

Nos Están Matando [They are Killing Us]: Feminist Movements' Influence in Argentina and Chile

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Abstract:

Despite the attention given to violence against women in Latin America, little is reported about the effect of women's movement protests on legal decisions pertaining to femicide, gender violence, and abortion. However, protests within the last five years in Argentina and Chile regarding these issues have caught media attention. I intend to discover how grassroots feminist protests in each country influence decisions about the issues. I used two newspapers from each country to collect data on protests. Additionally, I collected data from one court website for each country along with the United States Library of Congress about legal decisions regarding the topics. After examining how the protests influence decisions in each country, I compared the two countries. The findings suggest protestors demanded legal changes and the courts reacted by approving the changes. Further, I discovered machismo interacts notably with violence against women in both countries.

I was looking down to avoid tripping in the cracked, narrow side streets of Buenos Aires, Argentina so as to not spill the four bags of laundry I needed to take to the laundromat when I first realized something was different. Two weeks into my study abroad, I tried to keep up with the pace of foot traffic so I would not be pushed off the sidewalk, but I noticed people were passing me. When I finally looked up, I saw a few handmade signs being carried toward Avenida 9 de Julio, the widest avenue in the world. I heard chanting and drumming and I knew something out of the ordinary was happening. People were excited and focused, but not joyful. I dropped off my laundry and walked outside to see what had been a trickle of people becoming more clustered. Before returning to my apartment, I saw scarlet handprints on posters, signs

with pictures of women's faces, and the hashtag #NiUnaMenos. When I returned to my apartment, I looked up the hashtag and discovered every 30 hours in Argentina a woman dies because a man kills her. People were protesting the violence. The hashtag demands that there is "not one less" female due to gender violence. Several weeks later while staying with a friend in Santiago, Chile, I found out that a similar protest occurred in Chilean cities.

Within the context of Latin American Studies and Women's Studies, Argentina and Chile are interesting cases to study because of the history of violence against women in both countries. Although grassroots efforts gave rise to women's rights groups, women remain marginalized in Argentinean and Chilean societies. For example, in Argentina, feminists have faced

hostile and skeptical reactions toward women's rights policies from both genders (Risley 593). Similarly, according to gender and Latin American politics scholar Susan Franceschet, Chile is internationally thought of as being intensely traditional and reluctant to support women's rights policies (1). Examining feminist movements and laws regarding violence against women in the two countries will uncover how the issues intersect. Looking at connections between feminist protests regarding femicide, gender violence, and abortion rights and legal decisions about these issues reveal specific measures of progress such as whether protest demands are met. Demands being met will help reduce violence against women in the countries.

The research question for my investigation was "how do grassroots feminist movements affect legal decisions regarding femicide, gender violence, and abortion rights in Argentina as compared to Chile?" Because of the high numbers of femicides, violence against women, and lack of abortion rights in the two countries, the issues are of intense concern to Latin Americans, especially individuals involved in feminist movements. Consequently, feminist movements are successfully protesting for changes regarding legal decisions to improve conditions for women. Investigation into the relationships between grassroots feminist movements regarding femicide, gender violence, and abortion rights and legal decisions allows for comparison between Argentina and Chile regarding the topics. Examination of the protests and court decisions reveals what relationships existed between protestors and the courts. Grassroots feminist movements similarly affect decisions regarding femicide, gender violence, and abortion in

Argentina and Chile. Feminist protestors demanded legal changes in each issue and the courts granted the changes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Dawn of Feminist Groups

During the Dirty War (1976-1983), Argentine women were victims of government-sanctioned sexual and reproductive violence. The Dirty War during Jorge Rafael Videla's military dictatorship employed sexual violence to stop dissidents. As reported by Argentine social and gender news correspondent Marcela Valente, military commanders forced women in concentration camps during the period of rule to engage in sexual acts with the commanders or face death ("Argentina: Shedding"). Additionally, Susana Kaiser's research regarding memories of the military dictatorship retells instances of incarcerated pregnant women giving birth in dismal conditions. Afterwards, military personnel took the babies from the mothers (Kaiser 3). The sexual nature of the acts—forcing women prisoners to engage in sex and give up babies—illustrates the psychological and physical power the representatives of the government had over women. Due to consequences stemming from the history of state-sponsored and gender-specific violence, feminists in Argentina have and must continue to transcend systematic misogyny before legislators can institute feminist policies.

Women created feminist movement organizations with mostly women members meeting together in Argentina as a result of women leading the quest to document human rights violations during the Dirty War. Female relatives of the disappeared and killed organized and then sought

information from the government. One of the groups, Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, defined the Argentine government as a sponsor of terror and called for Argentines to hold the government responsible for the violence (Risley 587). Mothers seeking criminal punishment of the people in the government responsible for the death of children comprise a separate group, Committee of Relatives of Defenseless Victims of Institutional Violence (COFAVI) (Risley 588). Women in Argentina organized with the explicit goal of finding out what happened to disappeared relatives during the Dirty War. The act of organizing the female groups established a baseline voice for influencing politics in Argentina because the groups encouraged the public to keep the government accountable and demand punishment.

Like Argentina, Chile has a history of government-sanctioned violence, which intensified during Augusto Pinochet's military dictatorship (1973-1990). Further, Chilean women experienced government-sanctioned gender violence during the dictatorship. Female political prisoners held during Pinochet's dictatorship revealed systemic sexual torture and assaults during testimony (Vergara, "Women Seek"). One former political prisoner, Nieves Ayres, provided testimony describing forced incest, bestiality, and other forms of sexual torture (Vergara, "Women Seek"). The pervasive violence against women is well-documented because of the testimonies and indicates the government had full knowledge of the violations. The ability of women to garner government support for feminist policies seems remote, given the history of institutional abuse toward women in Chile.

However, under the veil of oppressive military rule, women in Chile started

resisting human rights abuses targeting women. Multiple women's organizations, such as *Círculo* and *Mujeres por la vida* (MPLV), formed to promote opposition to Pinochet's government-sanctioned gender violence. According to the research of Latin America and gender scholar Jadwiga Pieper Mooney, at a public gathering six years into Pinochet's reign the feminist group *Círculo* sponsored a public meeting about women's issues with over 300 women in attendance (616). In 1983, ten years into the Pinochet regime, the feminist group MPLV—one of the first Chilean feminist groups—formed to fight against the regime's human rights violations against women; the first rally drew 10,000 women (Walsh 1336). While small in number, the initial attempts to organize women during the dictatorship demonstrate the commitment to influence political structures in Chile because the women gathered during a dangerous time—Pinochet's government-sanctioned gender violence—for women. However, because of the dramatic growth in number of rally participants, the fight for recognition of women's rights began noticeably growing.

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Many female deaths occur in Argentina because men kill women due to misogynistic motivations. According to reports in *Clarín*, Argentina's largest newspaper, evidence of gender violence comes from the compilation of yearly murder statistics by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Argentina such as *La Asociación Civil la Casa del Encuentro* (Iglesias, "En un año"). Hinde Pomeraniec, a journalist and one of the organizers of the #NiUnaMenos movement, explains that according to "respected NGO" data, a woman dies about

every 30 hours due to femicide, a term defining violence resulting in the murder of a woman because of gender (“How Argentina”). Between 2008 and 2014, Argentine men murdered approximately 1,800 women (Smith, “Femicide Protests”). However, ascertaining precise numbers of femicide is challenging because the data from the Argentine government did not become available until late 2015 and the NGO was the only reporting agency; the numbers of deaths due to femicide might be higher.

In addition to femicides, Argentine women suffer from other forms of gender-based violence such as domestic abuse and rape. Amy Risley, a scholar of comparative and Latin American politics, reveals that one-fourth of all Argentine women endure domestic violence according to NGO reports (586). Additionally, between five and seven thousand women are victims of rape each year (Risley 585). Violence toward women comprises a wide range of actions; the violence is not contained to femicide and can happen daily in a woman’s life. Because of the extensive nature and number of the crimes, women in Argentina are likely to either personally or indirectly experience gender-based violence creating an environment for women to support the feminist movements against violence toward women.

Because the Argentine government currently places limits and restrictions on abortion, women do not have complete access to legal abortion. Members of the feminist women’s movement in Argentina consider abortion a gender violence issue. As a consequence of government legislation only permitting abortion in cases of rape or if the life of the mother is in danger, women obtain about 500,000 illegal abortions

resulting in 80,000 hospitalizations and 100 deaths each year according to reporting in *Clarín* (Iglesias, “La legalización”). Refusing to discuss the issue of abortion rights, Argentine Cabinet Chief Aníbal Fernández declared abortion rights are not on the government’s agenda (Iglesias, “La legalización”). An approach to measure the influence of feminist movements on politics is to look at abortion legislation because Argentine feminists set a goal to challenge restrictive abortion laws. The current abortion laws and refusal to put abortion rights on the government’s agenda suggest feminist movements historically have not influenced abortion politics because the laws are strict. A decrease in the number of illegal abortions could be an indicator of the success of the women movement’s influence because women have access to legal options.

Chilean women, just as in Argentina, are victims of femicide perpetrated by men for misogynistic reasons. In 2014, according to the prosecution records and public police accounts, there were 45 femicides, 102 attempted femicides, and in the first six months of 2015 there were 35 femicides in Chile (“Campaña ‘¡Cuidado!’”). Husbands, boyfriends, exes, male family members, male acquaintances, and male strangers committed and attempted the femicides (“Campaña ‘¡Cuidado!’”). The record-keeping adds legitimacy to the number of femicides because the data comes from a government agency. The femicide and attempted-femicide data indicates femicide is a growing problem. The relationship between individuals committing and attempting femicide to the victims ranges from intimate involvement to no relationship; Chilean women are at risk because femicide occurs within a variety of associations.

Women in Chile are also victims of gender-based violence such as domestic violence and rape. As with the records of femicides, evidence of gender-based violence comes from prosecution records and public police accounts. The numbers of domestic violence complaints by women in Chile are consistent; there are no less than 110,000 complaints of domestic violence each year (“Campaña ‘¡Cuidado!’”). Additionally, 88.3 percent of the 2,091 rapes during 2014 consisted of a man raping a woman (“Campaña ‘¡Cuidado!’”). Although there are significant numbers of femicides in Chile, the numbers of gender-based violence are even greater; the numbers for both femicide and gender-based violence suggest women are potential victims every day in Chile because of gender. Women in Chile are likely to be victims or know victims of gender-based violence producing an environment for Chilean women to support the feminist movements against violence toward women.

The Chilean government limits on abortion rights are more stringent because abortion is illegal in all cases. Feminists in Chile consider abortion to be a gender violence issue because women do not have the right to consider the medical procedure. While the government once allowed therapeutic abortion, the practice was banned in 1989 and is currently illegal (Pieper Mooney 624-5). Each year, women obtain approximately 140,000 illegal abortions and can face criminal punishment for obtaining an abortion (Montes, “Chile avanza”). The Chilean government reversal position on therapeutic abortion is a form of government-sanctioned gender violence because the government took away the only abortion option allowed. Government-instituted policies prosecute and punish

women because the policies criminalizing abortion only legally impact women and ignore the status of the father.

Action

The #NiUnaMenos feminist movement started a violence toward women awareness campaign because of concerns about increasing gender-based violence and femicides in Argentina. In June 2015, the movement garnered attention with widespread use of marches and social media. Over 300,000 feminist-minded people chanted and marched carrying #NiUnaMenos signs and banners containing names of femicide victims through the streets in Buenos Aires up to government buildings (Nugent, “Four Months”). As reported by *The Argentina Independent* during a conversation with the organizers of #NiUnaMenos, the movement received further attention when political candidates published the movement’s hashtag, #NiUnaMenos, in ads and on social media (Nugent, “Four Months”). Because of the high turnout at the march, attention from politicians, and social media attention, the grassroots marches and social media campaign proved successful. The hashtag usage by political candidates was another success, reaching citizens not physically present at the marches.

Argentina’s government is passing laws designed to decrease and penalize certain acts of violence toward women. The laws respond to the far end of the gender violence spectrum—murder. Argentina’s penal codes now recognize femicide as a crime (Smith, “Femicide Protests”). In 2012, lawmakers crafted and then passed a law stating that femicides may carry a life sentence (Smith, “Femicide Protests”). The passage of the

laws implies the government will initiate funding, training, and data gathering for gender-based crimes. If the laws are effective, then the number of femicides will decline over time.

Although lacking a unifying slogan against gender violence, victims of past government-sanctioned sexual violence in Chile are currently demanding justice. The female victims are former political prisoners during Pinochet's dictatorship. Chile's government signed an international human rights accord allowing the women to press charges against current and former military personnel (Vergara, "Women Seek"). Additionally, the women are fighting to legally classify the rape of political prisoners as political crimes (Vergara, "Women Seek"). As government leadership changes, women are finding political support for taking action against perpetrators of crimes because the women are able to press charges, something not possible under past government leaders. Since forms of gender violence such as rape of prisoners and the end of therapeutic abortion hailed from the Pinochet government, legal action against former power figures provides an avenue for current governmental agencies to remedy past transgressions and focus on eliminating violence toward women, especially government-sanctioned violence.

Although the laws in Chile ban abortion, a woman supporting abortion rights has the highest political position in the country: current Chilean President Michelle Bachelet. Bachelet's successful 2013 presidential campaign ran on the platform of decriminalizing abortion in cases of rape and when the life of the mother is at risk (Bodzin, "In Chile"). In 2015, Bachelet presented a bill to decriminalize abortions in cases of rape, severe medical problems, and

when the life of the mother is at risk (Montes, "Chile avanza"). Bachelet's supportive views regarding abortion represent progress from the complete denial of abortion rights held by other Chilean government leaders. Since many feminists believe abortion is a right for women denied by the government, the election of Bachelet is significant because she won while supporting abortion rights.

Gaining Power in a Machismo Culture

Machismo, a cultural practice of male sexual dominance, is a foundational reason for the violence toward women in Argentina because objectifying women is commonplace. Moreover, some in positions of power tolerate machismo. For example, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the mayor, a male, publicly stated women enjoy lewd comments or catcalls (Goñi, "Argentine Women"). Yet, as reported in an article detailing the origins of #NiUnaMenos in *The New York Times*, women in Argentine feminist movements disagree with the mayor—now the current president—and connect the cultural practice to gender-based violence (Goñi, "Argentine Women"). Feminist movement members note and condemn the relationship between machismo and gender violence—important because the women have identified machismo as permitting an atmosphere of male dominance leading to gender violence. However, men in the culture and in positions of power, such as the former mayor, publicly accept the practice as part of the culture and consequently exacerbate the machismo-violence relationship making political change regarding gender violence more difficult.

Feminist groups in Argentina monitor the government policies on gender violence. The work of the feminist groups has grown as changes in government structures occurred. For example, as democratic governments emerged in Argentina, women activists lobbied new leaders to adopt laws preventing gender violence (Oropeza Eng et al. 15). Additionally, women's groups collected documentation of gender violence to ensure official records on crimes against women are complete and accurate (Oropeza Eng et al. 15). New forms of government have provided an avenue for women activists to make changes in policies because with the requested changes, more laws, and data collection, the activists will no longer have to fight for basic information and will instead be able to help create policy. Accountability for institutional policies against gender violence in a machismo culture is unlikely until women activists pressure the government to include gender violence changes on the legislative agenda.

Similar to feminists in Argentina, feminists in Chile also cite machismo as a reason for the violence toward women because men view women as subservient within the concept of machismo. Male dominance is a part of Chilean daily life because some men do not turn off their machismo mentality. In a 2015 survey, 75 percent of Chilean women indicated being victims of street harassment, a practice men often regard as a masculine right (“Campaña ‘¡Cuidado!’”). La Red Chilena contra la Violencia hacia las Mujeres, an organization against gender violence, connects Chile's patriarchal and machismo society with gender-based violence because Chilean institutions, including family and government, promote the transmission of machismo from generation to generation

(“Campaña ‘¡Cuidado!’”). Because the non-government groups—not the actual government—consider machismo a cause of violence toward women, feminist movements have a difficult fight trying to influence politics. Machismo is a part of the culture and is unlikely to completely cease to exist; consequently, the feminist groups must work primarily on effective legislation.

Women's movements in both Argentina and Chile create atmospheres to allow women to gain positions of power because the women in both countries shun the subservient label and instead fight for rights and become leaders. Evidence of the rise of women's leadership is each country's democratically elected woman to a high-ranking position. For example, Chile's 2013 presidential election was between two women, Bachelet and Evelyn Matthei (Bodzin, “In Chile”). Another example of a woman leader is the former Argentinian president, Cristina Kirchner. Kirchner served two terms and spoke against machismo during the campaign (Smith, “Femicide Protests”). While both countries have a history of acceptance of machismo, women currently serve in political institutions because women's groups supported the involvement of women in politics. Both grassroots women's movements and female government officials have a voice in creating potential policies affecting violence toward women because as the previous examples show, the electorate in both countries is willing to elect women despite a culture of machismo.

DATA AND METHODS

The United States Library of Congress provided data on legal developments in Argentina and Chile regarding femicide,

gender violence, and abortion. The data was in the form of press releases and official national legal publications from the Global Legal Monitor. I used the Global Legal Monitor search on the United States Library of Congress website and used Argentina and Chile for the jurisdiction and abortion, crimes against women, and domestic violence for the topic. I looked at documents from 2011 through 2016 and recorded the data. Next, I compared the presence or absence of legal decisions regarding femicide, gender violence, and abortion in the countries. The data provided information about the types of legal issues the courts of the respective countries hear and decide. Additionally, I identified timeline patterns in legal developments regarding the topics.

The government of Argentina's judicial information website, *Centro de información judicial: Agencia de noticias del poder judicial* [Center of Judicial Information: News Agency of the Judicial Power] provided Argentina's decisions regarding femicide, gender violence, and abortion. The data appeared in *buscador de notas* [search engine] on the website with categories for *fecha* [date] and *palabras clave* [key words]. I used the search engine and entered the search statements of *femicidio* [femicide], *violencia de género* [gender violence], *violencia doméstica* [domestic violence], and *aborto* [abortion]. I looked for data between 2011 and 2016 and kept a tally in a table of the number of times decisions appear in each of the three categories. Through the process, I traced the outcomes and amendments to decisions the courts in Argentina made about the topics. With the official data, I identified connections between the times the courts made decisions about the topics and dates of protests by grassroots feminists.

I collected data on Chile's decisions regarding femicide, gender violence, and abortion by using the country's judicial information website, *Poder judicial: Republica de Chile* [Judicial Power: Republic of Chile]. I used *busqueda noticias* [search engine] and the categories of *titulo noticia* [news title] and *fecha desde/hasta* [date from/up to] on the website to locate the data. The search statements I used on the search engine consisted of *femicidio* [femicide], *violencia de género* [gender violence], *violencia doméstica* [domestic violence], and *aborto* [abortion]. Using the same method I employed with the Argentina data, I created a table of the number of instances of legal decisions between 2011 and 2016 regarding femicide, gender violence, and abortion. The process allowed me to identify the decisions courts in Chile made about the topics and make a comparison of decisions between the countries.

Two Argentine newspapers—*Clarín* and *Página 12*—allowed me to collect data about grassroots feminist protests in Argentina. I chose the two newspapers because *Clarín* presents an establishment viewpoint and *Página 12* has a leftist viewpoint sympathetic to the feminist protestors. I searched both newspapers' websites with search statements of Argentina, *feminista* [feminist], *manifestación* [demonstration], *marcha* [march], *protesta* [protest], *femicidio* [femicide], *violencia de género* [gender violence], *violencia doméstica* [domestic violence], and *aborto* [abortion]. I recorded protests between the years of 2011 to 2016. With the data, I learned the number of grassroots feminist protests in Argentina during the time range of five years. The information helped me make connections

between the dates and numbers of grassroots feminist protests in Argentina and the data about decisions regarding femicide, gender violence, and abortion in Argentina.

Using Chilean newspapers, *La Nación* and *El Mostrador*, I collected data about grassroots feminist protests in Chile in a similar manner to the Argentina data collection. *La Nación*'s viewpoint leans toward the establishment and *El Mostrador*'s leans to the left and is sympathetic to feminist views. Using the websites of both newspapers, I used search statements of Chile, *feminista* [feminist], *manifestación* [demonstration], *marcha* [march], *protesta* [protest], *femicidio* [femicide], *violencia de género* [gender violence], *violencia doméstica* [domestic violence], and *aborto* [abortion]. I set the year range as 2011 to 2016 and used a table to record the demonstrations. I identified the

frequency of grassroots feminist protests in Chile over five years through the process. I could compare the data regarding the grassroots feminist protests in Chile to the data about legal decisions.

I looked for correlations between the number of grassroots feminist protests to decisions regarding the issues and whether specific demands were met from 2011 to 2016. Next, I took tallies of the numbers of protests and the numbers of court decisions and categories. The data revealed connections between the protest demands and court decisions. Finally, I answered my research question with the information because I could infer the extent of the effect of grassroots feminists on decisions in the countries. The information also allowed me to compare influence of grassroots feminists on decisions in Argentina versus Chile.

FINDINGS

Argentina

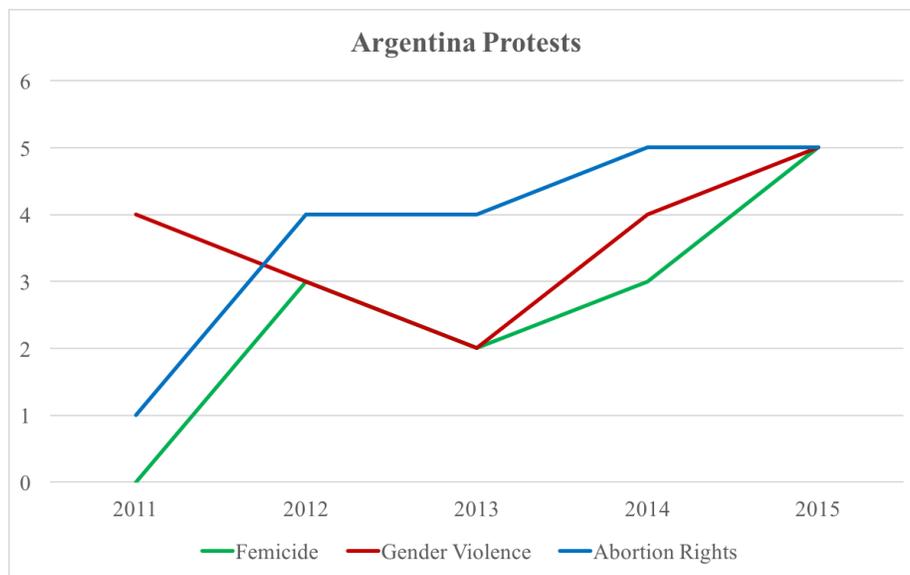


Fig. 1. Number of protests in Argentina, years 2011-2015

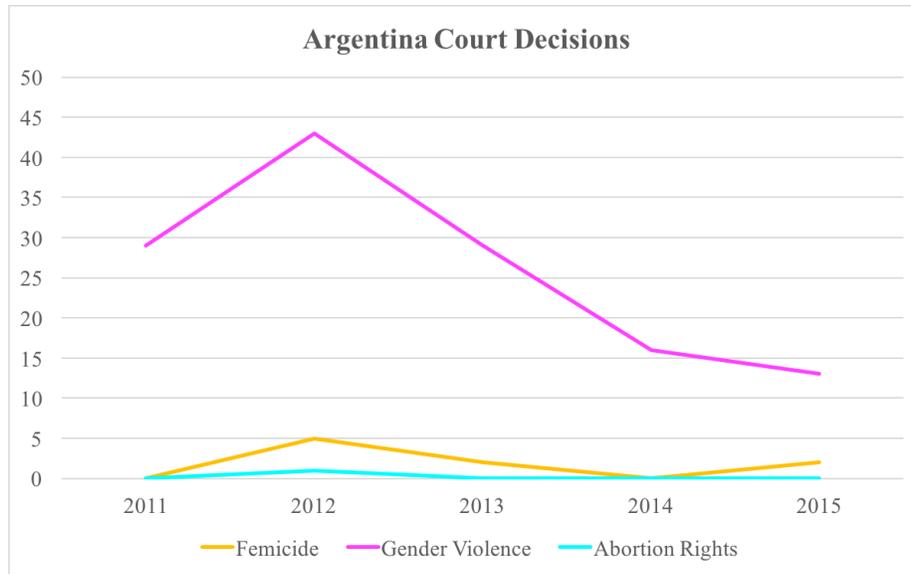


Fig. 2. Number of court decisions in Argentina, years 2011-2015

Femicide. When examining the specific feminist issue of femicide, the data confirms femicide protests in Argentina increased between 2011 and 2015 (see fig. 1). The increase generally shadows the increase of overall feminist protests in Argentina during the range. From 2011 to 2015, the newspapers noted 13 protests. There were more protests in 2014 and 2015 than in the years from 2011 to 2013. Though the newspapers did not specifically report protests regarding femicide in 2011, by 2015 there were five such protests.

The number of legal decisions about femicide in Argentina from 2011 to 2015 saw the biggest increase in 2012, suggesting 2012 was a significant year for femicide-related decisions (see fig. 2). In 2015, the Supreme Court announced commitment to creating a national registry of femicide, commitment to delivering justice in femicide cases, and created the registry in November. Generally, the number of decisions and protests about femicide did not both increase at the same points. However, after the #NiUnaMenos protests in

2015, the Supreme Court met two demands the movement wanted, suggesting that the Supreme Court was aware of the growing anger and protests about femicide.

Gender violence. There was little variance in the number of yearly protests in Argentina about gender violence between 2011 and 2015; the protest numbers stayed consistent (see fig. 1). Organizers of the protests included other topics such as abortion and femicide; the clustering of the topics may indicate feminist groups believe the three are related problems. Eighteen reported protests occurred between 2011 through 2015.

The courts in Argentina respond to gender violence in a variety of ways; at times, the courts punish, charge, or detain the perpetrator of the gender violence. However, more often, the courts report administrative tasks concerning gender violence. Eighty court announcements detailed a national registry of domestic violence, a longer sentence for rape, workshops, education, and meetings for court personnel about gender violence (see

fig. 2). Overall, both the number of protests and the number of decisions directly related to gender violence were small, yet consistent, during the time range; protest/legal decision interaction reflect each other. The results provide some evidence to suggest pressure by protest groups propelled the courts to hold offenders accountable and keep gender violence on the courts' agenda.

Abortion. The number of feminist protests supporting abortion rights increased from 2011 to 2015 in Argentina (see fig. 1). The numbers of abortion protests mirrored the numbers of feminist protests overall; both numbers generally increased. From 2011 to 2015, there were 19 protests for abortion rights. More protests occurred in 2014 and 2015 combined than in 2011, 2012, and 2013 combined. The jump in protest numbers may reflect, in part, the public recognition of the effect protests have on legal decisions.

The Supreme Court of Argentina handed down one legal decision about abortion

rights in Argentina from 2011 to March 2016. The legal decision is significant since Argentina has strict abortion rights laws (see fig. 2). The legal decision stemmed from a two-year-long Supreme Court case involving a 15-year-old girl terminating a pregnancy due to rape (Library of Congress). The Supreme Court decided not to charge the girl with a criminal offense for receiving an abortion (Library of Congress). The decision clarified a prior ruling stating a victim of rape cannot be charged with criminal liability if the woman decides to seek an abortion and will not need court authorization for the abortion (Library of Congress). While the courts have only handed down one decision about abortion rights, La Campaña Nacional por el Derecho al Aborto Legal, Seguro y Gratuito protested for abortion rights the year before, in 2011. At the time the courts made the decision abortion rights were a clear protest demand.

Chile

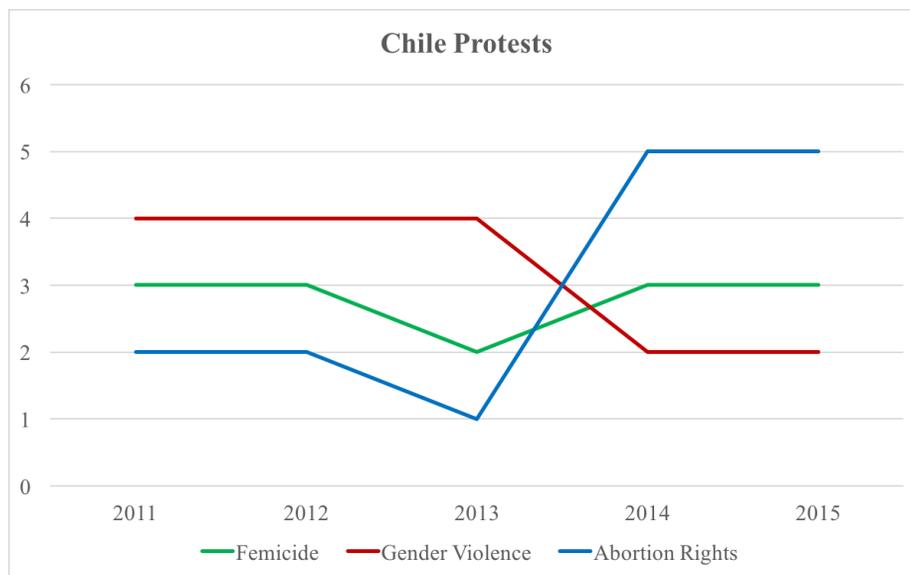


Fig. 3. Number of protests in Chile, years 2011-2015

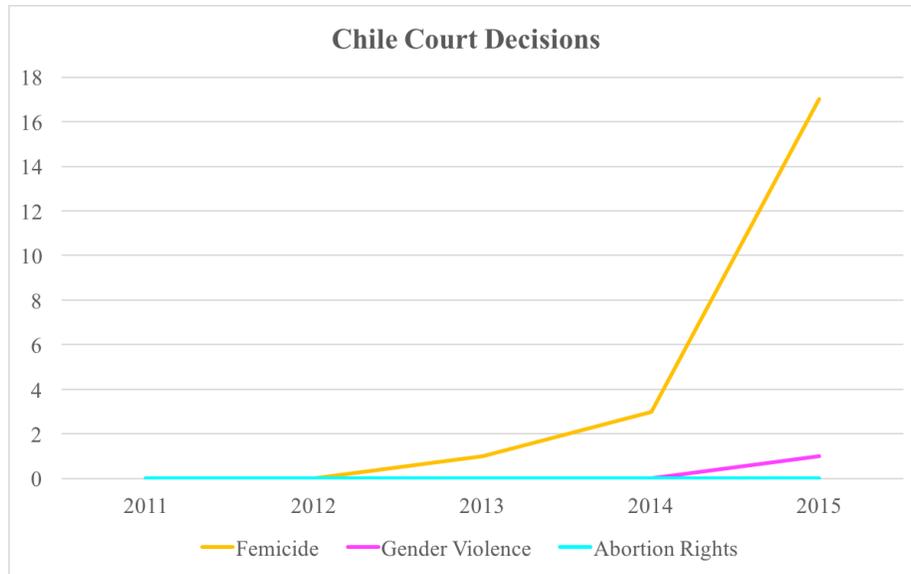


Fig. 4. Number of court decisions in Chile, years 2011-2015

Femicide. There was little variation in the number of protests against femicide in Chile between 2011 and 2015 (see fig. 3). Still, there were 14 total protests during the time range. The only dip in protests occurred in 2013, when the selected newspapers reported protestors gathered for just two public demonstrations against femicide. Whether the small variation in protests from 2011 to 2015 in Chile affected decisions about femicide will require taking a close look at the demands and decisions. The protests may have influenced the decisions about femicide.

In Chile, the number of judicial decisions regarding femicide increased between 2011 and 2015 (see fig. 4). The decisions dealt with Chileans the courts accused of having committed or attempted femicide. From 2011 to 2015, courts handed down 21 decisions regarding femicide. The numbers of protests and decisions did not parallel each other because the number of femicide protests stayed constant while the number of decisions increased. However, the results may serve as evidence to suggest

the numbers of femicide decisions increased because the protests stayed consistent; the courts felt the constant pressure. Further, numbers of legal decisions about femicide are continuing to increase in 2016 in Chile, providing evidence the increase from 2011 to 2015 was not a phase. Of the nine decisions, eight were legal decisions about femicide. However, a complete examination of the connections may be difficult because nine months (at the time of the research) remain in 2016.

Gender violence. From 2011 to 2015 in Chile, the number of protests regarding gender violence decreased (see fig. 3). Yet, the protests became more organized because of the participation in an international annual event. Protestors gathered for 16 marches against gender violence during the time range. An annual event in late November, Día Internacional de la NO Violencia Contra la Mujer, drew thousands of protestors each year from 2011 to 2015. The unexpected decrease in the number of protests may reveal a temporary trend away from the more generic topic of gender

violence and toward the more specific femicide and abortion issues. However, despite the five-year decrease, gender violence protests are increasing in Chile in 2016 as of March. The data possibly indicates a feminist goal of renewing the focus on gender violence in 2016.

While the number of decisions about gender violence in Chile increased from 2011 to 2016, the increase was not large (see fig. 4). The only decisions the Chilean judicial website reported were administrative, not about criminal punishment for perpetrators of gender violence. The decisions required training and seminars for judges and other court personnel throughout the country; the training was about handling domestic violence cases, better access to justice for victims, and the legal services victims of domestic violence can receive. At the time of the research, examination of the protests could not yet determine the protests' effects because the only decisions the courts reported were in 2015 and March of 2016. Because the legal decisions suggested court personnel need training about gender violence after the spike in protests, there may be a connection between the protests and decisions.

Abortion. Like the number of overall protests in Chile, protests for abortion rights increased in Chile from 2011 to 2015 (see fig 3.). The time range began with two protests in 2011 and increased to five protests in 2015. The evidence indicates a possible increase in pressure on legal decisions since the number of protests grew. Because the government abolished the only abortion rights—therapeutic abortion in 1989—abortion legislation will be significant to the protestors.

In Chile, between 2011 and March of 2016, the number of decisions regarding abortion slightly increased, suggesting a victory for the abortion rights issue since Chile is a country with one of the strictest anti-abortion laws (see fig. 4). After almost a year of debate, lawmakers in Chile's lower house of Congress approved a measure regarding abortion in March 2016 ("Cámara aprueba"). The lawmakers approved abortion in limited circumstances—rape, when the mother's life is in danger, and when doctors do not consider the fetus to be viable ("Cámara aprueba"). In order for the decision to pass, the Chilean Senate must approve the decision ("Cámara aprueba"). An increase of protests during 2014, 2015, and 2016—the last few years—may have affected the decisions because the legislators knew protests and public discontent were growing.

DISCUSSION

A relationship between feminist protests and legal decisions emerged in Argentina. While the effectiveness of the protests may appear to have lessened over time, a closer look at the decisions reveals something different. In 2012, after an increase in femicide and abortion rights protests, there was a spike in the number of court announcements. The announcements focused on administrative tasks such as the establishment of a national registry of domestic violence, workshops, education, and meetings for court personnel regarding gender violence. The establishment of the registry and educational opportunities signifies the decisions will have a continued presence in Argentinian society. In the five-year period, the courts granted major protestor requests. For example, in 2012

after an increase in femicide-focused protests and after the newspapers started using the word “femicide,” the courts amended the Criminal Code to include femicide as an aggravated type of homicide. Three years later in fall 2015, a few months after another increase in femicide-centered protests led by the #NiUnaMenos movement, the Supreme Court presented the first national registry of femicides. After a period of an increase of protests regarding gender violence, the courts amended the Penal Code to increase the maximum sentencing for rape to a thirty-year sentence. Finally, after an increase in abortion rights protests in 2012, the Supreme Court confirmed there would be no criminal liability for abortions performed in cases of rape. The findings answer the research question regarding Argentina because the data shows the feminist groups protested for several specific changes the courts eventually granted.

As with Argentina, a relationship between feminist protests and the decisions emerged in Chile. Again, as with Argentina, the Chilean courts made decisions supporting the protestors’ calls. Both the number of decisions and protests overall increased and the decisions and protests regarding abortion both increased. While the numbers of protests regarding femicide and gender violence remained stable—between two and four annual protests—the protests were a consistent presence and the legal decisions increased. After a consistent number of femicide protests in 2011 and 2012, courts first used the term femicide in a court sentencing in 2012 and established prison sentences for femicide-defined murder. In 2015, after years of stable numbers of femicide and gender violence protests, the courts required court personnel

training led by the Supreme Court regarding femicide and gender violence.

Administrative changes represent a trend toward greater awareness by the courts regarding cultural and systemic violence facing victims. Finally, after an increase in abortion protests, lawmakers in Chile’s lower house of Congress approved abortion in limited circumstances—rape, when the mother’s life is in danger, and when doctors do not consider the fetus to be viable. The findings reveal in both Argentina and Chile the numbers of feminist protests and legal decisions did not have a one-to-one correspondence. However, a one-to-one correspondence is not needed to argue the protests had an impact. For example, if there are five protests a year against femicide, success does not require five legal decisions the following years. Instead, the courts meeting one of the specific demands from the five protests would indicate success. Feminist movements in both countries influenced the decisions on the topics by achieving changes protestors demanded in each issue and the courts began using the term femicide in legal writings.

The influence feminist protests have on legal systems is a significant issue to address because of the urgency of the topics. The women and their family members—especially the children—also suffer. For example, La Asociación Civil la Casa del Encuentro, an NGO defending human rights of women in Argentina, reported in March 2016 there were 286 victims of femicides in 2015 (Iglesias, “En un año”). Consequently, 322 children became motherless due to femicide in 2015 (Iglesias, “En un año”). Although decisions about the issues cannot bring the women back, the decisions can prevent future femicides and suffering. Knowing whether feminist protests

influence decisions can help feminist-minded people decide what type of action the groups should take to help prevent future victims.

In addition to the urgency, the research question is important because during the research process time frame, March 2016, courts and legislators were actively making decisions and feminist movements were continuing to protest. In the first three months of 2016, lawmakers in Chile tentatively granted one of the feminist goals—expanding abortion rights. While feminists can be cautiously optimistic about the progress, the legal process is not yet over because the Chilean Senate still needs to approve the abortion decision (“Cámara aprueba”). Furthermore, in 2016, some of the protests in Argentina continue to use #NiUnaMenos; the hashtag has the potential to maintain permanent pressure on the Argentinean court system. Although the pattern of results for the number of yearly protests between the two countries studied differ slightly, the pressure on the respective governments to address the issues of femicide, gender violence, and abortion remains strong.

Many feminist-minded people agree that the generational practice of machismo creates a climate for femicide, gender violence, and lack of abortion rights. Women’s rights advocates in both countries point to the persistent presence of machismo in both cultures as a barrier to changing the attitude toward women. Women’s rights advocates claim Argentinean men believe that treating women as lesser citizens is acceptable because macho behavior is an everyday occurrence in Argentina (Goñi, “Argentine Women”). In Chile, women’s rights advocates similarly claim machismo is present in every region and social class,

consequently allowing men to believe women are inferior (“Campaña ‘¡Cuidado!’”). Identifying the machismo culture in both countries as a cause for lack of women’s rights and a barrier to the creation of more rights is important to Latin American Studies and Women’s Studies because feminist-minded people can attempt to find solutions to lessen machismo. Additionally, the concept of machismo harming Argentinean and Chilean women comes from women in the two countries; the concept is not a culturally-biased perception from people outside of Latin America.

One way to limit machismo is to have education in schools to teach young men and women that machismo is corrosive to society. The curriculum should focus on identifying machismo and institutional-based ways to end machismo. The fact that the public elected a former mayor supporting machismo—saying women like catcalls—to the presidency in Argentina suggests the Argentinean voters do not actively recognize and call out machismo, instead voters passively accept machismo (Goñi, “Argentine Women”). Additionally, in 2013, only 8 percent of surveyed executive committee members in Latin America were women, showing the effects of institutional machismo (Stillman, “Machismo Persists”). Education to identify machismo could possibly make machismo disappear. Education about institutional-based ways to end machismo would benefit women in the two countries because with equal access to justice, health care, political power, and employment they will not be as vulnerable.

CONCLUSION

Despite living in countries with cultures expressing historically negative views against women, feminist protestors in the last five years in the two countries have influenced legal decisions regarding femicide, gender violence, and abortion rights. Feminist protestors demanded specific legal changes within each of the topics and ultimately saw the specific legal changes. For example, in Argentina, courts increased the maximum sentencing for rape, created a registry of femicide and domestic violence, and granted abortion rights in cases of rape. Similarly, in Chile, the courts established prison sentencings for femicide-defined murder, ordered court personnel

training on femicide and gender violence, and lawmakers have tentatively expanded abortion rights. In both countries, the courts met some of the protestors' demands. Protests have a central place in shaping legal decisions in the two South American countries. The protests within the past five years publically pressured the lawmakers to create and pass new laws and decisions. Because feminist protestors influenced changes in two machismo-oriented countries, public street protesting appears to be an effective agent of change. Feminists in other male-dominated countries could look to the results of the feminist protests in Argentina and Chile as a model for change.

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