

*There is more honor in death than in shame: examining honor-based
violence in the Arab-Muslim discourse community*
By: Malak Alwawi

Honor Violence: A Definition and Description

A definition for honor violence

Honor violence is a particular form of domestic violence in which the perpetrator(s) emotionally, psychologically, and/or physically assault or kill the victim (who is usually a woman) to protect/uphold the family reputation and honor that they believe the victim has threatened by committing an action(s) that violates cultural norms. The threat to honor can be real or perceived. The perpetrator is always someone that is related to the victim, oftentimes being the father, uncle(s), brother(s), male cousin(s), and/or fiancée or husband of the victim (there can be multiple perpetrators and they are usually male). Female perpetrators have been on the rise recently in terms of main or secondary contributors to the perpetrated honor violence. These women are usually the mother, aunt(s), or even the sister(s) of the victim.

The UN estimates that there are 5,000 cases of honor violence every year, albeit this statistic is noted as grossly underreported due to lack of research on the crime, and other factors like the victims not being aware they are victims or a lack of disclosure of their victimization to officials for fear of re-victimization (United Nations, 2010).

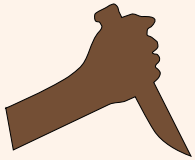
- One of the main issues plowing research on honor violence is not just that it is severely underresearched in general, but also that there exists no official definition for it. So one researcher can define honor violence differently from another researcher, which could allow one researcher to include particular vital aspects/characteristics of honor crimes in their definition while another does not include these key aspects. This generally impacts the research conducted on honor violence because based on the definition the researcher uses, it may result in them excluding a number of cases that clearly depict honor violence from their analysis, effectively putting their results at risk and making them unreliable. There have been many well-known cases of honor violence that have been excluded as being identified as honor violence because many were not educated on what honor violence is and what kind of crimes it includes, and this is due to the lack of an official or stable definition. In what crimes are considered honor violence by definition and what is not.
- The definition provided above was written by the researcher, however, another definition that depicts honor violence well, written by the National Criminal Justice Reference Service Database, is as follows:
 - “The term “honor-based violence” is used as a collective term to cover all aspects of honor violence. The author defines honor-based violence as “... any form of mental or physical violence that is committed on the basis of a collective mentality and in response to (the threat of) damage to the honor of a man or woman, and thereby to that of his or her family, of which the outside world is aware or threatens to become aware.” The attack on one’s honor can be either a real or perceived threat” (Helba, 2015).
 - This particular definition of honor violence is very important because it speaks about how the concept of honor is a collective mentality and not a single action, which could not be closer to the truth. This aspect particularly dashes down the popular stereotype that honor violence is a singular or separated action and not part of a bigger problem, a stereotype that is extremely popular in the community. It is also really well defined in that it attempts to include all forms of honor violence crimes and punishments by noting, “The term “honor-based violence” is used as a collective term to cover all aspects of honor violence.

So, what punishments can honor violence include?



Honor Shaming

This is the “least” form of honor violence in terms of the violence from least to most. However, make no mistake about the term, it is the first form of honor violence that occurs, and its frequency and context to easily lead to a much more heinous form of honor violence over time are what makes it so dangerous. All forms of honor violence start here and as we go from one form of violence to possibly another form of violence, the woman continues to be shamed for the fact that she is not abiding by honor terms. Attempts by a family member(s) or perpetrator(s) to alert the victim that they are committing honor shaming behaviors can be subtle or direct. It is a technique that is inserted in the language of the perpetrators involved (father, brother, uncle, and even the mother of the victim) and can find its way into some actions (emotional or physical discipline to deter the victim from continuing the honor shaming behavior).



Honor Killing

An honor killing is the most heinous form of honor violence and is oftentimes described as the “last resort” to deal with the victims who commit “honor offending behaviors” (although this is debated in the sense that from looking at some case studies, the families that do end up killing their female relatives sometimes get to that conclusion in a much quicker fashion than other honor violence cases). Honor violence as a whole is always perpetrated by someone who knows the victim and is usually someone who is related to them in some way. Past honor killing cases have seen the perpetrators commonly be the father, the brother, the uncle, the male cousin, the *male* fiancé/husband, OR a COMBINATION of some or all of these. Honor killings are usually supported by other female family members as the female family members are raised and taught to also believe in the system of honor. In fact, honor killings where the mother is the lead orchestrator behind it (not in terms of carrying it out but rather influencing male members to do so, facilitating it, and planning it) have been on the rise recently. As already mentioned, women in these families have the thought ingrained in them from the time they are kids and for the rest of their lives that their purpose is to uphold the family reputation and protect the honor of the “family” (aka male family members). For example, this was depicted in the honor killing of **Noor AlMaleki**.



Rape/Sexual Abuse/Sexual Assault

While it is not clear the exact rate or statistics surrounding sexual abuse among honor violence victims (whether as victimization that occurred separately from/not as a result of honor, or sexual abuse/rape as a form of punishment for an honor violation), it seems that sexual abuse has been found as a recurring factor in many honor violence cases. It has been noted that this sexual abuse usually begins before the honor violence does, however, in many cases, rape or sexual molestation/abuse is used as a punishment against the victim when the perpetrator feels they have violated the honor clause. Therefore, rape or sexual abuse/molestation can occur both as a punishment to the victim for participating in honor shaming behaviors, or it can be an “independent factor” that occurs due to factors separate from/not conspiring with honor.



Acid Attacks

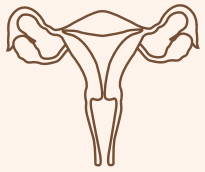
This is when the victim is disfigured by having acid thrown on them by the person that believes that their honor has been tarnished by the female victim. In some cases of acid attacks, the victim does not survive. In others, she is severely disfigured for the rest of her life. There have been many cases of acid attacks where the perpetrator was a suitor of the victim asking for the victim's hand in marriage, and when the victim refused, the perpetrator could not take no for an answer and chose to disfigure her both as punishment ("how dare you say no to my advances, you should be honored I asked") and as insurance that no one "will ever look at her again" (the idea that if "I can't have you, no one can"). Many victims of acid attacks who reject a potential suitor also testify that when they rejected the suitor, their honor was called into question. This is a common response from the community towards women who reject marriages, especially if they reject multiple suitors, as it is the community's belief that (1) marriage is the only route in order to sustain a good life and reputation, and (2) the women's identity is so wrapped around the man and she is seen as an extension to a man to the point where an independent woman who does not marry is not recognized as a good woman or is seen as someone who lacks faith. Because of these beliefs, any marriage proposal is considered a blessing. Another view of the community on women who do not marry fast or reject suitors is that the rejection of the suitor is not seen as a freely made choice of consent by the woman, but rather is seen as a choice with some malicious intent behind it, with the malicious intent being that there must be an underlying reason why she is choosing not to say yes. This "reason" is usually one that has to do with speculation that she is committing honor shaming behaviors (i.e., is dating or has dated), and that that is why she does not want to get married. Marriage is seen as one of the purest forms of honor and a blessing, and women should welcome it with open arms. So if she refuses such a great thing or is not as eager to marry, in the eyes of the community, there must be a serious and honor-threatening reason why.



Forced Virginity Check

This is the act in which a woman is suspected of losing her virginity due to sexual activity, and as a result, the family does a forced virginity check on her in order to check if the hymen is still present. Forced virginity checks occur against the will of the victim, and even in cases where the victim seems "compliant", they are more likely than not either manipulated into the check or threatened. This threat can usually be a life-threatening one for the victim (e.g., "I will tell your father that you had a boyfriend, and you know if he finds out he will kill you"). Forced virginity checks can sometimes be facilitated by a doctor who may or may not be aware that they are performing a check. Other women have their forced virginity checks performed by their husbands, fiancées, father in laws or fathers, or other male relatives. Sometimes their mothers or other female relatives perform it. Finally, in some cases, honor violence will strike on the night of the wedding where there is a popular cultural practice that on this night (when sex is usually expected to take place between a woman and her husband), she must bleed on the sheets and show the sheets to her husband or his family in order to prove that she is "pure, clean, and honorable". If she fails to produce the blood for whatever reason, it is assumed that she is not honorable and has been "used" before. The hypocrisy in this is that not every woman bleeds after their first time, and in fact, not bleeding is common just as much as bleeding is. One cannot determine or predispose themselves to bleed on the wedding night, and this is the most terrifying thing about this practice: what if she is a virgin and does not bleed, and the discovery of this leads to honor violence like an honor killing, even though she has never engaged in penetrative sex before. Let it be 100% clear that a women's sexual history should never matter and she should never be judged for it. Whether or not she has engaged in premarital sex is her business and her business only, and not being a virgin does not make her less of a woman.

There is much to be said about the hypocrisy of forced virginity checks, but to keep it short and sweet: (1) virginity is a social construct by the patriarchy and men and is used as a way to determine the value of a woman for their needs and reputation, and (2) forced virginity checks are not rooted in any science or medical academia, and in fact, is considered strongly against scientific and medical ethics. In relating these checks to the Arab/Muslim community in this project, forced virginity checks are also NOT rooted in religion and are actually very much against it. In fact, to merely question, a women's honor is against the religion, and the concept of honor is depicted in a completely different light in the religion than it is in the culture (more on this in the ***Religion vs. Culture section***).



Female Genital Mutilation

This form of honor violence is particularly heinous in that it can, in many cases, permanently disfigure and destroy the vagina if reconstruction surgery is not possible for various reasons. According to the Desert Flow Foundation, “Female Genital Mutilation (often referred to as FGM) is a destructive operation, during which the female genitals are partly or entirely removed or injured with the aim of inhibiting a woman’s sexual feelings. Most often the mutilation is performed before puberty, often on girls between the age of four and eight, but recently it is increasingly performed on babies who are only a couple of days, weeks, or months old” (“What is FGM”). Female genital mutilation can occur for many various reasons but the main reason that it has become known for/associated with is the idea that mutilating the vagina, according to the World Health Organization, can “ensure premarital virginity and marital fidelity” in the future. They state that “FGM is often considered a necessary part of raising a girl, and a way to prepare her for adulthood and marriage” (“Female genital mutilation”). FGM directly ties into honor violence in one big way: protecting premarital virginity (and premarital virginity in it of itself) is one of the biggest concepts of honor. A woman losing her virginity or “leading her family on” to believe or suspect that her virginity was lost can usually lead to harsh consequences, anywhere from forced virginity checks to possible death. Scientifically/medically speaking, we know that virginity is not something that exists and that virginity is a social construct created largely by men solely to assign and deem value to a woman. It is important to know, however, that regardless of it being a social construct, the majority of the members in the community do not believe it is a social construct, despite medicine proving otherwise. Because of this persistent belief, the hymen has been determined to show the worth of a woman in the community. So, when it is determined that a woman does not have a hymen, usually the conclusion is because she may have had sex, even though we know that many women are not born with a hymen, and some are born with hymens so thin, that they can tear them doing normal-to-rigorous exercise. Even those with thicker hymens may tear their hymen with enough effort (whether intentionally or not). The fact that the hymen has come to symbolize virginity, therefore deeming the worth of the woman, is an important topic when discussing FGM because female genital mutilation can occur to prevent the chance that a hymen or virginity can be taken in the first place. In other words, it is a form of insurance to make sure the woman will not go and tarnish the family name by participating in extracurricular sexual acts. FGM, thereby, is used as both a technique to control a woman’s sexual actions and freedom and as a consequence for a woman who chooses to engage in sexual activities, even if it may not be penetrative sex. Some families in the community jump to the conclusion of sex when they find out their daughter has been dating someone, even if the daughter refrained from sex in her romantic relationship. In other words, the term “sex” becomes inclusive of any form of extramarital romance.

Note about honor crimes:

It is important to note that these above-depicted crimes of honor violence are the ones that are known to us thus far. Other forms of honor violence may still be out there waiting to be discovered via different cases that are scattered across the world. It is also important to note that as we continue to research this crime and hold the perpetrators accountable, perpetrators or potential perpetrators of honor violence may come up with different ways to punish women in the community, and these methods are obviously not known to us right now. In other words, the catalog of honor violence crimes is one that is fluid: an additional crime found to have links to honor in the motive can get added at any time as we continue to research honor violence.

What are some reasons that honor violence victims are killed and/or assaulted?



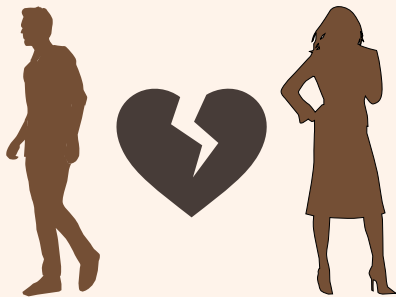
Engaging in "westernized" behavior or behavior characterized as autonomous (like engaging in premarital sex, getting an education, having beliefs that do not align with those of the community, like progressive or liberal beliefs on gender and gender roles, women's rights, etc.)



Dating or marrying someone of their choice that the family does not approve of or having male friends



Dressing how they want to



Separating or divorcing from an arranged or forced marriage (this may also apply in initially consensual marriages)



Being a victim of sexual assault/molestation/rape

And many other behaviors



Note: Although these are the behaviors that popped up most frequently in observations, field notes, and general media research, as well as scholarly research (see "literature review" section below)

Religion vs. Culture

Religion:

- Religion is from a higher power
- Religiously speaking, a Muslim's goal is to uphold the faith and religious rules to the best extent that they can and to preserve the Islamic faith.
- Religion has a strong stance against gender discrimination and gender-based violence like honor violence
- Islam is a feminist-friendly religion, and in fact, was one of the first religions to afford women their rights

Culture

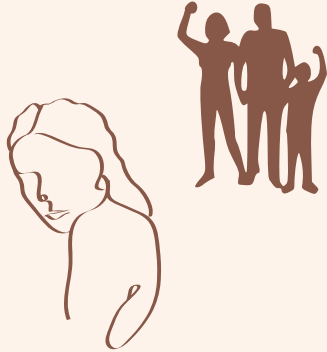
- Culture is from humans, is socially constructed, and is open to bias and interpretation by humans
- Historically speaking, these "interpretations" of religion and what is and is not acceptable in society have come from cis-gender, conservative, men who tend to be dedicated to the patriarchy
- Culturally, the goal is to uphold the patriarchy, preserve female honor, which in turn preserves family honor as female honor is family honor, and uphold conservatism through the cultural lifestyle of its people.
- Culture is based on gender discrimination and supports and encourages honor violence and honor shaming
- Culture is clearly against the progression of women in society and feminism because it is a system born from the patriarchy

It is interesting to analyze how religion and culture are used interchangeably by this discourse community to uphold and enforce certain concepts and rules against each sex, respectively. It is important to differentiate between the standards of religion and culture, as any confusion between them may cause a misinterpretation of this analysis. Religiously speaking, this group's goals are to teach and uphold the Islamic faith and religion to its followers. From a cultural aspect, the goals of my discourse community can be summed up into two words that are used interchangeably throughout the community and in my research: ***upholding honor and reputation***. Religion will oftentimes find itself being placed in the middle of the enforcing of cultural principles, like what female cultural etiquette is and how it is accomplished, how to protect one's honor and reputation, and even in how someone may be perceived in the smallest circumstances. However, when the discourse communities' cultural goals are being threatened, neglected, or not being met in some aspect, this is particularly where religion is used to enforce cultural values. So, for example, members in my discourse community will see a woman talking to a male friend, or dressing "inappropriately" (whether or not they wear a hijab), or having western beliefs. These examples are all violations of cultural rules, and in order to combat them, they will use religious beliefs and scriptures to explain why a given violation that occurred violated not only cultural rules but religious principles as well, hence tying religion and culture together. This is then used to justify violent punishment that may be enforced against the woman. To be fair, some of the cultural violations are actually violations of the religion as well, but that is not always (and usually is not) the case, especially in the case of gender discrimination and honor violence (which are both grave sins in Islam). Additionally, the religion DOES NOT give the right to community members to enforce punishment on violators of the religion. One of the biggest principles of Islam is that the only person that can judge and will judge you is Allah (Allah is Arabic for "God"). For a community member to take punishment into their own hands is a sin, as they are not the ultimate judge, and assuming this position assumes that they are this judge, which is not true because Islam believes the only ultimate judge is Allah. It is also important to note that situations/incidents where community members punish others for cultural and/or religious violations usually only occur when the violator is a woman. Throughout my observations of my discourse community, male behavior that violates religious or cultural principles usually goes unpunished or does not receive a harsh punishment, unless the violation they committed had to do with homosexuality.

Some members of my discourse community do not believe that culture and religion should be intertwined, and they cite religious scripture that states that each should be independent. Others in my community believe that culture is religion, and vice-versa, which is why you will never see them apart and will oftentimes see cultural principles being cited as religious rules. It is important to understand this distinction now so that it can be clear that any violent acts or discrimination discussed in this paper belong under and occur because of cultural principles, and not religious principles that prohibit these very violent and discriminatory practices.

***Factors That Allow, Support, and
Uphold Honor Violence In The
Community***

Throughout gatherings that I attended where I took many field notes, my analysis found a pattern of factors that contribute to the existence and continuation of honor violence. These factors boiled down to 3 main phrases/concepts:



A female must always keep
her family's honor in the
back of her mind



Boys will be boys



The particular methods used to break
women down and how honor violence
punishments affect them.

A female must always keep her family's honor in the back of her mind

What is meant by keeping the family honor in “the back of her mind”? How does a woman keep her family's honor in the back of her mind? Is it through actions, words, or both? So far, we know that the terms honor and reputation can be and are used interchangeably in the Arab-Muslim community. Therefore, what is meant by honor is reputation. Showing an honorable character can be through words and actions. In other words, whatever a woman does or says will always come back to haunt or help her reputation, which is why she should think about what she says, how she phrases her thoughts, and how she acts, more specifically in front of guests, the public, and even close family friends. The concept behind this phrase is that a female's honor in the Arab-Muslim community is the same exact honor of the family. This means that her reputation is also the family's reputation. For example, if a female participates in premarital sex, becomes pregnant as a result, and the rest of the community finds out, the community will see not only the woman as a dishonorable “slut” essentially speaking, but they will also come to view any sisters she has as such and her mother as one who failed to raise her properly and as “a mother of a slut”. They will question and criticize the father for the role he may have played and why she had turned out the way she did, and even extended family like girl cousins will have their honor status snatched from them. In order to understand this concept, one can think of the analogy of a pyramid. A pyramid is structured with levels starting from the bottom and working all the way to the top. The essential yet less valuable group of people are usually at the bottom and the higher status people are placed at the top. If the lowest ranking level is eliminated by whatever method, the rest of the pyramid will suffer, crumble, and will no longer be able to function. That is literally and metaphorically how a woman's role in the Arab Muslim community functions. She holds the entire family's reputation and status on her back and is expected to perform with flying colors in all aspects of her life, whether that be in education, marriage life, family life, recreational life, etc. If she fails to perform well in an aspect of her life or rather completely violates her honor by going against cultural conduct, she is eliminated from the pyramid, and the people who fall above her like her parents, her other siblings, and extended family will also all crumble and suffer the same fate.

With this analogy being set forth, it is important to discuss what kind of actions may put a woman's honor and reputation on the line. Such actions include, and are not limited to, having premarital sex, having significant others, unless you are in the announced marriage phase and are looking to marry (and even during this phase you can become a victim of honor violence if behaviors that are considered “inappropriate” by the family and community are committed), having male friends, having “controversial opinions” (conservatism is quite key in the culture and more liberal opinions are seen as “Americanization” and “westernization”), full out developing western thinking, not following the religion properly (by doing things like not wearing the hijab well or not wearing it at all or not dressing modestly), and etc. The way a woman presents herself in public, especially on online platforms like social media, also are things she must be extremely careful about.

A female must always keep her family's honor in the back of her mind (Cont.)

One last interesting concept that I have come to find since I first conducted my research is the cultural idea that women in Islam are the face of the religion or that they represent their faith and the religion. I find this concept confusing (and disturbing) for a few reasons. First, this idea emphasizes that it is the woman that has the sole responsibility to make the religion look good. Similar to other religions, I would not know that someone is Muslim unless they wore a headscarf or some other sacred clothing, or if they told me they were Muslim. This concept is concerning because it puts all of the pressure on the woman in the religion to perform not only excellent in the way they represent the faith, but beyond outstanding. She is under a microscope almost all of the time. This kind of concept is also asking the Muslim woman to bear two responsibilities: her responsibility to make sure she is excelling in her faith and the responsibility that the men in the religion are supposed to have to make sure their faith is maintained. Since men in the religion do not outright represent the religion due to the fact that there is no required religious garment for them, no one will necessarily know they are Muslim. Therefore, if they choose to act out and violate cultural norms, they won't hinder the reputation of the religion and the community. Some families in the community do care about how one man's reputation is, but generally speaking, they are not the main concern. The woman carries more responsibility to have honor, therefore upholding her family honor. Making the woman the face of the religion allows them to ignore the actions that men commit that would otherwise destroy the religion's and their family's reputations. They are held accountable for little to none of their actions. Additionally, this type of belief that women hold the sole responsibility to make sure the religion looks good is deep-rooted in sexism and in the idea that men are animalistic in nature and that they can commit any actions, no matter how sinful the religion considers their act, and still face no consequences because it is "in their nature" to stray and because "boys will be boys". The excuse that they cannot be taught to act better and that they will always remain the way they are by nature, and therefore no effort should be put towards fixing their mentalities of misogyny and sexism, is an easy way for the community to serve its goal (upholding the patriarchy) and allowing men to stay in power. The action of making the woman the sole responsible party also speaks to one of the oldest beliefs of the patriarchy: that the woman or mother is the nurturer and caretaker of the family, acting like a sowing machine throughout her entire life in the constant attempts to keep the family together. It is also a belief that is against the religion of Islam, as in the religion, every follower is held responsible for making sure they are pious in their faith, and pious for God only (and no one else like the community since the community seems to think they are the judges, juries, and executioners of violaters). Not only does this put immense and triple the pressure on women in the religion to perform (as discussed above), but it also forces them to mature at extremely young ages, something a child should not have to do. It does not take rocket science for one to know that forcing a child to "adult" at such a young age hinders their development of identity and steals from them the opportunity to grow mentally and emotionally at a healthy and appropriate pace. When the opportunity to develop and form an identity is stolen from them, they will not be able to make their own informed decisions and their autonomy is stolen from them. As they experience honor violence in their later lives, they will come to believe that what they are experiencing is just a part of normal life and that that is how the world is supposed to work. If an alternative perspective is not presented to her, this may lead her to submit to the cultural patriarchal system and continue the cycle of trauma and misogyny. Therefore, the communities' attempt to make sure to break down the identity of a woman from a young age is intentional in order to serve its patriarchal mission, especially later in life when the girl enters her adolescence and then adult years.

"Boys will be boys"

The concept of "boys will be boys" is not exclusive to the Arab-Muslim community, but is a long-held practice of the patriarchy to keep men in power by excusing away extremely disturbing and problematic behaviors (that are oftentimes rooted in sexism and misogyny). This concept is an idea that specifically attempts to explain away inappropriate male behavior by indicating that it is in the nature of men to act the way that they do, and therefore they should not be held accountable for the way they have been created. One notable aspect of this phenomenon is that it literally breaks down men as being animals, mammals, or creatures and indicating that they, just like animals, have needs that need to be met in order to survive, and just like animals, will try to achieve their survival needs at any cost and are constantly in a state of alertness and have a hunting mentality. Historically speaking, the term "boys will be boys" has been used to excuse all male behavior, from something as little as catcalling to something as big as rape, indicating that such aggressive, gruesome, and heinous behaviors are part of male existence and that they cannot live without them. It is also a term that is used to directly place the blame on women in any situation that this term is used in. It is a concept that emphasizes that women were created for the sole reason of male entertainment and that if she dares to be bold and challenge the man and his needs, then any retributive action after, however small or big, is excused.

In the context of the culture, the concept is used exactly as described above as well (i.e., to justify male inappropriate behavior that is always against the religion and then to blame the woman for attracting such male attention or causing their behavior, so that they can then seek retribution against her for her actions). For example, an Arab man may be caught gazing lustfully at a woman and catcalling her. This will almost always be followed by a lecture to the woman about something she must've done wrong to provoke him, such as criticizing the way she was dressed, the way she spoke, the way she walked, how much makeup she had on, how loud her laugh was, and additionally, entirely dismissive language when talking about the man's action that directly uses phrases like "boys will be boys, you can't change them, it is in their nature", or "they looked because they saw something they liked and couldn't help themselves, it is your job to make sure that you don't show something they would want". In bringing the religion into this to examine whether or not this reasoning is applicable and just in the religion, Chapter 24 of The Quran, titled "Surah An-Nour", in verse 30, explicitly states, "tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do" ("The Quran", 24:30). Throughout the entirety of the Quran, the responsibility is placed first and foremost on men to be modest and lower their gazes. While modesty is also equally required for women, the Quran labels men as mainly responsible for remembering and applying that modesty. Yet on countless occasions, including in the example discussed above which is a very common occurrence in the community, the opposite will apply, and some community members will even take it as far as to say that "women hold the responsibility first and foremost to remember modesty and lower her gaze". This is what is meant by taking The Quran out of context, twisting it, and sometimes, making parts of it completely up to justify cultural beliefs about gender roles and honor.

Another example from collected field notes on the concept of "boys will be boys" and how it coincides with the concept of females preserving their and their families' honor is a particular interaction with a community member who noted that women had more responsibility than a man to maintain and practice her faith, and ensure she is pure at all times (both generally and sexually speaking). This community member expressed that a woman carries more weight and responsibility in maintaining her honor and her families honor, whereas "boys will be boys, and while they are also required to have faith, they do not nearly have to try as hard as a woman because The Quran says they do not need to". This cultural logic is not only harmful but blatantly incorrect when examining and comparing it to religious scripture. The Quran holds women and men to the same exact standard in maintaining their religion, faith, and honor. It is quoted religiously throughout The Quran, but one verse that is commonly used to show this is, "their Lord responded to them: "I never fail to reward any worker among you for any work you do, be you male or female – you are equal to one another"" (The Quran, 3:195). Finally, it is crucial to note that twisting, fabricating, or taking The Quran out of context in any capacity is a grave and well-known sin in Islam, a sin that is constantly and commonly committed by community members.

The particular methods used to break women down and how honor violence punishments affect them.

The first two concepts/phrases, "a female must keep her family's honor in the back of her mind at all times and "boys will be boys", serve as the basis that supports the existence of honor violence. The discussion of the last concept, which is the chilling and intricate methods that the community uses to break down women and use honor violence to punish them becomes the action that allows honor violence to continue. We already discussed the definition of honor violence above and this definition will be crucial to explaining the methods used to break women down in the community. Honor crimes are used as a method to break women down, but there is also a strong emphasis on psychological manipulation and verbal abuse (honor shaming) because targeting the mind of the woman (1) makes it easier for community members to violate her later physically and (2) leaves the woman vulnerable to future honor violence crimes. Some families in the community start at honor shaming, and then quickly escalate to more violate honor crimes like forced virginity checks or even honor killings. The rate at which they may go from one level of honor violence to another can escalate depending on the situation and the family itself and how dedicated they personally are to preserving honor. Let it be clear: most community members are seriously committed to preserving honor, making it a life mission of sorts, but some may choose violence as a last resort. Although let it be known and understood that this is not out of grace or curtesy to the victim, but rather to see how much the family will take until they consider the women's "actions" as "grave and having the potential to cause irreversible harm to the family status". Different families in the community have different limits, and families from different cultures that practice honor violence (although this study is in the context of the Arab-Mulsim community) may have different limits. While the logic that honor violence perpetrators possess is the same/similar across the board, culture (Arab culture vs. African culture; Jordanian culture vs. Iranian culture) can be a great factor of impact on how and when the family decides to "take care of the threat to their honor".

The particular methods used to break women down and how honor violence punishments affect them (Cont.)

Women in the community are conditioned and controlled via gender discrimination and threats of honor violence to obey societal standards of what a woman is supposed to be. There seems to be a strong emphasis on guarding women's innocence and purity and even attempting to keep their innocence, or rather naiveness, for as long as possible. The more naive the woman is, the more control could be had on her, compared to the educated woman, one who could and would completely shatter traditional norms and practices (albeit effectively putting her life in more danger). Any time the community felt it was being threatened by a powerful, especially younger, woman, they resorted to cherry-picking, taking out of context, and completely twisting religious scripture like the Hadith and Quran to either guilt trip the woman or make a religious nuisance of her. Either way, even if the woman does not give in to such a cultural or religious attack, she is left with a tremendous amount of confusion and trauma that is oftentimes life-long or long-lasting. This would therefore directly contribute to and continue the process of generational trauma (discussed extensively below) if help is not sought out and the trauma is not healed. Once this generational trauma is felt and endured, some women are so confused about reality and truth that they oftentimes resort back to what they were taught growing up: their role as a woman in the culture. And so, for her children, she teaches the same she was taught because she knows no different. The abuse committed against women by the Arab-Muslim discourse community is one that weaponizes the mental health and psychology of these women in order to use it against them. By making the women in this culture vulnerable, they are able to take advantage of the minds of these women and use guilt-tripping techniques to bring them back to recognizing "their true place in society". On the other hand, those that do not abide by cultural rules and "recognize their true place in society" per cultural traditions are at an increased risk for physical honor violence. Additionally, through observing the discussions that were taking place and putting that together with personal experience, the communities' ulterior motives of preserving honor and upholding the patriarchy were sustained through classic misogyny and internalized misogyny in the way that these women were raised and conditioned with these beliefs via emotional and mental manipulation and abuse so that the power could continue to rest in the hands of the men that women in the culture oftentimes find themselves falling victim to. It is a constant circle of abuse, one that cannot be broken unless the woman is able to not only break the traditional barriers but also work to heal the trauma she endures as a result of the abuse (more on this and why women unfortunately end up bearing the responsibility of healing below). At this time, it's important to note that not every woman makes it past the stage of overcoming trauma, and this does not in any way, shape, or form, make them weaker than women who do. Trauma is an incredibly hard thing to overcome, and many note that it is something you never really "overcome", but rather learn to cope/live with.

Literature Review On Honor Violence Research

Honor Crimes in the United States -- An Overview of Study #1: An Exploratory Study of Honor Crimes in the United States

In a study titled *An Exploratory Study of Honor Crimes in the United States* by Hayes et. al, an overview of known honor violence cases was performed and honor violence cases were examined and analyzed for victim and offender relationships, the reason for the occurrence of the honor violence victimization, and general characteristics of the honor violence cases. The United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) was used to pull the cases that were analyzed. As noted throughout this presentation, this study backs the claim that honor violence is an under-researched study, and that there exists a particular "lack of research on honor crimes within the United States" (Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak, 2016). The study included 16 cases of honor violence that occurred between the dates of January 1st, 1990, and December 31st, 2014. Given that this study was looking specifically at honor killings, the criteria of inclusion in order for a case to qualify for the study were as follows:

1. The honor violence resulted in a homicide that occurred in the United States
2. The homicide occurred between the dates listed above
3. The victim was targeted because of their real or perceived behavior that the community, their family, or the perpetrator deemed shameful and inappropriate.
4. The perpetrator committed the crime with the intention to restore his (and his family's) honor in the community and to avoid being seen as shameful or without a good reputation due to the victim's actions.
5. The perpetrator believed that by killing the victim, they would accomplish some sort of social goal in their mind (whether this goal be a warning to other women inside and outside the family, a form of revenge, etc.)

(Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak, 2016)

The study also concluded that honor violence cases in the U.S. were more likely to involve a perpetrator who was the father or stepfather of the victim, whereas honor violence cases outside of the U.S. were more likely to include the involvement of other family members like male cousins and brothers. This does not mean that honor violence cases in the U.S. have not had a number of different kinds of perpetrators who were related to the victim (see limitations slide below), but that cases overseas were more likely to have other relatives, like male cousins and brothers, involved in the honor violence incident.

Honor Crimes in the United States (Cont.) -- Findings of Study #1

| | Daughter/ Children | Wife/Former Partner | Other Family Members | Cousins |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------|
| Cousin too westernized | | | | Died |
| Daughters too Americanized | Died | | | |
| Daughter Resists Arranged Marriage | Died | | | |
| Daughter too westernized | Died | | | |
| Daughter was sexually molested | Assault | Died | | |
| Step-daughter too westernized | Died | | | |
| Daughter dating a Non-Muslim | Died | Died | Died | |
| Seeking Divorce | Died | Assault | Died | |
| Seeking Divorce | | Died | | |
| Seeking Divorce | | Died | | |
| Seeking Divorce | | Died | Died | |
| Wife did not make goat dinner | | Died | | |
| Pregnant wife would not convert to Islam | Died | Died | Died | |
| Pregnant wife would not wear Muslim clothes | Died | Died | Died | |
| Former partner disrespected him | Died | Assault | | |
| Former partner ended relationship because of religious differences | | | Died | |

Table 2 from the Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak study shows the relationship between the honor violence perpetrator and offender, the reason why the honor crime was committed against the victim, and the outcome of the victimization. This study analyzed 16 honor crime cases. There were a total of 40 homicide victims across the 16 cases studied. In some cases, along with the homicides, there occurred the assault of additional victims.

Honor Crimes in the United States (Cont.) -- Findings of Study #1

| Murdered Victim's Relationship to the Murderer | Frequency |
|--|-----------|
| Daughter | 9 |
| Wife | 5 |
| Niece | 4 |
| Estranged wife | 3 |
| Son | 3 |
| Unborn children | 3 |
| Sister-in-law | 3 |
| Mother-in-law | 3 |
| Stepdaughter | 1 |
| Mother | 1 |
| Brother-in-law | 1 |
| Cousin | 1 |
| Unborn niece or nephew | 1 |
| Ex-girlfriend's sister | 1 |
| Ex-girlfriend's father | 1 |

From the Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak study: the relationship between the victim and offender in American Honor Killing cases. The cases above do not include additional assaults. There were a total of 40 homicide victims across the 16 cases studied.

Honor Crimes in the United States (Cont.) -- Analysis of findings of Study #1

Of the cases included in the study, honor crimes with child victims were found, as well as honor crimes involving a current or former intimate partner. The study also looked at the cases that involved extended family members as victims. All in all, "honor crimes were almost equally divided between daughters murdered by fathers or stepfathers and women murdered by their current or former partners (Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak, 2016). Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak also concluded that it is important to analyze the victim and offender relationship along with the motive for the honor violence, as motives can be complex. For example, in one case, the perpetrator's estranged wife was murdered because the victim's daughter was dating a Non-Muslim (Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak, 2016). This motive suggests a concept discussed above (in the slide 11) that details how other people close to the person committing the honor shaming behavior can get punished so in order to serve as a warning or revenge to the secondary victim, which in this case would be the daughter was dating a non-muslim. This is also indicative of the idea that mothers will get punished for their children's, specifically their daughters, honor shaming behaviors, as the mother is seen as the sole caregiver and the person responsible for raising her children, once again specifically her daughter, with the cultural beliefs of the community. Any failure in the daughter's actions is considered a failure of the mother to properly raise the child. This was a concept seen in many field notes during observations.

9 out of 16 of the honor violence cases analyzed had child victims. With the child victims, 4 different motives were presented by the offender, as noted in the ECDB:

1. The daughter was becoming too westernized (N = 3)
2. The daughter refused a forced or arranged marriage (N = 1)
3. The daughter dated someone who was not a Muslim (N = 1)
4. The mother's behavior was honor shaming, and so the children were killed (suggesting that this was to punish the mother for her perceived honor shaming behaviors (N = 4)

(Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak, 2016)

Honor Crimes in the United States (Cont.) -- Analysis of findings of Study #1

In the cases where a current or former partner was murdered, 4 different motives were presented by the offender, as noted in the ECDB:

1. The victim attempted to or "successfully" divorced or separated the perpetrator (N = 3)
2. The victim displayed westernized behaviors and/or beliefs that violated the cultural norms/ideals (N = 2)
3. The victim did not prepare the perpetrator's preferred dinner (N = 1)
4. The perceived behavior of the victim's daughter (N = 2)

(Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak, 2016)

Note: in some of the cases of the murder of former or current intimate partners, the victim was pregnant

In the 6 honor crime cases that resulted in the death of at least one extended family member, 2 different motives were presented by the offender, as noted in the ECDB:

1. The perpetrator's intimate partner was seeking a divorce or the perpetrator's daughter was in the process of ending her relationship with the perpetrator (N = 3)
2. The perpetrator's intimate partner or daughter was displaying behavior that the perpetrator viewed as westernized (N = 3)

(Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak, 2016)

Finally, the study concluded that "overall, ... the primary motivations for honor crimes were divorce/separation and the perceived westernized behavior of the victim by the perpetrator" (Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak, 2016).

Additional abstract notes, comments, and limitations of the Study

There were a few abstract comments about this study to be made:

1. In terms of the family structure of each honor violence case/victim/offender, the study makes an important note that, "even in an individualistic nation like the United States, it is possible groups of individuals rely on their cultural heritage to define honor" (Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak, 2016). In comparing this note with the field notes and observations collected to form this ethnography, I argue that this reasoning is not just "possible", but is rather a fact in terms of the way that the community (in this context the Arab-Muslim community, but can be generalized to other cultures that have a high prevalence of honor violence, like South Asian and North African communities due to many patriarchal cultural practices and beliefs being similar) and its subsequent families, specifically the community and families that reside in the United States who may or may not engage in honor violence, operate. There is a big theme, attitude, and practice of xenophobia towards western or American culture in the community. In fact, many families within the community believe that the culture in the U.S. is downright evil and is intended to corrupt the minds of the youth in the community, specifically the daughter. Many families in the community will choose to homeschool their children in the fear that public schools are teaching impure and liberal agendas in terms of concepts like gender, equality, and way of lifestyle and freedom. The concept of freedom is almost despised amongst many families in the community and here is a collective mindset that is present. Many families are afraid that if their children are sent to public schools, they will become impure and will be corrupted. There is a specific belief present in the community that having their daughter attend public schools will teach them and encourage actions such as dating, engaging in premarital sex, dressing how she wants, and having freedom of thought and belief (which is a strong characteristic of "westernization" and that goes against the cultural and patriarchal community belief that the woman does not and cannot have an opinion and input in many matters, specifically those involving her).
2. An important limitation that the study recognizes and is important to note here is the fact that this study focused specifically on honor crimes that resulted in homicide (with some "secondary assaults"). These are specifically known as honor killings. This is a limitation because the crime of honor violence can include multiple forms of abuse, and does not always result in death (albeit death is a common end result for many victims). This means that the study was not able to include the honor violence incidents that did not result in homicide, which definitely would have broadened the number of cases examined (although it is important to note that this was not an expectation when viewing this study because analyzing more than one honor violence crime at a time could jumble up results in that different crimes can have different implications). Full studies can be dedicated to analyzing each of the other forms of honor violence. Thus, an important future endeavor for research is to look at other forms of honor violence. The researchers also recognize that the 16 cases and 40 total victims that were analyzed as part of this study are obviously not all the cases of honor violence in the U.S., even when looking at it from an "honor violence cases that end in homicide approach". This could be because the ECDB might not include all honor violence cases and some cases may not be documented in the media. At one point in the study, the authors noted that "if the offender commits suicide after murdering the victim(s), the case would not appear in police or court documents" (Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak, 2016). At no fault to the researcher, due to the complexities of what cases are identified as "honor violence" or "honor killing" by both the police and the media, and due to the unstable definition (thus far) of what honor violence entails, many cases that could have been valuable to the analysis in this study may have slipped through the cracks.

Additional abstract notes, comments, and limitations of the Study (Cont.)

3. The researchers recognize that "ethnographic studies on how honor crimes are handled have suffered from unsystematic observations and lack of representativeness" (Cooney, 2014, as cited by Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak, 2016). This particular note is extremely important because ethnographic research on this matter is what will propel the information that we can potentially gather on this subject. It is extremely important to consult those that have spoken with and spent ample time with the community and/or are a part of the community (even if they have or have not experienced honor violence), as they may have first-hand experience with this crime. This is especially important given that we lack a lot of knowledge on the subject of honor violence, including a formal definition for the crime. Crucial and valuable information and perspectives, both from those in the community who possess cultural patriarchal beliefs (and may or may not have the potential to commit honor violence), and those who are on the receiving end of these cultural and patriarchal beliefs (like mothers and daughters), can be listened to, gathered, and analyzed. Finally, to the credit of the researchers, they do recognize that relying only on official documents, like court documents, police documents, etc., (which are equally important) may leave out much of the interpretation aspect of studying honor crimes. They note that speaking with offenders can be valuable when possible as it may help shed light on the honor crime in general, but specifically on how the offender interprets their crime, that is if they believe they committed a crime to begin with.
4. The researchers recognize an important future avenue of research on honor violence in terms of policy implications, which is to "focus on the role of the community" (Hayes, Freilich, & Chermak, 2016) to see who else may be involved in the crime of honor violence, even if they did not directly cause victimization to the victim (a supporter of the crime, but not the main perpetrator or accomplice). When comparing this to field notes and observations, the role of the community and who supported a given incident of honor violence was a theme that popped up frequently. It has also been seen in many cases of honor killings in the U.S., where the extended family of the victim stands by the perpetrator. This can either be due to a fear of the perpetrator or a stance taken due to a real agreement with the perpetrator's actions and reasonings, or a combination of both.
5. Finally, the researchers recognize the bias in the way that the media reports honor violence when the offender, victims, and/or family is Middle Eastern or a part of a marginalized community. This is also important to note because while the crime of honor violence is a real crime that is committed based on the patriarchal belief of honor, the media does take advantage of this and stereotypes that are present against these specific marginalized communities to foster a sense of xenophobia, hatred, and at many times, Islamophobia, against the entire community, including those who (1) may or may not even personally identify with the community in terms of beliefs and attitudes, and/or (2) those that do not practice cultural beliefs, but religious beliefs only.

Honor Crimes in the United States -- An Overview of Study #2: Honor Crimes in the United States and Offenders' Neutralization Techniques

In the study titled *Honor Crimes in the United States and Offenders' Neutralization Techniques* by Van Baak, et al., the study included an overview of the concept of honor violence as well as analyzing how neutralization techniques, which are a part of neutralization theory authored by sociologists and criminologists Gresham Sykes and David Matza, are used by offenders of honor violence to attempt to justify their crime against the victim. Like study #1 discussed above, the United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) was used to pull the cases that were analyzed. The study included 16 cases of honor violence that occurred between the dates of January 1st, 1990, and December 31st, 2015. The approach taken in this study is interesting as neutralization theory "has not been used to understand how domestic violence perpetrators justify their crimes" (Dobash and Dobash 2011, as cited by Van Baak, et al., 2017). Studies that examine the mindset of offenders, especially offenders of domestic violence, are important because it will help in creating policy and legislation to help stop honor violence later on down the road: if we can understand the mindset of these abusers and perpetrators of honor violence, not only are we able to understand all the complex concepts that allow honor violence to exist, but we are also then able to better prevent the crime by helping victims and dealing with their perpetrators in the most efficient, effective, and evidence-backed way possible via the criminal justice system. Like the study discussed above, this study looked specifically at honor killings and the criteria of inclusion in order for a case to qualify for the study were the same:

- The honor violence resulted in a homicide that occurred in the United States
- The homicide occurred between the dates listed above
- The victim was targeted because of their real or perceived behavior that the community, their family, or the perpetrator deemed shameful and inappropriate.
- The perpetrator committed the crime with the intention to restore his (and his family's) honor in the community and to avoid being seen as shameful or without a good reputation due to the victim's actions.
- The perpetrator believed that by killing the victim, they would accomplish some sort of social goal in their mind (whether this goal be a warning to other women inside and outside the family, a form of revenge, etc.)

(Van Baak, et al., 2017)

Honor Crimes in the United States -- An Overview of Study #2: Honor Crimes in the United States and Offenders' Neutralization Techniques

The 5 techniques of neutralization that are a part of Sykes and Matza's neutralization theory that were analyzed are:

- Denial of victim: this is when the offender denies that there was a victim as a result of their actions or that the victim is to blame for what happened to them.
- Denial of responsibility: the offender claims that they are not responsible for their actions and oftentimes blame forces out of their own control for their actions (e.g., mental illness, trauma, etc.).
- Appeal to higher loyalties: this is when the offender claims that their actions were done to appease some sort of higher loyalty or cause (e.g., to appease a god, to appease a religious or cultural belief) or that this higher loyalty "pressured" them to do what they did.
- Condemnation of the condemners: this is when the offender believes that those who are condemning their actions are doing so out of spite and are hypocritical, as this world is an inherently corrupt place. The offender might go as far as to say that condemners are hypocritical because they would have done the same thing if they found themselves in a similar situation, and that they just do not want to admit it or take the blame.
- Denial of injury: The offender believes that their actions did not cause substantial harm or perhaps any harm at all.

(Sykes and Matza, 1957)

Honor Crimes in the United States -- Findings of Study #2

| Facts | Victim-offender relationship | Offender's country of origin | Technique of neutralization | Sub-theme |
|--|---|------------------------------|--|---|
| Offender killed his two daughters for acting too Western and dating non-Muslims | Daughters (2) | Egypt | Denial of victim Appeal to higher loyalties | Westernized Culture |
| Offender killed his daughter because she wanted to divorce her husband from an arranged marriage | Daughter | Pakistan | Denial of responsibility Denial of victim | Immediate dissociation 1. Perception of victim's behavior 2. Cultural standards |
| Offender killed his wife and injured his daughters because he believed his wife and daughter were molested by his brother and his youngest daughter had been "sullied" by a gynecological exam | Wife | Turkey | Appeal to higher loyalties Denial of victim | 1. Honor generally 2. Religion 1. Cultural standards 2. Perception of victim's behavior Honor generally |
| Offender killed his children and raped and beat his wife because his wife disrespected him | Children (4) | Somali | Appeal to higher loyalties Condemn the condemners Denial of responsibility | 1. Innocence 2. Delusions/trauma 1. Adultery 2. Perception of victim's behavior |
| Offender struck his daughter and her boyfriend's mother with his car because daughter, who had an arranged marriage, was westernized and lived with her boyfriend | Daughter | Iraq | Denial of victim | |
| | | | Condemn the condemners Denial of responsibility | 1. Accident 2. Lack of intent 3. Delusions/trauma |
| | | | Denial of victim | 1. Westernized 2. Perception of victim's behavior |
| Offender killed his wife and her family because he believed she had an affair and that their son was not his | Wife; father-in-law; sister-in-law; niece | Pakistan | Appeal to higher loyalties Denial of victim | 1. Honor generally 2. Culture 1. Adultery 2. Third party |
| | | | Denial of responsibility Appeal to higher loyalties | Delusions/trauma Religion |

This is Table 4 from the Van Baak et al. study that summarizes each of the 16 cases analyzed, what the victim-offender relationship was, where the offender originated from, what techniques they used to neutralize and justify their actions toward the victim, as well as a brief note on the exact way they applied the neutralizing technique they did (sub-theme category).

Honor Crimes in the United States -- Findings of Study #2

| | | | | |
|--|--|------------|--|---|
| Offender drove 12 hours to kill his step-daughter, allegedly because she left home and did not adhere to Muslim values. Later it was reported that she was going to disclose that he sexually abused her | Step-daughter | Iraq | Condemn the condemners Denial of responsibility Denial of victim Appeal to higher loyalties | 1. Accident 2. Delusions/trauma 1. Westernized 2. Perception of victim's behavior 1. Honor generally 2. Culture 3. Religion |
| Offenders killed their cousin because they believed she did not comply with their cultural standards | Cousin | Palestine | Denial of victim Appeal to higher loyalties | Perception of victim's behavior 1. Religion 2. Culture |
| Offender killed his wife because she made him the wrong meal | Wife | Pakistan | Denial of injury Denial of responsibility Denial of victim Appeal to higher loyalties | 1. Lack of intent 2. Innocence Perception of victim's behavior Culture |
| Offender killed his wife and her family because his wife refused to convert from Hindu to Islam | Wife; unborn children (2); mother-in-law; sister-in-law | Guyana | Denial of responsibility Appeal to higher loyalties Denial of victim Denial of responsibility | Immediate dissociation Religion Religion 1. Innocence 2. Lack of intent 3. Immediate dissociation |
| Offender killed his ex-girlfriend's father and sister because they disapproved of their relationship | Ex-girlfriend's father and sister | Bangladesh | Condemn the condemners Denial of victim | 1. Third party 2. Perception of victim's behavior |
| Offender killed his family because they would not convert to Islam | Mother; wife; child; unborn child; nieces (2); unborn child of niece | America | Denial of responsibility Denial of victim Appeal to higher loyalties | 1. Delusions/trauma 2. Immediate dissociation 1. Perception of victim's behavior 2. Westernized Religion |

Table 4 (Cont.)

Honor Crimes in the United States -- Findings of Study #2

| | | | | |
|---|---|----------|--|--|
| Offender beheaded his wife because she filed for a divorce | Estranged wife | Pakistan | Denial of responsibility Denial of victim Appeal to higher loyalties Denial of responsibility | 1. Immediate dissociation 2. Self-defense Perception of victim's behavior Religion Innocence |
| Offender killed his wife because she allegedly planned a divorce and their daughter was rebelling against her arranged marriage | Estranged wife | Iraq | | |
| Offender killed his family, his wife's family, and himself, allegedly because of marital and financial problems | Estranged wife; children (2); sister-in-law; brother-in-law; niece; himself | Iran | * | |
| Offender wounded his wife, killed her mother and his daughter, and then himself allegedly because of his impending divorce | Daughter; mother-in-law | Iran | * | |

*murder-suicide, not included in analyses

Table 4 (Cont.)

Honor Crimes in the United States -- Analysis of Findings of Study #2

The following is how each technique was used by the offenders in this study. Note that at times, offenders used more than 1 technique of neutralization, hence the overlap:

- Denial of victim:
 - This was the most common technique used by offenders in this study (N = 13), and the most common subtheme used alongside it was the "perception of the victim's behavior" (N = 10) that were seen as going against cultural standards and violating the offender's honor and reputation (Van Baak, et al., 2017).
 - "The presence of this technique often overlapped with appeal to higher loyalties, with 11 cases including both techniques" (Van Baak, et al., 2017).
- Denial of responsibility:
 - This technique was the next most frequent one used (N = 11).
 - The findings indicate that "it was most common for offenders (N = 5) to claim they were not responsible due to delusions or trauma they had experienced...[or that there] was "immediate disassociation" (N = 5), in which the offender shifted the focus to his mental state during the incident...other offenders claimed they were completely innocent (N = 4)." (Van Baak, et al., 2017).
- Appeal to higher loyalties:
 - This technique was also a common one and was found in (N = 11) cases.
 - In terms of the subthemes, 3 came up: religion as a higher loyalty (N = 7), culture as a higher loyalty (N = 5), and honor (in general) as a higher loyalty (N = 4) (Van Baak, et al., 2017).
 - It is important to note that there was an overlap between appeal to higher loyalty and denial of a victim. In fact, any time appeal to a higher loyalty was identified in each case, denial of a victim was also identified (Van Baak, et al., 2017).
- Condemnation of the condemners:
 - This was one of the least frequently used techniques (N = 4).
 - According to the findings, "in cases where it was used, the offender did not blame western society or culture but rather focused on those who disapproved of the crime or the victim" (Van Baak, et al., 2017).
- Denial of injury:
 - This technique was used in just 1 case.
 - The offender in this case focused on denying how severe the injury was to the victim (Van Baak, et al., 2017).

A note on these findings:

In comparing these findings with the observations and field notes collected for this ethnography, it is important to note that denial of victim, denial of responsibility, and appeal to higher loyalties **were also** seen as the most common techniques in many gatherings and attitudes of community members, as well as attitudes of male community members both in these gatherings and when looking through media coverage and material on honor violence, specifically media coverage that asked male community members about their attitudes towards women in the community (like their sisters) who "went out of line" and what should happen to them when they exhibit honor shaming behavior.

Honor Crimes in the United States -- An Overview of Study #3: Are Honor Killings Unique? A Comparison of Honor Killings, Domestic Violence Homicides, and Hate Homicides by Far-Right Extremists

In this study titled *Are Honor Killings Unique? A Comparison of Honor Killings, Domestic Violence Homicides, and Hate Homicides by Far-Right Extremists* by Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017, offenders of honor killings, domestic violence homicides, and hate homicides are compared and contrasted in order to see how these crimes may differ. As Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017 note, "prior research has suggested that terrorists may differ from "regular" offenders whereas others suggest similarities". This study attempts to see if honor killings can be grouped as extremists acts or if they are considered acts of domestic violence by analyzing the offender's mental illness history, prior criminal justice involvement, both in general, and for domestic violence-related incidents, motivations for the crime they committed, and the number of perpetrators and victims that exist for incidents across the three crimes. The study selected a population for each crime to analyze. The specifications of the populations are as follows:

- Honor Killings:
 - Like the studies discussed above, this study looked specifically at honor killings and the criteria of inclusion in order for a case to qualify for the study were the same:
 - The honor violence resulted in a homicide that occurred in the United States
 - The homicide occurred between January 1, 1990, and December 31, 2016.
 - The victim was targeted because of their real or perceived behavior that the community, their family, or the perpetrator deemed shameful and inappropriate.
 - The perpetrator committed the crime with the intention to restore his (and his family's) honor in the community and to avoid being seen as shameful or without a good reputation due to the victim's actions.
 - The perpetrator believed that by killing the victim, they would accomplish some sort of social goal in their mind (whether this goal be a warning to other women inside and outside the family, a form of revenge, etc.)
(Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017)
 - The United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) was used to gather the population of honor violence offenders.
 - In total, 16 incidents/cases ended up being selected for this population
 - The samples selected for the domestic-violence homicides and hate homicides were based on the occurrence time of honor violence cases (see slide below), as this study seeks to find out if honor killings are different from their counterpart crimes of domestic violence and hate homicides (and not the other way around).

Honor Crimes in the United States -- An Overview of Study #3: Are Honor Killings Unique? A Comparison of Honor Killings, Domestic Violence Homicides, and Hate Homicides by Far-Right Extremists

- Domestic-Violence Homicides:
 - For this population, the ECDB was also used to gather the sample for this study, as well as other open-source data.
 - In order to help eliminate internal validity issues, the domestic violence cases picked for comparison were picked by occurrence date that matched honor violence cases. In other words, domestic violence incidents randomly picked had occurred in the same month as its counterpart honor killing case.
 - In total, 16 domestic violence homicide cases were selected for comparison

(Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017)
- Hate Homicides:
 - For reference, the ECDB defines hate homicides as, "homicides where a far-right extremist committed the act due to ideological reasons and purposefully targeted the victim due to their actual or perceived race, ethnicity, religion, sexual identity, sexual orientation, or homelessness status" (Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017).
 - For this population, the ECDB was also used to gather the sample for this study.
 - Similar to the way that domestic violence homicides were picked above, to eliminate validity issues, the cases for this population were randomly picked and occurred in the same month as its counterpart honor killing case.
 - Because of how large the data is on hate homicides in the ECDB, there were times when multiple hate homicides popped up in the same month as an honor killing case. When this happened, the case to be compared to the counterpart honor killing case was randomly selected out of the multiple cases that came up.
 - In total, 16 hate homicide cases were selected for comparison.

(Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017)
- Note: A limitation that was presented for the random selection of both domestic violence and hate homicides cases that occurred during the same month as each honor killing case, one main limitation that presented itself was the fact that many of the cases of each crime did not occur in the same geographical locations as to where the honor killing cases occurred.

Honor Crimes in the United States -- An Overview of Study #3: Are Honor Killings Unique? A Comparison of Honor Killings, Domestic Violence Homicides, and Hate Homicides by Far-Right Extremists

The following hypotheses were made and tested as part of this study:

Supported?

- **Hypothesis 1a (H1a):** Offenders of hate homicides are more likely to have criminal justice system involvement unrelated to domestic violence than offenders of domestic violence homicides **No**
- **Hypothesis 1b (H1b):** Offenders of hate homicides are more likely to have criminal justice system involvement unrelated to domestic violence than offenders of honor killings. **No**
- **Hypothesis 2a (H2a):** Offenders of honor killings are more likely to have criminal justice system involvement related to domestic violence than offenders of hate homicides. **No**
- **Hypothesis 2b (H2b):** Offenders of domestic violence homicide are more likely to have criminal justice system involvement related to domestic violence than offenders of hate homicides. **No**
- **Hypothesis 3a (H3a):** Offenders of honor killings are more likely to have prior domestic violence noted in open sources than offenders of domestic violence homicides **No**
- **Hypothesis 3b (H3b):** Offenders of honor killings are more likely to have prior domestic violence noted in open sources than offenders of hate homicides. **Yes**
- **Hypothesis 4a (H4a):** Offenders of hate homicides are more likely to claim mental illness than offenders of honor killings. **No**
- **Hypothesis 4b (H4b):** Offenders of hate homicides are more likely to claim mental illness than offenders of domestic violence homicides. **No**

(Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017)

Honor Crimes in the United States -- Analysis of Findings of Study #3

| | Honor killings | Domestic violence homicides | Hate homicides by far-right extremists |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Total number of victims | 40 | 20 | 21 |
| Total number of perpetrators | 19 | 18 | 25 |
| Most common victim-offender relationship | Father-child (daughter) | Current or former girlfriend | Strangers |
| Perpetrator had history of mental illness | 3 | 0 | 3 |

Table 1 from the Hayes et al. (2017) study depicts (1) the total number of victims, (2) the total number of perpetrators involved, (3) the victim-offender relationships, and (4) the mental illness history of the perpetrator across honor killing, domestic violence, and hate homicides.

| | Honor killings | | Domestic violence homicides | | Hate homicides by far-right extremists | |
|--|----------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|--|-------|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| Prior criminal justice involvement | 3 | 15.79 | 4 | 22.22 | 10 | 40.00 |
| Prior criminal justice involvement for domestic violence | 5 | 26.32 | 5 | 27.78 | 5 | 20.00 |
| Prior domestic violence in open sources | 11 | 57.89 | 7 | 38.89 | 5 | 20.00 |
| Total perpetrators (N) | 19 | | 18 | | 25 | |

Table 2 from the Hayes et al. (2017) study depicts the prior criminal justice involvement (in general) for perpetrators of honor killings, domestic violence homicides, and hate homicides, respectively. Prior criminal justice involvement specifically for domestic violence was also analyzed, as well as prior domestic violence in open sources.

| | |
|--|--------|
| Honor killings motivations | n = 16 |
| Separation/divorce | 6 |
| Actual or perceived Western behavior of the victim | 10 |
| Domestic violence homicide motivations | n = 16 |
| Separation/divorce | 6 |
| Argument escalated | 2 |
| History of abuse | 2 |
| Suicide pact | 1 |
| Belief offender's son had been molested | 1 |
| No information | 4 |
| Hate homicide by far-right extremists motivations | n = 16 |
| Victim's race or ethnicity | 11 |
| Victim's religion | 2 |
| Victim's sexual orientation | 2 |
| Bias against homeless individuals | 1 |

Table 3 from the Hayes et al. (2017) study depicts the motivations for the commission of each crime by each kind of perpetrator as gathered from the perpetrator and other official sources.

Honor Crimes in the United States -- Analysis of Findings of Study #3

This study found that honor killings, domestic violence homicides, and hate homicides have their similarities and differences, but may share more similarities than differences (Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017).

- **Ways that honor killings are similar to hate homicides:**

- The actions of the offenders in each crime originate from the offender's belief system (Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017). This belief system tends to be one that is ingrained and solidified in the offender's mind and is a belief system that some offenders believe is vital to their existence and/or society.
- In this study, 3 hate homicide perpetrators and also 3 honor killing perpetrators provided the court with mental illness claims that ended up being supported. In each of these cases, respectively, the offender acted alone.

- **Ways that honor killings are different from hate homicides:**

- The victim-perpetrator relationship in honor killings is always one where the victim is familiar with their perpetrator in one way or another. The victim-perpetrator relationship is usually a familial one. Whereas with hate homicides, offenders tend to target strangers over those they are familiar with.
- Honor killing perpetrators were more likely than hate homicide perpetrators to have a history of domestic violence *that was noted in open sources*. In terms of a history of domestic violence in general, they were very close in percentage (which is why Hypothesis 2a was not supported).
- Honor Killings are more likely to involve multiple victims compared to hate homicides.
- While honor killing offenders and hate homicide offenders both rely on a complex belief system to commit and justify their actions, honor killing perpetrators commit their crimes based on a real or perceived view of the victim's honor shaming *behaviors*, and hate homicide perpetrators commit their crimes based on the victims real or perceived *characteristics* (Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017).
- Offenders of honor killings *specifically* noted that the victims' behaviors brought shame to their honor, whereas hate homicide offenders never noted that their honor was tainted because of the identity of the victim they targeted.
- Honor killings had more fatalities than hate homicides and are more likely to target people beyond the victim as part of their crime.

- **Ways that honor killings are similar to domestic-violence homicides:**

- Both types of offenders in this study, overall, did not exhibit claims of self-defense.
- Separation or divorce was a common motivation cited by both types of offenders for the homicide of their victims (albeit this is not as surprising given that we know from previous research that the time during which the victim is separating from their abuser is the most dangerous time for them physically speaking) (Brownridge et al., 2008, as cited by Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017).

- **Ways that honor killings are different from domestic-violence homicides:**

- Honor Killings are more likely to involve multiple victims compared to domestic-violence homicides.
- Honor killings had more fatalities than domestic-violence homicides and are more likely to target people beyond the victim as part of their crime.

Additional abstract notes and comments on the study

- The study notes, "moving to a broader term of femicide would bring attention to the role patriarchy plays in the control of women's personal lives" (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2003, as cited by Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017). While honor violence, specifically the act of honor killing, is a form of femicide (and this is noted in the abstract of this ethnographic research, it would be a mistake to not recognize the role of honor in these killings. One of the biggest concerns that popped up during the observations phase of this research study was the very fact of how the media frames honor violence as a "Middle Eastern" problem and not a problem of the patriarchy. The study recognizes this and so does this researcher, however, to characterize honor killings as only a femicide and to leave out terms like "honor violence" would ignore the motive of this crime. The researcher understands that the roots of this complex issue of honor violence reside in the patriarchy, but as seen in the community from this ethnographic study, honor is a problem and it is a complex topic that runs rampant through the community and is a concept that has become the basis of many cultural and patriarchal beliefs in the community. The community has a problem with gendering honor and using it as a justification for violence. Therefore, from this ethnographic study, it is the researcher's belief that honor violence is characterized as both an issue of femicide and patriarchal honor. Terms like "honor" and "female mannerisms" (during observations, both terms were frequently heard in Arabic) take hold of many beliefs in the community and are a constant topic of discussion, even when women in the community are performing menial tasks, like socializing. The researcher recognizes the way in which the discussion of honor killings and honor violence may be twisted for a biased, stereotypical, or even Islamophobic in many cases narrative, which is why the researcher advocates for women in the community, particularly honor violence victims, to reclaim the term and continue advocating against the misuse of the term. This "reclaiming the term honor violence" has already begun to occur in protest across the globe in the famous advocacy motto "there is no honor in killing". Neglecting a term like honor violence can also serve honor violence perpetrators in a direct way: if the term is not targeting the very concept they use to justify their violence against women (and sometimes men) in the community, all the way from acts like honor shaming to honor killing, from when the victimization of women in the community begins (which can be traced back from a very young age) to well past young adulthood, then this may send a message that their mentality is not a problem and therefore their actions are encouraged.

Additional abstract notes and comments on the study (Cont.)

- The study notes, "perpetrators of honor killings are not killing any woman whom they perceive violates female chastity norms. Rather, they only murder family members for this behavior" (Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017). The reason why honor violence may work in this particular way was exposed during the observation phase of this ethnography. There exists a big theme within the community that each male is responsible for their own family or is "the man of their house". Going hand-in-hand with this theme is another one that is ingrained in community beliefs, which is that reputation is a competition among families in the community. Therefore, if a woman in the family displays honor shaming behavior and her actions end up tainting the reputation of her male family members (and thus her entire family), the community almost expects the male members to "do something about it" and to "put the woman in her place". Choosing not to "do something about the woman's actions" sends a message to the community that (1) the family is not to be respected, and that (2) the men in the family are "not real men". Respectability and aggressive manhood are key identifiers of what an ideal male community member is. It was noted in observations that male community members will oftentimes do anything to avoid being seen as weak in their male counterparts' eyes. Being seen as weak directly speaks to the character and existence of that man. This was also seen through many statements made by community members, as well as online news coverage of interviews with males who were identified as being a part of the community. A common statement that popped up was that "the man believed he had the right, or that it was his natural right, to keep the woman in line and ensure she does not taint his honor, and that if she does, he reserves the full right to "deal with her" in the way he sees fit to restore and maintain his honor". Toxic masculinity is one of the oldest results of the patriarchy, and it is a theme that is rampant in the community and is a key player in the concept of honor and honor violence.
- This study is particularly interesting as due to biased media attention focusing on the identity of the perpetrators and victims (especially when they are Middle Eastern), attitudes towards honor violence may be mistakenly grouped as solely being extremist acts rather than domestic violence, which can have serious implications for policy, future research, and even any future legislation that may come to exist for honor violence acts. Honor violence is a type/extension of domestic violence, but it is important to note that it may be considered an extremist act, "if the offenders are partially motivated by furthering political or cultural belief systems, as opposed to only being motivated by personal considerations "(Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017).
- In comparing this study with the ethnographic research here, it is in the researcher's opinion that a good future avenue of research could be examining honor violence perpetrators' mental health and state of mind (1) substantially before the incident of honor violence, (2) during the specific incident of honor violence and shortly into the aftermath of the incident of honor violence, and (3) substantially after the incident of honor violence. Examining the personal history of mental illness will also be interesting. This avenue is an important one as many observations that were noted during the research process, specifically statements made by male community members or general attitudes of male community members towards concepts like female mannerisms and honor, suggested or hinted at possible antisocial attitudes and beliefs. It would also be interesting to see the role of mental health in general with honor violence perpetrators and how this may or may not influence their actions and may or may not increase the risk of victimization to the victim.

Honor Crimes in the United States -- An Overview of Study #4: Comparison of Honor Killings to Anti-LGBTQ Homicides

In this study titled *Comparison of Honor Killings to Anti-LGBTQ Homicides* by Henry et al., 2017, cases of honor killings and anti-LGBTQ homicides are compared in order to see what role the concepts of shame and honor play in the facilitation of these homicides. The United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) was used to pull the sample for comparison. In total, 16 cases of honor killings were selected, and 21 cases of anti-LGBTQ homicides were selected.

While the study selected a population for each crime to analyze, in order for an honor killing incident to be included in the sample, it had to match specific criteria. The criteria for each case to qualify for the sample are:

- The honor violence resulted in a homicide that occurred in the United States
- The homicide occurred between January 1, 1990, and December 31, 2016.
- The victim was targeted because of their real or perceived behavior that the community, their family, or the perpetrator deemed shameful and inappropriate.
- The perpetrator committed the crime with the intention to restore his (and his family's) honor in the community and to avoid being seen as shameful or without a good reputation due to the victim's actions.
- The perpetrator believed that by killing the victim, they would accomplish some sort of social goal in their mind (whether this goal be a warning to other women inside and outside the family, a form of revenge, etc.)

(Henry et al., 2017)

The selected cases of anti-LGBTQ homicides were from a "U.S.-based population of ideologically motivated anti-LGBTQ homicides committed by a far-right extremist offender" (Henry et al., 2017). The ECDB was also used to pull this sample.

The study concluded that the concepts of shame and honor played a crucial role in both types of homicides, however, they presented differently across both types of crimes (Henry et al., 2017).

Honor Crimes in the United States -- Findings of Study #4

| | <i>Honor killings (N = 16)</i> | <i>LGBTQ homicides (N = 21)</i> |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Total number of victims | 40 victims | 28 victims |
| Victims who knew perpetrator | 40 of 40 victims | 8 of 28 victims |
| Total number of perpetrators | 19 perpetrators | 33 perpetrators |
| Cases with multiple victims | 8 of 16 cases | 3 of 21 cases |
| Cases with multiple perpetrators | 2 of 16 cases | 8 of 21 cases |
| Notes: $n = 37$. N , the total number of incidents examined for each type of homicide | | |

Table 1 from the Henry et al., 2017 study depicts the demographics of the cases that were included in the analysis. The number of victims and perpetrators, as well as which cases had multiple victims and perpetrators is noted. Additionally, the number of victims who knew their perpetrators are noted.

| <i>Theme</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>Percent of cases overall with theme (%)</i> | <i>Percent of honor killings with theme (%)</i> | <i>Percent of anti-LGBTQ with theme (%)</i> |
|---|----------|--|---|---|
| <i>Shame</i> | | | | |
| Shame to family | 13 | 35.14 | 81.25 | 0.00 |
| Suppressing homosexual urges | 5 | 13.51 | 0.00 | 23.81 |
| Acts that are shameful according to religious tenants | 10 | 27.03 | 31.25 | 23.81 |
| <i>Honor</i> | | | | |
| Protecting masculinity | 13 | 35.14 | 18.75 | 47.62 |
| Protecting honor | 18 | 48.65 | 75.00 | 28.57 |
| Notes: $n = 37$. N , the total number of incidents examined for each type of homicide | | | | |

Table 2 from the Henry et al., 2017 study depicts the motivations of the perpetrators for committing their homicide. The motivations, as well as how many cases each motivation was present in, are noted.

Honor Crimes in the United States -- Analysis of Findings of Study #4

The Henry et al., 2017 study focused particularly on (1) the real or perceived behavior of the victim by the offender that the offender believes would have caused them shame, (2) the motive of the perpetrator for the crime, and (3) the goal that the offender believed would be accomplished by committing the crime in society (Henry et al., 2017).

An interesting observation to make in terms of the number of victims and perpetrators across both crimes is that with the honor killing cases, there were fewer perpetrators (N = 19), but substantially more victims (N = 40), whereas in anti-LGBTQ homicides, there were more perpetrators (N = 33), but a fewer number victims (N = 28) (Henry et al., 2017). Both crimes had cases where there were multiple perpetrators, but anti-LGBTQ homicides had more cases of multiple perpetrators. Another interesting observation is the fact that while some of the anti-LGBTQ cases had victims that knew their perpetrators, in the honor killing cases, the victims and offenders always knew one another (Henry et al., 2017). This speaks to one of the characteristics of the crime of honor violence, which is that the victim and offender are always familiar with one another, in some way.

The role of shame and its sub-themes across the two cases:

In this study, 3 sub-themes of shame were analyzed:

1. **Shame to the family:** in terms of this kind of shame, it was found that "shame to the family" as a result of the victim's actions was only mentioned in honor killings. In other words, anti-LGBTQ homicide perpetrators did not note that their actions were committed to prevent shame from reaching their families. This theme did not apply to anti-LGBTQ homicides. In (N = 13) of the cases of honor killings, offenders explicitly noted "shame to the family" as a motivation for their crime.
2. **Shame related to suppressing homosexual urges:** in terms of this kind of shame, the opposite of what occurred in the subtheme "shame to the family" occurred here. The theme of "shame related to suppressing homosexual urges" was not present in any of the honor killing cases but was present in (N = 5) of the anti-LGBTQ homicide cases. Some offenders of the anti-LGBTQ homicides (N = 3) attempted to use the "gay panic defense" during their trial.
3. **Acts that are shameful according to religious tenets:** in terms of this kind of shame, there were similarities between the honor killing cases and anti-LGBTQ homicide cases. In (N = 5) cases of honor killings and (N = 5) cases of anti-LGBTQ homicides, the offender explicitly appealed to their religion and used it to justify their actions.

(Henry et al., 2017).

The role of honor and its subthemes across the two cases:

In this study, 2 sub-themes of honor were analyzed:

1. **Protecting masculinity:** this sub-theme was present in both the anti-LGBTQ homicide cases and honor killing cases, albeit the anti-LGBTQ homicides had a much higher prevalence of this theme. This theme was expressed in (N = 10) anti-LGBTQ homicide cases, while it was only present in (N = 3) honor killing cases. It also manifested differently across the groups in that, "for the anti-LGBTQ homicides, this abuse against [the perpetrators] masculinity typically resulted from a perceived sexual advance by the victim [onto the perpetrator]...[whereas with honor killings]...(N = 3) of honor killings were the result of violations of gender roles" (Henry et al., 2017).
2. **Protecting honor in general:** this sub-theme was present in both the anti-LGBTQ homicide cases and honor killing cases, albeit the honor killing cases had a much higher prevalence of this theme (75% of honor killing cases explicitly mentioned this sub-theme). Only 28.57 % of anti-LGBTQ homicides mentioned this subtheme. In the honor killing cases, the action was committed to protect the honor of the offender or cultural honor, whereas in the anti-LGBTQ homicides, some offenders claimed that they, "killed for the cause" (Simonson, 2005, as cited by Henry et al., 2017). Other offenders claimed that they were "protecting the honor of the white race" (Henry et al., 2017).

(Henry et al., 2017)

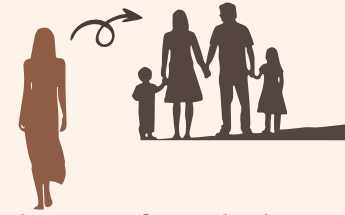
It is important to note that from the research we discussed above by Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017, the offender in hate homicides targeted the victim's real or perceived characteristics, while honor killing offenders targeted the victim's real or perceived behaviors that were seen as honor violating (Hayes, Mills, Freilich, and Chermak, 2017). This finding was clarified in this study (Henry et al., 2017).

The Cycle of Generational Trauma And How Honor Violence Fits Into It

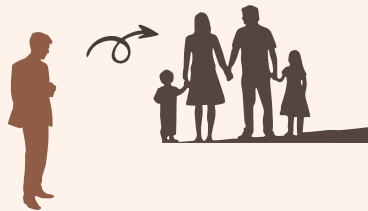
Many victims who experience honor violence may come from families that have a heavy presence of generational trauma, and their families' dynamics and relationships can look like what is described below



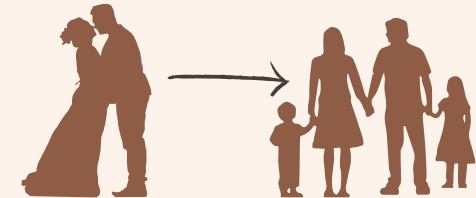
An example family comprised of a mother, father, son, and daughter



The mother has come from a background of emotional, psychological, physical, and possibly even sexual abuse. She has trauma that she has not attended to or mended (i.e., unhealed trauma) that has carried over into the current marriage she has.



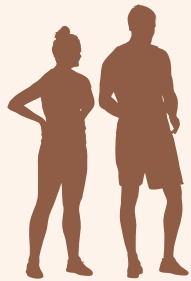
The father is usually one who has come from a dysfunctional family as well and has, from a very young age, taken on the role of the patriarchal man: one who is constantly seeking power, dominance, and control over others, has been raised to consider himself "the man of the house", and is personally insulted by anything that threatens his ego and power. The father in these families usually has experienced some form of emotional, psychological, physical, and possibly even sexual abuse, however, his victimization has always been denied due to victimization being associated with weakness and a lack of power by the patriarchy, both of which are characteristics that threaten the identity and existence of a man. In moving on to create a family of his own, due to the destruction caused to him by patriarchal and misogynistic values, he usually is not equipped with the capability to provide for his family **emotionally**, and therefore, lacks the ability to sufficiently provide healthy emotional support to his spouse and children, but most notably, his spouse.



So now you have a couple that has married and produced a family (whether that be due to an arranged marriage or other) in which one or both parties are not emotionally equipped and mentally prepared to handle even the basic responsibilities of marriage and parenting, let alone the responsibilities that go way beyond the bare minimum of such roles.



Due to the fact that the mother faces a barrier in getting emotional support from her husband, and because she does not get this support that is so crucial to a marriage, the mother will then go to the next best male figure and substitute that can provide her with this emotional support: her son. It is specifically the son that she goes to because (1) he is the next **male** figure in the family to whom she believes she can provide her support. The concept that a woman needs a man in order to function and that in order for her to have any valid identity or to truly have her existence recognized, her identity must be centered around a male in her life is a concept/belief that the mother is taught from an extremely young age in the patriarchal family she grew up in. It is one of the oldest beliefs of the patriarchy. She is conditioned to understand that she does not have body autonomy and her own identity, but rather she is an extension to a man, and in order to have any sort of relevant identity in general, but more specifically in the eyes of the patriarchal community, there must be a man there supporting her and providing for her in many different capacities.



The process of the mother seeking emotional support can be termed "spousal substitution". The relationship that then results from the spousal substitution can be referred to as the husband-son hybrid. *So what then becomes of this relationship when the son grows older, passes puberty, and becomes an adult?* Not only do the patriarchal beliefs of the father get passed down to the son and he starts believing that he is the man of the house, but because of how much the mother has relied on the son for emotional support, this belief comes to life for the son, and in the circumstance where the son chooses not to stray away from this outcome and this role as a male in the patriarchal house, he ends up genuinely believing that he is the man of the house. He ends up taking the title of the father, especially as the father gets older and can no longer "rule" in the capacity that he once could over his family.

At this point, the relationship between the son and mother is sealed in stone, and the heavy reliance on her son throughout the years, coupled with the conditioning of her son to believe that he is her savior, leads their relationship to be best defined as one that exhibits strong **emotional incest**. The son, while aware that he and his mother are "close", is not usually aware of this complex emotionally incestuous relationship, nor does he feel that the relationship is such. He is under the assumption that he and his mother are exceptionally close, as should any mother and son be, and the relationship feels absolutely normal to him. The mother, on the other hand, can either be aware or unaware of what she is doing, but in most circumstances, she does not see that the relationship she has with her son is inappropriate or out of line. She sees her son, quite literally, as her savior that rescued her from a painful marriage. Due to how deep this connection runs, anything that breaks or even threatens to break this bond that the mother has with her savior is seen as the enemy and is a threat that must be fought and/or destroyed. This is why in many relationships of newlyweds or newly engaged couples, you oftentimes hear of the disgruntled mother in law that stops at nothing to insult and emotionally destroy the new wife or fiancée of the son, effectively manipulating and threatening their marriage, and in some cases, preventing the son from moving on to start a family of his own. The mother sees the new wife as a threat because of how emotionally connected she is to her son. In other words, the mother quite literally sees the new wife or fiancée as a thief coming to steal a possession of hers. In this case, the new wife is stealing the husband that the mother thought she had.

So, what then, is the role of the daughter in the family?



A substitute mother to her other siblings:

Because her mother is too busy investing in her son, who is her surrogate husband providing her with the emotional support she needs, over time, she tends to ignore the needs of her other children (particularly her daughter, but other children as well nonetheless). These "needs" of her other children that the mother ignores can range anywhere from emotional and psychological needs, to even physical needs. It is not a new fact that having an absent parent or parents can be detrimental to a child's development, but in this dysfunctional family, not only does the daughter have an absent mother, but she is forced to become a parent at a young age in order to substitute for where her mother lacks, that is the daughter becomes a mother for her other siblings. This is not to say that the mother is 100% absent from her other children's lives. She may invest some time in her children over the course of their development as they grow into adolescents and their adult years, but her main focus and priority is her son because he is the only one giving her that emotional satisfaction. Whether it is the older son or the younger (if applicable) that is the target of her emotional incest can vary. In some families, both sons will be the target, and in others, the main target is the oldest son because he is the firstborn and was the first to afford her the emotional support she needed.



The object of hatred and jealousy of the mother:

The mother in this dysfunctional family will oftentimes hold resentment towards her daughter, particularly her eldest daughter (as she came first). The theories on why can be endless, although it is believed that the mother holds this resentment and jealousy because the daughter reminds her of her young vulnerable self, a child that never got the emotional love and physical support that was crucial to her development to her child. Internalized misogyny also plays a huge role in the negative attitude that the mother has towards other women or girls, like her own daughter. This attitude and the hatred and jealousy towards the daughter will only worsen, especially given that as a young child, the daughter is still not aware of how the patriarchal world works, nor does she know what gender roles are and other complex roles associated with being a woman. As a child who is obviously curious and knowledgeable, they will continue to question so many of the systems and rules that are taught to them, for it is only normal too. It is important to understand that this is something that will frustrate the mother in the long run, especially if the daughter does not catch on to her same understanding, or as she grows up, chooses not to believe in the same system her mother fell victim to. As the daughter's slow understanding of the world and the system of injustices that plague society slowly come into view (and this process obviously takes years for some of the even more knowledgeable adults to understand, let alone a child), the more questions the daughter will ask and objections the daughter will have, questions and objections that the mother hates because (1) they remind her of her own self in that she used to have the same objections and never understood why she never had her own questions answered and objections explained to her, or (2) she is frustrated that the daughter simply will not be submissive to her teachings (the same teachings forced on her by her own mother when she was young).





That of the emotional sponge and therapist for the mother:

At the same time that the daughter is serving as the target of hatred and jealousy of the mother, she also serves the role of a therapist, or "emotional sponge" as it can be termed. This role can entail the mother venting to her daughter about personal and familial issues, issues that are both inappropriate and too complex to discuss with a child. She may also take out any frustrations that she experiences as a result of the tumultuous relationship between her and her husband. Oftentimes, the mother may speak very negatively about the father and how and why she believes that he is a bad father and a bad person overall. She will also speak negatively about her husband's side of the family in an attempt to have the daughter view that side of the family negatively as well. Keep in mind that this mother is the same one that is reeling from the lack of emotional support and possibly even other forms of abuse from her husband, while also reeling from the effects of the emotionally incestuous relationship that her mother-in-law directed towards her now-husband. When the daughter is not being used as an outlet of frustration for the mother, she is her mother's therapist and listens to any issues the mother wants to discuss. This affects the daughter in an obvious way that she is (1) being told things are beyond her level of understanding and comprehension which only makes her confused and distorts her logic and reasoning of how she may come to view relationships with other people she may come to have later in life, and (2) she becomes a victim of what has become known in the field of psychology and family law as "Narcissistic Parental Alienation" also known as "Malicious Parent Syndrome". This is described as either a short-term or long-term process where one or both parents will deliberately go to the child and speak very negatively about the other parent in a way that teaches the child that the other parent deserves to be rejected and not loved or appreciated, effectively helping the child make an enemy of their own parent. This process can occur in a one-sided and two-sided manner. One-sided is when one parent is manipulating the child against the other. Two-sided is when both parents are engaging in what can only be coined "a parental war", with one parent pulling the child to their side via bad talk of the other, and the other parent only retaliating by pulling the child back. This process can determinately affect the child in many ways, but most notably, the child (1) has absolutely no sense of a healthy relationship and grows to associate fighting and verbal abuse as a "positive factor" with relationships, and (2) is plagued with confusion to a point where it makes them feel as if their own input is not important, which only impacts them socially in the future. Additionally, in this process, the child is only shown positive reinforcement when they do something the parent wants them to do, therefore refuting the fight and choosing to not comment is not an option for the child. With time, the child will have an unstable or no sense of identity and in the future, their identity and personality will become surrounded and defined by people-pleasing. Being an emotional sponge for the mother will only complicate the daughter's sense of identity and logic and will severely impact her in the future, especially when she comes to choosing a spouse. Because of the marriage that was shown to her growing up, that of hostility between both parents, and the constant pulling and pushing of her around, she will most likely choose a spouse that treats her the same way her father treated her mother, effectively continuing the cycle as the only way she has learned to defend herself is by engaging in Malicious Parent Syndrome, just like her own mother and father taught her.



The bearer of honor in the family:

Culture (in this context the Arab/Muslim culture) and the patriarchy come together here in that the culture holds that the woman is the bearer of honor. This means that the responsibility falls on the woman and daughter alone to make sure that the reputation of the family is absolutely impeccable. Any actions that the daughter commits that shame the family honor in any capacity, whether her actions are real or perceived, will increase the women's chances of victimization and violence at the hand of her family members. The patriarchy holds a similar position in that the woman was remain pious for her and her family's reputation. The only note here to make is that in the Arab/Muslim culture, the concept of honor is exacerbated and taken to a whole different level, sometimes deciding whether a woman lives or dies, and other physical punishment for her should she live. The principles of generational trauma go hand-in-hand with the woman's experience of honor violence in that the woman is bearing the generational trauma that her mother is dumping and has been dumping onto her since she was young, while at the same time experiencing the abuse of honor violence. Through this, she is enduring a tremendous kind of trauma, one that many women do realize or understand until much later in life (and sometimes never if the resources are not available for her to do so). The trauma from both victimizations will carry into her marriage, if she goes on to marry, before she is mentally and psychologically prepared to, as she is taking with her the trauma of being raised in this dysfunctional household, as well as the trauma from an honor violence victimization she may have experienced, whether that be physical, emotional, or psychological victimization.

The cycle of generational trauma and how the daughter may (and usually does) unknowingly continue the cycle (whether by "choice" or not)

So therefore when the daughter enters her own marriage and has children, she (and really both parents) will continue this cycle.

In the case where the daughter is the only one with unhealed trauma, she will still pass that down to her children as long as she does not understand her trauma or seek help for it.

A daughter raised in a dysfunctional family where one or both parents have been traumatized by the patriarchal and cultural gender roles, and where the daughter fulfilled the role that her younger mother fulfilled may be more inclined to (1) get married to "get out of the house and away from her overbearing parents", and (2) because she was not shown what healthy love was and the only love shown to her was that of abuse or being submissive to a man, especially an abusive one, she will have an increased chance of marrying this kind of man, the same man that her father was. Marrying a man of this kind almost effectively dashes any hope of getting emotional support and love that spouses should share. And without the proper resources on how to heal, the lack of understanding of her own trauma, and a sense of healthiness in the marriage, the daughter will do what the human race is tempted to do by nature: resort to what she knows, which are the sexist and patriarchal gender roles. This includes making her daughter the emotional sponge, while directing rage and jealousy at the daughter because she could not understand her own pain, and seeing the son as a surrogate husband, given that her own husband will not provide her with the love and support she so desperately seeks.

As they grow up, they both become affected psychologically, mentally, and physically by the impact of the dysfunctional family and the roles they had to fulfill growing up. The daughter may or may not recognize that she has been impacted physically, psychologically, and emotionally. If she is aware of the effects, she will recognize that she should seek professional help (if possible) to learn how to cope with her trauma and not pass it down to her children, should she have any. If she does not recognize the effects, which is common since she was raised to believe that what happens in the culture to her is perfectly normal, she will pass down those beliefs and roles assigned to her, to her children, each gender respectively, and will continue the cycle by releasing the frustration from her trauma onto the daughter, the one child that reminds her of her younger, vulnerable self. The son, if he chooses to abide by the patriarchal role and surrogate husband role assigned to him, will not realize or will be adamant in denying any negative effects on him psychologically, physically, and emotionally as a result of his role growing up. The sons that stray away from the role assigned to them oftentimes recognize that they have been affected and may even seek professional help to heal the trauma they have endured so that they can learn how not to pass the trauma down to their children, albeit this may be an uncommon path taken by men given the stigma surrounding male mental health.

A parent(s) enters a marriage when they are not emotionally prepared to

The parent, usually the mother who does the child-rearing and raising in a patriarchal family, strongly guided by internalized misogyny and affected by the misogynistic and patriarchal beliefs that were imprinted on her from a young age:

Raises the daughter with the beliefs and practices associated with the role of being a woman in a patriarchal society (i.e., being submissive to a man, less valued, taking on the role of the nurturing mother, suffering in silence, etc.)

Raises the son with the beliefs and practices associated with the role of being a man in a patriarchal society (i.e., being dominant, aggressive, normalizing violence, and is seen as the one in control and in power over other people, especially their "property" (women))

Most importantly, the daughter serves the role of the secondary mother (and even primary in some cases) to her siblings, while simultaneously being her mother's target of rage and jealousy and therapist all at the same time

Most importantly, the son serves the role of the surrogate husband and object of emotional comfort, support, and love for the mother, making up for where the husband lacks

A mother (or father) who has unhealed trauma enters a marriage when they are not emotionally and mentally prepared to and have prior trauma that has not been properly healed. The cycle of generational trauma can pass through either parent, however, in a society that has constantly relied on women, and still does today, to fulfill the role of the nurturing and giving mother that the patriarchy has assigned her, much of the generational trauma passes down from wounded mothers. Additionally, the way in which generational trauma passes down and manifests from the father to the daughter vs. the mother to the daughter is different. The status and characteristics of each relationship, respectively, impact the capacity and way in which generational trauma is passed down.

In the Arab/Muslim community, it tends to be the mother that passes down any generational trauma she might have as the burden to raise the children is placed almost completely on her. Once again, it is important to note that this is not to discredit negligent fathers: they are serious contributors to the mental health complications that a child who was raised in a dysfunctional family may, later on, go on to experience and also play a role in how the son and daughter each turn out, respectively. However, this project focuses on the Arab/Muslim community that has a strong cultural theme of perfectional motherhood. In fact, being seen as a mother who does not tend to her children in the capacity the culture expects will reflect badly on her and the family (hence affecting their reputation).

The process is known as "generational" trauma because it is a cycle that has been going on for generations, passed down from one mother and father to another, from one mother to her daughter, and from her daughter to her children. While theoretically speaking it is never the daughter's responsibility to stop this cycle, and it is sexist in nature to imply that the burden to "save her family" should be placed on the woman and daughter, realistically speaking, the patriarchy and the stereotypical gender roles hold that the woman and mother, and the woman and mother alone, is the family nurturer and the one that holds and keeps the family together. Because of this, the burden and the responsibility to break the cycle and "save her family" oftentimes fall onto the daughter.

An additional observation of importance to note after the daughter and son have grown up is that in many cases, due to:

1. The gender and sex inequalities experienced by the woman
2. The trauma that has impacted the daughter from the immense pressure and responsibilities placed on her throughout her childhood and adolescence
3. If any honor violence was experienced (remember that we are discussing generational trauma in the context of an Arab/Muslim cultural household), the immense pressure to uphold the honor of the family, while the son is allowed to commit actions that would have otherwise destroyed the family's reputation and put her in harm's way if the daughter had committed them, takes a toll on her.

These conditions usually lead to the daughter resenting her male siblings. Additionally, one of the key mechanisms that the mother in the family uses to commit the emotional incest with her son, and alternatively, the abuse towards her daughter, is by pitting the two siblings against each other so the daughter cannot grow up to possibly disrupt the relationship between the mother and son if she believes it is wrong/inappropriate. The mother may also do this because of an underlying resentment towards her own male siblings from when she grew up, and could also be due to any victimization she experienced that her male siblings either did not experience or victimization that her own male siblings helped facilitate against her (this happens when the mother experiences honor violence or is raised in an "honor-priority" family and culture).

In short, honor violence is a crime that can have serious detrimental consequences for the woman and the trauma that results from the victimization is a type of trauma that can pass down through generations if not healed. Specifically, the trauma that results from the complex beliefs and practices taught to the women through an "honor priority" culture using the popular technique of honor shaming can be passed down from the daughter to her children if the daughter does not deviant away from these beliefs and realize that they are harmful and sexist beliefs rooted in the patriarchy and not in any valid and peaceful religion or reliable academia.

Final Notes on the discussion of Honor Violence

Anytime I mention the word “community”, I am speaking about communities in which honor violence is rampant in. From research, we know that honor violence is heavily concentrated in North African, Middle Eastern, and South Asian communities, although it is extremely important to know that we do not know where else the issue is present. More research needs to be done on what other communities have a strong prevalence of honor violence. I also mention Islam in my last paragraph, as the countries that exhibit a serious prevalence of honor violence have a strong following of Islam. However, make absolutely no mistake of it, the religion does not allow such actions and in fact, strongly condemns honor violence. I point this out because the religion is not to be blamed here, but rather culture, which is man-made and strongly affected by systems of inequality such as the patriarchy, racism, sexism, homophobia, etc. Religion and culture are two separate systems, hence why I use the word “culture” when discussing why honor violence exists. I just mention religion as many community members will use religious scripture to justify honor violence, even though the scripture they use is taken out of context, twisted, or outright fabricated.

It should also be noted that while this ethnography examined honor violence in the Arab-Muslim community, the results here can **generally** be applicable to honor violence victims across the regions of the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia, as well as any victims that reside in the U.S., but whose families originate from these countries. This is because the concept and system of honor is a well-known and duplicated system across the multiple cultures that reside in these regions.

Resources that are good sources of information on honor violence:

- <https://www.theahaafoundation.org/>
- <https://karmanirvana.org.uk/>
- <https://www.tahirih.org/>
- <https://www.unwomen.org/en>
- <http://hbv-awareness.com/>
- <https://www.refuge.org.uk/our-work/forms-of-violence-and-abuse/honour-based-violence/>

If you or someone you know is a victim of honor violence or domestic violence, please reach out to the available resources that can help you seek shelter from your situation, namely the National Domestic Violence Hotline. Their information is listed here:

Hotline Phone Number: 800-799-7233

National Domestic Violence Website:

<https://www.thehotline.org/>

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