



REPRESENTATION OF IDEOLOGY AND GENDER IN THE DOCUMENTARY *ICE COLD: MURDER, COFFEE, AND JESSICA WONGSO*

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the representation of gender and ideology in the true crime documentary *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee and Jessica Wongso*, focusing on the portrayals of Mirna Salihin and Jessica Wongso. Through a multimodal critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995), (Machin, D., Caldas-Coulthard, C. R., & Milani, 2016), this research examines how language, visual elements, and narrative structures construct meaning and reinforce social norms. Drawing on the concepts of gender performativity (Butler, 1990) and the male gaze (Mulvey, 1975), the analysis reveals how Mirna is idealized through emotional imagery and narratives aligned with normative femininity, while Jessica is framed through ambiguity, emotional detachment, and visual cues that evoke suspicion. The documentary offers counter-narratives to humanize Jessica, that are still constrained by dominant gendered expectations. The findings demonstrate multimodal strategies are used to produce emotionally resonant yet ideologically loaded portrayals of women. This research argues that media representations in true crime not only reflect but also reproduce gendered power relations. As such, this study highlights the need for critical media literacy to better understand how femininity, morality, and guilt are constructed in public discourse.

Keywords: Gender Representation; Ideology; Media Discourse; Critical Discourse Analysis; True Crime

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, true crime documentaries in streaming platforms have emerged as one of the most popular media formats (Walter, 2021) in depicting and narrating criminal events, influencing the course of justice and shaping social identities of those involved in the story. This kind of media does not only serve audiences with chronological narratives but also shaping on how the public interprets the story based on how the show was edited and narrated via audiovisual multimodal (Bruzzi, 2000) and how each character is labeled in their role. Several studies also stated that women in this genre are often portrayed not as a neutral character (Holmes, S., & Hines, 2025). In Indonesia, true crime documentaries have gained popularity due to the increasing interest across various formats, such as podcasts, YouTube videos (e.g., Nessie Judge and Hirotada Radifan), and documentaries like *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso*. These forms of media demonstrate that true crime genre has expanded significantly, offering viewers the freedom to consume content according to their preferences.

The interest in the true crime genre emerged due to its nature to explore a story that appears to be factual, and it builds relevancy with the viewers through convincing audio-visuals (Walter, 2021). The study underlines the viewers active role in forming the

idea of justice every time they watch true crime documentary and participate in an online discourse. As a subgenre in documentary, true crime combines several cinematic techniques, such as archival records, interviews, audio narrative, background, and dramatic visual effects; therefore, every element works to build meaning and emotions to the viewers.

Previous studies show that women were never portrayed in a fully objective way. (Collins, 2014) stated that the female perpetrator is often constructed in a cliché dichotomy as a cunning ‘black widow’ or ‘bad girl’ that was hypersexual, while the female victim was portrayed as ‘ideal’ especially if they were Caucasian, innocent, and conformed to the social norm. Another study stated white women tend to receive more sympathetic narrative views, while women from minority groups are more likely to be labeled as negative (Brennan, P. K., & Vandenberg, 2009) also stated that. Another study from (Easteal, P. L., Holland, K., Breen, M. D., Vaughan, C., & Sutherland, 2018) shows that violence against women is often reduced as an interpersonal narration; therefore, the structure of patriarchal power becomes blurry. Even in popular podcasts and documentaries like *Crime Junkie* and *I Am a Killer*, law enforcement, like the police or court, rarely gets substantial critical coverage. In contrary, narration on women is constructed to evoke emotion, sympathy, or even suspicion as (Cevallos, 2021).

In Indonesia, the documentary *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee and Jessica Wongso* marks the emergence of true crime genre based on local cases that were brought to the global stage through its release on Netflix. This program not only presents legal facts but also constructs images of two women—Jessica Wongso and Mirna Salihin—who are the center of the case and carrying complex ideological undertones. However, differing from most studies that focused more on Western media, research on gender representation in true crime documentaries in Southeast Asia remains very limited. Yet, as (Holmes, S., & Hines, 2025) argue, female viewers have a complex relationship with crime shows; they do not merely watch but also interpret and negotiate meaning about gender and power relations that emerge. Furthermore, studies exploring the connection between audiovisual and linguistics aspects in true crime documentaries have rarely employed interdisciplinary approaches—namely critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995), gender performativity (Butler, 1990) and male gaze (Mulvey, 1975). Therefore, this study presents a significant opportunity to analyze how ideology and gender are represented simultaneously through text, imagery and sound, and how these representations shape social construction of gender, identity and justice in Indonesia.

Although issues of gender representation in criminal media have been spotlighted in various of studies, there is a conceptual gap that can be analyzed thoroughly. Most of the studies only use one significant approach—such as critical discourse analysis—without considering the visual and performative aspects of the media itself. Whereas, as stated by (Machin, D., Caldas-Coulthard, C. R., & Milani, 2016) and (Ilyas, 2021), gender representation in media was ideally analyzed through a multimodal approach that covered imagery, gesture, language, and other cinematic strategies.

Furthermore, although gender performativity (Butler, 1990) theory of has become a significant pillar in gender studies, its explicit application in the context of true crime documentary remains limited—especially when it involves two female individuals that occupy distinctive positions between perpetrator and victim. The application of male gaze theory (Mulvey, 1975) is also more generally applied to fiction film than documentaries. Therefore, a thorough analysis to discover gender and ideological representation through several approaches has the potential to extend the reach into more contextual and relevant



domains. Many previous studies have also overlooked the fact that documentaries not only convey information but also construct gendered performances of the individuals of the story, through the sound, camera angles, and ways in which women's bodies and emotions are presented. For this reason, researchers acknowledged the need for research that not only fills this gap but also integrates text, visuals, and ideology to understand documentary as a form of media for constructing social meaning.

This study aims to analyze how the true crime documentary *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee and Jessica Wongso* represents ideology and gender through its narrative, visuals, and language in depicting two main figures of the case—Jessica Wongso as the perpetrator and Mirna Salihin as the victim. The focus is on how the documentary constructs their images, not only as individuals involved in a criminal case, but also as social symbols that were given meaning in a particular context.

To answer that purpose, this research is employing an interdisciplinary approach by combining three main theories; (1) Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995), (2) Gender Performativity (Butler, 1990) to analyze how gender identity is constructed, negotiated, or disturbed via repeated performativity and based on context; and (3) concept of male gaze (Mulvey, 1975) to see how body and expression of a woman is visualized through documentary cinematography. The main contribution of this research is the effort to open a new study related to the representation of women in crime documentaries, while also offering a critical analysis of how media constructs social meaning beyond factual narratives, legal texts, and documentary production. Therefore, this study is expected to broaden academic discourse on the incorporation of media, gender, and ideology within the contemporary visual cultural landscape.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative interpretative approach with a multimodal analysis method to analyze how true crime documentary *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee and Jessica Wongso* represents ideology and gender. The analysis focuses on three main aspects; verbal texts such as dialogue and narration, visual and audio elements such as expressions, camera angles, background sound, and narrative structure that are constructed together to represent meaning. First, the analysis employs Critical Discourse Analysis by (Fairclough, 1995) to trace labeling, ideological narratives, and power relations within the text. Secondly, theory on gender performativity (Butler, 1990) is used to explore how gender is constructed by Jessica and Mirna through their repeated gestures, expressions, and actions shown in the documentary. Third, (Mulvey, 1975) on male gaze is employed to examine how women's bodies are portrayed and positioned within the gaze dynamic.

The source of data for this research is the true crime documentary *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee and Jessica Wongso*, streamed on Netflix in 2023. The data include selected scenes, dialogue transcripts, and audiovisual cuts from the documentary. The analysis is conducted by identifying the key segments, detecting representational patterns, and interpreting the finding based on the three theoretical frameworks mentioned above. This approach enables a critical analysis on how documentary is constructed to not only reflect but also challenge the discourse in public, especially on ideology, gender, and social norms through its visual and narrative choices.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

a. Result

Based on the lens of critical discourse analysis, the Ice Cold documentary highlights how language is used to construct the impression of the main characters. These representations are built through media narratives within and outside the documentary. In the documentary, the impressions are shaped by the direct quotations from the family and friends of the victim, witnesses to the case, the public opinion, prosecutors, lawyers, and experts on the case. They were also strengthened by audio visual strategies employed by the production team.

In constructing the discourse, Mirna is portrayed as the ideal woman who became the victim of a tragic criminal intent. She is depicted as a loving and assertive daughter, cherished by her family and friends. Her father, Edi Salihin, states, "*Ngomongnye keras. Kalo salah dia bilang salah. Kalo enggak ya enggak... Dia main bola saja bisa berantem dengan temannya*" (Data 8), depicting Mirna as a strong and honest figure from a young age. Meanwhile, her twin sister, Shandy, recalls an emotional dream following her sister's death: "*Dia cuma duduk dan dia melihat gaun pengantinnnya, tapi muka dia terlihat sedih*" (Data 9). Through melancholic and personal language, the discourse around Mirna is directed to evoke empathy and frame her within a morally elevated position—as a victim who is not only innocent but also valuable and irreplaceable. This framing is also reinforced by her father's remarks about the public's reaction to the case: "*kasus ini meledak karena orang melihat Mirna itu cantik, kok dibunuh orang?*" (Data 78), indicating that physical appearance and social image also contribute to her construction as the 'ideal' victim.

In contrast, Jessica is constructed through language that is accusatory and laden with gender bias. Several participants of the documentary stated that Jessica is a woman with a 'strange face' (Data 78), an 'evil' (Data 2), "*Dia sekarang berbohong! Tidak memindahkan gelas. Tidak ada kantong. Tidak ingat, tidak tahu*" (Data 40), stated clearly by Mirna's father as "*psikopat gila itu.*" (Data 67). Devi, the manager of Café Olivier, described Jessica's reaction to Mirna's convulsions as "aneh sekali," while a member of the public commented, "Kalau dari tatapan matanya, seperti orang sakit jiwa" (Data 81). These narratives reveal how women who do not display grief according to social expectations are labeled as 'calculated' or '*pendendam*' reinforcing biases against women who deviate from conventional norms of feminine emotion.

The documentary, however, offer opposing narratives about Jessica Wongso through interviews by Jessica's lawyer team, several law experts on the case, and even by the production team. It emboldened the problematic nature of the judgement based on Jessica's physical appearance and psychologically biased character assessment by saying that those assessments were 'outdated'. In one part of the documentary, Jessica is stated as a very calculated and manipulative person by the prosecutor and Edi Salihin; however, Indonesian journalist Fristian Greic expressed her experience on interviewing Jessica and stated a different opinion about Jessica's personality. "*Saya melihat orang yang sangat manja. Terkadang makan harus disuapi oleh ibunya. Di saat psikolog menggambarkan dia orang yang terstruktur... itu sebuah hal yang sangat kontradiktif*" (Data 76). This challenges the image of Jessica as manipulative and instead presents her as vulnerable. Additionally, Hidayat Bostam, as one of the lawyers, critique on how superficial that appearance and be used to judge someone's moral, "*Masyarakat sudah menganggap yang jelek itu salah dan yang cantik harus diselamatkan. Kemudian menjadi seperti kisah telenovela begitu*" (Data 82). Forensic psychologist Reza Indragiri also rejects physiognomy-based assessment by stating, "*Itu merupakan teori usang*" (Data 71), in response to claims that Jessica's eyes "*tidak berbinar*" (Data 73).



The producers also play a role in providing a space to challenge existing perceptions of Jessica. For instance, the producer compliments Jessica's Australian accent during prison interview. When the interview is suddenly cut short, the producers display an on-screen message that reads: '*PIHAK BERWENANG MEMBLOKIR SEMUA WAWANCARA DENGAN JESSICA SETELAH PERTEMUAN INI*'. This is followed by recorded prison call in which the producers share their efforts to visit and continue the Interview with Jessica. This shows Jessica's voice was limited but also reinforce the documentary's effort to include perspectives that are often overlooked from the mainstream discourse. This framing is influenced by the fact that *Ice Cold* was produced by Beach House Picture, a production house based in Singapore, with a non-Indonesian director. As outsiders, they offer a critical distance on dominant local narratives. This external point of view creates room for resistance due to their freedom from national ties. Therefore, they highlighted and questioned how public opinion is formed and pointed out the portrayal of Jessica Wongso in Indonesian media and the justice system.

The concept of gender performativity (Butler, 1990) emphasize that gender is not a fixed identity, but rather something constructed through the repetition of actions, gestures, and expression within the social norm. In the *Ice Cold* documentary, the representation of Mirna demonstrates a form of feminine performativity that conforms to the socially acceptable norms. She was shown as a woman who was gentle and affectionate. This representation is evident in the visual narrative of Mirna's childhood with her family, photos with her twin sister, multiple wedding pictures, and happy friendship photographs between her, Jessica and other friends.

Jessica's gender performativity is presented in two contrasting points of view. On the one hand, the dominant representation comes from the perceptions of the victim's family and Indonesian society on Jessica's action and gestures during the investigation and trial. She was depicted as a woman who 'unrepentant' and 'emotionless'. The media reinforces these narratives through newspaper headlines such as "*Jessica Masih Bisa Menebar Senyum*" dan "*Tanpa Ekspresi*" with her face next to it. In other instances, Jessica was in an interview between her trial and asked by a non-Indonesian journalist whether she did killed Mirna, and she replied with slight laugh, "Of course not." These instances show how Jessica's body language and face are read as deviating from public expectation. Instead of seeing her as neutral, many interpreted her quiet reaction as a sign that she was guilty.

Conversely, the documentary also presents an alternative perspective on her gender performativity through more complex and visual narrative strategies. Her animated personal diary and recorded prison call reveal deeper emotional relations such as frustration, sadness, and confusion about her involvement in the case. The aesthetic visualization of her diary becomes a personal narrative that allows the audience to understand Jessica's point of view on convincing the public that she is not the perpetrator of the murder and see her more fully and not simply through a pathological labels like 'psychopath'. Her lawyer also points out that while Jessica didn't cry during the reading of the verdict, she broke down afterward suggesting a more complicated emotional response. Another lawyer, who is also her relative, describes her as a "good child," pushing back against public views that frame her behavior as abnormal. Through these choices, the documentary wants to open new interpretive space for Jessica's gender performance.

The concept of male gaze (Mulvey, 1975) is one of representation framework which positions the female body as visual object. In the *Ice Cold* documentary, Mirna's

representation is formed through verbal narration from her family—mainly her father, Edi Salihin—and emotional visuals such as childhood pictures, wedding photos, and montages of her chat with her friends, all accompanied by somber, melancholy music. In the male gaze framework, Edi is the paternal role who frames Mirna's impression as an ideal woman—she was strong headed, beautiful, loving—through memory and description of her behavior. The main point is on the scene where Edi visits Mirna's grave and he personally and emotionally reflects on the case of her and stated

Ingat tidak, Mir, saat sidang? Untung, Papa membela Mirna. Sendiri, tanpa pengacara. Jadi, dengan kekuatan Papa, kuasa Papa, semuanya Papa keluarkan, Papa lawan. Pokoknya, Papa harus mati-matian melawan Otto waktu itu [...] Kesalahan-kesalahan Papa. Memang Papa nakal juga... Suka berganti-ganti perempuan Papa. Salah Papa
(Data 60)

In this scene, the camera angle and narrative provide a space for a father emotional struggle who atones for his masculine mistake by defending his daughter, who was positioned as an innocent victim. Through this construction, the male gaze representation of Mirna is not only through visual gaze but based on emotional structure. She becomes the center of sympathy, not for her own agency, but because she was positioned through a masculine lens. The producer cinematic strategy is also conforming to the male gaze framework through soft lighting, slow paced background sound to frame Mirna as a symbol of mourned life that were lost.

Jessica becomes an object of observation and judgement, particularly from the lens of male figures in the documentary—including Edi Salihin, court testimony during the trial, the prosecutor, or even Indonesian public. Jessica's is repeatedly associated with suspicion as in the newspaper headline, turning her expression into signs of perpetrator of a crime. The media and public highlighted on how she stayed composed and smiled. Instead of seeing her facial expression and gestures as self-control. Edi Salihin enforces this portrayal by stating, "*Kita datang sempet, ke rutan. Nggak mau keluar dia. Dia teriak-teriak, "Nggak mau, nggak mau!" Gila, 'kan?'"* (Data 92), and from a public interview they also state, "*Menurut saya si orangnya kejam banget*". This kind of interpretation is also supported by male expert during the trial who is shown in the documentary "*Matanya sama sekali tak berbinar... bukan seperti Julia Roberts*" (Data 73) and makes personality claims based on her appearance: "*Cukup dengan melihat fisiognomi raut muka... ini orang tipe pendendam.*" (Data 70). Legal expert Eddy Hiariej uses paralinguistic reading of Jessica's gesture, stating, "*Saya mempelajari paralinguistik dalam teknik penyelidikan. Ketika seseorang itu ditanyai, kemudian dia melihat ke atas, itu seolah-olah sedang mengarang suatu cerita. Kalau dilihat-lihat, jangan-jangan dia yang melakukannya.*" (Data 31). The male prosecutor says Jessica shows signs of "*karakter psikologis eksplosif-kompulsif tadi itu,*" (Data 65), using a psychological term to frame her as an unstable and emotionally extreme woman. These statements shape audience perception of Jessica's manipulative and dangerous behavior through her body language and expression as evidence. Visual techniques in the documentary also support these findings. For example, the CCTV clip of Jessica entering the cafe is paired with darker lighting and suspenseful background music, to emphasize her presence as a threat.

Still, the documentary includes opposing view that challenge that framing, Jessica's defense lawyer, Otto Hasibuan, question the logic of the alleged motive to kill her friend "*Motif hanya karena, katanya, Jessica dinasihati oleh almarhum Mirna untuk tidak berpacaran dengan pacarnya yang ada di Australia... Itu tidak mungkin, menurut*



saya.” (Data 57). Other lawyer also criticized the simplistic moral division between the two woman “*Seolah-olah si korban, almarhum Mirna ini, orang yang tak berdosa. Lalu, si Jessica adalah sejahat-jahatnya orang*” (Data 77). These statements are efforts to counter label that produced by male gaze, which tends to judge women as either innocent or dangerous. In other scene, the producer also inserts a short black and white archival clip of a 1950’s woman in class trying to deduce woman behavior through their physical features by saying, “We all mistrust the shifty eye person... very often undependability” (Data 74). This serves as narrative resistance of expert testimony during the trial who judged Jessica's psychological state and behavior based on her face.

b. Discussions

By utilizing Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995), the Ice Cold documentary presents how language has a significant role in constructing and producing dominant ideology, especially on gender and power representation. Mirna as an individual and victim is constructed as an ideal woman through sentimental and affection from her family and friends. The language used to describe her, such as ‘*Mirna itu cantik*’, ‘*Mimpi-mimpi Mirna sih ada banyak*’, ‘*Kangen banget*’, forms a point of view of Mirna as someone loving, strong, and with a bright future. These finding conforms to the study of (Collins, 2014) that female victim are often represented emotionally to strengthen patriarchal norms. In (Fairclough, 1995) framework, this practice is a form of reproduction of hegemonic values that reinforces established social standing through language and emotional visualization.

In the contrary, Jessica Wongso is represented as a deviant figure through language that consists of negative opinion on her gesture, facial expression, and non-conforming emotional appearance. Statements from Edi Salihin, public perceptions such as ‘strange face’, ‘*psikopat*’, ‘*orang sakit jiwa*,’ and ‘*pendendam*’, show how emotional and physical appearance are used to shape public perception, label someone as guilty, and influence judgments in court regarding their guilt or innocence. This finding is conforming to the study by (Easteal, P. L., Holland, K., Breen, M. D., Vaughan, C., & Sutherland, 2018) which states that women's roles are simplified by their appearance without full context and often placed into narrow categories (Collins, 2014). Within CDA framework, this constitutes a discursive practice that limits identity diversity through the reduction of woman based on their appearance and emotion.

Jessica’s identity as an upper-class Chinese descent woman also demonstrates that the stigma in the media isn’t always tied to high economic background or a high level of education. She is positioned as a distinct individual from the majority of Indonesians—who generally come from lower middle class and ‘*pribumi*’ groups. The distinction is also strengthened by the way media portrays her through gestures and appearance which are deemed as inconsistent with public expectation for a woman who faces criminal case as a defendant. This finding is in line with (Brennan, P. K., & Vandenberg, 2009) that woman from minority group, such as ethnic groups, are easier to be stigmatized by the media. Similarly (Hoppstadius, 2019) argues that media tend reinforce structural bias by highlighting otherness. Through CDA lens, the language used to describe Jessica is used to show social inequalities and make certain groups appear inferior or more suspicious.

Although the public discourse is extremely powerful in this documentary there are also efforts to introduce the opposite discourse through the voices of advocates, journalists and visual strategies of the production team. These include the portrayal of Jessica’s vulnerability and critiques of judgment based on physical appearance—an

approach that reflects what (Cevallos, 2021) observed in true crime documentaries: even when emotional access is granted, narratives often remain entangled in dominant frameworks. Similarly, (Holmes, S., & Hines, 2025) argue that ethical representation requires giving voice and agency to the accused within a broader social context. The production foreign background (Beach House Pictures, Singapore) adds critical eye on local media discourse. It enables them to distance from local biases and brings their own perspective and agenda to the narrative. In CDA research, it shows documentary media can be used to reproduce ideology and as an alternative space to challenge and deconstruct discourses.

The theory of gender performativity (Butler, 1990) suggest that gender identity is not a naturally assigned value to women, but rather a created identity by actions, expressions, and behaving in a specific manner that have been repeated in the course of time and thus are perceived as being normal and acceptable by other members of the society. In *Ice Cold*, Mirna's performativity is displayed in the way that her relatives and friends remember and grieve her, creating an image of a woman who belongs to the mainstream social standards. She is depicted as warm, assertive, and attractive, which are the qualities attributed to ideal womanhood. This performativity is made by the repeated use of her wedding photographs, which serve more than personal memory. These photos show Mirna was loved, socially accepted, and going to her future, which is socially acknowledged and vastly appreciated: marriage and family life. Marriage turns out to be one of the most gendered performances—marking stability, emotions, and social acceptance. According to the theory of Butler, gender is not fixed values but is continually produced by the social practices and daily representations, such as visual narratives, the kind that appear in the documentary.

In contrast, Jessica Wongso is depicted as violating feminine performative in society, particularly during her trial. Her neutral body language, facial expressions, and confident speech in front of the media are interpreted manipulation and guilt by the public. In the documentary, witnesses, the family of the victim, prosecutors, and ordinary citizens describe her as being calculating, emotionless, and vengeful, most of which relates to either how she acts or how she looks (Data 12, 68, 73). From the lens of gender performativity, she fails to perform acceptable feminine emotions, especially in grief or remorse as a woman who is morally questioned during the trial. This vindicates the study from (Collins, 2014) that female perpetrators who do not fit the characteristics of a good victim are more susceptible to be framed negatively in society. The documentary enables the viewer to see Jessica in more complex perspective. Through her diary, she is given a space to express her concern, fear, suspicion, and frustration on the case. This is clearly a strategy from the producer to give light to challenge the representation of Jessica. The approach is similar to the one (Cevallos, 2021) noticed in the depiction of criminal characters, with the voice and visual tools applied to make the subjects more human. However, the framing of Jessica is still ambiguous and distanced. She is allowed to talk, but at the same time, in the frame that is distanced. *Ice Cold* thus shows that her portrayal remains mainly shaped by dominant discourse that link femininity and emotional transparency.

In the frame of male gaze (Mulvey, 1975), women in the documentary *Ice Cold* are represented through a masculine point of view, which constructs their visual and emotional representation. Mirna is shown as the object of affection and ideal woman, especially through her father's perspective. Edi Salihin recalls her in a reflective and emotional manner. The scene when he visits Mirna's grave; he expressed his remorse as



a male and a father and positions Mirna as a figure worthy of defense in court and mourning. Visualization through childhood, wedding pictures, soft lighting, camera angles, and sound frames Mirna as a symbol of a loving figure pursuing domestic and socially acceptable life. In this context, the male gaze functions not only visually, but also emotionally by constructing public sympathy and empathy through a male lens. This confirms the finding of (Collins, 2014) that female victims are often constructed sentimentally so the public is more likely to sympathize with them, even if it simplifies their complexity as woman and person. Similarly, (Ilyas, 2021) notes that semiotic tools—like image, sound, and emotional tone—serve ideological functions in shaping gendered perceptions.

Jessica, in contrast, is viewed as someone who is deviant from femininity expectations of the male gaze. Judgments of her mostly based on male authority figures, shown in the documentary, namely the prosecutors, legal expert and criminologist. They read Jessica physical features, behavior and gestures and conclude them as signs of deceit or psychological distress. Terms like *'penuh perhitungan'*, *'narsis,'* and *'pendendam'* emerge from her composed demeanor, which doesn't align with expected remorse. This reflects (Collins, 2014) finding that female perpetrators are often considered cunning and manipulative if they fail to display expected emotional performance. While the documentary includes opposing views through animations of Jessica's diary, and her legal team's defense of her behavior, her framing remains ambiguous. This finding conforms to (Cevallos, 2021) study that highlights the narratives about perpetrators that often appear empathetic and yet remain controlled by dominant discourse.

The Ice Cold documentary demonstrates how male gaze shapes public perception—determining who is remembered with affection and who is treated with suspicion—based on how women's bodies are presented and interpreted in public discourse. The representation occurs not only visually but is also reinforced by the narratives of various men in the documentary. Most of the contributors in the documentary are male, namely the victim's father, the prosecutors, the legal experts, and the defendants' lawyers, who guide the viewer's reading of Mirna and Jessica throughout the documentary. By combining these three analytical frameworks, this study explores not only what the media says, but also how it shapes the way we see and judge women.

Based on the findings and discussion above, the ideology and gender is constructed, framed and circulated through multimodal media. Following (Fairclough, 1995) critical discourse analysis, their representation do not stand alone. They are shaped by social practices and power that operate through language and multimodal media. Documentary, as a multimodal media not only rely in the language but also how elements such as visuals, sound, editing, image, and who and what is included and not included in the narrative shaped the meaning and carry specific ideological values (Machin, D., Caldas-Coulthard, C. R., & Milani, 2016). This study's contribution lies in combining critical discourse analysis, gender performativity, and male gaze to examine the multimodal representation of women in true crime media. As (Collins, 2014) and (Brennan, P. K., & Vandenberg, 2009) stated that media labeled negative stereotypes of women who deviate from the image of a good victim. This study also confirms that counter-narratives to Jessica—such as animated diaries and legal defense—remain entangled in dominant framework, as (Cevallos, 2021) found in her study of perpetrator narratives in true crime documentaries. Therefore, this analytical approach offers a model to be used in similar media studies to understand how discourse, visuals, and performativity shape gender representations and ideologies in popular culture.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the documentary *Ice Cold: Murder, Coffee, and Jessica Wongso* constructs gender representations and ideologies through multimodal discourses. Through interviews, imagery and sounds, Mirna is depicted as a loving woman, which is supported by the visual details, wedding photos, soft music, and emotional stories. Conversely, Jessica is depicted as a deviant since her actions and facial expressions are not in line with the feminine performativity that women are supposed to follow and her judgment is mostly based on gestures, gazes and facial expressions—reflecting is a male gaze and gender norms. While the documentary allows counter-narratives in the form of animated diaries and legal defenses, Jessica is still placed in ambiguous and suspicious light. These results highlight the fact that media not only present stories but also influence social perceptions of truth, morality, and women. This paper integrates critical and multimodal discourse analysis, gender performativity and male gaze approaches to demonstrate how ideology is enacted in the representation of women in true crime media. The findings support the fact that media is a very important space in the construction of societal knowledge of justice, gender, and power.

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