Why The Panic?
Gendered Moral Panics And The Saudi Ban On Women Driving

by Athoug Alotaibi

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Daina Eglitis
Associate Professor of Sociology

Dedication

I would like to thank my personal hero, my mother, Dr. Hessah Alfaiz. I have yet to meet a woman as strong as she is. What a blessing it is to be her daughter.

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Abstract

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Driving in Saudi Arabia is solely a male activity. Saudi women are forbidden to drive regardless of the continuing protests against the ban. This study applies Stanley Cohen's theory of moral panics to the Saudi ban on women driving. In this thesis, I reframe this concept as a gendered moral panic, highlighting the role women's driving plays on the traditionalists' expectations of normative gender roles. The study utilizes content analysis of the social media website, Twitter. Three hundred and forty tweets from the 2011 Twitter campaign #Women2Drive, which encouraged women to drive their cars in the streets of Saudi Arabia, were collected. I looked at both tweets in support of and against women's driving. I categorized the tweets based on four emerging themes: Westernization, Mockery, Defiance of State and Defiance of Gender Discrimination. This work argues that social media offers a unique platform for examining this debate in Saudi Arabia, which has a non-democratic government, but an open media. It also suggests that the debate on Twitter is evidence of the development of a gendered moral panic over women's driving.

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Background

Saudi Arabia is a well-established monarchy with deep historical roots in Islamic traditions that serve as its governing principles. It is also the largest country in the Arabian Peninsula, with a population of 27 million, including 8.4 million foreign residents. Before the unification of the Kingdom in 1932 and until the discovery of oil, the Saudi Arabian economy was largely agricultural. Since the discovery of oil in 1938, The Kingdom has flourished politically, economically and socially (AL-Mekaimi 2003).

The discovery of oil dramatically changed The Kingdom. The accumulation of wealth in the country led Saudi society to modernize and people began shifting from rural towns to cities (Atallah 1989). The economic growth that the country experienced also provided its citizens with access to free education (both locally and abroad), free healthcare, and access to a consumer lifestyle. With oil as its main export, Saudi Arabia quickly became the largest oil producer in the world, holding one quarter of the world's oil reserves. Despite this rapid modernization, Saudi Arabia remains committed to its conservative Islamic principles. (AL-Mekaimi 2003). There is a constant debate among Islamic scholars on gender roles and expectations in relation to the conservative Islamic principles of Saudi Arabia.

INTRODUCTION

Social media has radically changed the way people express their thoughts. Social media allows people to spread their ideas quickly. It can also be used to engage in conversation about politics, democracy and revolutionary ideas. In December 17, 2010, Mohammed Bouazizi, a Tunisian vegetable merchant, set himself on fire to protest the government. His actions sparked a wave of protests across the Arab world. Many activists used social media to help organize political protests in streets, demonstrations and other methods of resistance. There were many causes of the 2011 Arab Spring. Social media was a vehicle for change because it amplified the voices of those who might otherwise be silenced in closed political systems (Phillip et. al., 2015). Arab populations felt inspired to speak out and social media enabled them to do so. Saudi Arabian women used social media to organize protests, criticize their lack of rights, and debate issues important for social reform like women's right to drive.

One of the most debated issues in contemporary Saudi Arabia is the ban on women driving (Taylor, 2015). Women in Saudi Arabia cannot obtain a driver's license. However, Alnafjan (2015) points out that women in rural areas drive without any interference from the government, making the driving ban a political rather than a social one. If a Saudi woman were to drive in the city, it would be considered illegal and she would be subjected to various sanctions, including placing her on no-fly list and a government-issued warning (Alnafjan 2015).

Two publicized events serve as the beginning of the defiance of the ban. In 1990, fifty women got behind the wheel as an act to demand their right to drive. The women drove around Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, for half an hour before being pulled over and

arrested by the police. All the women drivers and their husbands were banned from driving and placed on a no-fly list. Any woman who held a government job was fired and their acts were deemed immoral. Opponents of women's driving suggested that the protest was an effort to destroy the Saudi society (Murphy 2008). The first incident caught the attention of the Grand Mufti, the country's highest religious authority, who immediately opposed women driving by instigating a *fatwa* (religious edict) against the act.

Decades later, the ban is still intact. In 2011, as part of a Women2Drive twitter campaign, Saudi women urged each other to drive themselves in defiance of the ban (Macfarquhar 2011). This incident caught the attention of law enforcement and was immediately shut down because demonstrations and political parties are prohibited in Saudi Arabia. Police have detained prominent figures in the 2011 Women2Drive campaign including activists Eman Alnafjan and Manal Al-sharif. Several other attempts to defy the ban have taken place since the 2011 incident, though none have gained widespread political influence. However, women continue to defy the ban by recording themselves driving, posting it on social media, and petitioning the king (Human Rights Watch 2013).

Polls suggest that 55 percent of Saudi males and 66 percent of Saudi females support women's rights including their right to drive (Rheault 2007). Driving continues to symbolize freedom for many women (Human Rights Watch 2013). My primary interest in this paper is to investigate key reasons the ban is still intact despite the massive support to lift it and the economic progress the country will gain from allowing women to drive.

For the purpose of this research, I will examine the reasons behind the ban on women driving in Saudi Arabia. In my analysis, I use a frame of gendered moral panics, which I define as *a fear and concern about perceived threats against traditional societal expectations of gendered roles and behaviors*. This framework is derived from Stanley Cohen's theory of moral panics: "the process of arousing social concern over an issue [through] the work of moral entrepreneurs and the mass media" (Scott 2014). This investigation aims to provide an alternative perspective behind the ban of women driving. I hypothesize that the controversy surrounding women's driving, with a focus on its opponents, is a gendered moral panic that affects any potential political or social action made to lift it.

In this research, I will investigate the following research questions. First, what are the characteristics of gender roles in Saudi Arabia? Does driving challenge these roles and affect women's participation in the public sphere? What are the sociological roots of the ban? How does the framework of gendered moral panics help explain the roots and consequences of the ban?

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Two theories serve as a theoretical foundation and framework for this study: moral panics and my own contribution, gendered moral panics. Moral panics originated in the early 1970s as a theory to conceptualize the reason why people label events as threatening to society (Krinsky, 2013; Young, 2009). While the origin of the term remains obscure, Stanley Cohen explored the theory in his book, *Moral Panics and Folk Devils: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*, to illustrate how interest groups in society

such as political elites, the media, the public and law enforcement define a situation as threatening to society's core values and interests (Cohen, 1972; Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994).

Moral panics starts with a fear and concern about specific perceived threats in society. These threats can be culturally and politically motivated. A moral panic does not need to consume the entire society. The majority do not have to agree that a threat is real. However, moral panics need a consensus amongst segments of society, known as "moral entrepreneurs" or certain interest groups or media sources, that there is a threat to the values, interests, way of living, or the very existence of society. These moral entrepreneurs are organizers, do-gooders, movement activists who create a battle against a perceived threat (Goode & Ben Yeduda, 1994). They may be motivated by genuine humanitarian goals or by partisan, ideological goals, or simply by a fear of a perceived threat.

There are many ways societies deal with moral panics. Whether the moral panic is spontaneous or socially organized, the longer they exist in society, the more likely that societies will react with surveillance, regulation, discipline and punishment (Herdt 2009).

Creation of Moral Panics

According to Goode & Ben Yeduda (1994), there are two kinds of social problems that create moral panics: (a) objective, and (b) constructed. An objective moral panic is when the threat is foreseen, real, unbiased, and would cause harm regardless of human belief. The consequences of injustices in society like racism, sexism, and oppression on a group of people visibly illustrates the reality of an objective moral panic. A constructed moral panic is a product of human opinion (Goode & Ben Yeduda, 1994).

For example, the use of marijuana in the United States is perceived as a constructed

moral panic. Marijuana was once viewed as harmless in the US society. In fact, more

than 30 states in the United States did not have laws enforcing the use or sale of the drug.

However, in 1937, legislators began to pass laws to criminalize marijuana. Arrests were

made for possessing or selling the drug. Even newspapers contributed to the creation of

the marijuana moral panic by publishing articles deeming the drug as a "'killer weed,' the

'weed of madness,' a 'sex-crazing drug menace,' the 'burning weed of hell,' a 'gloomy

monster of destruction'" (Goode & Ben Yeduda, 1994).

Process of Moral Panics

The process of moral panics is comprised of five key elements: (a) timing, (b)

target and trigger, (c) content, (d) spread, and (e) denouement (DeYoung, 1998). First,

timing refers to the combination of ideological beliefs held deeply in society as the

foundation of what is right and wrong and the action or behavior that challenges these

held beliefs. Second, the target refers to the people, groups, category, or institutions,

which are engaged in activities that defy the social values. The trigger is an event that

produces a strong reaction from the public and legitimizes the moral panic. Third, content

is the stories, allegations and claims made by members of society, the "moral

entrepreneurs," who deem the actions and behaviors as inappropriate. Fourth, spread is

the way these stories, allegations and claims are taken into the public sphere. Fifth,

denouement is the final element in the process of moral panics where cultural anxiety

decreases and claim makers are silenced (DeYoung, 1998).

Moral Panics in the United States

Part of moral panics is creating hostility toward the people engaging in the behavior or act seen as threatening to society (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994). The "moral entrepreneurs" view members who would change the social norm as the enemy. For example, in the early 1980s, females began entering the workforce in large numbers and the idea of daycares started to expand in the United States (Chimonas 1997). However, members of society were skeptical about the morality of daycare centers claiming that there are horrific practices and satanic rituals occurring in these centers (timing phase). It was not until a vague statement made by a toddler in one of the daycares, suggesting that a sexual encounter had occurred, did people began to construct and validate daycare centers as a social problem (target and trigger phase). An investigation began to unravel where social workers claimed that over 369 toddlers were victims of abuse including "the ritualistic ingestion of urine, feces, blood, semen, and human flesh; the disinterment and mutilation of corpses; the sacrifices of infants; and orgies with their day care providers, costumed as devils and witches, in classrooms, tunnels under the center, and in car washes, airplanes, mansions, cemeteries, hotels, ranches, neighborhood stores, local gyms, churches, and hot air balloons" (content phase) (DeYoung, 1998, p 261). The case about the daycare center spread in two different ways: (a) media coverage, (b) and moral entrepreneurs (Critcher, 2006; Goode & Ben Yeduda, 1994).

Moral entrepreneurs included social workers, mental health professionals, attorneys and law enforcement authorities who legitimized the existence of the daycare moral panic by creating a funded organization, National Center for Child Abuse and Neglect, to tackle daycares. Media coverage included the saturation of the event through

daily reporting in national and local news (spread phase). However, after many years of controversy, the social issue regarding daycare centers began to disseminate. According to DeYoung (1998) there are many factors that contribute to the denouement of the daycare moral panic including changing economic conditions, change in policies and regulations, reforms and widening gaps between segments of society. In fact, in some cases, public discontent over the claims made by professionals grew and eventually led to a backlash against the moral entrepreneurs (denouement phase).

Gendered Moral Panics

Cohen (1972) did not attend to gender in his book on moral panics. Several other scholars have used the lens of moral panics to study gender and sexuality (Herdt 2009). The framework of study used in this paper is gendered moral panics. I am using it as a working definition to mean: *a fear and concern about perceived threats against traditional societal expectations of gendered roles and behaviors*. In this research, I am particularly interested in how a theoretical framework of gendered moral panics helps to explain the existence and persistence of the ban on Saudi women driving.

Change in gender roles can be threatening to power relations in society. Thompson (2005) notes that changes in ideologies and values can increase risk and threaten the idea of "normal" and the sustenance of social order (Thompson 2005). Power relations structure gender roles to create a social order in which gender roles operate. Framing, organizing and negotiating of gender roles functions in an overall structure of power relations (Parker et. al., 2000). Therefore, resistance to gender roles can cause widespread moral panic. Herdt (2009), after studying the fear over sexual rights, argued that moral panics focused on gender roles and expectations have long been found in

religious disputes. These specific panics create what Herdt (2009) termed "cultural anger," as the "marshaling of intense emotion across diffuse domains and arenas of action to unite individuals and groups in political pursuit of a common enemy" (Herd 2009:6).

In investigating moral panics, Thompson (2005) suggests that moral panics increase in society as gender roles change. During the early 2000s, Saudi society became more engaged in the international community and a demand by Saudi youth for a revised definition of gender roles was a result (Le Renard, 2014). Le Renard (2014) writes that, "young Saudis are increasingly shown as individuals who must take charge of their own lives to succeed, gain education and become highly qualified, build careers in the private sector, and thus participate in the country's development."

Key loci of power in Saudi consists of state officials and Saudi clerics. Saudi clerics are seen as the backbone of social stability in the country, while state officials, composed of royal princes are seen as protectors of the political and economic stability of the country (Alrasheed 2013). Thus, the overall stability of the country is based on negotiations between state officials and religious scholars. As Alrasheed (2013) noted, gender related issues are usually left in the hands of the religious scholars. Therefore, mobility and travel for women is a concern for Saudi religious clerics. In 1990, the Grand Mufti's *fatwa* against women driving stated that the act would "expose women to 'temptation' and lead to 'social chaos'" (Human Rights Watch 2013). Women driving is viewed as a threat to gender roles and a source of *fitna* (dissent). Following the *fatwa*, other religious clerics immediately labeled the event as an infidelity against Islam, and accused the women who drove in the 1990s of sexual immorality (Doumato 1991). In

short, the act of female driving contradicts the framing of Saudi female roles and values by Saudi clerics.

Social media plays an important function in Saudia Arabia's gendered moral panic. Twitter is a tool used by both opponents and proponents of women driving. Recent events around the world show that Twitter has been part of processes of dramatic social change. In the 2011 Arab Spring, Twitter was used as a "tool of information, information sharing and discussion" (Chaudry 2014:955). In Egypt and Tunis, Twitter was used as a tool of organization, team building and strategic planning that lead to the overthrow of their governments. In short, Twitter was used as a vehicle for change.

The Arab Spring spread across the Middle East including Saudi Arabia. In 2011, the twitter hashtag #Women2Drive appeared, gaining a strong force among Saudi Twitter users and the international media. The aim was to cultivate ,strong support for social protest against the Saudi ban on women driving (Chaudry 2014). On May 19, 2011, a prominent social activist, Manal Alsharif, recorded herself driving a car in defiance of the Saudi ban on women driving, stating, "We are ignorant and illiterate when it comes to driving. You'll find a woman with a PhD and she doesn't know how to drive. We want change in the country" (Medeiros, 2013:2). The video was posted on YouTube and watched by 600,000 people (Chaudry 2014).

Women driving is assumed to go against the morality and chastity of women (Mtango, 2004). Despite awareness and the international criticism found in the hashtag #Women2Drive, religious clerics and traditionalists used a narrative of gendered moral panics by associating women driving with sexual promiscuity (Chaudry 2014). Thus, Social protest produced a gendered moral panic through the use of a narrative that

assumed women's morality and the morality of society would be placed at risk if women were allowed to drive.

In this study, I will argue that the opposition against Saudi women driving displayed in the 2011 Twitter hashtag #Women2Drive constitutes a narrative of gendered moral panics. It is an important sociological investigation to explain why the ban on women driving is still intact despite efforts to lift it.

There has not been much scholarly work done on Saudi women (Alrasheed 2013). Saudi women remain an understudied population, especially by Saudi Arabians. Therefore, the research available on the Kingdom's females has been authored mostly by foreign scholars (Alrasheed 2013). This research's aims are imperative to increase sociological knowledge in the field of gender inequality and to provide an explanation behind the resistance to lift the ban on Saudi women driving.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES

For the purpose of this study, I utilize content analysis as the main method of data collection and analysis. Content analysis is an unobtrusive research tool used in social research to observe and examine recorded human communication, usually in a textual format. There are two types of content analysis: Conceptual analysis, which analyzes the existence and frequency of concepts in human communication and Relational analysis, which analyzes the relationship of concepts in human communication. For the purpose of this study, I will utilize a conceptual analysis of the content. Furthermore, there are also two types of human communication or content. Manifest content is observable content; it is what we see on the surface (Flip 2014). Second is latent content, which is the

underlying meaning of content. The latter type of content is what I will use in exploring

gendered moral panics.

 I chose content analysis because my research approach is explanatory, which is a

design that "identifies the sources of social behaviors, beliefs, conditions and events; it

documents causes, test theories and provides reasons" (Neuman 2011). Furthermore, this

type of research often "test theories or examine whether a theory can explain new

situations or activities" (Neuman 2011). In this type of research approach, content

analysis is viewed as appropriate.

Other methods like surveys do not fit in this study because of lack of access to the

population. I live in the United States and to gain access to the population will be

difficult, unlike content analysis. Also, surveys are not the best method of data collection

because I want to examine the theory without having any individual bias. If I compile

questions on whether the ban on women driving is a moral panic, Saudi citizens might

reject it. Therefore, the only possible method is content analysis.

Operational Definitions

The variable of study is women driving, and is operationally defined as "the act of

driving by a Saudi female." The other variable of study is gendered moral panics and is

defined as any themes apparent in the Twitter hashtag Women2Drive that view the act of

women driving as a threat to normative gender roles and practices. The themes that

emerged from the data include the following: Westernization, Mockery, Defiance of the

State, Defiance of Gender Roles. The quoted material below is taken from tweets that are

representative of each of the themes:

- **Westernization** is defined by tweets that believe the campaign is a western plot rather than a local initiative:

  - متابعتي وقراتي لمثل هذه المواضيع اجزم بأن هؤلاء التغريبيين ليس قضيتهم المرأة او حقوقها '' بل والله افسادها اخي الحبيب''

  - "From following and reading similar topics, I found that those who are westernized are not interested in women and their rights but corrupting her."

- **Mockery** is defined by tweets posted that ridicule women and the act of women driving:

  - عزيزتي السؤاقه الجديده: بالنسبه لمسكه الدركسون !ترا عادي تمسكينه بيد وحده ! ناكد لك انه '' ماراح يطير''

  - "Dear new female drivers: regarding to the way you hold the steering wheel, It is fine to hold it with one hand. We guarantee it will not fly away."

- **Defiance of the state** include tweets that view the act of women driving as a direct violation of religious, social and state laws:

  - حمله قيادة المرأه السيارة فاشلة لأن لا أحد يصدق اللبرالين والعلمانيين بأن الموضوع حق القيادة '' بل تحدي للدولة   ودعوة للفساد''

  - "The women driving campaign is a failure because no one believes when the liberals say that the issue is only about driving. Rather, it is a resistance to the State and an invitation for corruption."

- **Defiance of Gender Roles** are tweets that view the act of women driving as inappropriate female behavior:

- o "كفايه مسخره يانساء بلادي وكل وحده تهتم ببيتها أبرك لها"

- o "Stop with the ridiculousness women of my country and every one of you

should care about her house. That is beneficial for her."

These are the categories that emerged from my examination of the tweets in the

hashtag Women2Drive. A total of 340 tweets were collected to examine whether women

driving constituted a gendered moral panic.

Sampling

In considering the type of content to analyze for this study, I used the "Advanced

Search" option on Twitter to modify the dates the hashtag, #Women2Drive, was used in

to only June 17, 2011, the day women drove as part of the campaign. I also used the

Arabic hashtag " سواقة_المراة" "Women Driving" that was trending during that day to focus

on local tweets. Then, I chose the tweets based on the first 340 tweets that emerged from

the search. Furthermore, I coded the tweets based on the themes that emerged:

Westernization, Mockery, Defiance of State, Defiance of Gender Roles.

I used Twitter for this study because most of the campaigns launched in Saudi

Arabia took their cause to Twitter. Also, Twitter is a thriving social media tool used by

the majority of Saudi Arabians. Saudi Arabia has the most active twitter users in the

Kingdom, with 2.4 million active users (Arab Social Media Report 2010). 40 percent of

tweets produced by the Arab world comes from Saudi Arabia. Therefore, it is highly

important to use Twitter as a source because of its popularity in the Kingdom.

Strengths of Content Analysis

Content analysis is used by many sociologists to investigate a phenomenon in the

mass media. By using this tool, researchers are able to explore the content related to an

issue and discover how an issue is presented in the media (Krippendorff 2012). An important strength of content analysis is its easy access. This method is unobtrusive; the researcher can explore content through the use of the internet without any human interaction. Furthermore, sampling is relatively easy and the access to the content is inexpensive (Krippendorff 2012).

Although it is usually used quantitatively, it is a method that can produce both qualitative and quantitative data. This allows room for the results to compliment each other qualitatively and quantitatively. Also, content analysis presents objective analysis of the phenomenon or issue in question, which allows for the reader to better understand the content they are reading (Krippendorff 2012).

Weaknesses of Content Analysis

Although content analysis claims that it is objective, the researcher cannot be completely objective. The researcher chooses the content. Therefore, the choices the researcher makes on which content to focus on is highly subjective. The researcher selects material from the larger body of texts but it would not be the guiding principle. The researcher selects items that are representative or reflective of larger patterns in the data. The selection of quotes can be "objective" insofar as the researcher selects quotes that are largely reflective of the data analyzed.

Also, the researcher choses the coding scheme and decides how to interpret the content. Therefore, the method cannot completely claim that it is objective. Choosing the media content, creating a coding scheme, running statistics, interpreting data requires time (Krippendorff 2012).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study will be presented through coded data organized around four major themes: Westernization, Mockery, Defiance of State, and Defiance of Gender Roles. These major themes emerged from the 340 random sample of tweets from the 2011 Twitter campaign hashtag #Women2Drive. An important takeaway the researcher found is that the themes overlap and a tweet can have one or more theme coded to it.

Before delving into the different themes, an important finding structures the overall section. The opponents of women driving, both males and females, do not find women rights to drive an issue worthy of debate and negotiation. Tweets from opponents wish Saudi women would take on causes like poverty, unemployment and other local issues they label as more important than their cause to drive.

The following tweets are examples of the rhetoric regarding the insignificance of the cause:

"الناس في ليبيا وسوريا واليمن تموت وانتوا همكم تسوقون"

"People in Libya, Syria and Yemen are dying and all you care about is driving"

"الشعوب العربيه لديها جمعة الحريه والكرامه ونحن قيادة السياره للمراه يا أمة ضحكت من جهلها الامم"

"The Arab societies have the Friday of Freedom and Dignity and we have Women [rights] to Drive. Other Nations have laughed at the ignorance of this Nation."

Therefore, the themes that emerged are interconnected and fall under the idea that the issue is insignificant.

Mockery

Out of 340 tweets, 82 tweets used keywords and phrases that were coded as mockery: tweets that ridicule women and the act of women driving. In this category, the tweets

aimed at mocking the campaign and the participants of the campaign. The tweets took the cause as a platform for ridicule and laughter.

Table one illustrates the keywords and phrases used commonly in the hashtag that the researcher defined as mockery.

TABLE 1

KEYWORD/PHRASE	NUMBER OF TIMES USED
Domestic duties	5
Appearance	6
Masculinity	4
Femininity	5
Sarcasm	34

Domestic Duties

A recurring sub-theme among the Mockery dataset is that women's domestic duties are incompetent and are left in the hands of maids. Therefore, before asking for a right to drive, the tweets suggest that women should perform their domestic duties adequately. A hashtag was created simultaneously during the #Women2Drive campaign, named #Women2Kitchen. The hashtag was created in June 6, 2011 by a male Saudi twitter user. The following tweets illustrate the ideas surrounding domestic duties and women rights to drive:

''ابرك لها من السواقه women2kitchen#''

"Better for her than driving #women2kitchen"

"Ramadan is near, maids are leaving without return, time for women to fulfill their true role in life. #women2kitchen"

Appearance

Tweets that mocked the appearance of women who support driving have been coded as a sub-theme of mockery. Some tweets jokingly linked the idea of women caring about their appearance to an incompetence in driving:

"اثنان واربعون في المائة من حوادث النساء بسبب انشغالهم بالاهتمام بمظهرهن"

"Forty-two out of 100 of female driving accidents are due to their preoccupation with their appearance."

" بما ان الموضوع صار رسمي يرحم اهلكم لا نشوف حركات اللثمه وسماجه. وصوت المسجل لاعمري اشوفك معليته خخخخخخخ"

"Since the issue has become official, we do not want to see the wearing of the *lithma* and behaving weirdly. I never want to see you turning the radio's volume up."

Lithma is a type of style some Saudi women wear. It is styled where a cloth wraps around the head and covers only the lips and half of the nose. In this context, the tweet views the lithma as provocative and is discouraging the style.

Masculinity and Femininity

Tweets coded as mockery illustrated a third sub-theme: Masculinity. In this sub-theme, tweets viewed the act of driving as a masculine act. Therefore, in mocking women driving, the tweets associated the act of women driving with prescribed Saudi male roles. For example:

"الله يعين ، شكله قريبا نسمع عن عسكريات في المرور"

"May God help us, looks like we will soon hear about female traffic cops."

‘‘أقول لزوجتي تمر تجيب العشاء اليوم عني..؟‘‘

"Should I tell my wife to go pick up dinner instead of me..??"

"الحريم اليوم بيجيبون الغدا يعني؟"

"So today the ladies will bring lunch?"

Another sub-theme emerged which associated femininity with weakness and used it as a lens to mock and delegitimize the campaign. For example:

"الاجانب يحسبون ان بناتنا بيسوقن وبيغيرون القوانين ههههههههه بناتنا حليلات مب قويات مثلكم"

"These foreigners actually believe that our women will drive and will change the laws. [laughter] our girls are not strong like you, they are very sweet."

‘‘ طب اذا سويتي مخالفة لاسمح الله..معروف انك اذا عليكي الغلط بتنحبسي...بترضي تروحي ولابتبكي وتعملي مناحة بوسط الشارع؟‘‘

"Ok if you were in an accident, God forbid, it is known that if you are in the wrong, you will be jailed… Are you ok with that or will you cry and cause a scene in the middle of the street?"

Sarcasm

The largest sub-theme in this category is sarcasm. Most of the tweets in the ‘‘Mockery’’ category took to twitter to engage in sarcastic conversations by tweeting their thoughts in regards to the campaign or replying to prominent activists and mocking their ideas. It is important to note that most of the tweets were written by men. However, women did participate in the mockery of women driving. The following is a tweet coded as sarcastic written by a Saudi female twitter user:

‘‘الحين أنا جوعانه و مافي سواق يصير أروح اطلب لي وأرجع هذا يعتبر من الضروريات‘‘

"I am hungry now and there is no driver. Is it ok if I go order food and come back? This is a necessity**"**

Other Sarcastic tweets disregarded the campaign automatically and viewed it as a way for Saudi female twitter users in favor of the campaign to gain attention. The following example is by another Saudi female twitter user:

‘‘ أنا متأكدة ان نص اللي قالوا سقنا وحطوا صور كلام فاضي ألقاها ماتعدت باب بيتهم الكهربائي وقاعدين تسوون

"فيها عشان تكثرون الفلو"

"I am sure that half of the women who claimed that they drove and posted pictures is nonsense. They most likely have not crossed their door steps and are only claiming they drove to gain followers."

Other sarcastic tweets questioned the seriousness of women's driving. For example:

‘‘؟.. إنتوقعوا اذا سمحوا للبنات يسوقوا ،،، راح يطالبوا بشغالة ثانية تسوق السيارة عنهم "

"Do you think if they allowed women to drive ,,, that they will ask for another maid to drive the car for them..?"

Mockery is an important finding that emerged from the 340 tweets. It illustrates the lack of awareness of the impact lack of driving has on women in Saudi Arabia. The narratives used in mocking were heavily sarcastic and aimed mostly at mocking middle and upper-class women:

"أنتم اول قومو بأعمال منزلكم بنفسكم بعدين قودو بنفسكم. إذا مشينا الشغالات بتستحقون انكم تسوقون"

"First, perform your domestic duties by yourself and then drive by yourself. If we let the maids go, you will deserve to drive."

In this context, the tweet aimed at mocking privileged Saudi women who can afford to have the services of servants. It lacks the ability to recognize the economic condition that

persuaded many women to ask for their right to drive. Most women who afford the service of servants also have personal drivers and are not severely affected by the ban (Alfawzan 2016).

The tweet also claimed that women cannot ask to drive because they seemingly fail to perform their ascribed gender roles: domestic duties. Driving is seen as outside of their socially ascribed gender roles. Therefore, they are criticized for asking for something that is viewed to be outside their normative gender roles without first performing their socially ascribed gender roles. In this tweet, granting a woman to drive would affect her prescribed gender roles. In a sense, if women are engaging in a behavior outside their ascribed gender roles, who will perform their expected duties? This fits into the narrative of gendered moral panics. Saudi women might be not performing their expected gender roles. Le Renard (2014) illustrates that a demand for a refined definition of gender roles emerged as the Saudi society became more engaged in the international community. As women demonstrate their demand for a different definition of gender roles through their participation in the twitter campaign, Women2Drive, statements that stress the importance of maintaining and performing normative gender roles are used to combat the perceived threat: change in gender roles.

Westernization

Another important theme that emerged from the findings is Westernization: the belief that the Twitter campaign is a western plot rather than a local initiative. Out of 340 tweets, 62 used keywords or phrases that were coded as Westernization. Three main sub-themes appeared from the data. Table two illustrates the keywords and phrases used commonly in the hashtag that the researcher defined as Westernization.

TABLE 2

KEYWORD/PHRASE	NUMBER OF TIMES USED
Betrayal	19
Skepticism	20
Plot/Conspiracy	23

Betrayal

A sub-theme that emerged from this category is betrayal. Tweets in this sub-theme

viewed the proponents of women driving who are active in the hashtag, Women2Drive,

as betraying the overall society. The betrayal was defined through seeking international

support for their cause. The following is an example that illustrates betrayal:

"هذه خيانه والله عندما نشاهد من يتقوى بالأجنبي على بلادنا"

"I swear this is a betrayal when we see those who use foreigners against our country"

Furthermore, the tweets in this sub-theme labeled the narrative behind women driving as

liberal. As seen in this category, liberal was also associated with betrayal:

"الليبراليون يستمدون قوتهم من الخارج لأنهم يعلمون أنهم لا شعبيه لهم داخل المجتمعات المسلمة"

"The liberals gain power from outside because they know they are not popular inside

Islamic societies"

Betrayal was also coded in the tweets that viewed the proponents of the cause as

individuals who sold themselves to the ideologies of the west:

"والله هنالك من باعو أنفسهم للأجانب!"

"I swear there are those who sold themselves to the foreigners."

In this sub-theme, it is evident that the opponents disassociated the cause of women driving as a local initiative. Rather, the opponents used the narrative of betrayal to strip the proponents of any legitimacy, deeming their acts as a form of betrayal. Associating the proponents with selling themselves to the foreigners is an act that views the ideas behind the campaign as a betrayal and a western conspiracy.

Conspiracy/Plot

The largest sub-theme in this category is coded as conspiracy/plot. In this sub-theme, opponents viewed the entirety of the campaign, Women2Drive, as a western plot rather than a local campaign. The western plot was defined as an initiative to corrupt Saudi women:

"يا شعب المملكة المسلمة أتقو الله وأعلمو أن وراء مطالب قيادة المرأة ولعب على عقول النساء أجندة لا تريد للبلد الخير"

"O Islamic Saudi society fear Allah and know that whatever is behind women rights to drive is a play on the minds of women and a hidden agenda that does not want any good for the country"

"متابعتي وقراتي لمثل هذه المواضيع اجزم بأن هؤلاء التغريبيين ليس قضيتهم المرأة او حقوقها بل والله افسادها اخي الحبيب"

"From following and reading similar topics, I found that those who are westernized are not interested in women and their rights but corrupting her."

The western plot was also defined as a plan to westernize the country:

"هناك تخطيط دقيق لتغريب هذا البلد"

"There is a detailed plan to westernize this country."

Finally, a western plot was used to disassociate Saudi women from the campaign:

الحمد لله ان اغلب التاييد الموجود مو من سعوديات بل من غربيات ومن عربيات نصارى ...اما السعوديات الغالبية
العظمى" "ضدهن"

"Thank God that most of the supporters [of the campaign] are not Saudi women but

Western women or Christian Arabs… Saudi women are mostly against them"

This disassociation feeds into the overall westernization theme that aims to remove the

Saudi society completely from the narrative of the campaign to delegitimize it. As

Stanley Cohen stated, "interest groups in society such as political elites, the media, the

public and law enforcement define a situation as threatening to society's core values and

interests" in order for a moral panic to occur. As evident in this category, disassociation

was a method used to shift the narrative to a western plot. In doing so, any attempt to

localize Saudi Arabia in the narrative is obsolete because the campaign has been defined

as a Western conspiracy that threatens Saudi Arabia's normative values and interests.

Skepticism

Another sub-theme in this category is skepticism. Skepticism shares many of the same

views as the conspiracy\plot sub-theme. However, rather than blatantly stating that the

campaign was a conspiracy, the tweets that were coded as skepticism asked questions or

made statements to decipher the overall goals of the campaign. The following example

was a reply to an active twitter user in favor of the campaign:

"ياليت تجيب لنا نسبة اللي كتبوا في هالهاشتاق من خارج السعوديه;لانه اشوف الاجانب اللي يكتبون فيه اكثر مننا"

"I wish you would show us data of the users in the hashtag outside of Saudi; because I

see foreigners write in it more than us."

Furthermore, because the majority of tweets written by proponents were in English, skeptics asked why that would be. Writing in English rather than Arabic was viewed as a method of gaining support from the west. An act viewed to coincide with westernization. Example:

" الغريب أن الهاش تاق الخاص بقيادة المرأة للسيارة.الأكثرية الساحقة باللغة الأنجليزية.هل المقصود طلب النصرة من الغرب"

"It is weird that the hashtag is related to women driving, yet the majority are writing in English. Is the purpose seeking help from the west?"

" ملاحظ في هذا الهاش تاق ! أن غالبية المتوترين من الخارج / والسعوديين فقط للريتويت !.. طيب فهموني القضية لمين"

"I noticed in this hashtag that most of twitter users are foreigners and all Saudi do is retweet! Tell me, the issue is for whom?"

Being skeptical instigates fear in the public. Questioning the aims of the campaign produces what Herdt (2009) named "cultural anger" in which "marshalling of intense emotion across diffuse domains and arenas of action to unite individuals and groups in political pursuit of a common enemy." In the context of this theme, conceptualizing "westernization" as the core goal of the campaign creates an emotional reaction that unites individuals towards a common enemy: being westernized. As Moghadam (2003) mentioned, gender operates in a "larger matrix constructed of religion, power and culture." Westernization would threaten the normative gender roles because it would destabilize the construction of female gender roles in Saudi Arabia.

Defiance of State

Another theme that emerged from the findings in Defiance of State. were coded as Defiance of State. Out of 340 tweets, 98 used keywords or phrases that were coded as Defiance of State. Four main sub-themes appeared from the data. Table three illustrates the keywords and phrases used commonly in the hashtag that the researcher defined as Defiance of State.

TABLE 3

KEYWORD/PHRASE	NUMBER OF TIMES USED
Threat of imprisonment	39
Islamic law	25
Ineffective strategy	34

Threat of Imprisonment

During the investigation, the researcher saw a common sub-theme emerge out of the data. Many opponents of the campaign reported arrests of female drivers in Saudi Arabia. They also threatened women who supported the campaign with imprisonment and public humiliation if they decided to drive. The following are examples:

‘‘ قيادة المرأة للسيارة .. مخالفة للنظام .. كأي مخالفه .. يجب معاقبة صاحبها .. وخاصتا من يتحدى الحكومة هذي الايام’’

"Women driving… is against the law.. and like any law breakers.. we need to punish those who break the law.. especially those that challenge the government these days."

‘‘أتمنى جلب كل من قاد ومعرفة من يقف ورائهن من الجهات المشبوهه’’

"I wish to bring those [females] who drove and find out the suspicious authorities behind this."

"تم ارسال الامرأة التي قادت وزوجها بجانبها إلى المحكمة"

"A female who drove with her husband beside her has been sent to court"

The majority of tweets that have been coded as "threat of imprisonment" have reported female arrests or reported the presence of police in areas around the city of Riyadh and Jeddah. These tweets instigate fear in the public. Driving has been linked to imprisonment and public humiliation. This sub-theme is the largest in the category and it is a method to combat the act of female driving. To illustrate how fear is utilized in the defiance of state theme, it is important to view it in the context of Islamic law.

Islamic Law

The second largest sub-theme in this category has been coded as Islamic law. Most of the tweets in this sub-theme concluded that the act of driving defies Islamic laws. The following exemplify this rhetoric:

"أطيعوا ولي أمركن – اقصد الي ساقو"

"Obey your guardian – I mean to those who drove."

Women in Saudi are subjected to the **guardian system**: A system that views women as legal minors and requires them to gain approval from a male guardian in order to engage in the public sphere (Manea 2013). That includes opening a bank account, traveling, entering the workforce, undergoing some medical procedures or gaining education (Human Rights Watch 2013). The campaign, Women2Drive, drive does not use the narrative of gaining approval from the guardian in order to drive. The act of driving urges women to drive their cars without mention of gaining approval from a guardian.

Therefore, the tweet is demanding women to obey their guardians who are seemingly against the act.

In response to prominent activist of the Women2Drive campaign, a user concluded:

"ما تسألون عنه هو ضد الشريعة الإسلامية"

"What you are asking for is against Islamic law"

As part of the moral panics process, religion is used as a tool to combat a threat in society. As Herdt (2009) mentions, moral panics on gender roles and expectations has long been the topic of religious disputes.

Ineffective Strategy

In this sub-theme, the tweets viewed the method of gaining women rights to drive by driving their car in the streets an ineffective strategy. They might not necessarily be against the act of women driving, but they believe there are other ways to gain their rights. For example:

" ستسوق المرأة السعودية في وقته ولا فضل لمن سقن اليوم في ذلك فهم مجرد متحديات للقانون"

"Saudi women will drive in time as for those who drove today they are nothing but law breakers"

" بكل امانه انا مع قيادة المراه لكن الي جالس نشوفه تحدي انظمة الدوله الي مانعه الشئ ذا وهذا اكبر غلط ولا نرضاه بتاتاً"

"In all honesty I am with women driving but what is happening is against the law and the country has banned this [form of action] and that Is the biggest mistake and we do not condone this at all"

What is interesting in this sub-theme is the emergence of a sub-group: Proponents who do support women rights to drive but disagree with the campaign's method of gaining

women rights to drive. This sub-group is a unique category because they believe that only through a royal decree or order should they get the right to drive. For example:

"مادري ليه مبسوطين وتشجعون على مخالفه الأنظمة!!مع وجود نص صريح بالمنع،، ...خلاص أصبرو يعني أصبرو"

"I do not know why you are all happy and supporting breaking the law!! Even with an explicit text that forbids this,,... Enough just wait"

The tweets support women driving, but not by actively opposing the ban through driving their cars in the streets. As Thompson (2005) noted, changes in ideologies and values can increase risk and threaten the idea of "normal" and the sustenance of social order. A segment of proponents of women rights to drive might join forces with opponents because actively opposing the ban threatens the idea of "normal" and the sustenance of social order.

Defiance of Gender Roles

Out of 340 tweets, 75 used keywords or phrases that were coded as Defiance of Gender Roles. Table 4 illustrates the keywords and phrases. This theme emerged from tweets that viewed the campaign or the act of driving itself as defying normative Saudi gender roles and threatening women's virtue and reputation.

TABLE 4

KEYWORD/PHRASE	NUMBER OF TIMES USED
Threat to normative gender roles	45
Threat to women's reputation/virtue	30

Threat to Normative Gender Roles

In this sub-theme, any tweets that used keywords and phrases to deem the act of driving as a threat to gender roles was coded as such. The most retweeted (a tweet that is reposted or forwarded) is the following:

<div dir="rtl">"انتي قمتي بعمل الشغاله عشان تطالبين بعمل السايق؟"</div>

"Have you done the work of a maid to ask for the work of a driver?"

In this tweet, the user links the act of driving to performing her domestic duties. Similar to the sub-theme "domestic duties" found in the Mockery theme, it views women in the scope of normative gender roles and concludes that she must perform her expected gender roles before asking for something seemingly outside her ascribed gender roles. Other tweets urged women to stay and care for her home rather than drive their cars. For example:

<div dir="rtl">"كفاية مسخره يا نساء بلادي وكل وحده تهتم ببيتها أبرك لها"</div>

"Stop with the nonsense women of my country and each of you should take care of her home that is better for her."

<div dir="rtl">"اجلسو في بيوتكم احسن لكم واجلسو في المطبخ. أخاف عليكم من الشوارع"</div>

"Stay at home is better for you and stay in the kitchen. I fear the streets for you."

Other tweets found that the act of driving would destabilize the established gender roles of women and men. For example:

<div dir="rtl">"اشجع منع قيادة المراءه لانه لن يكون لرجل دور اذا قادة المراءة وقد تكثر "</div>

"I oppose women driving because men will not have a role once women start to drive."

<div dir="rtl">الغبار الذي احتاج مناطق المملكة الا عقوبه وتحذير لكل وحده تسول لها نفسها الضعيفه ان تعد نفسها مساوية لرجل</div>

29

"The dust storm that hit the kingdom [today] is nothing but a punishment and threat to any woman whose weak soul tells her that she is equal to men."

القياده لرجال فقط ونحن النساء الأفضل لنا تجنب ذلك .. ونحمد ربنا لمنع قيادة المرءة

"Driving is for men only and it is better for us women to avoid it.. we should thank our God for the ban on driving."

As seen in the examples, the thought that the act of driving is a threat to gender roles is evident in both male and female twitter users. This suggests that the normative gender structure is internalized by both men and women.

Threat to Women's Reputation/Virtue

In this sub-theme, any tweets that viewed the act as threatening women's reputation or virtue were coded as such. Tweets found the act of driving as well as the prominent activists as corrupt and a threat to a woman's reputation in the society. For example:

"فيه بنات لاهمها سمعة أسرتها ولا قبيلتها ولاحتى زوجها"

"There are girls that do not care about their reputation or her family or her tribe or even her husband."

Other tweets urged women to not listen to prominent female activist because they are viewed as corrupt. For example:

"لا تسمعون لهؤلاء النساء الغير محترمة الذين سوف يدمرون سمعتكم"

"Do not listen to these disrespectful women who will ruin your reputation"

In short, women's actions are used to measure the reputation of herself, family, tribe, and husband.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL DISCUSSION

The prohibition of women driving is fed by the belief that it harms social values

(*The Week*, 2015). The virtue of Saudi women is believed to be at risk in face of driving cars. Using women's actions as the measure of social values is not a new phenomenon. In fact, protecting a woman's virtue has been used as a means to control women's access to the public sphere. It is important to understand that through the struggle of gaining women driving comes the question of the cost of the ban.

Economic Conditions

Currently, the majority of households in Saudi Arabia rely on foreign workers to serve as personal drivers for women. It is estimated that approximately 800,000 foreign workers serve as personal drivers in Saudi Arabia, with an average monthly income of 1,500 riyals (266 US dollars) (Alfawzan 2016). Saudi households must endure additional costs in obtaining a foreign driver including an average of:

- 8000 riyals (2133 US dollars) to recruit a foreign driver.

- 2000 riyals (533 US dollars) visa fees

- 2000 riyals (533 US dollars) plane ticket fees for every two years of service.

- 200 riyals (53 US dollars) driver's license fees.

- 430 riyals (114 US dollars) driving lessons fees.

- 1200 riyals (320 US dollars) monthly car insurance fees.

- 800 riyals (213 US dollars) for living accommodations.

- 500 riyals (133 US dollars) monthly health insurance fees.

- 600 riyals (160 US dollars) monthly grocery fees.

The prohibition of women driving costs the country on average 14 billion riyals (3.7 billion US dollars) annually (Alfawzan 2016). Furthermore, much of the money the foreign workers make in Saudi Arabia is sent back home, a process known as remittance money. Therefore, the money invested in personal drivers is not recycled back into the economy. It is estimated that remittances sent from Saudi Arabia reached 28 billion dollars in 2011 (The Guardian 2013). These numbers suggest that lifting the ban on women driving can cut costs for Saudi families and limit the process of remittance. Furthermore, social class largely determines the affordability of personal drivers and the number of personal drivers per household. A personal driver aids in providing female autonomy and mobility. Upper class women enjoy greater mobility and autonomy than lower class women (Moghadam 2003).

In recent decades, as internet usage grew in the United States and more homes welcomed the internet, a public concern over the time spent on the internet by young females developed. Public Service Announcements about sex offenders exploiting young females spread fear amongst parents and encouraged the passing of the Sex Offenders bill in July, 2006. The bill proposed a program to attack online pornography with twenty-year minimum prison sentence for taking part in "child exploitation enterprises" and "deceiving children into viewing obscene material" (Cassell and Cramer 2008).

While this fear ensued a public concern, it is also a form of moral panics. The fear of females using communication technologies has been around throughout US history in different forms ranging from telephone technologies in the early 1900s to the development of the internet. As seen in history, there is a consistent moral panics in anything that that is perceived to compromise the virtue of girls and a consistent debate

whether women can use technology without being at risk. The fear of female risk in using online technologies is exaggerated and a moral panic that spurred from a fear of female agency (Cassell and Cramer 2008)

Anti-Suffrage Movement and Gendered Moral Panics

In effort to counteract the suffrage movement in the early twentieth century, men in powerful industries such as railroad, textile and liquor formed a group known as the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage (NAOWS). This anti suffrage movement resembles gendered moral panics because it was defined as "an organized, uninstitutionalized, and large collectivity that emerges to bring about or to resist a program of change in societal norms and values, operates primarily through persuasive strategies, and encounters opposition in a moral struggle" (Maddux 2004). The principle rhetoric behind the anti-suffrage movement was reminding women that their place was in the home and that the majority of women did not want to vote. Therefore, none of the women should have it (Maddux 2004). Similarly, the opposition to Saudi women driving reiterate the same arguments established by the anti-suffragists in claiming that most Saudi women oppose driving. Therefore, none should drive and a woman best be kept in the home, not on the streets. While attending a hearing before the European Parliament's foreign affairs commission, Saudi Arabian Justice Minister Mohammed al-Isa defended the Saudi ban on women driving asserting that because of social culture, women have no desire to drive. He went on to claim that the decision to drive was at the hands of Saudi women, alleging that they have the freedom to choose but decide not to drive (Manea 2013). In her controversial blog, Saudiwoman's Weblog, Eman Alnafjan challenges the rhetoric claiming that women driving is a social and cultural one. She objects to the

narrative that women have the freedom to drive, but choose not to, by depicting the countless arrests, travel bans and job loss women who defy the ban face by the government (Alnafjan 2015).

The anti-suffrage movement also included female anti-suffragists, who profoundly opposed the inclusion of women in political life. As president of the Minnesota Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, Mrs. J. B. Gilfillan stated that:

> Anti-Suffragists are opposed to women in political life, opposed to women in politics. This is often interpreted to mean opposition to women in public life, which is a profound mistake. We believe in women in all the usual phases of public life, except political life. Wherever woman's influence, counsel or work is needed by the community, there you will find her, so far with little thought of political beliefs… The pedestals they are said to stand upon move them into all the demands of the community (Thurner 1993).

In a similar situation, Saudi anthropologist Madhawi Alrasheed, cited the reasoning behind Saudi female opposition to lift the driving ban, which included a gendered self-image (Alrasheed 2013). Whereas the anti-suffragists believed that women had no place in politics, many Saudi women who oppose the lifting of the ban believe that women have no place in demanding to drive. In a family structure, some married women view that it is a female right and a husband's duty to drive. Taking away that right and duty causes disorder in the household. However, the alternative view is that the ban on driving dismantles families. The ban on driving has been found as a contributing cause of divorce. Some Saudi marriages suffer from the driving ban because it places the entire burden on the husband to drive the family to work, school, the doctor, family and friends gathering and many other activities that can cause quarrels in the household (Alrasheed 2013).

Hegemonic Ideas and Gendered Moral Panics

Gendered moral panic is evidenced through the tweets that oppose women's right to drive. To illustrate a broader idea of how this gendered moral panic took place in the 340 tweets gathered, one must understand the power of hegemonic ideas. Hegemony, or domination, is a theory developed by Marxist Antonio Gramsci and it is "based on a shared common sense that naturalizes this world, that tells us there will always be bosses (and they will always be men)" (Gramsci 1975). Gramsci explores how the masses and the marginalized come to consent to their own domination. He states that ideas can lead even those who are disadvantaged by the existing order to support it (Gramsci 1975). As noted earlier in the findings, there are women supporting the ban which demonstrates their own acceptance of the existing order.

In order for a group to gain hegemony, their ideas have to be disseminated through schools, work, advertisements and soap operas. In this way, the group gains dominance and demands subordination from all groups. Gramsci also claims that if hegemony rules, a counter-hegemony must also exist. Counter-hegemony is a practice made by people, labeled organic intellectuals, who resist "the power and control of a dominant group" (Gramsci 1975). Organic intellectuals play an important role because they are "organizers who work with ideas" as opposed to traditional intellectuals who are "clerical or civic category of intellectuals." Gramsci's ideas are Marxist in nature and are viewed through an economic lens. However, an important takeaway from Gramsci's ideas is the hegemonic versus counter-hegemonic ideas. As the phenomenon of women driving is considered, Gramsci's ideas show the tension between the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic ideas.

As seen in the women right to drive issue, Saudi clerics, a hegemonic group, were incited by the act of women driving and issued *fatwas* (religious edict) to deem the act un-Islamic. That hegemonic idea can be found all across the 340 tweets to illustrate that the act of driving does not fit into the context of Islamic principles, which are the foundation of the Saudi society. The opposition to women driving use the narrative of a gendered moral panic in order to keep the hegemonic ideas intact.

However, as Gramsci notes, a counter-hegemonic group must also exist to resist the ideas of the hegemonic group. The proponents of Women2Drive campaign created a new narrative for themselves. Gender and religion were reframed to counter the attacks they received from the opposition (Almahmoud 2015).

Gender plays a strong role in the ban on women driving and the campaign, Women2Drive. Gender relations are constructed to fit into the overall power structure in society (Appelrouth and Edles 2007). Foucault discusses the importance of power in sexuality because it plays a major role in the construction of it in society. Power comes to play in sexuality by categorizing it, monitoring it and eventually managing it. Sex roles play an important part in society and power regulates it. This explains why the 340 tweets viewed the act of women driving as illegitimate because the act of women driving changes gendered roles. "Have you done the work of a maid to ask for the work of a driver" is the most tweeted post from the opposition. The conceptualization of Saudi women's roles through domestic duties is a positive powerful tool that manages women roles and men roles. For example, a woman is expected to follow her domestic duties and a man is expected to drive. Asking for a change of roles is asking for a change of the historical and social construction of power.

CONCLUSION

Social media is an important tool for social activists. For Saudi women activists, social media is used as a platform to organize and discuss ideas to counter the normative ideas surrounding the expectation of Saudi women. This study investigated the reasons behind the ban on women driving in Saudi Arabia through the framework of gendered moral panics: a fear and concern about specific perceived threats toward conservatives' expectation of women. The results indicate that opponents of women driving use a narrative of gendered moral panics. Historically, gendered moral panics can be found in any new phenomenon in society like technology and the anti-suffrage movement. The ideas of the opponents are what Gramsci termed hegemonic ideas because they perpetuate and call for the maintenance of the status-quo. The proponents of Women2Drive campaign are what Gramsci termed the counter-hegemonic ideas because they resist the ideas of the dominant group. Because the Women2Drive campaign is about gender, Foucault tells us that power plays a major role in sex roles because they regulate, manage and categorize it.In Saudi Arabia, power plays a role in gender by regulating, managing and categorizing the roles in the public and private spheres. The act of women driving would seemingly shake the structure of sex roles because it would change the power structure attached to maintaining the ban (Alrasheed 2013). Furthermore, power and counter power can be found in online platforms like twitter by Saudi Arabians. Women utilized this tool more than men to voice their lack of rights. They use Twitter for its popularity in the kingdom. A report by the Arab Social Media Report stated that "47% of all tweets in the Arab region stem from Saudi Arabia" (Chaudry 2014:10). Therefore, taking social causes like women driving would mobilize

women to stand up and defy the ban. The ban failed. It was found that the opponents of the ban used a narrative of a gendered moral panics through their use of mockery, defiance of state, defiance of gender roles and westernization to delegitimize the cause. However, as one proponent of Saudi women driving noted:

كل الحقائق تمر بثلاث مراحل:1- يتم السخرية منها,2- تقاوم بضراوة,3- يتم القبول بها كحقائق مسلمة-أرثر " "شوبنهاور

"All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident- Arthur Schopenhauer."

In future studies, it is important to investigate the guardian system which limits Saudi women's participation in the public sphere.

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