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# Final MA Portfolio

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# FINAL MASTER'S PORTFOLIO

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## A FINAL PORTFOLIO

Submitted to the English Department of Bowling  
Green State University in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
  
Master of Arts in the field of English

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Professor Erin Labbie, First Reader  
Professor Bill Albertini, Second Reader

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*Self-Conscious Reflection on Scholarship in English*

As a teacher and a scholar, I think that we spend our whole lives trying to figure out who we are, where we are going, and what defines our identity. We learn. We act. We evolve. In so doing, we hopefully become better humans, and cultivate a well-rounded and clear-cut notion of our self. Self-exploration, and identity is not a solitary process. We cannot find ourselves by ourselves. Our place in the world, our beliefs, faith, and actions are all learned behaviors. Our identity is a result of the world we live in. However, my world is likely vastly different from yours, as we are result of different experiences.

My life experiences and the labels that have been placed on me have varied vastly. I have been labeled as a college dropout, a graduate student, a waitress, a lobbyist, a business owner, a party girl, a mother, a cancer patient, a cancer survivor, and at one point, I was even a reality television star. These different identity markers have each positioned themselves into a slice of my past, that forms my current identity. It's not a different lifetime, so as the next step in one life. Some might say that sounds philosophical, but I think that the feeling arises from a constant evolution of adjusting to circumstances, and the desire to consistently improve myself and my identity markers.

If asked to define my identity today, I would fail because I don't have a singular answer that fully defines it. I may offer one answer over another, based singularly on who presents the questions, but there is not one aspect of my identity that takes

precedence over another. Even those aspects of my life, such as family, that consume so much of my day, is broken down into separate subcategories that each define me differently. I am a woman. I am also wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend. That's only the relative part. I could go on, and I suspect we all can go on.

When I look back on the work that I have completed over the last three years, there are apparent themes, and repetitive messages that I continue to explore. Identity is the core repetitive issue that has been my focus. Women's rights, and identity, as well as the examination of marginalized groups, are interests that I have spent a great deal of time pondering during my MA progress.

I have chosen to include four projects into my portfolio that best portray the search and understanding for both personal identity, and well as social identity and placement.

The first project is titled, "The Creation of Self-Consciousness in Marginalized Groups." This piece explores Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. The revision for this project was an intense line by line revision. There was a need for clarification in several parts, and a lack of direct thought. The concept of self-consciousness can be a difficult one to follow, and so I felt it best to revise the language used to be more direct, as well as concise. I have always felt a sense of inspiration through the connection that I see present between Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's theory of self-consciousness, and the theory of the "double consciousness," explored by W.E.B Dubois in *The Souls of Black Folk*. Although their theories are designed uniquely

from one another, the conclusion that one's identity is formed not through themselves, but from the interactions with others, makes self-identification, a communal process.

The second project, a much shorter piece to work with, *Myth Debunked: There IS Rationale in the Irrational Language of Women*, piggy backs on Hegel's ideas and the first project a bit but drives them into contemporary experiences, and the familiar mother daughter relationship. This piece explores the ideas presented by Deborah Tannen in *You're Wearing That?: Understanding Mothers and Daughters in Conversation* and applies Tannen's theories on language to real-life experiences. Although short, I felt this particular piece was important to include in the portfolio, as it shows how traditional theories are as relative to modern life as new ones. The revision process for this piece, included making the readability a bit more formal, and moving outside the original confines of the assignment, which called for a less formal review. While there was not a major revision overhaul, as I felt the connection was quite adequate, I did edit for clarity, and function. I felt that the message followed the first project into modern view, which is why I chose to include it, as I felt it tied into Hegel, and his master-slave dialect, which I feel is greatly echoed in the mother-daughter dialogue, that also presents with its own form of conversational master and slave.

Next, I chose to include *The Oppression of Society, Under the Mask of Modernity*. This project focuses on women's rights in the nation of Saudi Arabia. As women, when we form our identity, I think that it is important to understand the struggle of women who lack equal rights. As Western women who claim unity among the sex, we must be aware of the privileges that we hold, as they are a part of us, and our identity, just as the

lack of rights becomes part of the Eastern female identity. The original version of this project was exciting to write, in that relevant events, and rulings occurred a few short hours before the project deadline. The first point of revision for this project, was to go back and examine how the latest driving law has impacted Saudi society, as well as altering the language and tenses used, as the event is no longer as current. The revision of this piece included tying in connections between Eastern and Western societies, so that plight of women in Saudi Arabia, could viewed as a relatable struggle, as well as a sympathetic issue to Western women.

Lastly, is the pedagogy titled, *Theory and Controversy*. This is a course syllabus, designed to tackle controversial issues, such as gender and race, and explore the notions associated with them. The course is designed to formulate critical thinking and reflection on issues such as white privilege, gender inequality, and cultural appropriation. The focus is to attack the social norms through different units of literary criticism and view the themes through the lens of theory, with a focus that allows the student to reflect on their own lives and actions by exploring those of others and making connections. The original assignment required several in- depth activities and planning materials. I chose to remove those aspects during the revision. Although I think that they are helpful planning tools, my aim with this revision was to generate a student-focused syllabus, as opposed to an instructor or assignment focused one. Additional revisions to the pedagogy included clarity of due dates, requirements for each class, and expected discussion, lecture, or activity for each day the class meets. I altered the assessment guide for better clarification of both the scale that students

would be graded on, and the expectations of both the quality and quantity of work. The revision also reduced the amount of reading required for each class. As the revision stands, the required reading is reasonable to a student taking multiple other courses while still engaging enough to create lectures, hold discussion, and have classroom activities that draw student interest and engagement. The reading and activities related to course are intended to create mastery over popular authors and readings, that the student may encounter later into their education. Lastly, the format was revised for easier readability.



ENG 6070

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### **The Creation of the Self-Consciousness in Marginalized Groups**

The identification of the self is created within Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's 1807 publication of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The notion that a conscious entity can become an aware individual is outlined by the conversion of consciousness into self-consciousness. This idea creates a self-awareness that was not present prior to a person to person interaction and is what shapes the individual. This process is not equal to both conscious bodies entering into agreement, nor does it relate equally to marginalized groups, without the addition of further applications. The theory of self-consciousness however, does begin a debate into how one self, views another self, and the impact that this has on identification when the selves are placed in an interaction where each differs greatly.

To move forward into the application of Hegel's theory of self-consciousness, the relationship and definition of self-consciousness by way of Hegel, must first be determined and defined, even if only from the interpretation of the author. As interpreted from Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the act of consciously achieving a state of self-consciousness is granted only by an interaction with another consciousness. The act of first identifying with another, and then being able to subconsciously and rather

immediately determine how the other is currently viewing the self and the reaction and interpretation of this identification (regardless of what or where the identification can be classified as) is what is formulated by Hegel as self-consciousness. “The twofold significance of the distinct moments has in the nature of self-consciousness to be infinite, or directly the opposite of the determinateness in which it is posited. The detailed exposition of the Notion of this spiritual unity in its duplication will present us with the process of Recognition” (Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit* 541). One cannot come to know their self by any other way, then by their interaction with another. This interaction in turn creates a hierarchy in which the self is able to recognize where it stands within a society and in relation to others. The interaction essentially equates power and is referred to as the Master-Slave relationship (equally known as lord and bondsman). In each relationship and interaction of which self-consciousness can be achieved, one individual will always be the master and the other the slave. While one may be a master and command more power from the relationship, it is important to note that the master can only exist with the presence of the slave who essentially creates the master's role in the first place. Masters become dependent on their interaction with another who in turn takes on the role of slave. Determinately, each time one meets another, a master and a slave are born regardless of circumstance, class, race, or prior authority.

Despite the classifications, definitions, and determination, that any self and other can become a master and/ or a slave, Hegel’s theory when applied to the oppressed

masses can be identified in great lengths as much more than a power struggle within one relationship and one meeting. Within marginalized groups, a singular meeting can create a power struggle that can effectively change or aid the master-slave relationship for the entire group. This is not to mean that the change is effective immediately, but that the One's realization can be impactful. This theory can be argued with the aid of Hegel (though not with intention) when examining the successes of women and minorities and how the alteration of traditional race and gender roles within society does not play into the traditional labels of master and slave, suggesting that any slave can become a master. The application of the master slave relationship and its complexity with marginalized groups is most clearly viewed through the placement of the African American male into the position of slave, with the white male being placed into the role of master. Clearly this placement has specific historical and social connotations involved. The actuality that the black man was in fact slave to the white man places the white man at the top of the social and political hierarchy. This placement, although clearly with no current physical binding has left a lasting effect on not only the black man, but also the white man. This effect is now present whether it is a conscious or subconscious consideration to thought and action. The effect of this hierarchy of selves and to the differentiation within the races, is more clearly explained when considering the theories of W.E.B Du Bois. Du Bois takes his influence from Hegel's theories and creates the vision of double consciousness. The universality of the theories of self-consciousness and duality that are presented by Georg Hegel in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, as well the Hegel inspired themes of the veil and double-

consciousness presented by WEB Dubois in *The Souls of Black Folk*, can be combined together in relation to Hegel's, master-slave dialectic to explain and exploit the internal race relationship which exists in the past and present, and is arguably unchanged despite change. Dubois's application of Hegel to race relations offers an explanation and source for the repression and devaluation of blacks within the American society. Using DuBois's model, the source of race relations can be traced back to the introduction of the two consciousnesses, and the formation of self-consciousness. The duality of the self-conscious creates a domino effect that spirals off into DuBois's theory of double consciousness, in which the black man can never be conscious without being self-conscious, as he must be aware of the impact that his self has on the other. Models of the varying layers of consciousness and the impact they have on the self can be seen not only in our society, but it is even more prevalent and explanatory within literature.

In accordance with the previously defined definition of self-consciousness, and the claim that one is able to identify themselves through the eyes of the other, DuBois builds upon this to create a related argument. "It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife- this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double

self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost.” (Du Bois, 871). The two-ness that is described by Du Bois is the result of having a double interaction with another. The traditional creation of the self-consciousness, during an interaction that results in a double consciousness, occurs because the Self first interacts with the Other, which takes their conscious self and forms self-consciousness. This self-consciousness that is created and the awareness of the other’s view is then used to transform a new consciousness which results in the process duplicating itself. The Self now portrays and interacts with the Other in accordance to what they believe will conform to a desired result. This change results from the formation of a second (double) consciousness. Quite simply stated, the Self attempts to create a new identity based upon what they believe the Other will prefer or react better towards. This new identity is not the actual identity of the Self. The Self keeps their original identity, and at the same time, portrays a secondary identity.

Du Bois’s concept of the veil, adds another layer to the complication of interactions with the Self and the Other. The veil reacts to the stigma and controversial creation of double consciousness. Placing the veil over oneself or another, creates a blurred reception of what is clearly seen and understood within the singular interaction. During the process that creates the double consciousness, and when the black man alters his consciousness for the interpretation of a white man, he does so only by an assumption and his own interpretation of what he perceives through the interaction. The veil then allows for a margin of error in creation of the double consciousness to

occur. The veil reflects into society when the different races attempt to view the Other and confirm that they understand the plight of each. The white man can only see the black man and his struggles with a veil present. That is to say, that no matter how hard they attempt to understand, the definition will never be completely clear to them. This concept can be compared to the idea of “white privilege” within today’s society. The white man or woman may claim to not use their race for any type of privilege, but do not understand, that the mere physicality of being white is a privilege in and of itself. In relation to a modern creation of the master slave relationship involving a white man, their race does not play any role in the determination of the exchange from consciousness to self-consciousness. The oppression and discrimination that comes with the physicality of being black, however, does play a role for a black man during the exchange in which more than one race is present. Being black (and suggestively any oppressed and discriminated race, for example, Muslim, plays a role in the creation of the master slave dialect, because it forces upon the Self the need to create the double consciousness. The theory of the self-conscious and the double-conscious existed long before terms were coined to appropriately theorize each. The effects of each have such a lasting and powerful effect on man and society, that society has yet to function without them, and thus we see them in action not only in history but in the society in which we live. Human nature and the identity of the self and the other is a stagnant force that does not change in its identification despite time moving forward and the changes that come.

Hegel makes the claim in *Phenomenology of Spirit*, that “Selves are not born, but made...” (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit* 544). In this idea then, we must consider that since a self is made subsequently by the interaction with another, then there must be room to for the self to choose to either become the master or the slave, and even that the self can be made to move between the two or find the possibility of doing so. The creation of this self then, is not bound by the consequences of its birth, but rather by the actions and interactions that it creates for oneself. The breakdown and movement with the hierarchy of the master slave relationship can be seen through the eyes of former literal slave, Frederick Douglass. From the Douglass autobiography, *The Narrative and Life of Frederick Douglass*, “You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man” (Douglass, 308). Suggestively, the means that Douglass found within himself to fight back against the oppression of slavery can be theorized through the use of Hegel. Douglass identified outside of himself. On the question of how self-consciousness is acquired, Hegel answers in *the Phenomenology of Spirit*, “Only in meeting with something that is not the self” (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit* 537). Douglass, who was more aware and educated than most slaves, given his somewhat protected (a word and action proven by Douglass and not to be implied) upbringing is what aids him in his awareness of the surroundings and interactions. He is at the same time aware of his circumstances, but in meeting and interacting with the white men who are above him, and not like his self, Douglass is able to see that the self of the other, is not in any way a better or more deserving man than he, despite his status as slave. Four years prior to earning his freedom, Douglass was nearly beaten to death by Mr.

Covey, the man his master had hired him out to. Douglass walked seven miles on the brink of death to his master's home to ask for protection but was granted none and returned to Mr. Covey. He was soon after faced with yet another beating for attempting to seek protection, but this time, Douglass fought back. He had realized the character of the men he served, but was at the same time through this meeting, aware that he was above them, "This battle with Mr. Covey was the turning-point in my career as a slave. It rekindled the few expiring embers of freedom and revived within me a sense of my own manhood. It recalled the departed self-confidence, and inspired me again with a determination to be free... It was a glorious resurrection, from the tomb of slavery, to the heaven of freedom. My long-crushed spirit rose, cowardice departed, bold defiance took its place..." (Douglass, 290). What Douglass sees as his own manhood and self-confidence is what Hegel would consider to be him coming out of himself and becoming dominant over Covey and any holding to the ideals of slavery. Douglass no longer sees the other as being an essential being on a hierarchy, but rather replaces himself with the other. Hegel's literal slave-master relationship is challenged and overthrown by Douglass's actions and conclusions. He no longer believes that the master (Covey, and in this specific case not his literal master) grants him the gift of life, and therefore refutes the idea that Covey remains his master. It is in this realization through the actions and interactions with consciousness and self-consciousness that Douglass rises to the role of master despite his actual his title to be.



While the emphasis to this point has been on men and race, let us consider a second marginalized group: Women. Women have been marginalized throughout history, regardless of race, though even more so if their race is not white. Viewed often only as property throughout much of history, even Hegel himself did not consider women a forethought in the creation of the self and self-consciousness. Close examination of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* by scholars, has confirmed that Hegel did not write his theory of the master-slave relationship to include women in anyway. He considered woman neither being capable of becoming master nor slave (Phipps). The direct disdain for women is evident in his writing and exclusion. Hegel would write later of women in *The Philosophy of Right*, “The difference between men and women is like that between animals and plants. Men correspond to animals, while women correspond to plants because their development is more placid and the principle that underlines it is the rather vague unity of feeling.... Women are educated – who knows how? – as it were by breathing in ideas, by living rather than acquiring knowledge” (Hegel, *Philosophy of Right* 144). Hegel’s disdain for women is apparent, and so in his writing, when he says ‘man,’ he means literal man and not philosophical human. Clearly woman for Hegel is meant to be weak and consumed on the food chain of life. Men are active in society and interaction, while women are passive. Despite the exclusion of women from his theory, when considered and replaced and/ or placed alongside man, the application of the master slave relationship in regard to woman is quite relevant and similar in that woman can move in between master and slave, in a similar manner as minorities and men alike. While neither master nor slave can exist

without the other. When replacing one or the other with man or woman, we can also contend that neither would physically exist without the other. Despite the simplicity of the concept, Hegel views women as being of importance only in the capacity of the family, and even then, only to produce life, “The feminine, in the form of the sister, has the highest intuitive awareness of what is ethical. She does not attain consciousness of it, or to the objective existence of it, because the law of the Family is an implicit, inner essence which is not exposed to the daylight of consciousness but remains an inner feeling and the divine element that is exempt from an existence in the real world” (Hegel, *Philosophy of Right* 155). While Hegel may concede that a woman can have intuition but not be conscious of what intuition is or implies or find self-consciousness in her interactions and that women only exist in conjunction with the family unit and not outside of it, therefore their interactions with another are not claimed to result in self-consciousness, this claim is not substantiated when broken down into reality. Hegel’s view on women is contradicting when one must consider the woman an individual if she is to be part of the reproduction process to create life alongside man. If the woman has an equal role in the assurance that the male sex will survive, then how can one deny that she does not indeed offer a self that can be created? Then, if we can consider her to be an individual in regardless of which way, she must also claim a form of consciousness, which we know by way of Hegel is automatically conformed to self-consciousness when the Self and the Other interact. It is seemingly impossible that woman cannot be part of the master-slave relationship when it is her physical being that can create man. If she can create, then she must be considered a self.

When one considers their own identity, they often assume that it is their own self that controls the creation and actions of their identity, and that their identity is specifically unique to themselves and created by himself. This is not entirely accurate if one must assume that the self is made in accordance with the conscious and the self-conscious. For marginalized groups this expansion can be considered a dual expansion, as the need for the double consciousness is activated to react accordingly to society, and in order to claim position on the hierarchy of self. Marginalized groups must often interact with their conscious and self-conscious more adamantly in order to not only be involved as an active member of an interaction, but in order to rise to the level of master in an interaction when needed and appropriate. Our Self and our identities are made by the interaction and the reaction that two consciousnesses have on one another and through the creation of the self-conscious. Identity therefore does not exist without another. The unique identity and traits that we consider to be uniquely ours, are created and formed in such a way because those who each self has interacted with will never be the same as another self and will constantly be evolving.

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Eng 6150  
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**Myth Debunked: There IS Rationale in the Irrational Language of Women.**

Let's start with some full disclosure: I chose the book by the title. *You're Wearing THAT?* I've heard these words far more than my fair share over the last thirty-five years, and I even catch myself asking this of my two-year old. Of course, in her case I'm justified. A swimsuit in December? Deborah Tannen's, *You're Wearing THAT? Understanding Mothers and Daughters in Conversation* was simply too tempting of a promise within a title, to not pick up. Could the science of language solve my communication problems with my own mother, and cool my boiling blood at each *helpful* suggestion she offers? Not quite. However, there is an adequate reasoning, and an understanding to my boiling blood that goes much deeper than the most literal of spoken words. As a matter of fact, my boiling blood is *quite* justified.

Mother and I have a rocky relationship at best. Despite my age, I am now, and will likely always be a child. Her child, who is far less versed in absolutely everything about the world. *She knows everything* (an amazing feat to be done with a high school diploma), and everyone, and one day may she convince the world that the sky is pink. I admit that I am in return, a touch of a bitter woman, but in this I feel justified, as enough one day finally became enough. On my wedding day, (YES. on my WEDDING DAY), not more than three minutes after being pronounced husband, and wife, my mother told to go and change into my other dress. *What other dress?* "Oh, you're

wearing that all night?" When I answered a curt, *yes*, she asked the photographer what type of editing he performed. When I immediately started crying, she began to yell at me, that no one likes a drunk bride. I wasn't drunk. However, she persisted that I must be, as why would I start crying out of the blue. Did I really cry over *nothing*? Did that *one glass* of champagne make me drunk? Was I being irrational? Oh, no.

For the love of meta-messages. It's not what mother said, it's the implication brought on, by the words she said, and what they implied to me, based on the past, and history of our relationship. Because I don't hear the facts in her words, or even the words that she speaks. I hear the meta-message, based on our relationship and history, that what she is actually saying, is "You're too fat to be wearing that dress," and "can you edit-out her back fat?" When she says I must be drunk, that's code for, "You must be crazy to accuse me of doing anything wrong." This incident was a turning point in the relationship I have with my mother. The results of her words, were far greater than I now believe she ever could have expected, and certainly did not intend for. In the months that followed, terminology unbeknownst to myself or her, we argued quite often about the meta-messages of that epic exchange. For quite some time, it seemed she would simply never admit fault, and I was physically, and emotionally heated at each mention. One day she had enough, and after a lengthy (and too wordy to repeat) conversation, she made me agree to never mention *the incident* again. Let's call it a meta-message-ology: mother admits fault without admitting anything.

The always surprising piece to this tale, is that neither my husband, or father, could figure out what the big deal was, but female friends and family took sides. While not solely unique to women, suffice to say, women speak in meta-messages far more often than men. That being said, a theory directed to conversations among men (not women) seems to provide a relevant basis, in which to discuss, and analyze the mother-daughter dialect.

There is a power struggle within the mother-daughter relationship that closely resembles, the Master-Slave dialect, that was printed in Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, in 1807. Hegel's Master-Slave dialect theory (also translated as Lordship and bondage), in its most simplistic form, dictates that within each conversational encounter, one individual (the master) must control the dialect they share over another (the slave). In a conversational setting, the master and slave may switch roles at any point during their shared dialect, but at each conversational point, only one may be the master, and one may be the slave. In theory, this becomes a conversational equalizer as each individual transfers the power of the conversation (Hegel, 2010). If one is to consider the subconscious role that the master-slave dialect plays in conversation, as the norm, then one might also conclude that the conversational aspects of the mother-daughter dialect are most directly, abnormal, as in this exchange, power does not transfer.

The cross-over of the master-dialect theory becomes a little fuzzy, when applied to the dialect shared by mothers and daughters. Perhaps this discrepancy over a traditional conversational power trade off, is why Tannen is able to write multiple

books on the topic of mothers, daughters, and language. Within a mother-daughter dialect, the mother does not wish to relinquish control to her grown daughter, and the grown daughter does not realize that she can take control, and become the master (Tannen, 2006). Both women are adults, and arguably will share a typical master-slave dialect with others, but when it comes to shared dialect with one another, the control of the shared dialect is stagnant, which adds to the animosity that grown daughters have when speaking to their mothers. The outbursts, the anger impulses, and the application of sometimes absurd meta-messages are results of the lack of a transfer of conversational (and relative relationship) power in conversation. If the mother did not demand to be a constant subconscious master, and the daughter, was not a constant subconscious slave within their conversational settings, then the relationship would be equalized, and the meta-messages that each gathered from the other would not be in such an extreme nature, or cause the strife, and emotional madness that they do. The position, and title of mother and daughter are never equal, and partly because we let the role of mother, rule. The role of mothering, does not simply end because your daughter is grown. Mother's position themselves into constant mothering, regardless of age. *You're Wearing THAT?* The emphasis on "that," may be both negative or caring, and negative and caring. The meta-message that this question implies, may be that the daughter should not be wearing what she is wearing, by opinion of her mother, but the reason for the mother's utterance, may not be the same reason that the daughter hears in utterance. However, the daughter places an emphasis on the words of the mother. If I had become the master of the conversation with my mother at my wedding, and told



her to ever so kindly, “shove it,” would the outcome have been different? Did her words have power over me because I let them have that power?

Meta-messages are not the only culprit to the complicated communication between mothers and daughters, although a great deal of strife does linger in this aspect. One must however, take into consideration, that the issue lies, not always with metamessages, but rather with the direct message that the mother (or daughter) wishes to portray, and how they use language in which to do so. The tone and emphasis that words are spoken with, offers implications to underlying meaning, as well as becoming the root cause of the creation of a meta-message (Tannen, 2006). Let us consider the title of the book, as an example: “You’re wearing THAT?” While difficult to convey tone in print, Tannen’s use of capitalization for the word, “THAT,” implies that the word is stressed, and as a question, we consider the negative implication of the question. So, “You’re wearing THAT?” becomes a negative implication. The stress and the tone of, “that,” which is the daughter’s clothing choice, is an offensive object to the mother. The tone changes the meaning of the formed sentence, and what words may have been formed in innocence now form a negative connotation. Does the stress on “that” mean that the denotation was meant to be negative? Not necessarily (and by not a yes or a no, here is where it gets complicated).

In the Chinese language, tone differentiates identical words with unique meanings (Finegan, 2015). While one who is a literal individual, may argue that tone does not work with this way in English, consider that it may. In particular, as we consider the mother-daughter dialect, tone creates implication, and changes word and

phrase meaning. If we consider that tone differentiates the meaning of words, then the process by which meta-messages are created, seems less irrational, and rooted more into a general linguistic tradition.

When we generalize the relationships of women, whether mother and daughters' or simply female friends, we look for the bonds that join two women. Connections within female relationships, as with most relationships, generate on sameness. We feel connection to people who are similar to us, whether in ideology, hobbies, skills, employment, etc. Conversations across any two people are generally built on a connection of sameness, a sameness that can be just about anything from physical to biological. In the complex world of mothers and daughters, this idea of sameness, however, is tested and abused. The mothering correction that daughters often face deals with the simple context of syntax and pronunciation. Where a daughter might imply a connection through the sameness of being a mother herself, a mother may offer a correction to the fact that her daughter is a mother, in the way that she may counter that she has been a mother longer. Both women are connected and have the sameness of being mothers, but by the correction of the syntax within this fact that the length of time matters, the connection of the sameness is lost. Repeating the fact with an alteration of syntax, has not only broken the sameness for the mother and daughter to share a connection, but also confirms her dominance as the master of the mother-daughter dialect.

Mothers and Daughters are complicated beings. My husband chimes in and questions, "aren't all women?" I'd like to roll my eyes at the question, but I think there

is merit to it, beyond a chuckle. Evaluating conversation, has me viewing women as a far greater interceptor of metamessages than men. Generally speaking, or rather, speaking from personal experience, and observation, men tend to take literal meaning from words, and utterances, as opposed to creating meta-messages and implications outside of direct meaning. That's not to say that men do not differentiate tone and pronunciation across general conversation, and interactions, but rather that they take less implied meaning from conversational speaking, than women do. They notice syntax changes less and tend to sway from ideas not bounded in literal meaning. I imagine it's much easier to be in a father-son relationship and dialect, than it is for the mother-daughter dialect.

Goal for 2030-something... let my daughter be a master.

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WS 6100

Dr. Becca Cragin

March 16, 2018

### **The Oppression of Society under the Mask of Modernity**

The empowerment of women, independence from men, and a solid identity, is a Western reality that to women in Saudi Arabia, is a foreign ideal. Religion, culture, and tradition have reigned over equality, and arguably, even over the universal human rights doctrine. In recent years, the policies have been tested, and rebelled against by women, who risk their lives not for the hope of equality, but of simple daily rights, that many in the West consider a commodity. Westerners may look to the middle east, and their ways of life as being unmodern, but the advancements made in recent years, and even in recent days, prove otherwise for this nation. The rise of *feminism* (or qualities pertaining to), the unity of women, and the determination for rights, is proof of the forward thinking, and movement of the middle east. It is women who are laying the groundwork for modernity and succeeding in their long-sought battle for rights, reforms, and independence.

As a western thinker, one must be able to remove their own societal, and cultural guidelines, in order to delve into the historical, political, and religious intersections that form Saudi life in general, and understand that there are things that just might not be understood, where the treatment, and *past* regulation of women is concerned. It is not always a matter of not knowing, or having the answers, but rather that knowing that

the system of law in Saudi Arabia, is complicated, somewhat unregulated, and greatly inferior in regard to the rights of women. While times are changing, it has been a long journey for *feminism*. The women's movement in Saudi Arabia is undergoing *extreme* modernization for the nation, as well as a stark advancement of women's rights in recent years. The plight, and successes have been formed both against, and in conjunction with, a focus on religious and political traditions that surrounded the mass oppression of women in Saudi Arabia.

On September 26, 2017, The Saudi Arabian King, King Salman, issued an order that went above the Sharia law, and allowed women to drive (BBC News, 2013). I did the math, that was a mere eighty days ago, that women in Saudi Arabia were granted a right, that every sixteen-year-old child in America takes for granted. Women in Saudi Arabia fought for the ability to drive for 21 years, though silently for much longer. The #Women2Drive campaign, ignited by Manal Al-Sharifa in 2011 revived the effort that had long gone stagnant, and found renewed hope for women's rights issues in Saudi Arabia, as well as gaining awareness for women, on the world's stage.

In the spring of 2011, an image flashed across many media outlets world-wide. The photograph seemed simplistic enough, a young woman with fashionable large rim sunglasses, in a traditional black burqa, smiling radiantly, and flashing equality, as she sat behind the wheel of a dark colored sedan. The photograph, that was not unlike those taken by women all over the world, sparked international outrage, and resulted in the young women's imprisonment (Al-Sharif M., 2017). Manal Al-Sharifa's image is a familiar one. While her entire story, or the background, and events surrounding her

might be unknown, she without argument, the face of the oppressed in Saudi Arabia.



The accompanying articles to the photograph go on to educate the western world on the appalling state of women's rights in Saudi Arabia, and illegality of the act that the thirty-

two-year-old mother, Manal Al-Sharif had committed. The western world cried foul.

The east condemned.

Women's rights are drastically different in Saudi Arabia than any other nation in the world, even among the East, and other similar Muslim dominated nations. The comparison that Manal Al-Sharif made in 2013, was that, "there is Saudi Arabia, and then there is the world." (Al-Sharif M., 2013) At the height of Al-Sharif's activism in 2013, women were completely governed by men, and "remained minors for their entire life." (Al-Sharif M., 2013) Women always needed to have a male guardian, could not live alone without male permission (although even that was still considered taboo), must have permission to work, leave the home, and quite literally do anything. If the male guardian did not allow something, the women had to obey. Women did not even need to be present for their own marriage vows, as it was less vow, and more contract between father (or guardian) and husband. What is most astonishing as Westerner looking in, is that the majority of women in Saudi Arabia did not fight, argue against, or protest the such male dictatorship. Except that they could not do so safely. In the West, we feel protected by our nations proclamation of free speech, the promise to be protected regardless of race, creed, religion, national origin, age, and gender. However,

in Saudi Arabia protest is illegal and there is no democracy, but rather laws decided by a King and appointed committee members. Women who disagree, live in fear. Women who fight against the laws don't simply risk imprisonment if detected, but face shame, threats, and harm from other citizens who believe that female activism threatens traditional Saudi life, and Islam.

The traditional laws that exist in Saudi Arabia, are mostly old, and saturated with religious background. The lack of newer laws that conform to the times, are not necessarily, a refusal to modernize, and stay on par with the Western world, but rather due to very rigid religious beliefs, and importance that Islam has in both the culture, and politics of the nation. The law in Saudi Arabia, contrary to popular Western belief, is not against the human rights doctrine. However, this is where it gets confusing. Manal Al-Sharifa did not break a state law by driving in Saudi Arabia, and yet, she broke *a* law, and was arrested, and consequently jailed for driving. The distinction, and confusion lie in the inclusion of, and the enforcement of, Sharia law. The religious police do exist in Saudi Arabia and enforce laws that are not considered Saudi Arabian laws, but rather religious laws of Islam (the fatwa). The actual laws of Saudi Arabia are within the ethical guidelines put forth in the human rights doctrine. While the human rights doctrine is not technically an accord, and so there are legal bounds to it, it is widely believed in the west that nations must follow it. Technically, Saudi Arabia is in accordance with the doctrine, upon the treatment of women, because laws do not exist that withhold rights to women. There is a fine line that exists when we consider this fact. In fact, the separation of women outside of Mecca, is not in the origin of Islam. The

practice of division is considered to be adopted from differing cultural practices that came from other nations and were imposed on Muslims in Saudi Arabia (and other middle east nation, but Saudi Arabia is the only one still practicing in extremes).

The historical suppression of women in Saudi Arabia derives from religious roots in Islam. Understanding the role of the patriarchy in traditional Islamic society, and the relationship to the modern Islamic society in Saudi Arabia helps to formulate an understanding, as to how the suppression has been accepted, and continued, for such the time that it has. With the understanding that the nation of Saudi Arabia has deep religious roots, and practices, the words of the Qur'an, and tradition, are much more accepted, followed, and believed, than that of many religious practices in the Western world. Tradition and belief play a large part in society.

Sharia laws, (changeably with fatwas, and religious law) are religious laws based on Islam, and the Qur'an. Sharia law as it relates to Islam, is a grouping of laws that based on the state interpretation of Islam, that promote the belief system, and the ethical actions and guidance that Muslims must live their life by to be faithful followers of Islam. General Sharia laws fall into the following main categories: mandatory, recommended, neutral, abhorred, and prohibited (Sharia, December). It is important to reiterate, that these laws are based upon an *interpretation* of the Qur'an. While I do not pretend to know the Qur'an, the one thing that I have taken from those that do, is that the Qur'an is a complicated religious text, and that a great deal of meaning that comes from it is based upon the interpretation of it. To go off topic a bit, but to offer a popular comparison model, consider the extremists of ISIS, who think that they are performing



God's will by means of terrorism. It is *their own interpretation* of the Qur'an, and not the religion itself, that leads them to believe that God wills this. In other words, the King's appointed committee could have just as easily interpreted the Qur'an differently, thus effecting Sharia law. In addition to being an interpretation of the Qur'an, Sharia laws can also be customs and traditions that Muslims have simply adopted from other cultures (to give a rather broad example, somewhat in the way that Americans celebrate Cinco de Mayo, and St. Patrick's Day, or eat rice with chopsticks). Even adopted customs can be subject to Sharia law and enforced by the religious police. These laws are created by a committee appointed by the King of Saudi, and enforced by the religious police, who are a separate policing unit than the Saudi Arabian state police. The religious police, until recently known as the Commission for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, had the power to both arrest and interrogate Saudi citizens until this past year. While many laws are based on the Muslim tradition, and customs, they have also been subject to reform over the years (with extreme reforms made most recently). The confusion in Saudi Arabia lies in that Sharia law is not the same as State law, and some would argue that Sharia law is not an enforceable law. However, one must also know the difference between Sharia law and law, to even place an argument.

There is great difficulty when attempting to uncover which laws are religious laws, and which laws belong to the state, as many Saudi Arabian citizens do not often what is literal law, and what is religious law. The law that prohibited women from driving was not state law, but rather Sharia law. The car that Al-Sharif owned was one

that she was able to drive within the employer owned compound in which she lived, as despite being on Saudi soil, it was not subject to Saudi law- any variation of law. Al-Sharif was unaware that the driving ban was not a law, until a male co-worker told her so, after she complained about not being able to drive to work, despite having an international driver's license, and owning a car. When Al-Sharif researched the Saudi Arabian driving code in April of 2011, it was then that she discovered that being male was not a requirement to be allowed to drive. Further research led her to the most recent previous protest against the ban, which had been 21 years earlier, in 1991. (Al-Sharif M., 2017) This is where the #women2drive campaign began.

Al-Sharif was not the only woman at this time, who was ready to challenge the traditional system. A small group of women with common friends had been organizing a protest drive on Facebook, and Al-Sharif joined them, just a month prior to the date of the protest. She convinced the women to push the date back by one month, from May 17 to June 17, 2011, in order for her to further the efforts by encouraging more women to drive. Al-Sharif's goal was to make this driving protest twice the size of the protest that occurred in 1991. To do so, she needed to find 100 women willing to drive on June 17. Her rallying cry went out over both Facebook, and Twitter, and she dared to do something no other activist was, she used her real name, and her own face. (Al-Sharif M., 2017) Until this point, activists worked anonymously, to avoid breaking both Saudi laws, concerning protesting, and Sharia laws, concerning face coverings. Using her real identity, both opened Manal up to threats, backlash, and potential imprisonment, but giving a face to the #women2drive movement, also made it real. She was able to gain

further support, as well as meet with more women, and forward-thinking Saudi Arabian men, who supported women's rights in Saudi Arabia. As much as there were many against women driving, many men were in support of the campaign. The male support tended to have two sides, those who believed that women deserved rights, and then those who believed that giving freedom to their wives, and sisters, also meant gaining freedom for themselves. Because women could not drive, men had to drive them everywhere, in addition to their active role as women's guardians.

The #women2drive movement faced obstacles from its fruition. If it was going to occur, it needed to be successful, big, supported, and it needed to make noise. Al-Sharifa used social media, and influential contacts to spread the story. The foreign press acted two-fold. First, they helped to spread the message, date, and information for the drive, and second, they acted as a form of international protection. Foreign intervention was not an intended scenario, but rather an intimidation, in the form of putting all eyes on Saudi Arabia on June 17, to watch the state's reaction to the #Women2Drive. Media outlets in the UK and in the United States, printed articles on the lack of rights for women in Saudi Arabia, and on the shocking information that women were so suppressed that they were not even allowed to drive a car. The mass attention however, came prior to June 17<sup>th</sup>, while Al-Sharifa attempted to lure more prospective drivers to her cause.

Manal Al-Sharifa drove twice in protest of the ban, prior to June 17<sup>th</sup>. The first time she drove, she did so, in order to film herself, and upload the video to YouTube, in an effort to empower more female drivers for June 17<sup>th</sup>. The video had hundreds of

thousands of views, and the Saudi authorities (both the police, and religious police) remained silent. The second time she drove, she went looking for the police. Al-Sharif wanted to test the police response, in order to know what to expect for all women on June 17th. (Al-Sharif M., 2013) Al-Sharifa drove outside of the compound (where was allowed to drive). Her and her brother (her guardian, who was present with her during her drive) were both arrested, and detained. Al-Sharif spent nine days in jail. This is where the Western world, took hold of the status of women in Saudi Arabia. While adamantly proclaimed her innocence, from having broken the law, she was jailed, threatened and ridiculed throughout her homeland. It is somewhat incomprehensible as a Westerner, to understand how one nation can simultaneously follow two distinct sets of laws. I think the answer is that they don't. As Al-Sharif sat in jail, the Saudi Arabian nation took a severe beating. Saudi Arabia was accused of being backwards, a third world, and oppressive, and a need for modernity, and enforcement of the human rights doctrine was called in. Saudi Arabian nationals saw a different view, one where Al-Sharifa was accused of causing public disorder, and inciting women to break laws and drive. The questioning of laws, from both abroad, and by Saudi Arabian citizens began. Were the laws backwards, and in need of modernity, and was Saudi Arabia in violation of the human rights doctrine? A law didn't exist, a tradition did, but if it was not a law, then on what basis did the police hold Al-Sharif on? There are not truly answers to such questions as each consideration contradicts itself. The ban cannot be both law and not a law. It might not sit within books, and within writing and codes, but the enforcement of such a form of Sharia law by the government makes the law, law.

*“Some battle oppressive governments. Others battle oppressive societies. Which battle do you think is harder?”* (Al-Sharif M., 2013) This is the question that Manal Al-Sharif posed to an audience in 2013. In the West we so often consider that the two are meshed, and that society and government reflect each other I dare say, that values are imposed through government. However, we see the oscillation that exists between laws, customs, and a multicultural tradition. Being that Saudi Arabia is does not have the extreme shift in culture and religions, that does point to the conflict between government and society in Saudi Arabia. In addition to this, Saudi Arabians are taught the traditional laws and customs their entire life, and to not question them. Al-Sharif questioned the laws, and became an activist out of need, and what made sense to her. She owned a car, had an international driver’s license, and yet could not drive. She was also denied the most convenient mode of transportation within the employment compound in which she lived, simply because she was a woman, and religious laws dictate that men and women may not share spaces. Her government was oppressive, *and* her society was oppressive, and because they were both so tightly intertwined, women’s rights, and reforms are far more difficult than anywhere else in the world. Even those who would seek out women’s rights, and fight for them, are not even in agreement as to what the problem is. Consider a simple concept, such as women’s activist groups in Saudi Arabia.

Firstly, there are technically no feminists, and no activists. Saudi Arabian “feminists” do not consider themselves to be feminist or even activists. Feminism is a western ideal, and terminology. While we consider the actions of Saudi Arabian activist

groups as feminist by their qualities, goals, and actions, it's important to remember that they do not consider themselves feminists. I think that the distinction based on the different efforts that the main activist groups in Saudi Arabia focus on, is that they are all concentrated on reforms. When we as Westerners look to the actions, beliefs, and writings of Manal Al-Sharifa, it's simple to proclaim her a feminist. It's not such an easy task in Saudi Arabia, where the term has little connotation, and would create little to no connection across the differing groups that do exist. There's a stark contrast between feminist groups in the United States, and those that exist in Saudi Arabia. Highlighting the differences between Western feminists, and Saudi women's rights groups, there is a major difference between the Saudi woman's plight for rights, and Western feminism. Differences of religion, offer the main argument, and understanding behind why Saudi culture. Time will tell, how current reforms will change future generations. However, for the time being, women do not consider themselves to be *feminists*, by Western standards. The Saudi women of the current generations have been raised with strict beliefs of the separation and differences of men and women and have been ingrained to not question this. Even as women seek reforms, the reforms they seek are moderately milder than what a Westerner feminist might wish upon the Saudi culture. While they do not wish to be considered under the Western label of feminist, whether it be goals of political, social, or religious transformations, I think it is fair to at the very least call them reformers. As such, there are four main groups in Saudi Arabia:

- Liberal (libralliyya)

- The groups focus their efforts on gaining women greater roles in society, and to have them be considered active participants within society.
- Rights (huugiyya)
  - Rights based groups are focused on human rights, both domestic and international.
- Islamic feminists (nasawiyya Islamiyya)
  - The one group that actually takes the name feminists, is focused on the revision of the interpretation of Islamic texts.
- Conservative (muhafitha)
  - Conservative feminists are often pitted against all other types. They promote strict religious codes, face covers, women's roles in society, the presentation of women in society, and promote continued segregation. segregation, and so on. Conservative groups are the most against outside intervention into national affairs. (Ismail, 2016)

These groups are not widely public, and organize quietly, as so to not break any laws, national or religious. Social media has been a huge factor of involvement within these organizations, because it allows women to congregate online, spread ideas, and organize. For example, when Manal Al-Sharifa planned Drive for June 17, 2011, the campaign was organized from Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Social media was a vital part in not only spreading the movement, but for gaining the support and trust of other women. While I think that it is very important to understand that there are different types of feminism in Saudi Arabia, just as in the United States, for the

purposes that are discussed here, it is most important to understand that these groups each serve their own specific purpose, and do not all agree with each other, and that there is little to no oscillation among the groups. For example, the Conservatives were not impressed, nor did they agree with Al-Sharif's, #women2drive campaign, and to this day, are working (unsuccessfully) to reinstate the ban. While members of each group cannot fluidly oscillate, there are then independent feminists, who work on their own terms, and can encompass more than one set of ideals. Manal Al-Sharif is an independent feminist. She did not seek out feminism, or activism, it found her, as a result of circumstance.

While many groups in the United States focus on their commitment to several different goals, Saudi Arabian groups limit their focus, with each group taking on a limited, if not singularly goal. While all the groups take the aim of women's equality, they do not all agree on the path that will grant equality to women and face differing agendas. There is a comparative similarity to the differing types of feminism in the West. When we considered the past of feminism in general, it is not surprising that women disagree on the most important rights that need to be claimed, and also how to gain those rights/freedoms/equalities/reforms. There is an impressive relevance to the distinctions between groups.

Islamic feminist groups, and conservatives seems to be as far from agreeing as any group can be. There's also a confusion as to how conservatives can even be considered a feminist group. I, of course, say this imposing my Western views onto them, as I suppose I view the embracement of traditional Islamic customs, traditions,



and law, to be a step backwards for the rights, and advancement of women. These women however, view their rigid beliefs to be in accordance with God and family, and that their place among these rules and separation from men, is what gives them rights and identity as women. While I don't see it as my place to impose judgement onto them, I much prefer the views of Manal Al-Sharifa, when comparing ideals. I don't think that Al-Sharifa intended to throw an entire system, and nation on its side, or to destroy the culture, or test the boundaries of her place within society. She faced an imposing issue, that was only an issue due to her being female, and so solved the problem. I don't think that a handful of women in Saudi Arabia, could have overturned the driving ban, or have been the force to reform the nation of Sharia law, had nation not already been in a forward moving motion in terms of modernization, and reforms.

Two years following #women2drive, Saudi Arabian police announced that they would not ticket women for driving, with the exception of those actually violating a traffic code. In addition to this, the religious police revised the fatwa on women driving, to change the ban against women drivers, to a recommendation that women do not drive. (BBC News, 2013) The fatwa might seem like a slap in the face to a Western feminist, it was considered a win for women's rights in Saudi Arabia. The revision on the fatwa meant that women could indeed drive without fear of arrest or detention. The right to drive went further on September 26, 2017, when Saudi Arabian King Salman ordered that driver's licenses be issued to women in Saudi Arabia. A further clause to the King's order arrived on December 15, 2017, when the Saudi General Department of Traffic issued a statement that women will be allowed to drive both trucks and

motorcycles in June 2018. (Saudi Arabia allows women to drive motorcycles and trucks, 2017) While the initial revision of the fatwa, was expected to result in women being able to drive, the religious law has still prevented women from driving in the early part of 2018. However, it is expected that women will be granted full driving rights beginning in June 2018, and rights that supersede the fatwa. In the expectation of large numbers of women drivers, the nation began to recruit female driving instructors from nearby Tunisia. Change has certainly arrived for women in Saudi Arabia.

The #women2drive movement began with one woman's simple need to find transportation to work. Her resilient effort, combined with the trust, and bravery of hundreds of other Saudi Arabian women, came at a time where change was not just a dream, but possible. New rights have been offered to women in response to the international outrage over the suppression of women that Saudi Arabia saw, however the validity of equality on some given rights is questioned. King Salman's priority upon being crowned in 2011 was to maintain stability within Saudi Arabia. The meaning of this would be inferred to include stability of men, *and* women. With his main interest being the state of Saudi Arabia, he has created growth both home, and abroad. While I would suspect that there is influence from familial interests that lie within European nations, his orders to further equality among women and men in Saudi Arabia, are noteworthy. While closer to the beginning of his reign, it was suspect that his actions were for foreign alliances only, and to slow the worldwide accusations of human rights violations, as Saudi Arabia was desperately in need of their US and UK foreign alliances at the time. However, the continuation, of King Salman's reforms, suggest that he may

himself, be a feminist. In 2013, he reappointed the Shura Council to include 20% women. (BBC News, 2013) This was a huge gain for the Islamic Feminists, to have women appointed to oversee laws and regulations regarding the interpretation and revision of Islamic texts. One can only hope that the heir behind the aging Salman, will be as reformed in his actions.

I think it's impossible to try to conclude a topic on women's rights in Saudi Arabia, at this moment in history. Advances in women's rights, and equality are literally different from yesterday. There is a modernization, and reform that is occurring at this very moment, that is changing the lives of a generation of Saudi Arabian women. While that is not to say that everyone agrees with the changes that have been made, women have more power today, December 15, 2017, than they did yesterday, ninety days ago, or six and a half years and one day ago, during #women2drive. While it didn't start with her, it won't end with her, Manal Al-Sharif has had an astounding change on women's rights in Saudi Arabia. I think that Manal Al-Sharif would say that it is. I think that the support that she received from foreign nations helped her to continue her fight, particularly as her own country condemned her for her actions. Support and reform are two different things. Manal mocked the system. She challenged it and faced the consequences. Once free, she didn't comply, she continued to fight. The result? In her words, "we realized it's so empowering to mock your oppressor. It strips it away of its strongest weapon: fear." (Al-Sharif M., 2013) The Islamic tradition, the old Saudi Arabian rule, the oppressing patriarchy, is not unlike any other male dominated

oppression in the rest of the world. The oppression continued, until someone was strong enough to stand up, fight back, and take their power back from their oppressor.

For what it's worth, I think that that scariest oppressor to face, based on what I have learned from Manal Al-Sharif's experiences, is the societal oppressor. I think that society, and tradition can rule much longer than government, and society, and beliefs must be changed first, before rules, and regulations will follow.

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Stacey Magri

Eng 6800

Dr. Cheryl Hoy

April 19, 2018

Course Description
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English 365: Theory and Controversy explores various social issues by examining the literary theory and traditions that accompany each. By examining samples of Marxism, Feminist Theory, Post-Colonialism, and American Multiculturalism, we will learn to use literature to discuss our current lives, and evaluate our personal experiences for meaning, social responsibility, and progress.

Course Learning Outcomes
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- To introduce students to the concepts, resources, and skills necessary for successful engagement and integration with both text and society.
- To help students think with more complexity, and to facilitate perspective and transformative thought.
- To engage and encourage the students to participate, and debate on topics related to their own lives, and in a way that they may share experiences to gain perspective, and/or educate their peers.
- To be able to critically reflect on films, music, representations, and social media, as they go about their everyday lives.

Student Learning Outcomes
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- Students will become familiar with the issues of culture, history, race, ethnicity, and gender.
- Students will understand the material of a text and reflect in order to formulate and argument.

- Students will learn to appreciate differences, as they are mirrored in social, artistic, and literary traditions.
- Students will learn to use literary texts as a mediated and partial source of information on the society in which they were composed and appreciate their differences.
- Students will write formal responses to literary and critical theory that demonstrates engagement, reflective thought, effective questioning, language, and reflective contemplation.

Students will apply selected theories to specific literary works.

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

**READING RESPONSES** are 350 – 500 word typed informal responses to the readings that are due for the day. Prompts for responses are listed below. You may choose one or more. These will be collected at the beginning of each class, and count towards your overall participation grade. I suggest creating a file folder specifically for your responses, as they will help you in preparation for class assignments. It is noted on the course syllabus, the days that there is no response due.

**UNIT RESPONSES** are 600 word typed informal responses to the unit readings. Prompts for unit responses are listed below. It is expected that you will make connections across the material discussed in lecture and in the readings. There will be a total of 5-unit responses due and will count towards your overall participation grade.

**REFLECTIVE ESSAY** is an 8-10-page essay and should be formulated using the reflective processes that we outlined during unit 1. You may choose your own topic, but your paper should follow the levels of Grossman’s reflective contemplation: Content based reflection, self-authorship, metacognitive reflection, and transformative and intensive reflection. Please utilize the reflective writing worksheet. Broad

generalizations on a topic will not be accepted. You must connect at least two works from the course and are welcome to read ahead. Please see me prior to October 17<sup>th</sup> if you are having a difficult time finding a topic.

Essay proposals are due in class on October 11<sup>th</sup>.

Essay drafts are due in class on October 25<sup>th</sup> (2 hard copies)

Final Draft is due in class on November 1<sup>st</sup>.

## SOCIAL MEDIA ASSIGNMENT

Students are expected to find at least one example of racism, and/or cultural appropriation on a social media platform. The example can be from any platform, as long as the student is able to provide either a public link that the instructor can access, or a screenshot (for example, of a Facebook post, and comments). A 750-word response to the student's findings will accompany the link.

Your response should address the following questions:

- What is the specific issue being addressed?
- How can you relate this issue to your own experiences, and what are your thoughts on the issue?
- What types of views does this issue represent?
- How do you respond to the social media feedback if there is any?
- Do these views differ from your own?
- How does this issue effect your worldview of society?
- Is there a solution? An implementation? What type of action can be done, whether socially or independently.

The assignment is due via email by **November 28th**. Students will be prepared to discuss their assignment during two following classes. It is suggested that the student bring a copy of their response to this class.



**FINAL PROJECT: Social injustice on Social Media**

Choose a negative public incident of either gender or race relations in America.

Please find the following information, your final project must contain at least 5/6 modules.

1. A news article, from a reputable source, detailing, and immediately following the incident (articles written more than 7 days past the incident date will not be credited)
2. Video from the actual incident (amateur recording on YouTube or from the news)
3. A Facebook post on the incident, and include 2-3 related comments
4. A twitter post on the incident, include 2-3 related comments
5. Blog contents on the incident.
6. A news article from no less than one month after the incident, detailing the incident.

The above findings can be presented as links and screenshots, or you are welcome to create a Tumblr to display the information.

In addition to the media findings, an 8-10-page reflective essay, will accompany the assignment.

In preparation for your final Essay, use the following questions, as a guide:

1. Reflecting on the information that you have gathered, please find 3 to 5 connections between the current event, and the essays that we have discussed either in the readings, or during class.
2. Reflecting on the opinions, and theories of the author's, how has society changed? How has it stayed the same?
3. DuBois's theory of double consciousness, and the veil, were written in 1903-1910. In relation to current times, how relevant are these theories today? How do these theories relate to the idea of American multiculturalism? What do you think about the

existence of both theories, side by side? Reflect on the theory of American multiculturalism, and how it relates to the current event.

4. Morrison is a current author, but does that mean she has more, or less insight into current events.
5. Please include in your final thought, an action plan regarding your chosen conclusion.

### COURSE REFLECTION

This will act as your final response paper due for the semester. 250-500-word informal course reflection.

### ASSESSMENT

#### Response Papers:

✓+	✓	✓-	0
Response is well organized and shows evidence of critical reflective thought on the assigned readings. Original ideas are present.	Response shows evidence that student has completed the readings and engaged thoughtfully with them.	Response is related to the material but does not show accurate engagement or proof of reading completion.	No assignment is received.

#### Final Project:

	A	B	C	D	F
Thesis Statement	Presents a clear and focused argument.	Acceptable argument is presented but may need improved focus.	Argument is not clearly defined or is too generalized.	Argument is either inaccurate, vague, or generalized.	There is no identifiable argument or thesis statement present.

Quality and Clarity of Thought	Presents issues thoughtfully and in depth.	Shows some depth, and complexity of thought.	Has a focus but is not entirely clear.	Lacks focus and portrays confused or simplistic thinking.	Lacks focus and fails to communicate ideas.
Organization, Development, and Supportive Evidence	Ideas are well organized, developed, and supported by evidence that extends beyond the classroom material. Paper flows logically and creates a progression of ideas to prove a central argument.	Well organized and developed ideas that are supported by evidence. Well-constructed flow of ideas, that are related thoughtfully to the central argument.	Shows effort, but lacking in organization, and/or supported evidence. Limited connections between ideas, and lack of strong connection between body paragraphs and overall argument.	Has weak organization, and ideas are generalized and not supported by evidence. Limited connections between ideas and shows lack of focus.	Ideas are disorganized, undeveloped, and present no supported evidence. No connections between paragraphs.
Grammar, Language, and Mechanics	Free from grammatical errors. Proper language and mechanical usage	Few errors in grammar, language, and mechanical usage.	May have grammatical errors but shows overall competency of language and usage.	Has a large number of grammatical and language errors that interfere with intended meaning.	Has serious and persistent errors in grammar, language, and mechanics that interferes with meaning.
Accurate usage of MLA Citations.	All sources are cited correctly and completely.	Sources cited completely and correctly.	Minor citation errors.	Incomplete citations, and/or errors in citations.	Failure to cite.

**Social Media Project:**

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
The presentation accurately presents the history, and facts associated with the assigned reading and genre. Student is knowledgeable about the content presented. Student is able to accurately field questions from peers and lead a focused discussion on the material presented. The presentation and discussion are well organized, and an accurate bibliography has been submitted to the instructor.	The presentation addresses some history and facts associated with the assigned reading and genre. Student properly leads a discussion on the material presented, with little assistance from the instructor. The presentation is organized and accurate. A bibliography with few errors has been submitted to the instructor.	The presentation is lacking in history and facts associated with the assigned reading and genre. Student needs instructor guidance to lead classroom discussion. While the presentation displays some evidence of preparation, it is lacking in organization and overall execution of goals. A bibliography has been submitted with errors.	The presentation does not accurately present the history and facts associated with the assigned reading and genre. There is little evidence of preparation, and the student is unable to lead an accurate discussion on the material presented. The presentation is disorganized. An inaccurate bibliography has been submitted to the instructor.	The presentation does not address the assigned material or content is inaccurate. There is little to no organization, and no evidence of preparation. The presentation is disorganized, and no bibliography has been submitted to the instructor.

**DISTRIBUTION OF GRADES**

Response Papers	15%
Social Media Project	15%
Course Reflection	5%
Project Proposal	10%
Essay	25%
Final Project	30%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>

GRADING SCALE
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A 100 % to 94.0%	C < 77.0 % to 74.0%
A-< 94.0 % to 90.0%	C-< 74.0 % to 70.0%
B+ < 90.0 % to 87.0%	D+ < 70.0 % to 67.0%
B < 87.0 % to 84.0%	D < 67.0 % to 64.0%
B-< 84.0 % to 80.0%	D-< 64.0 % to 61.0%
C+ < 80.0 % to 77.0%	F < 61.0 % to 0.0%

REQUIRED TEXTS
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*A Critical Tradition*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (1997) David H. Richter

\*Additional required readings will be made available online by PDF. Students will be responsible for accessing whether by print or digital copies.

WEEK ONE
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### Course Introduction

8/28/2018 **Lecture:** How to read and write about a text.  
 Overview of Graham Badley's, *A Reflective Essaying Model of Higher Education* (PDF) and Robert Grossman's, *Structures for Facilitating Student Reflection* (PDF)

8/30/2018 **Assignment Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** Gordon Baker, *Philosophical Investigations Sections 122: Neglected Aspects* (PDF) and Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities*. (Norton)  
**Lecture and Discussion:** Understanding Interpretive Communities

WEEK TWO
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### Reader Response Theory

9/4/2018 **Due:** Reading Response

**Readings Due:** Louse Rosenblatt, *The Reader, The Text, and The Poem* (PDF)

**Discussion:** Reading a text.

- 9/6/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** Carol Rodgers, *Defining Reflection: Another Look at John Dewey and Reflective Thinking* (PDF) and Wolfgang Iser, *The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach*.  
**Lecture:** Reflective Interpretation  
**Activity:** Group Reflective Thought (See Reading Questions)

WEEK THREE
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### Marxism

- 9/11/2018 **Due:** Unit Response  
**Readings Due:** Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto* (PDF)  
**Lecture:** Introduction to Marxism
- 9/13/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconsciousness*  
**Activity:** Group Reflective Thought (See Reading Questions)

WEEK FOUR
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### Marxism cont'd

- 9/18/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** George Lukas, *The Ideology of Modernism* and Zora Neale Hurston, *What White Publisher's Won't Print*  
**Lecture and Discussion:** Racism in a Professional World
- 9/20/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** W.E.B Dubois, *The Souls of Black Folk* and Georg Wilhelm Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*  
**Lecture and Discussion:** Double Consciousness and Self-Consciousness

WEEK FIVE
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### Marxism cont'd

- 9/25/2018 **No Reading or Response Due**  
**Film and Discussion:** Spartacus

**Feminist Theory & Criticism**

- 9/27/2018 **Due:** Marxism Unit Response  
**Reading Due:** Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Woman Writer and the Anxiety of Authorship* and Toril Moi, *Dialogue with Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar*  
**Lecture:** Introduction to Feminist Theory and Criticism

WEEK SIX
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**Feminist Theory & Criticism cont'd**

- 10/2/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** The dialogue between Elaine Showalter and Terry Eagleton. Read in order: Elaine Showalter, *From Critical Crossdressing: Male Feminists and Woman of the Year*, Terry Eagleton, *A Response to Elaine Showalter*, Elaine Showalter, *In Reply*  
**Group Activity:** Creating a Dialogue
- 10/4/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings:** Johnathon Culler, *Reading as a Woman* and John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*  
**Lecture:** Reading and Seeing Art

WEEK SEVEN
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**Feminist Theory & Criticism cont'd**

- 10/9/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** Julia Kristeva, *Woman's Time* and Laura Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*  
**Lecture:** The Male Gaze  
**Media:** Ted Talk: Jean Kilbourne
- 10/11/2018 **Due:** Essay Proposal  
**Film:** Clips from Disney's *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *Snow White*  
**Discussion & Activity:** The Disney Princess Effect

WEEK EIGHT
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**Feminist Theory & Criticism cont'd**

10/16/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** Bell Hook, *In Black Looks: Race and Representation* (PDF) and Barbara Smith, *Towards a Black Feminist Criticism*  
**Lecture and Discussion:** The Marginalization of Black Women (See Reading Questions)

### Post-Colonialism

10/18/2018 **Due:** Feminist Theory Unit Response  
**Readings Due:** Edward Said, *Orientalism* and Benedict Anderson, *The Origins of National Consciousness*  
**Lecture and Activity:** Nationalism and the Anthem

WEEK NINE
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### Post-Colonialism

10/23/2018 **No Response or Readings Due**  
**Film:** Avatar (2009)

10/25/2018 **Due:** 2 Copies of Essay Draft  
**Film:** Complete viewing of Avatar (2009)  
**Lecture and Discussion:** Avatar and Imperialism  
**Activity:** Peer Review

WEEK TEN
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### Post-Colonialism

10/30/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *What is a Minor Literature?* Barbara Christian, *The Race for Theory*  
**Lecture:** Deterritorialization

11/1/2018 **ESSAY DUE**  
**Readings Due:** Sandra Harding and Uma Naraya, *Border Crossings: Multicultural, and Postcolonial Feminist Challenges to Philosophy*  
**Lecture:**



WEEK ELEVEN
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**Post-Colonialism**

- 11/6/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** Gayatri Spivak: *Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism*  
**Lecture:** The Third World
- 11/8/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** Henry Louis Gates Jr., *Writing Race and the Difference it Makes* and Michelle Cliff, *If I Could Write This in Fire, I Would Write This in Fire* (PDF)  
**Lecture:** Race and Passing in America

WEEK TWELVE
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**American Multiculturalism**

- 11/13/2018 **Due:** Post Colonialism Unit Response  
**Lecture:** The Crossover between Post-Colonialism and American Multiculturalism  
**Film:** *Imitation of Life* (1934)
- 11/15/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** Rey Chow, *The Interruption of Referentiality: Poststructuralism and the Conundrum of Critical Multiculturalism*  
**Lecture:** Film follow up, and Critical Multiculturalism  
**Media Assignment Questions and Further Instructions**

WEEK THIRTEEN
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**American Multiculturalism**

- 11/20/2018 **No Reading or Response Due**  
Film and Discussion: *Dear White People*
- 11/22/2018 **NO CLASS**

**WEEK FOURTEEN****American Multiculturalism**

- 11/27/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** Toni Morrison, *Black Matters*  
**Lecture and Discussion:** Cultural Appropriation (see reading questions)
- 11/28/2018 **SOCIAL MEDIA ASSIGNMENT DUE VIA EMAIL**
- 11/29/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** Houston A. Baker Jr., *From Blues, Ideology, and Afro-American Literature* and Michael North, *The Dialect of Modernism: Race, Language, and Twentieth-Century Literature* (PDF)  
**Activity:** Student led discussion (from social media assignments) on race and cultural appropriation on social media.

**WEEK FIFTEEN****American Multiculturalism**

- 12/4/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** George Douglas and George Yancey, *Taking Stock of America's Attitudes on Cultural Diversity: An Analysis of Public Deliberation on Multiculturalism, Assimilation, and Intermarriage*  
**Activity:** Student led discussion (from social media assignments) as they relate to race relations.
- 12/6/2018 **Due:** Reading Response  
**Readings Due:** Alan Singer, *Why Multiculturalism Still Matters* (PDF)  
**Media:** News Reels  
**Discussion:** Has America failed multiculturalism?

**WEEK SIXTEEN**

- 12/11/2018 **COURSE REFLECTION DUE**  
**Lecture:** Closing Connections  
**Activity:** Final Project Q & A and Peer Review
- 12/14/2018 **FINAL PROJECT DUE**