vs. strategic dichotomies, we see the tension between the collective and the individual at play. Initially, Ojeda highlights specific groups: actresses, journalists, business leaders, etc. She understands the political and social influence of these groups, and therefore challenges them to act. But then, almost in frustration and dismay, she writes “todas .. bah,” using the plural feminine form of the word “todo.” Femicide is a collective problem that requires a collective solution. Specifically, it requires collective action by Argentine women. While ultimately the movement did involve men, I argue that Ojeda understood that #NiUnaMenos must begin with angry women fighting for their lives. As Sara Ahmed

writes, “The response to pain, as a call for action, also requires anger; an interpretation that this pain is wrong, that it is an outrage, and that something must be done about it” (p. 174). Feminist anger may help constitute the start of a movement, but it does not end there, as Ahmed explains. She quotes Audre Lorde, a black feminist writer and activist, who, in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, writes:

Every woman has a well-stocked arsenal of anger potentially useful against those oppressions, personal and institutional, which brought that anger into being. Focused with precision it can become a powerful source of energy serving progress and change . . . anger expressed and translated into action in the service of our vision and our future is a liberating and strengthening act of clarification. (127)

In her analysis of Lorde’s words, Ahmed writes that “anger is not simply defined in relationship to a past, but as opening up the future” (175). While collective anger helped to spark #NiUnaMenos, it was not just focused on the past, but rather the building of a new future.

Ojeda then asks, “No vamos a levantar la voz?” Ojeda urges women to raise their collective voice, one that is raised together for change. Again, we see the message of collectivity, with the singular “la voz” used instead of the plural “las/nuestras voces.” I also think it is important to highlight that it is the raising of one’s voice—one’s language or discourse—that is suggested as the tool to combat femicide. In keeping with the initial message of María Pía López, who talked about using language to resist discursive violence against women, Ojeda appears to have a deep understanding of the power of discourse and its role in power relations. At the end of the tweet she writes, “They’re killing us,” in all capital letters, almost as if she is *gritando*. In this sentence, the subject

is not specified. One could initially assume the subject to be “men,” but perhaps it is intentionally ambiguous because the idea of *la femicida* is meant to be broader. The problem of femicide extends beyond the individual men who commit the act to the patriarchal society in which we live. Or, perhaps the subject was left out simply because it was a tweet designed to be concise. By writing, “they’re killing us,” instead of “they’re killing women,” she again emphasizes collectivity, and brings women closer to the reality of femicide. Additionally, the verb used in “nos estan matando” is in the present tense. Violence toward women is not a problem of earlier generations; rather, it is taking place now.

Ojeda’s tweet was not confined to Twitter. Her tweet, and the flurry of activity on Twitter by others, was documented by numerous media outlets. That same day, on May 11, *El Cronista* published a brief article referencing the Twitter conversation (including the Twitter handles of the key women involved), and the day, time, and location for the June 3 demonstration (“Ni Una Menos, la consigna contra el femicidio”). On May 15, just four days after the initial tweet, the front page of the “Las 12” supplement of *Página 12* profiled the movement and the ways in which it originated on social media (Sandá). Fifteen days after the “They’re killing us” tweet, the #NiUnaMenos collective wrote an essay in *La Agenda Revista*, a Buenos Aires magazine (@NiUnaMenos\_, “El estallido #NiUnaMenos”). The essay reflects on the “estallido,” or explosion or outbreak, of #NiUnaMenos that began on Twitter. The collective writes:

¿Puede algo tan efímero y banal como una seguidilla de tuits dar un batacazo con un tema y llevarlo a la agenda pública? Hace diez días habríamos jurado que no. Era un lunes y, como corresponde, tuiteábamos sobre nimiedades. Algunas

estábamos trabajando, otras almorzando, otras haciendo tiempo entre citas. Entonces trascendió la noticia de un nuevo femicidio, el de Chiara Páez. Una se sintió tan dolida, que preguntó: “¿Cómo es posible que sigan asesinando a mujeres, sólo por ser mujeres, sin que nadie se conmueva?”; otra respondió que algo debería poder hacerse, otra sugirió un camino empezado pero transitado por poquísimas personas. Otras dijeron que querían caminar por ahí. De repente, ya éramos diez. (@NiUnaMenos\_, “El estallido #NiUnaMenos”)

Can something so ephemeral and banal like a string of tweets find success with a topic and insert it into the public agenda? Ten days ago, we would have sworn it couldn't. It was Monday and, as such, we were tweeting about trifles. Some of us were working, others eating lunch, others passing the time between appointments. Then the news broke about a new femicide, that of Chiara Páez. One of us felt so hurt, that she asked: “How it is possible that they keep on killing women, only for being women, without anyone being moved by it?”; another responded that something should be done, another suggested a path that had been started but traveled by few. Others said that they wanted to go that route. All of a sudden, there were ten of us. (@NiUnaMenos\_, “El estallido #NiUnaMenos”)

The collective writes that it is not their messages that are new, but the ways in which they are communicated that is new. Social media, in particular Twitter, helps to bring new attention to an old societal problem. They explain:

En la Argentina, las mujeres son asesinadas desde hace décadas. De femicidio, de maltrato machista, de violencia hacia las mujeres, se informa desde hace años . . . Y sin embargo el tema quedaba en los márgenes, recluso entre casos policiales y temas “de mujeres”. Por eso resulta increíble lo que logra el azar cuando se combina con una red social. Un reclamo viejo, viejísimo y justo, de un segundo al otro encontró una modulación distinta gracias a las redes sociales. Algo pasó. Algo está pasando. (@NiUnaMenos\_, “El estallido #NiUnaMenos”)

In Argentina, women have been killed for decades. We've known about femicide, machista abuse, violence toward women for years. And nevertheless, the topic has remained in the margins, shut away among police cases and topics “of women.” That's why it's incredible what chance achieves when it is combined with a social media platform. An old complaint, very old and just, from one second to the other found a distinct modulation thanks to social media. Something happened. Something is happening. (@NiUnaMenos\_, “El estallido #NiUnaMenos”)

The structure of the article itself speaks to the importance of social media. Instead of a traditional byline for the piece, the writer is identified as @NiUnaMenos\_, the collective's Twitter handle. In a sense, the Twitter handle takes on its own identity; it is personified as the "writer," and the handle becomes the organization. Rather than being an after-thought, the Twitter handle is an essential part of the group's identity. The Twitter handles of the key collective members are also listed and hyperlinked, encouraging the online reader to click on the links, follow the women, and engage in the conversation and in the movement.

Therefore, as I have demonstrated, what happened in digital spaces spilled over into these traditional, physical spaces. Tweets were published in print publications, which were then read by individuals who perhaps were not active on Twitter. Additionally, as I have learned in my professional work in public relations, social media can be used not just to share news, but to create news, and this is precisely what occurred at the beginning of the #NiUnaMenos movement. While my thesis does not focus on this aspect of the movement, an investigation of how #NiUnaMenos garnered media coverage in the beginning months could form part of a larger project on #NiUnaMenos and feminist activism in the future.

Finally, before I shift my analysis to #DeLaFotoALaFirma, it is essential to discuss the term "Ni Una Menos" as a hashtag. Ojeda's second tweet on the morning of May 11 announced the details of the June 3 demonstration and used the #NiUnaMenos hashtag. It is important to clarify that this was not the first time #NiUnaMenos was used as a hashtag. Using Twitter's advanced search function, one can see that the hashtag had

been used previously by a variety of individuals and groups, and was also used by some individuals sharing content from the *maratón de lectura* (@AUGEuba; @solevallejos). However, the hashtag appears to have gained little traction in an organized way until it was used by Ojeda and her *compañeras*. Quickly, the hashtag became the movement, similar to what has happened in the United States with the #Occupy and #BlackLivesMatter movements. As Tufekci explains, “Digital technologies are so integral to today’s social movements that many protests are referred to by their hashtags—the Twitter convention for marking a topic” (xxvi). Hashtags serve several functions. By clicking on a hashtag, a Twitter user can see all tweets that include the hashtag. Thus, hashtags create broader, networked conversations that link users. Baer writes, “By emphasizing the way individual stories of oppression, when compiled under one hashtag, demonstrate collective experiences of structural inequality, hashtag feminism highlights the interplay of the individual and the collective” (29). Hashtags allow individual users and their stories to become part of a larger, collective narrative. Often, it is these narratives that spur social movements forward. Thus, hashtags have become an important organization and storytelling tool for activists.

In addition to a hashtag’s technical capabilities, it has symbolic functions. An Xiao Mina writes, “Today, in activist contexts, just adding a # to a phrase can make it a certain kind of political statement in and of itself. The new-ness of this convention in physical space is part of what makes it stand out . . .” (“#Hashtagging the Streets”). The # sign adds meaning to the phrase or slogan by politicizing it. Additionally, as Mina

explains by using the example of #BlackLivesMatter, hashtags also build a sense of community. She writes:

. . . [I]t's more explicitly a common reference point, a way to join hands across space. For those familiar with internet conventions, to write #BlackLivesMatter is to say, implicitly, "It's not just me. It's not just here in this space. We are part of something bigger. We are part of a conversation." (“#Hashtagging the Streets”)

Thus, as can be seen in the early months of #NiUnaMenos, hashtags are not solely used in digital spaces to network users and their stories. They are also utilized offline—on posters, banners, T-shirts, etc.—because of the political message they communicate.

### **#DeLaFotoALaFirma**

During the week after Ojeda's first tweet, politicians began to take advantage of the movement's visibility and momentum and share photos on Twitter with a #NiUnaMenos poster. It was an election year in Argentina, and the #NiUnaMenos collective was wary of the narrative being co-opted by one party or the other. Therefore, as a growing number of politicians started to jump on the #NiUnaMenos bandwagon, the collective published five points or demands and launched the hashtag #DeLaFotoALaFirma, or #FromThePhotoToTheSignature, to put pressure on politicians to not simply pose with a #NiUnaMenos poster, but to sign a public agreement in which they would commit to fulfilling the five demands (Rodríguez 91-92). Before I present my analysis, it is important to note that, in some ways, the #NiUnaMenos collective created the problem themselves. Their strategic use of social media and personal networks made #NiUnaMenos into a popular trend among politicians, celebrities, and other Argentine

public figures who many would not consider to be feminists. As Agustina Paz Frontera told me, “Fue muy importante allí la relación de estas chicas de Twitter con el mundo del espectáculo . . . De repente, todo el mundo se quería subir a la ola de Ni Una Menos.”<sup>34</sup> The movement certainly benefited from the influence and followings of these individuals. However, the founding collective also felt it necessary to hold them publicly accountable via #DeLaFotoALaFirma. In addition to cultural change, the movement sought legislative change.

To begin, I will briefly summarize the five demands that #NiUnaMenos published along with #DeLaFotoALaFirma. The first point demands that laws to protect women from gender violence are fully implemented and provided the necessary resources to be fully implemented. The second point demands a guarantee that women can access the justice system, and that police stations and prosecutors’ offices are appropriately staffed to receive and process gender violence and assault reports. The third point calls for the creation of an official register of victims of gender violence, and the production of official and current statistics about femicides. The fourth point asks for the guarantee and expansion of sexual education at all levels in order to create a more equal society and one that is free of discrimination and *machista* violence. The fifth and final point demands the guarantee of the protection of victims. It calls for aggressors to wear electronic monitors to ensure that they do not violate their restrictions and restraining orders (Rodríguez 117-118).

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<sup>34</sup> “The relationship of the Twitter group with the world of show businesses was very important . . . All of a sudden, everyone wanted to ride the wave of Not One Woman Less.”

What ties these five points together? The responsibility of the state. The central message is that the state has not done enough to protect Argentine women, and therefore policies need to change to better protect them. Here, we see the political vs. partisan dichotomy. The movement is careful to not isolate anyone by placing blame on individual politicians or political parties; rather, it places blame on the state, known for its failures and shortcomings in protecting women’s rights, and works to hold accountable all politicians.

Given the brevity of the five demands, and the specificity of each demand, I found less lexical repetition compared to other texts. However, there are three key words, listed in table 3 (see below), that were repeated multiple times, and are deserving of a brief analysis. I identified the most frequently used terms by using the search function in a PDF version of the points that I created based on Rodríguez’s *#NiUnaMenos*.

Table 3

Frequently Used Terms in the #NiUnaMenos Five Demands

<b>Term</b>	<b>Count</b>
víctima(s)	4
violencia	4
garantizar	3

Throughout the five demands, women are referred to as victims. While María Pía López talked to me about the intentional effort to represent women not as victims but as individuals with agency, I argue that the use of the word “víctima” here is distinct

because of the political and legal context in which the term is situated. The repetition of “víctima” is critical in establishing women as individuals who deserve access to and support from the judicial system. As discussed earlier, women were often the ones blamed. Their clothes, their decisions to go out late with friends, and their relationships with men were—and still are—placed under a microscope. If women can be found *culpables*, then femicides can be viewed as the result of specific instances in which individual women made poor decisions that put them in vulnerable situations, rather than a large, societal problem. If femicides are not cast as a societal problem stemming from the patriarchy, then the state can argue that it has little responsibility to act. Therefore, from the very beginning, we see that the movement makes a concerted effort to fight the discursive violence that represents women as *culpables*. This discursive violence has real-life, physical implications. Additionally, as we can see in the fourth point of this text, women are not victims of one-off violence; rather, they are victims of “violencia machista.” In my interview with Florencia Abbate, she told me, “[I]ntentamos instalar violencia machista, porque a veces se dice violencia de género. Violencia de género podría ser cualquier género.”<sup>35</sup> As Abbate explained, “gender violence” is not specific enough, and does not convey the root of the problem. With a term like “violencia machista,” the type of violence and the root of the violence is clear.

The final word I would like to discuss is “garantizar.” Three of the five points begin with this word: “Garantizar que las víctimas puedan acceder a la Justicia”;

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<sup>35</sup> “We tried to install machista violence, because sometimes gender violence is said. Gender violence could be any gender.”

“Garantizar y profundizar la Educación Sexual Integral . . .”; and “Garantizar la protección de las víctimas de la violencia” (Rodríguez 117-118). Prior to May of 2015, the Argentine government had passed laws to protect women and help provide them access to the judicial system. However, as we see in many texts produced by the founding collective and others, especially the manifesto read later at the June 3 demonstration, #NiUnaMenos criticizes the lack of implementation of these laws. There was—and still is—a large gap between law and practice. Therefore, the collective does not ask state officials to “work on,” “investigate,” or “improve these issues”; instead, they ask that access to the judicial system, sexual education, and protection for victims of violence be *guaranteed*—a word choice that is stronger and more direct—by the politicians who sign this commitment.

Largely absent from the five demands are specific references to the patriarchy and the ways in which femicide is a socio-cultural problem. Instead, the text attacks the ineffective and nonexistent public policies that have perpetuated femicide and discrimination against women. While we can certainly infer that *machista* violence is a collective, societal problem, given the fact that the collective is asking the government to take action, there is less emphasis on the role of Argentine culture. It is important to remember the audience for this text: politicians who were quick to jump on the #NiUnaMenos bandwagon. I argue that, like any good communications practitioner, the collective intentionally tailored its message based on the audience. We also see that men are not specifically blamed in the demands. Instead, the focus is on victims, their needs, and the ways in which the government needs to support women.

In order to study the conversation happening on Twitter with #DeLaFotoALaFirma, I used the Twitter advanced search function, MassMine, and Voyant Tools to scrape 311 original #DeLaFotoALaFirma tweets and identify the key terms and phrases that appeared in tweets using the hashtag. I sampled the data using a location restriction of Buenos Aires. The location filter only captures tweets by users that had their geolocation turned on. Additionally, the 311 tweets represent publically available tweets that are still available to this day. Some people choose to “protect their tweets,” meaning they are private, and some have deleted their accounts since 2015. Therefore, the corpus of tweets is certainly not comprehensive; however, it does provide a good sample of the Twitter activity that was taking place. The table below shows the most frequently used terms. I created table 4 (see below) by inserting the MassMine data into Voyant Tools, which then produced a list of the most frequently used terms. I edited the list by eliminating stop words, like articles or conjunctions that, depending on how they were used, were not significant in terms of the meaning of the tweet.

Table 4

Frequently Used Terms in #DeLaFotoALaFirma

<b>Term</b>	<b>Count</b>
niunamenos	314
delafotoalafirma	311
compromiso	54
puntos	32

todos	31
ahora	29
pasar	29

The two terms with the highest counts are “niunamenos” and “delafotoalafirma” (Sinclair and Rockwell). While on the surface, this data may seem obvious and not particularly noteworthy, these counts are valuable because they demonstrate that the individuals and groups participating in what could be viewed as a mini social media “campaign” understood the connection to #NiUnaMenos, the function of a secondary hashtag, and the importance of linking the two messages by using the hashtags together. For a grassroots movement that began very quickly, the social media strategy and coordination is impressive. As Tufekci explained in a 2014 TEDGlobal talk, “Today’s movements scale up very quickly without the organizational base that can see them through the challenges” (“Zeynep Tufekci”). #NiUnaMenos started as a grassroots movement that organically originated on social media. However, in contrast to the movements that Tufekci describes, #NiUnaMenos did not disappear after a few months. To understand its success, it is important to remember who was behind the movement: communications professionals with influential networks and years of experience in feminist activism. While the “grassroots” narrative may have made #NiUnaMenos more appealing to Argentines, its sustained success can be attributed to the strategy behind the movement and its discourse.

Additionally, the repetition of the words “todos,” or “everyone,” and “ahora,” or “now,” on social media is noteworthy. The most commonly used phrases using “todos” are “todos al congreso,” “todos y todas,” and “todos los partidos” (Sinclair and Rockwell). Once again, we see an emphasis on the collective nature of this problem, and how all Argentines must work together to end violence toward women. The most commonly used phrase using “ahora” is “ahora exigimos compromiso”<sup>36</sup> (Sinclair and Rockwell). The word “ahora” helps to cement this message of urgency we see throughout the movement. While gender violence is in no way a new societal problem, the movement does a great job of making it into an urgent issue that requires action now. When issues are not cast as “urgent,” they tend to lose momentum and get forgotten in today’s world of the 24-hour news cycle and rapidly rotating list of “trending topics” on social media. Therefore, repeating this message of urgency was critical in keeping #NiUnaMenos top of mind for Argentines.

In reflecting on #DeLaFotoALaFirma within the larger context of #NiUnaMenos, Ingrid Beck said:

#DeLaFotoALaFirma tuvo que ver con sostener la convocatoria durante la segunda semana y además responder a esa aparición de los políticos, evitar que hubiera gente enojada porque sentía que la movilización se estaba partidizando. Salieron los cinco puntos del compromiso que les pedimos que firmaran y mientras tanto discutíamos el documento que se iba a leer en la plaza, que era el contenido que queríamos leer. (Rodríguez 92)

#FromThePhotoToTheSignature had to do with sustaining the call during the second week and, in addition to responding to that appearance of politicians, preventing that there were angry people that felt like the movement was becoming partisan. The five points were put out there and we asked politicians to sign the

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<sup>36</sup> “we demand a commitment now.”

agreement, and meanwhile we were discussing the document that was going to be read in the plaza, the content that we wanted to read. (Rodríguez 92)

As Beck explains, #DeLaFotoALaFirma served several purposes. First, it helped build on the momentum from the first week and keep people interested in #NiUnaMenos. After Ojeda's tweet on May 11, there were several weeks to go before the June 3 demonstration. Building momentum over the course of the month of May was a difficult task, and #DeLaFotoALaFirma played a key role in helping sustain the energy surrounding the movement. Second, it served as a way to put pressure on politicians and hold them accountable during what was an election year. As Tufekci writes, "Technology alters the landscape in which human social interaction takes place" and "shifts the power and the leverage between actors" (124). Social media allows everyday citizens to publicly and directly challenge politicians in a way that was not possible before. Third, it helped communicate to the public that this was not a partisan effort, and that the movement's leaders planned on holding *all* politicians accountable, not just those of the more conservative parties. As I argue, the movement's discourse was highly political, but not partisan. Finding this discursive balance was critical in garnering support from a wide variety of individuals and groups across the political spectrum.

I also argue that #DeLaFotoALaFirma was a strategic way for the movement to create news and remain in the Argentine media. Coverage of the mini-campaign appeared in *La Nación*, *La Gaceta*, and *La Política Online*, to name a few. As I have discussed, the members of the collective were skilled communicators, and many served as editors or journalists for important publications. These women knew how to navigate the media

landscape, and they understood that keeping #NiUnaMenos in the media was critical in terms of building momentum ahead of the June 3 demonstration.

### **The Logo and Liniers**

An analysis of the Twitter conversation surrounding #NiUnaMenos would be incomplete without an investigation of some of the illustrations and graphics circulating on the platform. I focus my analysis on the #NiUnaMenos logo—perhaps the most important graphic that has remained the visual identity for the movement—and the #NiUnaMenos illustration by Argentine cartoonist Ricardo Siri, known as “Liniers.” While there are numerous illustrations and graphics that could be analyzed, these two stand out in particular because of how broadly they were—and still are—circulated, not only on social media, but also on posters, banners, and T-shirts in offline spaces. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, I use Multimodal CDA to analyze how image and text are used together to communicate messages.



Figure 2. Carolina Marcucci’s Tweet Sharing the #NiUnaMenos Logo

I would like to begin this section by focusing on the original #NiUnaMenos logo, which consisted of the words “Ni Una Menos” (without the hashtag symbol) in all caps—in white against a magenta background—with a silhouette of a feminine figure inside the letter “A.” The graphic was created by graphic designer and feminist activist Carolina Marcucci (Rodríguez 58-59). It first appeared on Twitter on May 13, two days after Ojeda’s tweet (see figure 2) (@connieansaldi; @la\_marcucci). As Marcucci describes in Rodríguez’s book, she quickly put together the logo in the middle of the night, after a request for a digital banner for social media. Given her background in advertising, she explains she was strategic in the use of color, typeface, and overall design:

El original fue magenta, puro. . . . Tiene mucha visibilidad en la red: el rojo no tiene la visibilidad que tiene el magenta, que es más brillante, pixela poco, no se

vira mucho al azul ni al amarillo en distintos monitores. Tengo incorporado, de haber trabajado en publicidad, que lo que tenés que hacer es generar un punto que llame la atención en la pantalla; es el abecé de la publicidad.

Y la tipografía del Ni Una Menos es Impact, que es muy legible. Era un cartel que tenía que leerse. Tenía que ser una piña. Estamos hablando de un recurso mínimo, mínimo. Lo mejor que podés hacer es algo que se vea. O sea, ni bonito, ni glamoroso, ni que vos quedés como «que cool.» No. Que se vea. Lo resolví con recursos de señalética –esa silueta de mujer en la letra A– para que tuviera mayor legibilidad en las redes. (58)

The original was pure magenta. . . . Magenta has a lot of visibility on the internet: red doesn't have the visibility of magenta, which is more bright, it doesn't pixelate a lot, it doesn't turn to blue or to yellow in different monitors a lot. Having worked in advertising, I understand that what you need to do is generate a point that catches people's attention on the screen; it's the ABC's of advertising.

And the typography of Ni Una Menos is Impact, which is very legible. It was a poster that had to be read. It had to be striking. We're talking about a minimal resource, minimal. The best that you can make is something that can be seen. That is, not pretty, not glamorous, not something that makes you think "How cool." No. It needs to be seen. I resolved it with symbolic resources –that silhouette of a woman in the letter A– so that it had more legibility online. (58)

As Marcucci explains, the idea was not to be super flashy; rather, she was focused on clearly communicating the message of "Ni Una Menos." Therefore, she explains that she used bright colors, a legible font, and the silhouette of a woman as a symbol to communicate that Ni Una Menos is related to women. Over the years, the feminine silhouette has been removed from the logo, while the rest of the design has remained the same. While I have been unable to find a specific explanation of the change, I would guess the silhouette was removed to make the symbol more inclusive. Marcucci herself says, "Es señalética, es políticamente incorrecto, ponele, porque en esto también deberían entrar los femicidios de las trans, por ejemplo, pero en situaciones así tenés que llegar a

todo el mundo, no te podés poner a hilar fino con la teoría queer”<sup>37</sup> (58). Marcucci’s intention was not to exclude any particular group; rather, she was trying to quickly communicate a message with the design.

The creation of this logo within days of Ojeda’s tweet demonstrates the grassroots vs. organized dichotomy I have discussed. In a way, the creation of the logo was somewhat spontaneous. Marcucci explains:

Cuando ya estaba todo ardiendo, cuando se convoca para el 3 de junio en el Congreso, sale un textito también en Facebook posteando la convocatoria. Y Gabriela Cabezón pregunta si algún amigo diseñador puede hacer un banner. Eran las tres de la mañana. Y ahí nomás lo hago, lo subo y se replica por ... miles. (Rodríguez 57)

When everything was heating up, when the June 3 event at the Congress was being organized, there was a Facebook post with the announcement. And Gabriela Cabezón asked if any designer friend could make a banner. It was three in the morning. And I just did it, uploaded it, and it replicated by the ... thousands. (Rodríguez 57)

Marcucci was not specifically commissioned by the #NiUnaMenos collective to create a logo or a comprehensive visual identity. She simply responded to what appears to have been a spontaneous call for a digital banner. However, it is apparent that the collective quickly recognized a need for a consistent design, because it started to produce all materials with the same clean, bold look, although sometimes with different colors, as can be seen in a variety of texts throughout the movement. Ultimately, this helped #NiUnaMenos establish a visual identity—and what some may call a “brand”—that

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<sup>37</sup> “It’s a symbol, it’s politically incorrect, sure, because you should also include the femicides of trans people, for example, but in situations like this you have to reach the whole world, you can’t split hairs with queer theory.”

would become recognizable. Even today, the #NiUnaMenos website has the same look and feel as the original logo (Ni Una Menos).



Figure 3. Omar Perotti’s #NiUnaMenos Tweet

Earlier this year, Omar Perotti, now the governor of the province of Santa Fe, modified the #NiUnaMenos logo (see figure 3). He changed the color to light blue, the color of the pro-life movement in Argentina, and replaced the “A” with a silhouette of the shape of Santa Fe (@omarperotti). Immediately, feminist groups and members of the #NiUnaMenos collective directly responded to Perotti, criticizing the way he changed the color of the logo and then tried to align himself with #NiUnaMenos. On Twitter, Ingrid Beck wrote, “Le sugerimos que no use ni nuestra consigna ni nuestro logo. No sea

irrespetuoso. #NiUnaMenos es magenta, es violeta, es verde. Y, sobre todo, es nuestro”<sup>38</sup>

((@soygridbeck). Marcucci also responded, writing:

Señor del mal, que está a favor de la muerte de niñas y mujeres @omarperotti aunque el logo esté liberado y la consigna no pueda registrarse, sí puedo apelar a que no use el logotipo de Ni una menos. Paga un diseñadrx en vez de andar robando para torturar mujeres y niñas. (@la\_marcucci)

Evil man, who is in favor of the death of girls and women @omarperotti although the logo is free to use and the slogan cannot be registered, I can ask that you not use the logotype of Ni Una Menos. Pay a designer instead of going and robbing in order to torture women and girls. (@la\_marcucci)

There had been conversation on Twitter about whether or not the logo was trademarked and therefore could not be altered (@Lagenteque1). In the quotation above, Marcucci responds, revealing that the logo is free to use and the #NiUnaMenos slogan cannot be registered. However, she asks that Perotti hire his own designer to create a graphic instead of “stealing” the #NiUnaMenos logo. As we can see, this logo has become an integral part of the movement, and any modification or appropriation of it is strongly condemned, even today.

In addition to the grassroots vs. highly strategic dichotomy, we also see how the logo is leveraged in both digital and physical spaces. From the very beginning, Marcucci is focused on digital design. A primary goal of the design was “generar un punto que llame la atención en la pantalla” (Rodríguez 58). Because she was asked specifically to create a digital banner, rather than a print poster, she set out to create a design that would

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<sup>38</sup> “We suggest that you don’t use our slogan or our logo. Don’t be disrespectful. #NiUnaMenos is magenta, it’s violet, it’s green. And, above all, it’s ours.”

stand out on a cell phone or computer screen. However, we quickly see that the logo became more than just a social media banner; video from the June 3, 2015, demonstration show that it was utilized heavily at the event, on large screens, banners, and individual posters (“Acto Ni Una Menos”). Instagram photos from the recent June 3, 2019, demonstration also show large banners and flags with the logo, as well as pink T-shirts with the logo (@\_niunamenos\_). During my trip to Argentina this summer, you could still find *pañuelos* with the #NiUnaMenos logo for sale at newspapers stands in the city. The large type and simple two-color design allows the logo to work just as well on Twitter as it does on a poster.

Finally, the creation of this logo, and ultimately a comprehensive visual identity for #NiUnaMenos, demonstrates the long-term vision and future-focus of the movement. While the movement honors the feminist legacy in Argentina and builds on some of those key messages introduced by the groups that came before them, they understand the twenty-first century needs and demands. By focusing on digital media, the movement anticipates the rapidly shifting media landscape and the growing use of smartphones by younger populations. The effort to create a visual identity demonstrates the savvy, forward-thinking nature of the collective. They understand that to build a national, and ultimately transnational movement, consistency across communications is vital.

In addition to the logo, one illustration in particular that stands out is the #NiUnaMenos cartoon by Liniers, which appeared on Twitter the day after Ojeda’s tweet (see figure 4) (@porliniers). As Liniers explains in an interview with the *La Izquierda Diario*, collective member Florencia Etcheves had asked him to draw something in order

to help spread the message of the June 3 demonstration. Within hours, Liniers had transformed one of his *Macanudo* cartoon characters, “Enriqueta,” into a symbol of feminist resistance that was shared on social media, in news outlets, on posters, and beyond.



Figure 4. Liniers’ Tweet of *Macanudo* #NiUnaMenos Cartoon

The collective was strategic in identifying Liniers as a thought leader and influencer. At the time, his comic strip *Macanudo* had run for roughly 13 years in the newspaper *La Nación*. In recent years, Liniers’ work had reached beyond Argentina, with the cartoonist drawing covers for *The New Yorker* and publishing books in the United States. In Argentina, there is a strong comic art tradition, and “comics tend to offer biting social commentary or jabs at the political establishment” (Wolfe). Thus, Liniers was the perfect person to help spread the message of the movement. He was, and is, a well-known

and respected artist who is uniquely adept at challenging social norms and political institutions with his seemingly simple cartoons. His work was perfect for a movement that was seeking quick, concise communications that could be shared broadly across a variety of channels.

To begin my analysis of the cartoon, I would like to discuss the visual semiotic choices, specifically what the image depicts, or denotes, and then what those visual elements connote. As Machin and Mayr put it, “What ideas and values are communicated through what is represented, and through the way in which it is represented?” (50). In the illustration, we see a young girl, known by many Argentines as “Enriqueta,” one of the main characters in Liniers’ *Macanudo* cartoon. Enriqueta is a young girl, who in this illustration is holding a stuffed animal and is wearing a simple, blue dress. She has a young, round face, and her eyes are closed or looking down. It almost appears as if she just woke up or is about to go to sleep. The image connotes innocence, a stark contrast to the images of promiscuous, “they-should-have-known-better” women that were circulating in the media. As Liniers explains in an interview with Marcelo Longobardi:

Enriqueta tiene un osito en la historieta y yo quería que contraste lo violento de la marcha, de que tengamos que hacer una marcha con esto, con un personaje que siempre lo vemos en un contexto mucho más amable y que todas esas chicas que mueren por femicidio fueron Enriqueta: eran niñas. (“Liniers reveló la historia”)

Enriqueta has a stuffed bear in the cartoon, and I wanted to contrast the violence of the march, that we had to do a march about this, with a character that we always view in a much nicer context, and that all of those girls that die of femicide were once Enriqueta: they were little girls. (“Liniers reveló la historia”)

Liniers says that his purpose was two-fold. He wanted to create an image that was a stark contrast to the violence that was occurring. He also wanted to appeal to the emotions of average Argentines by demonstrating, through a popular cartoon, that these young women who were killed were once young, innocent girls. However, in Rodríguez's *#NiUnaMenos*, Liniers discusses the criticism he encountered from those who thought this drawing, and others, infantilized women (64). In a conversation that I had with an Argentine researcher and professor, she too expressed her dislike of the image, and asked rhetorically, "Who asked him to produce that?" However, many who follow his work understood that for this particular illustration, he simply used an existing, well-known character.

Nevertheless, Liniers does juxtapose this image of youthful innocence by drawing Enriqueta with her fist raised. As he explains to *La Izquierda Diario*, "[L]a dibujé con un puño en alto porque me parecía que hacía un contrapunto fuerte, porque es un personaje que se ve en contextos 'muy lindos y tiernos.'" <sup>39</sup> Liniers takes an innocent, youthful, feminine character—one that had become popular in Argentina—and turns her into a symbol of feminine resistance, with the simple raising of her fist and the words "Ni Una Menos" prominently placed at the top of the cartoon. He makes sure to include the hashtag as well, again communicating the message that the movement is taking place in the digital world.

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<sup>39</sup> "I drew her with her fist in the air because to me it seemed to make a counterpoint, because it is a character that is often seen in contexts that are 'sweet and tender.'"

My research conducted on Twitter shows that this was one of the most widely-shared images during the first weeks of the movement. Liniers' very first tweet with the image has nearly 5,000 likes and 9,000 retweets (as of Oct. 26, 2019). A tweet from Liniers on May 22, that garnered 335 likes and 162 tweets (as of Oct. 26), shows that the design was printed on physical T-shirts (@porliniers). On June 3, 2015, he revisited the design, showing the young girl walking with her cat with the words "Hoy vamos al congreso" and "# Ni Una Menos." That tweet has 2,047 likes and 2,642 retweets (as of Oct. 26). My analysis of Twitter also found numerous other accounts sharing the image in different capacities. Offline, the image appeared on posters at the June 3 demonstration ("Ni Una Menos - 3 Junio de 2015"). Again, we see how the simplicity of the illustration spurred its success as a social media post and as a demonstration poster. Even today, the image of Enriqueta with her fist raised (but without the words "Ni Una Menos") is the profile picture of Liniers' Facebook page (Ricardo Siri Liniers). This past May, Liniers swapped out Enriqueta's stuffed animal for a green balloon, showing his support for free, safe, and legal abortion in Argentina (see figure 5) (@porliniers). His post on Twitter, which simply said "#28m #QueSeaLey," was retweeted 2,902 times and liked 7,558 times (as of Oct. 26, 2019).

To conclude, Twitter played a key role in sparking and sustaining the movement—and reinforcing the key messages—leading up to the June 3 demonstration. While Ojeda's tweet is recognized by many today as the tweet that kick-started the movement, it was not enough to spur the momentum in the weeks to follow. The collective was strategic in introducing #DeLaFotoALaFirma, publishing the five

demands, the first official communication of the movement, creating a visual identity for #NiUnaMenos, and enlisting the support of a well-known artist to help spread the message. By the end of May, the stage was set for what would become a historic day in Argentina.



Figure 5. Liniers' #QueSeaLey Tweet

## CHAPTER IV

### *EL 3 DE JUNIO*

Less than a month after Ojeda's "NOS ESTAN [sic] MATANDO" tweet, 250,000 Argentines flocked to the Plaza del Congreso in downtown Buenos Aires to participate in the first #NiUnaMenos demonstration (Rodríguez 153). Additionally, across the country, more than 120 cities and towns worked in conjunction with the Buenos Aires collective to host their own #NiUnaMenos demonstrations and marches. Approximately 30,000 people participated in the Córdoba demonstration, 20,000 in Rosario, and 15,000 in Mendoza (Rodríguez 153). However, June 3, 2015, did not just mark the beginning of the #NiUnaMenos movement. As Marcela Ojeda told me, "El 3 de junio fue histórico, irrepitible para la Argentina . . . fue la creación de una nueva agenda que por supuesto sumaba o tomaba los reclamos de los movimientos de mujeres"<sup>40</sup> (Ojeda). Similarly, Cecilia Palmeiro, a member of the current #NiUnaMenos collective, said, "La primera marcha Ni una menos marcó un antes y un después en la cultura y la historia argentina."<sup>41</sup> June 3, 2015, marked the beginning of a new wave of feminism—built on the country's strong feminist tradition—that would spread not just across Argentina, but across Latin America, and other regions of the world.

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<sup>40</sup> "June 3 was historic, unrepeatable for Argentina . . . it was the creation of a new agenda that of course added or took the calls of other women's movements."

<sup>41</sup> "The first Ni Una Menos march marked a before and an after in the culture and history of Argentina."

For this project, I focus specifically on the Buenos Aires demonstration at the Plaza del Congreso. First, I conduct a discursive analysis of the manifesto that was read at the event and then shared extensively on social media and in digital and print publications. Second, I analyze the posters and banners that were used at the demonstration. These materials were selected from available photography and video of the demonstration. Finally, I conduct a macroanalysis of the Twitter activity that took place during that day. I argue that online and offline discourse was central to the success of the first #NiUnaMenos demonstration, and ultimately set the stage for the movement to emerge as a large, transnational movement that would reach far beyond Buenos Aires.

### *El manifiesto*

The first #NiUnaMenos manifesto is a foundational text created and shared by the movement's collective. The text, which is organized into three parts, was originally read at the June 3 demonstration in Buenos Aires by three public figures: actors Érica Rivas and Juan Minujín and cartoonist Maitena Burundarena ("Acto Ni Una Menos"). From there, it was shared via social media and media outlets, and is currently accessible on the #NiUnaMenos website ("3 de junio 2015"). Before diving into my analysis, it is important to mention that this document was, and is, lauded by some, yet viewed critically by others. From my interviews with members of the founding collective, I know that the document was heavily debated over (Abbate). María Pía López explained that the manifesto was not written to be an explicitly feminist manifesto. She said, "Se escribe más bien denunciando la violencia machista, sin decir, en ningún momento ese texto

‘patriarcado’, o sin decir mucho menos ‘heteropatriarcado.’ Resistimos mucho usar estas palabras . . .”<sup>42</sup> The document was meant to be understood by the larger public, and reach beyond traditional feminist circles (María Pía López). However, it is clear that some did not agree with this approach. During my trip to Argentina, one feminist intellectual told me that the document was “una vergüenza” and that nobody liked it; she said the document was too watered-down and did not address the issue of abortion. Therefore, while the text is certainly a key part of my discursive analysis, the value and impact of the document continue to be debated.

I begin my analysis by looking at the key messages of the manifesto, section by section (“3 de junio 2015”). The first section of the document defines the word “femicide,” introduces the audience to the widespread problem of femicide and violence toward women, and positions femicide as a byproduct of Argentine culture. The text starts with statistics: “En 2008 mataron una mujer cada 40 horas; en 2014, cada 30. En esos 7 años, los medios publicaron noticias sobre 1.808 femicidios. ¿Cuántas mujeres murieron asesinadas sólo por ser mujeres en 2015? No lo sabemos.”<sup>43</sup> Here, the audience immediately feels the impact of *machista* violence on Argentine women. By breaking down the total number of femicides to “one woman is killed every 40 hours,” the statistics seem even more jarring. But the collective does not just focus on women. They also strategically mention that these 1,808 femicides over seven years have left close to

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<sup>42</sup> “It was written more to denounce machista violence, without saying, in any moment in the text, ‘patriarchy’ or much less ‘heteropatriarchy.’ We really resisted using these words . . .”

<sup>43</sup> “In 2008 a woman was killed every 40 hours; in 2014, every 30. In these 7 years, the media has published news about 1,808 femicides. How many women died, killed only because they were women, in 2015? We don’t know.”

1,500 children as orphans, and some of them have been forced to live with their mothers' killers. While women can often be unjustly blamed, children are viewed as innocent and helpless. Regardless of what the woman may have done "to provoke the violence" (an argument that continues to be used today), I think most would say that no child deserves to be without their parents. By mentioning that some children are living with the men who killed their mothers, it can be argued that the collective draws a subtle connection between the children of femicide and the children of *los desaparecidos*, some of whom were adopted by people who enabled the regime that murdered their parents (Rebossio).

After the presentation of statistics, we see the message of collectivity. The problem is "de todos y de todas" and together Argentines must find a solution. Femicide is positioned as a societal, cultural problem instead of a private, domestic one. The collective writes:

[E]s producto de una violencia social y cultural que los discursos públicos y de los medios vuelven legítima, cada vez que alguien le dice puta a una mujer porque ejerce su sexualidad libremente, cada vez que alguien la juzga por las medidas de su cuerpo, cada vez que alguien la mira con sospecha porque no quiere tener hijos, cada vez que alguien pretende reducirla simplemente al lugar de la buena esposa o la buena madre, destinada a un varón.

[I]t is the product of a social and cultural violence that public discourse and the media have made legitimate, every time that someone says whore to a woman because she freely exercises her sexuality, every time that someone judges her by the size of her body, every time that someone looks at her with suspicion because she doesn't want to have kids, every time that someone tries to reduce her just to the place of the good spouse or the good mother, set aside for a man.

Femicide is a cultural problem because it starts, and is reinforced, with the dominant, hegemonic discourse. This repetition of messages—"He's the head of the household,"

“She’s a slut,” “Can you believe she’s not having any kids?”—creates a reality in which women are subjugated by men. Therefore, men choose to exert power over women through violence in order to maintain their position. As bell hooks writes, it is sexist thinking that produces violence against women (*Feminism is for Everybody* 61-62), and this thinking is often reinforced by discourse. In the midst of this section about femicide as a collective, societal problem, the collective also asserts that “la violencia machista es un tema de Derechos Humanos.”<sup>44</sup> Interestingly, this sentence seems to be inserted in this section without further explanation. Later in section two, the collective comes back to the idea, writing, “Es que los derechos de unas son los derechos de todos. La preservación de la vida y las decisiones de las mujeres son ampliación de libertad para todos y para todas.”<sup>45</sup> Here, the human rights message is connected with the collectivity message; defending the rights of one particular group helps preserve and defend the rights of all. In my interview with María Pía López, she told me that positioning *machista* violence as a human rights issue was critical to the movement:

[L]a violencia contra las mujeres no era un problema de seguridad, sino una cuestión de derechos humanos. Eso en el escenario político argentino resultó muy fundamental porque había habido marchas muy grandes por la seguridad la década anterior . . . pero también en este mismo país hay una tradición muy fuerte, poderosa y relevante de los organismos de derechos humanos. Entonces cuando nosotras dijimos el femicidio es una cuestión de derechos humanos y no de seguridad, pudimos hacer una inflexión que nos ponía en la zona de reclamar cada vez más derechos, y no cada vez más penas. Esa es una discusión que todavía sigue abierta . . .

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<sup>44</sup> “machista violence is a topic of human rights.”

<sup>45</sup> “The rights of some are the rights of all. The preservation of the life and decisions of women is the extension of liberty for everyone.”

[V]iolence against women was not a problem of security, but rather a question of human rights. In the Argentine political scene, that was very fundamental because there had been very large marches for security the decade before . . . but also in this same country there is a very strong, powerful, and relevant tradition of human rights organizations. So, when we said that femicide is a question of human rights and not security, we were able to make an inflection that put us in the zone of each time reclaiming more rights, and not more punishments. This is a debate that continues to be open for discussion . . .

As López mentions here, Argentina has a strong tradition of human rights activism, particularly in response to the country's dictatorship. During the early 1980s, there was a "natural" connection between the human rights activism and the feminist activism that was taking place:

Varias de nosotras habíamos militado en la izquierda y/o teníamos alguna persona cercana desaparecida. Nuestro vínculo con el movimiento de derechos humanos, del que algunas participábamos, no fue el producto de una determinada táctica política, sino el resultado "natural" de nuestras propias vidas. (Atem "25 de noviembre" 5)

Many of us had been activists for the left and/or had someone close to us disappear. Our link with the human rights movement, that some of us participated in, was not the product of a determined political tactic, but rather the "natural" result of our own lives. (Atem "25 de noviembre" 5)

Given the history of Argentina, this message was important. Violence toward women is an issue of human rights, similar to other types of human rights violations that have taken place in the country. The human rights message was one that would have resonated with all Argentines, men included. The positioning of women's rights as human rights has also been used widely outside of Argentina. In 1995, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton delivered a speech at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing titled "Women's Rights Are Human Rights" ("Hillary Clinton"). While not unique to

#NiUnaMenos, I argue that this message does have a unique subtext given the country's history of dictatorship.

Section one of the manifesto ends with the message that femicide is connected to other crimes, and “se puede leer en una cadena.”<sup>46</sup> We see this word “cadena” used in section two as well: “desde el origen –la cultura machista-, hasta el fin de la cadena: la mujer golpeada, la mujer asesinada.”<sup>47</sup> The collective asserts that *machista* culture has created a chain of violence directed at women: verbal abuse, rape, physical violence, among other forms of violence, and ultimately, femicide. Therefore, the collective writes that women have the right—again, we see this word “derecho”—to say “no” to a relationship, to sex, to pregnancy, etc. Women have the right to their own bodies and to their own lives, a message that has been (and continues to be) attacked by cultural and political institutions like the Catholic Church (Sutton 31). Here, for the first time, we see a reference to abortion, although the word is not explicitly used anywhere throughout the manifesto. This is a perfect example of the movement's discursive balancing act.

Abortion was, and is, a highly controversial and debated topic in Argentina. In Rodríguez's #NiUnaMenos, Vanina Escales describes how the collective approached this sensitive issue:

No se incluyó la palabra aborto. Había un debate interno en el colectivo. Lo único que se escribió en el documento fue «el derecho a decir no a un embarazo». Muchas de las víctimas de violencia de género dijeron no a algo y fueron castigadas por esa libertad de decir no. Entonces, decir no a un embarazo nos parecía que era un punto posible en el documento. (103)

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<sup>46</sup> “it can be read in a chain.”

<sup>47</sup> “from the origin -machista culture- to the end of the chain: the beaten woman, the murdered woman”

The word abortion was not included. There was an internal debate in the collective. The only thing that was written in the document was “the right to say no to a pregnancy.” Many of the victims of gender violence said no to something and were punished because of that freedom to say no. So, we thought saying no to a pregnancy was a possible point in the document. (103)

To explicitly include abortion in the document would have alienated a large group of people, particularly those belonging to conservative and religious groups. Therefore, abortion was not specifically addressed in the manifesto. During the presentation of my research at the III Simposio de la Sección de Estudios del Cono Sur (LASA Cono Sur) in Buenos Aires in July of 2019, one feminist activist who attended my presentation said that what made #NiUnaMenos so massive in the beginning was not its approach to discourse, as I propose, but its exclusion of the topic of abortion. While not discussing abortion certainly allowed the movement to reach more people, I do not think it was *the* key to the movement’s success. Rather, I argue the movement reached so many people by finding a discursive equilibrium across a variety of messages—not just abortion—and then communicating those messages broadly in digital and physical spaces. Over the years, as can be seen in the evolution of the movement’s manifestos and other texts, abortion has become a key topic for the movement, if not *the* topic (“Manifestos”). However, because of the focus on femicide and the desire to reach a broad audience, abortion was not explicitly addressed in the first manifesto.

The second section begins by asserting that the fight against *machista* violence requires a variety of actions by the state and by society as a whole, including the mainstream media. The collective does highlight and commend the passing of *la Ley N° 26.485* in 2009; however, they write that several articles of the plan have yet to be

implemented, and therefore “esta herramienta lograda en 2009 resulta insuficiente para revertir el aumento de la violencia.”<sup>48</sup> They also highlight the need for official statistics about the number of femicides each year; for years, La casa del encuentro has been collecting data, but there is a need for official statistics from the government that can help inform policy and budget decisions. The manifesto then discusses the inefficiency of the Poder Judicial in Argentina, and the steps women have to go through to report violence and seek justice. In a conversation that I had with Alejandro David Puglisi, a *porteño* who works in la Dirección de violencia contra la mujer de San Isidro in the province of Buenos Aires, I learned that similar to what happens in the United States, victims of gender violence in Argentina have to jump through hoops to make a *denuncia*; there is no one-stop shop for women and their children to report violence and get the legal and financial support they may need. The result is that poor women in particular do not have the time or money to navigate the system, and therefore remain in unsafe situations.

After discussing the shortcomings of the state and existing laws, the manifesto addresses the role of the media. The collective, many of whom are members of the media, write the following:

El modo en que los medios, mayoritariamente, tratan el problema, debe transformarse por completo: en muchos casos culpabilizan a las víctimas de su destino: hablan de su vestimenta, sus amistades, sus modos de divertirse. En el fondo, agitan allí el “algo habrán hecho.”

The way in which the media, for the most part, deal with the problem, should completely transform: in many cases the media blames the victims for what happens to them: they talk about their clothes, their friendships, the ways in which

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<sup>48</sup> “this tool achieved in 2009 is insufficient to revert the increase in violence.”

they have fun. Basically, they create this idea that “they must have done something.”

Here, the text essentially demonstrates how to conduct Critical Discourse Analysis from a feminist lens, arguing that the narrative constructed by media places blame on the victim, rather than the aggressor, by focusing on what the woman was wearing, her relationships, and how she spent her time. According to Marcela Fuentes, a professor of performance studies at Northwestern University and a former member of the collective (a later collective, not the founding collective), this quick-and-easy deconstruction of journalistic discourse is something that resonated with her sister. In my interview with Fuentes, she told me, “My sister is an evangelical, but she started listening to the feminist reading. So, she’s like, ‘Yes, it’s true that they always focus on this’ . . . or, ‘They wouldn’t do this with guys.’ I saw her doing the feminist analysis without calling it as such.” As we see in this text and others, the collective is skilled at taking feminist ideas and concepts and making them accessible to the general public. In the book *#NiUnaMenos*, Jimena Aduriz, mother of Ángeles Rawson, killed at just 16 years old in 2013, talked about how she was pleasantly surprised by the way the collective criticized the media in the manifesto. She said, “Yo sufrí mucho la mediatización, hasta tuve que irme de mi casa y no vivir más con mi hijo.”<sup>49</sup> She added, “La interpelación que hicieron estas periodistas hacia la prensa misma me pareció una dignidad enorme”<sup>50</sup> (185). The criticism of the media was even more impactful because it came from skilled, prominent journalists, who understood that

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<sup>49</sup> “I suffered a lot from the mediatization, so much so that I had to leave my house and no longer live with my son.”

<sup>50</sup> “I thought the journalists’ questioning of the press was an enormous dignity.”

stories could, and should, be covered in ways that do not re-victimize women and their families.

Section three of the manifesto consists of a list of demands aimed at the government to help eradicate femicide and other forms of violence against women. This section is based on the original *cinco puntos* that the collective published, but is expanded to nine key points. In this section, we see the political vs. partisan dichotomy at play. No specific group is blamed; rather, the state as a whole is held accountable. After the nine demands are introduced, the manifesto ends with a few messages that reinforce this message of collectivity. The collective writes, “Ni una menos es un grito colectivo,”<sup>51</sup> and uses verbs conjugated in the *nosotros*, or we, form, like “repetimos” and “queremos”. The manifesto ends with the following sentences: “No queremos más mujeres muertas por femicidio. Queremos a cada una de las mujeres vivas. A todas. #NiUnaMenos.”<sup>52</sup> While we can assume that most people listened to the manifesto, rather than read it, it is interesting that in the official document posted on the #NiUnaMenos website, #NiUnaMenos is written with a hashtag to end the manifesto. As discussed earlier, the hashtag represents a network, or a collective and connected—and often political—group that is brought together both online and offline.

Now that I have discussed the key messages of this document, I would like to analyze some of the key words used throughout the manifesto. Table 5 (see below) lists

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<sup>51</sup> “Not One Woman Less is a collective cry.”

<sup>52</sup> “We don’t want any more women killed by femicide. We want every woman alive. Everyone. #NotOneWomanLess.”

the top ten most frequently used words. I used the PDF document search function to identify these terms and their counts.

Table 5

Frequently Used Terms in the #NiUnaMenos Manifesto

<b>Term</b>	<b>Count</b>
Todas/todos	15 (11/4)
Víctima(s)	13
Social(es)/Sociedad	10 (7/3)
Machista	8
Derecho(s)	7
Político/a(s)	5
NO (in capital letters)	5
Estado	4
Cultura/cultural	4
Basta	3

Similar to other texts I have analyzed, there is a repetition of the word “todos,” or “everyone,” with the feminine plural being used more than the masculine plural. The message is that violence toward women is a collective problem that requires a collective solution. Interestingly, the second most used term in the manifesto is the word “víctima.” This word appears only once in section one, and then six times in sections two and three. As I mentioned earlier, the collective chose not to focus on women as victims, but rather as individuals with agency and autonomy (López). However, when talking about specific

laws and their implementation, I think it makes sense to use the word “víctima” and emphasize the fact that women are victims, rather than individuals who “put themselves in that position” or “should have known better.” As victims of violence, they have rights and should be given access to quick, timely, effective justice. Next, we see the repetition of the words “social” and “sociedad.” Violence toward women is a cultural, societal problem. (The word “cultura/cultural” is repeated four times as well.) Therefore, the manifesto describes the “machista” culture (the next most frequently used word) that serves as the origin of femicide, and calls for societal change, in addition to political change. After “machista,” we see the word “derecho” repeated multiple times. As discussed earlier in this chapter, positioning women’s rights as human rights was critical, and helped connect the movement with earlier human rights activism that fought against the country’s dictatorship.

The word “político” is used five times, in two distinct ways: to mean “politics,” or “political,” and to mean “policy.” The manifesto says, “Lo privado es político.”<sup>53</sup> Violence toward women is not a domestic issue confined to private spaces or individual couples; rather, it is a societal issue and political in nature. Therefore, certain policies are required to enact change. Similarly, the word “estado” is used four times to highlight the responsibility of the state and the needed governmental action. Finally, the word “NO” (in capital letters) is used five times, and the word “basta” is repeated three times. In a patriarchal society in which women are expected to say “yes” to whatever demands are made of them, the collective recognizes the importance of reaffirming a woman’s right to

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<sup>53</sup> “The private is political.”

say no. By writing “NO” in all capital letters, and by emphasizing the word during the reading of the manifesto, the collective calls attention to this message. This two-letter word is at the heart of the movement, an uprising of feminist resistance that says NO to the patriarchy, NO to violence toward women, and NO to inefficient and insufficient legislation and policies. The “basta,” or enough, also serves as an act of resistance, while communicating a sense of urgency and a desire for immediate action. Women who have been taught to be quiet and compliant are encouraged to find their own individual agency while also coming together as a group for a *grito colectivo* that says, “¡NO, BASTA!” We demand change *now*.

What messages are absent from the document? Similar to other texts I have discussed, there are few specific references to men. The word “hombre” appears only twice, and only in section one. The first use of the word is used to explain and define *la violencia machista*: “Hablamos de hombres que piensan que una mujer es suya y que tienen derecho sobre ella, que pueden hacer lo que quieran, y que cuando esa mujer dice NO, la amenazan, le pegan, la matan para impedir que diga NO.”<sup>54</sup> However, blame is not placed specifically on these men, but rather on a society that has naturalized *machismo* and its forms of violence toward women. The second use of “hombre” is just a few sentences later, when the collective writes that most victims are killed by “hombres de su círculo íntimo.”<sup>55</sup> They continue by asserting that although a large part of this

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<sup>54</sup> “We are talking about men who think that a woman is theirs and that they have rights over her, that they can do whatever they want, and when that woman says NO, they threaten her, they hit her, they kill her so that she doesn’t say no.”

<sup>55</sup> “men in their close circle”

violence takes place in private spaces, violence toward women and femicide is a public, political issue. Additionally, while femicide is presented as a societal problem, and one in which the state must respond to, there is no specific mention of political parties or groups. Even though 2015 was an election year in Argentina, there is no mention of the upcoming election or how some parties' platforms may or may not support the #NiUnaMenos agenda. Again, we see a concerted effort of the collective to avoid partisanship. In contrast to some of the other texts I have analyzed, the manifesto does not individually name recent victims of femicide. Rather, the approach is to talk about the widespread nature of the problem: the 1,808 lives lost in the past seven years. While individual women are not mentioned, I do think the collective tries to personalize the issue by mentioning children, and by reframing the statistics with the phrase "a woman is killed every 40 hours." I think both of these messages could make the audience think of their own wives, sisters, friends, or children.

With regard to the representation of social actors, we can see that at the beginning, women and children are represented as statistics, a numerical representation of the problem. Right from the beginning, the collective uses statistics to prove the legitimacy of #NiUnaMenos. If a woman is killed every 40 hours in Argentina, just for being a woman, then a social uprising is warranted. As previously discussed, children are represented as innocent victims almost immediately. This helps the public understand the scope of the problem. If they do not feel compelled to advocate on behalf of women, because "she put herself in that position" or "she was asking for it," they may feel compelled to support the movement because of the impact femicide has on children.

In section one, women are represented as victims of the *cultura machista* in Argentina. The manifesto represents people as victims, while institutions and systems are blamed for the problem. Systemic, societal subjugation breeds a variety of forms of violence, with the most extreme form being femicide. The collective uses clear examples of this subjugation, examples that I argue all Argentine women would be able to relate to, such as, “alguien le dice puta a una mujer porque ejerce su sexualidad libremente”<sup>56</sup> and “alguien la mira con sospecha porque no quiere tener hijos.”<sup>57</sup> The collective takes a phrase like *violencia machista* and explains it in everyday terms, providing everyday examples. As Abbate told me, “Cuando vos hablá, estás hablando también a todas esas personas, no a los que leyeron Butler en 98”<sup>58</sup> (Abbate). I believe the collective knew its audience and was strategic in tailoring its messages accordingly. However, I do not think messages were oversimplified; they were defined and explained in an accessible way, without losing meaning.

Despite outlining the injustices that women face, and the ways in which women are victims of violence, the collective also affirms the human rights of women, and the agency that women have to resist. We see repeated use of the *nosotros* form, which helps to include the audience and invite them into this collective act of resistance. The manifesto asserts, “Y porque decimos NO, podemos decir sí a nuestras decisiones sobre nuestros cuerpos, nuestras vidas afectivas, nuestra sexualidad, nuestra participación en la

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<sup>56</sup> “someone calls a woman a whore because she freely exercises her sexuality.”

<sup>57</sup> “someone looks at her with suspicion because she doesn’t want to have kids.”

<sup>58</sup> “When you talk, you’re talking to all of those people, not just those that read Butler in ’98.”

sociedad, en el trabajo, en la política y en todas partes.”<sup>59</sup> The manifesto ends by once again highlighting the agency that women have individually and as a larger group:

Ni una menos es un grito colectivo, es meterse donde antes se miraba para otro lado, es revisar las propias imágenes, es empezar a mirarnos de otro modo unos a otras, es un compromiso social para construir un nuevo nunca más.

Repetimos.

No queremos más mujeres muertas por femicidio. Queremos a cada una de las mujeres vivas. A todas. #NiUnaMenos.

Not one woman less is a collective cry, it's putting yourself where before you'd look the other way, it's revising our own practices, it's starting to look at ourselves in a new way, it's a social agreement to construct a new never again.

We repeat.

We don't want any more women killed by femicide. We want every woman alive. Everyone. #NotOneWomanLess.

In these last few sentences of the manifesto, we see a reference to the Argentine dictatorship with the phrase “un nuevo nunca más.” Human rights organizations used the phrase “nunca más” in response to the dictatorship in Argentina, and the phrase also served as the title of the Commission on the Disappearance of Persons report that the government published after the return to democracy (Crenzel 23, 20). While there is not an explicit comparison made between the victims of femicide and *los desaparecidos* from the dictatorship, we see that, once again, the collective draws on Argentina's history and establishes a connection between #NiUnaMenos and “Nunca Más.” Apart from this reference, we see that the manifesto ends with a message of empowering resistance that emphasizes the collective actions that women can take to end femicide.

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<sup>59</sup> “And because we say no, we can say yes to our decisions about our bodies, our affective lives, our sexuality, our participation in society, at work, in politics and in everything.”

While my analysis has focused on the written text—the words, messages, and representation of people—it is important to remember that this text was presented to the public for the first time as a speech read by actress Érica Rivas, artist Maitena Burundarena, and actor Juan Minujín. The reading lasted approximately fifteen minutes, with the three readers each reading a different section of the document (“#NiUnaMenos, documento completo”). In watching the video of the speech, available on YouTube, I describe the tone as serious and aspirational, yet overall positive and energizing. The selection of these individuals was certainly intentional; they are three well-known public figures with prominence, influence, and a following. I argue that these three people would not have been the first-choice readers for some of the more liberal feminist activist groups because they could be viewed as too mainstream. However, if we think about the average Argentine who does not run in feminist circles, seeing these celebrities on stage representing #NiUnaMenos would have been impactful, similar to what we have seen in the United States with #metoo and Alyssa Milano. Although this activist work had been going on for years in the United States, it took a celebrity to make it part of the national discourse (Garcia). Additionally, I think it is noteworthy that a male, Minujín, was selected to be one of the three readers. The inclusion of a man demonstrates the collective’s efforts to not isolate men, but rather to involve them in the resistance and change-making processes.

In what could be viewed as controversial, all three readers wore the green *pañuelo* on stage, indicating their support for the Campaña Nacional por el Derecho al Aborto

Legal, Seguro y Gratuito. In Rodríguez's *#NiUnaMenos*, Burundarena explains her decision to wear the *pañuelo*:

Antes de subir al escenario me dieron el pañuelo verde que representa la lucha por el aborto legal, seguro y gratuito. Mi convicción fue dejármelo puesto. Entiendo que la convocatoria era por otra cosa, pero de todas maneras son temas que están relacionados: las mujeres muertas en abortos clandestinos son víctimas de una violencia, también. Entonces, si dentro de esta participación puedo decir: «Yo estoy apoyando esto y también estoy apoyando la Ley de Aborto» ¿por qué no? (183)

Before going up on stage they gave me the green scarf that represents the fight for legal, safe, and free abortion. My conviction was to leave it on. I understand that the call was for something else, but, in any case, they are related topics: the women who have died in clandestine abortions are also victims of violence. So, if as part of my participation I can say: "I'm supporting this and I'm also supporting the abortion law," why not? (183)

Verónica Camargo, the mother of Chiara Páez, said she was not even thinking about the abortion issue when she arrived at the demonstration. But when people started to hand out the green *pañuelos*, and when she saw the three readers on stage with them, she thought they were going to talk about abortion. She explains, "Y me hubiera sentido incómoda. Pero lo que dijeron no me pareció mal. Me pareció bárbaro que no se mencionara explícitamente. Y en la marcha me sentí muy bien. Me gustó como hablaron, lo que dijeron, y cómo se siguen comprometiendo. Veo el compromiso"<sup>60</sup> (Rodríguez 183-184). I find it significant that Camargo says she could see the compromise of the

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<sup>60</sup> "And I would have felt uncomfortable. But I didn't think what they said was bad. I thought it was great that they didn't mention it explicitly. And I felt really good at the march. I liked how they talked, what they said, and how they continue to compromise. I see the compromise."

collective. She herself recognized the discursive balancing act that was taking place, and seems to have appreciated the collective's approach to communication.

Having celebrities read the manifesto was strategic for another reason: it made the event newsworthy. While the media had been covering #NiUnaMenos since its inception, having big name readers certainly helped attract national media outlets. Because of the limited scope of this project, I do not have an in-depth analysis of media coverage. However, I do want to mention that there was widespread coverage of the event, including in media outlets such as *La Nación*, *Univisión*, *Página 12*, and *Clarín*, and some outlets included the entire manifesto in their post-event stories. As a communications professional who works with the media on a regular basis, it is clear that the organizers distributed the document extensively to their colleagues and media contacts, either immediately after the event, or in advance with an embargo date. In my experience, journalists typically do not include entire documents like the manifesto in their stories; rather, they pull a few of the key quotes to include in their articles (although perhaps United States and Argentine journalism differ in this respect). Therefore, I would guess the collective members specifically asked colleagues to share the document in its entirety, so that no message was left out.

The manifesto appeared on social media as well. In the early morning of June 3, the @NiUnaMenos\_ Twitter account shared graphics of bite-size messages from the manifesto that could be easily shared on social media, and also used for posters at the demonstration later that day. I would not characterize these posts as “viral,” but they were shared widely. After the event, @NiUnaMenos\_ shared the entire document on Twitter.

As Baer explains, “Digital platforms offer great potential for broadly disseminating feminist ideas, shaping new modes of discourse about gender and sexism, connecting to different constituencies, and allowing creative modes of protest to emerge” (18). Taking a text like the manifesto, originally constructed to be read at a demonstration, and repackaging it for social media allows it to permeate society in a way that could not be done before.

### **Posters and Banners in the Plaza**

It was not just the founding collective and its manifesto that contributed to the conversation taking place on June 3. In fact, if you were to ask the average Argentine, it is likely that they remember the posters of the participants, not the official document that was read. In reflecting on the day, Franklin Rawson, father of femicide victim Ángeles Rawson, said, “Era impresionante la cantidad de carteles, desde un papelito escrito con marcador hasta banderas gigantes”<sup>61</sup> (Rodríguez 164). While much of my research has focused on official communications coming from the collective—or communications commissioned by the collective, like the Liniers cartoon—it is important to analyze and discuss how average women and men in Buenos Aires were using discourse as resistance, in conjunction with the #NiUnaMenos collective. While the discourse of the general public often echoed what was coming from the collective, individuals were able to bring their own unique voices and personal stories to the #NiUnaMenos conversation. As with the other texts I have analyzed, posters and banners were not confined to the streets. They

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<sup>61</sup> “The number of posters was impressive, from a small paper sign written in marker to giant banners.”

appeared in news coverage and on social media, which helped multiply their reach. While some of these posters include only text, many include images and other visual elements that communicate meaning. I draw from Multimodal CDA to conduct these analyses, and am particularly interested in how the text and visual elements work in conjunction to communicate a message (Machin and Mayr 9). I explore the individual visual elements in images, how they are composed, and the ideas and values they communicate (51, 52, 54).

Because I was not present at the June 3 demonstration in Buenos Aires, I have relied on online newspaper coverage and YouTube videos of the event to collect images of the posters and banners and conduct an analysis. Since my analysis is just one section of this chapter, I have limited my sources to three YouTube videos covering the event, specifically the three videos that are the first to appear in a YouTube search of “Ni Una Menos 3 de junio 2015.” The videos are titled “Ni Una Menos - 3 Junio de 2015 - Congreso de La Nación,” “Ni una menos. #NiUnaMenos IMAGENES ESPECIALES 3 de Junio 2015,” and “NI UNA MENOS - Cobertura 3 de junio 2015.” Additionally, I use a photo gallery published by *El País* on June 3, 2015, which features numerous images from the march in the Argentine capital, as well as a photo provided to me by Florencia Abbate that was taken by her from the stage. In this section, I discuss the overall themes that have emerged through my research, as well as a few specific examples. It is important to note that this analysis is just scratching the surface. A more comprehensive, systematic analysis of the posters and banners of #NiUnaMenos is certainly warranted.

In reviewing the three videos of the event, the *El País* coverage, and Abbate’s photos, which in sum consist of dozens of posters and banners, several themes have

emerged. Overall, the handmade posters at the June 3 event tend to reflect the narrative constructed by the collective in the weeks leading up to the demonstration. While these similarities certainly do not indicate a cause-and-effect relationship, they do speak to the consistency in message that the movement was able to establish. For example, similar to what we saw at the *maratón de lectura* and with Marcela Ojeda's tweet, individual stories of women are used to talk about femicide and the real, devastating impact it has on families. The emphasis of individual women was perhaps even more profound at the June 3 event, which included a special area right at the front for recent victims' families (Rodríguez 155). The videos and photos show that throughout the crowd—not just in the front area—there was a significant number of posters with photos and/or names of victims of femicide. Therefore, while the use of individual stories reflects what the collective had been doing from a discursive perspective, it also shows how individuals were able to tell their own unique, personal stories as part of the demonstration. For example, in figure 6 (see below), a screenshot taken from the YouTube video “Ni una menos. #NiUnaMenos IMAGENES ESPECIALES 3 de Junio 2015,” we see two posters with photos of a woman named Brenda Fernández. Using photographs of the victims, and not just their names, helps bring the victims to life in a sense; seeing someone's face establishes a more personal, human connection than just a written name, which in turn helps appeal to emotions. I argue that showing the faces of victims functioned as a strategic appeal to the emotions of Argentine politicians and lawmakers. The lack of adequate implementation of policies has real, human impact, as can be seen in the photographed faces in the crowd.



Figure 6. Ni Una Menos 3 de Junio Video Showing Posters of Brenda Fernández

Additionally, I argue that the inclusion of photography allows families to showcase the photos they believe best represent their lost loved ones. Marcela Fuentes writes:

Mainstream media’s usual vulture scavenging/victim-blaming coverage is even more pronounced in the era of social media when many news reports appropriate selfies of femicide victims as evidence of “sexually provocative behavior” and as visual pleasure bait. (178)

While my research does not include a comparative analysis of photos used by media versus photos used by families, it is important to consider how representations of victims may differ. In figure 6, we see a happy, smiling Brenda in casual clothes, not an oversexualized Brenda. The photos are positioned right in the center of the posters, indicating that those photos are more important than the written #NiUnaMenos or even the name. The creator of the poster wants the smiling face of a young girl to be prominently

seen, above any other component of the poster. In addition to photography, a heart is used as a symbol of loving remembrance, with the ribbon identifying her as a victim. As we see on many posters, #NiUnaMenos is used with the hashtag. Fuentes writes, “In NUM’s bold, revolutionary program to take down patriarchy, social media platforms are, entangled with streets and squares, key sites for mobilization and intervention” (185). The widespread use of #NiUnaMenos on Twitter and on posters and banners in the streets demonstrates the convergence of the digital and the physical, and the use of the hashtag as an offline, political symbol.



Figure 7. Screenshot of Ni Una Menos 3 de Junio Video Showing Black and White Posters of Victims

While highlighting the individual stories was very important, we also see how stories are figuratively—and literally—strung together to convey the widespread nature of the problem of violence toward women. In figure 7 (see above), another screenshot taken from the YouTube video “Ni Una Menos - 3 Junio de 2015 - Congreso de la

Nación,” we see a portion of a string of photos of femicide victims at the event, with dates on each photo indicating the year of the victim’s death. In some ways, this string of photos functions like an online hashtag, by establishing a network of common experiences. The images are black and white, appearing to reflect the aesthetic of the photos of *los desaparecidos* that often appeared at demonstrations led by las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo (*The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo*). While it is possible that this could have simply been a logistical choice, perhaps due to the lack of full-color printing, I argue that the images were intentionally printed in black and white to give the photos a somber tone, and to make a connection to earlier human rights movements.



Figure 8. Photo of June 3 Demonstration: View from Stage

Many of the posters at the June 3 demonstration were repackaged duplicates of other materials or texts that had been created by the collective prior to the demonstration. Abbate’s photo from the stage (see figure 8, above) shows that many individuals had

white and purple and pink and white posters with the #NiUnaMenos logo. Given that there are a number of these posters, and that they are identical in design and size, it appears that the collective printed these posters to hand out to participants. In a photo published by *El País*, we see how one woman repurposed Marcela Ojeda's tweet, writing "NOS ESTAN MATANDO! NO VAMOS A HACER NADA?" on her poster. The 140-character limit on Twitter (that was enforced in 2015 and has since changed) allows online messages to be easily replicated on physical posters and banners. Similar to Ojeda's tweet, this woman writes in all capital letters, as if the sign itself is *gritando*. The writing gets larger from beginning to end, with emphasis on "NO VAMOS A HACER NADA?" "Are we not going to do anything?" the participant asks incredulously of her peers. Additionally, in the photos and videos that I analyzed, there are several instances of posters with Liniers' *Macanudo* #NiUnaMenos cartoon, as well as white T-shirts with the cartoon printed on them. As discussed earlier, despite the feminist critique by some, Liniers' simple cartoon resonated with many Argentines.

Finally, one large theme that emerged in my analysis of posters at the event is the representation of different organizations. In talking about the diversity of the participants, Gabriela Cabezón Cámara, a journalist and member of the founding collective, described the scene in this way: "Las católicas que estaban por no matar a las mujeres y en contra del aborto pegadas con las chicas que militan el aborto, pegadas con organizaciones gays, peronistas progresistas pegados con trotskos . . ." <sup>62</sup> (Rodríguez 174). The diversity of the

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<sup>62</sup> "The Catholics who are there because they are against killing women and against abortion next to the girls who are activists for abortion, next to gay organizations, progressive supporters of Peronism next to supporters of Trotsky . . ."

event was apparent because so many organizations and groups identified themselves on their posters and banners by including the name or logo of their respective groups. Organization names that I saw in the videos and photos I reviewed include la Universidad Nacional de Las Artes, Municipalidad de Tres de Febrero, Centro de Estudiantes de Veterinaria UBA, Comisión de Mujeres de CEP, among others. Feminist groups, student groups, and others felt compelled to identify themselves as members of other groups, separate from #NiUnaMenos. This representation of different organizations is significant for a couple of reasons. First, I argue that support from large, established organizations and institutions helped establish credibility. While these institutions may not have officially endorsed the movement, the posters and banners with their names or logos served as unofficial endorsements. Although the movement was gaining momentum quickly, it was still new and unknown to many Argentines, and therefore the support of other groups was critical, particularly for those not previously involved in feminist activism. It is possible that for some feminist activists, the involvement of large organizations may have deterred participation. Nevertheless, I think that, broadly speaking, these organizations provided critical support at the event and ultimately contributed significantly to the size of the event. As Agustina Paz Frontera told me, it was not just individuals on social media who made the movement massive; rather it was the “montón de las organizaciones políticas”<sup>63</sup> that mobilized. Second, the self-identification by groups and organizations contributed to this perception of political and ideological diversity that I previously mentioned, which in turn helped #NiUnaMenos

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<sup>63</sup> “lots of political organizations”

present itself as a nonpartisan, inclusive movement. Participants would have seen that a variety of groups and organizations were present, and that #NiUnaMenos was a space for all to come together to speak out and fight against *machista* violence.

### **#NiUnaMenos**

While women and men were in the streets, shouting chants and holding up signs, they were also on their phones, using the #NiUnaMenos hashtag to create a virtual demonstration of resistance that reflected what was happening in the physical world. Therefore, I conclude my analysis of the June 3 demonstration with an exploration of what was happening digitally, specifically on Twitter. I argue that Twitter served a couple of key functions during the demonstration. First, it helped reinforce and amplify the message of #NiUnaMenos in Argentina and beyond. Digital discourse was the spark that helped #NiUnaMenos become a transnational feminist movement, and, as I will demonstrate, there is a clear consistency of message among the tweets from participants and official texts from the organizing collective. Second, it gave individuals agency by allowing them to participate in the conversation and document their involvement with the movement. The use of the #NiUnaMenos hashtag allowed participants to connect and engage with one another. Similar to how I approached my analysis of #DeLaFotoALaFirma, I used Twitter's advanced search function and MassMine to collect and scrape the data for 949 original tweets from June 3 that used the #NiUnaMenos hashtag. After collecting the data, I inputted it into Voyant Tools to identify frequently used terms and phrases and conduct a macroanalysis of the June 3 Twitter activity.

This corpus of tweets is just a sample of the Twitter activity from June 3. Once again, because I focus on the movement in Buenos Aires, I used a location filter that focused on tweets produced in and around the city. The location filter only captures tweets by users that had their geolocation turned on and accessible to Twitter. Additionally, the 949 tweets represent publically available tweets that are still available to this day. Therefore, the 949 tweets in my dataset are just a sample of the social media activity that was taking place. In reviewing the data, I have identified several important accounts that were not included, most likely because they chose to not share geolocation information with Twitter. For example, my corpus does not include tweets from the official @NiUnaMenos\_ account. However, when I search specifically for tweets from the @NiUnaMenos\_ account on June 3, I can see that the collective tweeted twelve times throughout the day, resulting in more than 3,000 retweets. The corpus also excludes tweets from journalist and key member of the collective Marcela Ojeda (@Marcelitaojeda). However, when I search her individually, I see that she tweeted 21 times throughout the day and almost always used the #NiUnaMenos hashtag. The challenges I faced during my collection and analysis speak to the ongoing difficulties that researchers are confronted with when dealing with digital texts, especially tweets or other types of social media posts.

Given the limitations of my own dataset, I would like to provide some broader context regarding the Twitter activity that took place on and around the June 3 demonstration. One study conducted by researchers from la Universidad de Buenos Aires found that, “En los días 2, 3 y 4 de junio de ese año hubo un total de 13,101 mensajes en

Twitter”<sup>64</sup> using the #NiUnaMenos hashtag (Alamo et al.). While these researchers used similar methods, they did not have a location restriction. This study also found that during the month of June 2015, there were significantly more retweets using the #NiUnaMenos hashtag than original tweets: “En #NiUnaMenos de junio 2015 los RT superaban un 72% a los contenidos originales.”<sup>65</sup> While messages were shared extensively, people were less likely to contribute to the conversation with original tweets. These researchers also recognize the limitations of their data, writing, “Si bien se analizó una gran cantidad de datos, cabe destacar que solo es una muestra de un período de tiempo determinado y que los resultados son parciales y ningún modo estáticos”<sup>66</sup> (Alamo et al.). In #NiUnaMenos, Rodríguez cites data from the communications agency Es Viral that states that between May 11 and June 3, there were 643, 613 tweets with the hashtag #NiUnaMenos. Additionally, #NiUnaMenos was a trending topic worldwide on June 3 (151). As these studies, in conjunction with my own data, demonstrate, what was happening on Twitter was perhaps just as important as what was happening in *la plaza*, and likely more far-reaching.

Therefore, by conducting a macroanalysis of the words and phrases used in my dataset of tweets, we can build a better understanding of the digital discourse during the day of the demonstration. Because this corpus of tweets excludes the official #NiUnaMenos account and some of the key collective members, it focuses primarily on

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<sup>64</sup> “On June 2, 3, and 4 of that year that was a total of 13,101 messages on Twitter.”

<sup>65</sup> “In the June 2015 #NotOneWomanLess the retweets surpassed the original content by 72%.”

<sup>66</sup> “Although a large quantity of data was analyzed, it should be noted that the data is only a sample of a determined period of time, and that the results are partial and not at all fixed.”

the language used by the participants, not the organizing collective. Table 6 (see below) shows the most frequently used terms. In the same way that I created the list of most frequently used terms for #DeLaFotoALaFirma, I created this table by inserting the MassMine data into Voyant Tools, which then produced a list of the most frequently used terms. I edited the list by eliminating stop words.

Table 6

Frequently Used Terms in #NiUnaMenos June 3 Tweets

<b>Term</b>	<b>Count</b>
niunamenos	952
congreso	209
no	145
basta	85
hoy	80
aires	78
buenos	78
plaza	73
marcha	71
3	66

Given that I searched for tweets with the phrase “Ni Una Menos,” it is no surprise that “niunamenos” is the most frequently used term (Sinclair and Rockwell). We can see that the term is used 952 times in the 949 tweets, which means that it was used three times in one tweet. While the search term that I used to create this corpus did not include the #

symbol, it appears that almost all instances of “niunamenos” were used with the hashtag. As Mina writes, “Hashtags reach across time and space, collapsing them on the internet into a shared conversation. . . . Each sign, each tweet, each photo is a tiny contribution” (“#Hashtagging the Streets”). The majority of these tweets represent “tiny contributions” from average Argentine citizens, not large organizations or public figures. Most of the tweets garnered no retweets. However, by employing the #NiUnaMenos hashtag, individual users can write tweets that contribute to a larger, collective conversation—in this case, a conversation that started to trend worldwide, and have real-life impact. Fuentes writes, “In NUM’s activism, hashtags shape feminist publics, help disseminate counter-pedagogies seeking to debunk patriarchal pedagogies of cruelty, and ultimately, usher in utopian futures” (180). Through digital discourse, the #NiUnaMenos collective and other participants in the movement work to create a new reality, a new future for Argentina.

After “niunamenos,” there are many terms that refer to the time and location of the event: “congreso” (referring to the Plaza del Congreso), “hoy,” “buenos,” “aires,” “plaza,” “marcha,” and “3” (referring to *el 3 de junio*) (Sinclair and Rockwell). In looking at the instances of the terms plaza, congreso, buenos, and aires, I can see that these terms appeared often when users had posted on Instagram with the location of the event, and then shared native Instagram posts to Twitter through the Instagram function that allows cross-posting on other social media platforms. These terms seem to have been used less in advance of the event to promote the demonstration, and more often during or after the event to demonstrate one’s participation. Nevertheless, if shared during the

beginning of the event, these tweets may have helped attract more people to the plaza. After the event, the tweets likely helped create buzz surrounding #NiUnaMenos. Overall, these words are not incredibly significant in terms of contributing to the overall feminist discourse that the movement was working to create, but they do show how people were “checking in” digitally to show their friends and family where they were physically and what type of activity they were engaged in. Once again, we see the digital and the physical converge here.

After the grouping of terms that appear more logistical than anything, we are left with “no” and “basta” (Sinclair and Rockwell). Phrases with the word “no” include “no a la violencia de género” and “no más.” Phrases with the word “basta” include “basta de femicidios” and “basta de violencia de género.” We have seen these words repeated in texts produced by the collective, such as “Que la rabia nos valga” and the manifesto. Once again, the language used by the collective aligns with the language used by Argentines attending the event. While this relationship does not indicate causation, as mentioned in my analysis of the posters, it does show that there is consistency in message across the movement. As I discussed in my analysis of the manifesto, the word “no” serves as a microcosm of this and other feminist movements. Feminism can be viewed as women saying “NO!” when for years they have been expected to say “yes,” and from that “NO” creating new forms of being. Words like “no” and “basta” challenge a hegemonic discourse that says women must yield to the wishes of men. The repetition of these words is important in order to cement them in this new, alternative discourse that is being constructed. Women can say no, and they should feel comfortable and confident doing

so. We also see the message of urgency communicated through a word like “basta.” The collective, and the other women participating in #NiUnaMenos, are saying “enough is enough,” a phrase that indicates that a particular action will no longer be accepted, and change must begin now. “No” does not always connote urgency, but with “basta,” we have a sense of change happening right now, in this moment. While we can see the collective’s long-term vision in documents like the manifesto and the *cinco puntos*, the message of urgency remains present.

The use of “basta de femicidios” versus “basta de violencia de género” is also an important point to explore. As I mentioned earlier, Florencia Abbate talked to me about the efforts to replace “violencia de género” with “violencia machista,” which is more specific and speaks to the root of the problem: *machista* culture in Argentina. While “femicidio(s)” was used repeatedly throughout this corpus of tweets—exactly 30 times—we don’t see the term “machista” used often. Therefore, from this sample of social media activity, it appears that the collective still had work to do in terms of inserting this word into the discourse and replacing “violencia de género.”



Figure 9. @msolamaya #NiUnaMenos Tweet

What are some of the most popular tweets in my dataset? Journalist Sol Amaya tweeted, “Hasta el subte dice #niunamenos,”<sup>67</sup> and included a photo of the subway system in Buenos Aires with “Ni Una Menos” spelled out in the subway’s digital display (see figure 9, above) (@msolamaya). When I pulled this data in May, the tweet had garnered 210 retweets. As can be seen in the image, the tweet now has 205 retweets (as of Oct. 26, 2019). As mentioned previously, this is another challenge of researching social media sites: retweet and favorite counts, as well as followers, are constantly in flux. While we do not know how many followers Amaya had back in 2015, she now has over 12,000 followers. Therefore, it is likely that her large number of followers resulted in the large number of retweets. As I have demonstrated throughout this project, having

<sup>67</sup> “even the subway says #notonewomanless.”

collective members and participants with large followings was critical in reaching the masses with the message of #NiUnaMenos.

There are two key components in Amaya's tweet: the text and the photo. In the communications office for which I work, we know that adding video or still photography to social media posts always improves their performance in terms of engagement. The tweet says, "Hasta el subte dice #niunamenos," with a photo that demonstrates the way in which #NiUnaMenos had spread throughout the capital. The *subte* is one of the most important public transportation systems in the city, and therefore can be interpreted as a representation of everyday *porteño* life. If #NiUnaMenos has reached the *subte*, a system that dictates the ebb and flow of the city day in and day out, then it has certainly reached the masses of the city. #NiUnaMenos has not remained isolated in leftist feminist circles; rather, it has reached the everyday, average Argentine. It has even reached the *subte*.

The only tweet in this corpus with more retweets is a post by @lacopecope that reads, "Gritamos #NiUnaMenos por todas esas que no pueden gritarle a quién les pega, a quién las viola, a quién las mata."<sup>68</sup> This tweet reinforces the message of collectivity and the idea of the shared experiences among women: We all cry out #NiUnaMenos on behalf of those who cannot. In contrast to the tweet by @msolamaya, this tweet consists only of text. The Twitter account @lacopecope has not been active since fall 2018, but boasts more than 36,000 followers (as of Oct. 26). Again, we see that accounts with more followers tend to have more engagement with their tweets. I was unable to find a lot of

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<sup>68</sup> "We cry #NotOneWomanLess for all of those who can't cry out at those who hit them, at those who rape them, at those who kill them."

information about La Cope (the name listed on the Twitter account), but it appears to be the business account of artist Lía Copello. The La Cope website is up-to-date, with graphic novels and other feminist artwork for sale (Copello).

To conclude my discussion of the Twitter activity on June 3, it is essential to discuss the digital inequality that existed in Latin America in 2015, and still exists to this day. As Lionel Brossi and others explain:

[N]o todos los y las jóvenes tienen las mismas posibilidades de participar a través de las tecnologías. Esto se debe a una variedad de razones tales como factores demográficos, el contexto sociocultural y económico donde se sitúan, el acceso a conectividad y equipamiento tecnológico, las oportunidades de alfabetización digital e incluso el acceso a educación. (20)

[N]ot all young people have the same opportunities to participate with technology. This is due to a variety of reasons such as demographic factors, the sociocultural and economic context in which they are situated, access to connectivity and technological equipment, and opportunities for digital literacy including access to education. (20)

Due to socioeconomic status and other demographic factors, as well as physical location (urban versus rural), not all Argentines have internet access at home or on their phone. Therefore, when we talk about the widespread digital conversation taking place, it is important to note that a significant portion of the population was left out of that conversation. According to a report by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), “In 2014, 14.9% of users in Latin America utilized devices other than personal computers to access the Internet” (48). This means that most people in Latin America were not using smartphones to access the internet. While “Latin America was the world’s third fastest growing region in terms of the number of

smartphone connections . . . between 2010 and 2013”—with Argentina having “exceeded the regional average”—the report demonstrates that many Argentines did not have access to smartphones with internet (48). Additionally, with regard to internet access in general, just over half of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean were internet users in 2015 (11). Compared to the rest of the world, Latin America is “una de las regiones a nivel mundial más dinámicas en cuanto al uso de internet y la telefonía móvil”<sup>69</sup> (Gómez and Lemus 24). However, as we can see, a digital divide still exists, resulting in the exclusion of many. This digital divide further necessitates offline activism that works in conjunction with online activism.

To conclude, the demonstration on June 3 serves as perhaps the best representation of how #NiUnaMenos employed physical and digital modes of communication together to reach the masses with its feminist discourse. Despite the distinct channels, and voices, that were present during the day, the movement was able to establish a consistent message that reflected earlier communications leading up to the event. As I have argued throughout my thesis, we can see how the movement employed a unique set of dichotomous discursive strategies to reach the masses with the message of #NiUnaMenos. The June 3 discourse was political, but nonpartisan; incorporated high-level feminist concepts, yet in a way that was accessible to the public; and was deeply connected to the history of Argentina and its strong feminist tradition, while maintaining a focus on the future. It expressed urgency—*¡BASTA!*—with long-term vision; focused on the collective, while highlighting individual women and their stories; and appeared

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<sup>69</sup> “one of the most dynamic regions in the world in terms of internet and mobile phone use”

grassroots, while being highly organized. Prior to June 3, the collective was successful in building the discursive foundation for an Argentine feminist movement. After June 3, it was clear that something much greater had been accomplished: #NiUnaMenos had emerged as a global feminist wave, reaching far beyond Argentina.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

As I have demonstrated throughout my thesis project, #NiUnaMenos is a feminist movement marked by discourse. The movement started with words—a *maratón de lectura*—and employed language throughout the beginning months as an effective form of feminist resistance. The founding collective communicated through written texts, speeches, images, and combinations of text and image, in online and offline spaces, and balanced a unique set of discursive dichotomies. I have argued that the movement’s discourse was political, but nonpartisan; intellectual, yet accessible; and connected to Argentina’s history and strong feminist tradition, while keeping a focus on the future. The discourse expressed urgency, with a long-term vision; focused on the collective, while highlighting individual stories; and often appeared spontaneous and grassroots, yet was organized and strategic. In reflecting on the movement’s approach to communication, Florencia Alcaraz told me, “No es que estábamos diciendo algo nuevo, pero lo estábamos diciendo desde un encuadre nuevo.”<sup>70</sup> The movement’s discursive balancing act served as a new framing, an *encuadre*, of feminist messages. Although the discursive dichotomies employed by the collective may seem oppositional at first, I argue that they were complementary and functioned as a discursive strategy to reach the masses. In turn, #NiUnaMenos was able to successfully resist patriarchal

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<sup>70</sup> “It’s not that we were saying anything new, but we were saying it from a new framing.”

violence, help women reclaim their own bodies, and spark a cultural shift—and ultimately a transnational feminist wave—toward equality.

It is important to mention the limitations and challenges of my research. First, research requires a delicate balance of proximity and distance. I traveled to Argentina for the first time during the summer of 2019, and because of limited time and resources, was only able to spend seven days in Buenos Aires. Additional time in Argentina would have helped strengthen this project. While I interviewed seven women who were and/or are connected to the movement, I was unable to speak to many of the members of the founding collective. Therefore, as an American who has spent limited time in Argentina, I still have a lot to learn about the country's history, its feminist tradition, the current political environment, and the use of digital media among the Argentine people.

Additionally, as noted throughout this project, my macroanalysis of the #NiUnaMenos Twitter conversation presented several challenges. Because I limited my Twitter searches to Buenos Aires, my datasets only included tweets by users who enabled location sharing on Twitter. From my work with the digital humanities tool MassMine, and its co-creator Dr. Aaron Beveridge, there does not appear to be a way to focus Twitter searches on specific geographic regions without excluding tweets by users who have not shared their location information. Thus, this is something that will affect many researchers who are working with social media. Additionally, while my research only focused on Twitter, another key social media channel for the movement was Facebook. Facebook does not have the same advanced search functionality that Twitter does, and therefore it is a lot more difficult to conduct a macroanalysis of Facebook posts. The

difficulty in working with Facebook was one of the reasons I decided to focus on Twitter for this project.

In terms of the scope of my project, I chose to focus exclusively on Buenos Aires, the epicenter of the movement. However, #NiUnaMenos demonstrations were replicated across the country, and the feminist work being done in these more conservative, rural regions is just as noteworthy. I recognize that research on Latin American literature and culture tends to focus on the capitals while excluding smaller cities and towns. Given the way in which the movement originated, I believe it made sense for my initial work to focus on Buenos Aires. However, in the future, I hope to explore the movement and its impact on the rest of the country. Additionally, I limited my research to the first couple months of the movement: from March 26, 2015, to June 3, 2015. For this project, I was specifically interested in how #NiUnaMenos was able to use discourse in the beginning months to spark a massive feminist movement. However, in speaking with the Argentine women who were part of the founding collective, it is clear that #NiUnaMenos has changed in significant ways over the years, in terms of agenda, strategy, and makeup of the collective. It would be particularly interesting to examine how the discourse and discursive strategies of the movement have evolved.

In the future, I am interested in further exploring #NiUnaMenos and its impact across Argentina, from 2015 through today. #NiUnaMenos has now become a transnational movement, so there are opportunities for comparative analyses of #NiUnaMenos in different Latin American countries. Through my research, I also discovered other feminist work and activism taking place in Argentina that interests me

as a researcher. One example is the intersection of feminism and soccer in Argentina, which was on display in particular over the course of the last year with the FIFA Women's World Cup taking place in summer of 2019. In September of 2018, players for Argentina's national women's team "went on strike . . . because they weren't paid their daily stipends of roughly \$10" (Springer). The women's team "has been shockingly neglected by its federation and treated with downright hostility at times" (Nadel and Eley). During the World Cup, I started noticing that many of the feminist women I now follow on Twitter—women who have been connected to #NiUnaMenos—were very vocal in their support of the Argentine women's team. Paula Rodríguez, the author of the book *#NiUnaMenos*, was particularly active on Twitter (@madrebotinera). She is co-editor of the recently published *Pelota de Papel 3*, a collection of stories by women soccer players and coaches that are often told through a feminist lens. Having grown up playing sports, I am interested in how sports can be used to further feminist discourse, especially in countries where sport is viewed as religion.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of this project, I believe my work has implications for the fields of Latin American literary and cultural studies, women's and gender studies, communication studies, and digital media studies. As people around the world continue to employ discourse and digital media to bring about change—as I write this conclusion, Greta Thunberg is using Twitter to promote climate strikes in cities across the globe—understanding how language can be used via online and offline channels is increasingly important. Therefore, my findings are relevant to our understanding of the variety of social movements taking place in the twenty-first century.

In particular, I believe my work has relevance for work related to the ongoing struggle for women's rights in Latin America. For example, women are continuing to fight for the right to free, legal, and safe abortion, in Argentina as well as other places like Mexico and Ecuador (Reina). My project demonstrates how social movements, in particular feminist movements in Latin America, can leverage discourse, digital media, and traditional offline channels to effectively resist *machista* culture and produce societal change.

In my introduction to this project, I quote Victoria DeFrancisco, who proposes that we focus on research and scholarship that “place power and resistance at the centre of analysis . . . place emphasis on revealing violence against women . . . allow us to make links among local acts of oppression and global feminist movements; and truly emancipate the oppressed” (52). I hope to have achieved these objectives in my research. By focusing on feminist resistance, revealing the scope of violence toward women and its impact, drawing connections among feminist groups, and sharing the story of #NiUnaMenos—*las que ya no están y las que todavía están y siguen luchando*—my goal is to actively participate in this collective effort of emancipation, *para que no haya ni una menos*.

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## APPENDIX A

### #NIUNAMENOS MANIFESTO

#### 3 de junio 2015

I

En 2008 mataron una mujer cada 40 horas; en 2014, cada 30. En esos 7 años, los medios publicaron noticias sobre 1.808 femicidios. ¿Cuántas mujeres murieron asesinadas sólo por ser mujeres en 2015? No lo sabemos. Pero sí sabemos que tenemos que decir basta. En estos años, los femicidios dejaron cerca de 1500 niñas y niños huérfanos y algunos de ellos están obligados a convivir con los asesinos. El problema es de todos y de todas. La solución hay que construirla en conjunto. Necesitamos sumar compromisos para cambiar una cultura que tiende a pensar a la mujer como objeto de consumo y descarte y no como una persona autónoma.

El femicidio es la forma más extrema de esa violencia y atraviesa todas las clases sociales, credos e ideologías: Pero la palabra “femicidio” es, además, una categoría política, es la palabra que denuncia el modo en que la sociedad vuelve natural algo que no lo es: la violencia machista. Y la violencia machista es un tema de Derechos Humanos. Hablamos entonces de una cultura de la violencia contra las mujeres. Hablamos de hombres que piensan que una mujer es suya y que tienen derecho sobre ella, que pueden hacer lo que quieran, y que cuando esa mujer dice NO, la amenazan, le pegan, la matan para impedir que diga NO.

El femicidio es eso: marcar los cuerpos de las mujeres violentamente, y como amenaza para otras: para que las mujeres no puedan decir que no, para que renuncien a su independencia.

Aunque la gran mayoría de las mujeres que recordamos aquí fueron asesinadas por hombres de su círculo íntimo, el femicidio no es un asunto privado, es producto de una violencia social y cultural que los discursos públicos y de los medios vuelven legítima, cada vez que alguien le dice puta a una mujer porque ejerce su sexualidad libremente, cada vez que alguien la juzga por las medidas de su cuerpo, cada vez que alguien la mira con sospecha porque no quiere tener hijos, cada vez que alguien pretende reducirla simplemente al lugar de la buena esposa o la buena madre, destinada a un varón.

El femicidio es un tipo de violencia particular: no es un tema íntimo o doméstico o sólo de las mujeres. En muchos femicidios también fueron asesinados los hijos como parte del castigo proyectado sobre ellas y su propia capacidad de dar vida.

Lo privado es político. Cada mujer que se atreve a decir basta, que quiere dejar de ser víctima para convertirse en sobreviviente, desafía a toda la estructura de la violencia machista. Pero ese es su momento más vulnerable, ahí es cuando con saña se pretende ajusticiarla y es entonces cuando más necesita de otros y de otras que ayuden a sostener su decisión: redes de afecto, sociales, asistencia del Estado y un activismo político fuerte que insista en decirle que no está sola y que no es su culpa. Para que ese BASTA, que por fin pudo enunciar, se sostenga en el tiempo. Eso es, también, lo que estamos

haciendo hoy, acá, en esta plaza pública.

La violencia ejercida en el ámbito doméstico se vincula con cuestiones sociales que deben ser discutidas en la esfera de la política. A diferencia de otros crímenes, el femicidio se puede leer en una cadena: encontramos crímenes casi calcados por todo el país. Por eso, afirmamos el derecho a decir NO frente a aquello que no se desea: una pareja, un embarazo, un acto sexual, un modo de vida preestablecido. Afirmamos el derecho a decir NO a los mandatos sociales de sumisión y obediencia. Y porque decimos NO, podemos

decir sí a nuestras decisiones sobre nuestros cuerpos, nuestras vidas afectivas, nuestra sexualidad, nuestra participación en la sociedad, en el trabajo, en la política y en todas partes.

## II

Los femicidios no deben tratarse como problemas de seguridad. Y la lucha contra ellos exige una respuesta múltiple, de todos los poderes del Estado y todas sus instancias -nacional, provincial, municipal- pero también precisa una respuesta de toda la sociedad civil. Y en especial una respuesta por parte de los y las periodistas, comunicadores y comunicadoras, que son quienes construyen interpelaciones públicas.

En 2009 y por amplia mayoría (con 174 votos afirmativos y 3 abstenciones), el Congreso nacional aprobó la Ley de Protección Integral de las Mujeres, Ley N° 26.485, un paso importante en la lucha contra la violencia machista. Sin embargo, todavía está pendiente la reglamentación de algunos artículos, incluido el Plan Nacional de Acción para la Prevención, Asistencia y Erradicación de la Violencia contra las Mujeres.

Sin la reglamentación completa de la Ley, el diseño de políticas integrales y la asignación del presupuesto necesario para su instrumentación, esta herramienta lograda en 2009 resulta insuficiente para revertir el aumento de la violencia.

En el país existen líneas telefónicas y oficinas especializadas para orientar y asistir a las víctimas que sufren violencia machista. No alcanzan si no son acompañadas de políticas integrales.

No existe en la Argentina un registro oficial de femicidios. Los datos que mencionamos aquí son los que releva año tras año la Organización No Gubernamental Casa del encuentro.

Es fundamental contar con estadísticas oficiales.

El Poder Judicial desempeña un papel en general ineficiente a la hora de dar respuesta a las víctimas. En muchas jurisdicciones, son ellas las que tienen que denunciar y luego ratificar la denuncia que hicieron en comisarías. Este sistema de doble denuncia está apoyado en la falta de confianza de la Justicia hacia las mujeres y contribuye a la impunidad

del agresor. El aporte de pruebas y testigos depende enteramente de las víctimas y, si no lo hacen, las causas quedan paralizadas y luego se archivan. Se trata de un modelo de gestión judicial de la violencia contra las mujeres que suma desprotección y que no garantiza medidas efectivas. Con la impunidad para el agresor, el Poder Judicial agrega otro tipo de violencia para la denunciante: la violencia institucional. Muchas de las víctimas de femicidios habían denunciado antes y en reiteradas ocasiones al asesino.

A tantas otras mujeres no quisieron tomarles las denuncias. Esta inercia no puede continuar.

Hay mujeres golpeadas y asesinadas por afirmar sus propias decisiones. Otras están desaparecidas, víctimas del delito de trata con fines de explotación sexual o laboral, y sus destinos siguen sin conocerse. En torno a algunas de esas mujeres desaparecidas se sospechan tramas mafiosas que incluyen la participación de la justicia y de las fuerzas de seguridad. Por ellas también pedimos justicia.

El modo en que los medios, mayoritariamente, tratan el problema, debe transformarse por completo: en muchos casos culpabilizan a las víctimas de su destino: hablan de su vestimenta, sus amistades, sus modos de divertirse. En el fondo, agitan allí el “algo habrán hecho”. Necesitamos medios comprometidos en la elaboración de protocolos, además del imprescindible cumplimiento de los protocolos existentes y de los códigos de ética para las coberturas periodísticas de estos casos.

La televisión repite imágenes y palabras que ubican a las mujeres en situaciones de desigualdad, dominación y discriminación. Repite estereotipos. El tratamiento noticioso de los casos de niñas y mujeres asesinadas o desaparecidas, con la invasión de la intimidad de las víctimas y la insistencia en revelar el modus operandi del asesino, contribuyen

a que el femicidio se naturalice o se lo convierta en insumo para que el show continúe. Y esto ayuda a su reproducción.

Decimos Ni una menos, con el dolor de la suma de víctimas que crece y crece.

Esta conmoción masiva, esta enorme y comprometida participación social, son un grito unánime.

Es la manera que encontramos, en todas las plazas del país, con la movilización, con el dolor común, con la preocupación y la necesidad urgente, de poner en marcha acciones coordinadas que ataquen el problema; desde el origen -la cultura machista-, y hasta el fin de la cadena: la mujer golpeada, la mujer asesinada.

El Estado y los poderes reales, junto con la ciudadanía, debemos comprometernos a perfeccionar los instrumentos para combatir la violencia contra las mujeres, nuevos esfuerzos deben sumarse, codo a codo con el esfuerzo realizado por las organizaciones de mujeres, feministas, ONGs y personas comprometidas que trabajan en esto desde hace tiempo.

Es que los derechos de unas son los derechos de todos. La preservación de la vida y las decisiones de las mujeres son ampliación de libertad para todos y para todas. Forjemos nuevos modos de convivencia, estrategias para hilar cada vez mejor la trama de la vida en común. No queremos más lágrimas de duelo y sí más avances que festejar.

No queremos más mujeres muertas por femicidio. Nos queremos vivas. A todas.

#NiUnaMenos.

### III

Pedimos, entonces, una serie de puntos ineludibles para recorrer el camino hacia Ni una menos:

1. Instrumentación en su totalidad y con la asignación de presupuesto acorde de la LEY N° 26.485 “Ley de Protección Integral para Prevenir, Sancionar y Erradicar la Violencia

contra las Mujeres en los ámbitos en que desarrollen sus relaciones interpersonales”.  
Puesta en marcha del Plan Nacional que allí se establece.

2. Recopilación y publicación de estadísticas oficiales sobre violencia hacia las mujeres incluyendo los índices de femicidios.

3. Apertura y funcionamiento pleno de Oficinas de Violencia Doméstica de la Corte Suprema de Justicia en todas las provincias, con el objeto de agilizar las medidas cautelares de protección. Federalización de la línea 137.

4. Garantías para la protección de las víctimas de violencia. Implementación del monitoreo

electrónico de los victimarios para asegurar que no violen las restricciones de acercamiento que impone la Justicia.

5. Garantías para el acceso de las víctimas a la Justicia. Atención de personal capacitado para recibir las denuncias en cada fiscalía y cada comisaría. Vinculación de las causas de los fueros civil y penal. Patrocinio jurídico gratuito para las víctimas durante todo el proceso judicial.

6. Garantías para el cumplimiento del derecho de la niñez con un patrocinio jurídico especializado y capacitado en la temática.

7. Creación de más Hogares/Refugio en la emergencia, Hogares de Día para víctimas, y subsidio habitacional, con una asistencia interdisciplinaria desde una perspectiva de género.

8. Incorporación y profundización en todas las currículas educativas de los diferentes niveles de la educación sexual integral con perspectiva de género, la temática de la violencia

machista y dictado de talleres para prevenir noviazgos violentos.

9. Capacitaciones obligatorias en la temática de violencia machista al personal del Estado,

a los agentes de seguridad y a los operadores judiciales, así como a profesionales que trabajan con la temática de violencia en diferentes dependencias oficiales de todo el país.

Todas las medidas requieren creación de instancias de monitoreo y seguimiento para su puesta en práctica y funcionamiento efectivo.

Erradicar la violencia contra las mujeres puede ser difícil pero no es imposible.

Ni una menos es un grito colectivo, es meterse donde antes se miraba para otro lado, es revisar las propias prácticas, es empezar a mirarnos de otro modo unos a otras, es un compromiso social para construir un nuevo nunca más.

Repetimos.

No queremos más mujeres muertas por femicidio. Queremos a cada una de las mujeres vivas. A todas. #NiUnaMenos.

Source: <http://niunamenos.org.ar/manifiestos/3-de-junio-2015/>