An Exploration of Animal Metaphors in Gender-Based Violence Campaigns

Una investigación de las metáforas animales en campañas de violencia de género

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This article is dedicated to my daughter, Helena.
Thanks for being in my life.

RESUMEN: Este artículo explora el uso de las metáforas animales en campañas contra la violencia de género. Se analiza un corpus basado en 39 campañas producidas entre 1998 y 2023 procedentes de 21 países donde se recurre a las metáforas animales en la representación de la víctima femenina y/o su maltratador masculino. Utilizando el enfoque de la Teoría de la Metáfora Conceptual, los resultados mostraron que las campañas reproducen tropos zoomórficos comúnmente vinculados con existentes discursos misóginos y de violencia de género, tales como políticos, legales, de los medios sociales y de comunicación, así como de la cultura popular. Los maltratadores son representados como agresivos, depredadores, peligrosos y controladores a través de metáforas como "animales", "bestias", "pitbulls", "buitres", "gallos", "pulpos" y "búhos". Las víctimas femeninas, por otro lado, son sexualizadas, subyugadas y ridiculizadas—física, intelectual y moralmente—por medio de comparaciones con "perras", "zorras", "gatas", "cerdas" y "burras".

Palabras clave: animal, metáforas, violencia de género, campañas contra la violencia de género, misoginia

ABSTRACT: This article explores the use of animal metaphors in gender-based violence campaigns. It analyzes a purpose-built corpus consisting of 39 public-awareness campaigns that run between 1998 to 2023 across 21 countries that resort to animal metaphors in the representation of the female victim and/or the male abuser. Through the

lens of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, the results revealed that campaigns reproduce
common zoomorphic tropes associated with existing misogynous and gender-based
violence discourses, such as political, legal, mass, and social media, and popular culture.
Male batterers are portrayed as aggressive, predatory, dangerous, and controlling through
zoomorphic metaphors such as "animals", "beasts", "pit bulls", "vultures", "roosters",
"octopuses", and "owls". Female victims, on the other hand, are sexualized, subjugated,
and derided, physically, intellectually, and morally, via comparisons with "bitches",
"vixens", "cats", "pigs" and "donkeys".

Keywords: animal, metaphors, gender-based violence, gender-based violence campaigns,
misogyny

1. INTRODUCTION. ANIMAL METAPHORS AND THE FRAMING OF GENDER

The animal kingdom is a rich source domain for the figurative conceptualization
of the character and personality of individuals (Haslam et al., 2011; Kövecses, 2002; Nesi,
1995; Ruiz & Herrero, 2005; Shokym et al., 2022). The straightforward transfer of a name
from an animal to a person includes "whale" (a large, overweight person), "kitten" (a
young woman with conspicuous sex appeal), "bull" (a man with a brawny physique),
"pig" (a dirty, gluttonous, or repulsive person), or "fox" (a clever, crafty person)
(*Merriam-Webster*). There is also a wealth of animal-based adjectives applied to people,
such as "cocky" (boldly or brashly self-confident), "mousy" (quiet or timid), or "goosey"
(very nervous or scared) (*Merriam-Webster*). In addition to nominalizations and
adjectivizations, human behavior can be understood in animalistic terms so that people
can "bark" if they shout in a loud and rough voice, "wolf down" when they gobble their
food, "duck out" if they leave suddenly without telling anybody, or "beaver away" when
working in an active and energetic way (*Merriam-Webster*). Metaphoric and metonymic
representations of people as animals abound in all languages (Almirabi, 2022; Vujković
&Vuković, 2021; Wang, 2022) for humans have been close to animals since the dawn of
times.

Animals tend to be understood in anthropomorphic ways (Epley et al., 2007),
since they are thought of as having a human form or human attributes that are then
projected onto people (Kövecses, 2002). Anthropomorphic animals are at the core of
fables. These fictitious narratives in which animals speak and act like humans for didactic
purposes illustrate how people have traditionally recurred to the animal kingdom to
express (un)desirable human characteristics and behaviors (Danta, 2018; Shahid et al.,
2022). In *The tortoise and the hare,* for example, the slow-moving animal beats the
arrogant fast hare in a race to show how zeal and perseverance can prevail over arrogance
and indolence.

The figurative senses attached to animals are culture specific (Deignan, 2003;
Duan et al., 2014; Talebinejad & Dastjerdi, 2005). In other words, they depend on the
socio-historical contexts where the metaphors have been coined and on the cultural values
of a particular speech community. Cross-linguistic studies have shown how the same
animal metaphor can have different meanings depending on the language. In English, a
"turkey" denotes a stupid person, but the same animal metaphor refers to someone clumsy

and hypocritical in Spanish and Persian, respectively. Animal metaphors, thus, are not universal.

Animal metonymies and metaphors are often based on a hierarchical structure in which people are positioned above animals due to the ideology of human superiority to beasts (Goatly, 2006). The mental schema of the Great Chain of Being (Lakoff &Turner, 1989) assigns a place for every entity in the universe in a strict hierarchical order which is pictured as a chain vertically extended. The more powerful and better the being, the higher it stands. So, at the top is God followed by celestial creatures. Then come humans; then, animals. Afterwards, flora, inanimate objects and, finally, the four elements. The Great Chain of Being presupposes that the natural order of the cosmos is that higher forms of existence dominate lower forms of existence. This folk cognitive model has important conceptual and linguistic repercussions, for when people are compared to animals, they are being degraded, and, thus, the animal-related metaphor is likely to convey undesirable human characteristics (Talebinejad & Dastjerdi, 2005; Ŝpago, 2022).

Within the mental framework of the Great Chain of Being, the representation of people as animals entails dehumanization. Certainly, on equating people with beasts, the former are being deprived of their human condition and inherent human rights. As a matter of fact, animal metaphors are part and parcel of the language of exclusion and hate (Bock & Burkley, 2019; Brandes, 1984; Goldernberg et al., 2009). Marginalized social groups, such as immigrants, homeless, disabled, sex workers, or criminals, tend to be seen through an animal lens (López-Rodríguez, 2009; Santa Ana, 1999) given that dehumanization fosters and facilitates ostracism as well as the exertion of violence towards the target group (Haslam et al., 2011: 312).

Another key aspect that relates to animal metaphors is the notion of (lack of) control. Based on the belief that humans, unlike animals, can refrain their impulses and drives thanks to their superior rational capacity (Kövecses, 2002), the identification of people with beasts tends to highlight uncontrollable emotions and behavior. Falling within the so-called "control metaphors" (Pérez, 2001: 180), thus, animal metaphors are always at hand to sanction conducts that are considered inappropriate, offensive, and even hurtful (López-Rodríguez, 2009) So, a person who fails to keep anger at bay turns into a "beast"; an individual unable to repress toxic speech is a "viper"; somebody who cannot control his physical force becomes an "animal" whereas one who cannot refrain his sexual instincts is seen as a "sexual predator".

Animal metaphors are used in the categorization of gender (R. Baker, 1981: 45-52; Hines, 1999: 9-21; Nilsen, 1996: 257-270). Males and females alike can be understood in animal terms. The former can be referred to as *studs*, *bucks*, *wolves*, or *bull*s, the latter, on the other hand, as *kittens*, *bitches*, *chickens*, and *vixens*. Apart from reflecting stereotypical gender roles that associate men with wild, strong, predatory creatures and women with domestic, weak, small animals (Bujok, 2013; López-Rodríguez, 2009), the use of zoomorphic metaphors in relation to gender also mirrors courtship behaviors (Baker, 1981; Bock et al., 2017; Glick & Fiske, 1996; Robinson et al., 2017). Within this context, hunting metaphors often describe dating scenarios where the man typically adopts the role of the predator (e.g.: *wolf*, *tiger*, *fox*) and the woman is usually likened to the prey (e.g.: *bunny*, *chick*). Such animalization in connection with sociocultural gender roles, as well as (sexual/romantic) interactions and relations, has been linked to a wide range of attitudes that promote and perpetuate sexism, sexual harassment, and sexual assault (Bock & Burkley, 2019). As a matter of fact, some animal metaphors are gendered (Baider & Gesuato, 2005; Fernandes, 2021; Reuter, 2007), since

they are imbued with a strong ideological component that mirrors stereotypical gender roles. In this sense, they can contribute to shaping hostile sexist attitudes (Silaŝki, 2013; Tipler & Ruscher, 2019) that can foster and lead to violence against women (Bock & Burkley, 2019; López-Rodríguez, 2023).

Notwithstanding that animal metaphors often articulate misogynous discourses, little attention has been paid to the deployment of the bestial iconography in public campaigns raising awareness of gender-based violence. Although these resources are one of the most common, popular, and effective forms of drawing attention to this social scourge (Azabal, 2020; Robb-Jackson & Campbell, 2022; Tsegah, 2016; Vallejo, 2018), no study, to date, has critically explored the use of the figurative zoomorphic scenario in gender-based violence campaigns. To address this relevant gap in the existing literature pertinent to the intersecting field of metaphorical use in public discourses of gender-based violence, this article intends to explore animal metaphors in gender-based violence campaigns. The project, thus, seeks to answer the following research questions:

1) What are the animal metaphors used to portray male abusers and female victims in gender-based violence campaigns?
2) What cultural values and ideologies are transmitted through these animal metaphors?
3) To what extent do these campaigns reproduce the gender-based violence and misogynous discourses articulated around animal metaphors?

The paper begins with an overview of animal metaphors in misogynous and gender-based violence discourses. This is followed by an explanation of the methodology used for the compilation and analysis of the corpus. The next section presents and discusses the results considering the pivotal role that metaphor plays in shaping people's cognition and action. It studies the ideologies transmitted through the animalization of the male abuser and of the female victim in gender-based violence campaigns. Finally, some conclusions are drawn regarding the use of the bestial iconography in campaigns aimed at raising awareness of violence against women.

2. ANIMAL METAPHORS, MISOGYNY, AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Metaphors "invite listeners to conceive of one issue or phenomenon in the light of another issue or phenomenon" (Paris, 2002:427) by mapping conceptual structures from a relatively familiar source domain onto a more abstract target domain. Metaphors, thus, provide iconographic references that may force individuals to see something through a specific lens, often leading to a distorted vision of reality (Fairclough, 2003: 67). In fact, research has shown how different metaphorical framings are conducive to different ways of thinking and acting about the subject presented. Seeing criminals as animals, for example, led individuals to ask for stricter penalties and punishments than when they were seen as viruses or illnesses (Thibodeau & Boroditsky, 2011).

Animal metaphors have been documented in misogynous and gender-based violence discourses, including political, popular, mass, and social media, sports, medical and legal (Bock & Burkley, 2019; Haslam et al., 2011; Lacalle et al., 2024; Lomotey, 2019; López-Rodríguez, 2023; Tipler & Ruscher, 2017). Within the realm of politics, figurative fauna figures prominently in the context of female politicians and female activists being derided and discredited through comparisons with beasts (Anderson, 1999;

Collier & Raney, 2018; Kassam, 2018; Kleinman et al., 2009). An illustrative example relates to US president Donald Trump's list of faunistic epithets, which include "dog", "pig" and "bitch", to refer to ex presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and German Chancellor Angela Merkel (Erichsen et al., 2020; Gallagher, 2022: 1; Rucker, 2018). Similarly, Brazil's presidents Lula da Silva and Jair Bolsonaro recurred to "cow" and "bitch" when addressing female political opponents (Phillips, 2022: 5; Sinderski & Esperidião, 2023: 7). Canadian foreign minister Peter MacKay made a canine remark when describing liberal member of parliament Belinda Stronach as "dog" after she left her husband (Stewart, 2006: 2). Ex-Philippines president Rodrigo Duterte called women at the gender-equality event of International Women's Day "bitches" (Ellis-Petersen, 2019: 1), whereas far-right Spanish politician Ángel Bordas used "vixen" to criticize feminists ("VOX", 2019: 7).

Popular culture is rife with examples of the symbolic transformation of women into animals. In addition to the iconic Playboy bunnies and of superheroines like Catwoman and Batwoman (Coppess, 2013; Hines, 1999), many songs portray women as animals that need to be tamed or hunted or that are in heat. Such is the case of the lyrics of Robin Thicke and T. I. Pharrell's "Blurred Lines" (2013) — <<Ok, now he was close/Tried to domesticate you/But you're an animal>>—, or Maroon 5's "Animals" (2014): <<Baby, I'm preying on you tonight. Hunt you down, eat you alive>>. Reggaeton singer J. Balvin's "Perra" (i.e., Bitch) (2021) identifies a sexually excited woman with a bitch in heat. On the other hand, Shakira's "Loba" (i.e., She-wolf) (2009) and Nebulossa's "Zorra" (i.e., Vixen) (2024) try to re-appropriate faunistic slurs to depict (sexually) independent females as wild beasts. Furthermore, classical movies like *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1958), *The Female Animal* (1958) and *Kiss of the Spiderwoman* (1985) bear witness to the common representation of women as animals. Finally, although at times obsolete, proverbs offer a window onto the discursive construction of women as beasts to sustain dominant patriarchal ideologies (Corbacho, 2009; Echevarría, 2011; Lomotey, 2019), as seen, for instance, in "women and hens are lost by too much gadding" or "donkeys and women need to be tamed by flogging".

Similarly, social media provide a wide repertoire of animal expletives directed at women. Terms such as "whales", "seals", "bitches", "dogs" and "bunnies" permeate on-line communities of the so-called manosphere on sites, such as X (formerly Twitter), Reddit or Facebook (Hopton & Langer, 2022; Lacalle et al., 2024; Tranchese & Sugiura, 2021). Additionally, highly popular influencers, such as Tik Toker Andrew Tate or Instagrammer Dan Bilzerian resort to the animalization of women to sexualize, deride, and even hierarchically rank women's physiques and sexual desirability (Ayres, 2019: 3; Cocoran, 2022: 1-7). The exploitation of animal tropes has also been observed in advertisement (Sloan, 2019; Villanueva, 2013). PETA campaigns, for instance, have utilized photographs of nude women, who were artistically depicted and publicly displayed as pieces of meat for sale in a butcher's shop. Fashion commercials have equally employed semi-naked models that had wild animal print painted onto their bodies and hairstyles evocative of the mane of lionesses, tigresses, or cheetahs to convey the notion of unrestrainable (sexual) behavior.

In the sports world, animal metaphors are always at hand to describe female athletes. Romanian coach Ilie Nastase addressed Keothavong and Konta as "fucking bitches" for not living up to his expectations at a tennis tournament (Ostlere, 2017: 2). Romania's gymnast Nadia Comaneci remembered being called "fat cow" and "pig" as part of her abusive training (The secret, 2021). Australian journalists nicknamed Russian

tennis player Anna Kournikova "sex kitten" when reporting on one of her matches against Martina Hingis (Perry, 2015).

The patriarchal ideology conveyed through the iconography of the bestial feminine, however, is not just a trope utilized in public discourse, as it is manifested in real episodes of gender-based violence. Indeed, often times, the language of the male abuser is articulated around animal metaphors that dehumanize, sexualize, and depreciate women (Beiras et al., 2015; Bock & Burkley, 2019; López-Rodríguez, 2023; Luke, 1998). Abusive men tend to conceptualize their female victims as all sorts of beasts (e.g.: "bitches", "kittens", "chicks", "pigs", "dogs", "whales", "cougars", "cows") to exert— and even legitimize—violence against them. To illustrate, the well-known "pig girl" and "wolf pack" cases in Canada and Spain, respectively. In the former, the male farmer named Robert Pickton kidnapped, tortured, and raped at least 33 women, whom he treated, literally and metaphorically, as pigs. He forced them to stay in his pigsty, addressed them with the porcine epithet, killed them with a butcher's knife and subsequently took their corpses to a slaughterhouse (Butts, 2020). The latter refers to a gang rape planned by 5 young men through their WhatsApp group, tellingly called "The Wolf pack". Casting themselves in the role of sexual predators, these males sexually abused a woman, filming and boasting about their sexual exploits in the abovementioned chat (Cedeira, 2017).

Health-care providers similarly document animal metaphors as part of the abusive behavior of batterers (Eisikovits & Buchbinder, 1997; Mullaney, 2007) and of the traumatic experiences of female victims (Beiras et al., 2015; Lawless, 2001). Clinical narratives register men's comparisons with animality to conjure up images of their loss of control when hurting women (Beiras et al., 2015; Holma et al., 2007). Speaking of "the animal or beast within", "the animal side" and of "turning into a beast", male perpetrators relate and pinpoint the origin of their aggressions to their primal animal nature. Analogously, female victims of gender-based violence see their aggressors through an animal lens, as attested in their personal testimonies (Klein, 2013) and memoirs, such as *The Beast I Loved: A Battered Woman's Desperate Struggle to Survive* (Davidson, 2018) or *Animal* (Taddeo, 2021). Interestingly, in therapies aimed at treating male batterers, health-care providers can resort to metaphors of domestication and taming to help control their negative, impulsive reactions (Beiras et al., 2015; Buchbinder, 2017). Police officers and other professionals within the legal system are likewise familiar with animal metaphors in cases of violence against women (Cook, 1999; Mahan, 2013; Novak, 2012).

Judging from recent statistics that state that 736 million women worldwide— almost one in three—have been subjected to some form of gender-based violence in their life (UNWomen, 2023), this study becomes relevant as an attempt to tackle the complexity and multi-faceted dimensions of violence against women. In fact, despite remarkable efforts in recent years to raise awareness of and eradicate this global problem—with new laws, policies, initiatives, and campaigns led by feminist movements, (non-) governmental organizations, police forces, health services and educational administrations—, the figures of violence against women are still alarming today. In 2023 the Office on Women's Health recorded 89,000 femicides globally (OASH, 2023) and the World Health Organization also informed of the serious short- and long- term physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health problems for these victims of gender-based violence, with 42% of women reporting an injury, 41% experiencing depression, and 16% suffering a miscarriage (WHO, 2023). In addition, given that violence against women tends to happen behind closed doors, the available data must certainly hide an

even bleaker reality (Biswas & Das Chatterjee, 2023; Davies & True, 2019) that several gender-based violence campaigns are trying to bring to the public eye (Morales, 2013; Ramírez, 2015; Robb-Jackson & Campbell, 2022; Vallejo, 2018). Hence, because these campaigns are devised to have a social impact and change behavior, they deserve closer examination.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. METHOD

Data for this study were collected through the google search utilising a combination of English and Spanish key words relevant to the research questions with a focus on figurative fauna (i.e., "animal"/ "animal", "beast"/ "bestia", "fauna"/ "fauna", "metaphor"/ "metáfora") in relation to public gender-based violence campaigns (i.e., "gender-based violence campaigns"/ "campañas de violencia de género"). As a result, a total of 39 campaigns from 21 countries were retrieved. As such, these campaigns were produced in different languages, namely, English, Spanish, Galician, French, and Lithuanian.

Following Conceptual Metaphor Theory, the study considered that the main function of metaphor is the understanding of complex, abstract ideas in terms of more concrete, bodily ones (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The campaigns were, then, coded with the use of an animal metaphor as a unit of analysis. The project took into account that metaphors can be expressed through other means of communication rather than just language—gestures, music, sound, visuals—and, therefore, it employed the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) (Pragglejaz Group, 2007) and the Visual Metaphor Identification Procedure (VISMIP) (Šorm & Steen, 2018) for the identification and manual coding of the animalesque metaphors. Both procedures call for 1) reading the text-discourse to get a global understanding of the meaning/observing the visual image to get the general idea , 2) determining if each lexical unit in the text has a more basic, more concrete, or historically older meaning in other contexts than in the given one/determining if the images displayed present perceptually incongruous elements that violate an expected, more concrete, or literal scenario and 3) if so, marking the unit as metaphorical. To illustrate how these procedures work, consider two of the campaigns analyzed in this project: "Hit the Bitch" and "Te amo≠ Tu amo." The unit "bitch" means "an unpleasant, malicious and even promiscuous woman" in the campaign context. Yet, "bitch" has the basic sense of "a female dog" in other contexts and, therefore, "bitch" is marked as metaphorical according to the MIP. The other campaign shows the image of a woman kneeling with a collar around her neck and a leash that is held by a man. The image displayed is incongruous because collars and leashes are typically associated with dogs. Hence, following the VISMIP, the campaign poster evokes the image of a female dog instead of a woman and, thus, it is coded as metaphorical.

3.2. CORPUS

The resulting corpus was comprised of 54 metaphorical items—19 referring to male abusers and 35 to female victims (see tables 1 and 2).

Table 1. Animal metaphors for the male abuser

No.	Animal metaphor	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Animal	5	26.31%
2.	Beast	2	10.52%
3.	Dog	2	10.52%
4.	Pig	2	10.52%
5.	Spider	1	5.26%
6.	Donkey	1	5.26%
7.	Fauna	1	5.26%
8.	Rooster	1	5.26%
9.	Vulture	1	5.26%
10.	Owl	1	5.26%
11.	Sparrow	1	5.26%
12.	Octopus	1	5.26%
Total		19	100%

Table 2. Animal metaphors for the female victim

No.	Animal metaphor	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Bitch	19	54.2%
2.	Vixen	5	14.28%
3.	Bird	2	5.74%
4.	Insect	1	2.85%
5.	Animal	1	2.85%
6.	Pig	1	2.85%
7.	Donkey	1	2.85%
8.	Cougar	1	2.85%
9.	Cat	1	2.85%
10.	Viper	1	2.85%
11	Cow	1	2.85%
12	Butterfly	1	2.85%
Total		35	100%

Note that all the linguistic metaphors were regarded as the surface manifestation in language of conceptual metaphors. Hence, once retrieved and noted, the former were grouped thematically so that conceptual metaphors could be put forward to account for them.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis revealed that the metaphors applied to female victims (35 tokens) outnumber those used to represent male abusers (19 tokens) (see table 3). This might reflect the general language imbalance regarding animal names framing gender, for there

are more animal metaphors applied to women than to men (Baider & Gesuato, 2005; López-Rodríguez, 2009; Nesi, 1995). Studies have shown that women are more prone to animalization than men, because women's biological physiology (sexualization, fertilization, giving birth) tends to be more emphasized than men's (Heflick & Goldenberg, 2014; Reynolds & Haslam, 2011). Hence, women are more likely to be viewed as closer to animals and nature in general than men are (Bock & Burkley, 2019: 264). In addition, within the traditional Western patriarchal paradigm articulated around binary oppositions that sustain male dominance—human/animal, man/woman, civilization/nature—women have traditionally been compared to beasts (Adams, 1990; Adams & Donovan, 1995; Adams & Gruen, 2014). The categories "woman" and "animal", indeed, have symbolically been constructed as the dominant, submissive "Other" (Gruen, 1993).

Table 3. Gender-based violence campaigns based on animal metaphors

Campaign & date	Country	Animal metaphors	
		Male batterer	Female victim
Captain Harley's be cool…not cruel (1998)	Australia	Dog	
Fight Domestic Violence (2001)	New Zealand		bitch
¿Qué clase de animal eres? [What kind of animal are you?] (2006)	Spain	animal [animal]	
Spread the Word (2007)	Canada		bitch
We help deal with all kinds of animals (2008)	Australia	Animal	
Actúa. Siempre actuar, nunca mirar [Act. Always act, never watch. Stop domestic violence] (2008)	Spain	Spider	insect
Hit the Bitch (2009)	Denmark		bitch
Words Hurt (2013)	Lebanon		bitch
This is a Bitch (2013)	USA		bitch
Treated Worse than Animals (2014)	India		animal
Puta, Porca, Burra [Whore, Pig, Donkey] (2014)	Spain		porca [pig] burra [donkey]
Bye, Felipe (2014)	USA		bitch cougar
Día Internacional contra la violencia de género [International Day Against Gender-Based Violence] (2014)	Spain		pájaro [bird]

Usa la razón [Use your Head] (2014)	Colombia		perra [bitch]
Men for Women (2015)	Lithuania	dog donkey	
Ça suffit [Enough is enough] (2015)	France		bitch
Dear Daddy (2016)	Norway		bitch
Speak up like humans, don't be violent like animals (2016)	USA	Animal	
#Balancetonporc [Expose your pig] (2017)	France	porc [pig]	
Vivir junto a una bestia no es siempre un cuento de hadas [Living with a beast is not always a fairy tale] (2017)	Ecuador	bestia [beast]	
No seas animal [Don't be an animal] (2018)	Spain	fauna gallo [rooster] cerdo [pig] buitre [vulture] búho [owl] gorrión[sparrow] pulpo [octopus]	
Flip the Bitch Switch (2018)	New Zealand		bitch
#CambiaElTrato [Change the deal] (2018)	Argentina	Animal	
Zorra. No vales para nada. Duele leerlo. Imagínate vivirlo [Vixen. You are worthless. Reading it is painful. Imagine living it] (2019)	Spain		zorra [vixen]
Only animals can't control their lust. Stay human. Stop harassment (2019)	Egypt	Animal	
#ViolenciaES [It is Violence] (2019)	Mexico		perra [bitch] zorra [vixen] gata [cat]
Si soy una zorra. Si soy una perra. Si soy una víbora. Si soy una vaca es porque…[If I am a vixen. If I am a bitch. If I am a viper. If I am a cow it is because…] (2020)	Spain		zorra [vixen] perra [bitch] víbora [viper] vaca [cow]
It's time to flip the sexist script (2021)	UK		bitch
Internet Violence Museum (2021)	China		bitch

¡Por zorra! Te voy a violar [Because you are a vixen! I am going to rape you] (2021)	Colombia		zorra [vixen]
SheIsABitch (2021)	India		bitch
Volamos juntas [We fly together] (2021)	Spain		mariposa [butterfly]
Not your Bitch (2021)	Italy		bitch
Zorra es guarra. Zorro es listo. Sí, claro. [Vixen is slut. Fox is smart. Yes, of course] (2021)	Spain		zorra [vixen]
Hail Bitch! (2022)	Canada		bitch
Te amo≠ Tu amo [I love you ≠ Your owner](2022)	Spain		perra [bitch]
Cage bought to hold wandering animals. Modified to punish a straying wife (2023)	Cambodia		Bird
Man not Beast (2023)	Nigeria	Beast	
Through their Eyes (2023)	Australia		bitch

4.1. THE MALE ABUSER IS AN ANIMAL METAPHOR

As for the metaphors used for male abusers, the findings revealed a tendency to categorize them in terms of "wild beasts". Except for "dog", "pig", "rooster", and "donkey", which are all classified as domestic animals, all the other animals pertain to wild fauna. The generic term "animal" and its equivalent "beast" are registered in 8 campaigns to highlight the lack of rationality and of control of the male batterer. This is so because the PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS metaphor is based on the dichotomous folk belief that there is an animal inside each person and civilized people are expected to restrain their impulses and instincts with their rational capacity (Kövecses, 2002). Classified as "control metaphors" (Pérez, 2001: 180), then, animal metaphors tend to convey and condemn a type of extreme and undesirable behavior (Kövecses, 2002; Nayak & Gibbs, 1990).

Nigeria's "Man not Beast" (2023) brings the opposite pair man/animal to the forefront to make male abusers reflect on—and stop—their inhumane actions. The campaign video alternates images of men caring for women and wild animals attacking their preys to distinguish between human and bestial behavior. Similarly, the Australian police department juxtaposes a photograph of an animal fighting and of a man hitting a woman to equate their aggressions, while encouraging people to denounce gender-based violence in "We help deal with all kinds of animals" (2008). The straightforward identification of the male perpetrator with a beast is also at the core of the Spanish "No seas animal" (2006), where the animal kingdom is used as a mirror that reflects the conduct of the male abuser. After listing several animal species that exploit and even kill their partners, the campaign directly asks the batterer to identify himself with a type of beast (1):

> (1) El león se aprovecha de su familia. El gallo maltrata a sus semejantes. La mantis asesina a su pareja. ¿Y tú? ¿Qué clase de animal eres…?" [The lion

takes advantage of his family. The rooster mistreats his kin. The mantis assassins his partner. And you? What sort of animal are you?] (Spain 2006)

"Speak up like humans, don't be violent like animals" (USA 2016), on the other hand, uses human speech as a distinctive feature separating people from animals to underscore the aggressive conduct of male abusers and to promote verbal communication.

The campaigns corresponding to examples (2), (3) and (4) reduce those men unable to keep their sexual urges at bay to the category of a lustful animal in order to address (sexual) harassment and abuse. Activating the metaphor A LUSTFUL PERSON IS AN ANIMAL (Lakoff, 1987), the three campaigns directly urge male batterers to control their animalistic sex drive by appealing to their human condition. Notice the use of the verb "control" (3-4), the explicit juxtaposition animal-beast/human (2-4), the figurative term "fauna" (2) to encompass all types of batterers and the verb "extinguish" (2), typically associated with the extinction of animal species, in calls for civil collaboration to eradicate harassment. This animalesque portrayal, in turn, is reinforced through some of the campaign's posters and videos that link animals with men that harass women. In (2) six men are seen wearing different animal masks when stalking women on the street, whereas (3) presents one man making animal sounds when approaching a woman. (4) shows photographs of several beasts mating:

(2) No al acoso callejero. No seas animal. Ayúdanos a que la fauna callejera se extinga. [No to street harassment. Don't be an animal. Help us extinguish street fauna] (Spain 2018)

(3) #CambiaElTrato. La estás acosando. ¿Eres un animal que no te puedes controlar [#Change the deal. You are harassing her. Are you an animal that cannot control yourself?] (Argentina 2018)

(4) Only animals can't control their lust. Stay human. Stop harassment (Egypt 2019)

In addition to highlighting the violent behavior typically associated with wild animals, the campaign "Vivir junto a una bestia no es siempre un cuento de hadas [Living with a beast is not always a fairy tale] (Ecuador 2017) plays with the Disney character of Beast to break up with the stereotype of romantic love ingrained in fairy tales, where female characters are usually dominated, and even abused by their male partners. Beast, indeed, epitomizes the male batterer (Coates et al., 2019: 124-125). He is an animal literally speaking and behaves as such. His romance with Belle is based on abduction, imprisonment, isolation, aggression, and manipulation. Even though Belle's love acts as the catalyst for Beast's transformation into a charming prince, that does not change the fact that Beast has mistreated Belle (Lederer, 2012). The campaign poster makes this clear by presenting actress Emma Watson, who plays Belle in the Disney movie, with a purple eye and a broken nose next to Beast ("Crean campaña", 2012: 1).

The figurative dog, applied to a worthless or contemptible person (Waśniewska, 2018: 12-14), appears twice in the corpus. The Australian campaign "Captain Harley's be cool…not cruel", which centers on a 5-year-old member of a family represented as slightly humanized dog characters, portrays the male abuser as a dangerous dog. In the poster, a mean looking dog character, the father, shouts over the mother and children, whereas on the T.V. commercial the dog-like father is growling at the mother—barking instead of using words (Donovan & Vlais, 2005: 138), with the negative implications

attached to the metaphoric "bark" when applied to humans (i.e., to speak in an angry, court, aggressive tone of voice [Ruiz & Herrero, 2005: 938]). Analogously, Lithuania's "Men for Women" likens male abusers to fighting dogs to underscore their violent conduct ("Human Rights", 2015: 1). The campaign poster displays a man whose face has been replaced by that of a Staffordshire bull terrier, standing in a police station getting a photograph taken as a criminal and holding a sign with the police telephone number. Tellingly, the dog's mouth is wide open, revealing his sharp teeth and a long drooling tongue to reinforce connotations of aggressiveness and viciousness. This campaign also depicts male abusers as donkeys in its slogan: "Looking for a donkey. If found, stop him or dial 112 for the police". An epitome of stupidity and stubbornness, this beast of burden is regarded as an insult in English and Lithuanian cultures (Sakalauskaite, 2010: 32-33).

"Vulture", "owl", "sparrow", "octopus", "pig" and "rooster" are recorded once in the corpus. These metaphors appear in the same campaign, the Spanish "No seas animal. Ayúdanos a que la fauna callejera se extinga" [Don't be an animal. Help us eradicate street fauna]—see (5) below. The poster and video feature six men wearing different animal masks. Each animal stands for a type of contemptible behavior, illustrative of the (sexual) harassment women face while on the street. The script, which reads as follows, describes the type of predatory behavior of each animal to conclude that these actions are not characteristic of people:

> (5) El búho que no te quita ojo de encima. El buitre siempre al acecho. El cerdo te grita barbaridades. El gallito te dice "piropos" a unos metros de distancia. El gorrión reclama tu atención silbándote. El pulpo se pega cada vez que puede. Estos comportamientos no son propios de personas. [The owl that sets his eyes on you. The vulture that is always stalking. The pig that shouts atrocities. The rooster that makes "compliments" close to you. The sparrow that seeks your attention whistling. The octopus that clings to you whenever he can. These actions are not characteristic of people] ("No seas animal", 2018: 1)

Three birds epitomize stalking: the owl, the vulture, and the sparrow. These avian metaphors activate a hunting scenario that frequently conceptualizes heterosexual relationships as a male predator chasing his female prey, a dynamic often linked to sexual harassment and rape (Bock & Burkley, 2019). Far from symbolizing wisdom, the "owl" here is associated with nocturnal sight. It, then, conveys the notion of constant surveillance and stalking. As for the vulture, this rapacious bird that scavenges on carrion suggests the (sexual) voracity of male sexual predators. Despite not being a bird of prey, the figurative sparrow has a strong sexual charge too, for he is shown seeking females' attention through sounds. Hence, his mating call runs parallel to the whistles made by the male abuser when sexually pursuing women, as seen in the campaign video.

The figurative octopus suggests fondling. Rooted in the image of many tentacles moving and grabbing objects, the metaphor recreates men's unwanted physical groping of women (Herrero, 2005: 109). The rooster, which embodies masculinity, arrogance, and dominance over women (López-Rodríguez, 2007: 139), is associated with verbal aggression in the campaign video, since it is pictured making sexual comments to women. The same form of violence is conveyed through the metaphoric porcine, seen yelling and making obscene remarks at women. Symbol of dirtiness—both in the physical and moral senses—the figurative pig illustrates the abuser's shameful sexual conduct (Stibbe, 2003:

378). The same porcine metaphor appears in the French campaign "#Balancetonporc" [Expose your pig], which renders powerful males that sexually harass women as pigs (Vidon, 2017: 1).

Finally, the male abuser is likened with a spider in "Actúa. Siempre actuar, nunca mirar" [Act. Always act, never watch] (Spain 2008). The arachnid metaphor, on the one hand, highlights the toxic relationship with a male batterer, for most spiders are poisonous and even lethal. On the other hand, it underscores predatory behavior, for the spider is seen making a web, where a woman has been trapped (Sánchez-Montilla, 2015: 46).

4.2. THE FEMALE VICTIM IS AN ANIMAL METAPHOR

As opposed to the bestial iconography of the male abuser, most animal metaphors applied to women pertain to the domestic realm, mirroring, therefore, sexist assumptions about the social role traditionally attributed to women (see table 3).

"Bitch"—and its Spanish equivalent "perra" —is the most recurrent metaphor in the corpus. One of the most common terms of opprobrium for a woman (Kassam, 2018; Kleinman et al., 2009; Sánchez-Montilla, 2015), the female dog figuratively condenses the notions of maliciousness, spitefulness, and bossiness (Hughes, 1991). The slur, indeed, is usually applied to strong, belligerent, and influential women (Kassam, 2018) given that these traits tend to be negatively associated to female power (Caputi, 2004). Several campaigns pun on the literal and metaphorical senses of "bitch" to draw attention to the verbal violence conveyed through the faunistic epithet. Showing photographs of female dogs and women, (6) and (7) make it clear that "bitch" is a term that should pertain exclusively to the canine domain, but on no account should it be applied to a woman:

(6) This is a bitch. This is a woman who speaks up her mind (USA 2013)
(7) She's pricey. She's snooty. She's controlling. She's a bitch (India 2021)

In like manner, (8) and (9) denounce the widespread use of "bitch" to attack powerful and confident women:

(8) Spread the word. She is NOT a bitch. She is a strong woman (Canada 2007)
(9) Es una perra. Tiene carácter fuerte, pero no merece tu violencia [She is a bitch. She has a strong personality, but she does not deserve your violence] (Mexico 2019)

Italy's "Not Your Bitch" (2021) centers on the metaphorical senses of "cagna" (Italian for "bitch") to bring to the fore the sexism inherent in language (Bacchi, 2021: 1-3). Based on dictionary definitions, the campaign details how terms like "bitch" are a form of verbal aggression that contribute to the sexualization of women. On the other hand, the Spanish campaign "Si soy una perra es porque soy fiel a mí misma" [If I am a bitch is because I am faithful to myself] (Spain 2020) exploits the positive connotations attached to dogs to re-claim the gender stigmatizing label ("La provocadora campaña", 2020: 1).

New Zealand's "Flip the Bitch Switch" (2018) renders women as the female canine to warn about sexual assault. The campaign, which plays on the acoustic similarities between "bitch" and "switch", encourages women to take free self-defense courses to protect themselves from male aggressors (Rowe, 2018: 1-8). In Spain "Te amo

≠Tu amo" (2022) puns on the polysemy of "amo", meaning "owner" and "I love" in Spanish, to portray a battered woman as a bitch. Its slogan "Te amo no significa tu amo", that is, "I love you does not mean I owe you" is illustrated with a photograph of a young woman with a dog's collar around her neck that is held by a man to reflect her submissive situation and inhuman mistreatment (Sánchez-Montilla, 2015: 48).

Two campaigns bring to the fore the psychological damage caused when calling a woman "bitch". "BITCH. Fight Domestic Violence" (New Zealand 2001) shows photographs of battered women with the word "BITCH"—in capital letters—smeared over their heads (Donovan & Vlais, 2005: 68), since this body part metonymically represents one's state of mind and mental health. Similarly, the Lebanese "Words Hurt" (2013) features the image of a woman who has endured domestic violence. Her wounds mimic the shape of the audio waveform of the word "bitch" that has been hurled at her (Green, 2013: 1-3). The slogan makes it clear the long-lasting psychological effects of this form of verbal aggression: "Bitch. Words Hurt. You can't see them but the scars from verbal abuse are real and can last for years."

The Danish "Hit the Bitch!" (2009) and the Norwegian "Dear Daddy" (2015) take a step further by linking "bitch" not only with verbal and psychological violence, but also with physical and sexual abuse. The former features a videogame where the player must smack a woman, explicitly named "bitch", to score points. After vividly depicting the bruises and painful screams of the female character, the word "IDIOT"—in capital letters—appears on the screen as a rebuke to condemn domestic violence (Sharp, 2009). The latter is a short video that takes the form of a missive sent by a girl-to be-born to her father. The baby foresees "bitch" as part of the name-calling she will be subjected to during her lifetime, which will eventually lead to her sexual harassment and rape— see (10):

> (10) I need to ask you a favor. Warning: it's about boys. Because, you see, I will be born a girl. Which means by the time I'm 14, the boys in my class will have called me a whore, a bitch, a cunt, and many other things. It's just for fun of course, something boys do. So, you won't worry. And I understand that. By the time I turn 16, a couple of the boys will have snuck their hands down my pants while I'm so drunk I can't even stand straight. And although I say no, they just laugh. It's funny, right? […] Dear daddy, this is the favor I want to ask. One thing always leads to another. So please stop it before it gets the chance to begin. Don't let my brothers call girls whores, bitches, because they're not ("Norway's Dear Daddy", 2015: 1-7).

Similarly, Colombia's "Usa la razón" [Use your head] (2014) and England's "Flipped the Sexist Script" (2021) stress how calling a woman "bitch" contributes to her objectification, sexualization, and, ultimately, (verbal, physical, sexual) abuse. Based on the lyrics of reggaeton songs that portray women as sexy and hot bitches, the Colombian campaign unveiled the dangerous sexist messages that promote sexual violence through this popular music (García-Calderón, 2015): "Escucha con atención: Es una perra caliente, que lo quiere, que lo quiere" [Listen carefully: She is a bitch in heat who wants sex, who wants sex] and "Escucha con atención Esa perra quiere guerra" [Listen carefully: That bitch wants a sexual war]. The English campaign alerts people to the lethal consequences that sexist words like "bitch" can have in relation to domestic abuse ("It's Time", 2021): "Sexist Script: Women are sexual objects. Flipped script: The sexual

objectification of women underpins domestic abuse. No to dirty, bitch, slag, slut and nympho".

"Bitch" is at the core of two campaigns that recreate dating scenarios and everyday interactions where men express their (sexual) entitlement, (sexual) dissatisfaction and (sexual) frustration through this slur. Tackling sexual harassment on public transportation, "Ça suffit" [Enough is enough!] (France 2015) includes a transcript of a man who, making unwanted sexual advances, calls an unknown woman "bitch" while commuting in the metro: "Hello, Mademoiselle. You're lovely. Let's get to know each other. Is that short skirt for me? You're hot, you're turning me on. Answer me, dirty bitch. Stop—that's enough". Based on real screenshots from on-line dating sites and applications like OKCupid and Tinder, "Bye Felipe" (USA 2014) draws attention to the pervasiveness of "bitch" as a form of address for a woman who rejects man's (sexual) proposals: "Bitch, I said hi. Bitch, reply to me. Why don't you want to go out with me anymore, bitch?" (Shaw, 2016).

Three campaigns resort to "bitch" to illustrate cyberviolence against women. Featuring a short movie that documents hatred against women on the web, "Hail Bitch: Misogyny in the Digital Age" (Canada 2022) already employs the canine metaphor in its title to show the prevalence of this slur on the internet "Bitch. Bitch. Bitch. Everywhere" ("The 16 Days", 2022). The campaign video "Through their Eyes" (Australia 2023) showcases how female gamers are bombarded with insults like "bitch" in the gaming universe: "Stop playing, fucking bitch!" ("Maybelline & Hero", 2023). With the same purpose, the "Internet Violence Museum" (China 2021) campaign blankets a hill with red flags displaying real messages from the internet, in which women, particularly feminist activists, are derided as "bitches", such as "I hope you die, bitch" or "Little bitch, screw you" (Davidson, 2021).

Data analysis revealed that five campaigns use "zorra" (i.e., vixen) in the representation of women. Although the metaphor connotes cunningness, it generally applies to promiscuous, lewd women, and even to female sex workers (*DRAE*; Fernández & Jiménez, 2023). "Campaña de sensibilización" [Raising-awareness campaign against gender-based violence] (Spain 2021) juxtaposes the meanings of the animal pair "zorro/zorra" (i.e., fox/vixen) to denounce the blatant sexism inherent in language, for if "zorra" means dirty in the moral sense of the term and even prostitute, its male counterpart denotes a clever, crafty man ("Campaña de sensibilización", 2021, pp. 1-3): "Zorra es guarra. Zorro es listo. Sí claro" [Vixen is slut. Fox is smart. Yes, of course]. The Spanish campaign "Si soy una zorra es porque me muevo con inteligencia" [If I am a vixen is because I move and act in a smart way] (2020), by contrast, attaches the positive connotations of the male "fox" to the female "vixen" in order to re-appropriate the zoomorphic epithet ("La provocadora campaña", 2020: 1-7).

"Zorra. No vales para nada. Duele leerlo. Imagínate vivirlo" [Vixen. You are worthless. Reading it is painful. Imagine living it] (Spain 2019) highlights the damage caused through this animal slur. Apart from its explicit motto, the campaign poster further reinforces this form of verbal aggression, for it shows a man with a fist coming out of his wide-open mouth while yelling "zorra" (i.e., vixen).

In addition to underscoring verbal violence, Mexico's "Esa chava es una zorra" [That girl is a vixen] (2019) and Colombia's "¡Por zorra!" [Because you are a vixen!] (2021) connect "zorra" with sexual abuse. Whereas the Mexican campaign states that "zorra" functions as a social label that chastises women's sexual behavior, the Colombian

one exposes the link between "zorra" and man's sexual entitlement and sexual aggression—see (11) and (12):

> (11) "¡Esa chava es una zorra! Los chismes forman parte de la violencia comunitaria. Las personas tenemos derecho a la libertad, expresión y autonomía sexual [This girl is a vixen! Gossiping is part of the violence of a community. People have the right of freedom, expression, and sexual autonomy] (Mexico 2019)
>
> (12) ¡Por Zorra! Te voy a violar. [Because you are a vixen! I am going to rape you] (Colombia 2021)

The metaphors "animal", "porca" [pig], "burra" [donkey], "cougar", "gata" [cat], "víbora" [viper], "vaca" [cow], "mariposa" [butterly], "insecto" [insect] and "bird" are also registered in the corpus. "Butterfly" is used as a metaphor of metamorphosis and hope to describe women who flee from domestic violence in "Volamos juntas" [We fly together] (Spain 2021). The poster displays faces of women in the shape of the wings of a butterfly to encourage victims of abuse to seek change and freedom ("El vuelo", 2021). In like manner, Cambodia exploits the associations of liberty and autonomy attached to flying animals in a campaign that represents victims of domestic violence as birds trapped in a cage, as seen in its motto "Cage bought to hold wandering animals. Modified to punish straying wives", which, in turn, is illustrated with a wooden cage and a woman ("Domestic Violence", 2023). The same metaphor resurfaces in the Spanish campaign for the International Day against Gender Violence (2014). This time, however, the cage where the woman is trapped is placed inside the mind of the male abuser to suggest his (psychological) control over her (Sánchez-Montilla, 2005: 40).

In "Puta, porca, burra" [Slut, pig, donkey] (Spain 2014), the animal metaphors "porca" (i.e., pig") and "burra" (i.e., donkey) are embedded in derogatory comments made to criticize a woman's intelligence and cleanliness, for the donkey and the pig represent stupidity and dirtiness in Spanish. The campaign, illustrated with the words "porca" and "burra" made up of photographs of women, draws attention to this form of verbal aggression—see (13) and (14):

> (13) Tú calla que de esto no sabes, burra [You, shut up, because you know nothing, donkey] (Spain, 2014)
>
> (14) Mira cómo tienes la casa, cerda [Look at how filthy you have the house, pig] (Spain, 2014)

Mexico's "Ésa es una gata" [That woman is a cat] (2019) and USA's "Bye Felipe" (2014) use feline metaphors with a strong sexual charge (López-Rodríguez, 2009) to criticize the verbal abuse women endure because of their sexual behavior. The first one explicitly exposes the violence and debasement expressed when calling a woman "gata" (i.e., cat), a metaphor that describes a spiteful and lewd woman, and even a sex worker: "Ésa es una gata. Expresión violenta que denigra a la persona" [She is a cat. Violent expression that denigrates a person]. The second one uses a screenshot from OKCupid to illustrate the sexualization of women on dating websites: "Cougar, talk to me! Did you enjoy my pics?"

The Spanish campaigns "Si soy una vaca" [If I am a cow] (2020) and "Si soy una víbora" [If I am a viper] (2020) re-appropriate the animal slurs "cow" and "viper",

typically applied to overweight and evil women, respectively, to praise mothers who breastfeed their babies and women who have a strong self-esteem—see (15) and (16):

(15) Si soy una vaca es porque alimento a mis hijos [If I am a cow is because I breatfeed my children] (Spain, 2020)
(16) Si soy una víbora es porque nadie me pisa [If I am a viper is because nobody steps on me] (Spain, 2020)

"Siempre actuar, nunca mirar" [Always act, never watch] (Spain 2008) compares a battered woman with an insect that has fallen prey into a spider's web. Framing abusive relationships in terms of a male predatory spider catching and killing its female prey, the campaign presents the vulnerability of a woman and the lethal consequences of being in a relationship with a male abuser, symbolized through a venomous arachnid. Finally, India's "Treated Worse than Animals" (2023) identifies victims of domestic violence with animals to denounce institutional and gender-based violence. Illustrated with photographs of battered women lying on the floor next to animals, the campaign advocates for the human dignity of women who suffer violence (Rau, 2013).

Aware of the negative connotations attached to zoomorphic slurs, several gender-based violence campaigns pun on the literal and figurative senses of animal metaphors and even re-appropriate gender stigmatizing labels as a mechanism to discard the application of such terms to women and to neutralize their offensive import (Galinsky et al., 2013; Popa-Wyatt, 2020). Yet, given that no empirical research has been carried out regarding the impact of the campaigns analyzed on the general public, the use of zoomorphic metaphors that are deeply embedded in the collective imagination of sexism seems, at least, controversial, especially considering the use of pictures of real animals along with photographs of women in some of the campaigns' posters and videos. In other words, whether the iconography of the bestial feminine used in these campaigns may help raise awareness of violence against women or, on the contrary, may contribute to its perpetuation and legitimization falls outside the scope of this paper but it is, undoubtedly, an interesting field for future empirical research.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study has analyzed the animal metaphors used in 39 public-awareness campaigns that run between 1998 to 2023 across 21 countries. Using Conceptual Metaphor Theory as the methodological framework, the results showed that these campaigns tend to reproduce zoomorphic tropes that are deeply ingrained in the collective imagination of sexism and violence against women. In fact, despite the cultural and linguistic differences of the 21 countries where the campaigns have been produced, there are striking similarities in the use of the animal metaphors representing male abusers and female victims, which, somehow, mirrors gender stereotypes that associate men and women with wild and domestic creatures, respectively. Male batterers are, indeed, seen as predatory, menacing, dangerous and toxic animals, for they are "beasts", "vultures", "octopuses", "roosters", "pigs", "spiders", and "fighting dogs", whereas females are portrayed as vulnerable, domestic, sexualized, and trapped creatures, since they are depicted as "insects", "bitches", "cats", "pigs", "donkeys", "vixens", and "caged birds".

Despite the original good intent of raising awareness of and trying to eradicate all sorts of violence against women, the campaigns analyzed recur to the zoomorphic

scenario that male perpetrators often employ to legitimize their heinous actions and female victims recall in their traumatic experiences. Hence, although unwittingly, these campaigns may contribute to the reinforcement and perpetuation of the repertoire of animal metaphors associated with sexism and gender-based violence. Furthermore, because the animal metaphors applied to women outnumber those used to represent male abusers, the campaigns seem to place the focus on female victims instead of on male abusers, whose ideologies and behaviors are really the core of the problem (Azabal, 2020; Oddone, 2017). In this regard, research has shown that gender-based violence campaigns are more effective when targeting men, whose mentality and conduct need to be changed to safeguard women's integrity and life (Kodwo, 2023; Oddone, 2017).

Finally, in Lévi-Strauss words (1968: 10), animals are essential in people's lives not only because they are good to eat, but also because they are good to think with. Therefore, the analysis of the animal metaphors that inform gender-based violence campaigns across the globe deserves further examination, particularly in light of the similarities between this type of language and misogynistic and gender-based violence discourses. Hence, despite the numerous shortcomings of the present research (e.g. its theoretical nature and its limited use of campaigns), this study has attempted to shed some light on how gender-based violence campaigns often reproduce zoomorphic tropes that permeate the speech of male batterers and resonate in the traumatic experiences of female victims of gender-based violence.

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