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THROUGH A GENDERED LENS
WOMEN ISIS RECRUITS IN THE MEDIA

by
MAREAM-JENA ABELHALIM NABUT

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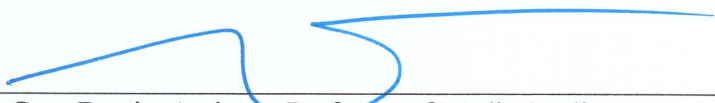at the American University of Beirut

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MAREAM-JENA ABDELHALIM NABUT

Approved by:

_____

Dr. Greg Burris, Assistant Professor of Media Studies   Advisor
Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Media Studies

_____

Dr. Hatim El-Hibri, Assistant Professor of Media Studies   Member of Committee
Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Media Studies

_____

Dr. Omar Dewachi, Assistant Professor of Medical Anthropology and Public Health
Member of Committee
Department of Epidemiology and Population Health

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Title: <u>Through A Gendered Lens: Women ISIS Recruits In The Media</u>

At a time when ISIS was making daily headlines all over the world, a particularly intriguing phenomenon appeared in the media: the recruitment of women by ISIS social media users. In this study, I analyze the coverage of this phenomenon as it has been treated by two major networks- CNN and Al-Arabiya. In assessing this news coverage, I utilize critical media and social constructionist theories. Meanwhile, content and discourse analysis were used for my methodology. I intend to discover how both CNN/U.S. and Al-Arabiya covered the news of women joining ISIS, in order to see how framing, representation, and symbolization of women took place in media, as well as the extremist groups' consequences on media's news. My findings suggested that females joining ISIS were constructed as deviant through CNN/U.S. and Al-Arabiya's use of language. Women were represented in a feminine way (e.g. emotional and powerless), taking secondary and stereotypically roles and were represented according to their appearance. Nonetheless, media stereotyped women involved in extremism by framing their stories around nationality and ethnicity.

Keywords: ISIS and Women, Representation of Women, Women in Media, Women and War, ISIS, Extremism, Terrorism.

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Women ISIS Recruits in the Media

Women are usually depicted as suffering, victims, and in need of protection during wars (Atkinson & Young, 2002; Jones, 2004; Kelly,2000; Sharoni, 1994). Moreover, when they join an extremist group, they are usually portrayed as brainwashed, not knowing what they are doing, or going to be mistreated and offended. One example was the media's representation of a woman who left her home to join ISIS, where she was portrayed as a victim, mentioning that the news channel said that ISIS attracted young women to join, get a decent life and wanting to have a husband, but eventually ending up being victims of rape and terrorists. (CNN, 19 November 2015). However, not necessarily women can be brainwashed by extremists or media, but women do have agency where they decide where to take action and where not to. Nonetheless, women can do that through being violent and aggressive without the need to be brainwashed via media.

This study is importantin my opinion, especially with the increase of women's participation in extremism, and the way media has been dealing with this particular issue. Yet, regardless the great number of studies that were conducted concerning women's participation in extremism and terrorism; I found it important to conduct this study to highlight where women with the latest extremist group, ISIS, stand in the Arab and Western media. However, there has been only one study accomplished by Hardy (2010), which examined the American media's portrayal of Muslim female suicide bombers. The study discussed how women in societies usually took place in traditional roles as nurturers and caregivers, and shortly started taking unexpected roles, as becomingsuicide bombers. Nevertheless, media started portraying them to be discomforting as well as fascinating. In addition, Hardy concluded that female suicide bombers were represented differently in the media than males, where the mainfocus was on their

appearance, emotions and family life. Regardless Hardy's study that was conducted on traditional media, yet I wanted to conduct mine on news channels only, and through onlycomparing one Arab news channel with another Western news channel.

I focused on how TV news channels represented women who join ISIS. As a case study, I took two examples of media that broadcasted from two different regions to two different parts of the world. The first was CNN, which is an example from the West, and the second is Al-Arabiya channel, which is an example from the Middle East. I looked into both channels' portrayal of women andwhetherthese channels broadcasted them in the same way or differently, as victims or as perpetrators. In addition, I checked the similarities and differences between their coverage of these women, all from a gendered lens.

Conflicts and wars always reflect violence and aggressiveness, and women also take part in wars as a prey or as a perpetrator, not only men. Thus, the generalization that women were victims not all the time was necessarily always true, especially that terrorism was usually masculinized, and victims were feminized. However, notions of gender played a role in the fundamental element of war, where people who participated in wars were usually doing so in their gender identities as either "men" or "women". Therefore, I believed that women who participated in conflicts and wars re-negotiated their gender to meet up the traditional means of womanliness like soft, emotional, and gentleness, to persuade the others that they were capable of joining a battlefield.

Women joining extremist groups and "terrorists" has increased recently and in different places where conflicts exists or has developed. One example was of a woman who was once caught at an airport while attempting to bring onboard liquid explosives in a baby milk bottle

(Esposito & Schecter, 2006). This showed how the involvement in extremist groups or "terrorism" was not necessarily exclusive to men. Thus, women's involvement in terrorism, violent actions, and extremism was essential to study in order to reconsider the gendered expectations and stereotypes of women and terrorism.

A sociological understanding of the social construction of women -who were joining ISIS-took place in this thesis through an investigation of representation in both CNN and Al-Arabiya. Media played a great role in socially structuring gender which was not necessarily always true according to ones' behavior. Studying the representation of women was for the purpose of seeing how media socially constructed those who join ISIS and terrorism as gendered, and how an extremist group played a role in structuring gender, meaning that media portrayed these women according to what group they were joining.

The analysis was carried through a social constructional view and a gendered lens. Since media played an essential role in this construction, I used qualitative content and discourse analysis to see how these women were portrayed in both CNN and Al-Arabiya's news stories. Content analysis according to Babbie & Benaquisto (2002) was able to be conducted through coding the recorded human communications, where its' main method was through looking at the repetition of certain words and terms. Meanwhile, discourse analysis looked mainly at the texts and communications which were analyzed, as well as the perspective and references of the makers, whichis the media in this case (Altheide & Michalowski, 1999; Altheide, 2002).

Here I analyze an example. One example from CNN, taking into consideration the visuality, the footages, the tone of the voiceovers, as well as the words and terms that were used in both news reports to illustrate the way both channels constructed and covered the news of

women and girls joining the extremist group, ISIS. As well as giving an idea regarding the way I analyzed the 41 news reports in both CNN and Al-Arabiya.

On the one hand, a news report broadcasted on CNN on the 5th of September 2014 showed pictures of a British girl who flee to Syria, with a neutral tone of the correspondent. Soon, the news report showed another picture of a girl wearing Niqab where the report referred to her to be the same girl "Aqsa Mahmoud". The picture of a girl wearing black Niqab was used by the channel many times to refer to many girls in different news reports. This shows the contradiction in the channel itself. Soon, the news report broadcasted an interview with the girl's parents where the tone was sad. Such interview illustrates sadness and sympathizing with the parents since the report showed the girl to be "brainwashed" and "manipulated" by ISIS. Nonetheless, the pictures of her as a baby broadcasted on TV also demonstrate how it is deviant and surprising to see a girl leaving her family to join extremism and terrorism. The Report showed that girls' place in general is not in extremism nor in wars and conflicts. Representation of women as feminine and powerless took place in this video. Repetition of information regarding this girl in many videos demonstrate a message which is girls should not take part in extremism and terrorism, and it is a way to tell whoever girl thinks of joining ISIS she will end up being the victim of extremism and even sex, as well as will be offended and mistreated, ignoring the fact that some females can actually be violent and can be as violent and aggressive as males.

Purpose of the Study

People in general, and media in specific are currently engaged in an ongoing war against extremism or what others refer to as "terrorism". Despite the existence of many extremist organizations which include female members and supporters, most of the research concerning "terrorism" is limited to males. According to Cunningham (2007), the lack of understanding of females' involvement in extremist groups has led them to be more successful than their male counterparts. In addition, Talbot (2002) found that women's success as terrorists was due to lack of trust and the common stereotype that women could not take any rough or violent actions. Moreover, she added that people did not realize to what extent women were actually involved in "terrorism". Thus, because females' gender was barely stereotyped as guilty, they were more able to succeed in executing attacks on behalf of their organizations.

This study examined how two different channels Al-Arabiya ─ a pan-Arab channel ─ and CNN ─ an American channel ─ reportednews of women who joined ISIS from the first day ISIS started recruiting women. It also determined the type of editorial media policies the two channels took on reporting these women in their daily coverage, in the ways of portraying them to the audience as victims of this group or as guilty and perpetrators according to ISIS' background. Moreover, I want to detect the differences between the two channel's coverage "Al-Arabiya and CNN" in terms of framing "terrorism" as a topic in their daily coverage.

The study was important for many reasons, mainly because, in my opinion, the studied two channels are the most watched channels by people worldwide, and they both cover a wide range of audiences. Thus, I looked forward to knowing how they framed their news to people. Also, such channels hadgreat influence on people; as they were able to change attitudes of their

audiences, opinions, and beliefs towards certain issues through their decisions on what was important to be broadcasted and what was not. Moreover, what was worth to be viewed and what was not and to what extent.

ISIS was one of the newest extremist groups to surface, yet would not be the last unfortunately. This study is not interested in ISISitself as much as it is interested in extremist groups in general. Thus, I took ISIS as an example to see how media represent women who join extremist groups, which most people view as a "terrorist group". In addition, I hope my research benefits future researchersto investigate aboutother extremist group which might show up later on.

As time has passed, women's participation in extremism, terrorism, and extremist groups has been increasing. However, most of the time, media's portrayal of these women have been feminized, covered as 'soft news', as well as not taken as serious as it should and not as serious as they take men's participation in the same groups. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand how news media channels, CNN and Al-Arabiya as an example, portrayed women and girls' participation in extremist groups, ISIS as an example. Moreover, I wanted to discover if females' participation was covered by the two news channels as victims or as perpetrators, as well as if it was covered from a gendered lens or not.

Therefore, this research aimed to answer the following three main questions regarding gender stereotypes and violence in the media's representation of women who join ISIS:

1. Were women joining ISIS portrayed in a way that draws on stereotypically gendered characteristics? If yes, how?

2. Were women portrayed as feminine? Or, were they portrayed as masculine due to their participation in violence?

3. What were the similarities and differences between both channels' coverage of women joining ISIS?

Terrorism and ISIS

Terrorism

To begin, it is more appropriate to define the term terrorism. Terrorism comes from the word 'terror', which comes from the Latin *terrere*, which means "frighten" or "tremble". A French suffix was added to the word, *isme*, referencing "to practice". This leads to the meaning "practicing the trembling" or "causing the frightening". Frighten and tremble are synonyms for fear and panic, which we call "terror", which is a very old word that is over 2100 years old (Matusitz, 2013). However, nowadays the term became subjective and difficult to define. Such a term is political and not academic, as well as it mystifies more than it illuminates (Mahmood, 2001: 528). Nonetheless, when one refers to a group as a terrorist, it makes the audience judge and conclude that this group is evil, and one should avoid, therefore, should be countered.

In addition, governments have different perspectives regarding the definition of 'terrorism' which also differs between them and those in academics (Egan, 2007: 28). Nonetheless, terrorism is defined based on what is believed to be the motivation behind such acts (Cunningham, 2003;Gallagher, 2002; Lutz & Lutz, 2005; Medd & Goldstein, 1997).The United States and Canadian definitions do not include the threat of political violence, but propose that terrorism is for political, ideological, or religious reasons. However, as expected, these classifications include political violence by governments that the U.S considers asterrorists. However, and according to Zulaika and Douglass, the public mind is constructed in rejecting and refusing "terrorism", the only acceptable response to that is "counterterrorism" (1996). Therefore, one finds the United States mainly, as well as the European countries and Canada spending billions of dollars to counterterrorism.

Nevertheless, it is agreed by many that terrorism is an academically fashioned, politically manipulated and media consumed discourse (e.g. Anderson & Sloan, 1995; Deflem, 2004; Denton, 2004; Mahmood, 2001; Medd & Goldstein, 1997; Nacos, 2002; Zulaika and Douglass, 1996, as cited in Egan, 2007: 31). Therefore, going back to the origins of the word terrorism, which means "causing the frightening", one concludes mainly why "terrorists" are successful. As long as people are frightened, subsequently, terrorists succeeded in practicing their acts.

Point of View On Terrorism

I did not wish to include the term "terrorism" in my thesis directly. However, through looking at previous articles, most researchers included this term to shed light on extremist groups, violent actions, and suicide bombers or what others called "martyrdom operations". However, factual reporting was more respectable, as the BBC's editorial guidelines mentioned, "[t]he word 'terrorist' itself can be a barrier rather than an aid to understanding. We should try to avoid the term, without attribution. We should let other people characteri[z]e while we report the facts as we know them." (emphasis added, the Guardian newspaper, 2015).

The term "terrorism" or "a terrorist" till this day is still vague, subjective, and difficult to define. It is usually used to describe specific actions done by certain groups according to their ethnicity/race, or religion. Thussu (2002) considered it "consistently reproducing the agenda set by the United States and helped to mold public opinion to support the war" (p. 205). Therefore, it was obvious how such a term was only used to benefit a certain side, and considered a disadvantage to the other side. In my opinion,media which used this term was only using it to continue capturing its viewers' interest and support. On the other hand, such media

couldsometimes be the mirror of a government, or even use same terms a government used in order for this media not to be rejected by the government. Also, certain media might haveused this term on the behalf of a government to achieve its political goals. Thus, it was very easy to add certain words, opinions, and ideas to a receiver's way of thinking, if they were not critical receivers.I could say that it was very subjective for media to use certain terms to achieve their political goals or agendas. Understanding what media chooses to make has vital outcomes regarding how the audience think of terrorism, nonetheless, terrorists utilize media to reach their objectivities (Chermak & Gruenewald, 2006: 430).

Unfortunately, we have come to an age where there is only black or white.and no gray. And when it comes to people, an individual is either with us or against us, and if you were against us, you should be fought. One example was, what the United States called "War on Terror" as an excuse to invade Iraq and Afghanistan, the time the U.S' actions were never labeled under the name "terrorism" due to its power and being able to gain the public's opinion mainly through media. Another example was the act of terrorism carried out by the Israeli government; during the year 1948 alone, over 5000 Palestinians were killed, in the war of Attrition, 2500 Palestinians were killed, during 2008 Gaza war, 1500 Palestinians were killed, and till nowadays almost every day at least one Palestinian gets killed, as most recently on Valentines' day, 14th of February, 2016, five Palestinians were killed. These all were terrifying acts, however, for the Western controlled media, these acts were not considered as terrorist acts, but defending freedom and achieving safety.

At first, I did not wish to use this term "terrorism" in my thesis because it is usually used to refer to whoever is against the United States' policy. However, I ended up using it to refer to all people who act violently, regardless of their nationality, religion, ethnicity/ race, age and even

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appearance. Violence in my opinion cannot be justified according to ones' nationality or any other description, therefore, the terms terrorism and terrorists were used, in my research, to refer to people who act violently. Conversely, a violent act differs not according to ethnicity, religion, or nationality as I have previously mentioned, but differs according to the situation itself. For example, if one is in a situation and needed to defend him/herself then definitely they are not considered terrorists. However, and again in my opinion, I believe that a terrorist act is used to refer to people who have history in their intentions to hurt, injure, kill others for no reason, or for a reason that they find justifiable such as their nationality, ethnicity, or religion. Nonetheless, people who act aggressively need therapy to recover from the situation that they are in. Also, terrorism can be used to refer to people who have plans to recruit and brainwash others to join them in order to create a group or a gang. Add to that, in some cases governments succeed in manipulating their own citizens against other nations, ethnicities, religions, or countries to earn the public opinion and reach their foreign policy's goal. Yet, in the previous situation, I do consider them terrorists.

From a different angle, I find it ironic to see how people worldwide usually take for granted whatever the media says. This comes within whoever owns the media. Taking the United State's control upon media; whenever they decide that a certain country, government, or group is a terrorist, they recruit the public opinion against them, like Afghanistan, the previous Iraqi government, Taliban, Hamas, or ISIS. However, in my opinion, one can barely find a wide public opinion against the United States or the Israeli governments' policies. People could beagainst certainpolicies, but this does not form a "terrorist country", nor one can see other countries, especially the Arab ones, paying and spending millions or billions of dollars to counter the U.S. or Israel. This is how media plays an enormous role in directing the public on what,

how, and where to think. Nonetheless, this is not a claim that media brainwashes receivers, however, it can, to a certain extent, manipulate their minds and create a public opinion with or against a cause, government, country, group, etc.

IT should be noted that since media is used to gain people's support, formulate theiropinion and judgments, it should not be controlled, as it is today, by elites in many societies. But since this is the reality, media literacy should be spreadto all media consumers, in order to raise awareness and increase understanding in this regard.

What is ISIS?

People were furious due to Assad government's failure who did not care or respond to the rural citizens' needs. Syrian protests started in February, 2011 as a very spontaneous protest against a brutal police incident, but not against risingfood prices or unemployment. Another incident occurred in Daraa by police had led citizens protest throughout Syria except for the rural areas. According to Cockburn, Sunni Arabs in Iraq anger inclined due to the injustice against Syrians. However, there was a very clear support to the Assad's government from Iran, Hezbollah, and Iraqi Shia militias further aggravate the sectarian nature of the Syrian conflict (as cited in Ford, 2015).

ISIS is the successor to Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) which was launched in 2004 that fought the U.S government during the American invasion in Iraq. AQI started losing its strength until Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi took control over it in 2010 according to Sprusansky (2014). He soon started sending funds to Syria for the sake of creating a group called Jabht al-Nusra or (the Nusra Front) in order to fight Assad's regime. Furthermore, in 2013, he decided to emerge AQI with Jabht al-Nusra to have a stronger organization (ISIS). However, Nusra leaders declined

Baghdadi's power because they were afraid of losing their power and control, but this did not stop some of its members to join ISIS, which quickly gained power, influence, and territory.

The Islamic State of Iraq and Al-Sham known as "ISIS", recently started calling themselves Islamic State "IS" from June 2014 till this day now (Bunzel, 2015: p.3). It started developing itself rapidly worldwide. According to the U.S. government some media outlets, still use the term "the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant" or ISIL, but most people in the Arab world use the term ISIS, as they substitute Levant with al-Sham (meaning Greater Syria). The aim of its establishment, according to their claims, is to create a religious authority in as many countries as possible. This group led by Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi is using atrocious techniques to expand its authority. Their ways to expand in numbers and spread their ideology is mainly through using new media to recruit fighters and intimidate others. Using social media became essential because "[w]ith so many technology options at one's disposal, sharing of information has become a seamless process." (Green, 2011).

The Funding of ISIS

It is not a hard question to ask "who funds this group?". However, it is hard and vague to answer it. There is a wide range of answers between scholars and researchers, where each puts his or her own analysis, however, answers to a certain extent intersect. To be able to answer this question, one must also know where the funding is being spent.

ISIS' expenses are considered the highest worldwide these days. According to Megeed's article *What keeps ISIS running: the funding and support of a terror organization* (2015), their expenses do not only include military equipments, but also training, safe houses, surveillance

equipments, roads, civilian bus services, food, technology (including media centers), salaries, rent and medical expenses to its members, and guarding against internal corruption.

Many political analysts see the funders of this group are from Saudi Arabia and Qatar regardless of the diverse differences in their political views. According to AlKhalid(2015), says that no doubt part of the funding Saudi and Qatar gave to the Syrian opposition army went naturally to this group. However, this indirect funding is only a small percentage of the whole funding. Moreover, according to the statistics published by the Western governments and media, ISIS is the richest group in the world. This means that this group does not rely only on the Saudi and Qatari funding.

To get a closer look at the funding, AlKhalid (2015) and Megeed (2015) see that their main support comes from the self-financing like paying ransom, spoils, energy (gas, electricity, oil, and petrol) and taxes. Paying ransom is through the Europeans who paid tens of millions of dollars in return of their hostages and detainees. Spoils is the main way for ISIS to guarantee their expansion in both Iraq and Syria. This was through expropriation and stealing many properties and selling them. Energy is considered the main funding for any country who owns it, thus, it is a strategic goal by any group. As reported by the U.S Treasury Department in 2014, an estimate of their revenue from oil ranged from 1$ to 2$ million per day. ISIS made sure from the first place to control the locations of oil plus the oil fields in Iraq. Finally, they are imposing strict taxes on citizens, charging for services like electricity, telephones, and even imported goods.

However, Megeed (2015) adds that one cannot ignore the great donations from the Gulf, primarily Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, and UAE. The donations as well as morally and

financially support to ISIS was mainly to fight against the regime of Assad. But there is no credible evidence that the Saudi government is financially supporting ISIS. Moreover, there are other countries like Turkey and the U.S. who want to get rid of the Syrian regime besides wanting to have power upon oil. Regardless researches that show American's effort to destroy ISIS, it is their advantage to have such a group, which explains the support they are putting but from under the table.

After reading several news websites, researches, and newspapers, I concluded that the main funding of ISIS comes internally, where it isself-funded, mainly through natural resources represented inoil. Their control on the largest oil wells in Iraq and Syria has generated an estimateof 1 to 2 million dollars ofrevenues per day from this source alone.

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Since we are living in aworld surrounded by media, it is necessary to find out howhas media portrayed women who play an essential role in wars, conflicts and extremist groups. I believe critical media theory is one of the closest theories tothis research because ofmedias big role in contributing to the social construction of gender concerning the participation of women in the social life, as well as in wars and extremist groups in specific. Therefore, in order to get a better understanding of the role of media in portraying women who join the extremist group, ISIS, this section examined: critical media theory, media construction of gender, as well as social construction of gender.

CNN and Al-Arabiya were two different channels that could to a certain extent represent the Western media and the Arab media respectively. TVs are considered as part of themass media which is accessible and inexpensive. Thus, this was the main reason behind me choosing TV channels to analyze rather than any other media types. Regardless of the popularity of social media and online news agenciesnowadays, TV has remained one of the most common media types that has a wide range of audience compared to any other type. Add to that, TV has had the ability to influence the audience and convince themof what was important and what was not according to what news channels see worth covering and what is not.

Before discussing the theories I used in my research, I must say that there has been many previous studies that were also concerned in women's representation in media. However, some of the previous studies that helped me in my research were the ones conducted by Egan (2007) and Eltantawy's (2007) studies. Regardless of the fact thatboth studies' analysis was concerning newspapers, their methodologies and theories helped me throughout this study. As I tackled

Egan's study in the below section "Women Involved in Wars and Conflicts". However, Eltantawi (2007) examined the U.S. newspapers' way of representing the Muslim-Arab women post 9/11. This was to understand how females were being portrayed relatively with religion, society, economy and politics, using discourse analysis. Nonetheless, Eltantawi concluded through postcolonial theory and Orientalism, that Muslim-Arab women were the stereotype of oppression, passiveness and ignorance.

Critical Media Theory

Media in general, and news media in specific decide what is seen as"reality" according to their own judgment. Many theorists discussed critical media theory, which differed from one theorist to another. Critical media theory is very broad, which has made it hard for me to know which theory is the most suitable one to use. However, through reading numerous previous studies, I concluded that critical media theory includes media constructionism and gender constructionism which I discuss later on below. Yet, first I discuss critical media theory according to Dobkin (1992), Mosco (1989), Hackett and Gruneau (2000), and Herman and Chomsky (2002). Later on, I go into details regarding the media construction of gender, and the social construction of gender. According to Dobkin (1992), news stories are constructed through re-ordering events in a way that the ethical importance of the stories could be judged. And as I mentioned before, news media decide what to cover and whatnot to cover through selecting certain stories and excluding others. Through their selectivity, they created stories and represented them to their audiences the way they saw best. Thus, because of the way each channel constructed and re-ordered events the way they desired, as well as due to media's control of covering what they saw was worth covering, I believe that critical media theory is one of the best theories to use in this study because it has led to an understandingof how the media selected

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information, as well as how each of thempresents it to the public and how they socially

constructgender.

Mosco (1989) illustrated that critical media theory could be divided into two ways: the

cultural studies approach and the political economy approach. The cultural studies approach

looked at the content and impact of media. It was also interested in connecting the media

production to wider ideologies. On the other hand, the political economy approach investigated

in who owned and controlled the media, the process of production, and distribution of the media,

as well as analyzing the relationship between mass media and other capitalist efforts.

In what ways did both CNN and Al-Arabiya cover the news of women joining ISIS?

Media often omitted unneeded news from their coverage, and highlighted the desired

ones in the way they wanted. Hackett and Gruneau (2000) talked about the skipped stories from

the Canadian press, and how newspapers decided what news to report. Ownership, advertisers,

sources, and individual self-censorship were explored in this research to understand how the

news was framed. In order for a news story to be framed, it should get past the imposed filters

that were decided by the director of the media. Institutional and economic pressured censor the

media, through imposing filters in the manufacturing of news. In their research, they focused

mostly on the influence of filters in producing the news. They argued that the organizational

censorship occurred because media companies did not want to challenge the values of the

dominant elites. News construction was a very complicated process where journalists were only

one part of it. Filters determined news content, and "divert[ed] the public from politics and

generated a political apathy that was helpful to preservation of the status quo" (Herman &

Chomsky, 2002). Thus, media content was constructed according to what the elite

decidedbecause they owned the sources and ads, and decided what they fill in the content of news. Another aspect Hackett and Gruneau (2000) highlightedas a blind spot was "engendering stereotypes"; it was where media considered women as victims unlike men, as well as not considering women a trusted source to get information from. I considered this important because both channels' coverage regarding the representation of women joining ISIS was in accordwith the channels' agendas and political background.

However, advertisements, self-censorship, ownership, and censorship are not necessarily the main reasons behind a media's way of broadcasting a certain story. Media can have intentions other than the previous four elements mentioned above. Media can and does construct news reports the way they see suitable according to the country's foreign policy, the opinion of a reporter, and even according to the news itself and the public opinion regarding the news they are broadcasting.

In what ways did CNN and Al-Arabiya's news stories differ in their content regarding women joining ISIS?

Hackett and Gruneau were not the only ones to discuss how media filtered and constructed news, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, by Herman and Chomsky (2002) likewise argued that the people who had power in society were the ones to determine what was worth broadcasting and what was not. Also, they mainly showed how media departed in representing the victims of the U.S. enemies and the ones who were victimized by the American military. Herman and Chomsky (2002) illustrated that victims of the United States' enemies received a wide range of coverage, as well as more angry coverage than the opposite side. American media succeeded in showing the people who were killed from their

side as victims, whereas the "others" were not victimized and unworthy. This gave me a sense of seeing if both channels' representation of women differed or similar in portraying women as victims or as perpetrators. Also, this took place according to the analysis of femininity and gender.

From which angle did both CNN and Al-Arabiya cover the news of same women who joined ISIS?

Furthermore, Hackett and Gruneau (2000) talked about "engendering stereotypes". It was when media barely covered the news of women, and if they did, women were usually examined more than covered the political and social forces that was centered around the news story. Also "their issues were considered 'soft news' including topics such as family, education, religion and sexuality. [Nevertheless], women in the news [were] portrayed more often than men as victims due to the difficulties involved in constructing men as victims" (as cited in Egan, 2007). However, my belief is that if men are victims, then the opposite not necessarily should be true. Previous research succeeded in showing that women could be perpetrators rather than victims.

Were women victimized in all news stories covered by CNN and Al-Arabiya?

From this point I wanted to discover whether women who join ISIS were included in CNN and Al-Arabiya 's coverage. This question became more important day after day while working on this topic, especially because both channels discarded ISIS and consideredit an extremist group and sometimes as terrorist. Moreover, I believed their portrayal to women was important because as Herman and Chomsky (2002) argued in their research that in the American news, anyone who was not from them was considered an "other", un-victimized, and against them. But, one would ask:

Is there a difference in CNN's coverage while portraying American women who left their beloved ones to join ISIS compared to other nationalities? And how did Al-Arabiya portray these women? and was there a difference between the two channels' coverage according to the women's nationality, or gender was the determining point in both channels' portrayal of these women?

Media Construction of Gender

There had been many studies not only regarding gender, but more specifically about media's role in constructing certain characteristics to females, and others to males. Agreeing with the critical framework of Hackett and Gruneau (2000) that focused on "engendered stereotypes",Wilcox (2005) mainly analyzed the gendered discourse in the news concerning violence, as well as she discussed how foreign media constructed the others, whether women or black. On the other hand, Meyers' study not only covered the way media portrayed women, but went further to investigate how the reporter of each news story covered it through looking at the process of writing or filming the chosen news story.

Wilcox (2005) analyzed the gendered and racialized discourse within news concerning violence and crime. She specifically focused on the ways media portrayed and constructed the other. Her research was mainly about the way media, British print media in particular, covered the news of two black women who were shot dead in 2003. The killers were anonymous, however assumed to be black, young, and gang members. Moreover, Wilcox argued how young girls and women were usually portrayed as victims through using both words "pure" and "innocent". Media used clarifying frameworks to find out women's deviance "in terms of the gender discourse of appropriate feminine behavior" (Wykes, 2001, as cited by Wilcox, 2005).

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Thus, she concluded that media reconfirmed the representation of women and femininity as victimization, and the black as uncivilized compared to the white norm. Wilcox's study was important to me in order to see to what extent women who join ISIS were victimized, as well as seeing how they were portrayed in both CNN and Al-Arabiya.

Moving to another angle of media's construction of gender, Meyers (1997) used her feminism view to talk about the news' representations against women. She used not only television to prove her point, but also supported her sample by including newspapers. What was interesting about her study was that she believed a report or story could not be understood without interviewing the journalists themselves who reported the stories because they were part of it, as well as interviewing the victims. One would ask - how could a journalist be a part of a story? The way a news story was constructed was always in the control of the journalist. What made Meyers' work interesting as well was her voice inside the research since she represented the study from a gendered lens and feministic. She concluded that the news stories of the female victims were usually reported within the context of family pathology, rather than the social construction reasons. Nevertheless, she added that news coverage had a tendency to divide female victims of male violence into two main kinds: innocent victims, and women who were guilty of inciting violence against them.

Did both media channels include interviews with the females joining ISIS or their families?

Social Construction of Gender

Social construction of gender emerged from the social constructionism which the general school of thought talked about. It basically considered whatever people know or see in life partially, if not entirely, is socially situated. Concerning gender theory and the social

construction of gender, Connell (1995; 2002) suggested that gender was relational, meaning that people lived gendered lives which changed through time and culture. Connell said that individuals could not enact gender, but rather gender performance was strongly restricted by social expectations (2002: 54). The expectations were structured and built through one's interactions which affect social structures. Moreover, one was an agent and an object at the same time according to Connell, so one practiced and performed his or her gender according to others and depending on how good they enacted this gender(West & Zimmerman, 1987). Therefore, one concluded that gender was socially constructed and embodied, as people performed certain behaviors unconsciously. On the other hand, social construction of gender resulted in multiple masculinities and femininities. The four forms of masculinities recognized by Connell (1995) were hegemonic, subordinate, complicit, and marginalized. Hegemonic masculinity, for example, was constructed through violence and aggression as a piece of the female domain. Also, hegemonic masculinity was manufactured, so that men embodied aggressive behavior which helped to perpetuate the structural belief that men were more aggressive than women(Connell, 1995; 2002; Kimmel, 2004; 2005, as cited in Egan, 2007).

Was women's participation in conflicts embodied as a masculinized act?

This literature regarding critical media theory, gender, and social constructionism was important to review because it helped in building up thisstudy through the analysis discussed in the upcoming chapters. Also, media's role in constructing gender was important because the subject was looked at through a gendered lens. Therefore, Iwas building upon all previous theories to find out, see, and analyze how both channels I had chosen represent and cover women's news who joined ISIS.

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Women Involved in Wars and Conflicts

On one hand, women being portrayed as victims was mostly according to how media's attention was on them. Some media also victimizedsuch women only due to their gender. However, as time passed, women's behaviorchanged, many women started taking part in wars and conflicts. Some started going to the battlefield and fighting, others got themselves involved only through joining extremist groups. In this section I particularly discussed how women who had been joining extremist groups were being represented in media.

Most of who were usually portrayed in news coverage as victims of wars were women, children and elderly. However, gradually more stories floated on the surface regarding different categories joining the fight with the extremist groups. My study focused mainly on women. Egan (2007) talked in her research how not only men were the ones to join extremist groups or what she called "terrorism", but women did as well. She used the gender theory and the critical media theory, and the methodology of discourse analysis to explore how the women involved in terrorism were represented by the print media. She chose four English newspapers; *The London Times, The Daily Telegraph, The Globe and Mail*, and *The New York Times*. Her findings proposed that these women were "constructed as deviant through the media's use of language associated with femininity and masculinity." (Egan, 2007). For instance, stereotypical feminine qualities, women's clothing, and even appearances had taken part by the media. And finally, media racialized these women according to their ethnicity, race and religion.

Moreover, historically speaking, women have always been less involved in extremist groups than men. In the United States for example, and according to Corley, Smith, and Damphousse's study (2004) which compared demographic data for domestic and international

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terrorists indicted in the 1980s and 1990s had resulted the following: All kinds of "terrorist" groups included less female members than male members. In the 1980s only 6% of right-wing members were female, and 94% were male. As well as the left-wing members, 33% were women, and 67% were men. On the other hand, in the 1990s, the percentage of female members in the right-wing doubled to 12% female members, and 88% male members. However, the female participation in left-wing members declined from 33% to only 11%. This showed that right-wing groups might had worked on recruiting women, the time left-wing groups were losing their female members. Corley, et al. (2004) noticed that the percentage of the participation of females was low in international terrorist groups was related with the ideological beliefs of these groups. But, international organizations seem to be using new methods to recruit women, which might increase their numbers for those who are involved in the U.S. However, I did not concentrate on whether women's participation in extremist groups had increased over time or not, but taking a look into women's participation in extremist groups, through highlighting women's religion, race/ethnicity, and nationality. This gave me an indicator regarding the reasons behind each channel's ways of coverage and representation of women joining ISIS.

Middle Eastern and Western women's representation in Extremist Groups

While looking at previous research regarding women's participation in extremist groups and terrorism, as expected, I found women's representation in media differed according to nationality. Egan (2007) found out that the term "others" had been used, in the four analyzed newspapers, to refer to individuals who were not Western, not white, and not males. Moreover, "others" was used to refer to Muslims, the uncivilized ones, and the people coming from the East to the West. The "others" were always portrayed and represented in media as "evil terrorists"; meanwhile, the "self" according to the structured "others" were represented as victims of

terrorism. Also, in some of the articles in the newspapers, terrorists were described as Middle Eastern, male, and Muslim, while ignoring the possibility of referring to Westerners, women, and non-Islamic individuals as terrorists. Nonetheless, women who supported terrorism were usually dragged by their partner's actions "their fiancés or husbands who [were] terrorists" because they were blinded by love (CNN, 03 April 2015).

Egan (2007) also illustrated how some articles suggested that Westerners were victims of terrorism performed by Muslims, as well as how Muslim women were in need to be protected by men. This showed to what extent and till nowadays how women were always being portrayed, represented, treated, and considered the weaker gender, always in need for help, and could not be responsible for themselves.

Moreover, individuals who participated in terrorism were not only divided by media according to religion and culture, but also according to race and ethnicity. Egan's findings showed how when the ethnicity was from the "others" it would be specified unlike when the individual was "Westerner". The themes suggested that whoever was not a Westerner nor white he or she was considered a terrorist. Therefore, as it was shown in *The London Times*, the geographic region and the culture of a newspaper also played a role in who/what was selected to be portrayed. And this showed how important ethnicity and race became after 9/11.

Women Countering ISIS

From a different angle, ever since ISIS came to exist, hundreds and thousands of men had been joining, simultaneously, youth and men had been against it, therefore, put effort to stop it from expanding. Likewise, with time joining this extremist group was not exclusive to men, but also to women. Therefore, women were being recruited from different countries to counterstrike

ISIS. Such actions had been expanding day after day. And what was surprising was the participation of women from different Arab countries such as Jordanian, Emirate, and Kurdish women had also taken action through making battles against ISIS. Many media channels had covered such news, as well as made news stories and reports.

CNN and Al-Arabiya had broadcasted many reports concerning women , with increasing numbers, had recently joining their countries' armies to fight ISIS. Through looking first at CNN's reports, most of them were through interviewing women who were fighting ISIS. One of the news stories mentioned how it was surprising to find*women* wearing the army uniform, carrying weapons, and fighting. This showed how categorizing gender still existed and stereotyping was still there. This also played upon the stereotyping of *women* and *men*; where men were the expected gender to be fighting no matter where, when, and against who, and it was very unexpected to find the other gender, *women*, holding weapons and fight. As if women were only supposed to remain in the traditional jobs and their existencewere only in soft careers, while wearing the uniform, carryingweapons, and fighting was only exclusive to men. On the other hand, the tone of the reporters and correspondents were not only surprised, but also positive comparing to the negative tone used in discussing the women who joined ISIS.

To conclude, women fighting against ISIS were not structured as deviant to the same level as those joining ISIS. Yet, I did not wish to go in details regarding women countering ISIS because not their portrayals nor the coverage of their news helped to answer my main questions I listed in this research.

CNN and Al-Arabiya

CNN

CNN stood for The News Cable Network which was first launched by Ted Turner in 1980 in Atlanta. Sometimes CNN is referred to it as CNN/U.S to distinguish it from CNN international. It soon gained its reputation due to its international news coverage, as well as its 24 hour news. It broadcasted not only on TV, but also online through their online website (CNN.com). According to Alexa, -the web traffic data company- CNN was ranked 81 among the highest-visited websites worldwide, and 24 among the highest-visited websites in the United States.

Shomaker (1996) demonstrated that due to CNN's immediate transmission of news from around the globe, it became one of the most popular media to be relied on by whoever seek to stay updated with the breaking news. Moreover, many scholarly studies had stated the channel's power and influence on foreign policy. Through CNN's coverage of the gulf war in 1991, it succeeded in becoming the "eyes and ears of the world" according to Miladi (2003, 149).

Thus, due to CNN;s popularity and great accomplishment as a news source, its reports were selected for analysis in this study as a representative of Western media.

Al-Arabiya

Al-Arabiya (Arabic for the "The Arabic One" was one of the most two famous pan-Arab news channels headquartered in Dubai. It began broadcasting as a 24-hour satellite news channel, challenging the domination of Al-Jazeera. It had been "consistently rated among the top pan-Arab stations by Middle East audiences" (Feuilherade, 2003). It was launched on March,

2003 with the Middle East Broadcasting (MBC) group. This group was owned by the brother-in-law of the late Saudi KingFahed, the Saudi businessman Sheikh Waleed AlIbraheem. As soon as Al-Arabiya was launched, it became very popular because its establishment started with covering the news of the Iraq war. Moreover, according to the web traffic data company Alexa, Al-Arabiya was ranked 1514 among the visited websites internationally, and 51 in Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, I would like to mention that I was planning to do my research about CNN and Al-Jazeera, but I substituted Al-Jazeera with Al-Arabiya for many reasons. First, I was not able to attain Al-Jazeera's reports concerning women joining ISIS comparing with Al-Arabiya. Second, both Al-Arabiya and Al-Jazeera were the most two famous pan-Arab that were watched by the Arab audience. Yet, most of the research one could find was concerning Al-Jazeera, meanwhile one could find little research concerning Al-Arabiya. And finally, according to Hammond (2007), Al-Arabiya channel was "more balanced" in its political news coverage than its competitor Al-Jazeera. I believe that their coverage is more balanced than Al-Jazeera regarding the worldwide news, where Al-Jazeera covers the news according to Qatar's foreign policy, whereas Al-Arabiya's coverage is not to that extent; according to Saudi Arabiya's foreign policy.

Thus, due to Al-Arabiya's popularity and great accomplishment as a news source, its reports were selected for analysis in this study as a representative of pan-Arab media.

Methodology

The project covered not only extremist groups, but also media and gender. I used the qualitative analysis since this proposal sought to see media's representation of women who join ISIS. Discourse and content analysis took place particularly in this project. And because media played an essential role in structuring women's image, I examined the content which was constructed by the media about women who left their home to join ISIS.

Content & Discourse Analysis

According to Babbie & Benaquisto (2002), content analysis could be conducted both qualitatively and quantitatively through coding the recorded human communications, and it's main methods werethrough looking at the repetition of certain words and terms. Moreover, discourse analysis also analyzed texts and communications, but took into consideration the perspective and reference of the makers (the media in this case) (Altheide & Michalowski, 1999; Altheide, 2002). Therefore, I wanted to conduct this paper using discourse analysis in order to comprehend how the social world was structured and formed, and finding out the relationship between discourse and women's real behavior.

Discourse according to Phillips & Hardy (2002) is "an interrelated sets of texts, and the practices of their production, dissemination, and reception, that brought an object into being". Also, it gave me the facility to comprehend the significance of the interconnectedness of texts, how meaningful texts were being structured in details, as well as how texts in return help in the construction of society. The way I analyzed the reports were through using discourses and texts that were connected to each other, and existed in the historical and social contexts (Phillips & Hardy, 2002).

My project included analyzing many reports on the two channels, CNN and Al-Arabiya, to understand how gender was structured and taken-for-granted, based on the fundamental assumptions that "bodies of text" embodied and produced discourse (Phillips & Hardy, 2002. As cited in Eagan, 2007). Thus, to examine how women who join ISIS were portrayed in the media, I used what Phillip and Hardy referred to, as a "social linguistic analysis"-which was the study of the relation between language and society- where my concentration was on the texts, and how they engaged in the social construction of gender (2002). I utilized the sociolinguistic analysisthrough listening to the texts (of the reports) very closely for the sake of gaining insight into how texts were used to construct phenomena (Phillip & Hardy, 2002).

I was mainly concerned with the media representations and how the texts socially constructed females who join this extremist group. Thus, my goal was to figure out the diversity meanings allocated in the texts through focusing on the reports themselves and the content of reports in specific to show these meanings. Therefore, I used discourse analysis to study media's construction of the women who join ISIS. Nonetheless, I should mention that Egan's study (2007) helped me through my research in analyzing and concluding my findings, since she analyzed women's involvement in terrorism in media.

Content analysis is not only restricted on analyzing texts, but it is a multipurpose research method that also can be used to analyze recorded communication, including movies, TV news reports, and videos. Content analysis is "any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages (Holtsi, 1969). At first, I did not wish to analyze the visuality of the news reports, however, concentrate on the text and voiceovers only. Later on, I found out that I was not able to disregard the visuality of the news reports because "videos not only convey the content of the situation, but also gestures, body

language and the tone of the voice, which is crucial for doing any valid analysis [...] Video analysis covers how people communicate face-to-face aside from the spoken words themselves which cannot be accomplished by textual documents" (Gradlyan & Baghdasaryan, 2013). Therefore, I decided to include a visual content analysis of some news reports that were broadcasted on both Al-Arabiya and CNN channels.

The process of analyzing videos goes into four steps which are: collecting and sampling of videos, defining criteria of analysis, watching and analyzing videos, and consolidating the results. Since the first step requires one to choose a sample if the videos were more than twenty. Therefore, I chose to analyze a certain section of my thesis which is "Repetition Of Information" (See page 95). The reason behind me choosing this part is because it mainly includes most of the other sections, like Gender Profiling, Women's Descriptions, and Reasons behind Women's Involvement in ISIS. However, the section "Repetition Of Information" includes more information, since it mainly highlights the repetitive data regarding women's participation in ISIS. The second step is defining the criteria for the video analysis. The criteria here is seeing the opinions included in the reports as well as femininity the news reports focused on. Third stage comes the analyzing, taking into consideration the body language and their tone of the voice. Last step is where I consolidate the results.

Population and Sampling

As for the sampling technique, I collected data via place and time. This was through depending on Altheide's (2002) discourse tracking, which was a comparative and historical method. I looked for keywords and tracked them across topics and time, because according to Altheide (2002) they "emerge[ed] as powerful symbols that in turn guide individuals-as-

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audience-members to extend these symbols across arenas of experience in the quest for meaning". This way led me to get information from the past until the present, because the news was being mapped according to topics and timing which helped me study how media represents certain overarching themes. Therefore, in order to find out how women who join ISIS were portrayed and represented in media, I chose to examine one foreign TV channel- CNN, and a pan-Arab media channel- Al-Arabiya.

Thus, in order to test the hypothesis and answer the research questions above, content analysis and discourse analysis were conducted on news stories published on the CNN YouTube channel, and Al-Arabiya YouTube channel. Both channels uploaded their news stories constantly after they were broadcasted on TV. The reports that were chosen were from the time ISIS started recruiting women and the two channels started covering their news till the 10th of February, 2016. This date was selected because it was the last date for me to search for videos on both CNN and Al-Arabiya YouTube channel concerning women joining ISIS, before starting the analysis.

Since the reports I analyzed were from the two channels CNN and Al-Arabiya, I contacted Al Arabiya channel to get their reports through visiting their office in Ramallah-Palestine. However, they told me the best type to analyze were the news stories and not any certain program, and to depend on their YouTube channel since everything was uploaded there. Therefore, this led me to retrieve all reports from the Al-Arabiya's YouTube channel, and check CNN's YouTube channel to find out that all their news stories were uploaded on their YouTube channel as well.

However, regardless me choosing to analyze the news reports from the TV channels, however, I depended on retrieving them from social media, their YouTube channels in specific. The reason behind that is due to the great database one is able to attain from the internet, since social media is considered a base for interaction between users. Users who are people from worldwide gather on social media to share their thoughts, but some use it for sharing news. Nonetheless, some of these users are news agencies, newspapers, and TV channels that update their Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube channels accounts with their news to stay up-to-date with the technology. Also, their usage of social media is to increase their interaction with the audience who does not only rely on traditional media like before. Their updates, with all the news that are shared on their 'traditional media', started being uploaded on social media. And since whatever is shared on the internet stays saved, one is able to go back in days and find whatever he/she wants very easily. This is unlike the traditional media platforms that makes it hard for one, researchers in specific, find the desired data for analysis, but makes one in need to go to the office of the required traditional media and require the needed data. Nonetheless, some media do not allow one to retrieve his/her desired data, or having to go to the main office in another country. And this is what happened with me when I went to one of the news channels' office requiring information, where they told me to depend on their YouTube channel to find the required records. Therefore, regardless me choosing TV news reports, yet I depended on the TV's YouTube channels to achieve the required information I needed for my analysis.

The primary search words differed in language between the CNN and Al-Arabiya channels, as for the CNN, I mainly used the English search engine searching for "women and ISIS", as well as using different forms of these terms, like "woman and ISIS", "women and join and ISIS", "females and ISIS", "female and ISIS", and "girls and ISIS". Meanwhile, I used Al-

Arabiya YouTube Channel's search engine using the same terms but in Arabic: "" ,النساء وداعش

.داعش"" and ""المرأة وداعش, ""الفتيات وداعش, "الإناث وداعش", ""داعش وتجنيد ونساء, ""الانضمام وداعش,

Thousands of videos were found under the name ISIS. Thus, this led me to search precisely for women and ISIS, excluded the unrelated ones, and included the related ones. Later on, I made different sections in my YouTube library, which were my concern for analysis. "CNN and ISIS women", and "Al Arabiya and ISIS women".

The news stories were organized according to the dates they were published, from August 2014 till February 2016. The population consisted overall of 41 online news stories, and the news reports on CNN and Al-Arabiya concerning women, girls, and teens joining ISIS were divided as the following: 26 stories from CNN and 15 stories from Al-Arabiya. Therefore, I decided to analyze them all in order to have a better image of the way media represented women joining extremist groups, ISIS in this case.

Data Analysis

My goal was mainly to understand the themes and discourses put into view by TV channels regarding women who joined the extremist group, ISIS. In order to accomplish this, I analyzed the codes concerning women in ISIS based on time (i.e. months) and subtopics. I highlighted how the subtopics related to female's representation appeared in the news stories, in specific, female's nationality, race/ethnicity and how they performed their activities (e.g. using guns, suicide bombings, used of any other sort of weapon). Codes were connected to the data in order to identify and reorder data so that the articles were broken up into pieces but also expanded on and teased out, developing new questions and levels of interpretation, as coding data allowed me to see and think about the data in new ways (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Later

on, the codes were analyzed based on the news reports and the theoretical ideas of media, gender, extremist groups, and subsequently put into six themes. The themes were drawn in connection with gender stereotypes (masculinity and femininity), along with ISIS, and how that corresponded to gender representation. Neither the previous codes, nor the consequential themes (gendering, joining ISIS, Victims, Perpetrators, suicide bombers, and terrorist/terrorism) were mutually selected in each and every report; but they overlapped making pathways through the news stories (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). While analyzing, I looked for the regularities and patterns, as well as contrasts within the reports; and these findings were discussed in the upcoming chapters.

Validity of Data

The technique I was using here was discourse analysis by generating data in accordance to tracking discourse to decide how both channels portray women joining ISIS, especially regarding gender stereotypes. And according to Mason, a research was valid if "you [were] 'measuring', or explaining, what you claim[ed] to be measuring and explaining" (2002, 188). This was decided through the validity of interpretation and validity of data generation methods (Egan, 2007, 53). By discovering how both channels portray women joining ISIS across time and place, the comparative models of data production increased validity.

Nonetheless, since the methods I was using were supposed to be linked to the research questions, I illustrated the linkage between them both. Discourse analysis showed the different meanings in texts and by utilizing discourse tracking, I was able to map such meanings across time and place. Hence, I was able to answer my research questions concerning CNN and Al-Arabiya's portrayal of women joining ISIS. The two channels I observed allowed me to analyze

the media's representation of women participating in ISIS in the United States and the Arab region. Moreover, discourse analysis allowed me to analyze the formats* and frames** used by the two channels to decide the emerging sub(topics) and themes. Even though I displayed a quantitative table showing frequencies, my analysis was largely qualitative based on the literature review and theoretical framework mentioned above regarding gender, critical media theory, and media construction of gender.

* Formats are how information was selected, organized, and presented in the media (Altheide & Michalowski, 1999).

** As defined in the literature review, framed focused on what the media discussed, how it was discussed and what was not discussed (Altheide & Michalowski, 1999)

Findings

After analyzing both CNN and Al-Arabiya's news reports, many results were concluded. But before listing the quantitative analysis' results, I shall put into details the ways I reached these final results. Since the news reports talked about the girls and structured them either as victims or perpetrators, there were more details within these two sections. This led me put divisions either as perpetrators alone because videos tackled the stories of these women as terrorists only and violent girls, or as brainwashed. The brainwashed women's section included four sub-divisions which were: brainwashed victims, brainwashed arrested, brainwashed perpetrators, and brainwashed alone without specifying any of the previous descriptions.

In the four sections that were included in the brainwashed section, the brainwashed victims were put to refer to the ones who were attracted, used, and forced to join the group the time they had a "normal" life before being a target to ISIS. Whereas, brainwashed perpetrators were the ones who were living also a "decent" life until they were lured by ISIS and terrorism, as well as taking action in extremism or terrorism. This led the two channels describe them as perpetrators at first, however soon mentioned how they were not extremists, but ISIS "played in their minds" which resulted them make "stupid" acts. Meanwhile, brainwashed arrested women were the ones who used to live in Western countries and a target to the extremist group, but while travelling to the Islamic State they were arrested. Therefore, they were not able to join ISIS,yet the news reports did not mention if they were victims or perpetrators. Moreover, one was not able to conclude this from the content of the news reports. One example was when CNN mentioned how a girl was arrested on her way to Syria, but was not charged with anything, and no one knows if she will be charged with anything, and no one also knows if she will even be charged in the future or not (CNN, 16 March 2015).

Since CNN portrayed Western (American, European, and Canadian) women who only joined ISIS, I analyzed their representations directly to either perpetrators or brainwashed (including victims, arrested, perpetrators, or unspecified (brainwashed alone)) without dividing them into Westerners and Arabs, since all videos were about Westerners. Meanwhile, Al-Arabiya's reports included Westerners and Arab women joining ISIS. Therefore, I analyzed them according to the two major sections, as well as a sub-division, plus specifying if there was a difference between Arab women and Westerners' portrayal on this channel.

I did not expect such results through the analysis of both channels' portrayal of these women who joined ISIS. And results were as the following:

Brainwashed victims took the majority representation on both channels. CNN's representation of "brainwashed victims" was 32%, while Al-Arabiya's representation of "brainwashed victims" was 48% which was the highest as well(36% Westerners and 12% Arabs).

Also, "brainwashed arrested" women on CNN was 21%, meanwhile 4% only for Arab women (and 0% Westerners) on Al-Arabiya. "Brainwashed perpetrators" took place 18% on CNN, while on Al-Arabiya 12% were only Arabs (and 0% Westerners). On the other hand, "brainwashed only women without specifying" if they were victims or perpetrators on CNN was 16%, while on Al-Arabiya 24%, (Arab women 8% and Westerners 16%). Finally, "perpetrators" without including any other information on CNN was 13% which was close to Al-Arabiya's which was 12% (See Appendix B).

I concluded from those results that the majority of these women's ways of representation on CNN were "brainwashed victims", while the least was portraying them as "perpetrators".

However, Al-Arabiya's majority of portraying these women were mostly for Westerners as "brainwashed victims". While the least was zero percent (0%) in portraying Western women as "perpetrators".

Conclusion

There has been many previous studies concerning media's portrayal of women's participation in extremism. However, the existing studies were relatively new but did not provide a comparative framework between countries and over years (e.g., Nacos, 2005; Brunner, 2005, as cited in Egan 2007). Nonetheless, since ISIS was one of the newest extremist groups to show up, there had been neither studies regarding women's participation in it, nor comparative studies between Western and Arab news channels regarding women's participation in ISIS specifically. Therefore, in this thesis, I made an analysis on how both CNN and Al-Arabiya portrayed women joining ISIS, from a gendered lens. The results that were accomplished talked about how the 41 news reports from CNN and Al-Arabiya news channels represented females as gendered, brainwashed, and racialized. Therefore, using discourse tracking, which Althiede (2002) discussed, was important since it helped me come across the news reports which were analyzed using content and discourse analysis. The main research questions I put were developed based on previous studies and theories (literature review and theoretical framework) regarding extremism, gender, and media. Also, my theoretical framework was based on critical theory includingthe constructionism of gender. Therefore, I attempted to develop a wide understanding regarding media's construction of women who joined the extremist group, ISIS. My analysis did not only investigate if women were portrayed as victims or perpetrators, however, it looked beyond that. It was also a gendered analysis through looking at media's ways of portraying females in a gendered feminine way regardless their vicious acts.

The findings suggested that women who tried joining or joined ISIS were depicted as feminine by both CNN and Al-Arabiya news channels' framing. Nevertheless, the two news channels portrayed these women most of the times as brainwashed. Also, CNN's portrayal of extremist Westerners was through depicting them whether they were arrested or not; if they were arrested before fleeing to Syria, they were depicted mostly as perpetrators, meanwhile if they joined ISIS in Syria already, they were depicted frequently as victims. Meanwhile, as unexpected, Al-Arabiya's coverage differed according to women's ethnicity. Women from the West were frequently portrayed as brainwashed victims, while Arabs were depicted as perpetrators. Through analyzing these two news channels from different regions and across time, I believe the study provided a wider understanding to content and discourse analysis. Finally, I found that both channels broadcasted what each saw was important and central to their countries according to the time and topic.

On the other hand, returning to the sub-questions then the main questions, I listed below all the questions and have themanswered subsequently:

1) In what ways did CNN and Al-Arabiya's news stories differ in the content regarding women joining ISIS?

After analyzing both channels' news reports, I noticed the difference between each coverage regarding these females who joined ISIS. CNN's news reports mainly focused on bringing feature stories of these women, with many repetition of same girls who fled to Syria, as well as focusing on how these girls were the victims of terrorism especially how their gender was abused by the extremist group to lure them in joining the Islamic State. Also, in most of CNN's reports, an interview was conducted either with the family of a girl who fled to Syria, or with an

analyst, or lawyer of girls whom parents put to try bringing their girl back, or even a footage of a minister from Europe saying how these girls will end up being sex slaves. Meanwhile, Al-Arabiya's reports mainly focused on the girls from a different angle, through discussing the reasons behind women's participation in ISIS, or the role of such women in ISIS, or the repetition in news reports on the salaries these women earn. Also, most of the footages broadcasted on Al-Arabiya were repeated not only in same report, but in most of the reports as well. On the other hand, Al-Arabiya's reports barely included interviews with analysts, but from the fifteen reports broadcasted, only one video included an interview with an analyst from Barcelona, Spain.

This showed how both channels' interest in the way covering women's joining ISIS differ, according to what each news channel considered important to themselves. And this is what the literature review also showed, when Dobkin (1992) said that the media included certain stories, broadcasted them from their desired angles, as well asdisposed the news the way they coveted. However, both channels still portrayed the participation of these girls from a gendered lens, where they took part in secondary jobs, as well as portrayed them in a feminine way as weak, powerless, and emotional. This emphasized on victims being feminized whereas violence remained masculinized.

Nonetheless, the manner both channels portrayed women's participation in ISIS was through the two approaches that Mosco (1989) discussed, the cultural as well as the political economy approach, where the first looked at the content and the impact of the media. Meanwhile the political economy approach looked at who owned the media, controlled it, process of production, and the distribution of media. The cultural approach was through the way CNN and Al-Arabiya portrayed women in a feminine way as well as most of the times depicting them as

brainwashed. Meanwhile, the political economy approach was through portraying the extremist group as a terrorist group since this group was against the channels' agendas. And each channels' agendas were according to the counties they represent, whether the United States, or Saudi Arabiya. Nevertheless, the channels decided to show whether the females were perpetrators or brainwashed (victims, perpetrators, arrested, unspecified) according to their nationalities, their actions in the group, and their backgrounds.

2) From which angle did both CNN and Al-Arabiya cover the news of same women who joined ISIS?

Both channels' coverage had some similarities as well as differences. However, both media mainly structured such women's involvement in ISIS from a gendered lens. After the analysis of twenty six news reports from CNN and fifteen news reports from Al-Arabiya, I was able in a way to conclude how news reports structured gender to the audience. Hackett and Gruneau (2000) discussed how media used frames to chose what to be discussed and how, and this came after making filters, decided by sources and owners. Therefore, previous research on the way media portrayed women in extremist groups were represented through stereotypes and feminine ways. Nonetheless, CNN and Al-Arabiya also took place in stereotyping women involved in extremist groups and terrorism in a gendered way, as weak, emotional and powerless.

On the other hand, Herman and Chomsky (2002) talked in their previous research on how the people who had the power in society determine what to broadcast and how, therefore in the American media's coverage of the wars the United States got involved in, Americans were victimized, meanwhile their enemies were portrayed as the "others" as well as unworthy. This

drew upon CNN's coverage of the girls who joined ISIS, where they mainly broadcasted the news of Western women joining ISIS. However, CNN ignored broadcasting any news or feature stories concerning women from the Arab world joining this extremist group. This illustrated that regardless the presence of information concerning Arab girls joining the extremist group, yet the media, CNN in this case, insisted on ignoring broadcasting any news regarding them. Meanwhile, girls from different countries worldwide took space in Al-Arabiya's channel, where they portrayed both Arab and Westerner women joining ISIS.

Nevertheless, both channels' coverage of Western and Arab women's involvement in ISIS were portrayed as victims and perpetrators. Though, both channels highest percentage of the representation of women's involvement in ISIS was as brainwashed victims, were CNN's coverage of such description was 32%, and Al-Arabiya's 48% (12% Arab women and 36% Westerners) (See Appendix B). If this was to illustrate something, it was how media's representation of women involved in extremism and terrorism was most of the time gendered and media framed gender according to their agendas and needs. Also, both channels' portrayal of such women drew upon the social construction of gender.

3) Were women victimized in all news stories covered by CNN and Al-Arabiya?

Not all women were portrayed as victims in both channels, however the largest portion of the two channels' coverage was as victims, which came under the section "brainwashed victims". Nonetheless, the women who joined the extremist group were mostly examined rather than the news covered the political and social forces that was centered around the news stories. This was what Hackett and Gruneau (2000) tackled while discussing "engendering stereotypes". The coverage of such women's stories mostly started through describing the social status of these

women, how some of these women were wives, mothers, and sisters, as well as their educational status. In Al-Arabiya's portrayal of these women, they also included how some of them joined the group only for salaries, through working as secondary jobs compared to men. While some of CNN's portrayal took place in using a tone of threat to scare other women from joining extremism in the future, like saying how such women's involvement in ISIS was as prostitutes and sex slaves. Thus, engendering stereotypes not also existed in old media's coverage of women, but existed in nowadays' media as well.

4) Was there a difference in CNN's coverage while portraying American women who left their beloved ones to join ISIS compared to other nationalities? And how did Al-Arabiya portray these women? Nonetheless, was there a difference between the two channels' coverage according to the women's nationality?

Herman and Chomsky (2002) discussed the American news' coverage regarding people getting killed in wars. They mentioned how whoever was not from them "Americans" was considered an "other", as well as un-victimized and against them. But when looking at the media's coverage concerning ISIS and women joining ISIS, it was a little different. First, concerning CNN, the United States considered the extremist group, ISIS, a terrorist group, therefore, against them and whoever died there from men were perpetrators, not victims, and others. Second, while analyzing the channel's news reports, I only made two sections, either Arab women, or Western women which involved women from the United States, Europe and Canada, however, in this question I specified Western women as American and Europeans & Canadian. American women portrayed as brainwashed perpetrators were twice portrayed as brainwashed victim, 8% was the percentage of portraying these women as brainwashed victims, while 16% portrayed as brainwashed perpetrators. However, 24% was the percentage of

portraying Western women as brainwashed victims, but 3% as brainwashed perpetrators. Such results illustrated that there had been a small change in American media's coverage regarding Americans because American women were portrayed as brainwashed perpetrators more than represented as brainwashed victims. Nonetheless, American brainwashed arrested took portion of 12%, meanwhile 8% for the Western brainwashed arrested. Also, Americans were never represented as brainwashed alone, the time Westerners were represented this way with a percentage of 16%. Lastly, the percentage of American and Western women portrayed as perpetrators were close to each other, where American perpetrators was 5%, and Westerners 8%.However, I was not able to make conclusions regarding that because American media, CNN in specific, was against ISIS which might be a reason behind portraying American women in such ways. Also, such conclusions might be due to the media's ways in trying to make a point and deliver a message to the rest of the American women not to join such a group since it is a terrorist one.

Meanwhile, looking at Al-Arabiya's portrayal of these women, one should take into consideration that Al-Arabiya is an Arab channel which might play a role in the way they frame the news of these women to the audience according to their nationality. However, surprising results were concluded, where Arab women were represented as brainwashed victims 12%, meanwhile Western brainwashed victims 36%. Also, Arab brainwashed arrested was 4%, the time Western brainwashed arrested did not take portion in Al-Arabiya's news. Same thing with brainwashed perpetrators, where Arabs took percentage of 12%, the time Westerners being arrested was never mentioned on Al-Arabiya channel. However, Arab brainwashed alone, without specifying, was 8%, and Western brainwashed was the double (16%). Finally, in the other section which was perpetrators alone, Arabs were depicted as so 12% the time Westerners

were never shown on Al-Arabiya channels as perpetrators only. This showed how Al-Arabiya considered Western women victims much more than considering Arab women as victims, and Arab women as perpetrators much more than Westerners who did not take any space in Al-Arabiya's coverage. Therefore, regardless Al-Arabiya's background and the unexpected results, yet such conclusions might hadtaken place only due to not wanting to make an image to whoever Arab women wanting to join ISIS, they would end up being represented as perpetrators rather than victims.

5) Did both media channels include interviews with the females involved with ISIS or their families?

Not both media channels included interviews with the girls or the families of the girls who joined or wanted to join ISIS. However, CNN only included interviews with either girls wanting to join the group, or with the families of the girls who had already fled to Syria. On the contrary, Al-Arabiya did not include interviews with neither the girls nor their families. According to Meyer (1997), a news story could not be understood without interviewing the journalist who interviewed whoever the news story was about. And one was able to see through CNN's news reports how there were interviews conducted by reporters with the families of girls who fled to Syria, then the correspondents made interviews with the reporters to ask them for more details and shed light on different angles in between the news reports.

6) Were women's participation in conflicts embodied as a masculinized act?

My literature review that tackled gender, media, and extremism helped me in my analysis. And mainly, I relied on gender theory which mentioned how people act their gender according to the social expectations as well as according to the interaction between the two

genders that was structured by society (Connell, 2002). The expectations of performance were based on the differences between genders and the gendered stereotypes due to each gender's reproductive capabilities like men were violent and women were emotional (Connell, 2002; Lorber, 2005; Nordstorm, 2005; Peters, 2002; as cited in Egan, 2007). Moreover, gender theory proposed that people actively represented gender, as well as how gender was socially constructed. Therefore, my findings illustrated that both media channels usually portrayed women in the same gendered way.

On the other hand, portraying women in a gendered way took place not only as victims, but also as perpetrators. The portrayal of such women as feminine still existed in the news reports on both channels. The mentioning of the females' gender in news reports was widely discussed and specified which illustrated the phenomena that only men were the ones to usually get involved in terrorism and extremism. Nonetheless, specifying the gender of the females who joined ISIS, structured a stereotype on how it was deviant to see females involved in extremism. This exemplified as if participating in extremism and terrorism was only exclusive to the male gender. Also, violence in wars and extremist groups was constructed as masculine including hegemonic masculinity, which Connell (2002) and Lorber (2005) tackled in their studies that I already discussed in my literature review and theoretical framework. Meaning that when a male was involved in ISIS, his gender was not specified unlike when talking about females' participation in ISIS. Therefore, the reason behind such representations was due to the way women were structured, which was through the way societies structure the gender expectations.

Discussion/ Conclusion

In this chapter I answered my main research questions which was through discussing the findings I achieved. Starting with the first question if (and how) there were any stereotypical gender characteristics in CNN and Al-Arabiya channels concerning women's participation in ISIS. First, I led the discussion to know how the news reports talked about women who tried joining ISIS or joined it, as women or young girls. Second, I elaborated on how the media structured women involved in this group as gendered, and in relation to stereotypes and the gender expectations. Then, I continued answering the following questions, whether women were portrayed as feminine or as masculine due to their participation in violence. Finally, I discussed the similarities and differences between the two channels' coverage regarding women's participation in ISIS.

Gender Profiling

CNN channel's 26 news reports finding specified the terrorist and perpetrator's sex. Yet, this profiling was only used when the perpetrator was a woman, like female suicide bomber for example. But also, when they mentioned suicide bomber or even terrorist, one assumed that the suspect was a man. This showed how the stereotyping of perpetrators were usually men, whereas violence and terrorism were structured as masculine, (Connell, 2002; Lorber, 2005; Nordstorm, 2005; Peters, 2002) which went along with what I wrote in the theoretical framework and literature review. On the opposite, since one did not expect a female to be a perpetrator, "gender" was mentioned to refer to her.

There had been many examples regarding profiling the perpetrators' gender broadcasted on news reports on CNN suggesting that people joining extremist groups and participating in

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terrorism was portrayed as masculine. And when one committed such acts, it became essential to mention the perpetrator's gender. As previously discussed, this showed how the media's representation of women involved in extremism were portrayed as victims, compared to the men involved in terrorism and extremism, who were the enemy of the West (Hackett & Gruneau, 2000; Herman & Chomsky, 2002). And below I listed the examples then analyzed them consequently:

"Another breaking news to tell you about tonight, a fine-year-old American women arrested at Denver airport accused of providing information to ISIS, battling in Iraq and Syria, Shannon Conley was arrested as she boarded a ticket trying to meet up with an ISIS fighter she met online". "When you hear the word terrorist a certain image comes to mind, and that image is always male. But there is a new face to terror, young women are being recruited by groups like ISIS in some creative ways. And not just for martyrdom but for marriage, and it might just be working" (CNN, 2 July 2014; CNN, 6 and 7 August 2014).

These three reports showed how it was a must to acknowledge the perpetrator's gender when the perpetrators were exceptions from gendered probability. Also, the channel decided to divide terrorists to males and females, and this goes along with what West and Zimmermann (1987) tackled, when saying that one practiced and performed their gender according to others and how good they enacted their gender. This led the news channels socially construct gender and portray women as something deviant and unexpected to join the group, regardless the true intension of these women who had fled to Syria to actually join ISIS.Nonetheless, the way media portrayed these women as deviant, was a way to structure the females' position as not in terrorism not extremism. Therefore, representing women joining ISIS in these cases was portrayed as if such women were exceptions. They were able to say "a terrorist/a bomber"

without specifying sex, however they considered specifying gender as an important issue because women were stereotyped not as perpetrators. Also, one usually expected the people who join extremism and terrorism to be males. Thus, identifying the perpetrator's gender was a must to let the audience know that it was a "she" because the audience would not expect women to take place in extremism. This indicated that women participating in extremism and ISIS in specific was considered deviant within their gender. On the other hand, the last two news reports mentioned above were consequently in days and exactly the same but one with an extra introduction. Nonetheless, the story of Shannon Conley was mentioned multiple times but each time with more information as well as referring to her as a terrorist after going into investigation and imprisoned. However, according to her lawyer, she went online only to learn more about Islam, but got trapped in ISIS' propaganda which ended up her being brainwashed (CNN, 13 January 2015).

However, I do not believe that media does brainwash a person, because if it actually does, everyone would have lost their agencies and be only receivers. Therefore, Shannon Conley's situation as an example, I believe that there must had been other reasons that might had led her want to leave the United States, and flee to Syria. Other reasons not necessarily must be media, but reasons like social, economic, religious, family, or even personal reasons. Nonetheless, media was a minor factor to lead her join such an extremist group.

Moving on, CNN's highlighting upon gender profiling took place in other news reports with time. However, that was through another way of portraying women which were through labeling them either as mothers, housewives, sisters or being described according to their age, appearance or education level, and this proved how women in media were being examined more

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than covered in news, which Hackett and Gruneau (2000) talked about in engendering stereotypes. Below are examples of engendering stereotypes in CNN's news reports:

"Look closely, this *jihadist* behind the veil is a *mother* of two, her name used to be Sally Jones. But after she converted to Islam, she reportedly changed it to Sakeena Hussein. This photo with the AK7 is far cry from this one from 2004 published in The Daily Mail [...] This *Jihadist* is also from Britain [...] On Twitter she published this disturbing image, a *woman* in a white doctor's coat and a black burqu, holding a human head [...] There is many as 15% of ISIS' foreign recruits could be *female*, more up to 200 *women* from 14 different countries [...] Long before ISIS, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict also gave rise to *female* terrorists, including this *grandmother*[...]". "Take a look at this, three missing *girls*. It is believed to be boarding a bus in Istanbul. Authorities believe they have already crossed to Syria [...] It is incredible to see how effective the ISIS propaganda machine has become, not only targeting young men, clearly targeting young *women* as well [...] These are three *female* British Muslims, they are wearing a Gulf dress with sneakers, something that appeals to British youth tremendously, and I think this is entirely a choice" (Emphasis added, CNN, 9 January 2015; CNN, 1 March 2015).

In this example, even though the portrayal of women were shown on the channel, yet the correspondent narrated the description of these women, as one wearing a veil, another wearing a white doctor's coat with a black Burqu, and others wearing a Gulf dress with sneakers to confirm their gender. Nonetheless, such examples showed how the appearance played a huge role while referring to the perpetrator's gender. Thus, the reports did not only profile the perpetrator's gender, but mentioned the appearances of the mother, the female doctor, the grandmother, and the three British girls by pointing out to their faces or the way they are dressed. Yet, the correspondent's confirmation on describing what the audience was seeing was just to emphasize

that it was surprising to see women participating in extremist groups and stereotypically seen as nonviolent. Also, the reports feminized them by referring how the first perpetrator was a mother of two and the specification of the Palestinian terrorist's gender . This showed that not only that it was unexpected to find women participating in extremist groups like ISIS, but mothers, female doctors and grandmothers as well. Therefore, the news report still feminized women by making reference not only to their sex but also their social status, education, and appearance. This came within what Hackett and Gruneau (2000) discussed, that women were depicted in the media as victims of crimes, and whenever they were actually involved in terrorism as perpetrators, media often blind spots them. Nonetheless, as Egan (2007) discussed, this could possibly restricts media in the future from portraying women as perpetrators.

On the other hand, since Al-Arabiya channel broadcasted in Arabic, it was quite different. This was due to the language's grammar, for example when the TV channel referred to women joining ISIS, the description of gender came automatically. One example was "female suicide bombers" in English, the translation in Arabic was "",انتحاريات or referring to "women" or "young girls" directly. Thus, profiling women and men came by Arab grammar design, which made it hard to find if the channel made the choice of referring to the gender while talking about women who join ISIS.

"The extremist group did not ignore the logistic and military roles women had been taking in the Islamic State [...] And many European girls had been joining the extremist group due to ISIS' calls, like these British twins who left UK to follow their brother who already joined the group before them [...] Girls' roles were mainly in recruiting others on social media, collecting money from abroad, as well as transport information and surveillance, however girls ended up being the victims of violence". Another example by Al-Arabiya that referred to women

participating in terrorism, was a report concerning a mosque that was bombed in Kuwait. The report talked about the accused and arrested perpetrators who were suspected to be behind the bombing of Al-Sawaber mosque. However, the reporter gave details that from the 26 suspects, 6 of them were women. (Al-Arabiya, 22 August 2014; Al-Arabiya, 6 July 2015).

Such reports firstdiscussed how it was an unusual news to hear "women" participate in ISIS, therefore girls were depicted as the victims of violence. This showed that extremism was a male construct excluding females' participation. Nevertheless, when women took part in extremism, it was deviant, unexpected, and yet they were victimized. Nonetheless, the first report's connection between twins' participation and their brother who was in Syria, emphasized that the dominant gender, the male, was the reason behind the girls' participation in ISIS. Meanwhile, the second news report stereotyped gender through mentioning that the accused woman was the daughter of a suspected man, who was married to another suspect. This emphasized that the perpetrator's gender was as usual expected to be a male, and the participation of a woman was usually by the help of a male who was a father or a husband. And as Meyers (1997) discussed, which I included in the theoretical framework and literature review, women were usually portrayed in news within the context of family pathology, rather than the social construction reasons. Finally, the expectation in this report was to conclude that the ones behind the bombing were males, but with the title: "ISIS women in Al-Sawaber mosque bombing cell" (Al-Arabiya, 6 July 2015).

Anotherexample for Al-Arabiya channel's reports was titled: "Abeer's military role and other women in ISIS" broadcasted on March 31st 2015, talked about the roles women took in ISIS. They discussed how women who joined ISIS participated by default since their husbands were in ISIS already. The report also mentioned how it was a way to free the girls from the Arab

family traditionsor the libertarian principles that the Western society applied. This example

showed how Al-Arabiya titled its' report by a name of a female so the audience would make a

conclusion that not only men were joining this group, but also women. Thus, the report did not

make any feature stories regarding Abeer neither even referring to her. However, it was just a

metaphor to refer to women's participation in ISIS in general. Also, this example showed how

women's portrayal in Al-Arabiya channel was broadcasted as the "other" to the "self" who was

the male, ISIS fighter and husband. Moreover, referring to the societies' traditions and rituals

draws upon the stereotyping of not expecting to see women joining extremist groups and

extremism. Nonetheless, women in this case were portrayed as masculine due to their

participation in violence, as well as strong. Also, the news report contrasted this masculine

portrayal, yet feminized these females through describing their appearances or their positions in

the group, relatively with the main gender, the self, the male, and this is what the literature

review also showed (Egan, 2007).

Moreover, there had been many examples on both CNN and Al-Arabiya specifying the

perpetrators' gender. Nevertheless, specification and profiling female perpetrators was used in a

very creative way by both channels. An example was when a guest said on a CNN news report:

"Before, they wanted women to come be their wives and the mothers of their children. Now what

we're seeing, they are luring women and attracting women to come fight, it has the element of

surprise, we simply don't expect women to do this" (CNN, 25 August 2015) . By specifying the

women perpetrators' gender, this deviation from gendered expectations was emphasized. What

made it worse, in my opinion, was the CNN's confirmation of females' roles as unexpected to see

them participating in neither terrorism and battlefields, nor extremist groups. Then the report

continued and mentioned that from over the fifty arrested people in the U.S for the suspicion of

joining ISIS, at least seven of them had been women. The specification took place because without mentioning the perpetrators' gender, one would highly acknowledge that the perpetrators' genderswere males, unless the reports indicated the gender. Nonetheless, the reason behind specifying the perpetrators' gender was because women were not usually seen taking place in terrorism, which Corley, et al. (2004) discussed in his study, that I included in my literature review. This was because women were usually not expected to be involved in violence.

The last example to mention in this section was a report published by Al-Arabiya. The report talked mainly about women and extremism as well as ones who were joining ISIS. Then the report portrayed ISIS men handcuffing ISIS women and beating them in order to pick which to rape (the footages included a voiceover mentioning that). The idea of broadcasting such footages was to stop *women* from joining such extremist groups and to alert them regarding what would be the results for females thinking of joining. The report continued and mentioned that women who had been joining ISIS were not the only "*women*" to join extremist groups and terrorism, but history had witnessed tens of *women* who joined other extremist groups, like Hala Al-Qaseer who joined Al-Qaeda (Al-Arabiya, 21 October 2015). My main comment on this was that it showed how women had always been active within history in extremist groups. Violence was not embodied in the female gender, thus, these women who had been joining ISIS were like exceptions from society and the stereotyping of women and femininity. This showed how media considered what was newsworthy and what was not, and in this case, broadcasting the news of women's participation in ISIS was considered newsworthy, and this is what Dobkin (1992) mentioned while discussing critical media theory, when he said how media includes certain stories and excludes others, constructing events the way they desire and socially constructing gender.

Finally, there were many other news reports on both CNN and Al-Arabiya that also profiled perpetrators and terrorists' gender. The profiling of perpetrators' gender was an essential finding in my research regarding media's portrayal of women joining ISIS, since the media gendered females who participated in ISIS through the media's constructionism to extremist women.

Gendering Women involved in ISIS

Women were usually portrayed in stereotypically feminine ways during conflicts in the media, such as weak, in need of protection, soft, powerless, innocent, victims of male violence, sex slaves and even forced to perform "male roles". After analyzing the news reports on both CNN and Al-Arabiya channels, I found repetition in many of the news reports which succeeded in representing women in such ways. I discussed, in the following chapters, the findings of how media gendered women's participation in extremist groups through pictures of stereotyping feminine anticipations.

For example, most news reports broadcasted on CNN discussed how ISIS used the emotions aspect to convince girls to join them, other example was through mentioning how their daughter did not even know how to take a taxi to her school, and they had no clue how she was able to fly to Turkey then to Syria. Al-Arabiya's news reports took place in gendering women as well. One example, Al-Arabiya portrayed ISIS women gathered, and one was reading a paper where she said: "We are in need for your help and support dear faithful prince", where Al-Arabiya titled another news report as "Adventure, home, and Halal marriage is waiting ISIS bride" and included that these women fleeing to join ISIS will only be sex slaves, and sexually abused. Another one was through interviewing the girls' parents who said that their daughters

were powerless and innocent (CNN, 5 September 2014; Al-Arabiya, 21 November 2014; Al-Arabiya, 8 March 2015; CNN, 19 November 2015).

"The picture recurs, but the timing and place are different. In the last decade, the women fighters' phenomena in battlefields got developed in Chechnya, then moved to Indonesia and Syria. This recurs today due to ISIS' expansion in Syria and Iraq. Nonetheless, their job is not truly to fight, however, in preparing food, incorporeal support, and medical care [...] "To the Believer Prince, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, we are the purity and honor-Hums women, in need for your help" a very complicated scene [...] Their job is mainly to surveillance the public behavior, apply the Islamic laws, and inspect other women on checkpoints" (Al-Arabiya, 21 November 2014).

In this example, and the previous mentioned ones, first women were labeled according to their social status, age, and race. A social status had been highlighted frequently in the news reports to show how women were usually in need for protection and given power through the existence of their husbands. Also, they were being represented as the "other" from the "self" who was either a husband, a father, or even a brother. Furthermore, in the previous detailedAl-Arabiya's report showed how their choice in broadcasting a group of women's footage requiring help and support from the "Believers Prince" showed how in the media, women were shown in stereotypically feminine ways during conflicts, like powerless and weak. Moreover, the way Al-Arabiya labeled women as "pure and had honors" illustrated that regardless the participation of women in terrorism and extremist groups, yet they were still being stereotyped by the media as innocent, soft, in need of protection, as well as craving for peace.

Another examples regarding women's involvement in ISIS on both channels discussed how it was difficult for the public to accept the thought of *women* taking part in terrorism, as well as stereotyping the female gender as the weak, soft, and emotional, which also Wilcox (2005) tackled in her study while talking about how women were usually seen the victims of the dominant gender, the male:

"When you hear the word terrorist a certain image comes to mind, and that image is always male. But there is a new face to terror, young women are being recruited by groups like ISIS in some creative ways. And not just for martyrdom but for marriage, and it might just be working [...]". "[...] Many studies have warned about Saudi women's participation in extremist groups, and said how it is a strategic goal for ISIS. The study requested a higher regulation upon women who are assumed of having extremist beliefs and a possibility to support extremist groups. Also, there is a vast need to put a strategic plan to fight women's violence and ideological extremism [...] Extremist groups' advantages of Saudi women joining them is enormous. Regardless if the percentage of Saudi women joining such groups is low, yet the latter consider it a great political success, rather than looking at these women's logistic jobs" (CNN, 6 August 2014; Al-Arabiya, 21 October 2015).

The way CNN divided terrorists either as males or females continued through generalizing that males were the ones to be behind any terrorist act, as well as specifying how it was unusual for *females* to take part in extremist groups was an example of the way media represented these women as exceptional. Nonetheless, describing women as coming for marriage did not illustrate that these women were perpetrators, but rather were constructed in a feminine way as in need for protection. In both previous examples, women were portrayed as weak, powerless, and emotional, therefore, girls were in need to be educated regarding extremism.

Nonetheless, reports highlighted gender expectations in the reports through mentioning how they were being used by the group due to them being the "soft and emotional"gender, resulting them being brainwashed, victims of extremism. Nevertheless, in my opinion, Al-Arabiya's report, in an indirect way, ignored all the males' participation in extremism as if it was a normal act, comparing to females' abnormal decisions in joining such extremist groups. Therefore, stereotyping gender took place, where it created a sort of a generalization and normality for seeing males in extremism, but excluding females.

Many other examples confirmed the "gendering women" theme on both channels, through representing them as women will end up staying at home, working as housewives, mothers, and even sex slaves: "We have to be very strict to explain to these young people, especially for the young girls, 13 and 14 years old, that if they are going there, some of them think that it will be [a] new life, in fact they are prostitutes and sex slaves [...] and we have heard from the very few who have escaped! Do they just don't get it? or do they realize when it is too late? How can they get out of that when they find themselves in that? [...] It is a hard question to answer how to get out of that because we haven't had very instances who have managed to successfully leave. But the idea of sexual slaves is a little limited, especially the women going from the West. They know very well what they are getting themselves into, they are going to be mothers and wives [...] The idea of slavery, I think, produces their sense of agency, in fact they feel very empowered in joining Islamic State (CNN, 19 November 2015).

Such an example amplified many ideas, first how CNN's decision in broadcasting specifically the minister's words, this was as if to threaten*girls* in specific not to join, because such place, ISIS, was not forthem nor it was a place they should even think of going to. The report also portrayed women as weak and emotional since they were being brainwashed through

stimulating their emotions. Also, the report reassured how such women would regret it eventually and would try to escape, however, it was very hard to do that. This stereotyped gender which differed in wars and conflicts as well as connecting males to violence and ignoring females' participation in it since it was not their place to exist in. Nonetheless, one was able to see how CNN succeeded in portraying women as "others" through their positions either as mothers, or housewives, or even sex slaves. And finally, such an example showed that war on ISIS constructed victims as feminine, first because they were women, second because women were weak.

Moreover, from what I had analyzed so far regarding women's portrayal in media, I concluded that women were being represented according to their gender as victims. Nonetheless, when women were represented as terrorists and perpetrators, their jobs, title and positions were linked to either supporting males emotionally or giving secondary positions to the males who were mostly husbands. Also, other media reports insisted on structuring these women in stereotypically feminine ways like powerless, weak and emotional. Such ways resulted portraying them as: Either they were in need for a "prince charming" in their life, or they were working in supporting male fighters or being "forced" to join because they were desperately in need for salary to survive under ISIS regime. Nonetheless, they were also portrayed as being "used" or "forced" to join because their husbands had joined already, and this showed that being "forced" was as if they had no choice. And this was what the literature review included, where it suggested that females who were coerced into extremism were more feminine than their counterparts who actually believed in the roots of ISIS (Egan, 2007, 99). Furthermore, when the media said that these women were being "used", one should look at the person/group that was using these women; usually their "husbands" or "male" fighters who convinced these females to

be suicide bombers in their countries, especially the European countries or the United States. This illustrated that even when women were taking part in extremist groups plus portrayed as perpetrators, the blaming went back to the common gender, the male.

Women in Extremism as Wives, Mothers, and Sisters

Women were usually referred to in most of the news reports on both CNN and Al-Arabiya after mentioning "males". This showed that no matter what depiction they took in media as victims or even as perpetrators, they still remained tied to the male gender. And when I said tied to "males" here, I meant either as wives, mothers, or sisters. Therefore, there femininity was being constructed in relation to a male who was usually a family member.

ISIS Women as Wives

Almost all news reports broadcasted on CNN and Al-Arabiya, connected females' roles to the main gender's participation in extremist groups, the males. In this part, I focused mainly on how females were represented in joining ISIS as housewives or as couples. Women who had joined, in this case, either joined because of their fiancés, husbands or even boyfriends who joined the group before them, or about to join or women wanting to become brides. This illustrated how women were most of the times seen as secondary participants thus embody femininity which Egan (2007)discussed in her study that was already tackled in the literature review.

As a start, an example was discussed by CNN about Hayat Abu Maryam, who was the most dangerous woman in the world. The report swiftly connected her radicalization through attaching her boyfriend's terrorist acts when he killed four people in Paris as well as videotaping himself saying that he was pledging alleges to ISIS. This showed that her involvement in

terrorism was through the help of her boyfriend, who obviously was the one to convince her to

join ISIS. Here, the report drew upon the dominance of males over females, and how females

were second participants in terrorism. Thus, regardless females' participation in terrorism,

extremist groups and violence, it remained something deviant and unexpected because they were

women. Nonetheless, the report included that Abu Maryam exchanged over 500 calls with

another terrorists' wife (CNN, 13 January 2015). Again, this showed the dominance of men's

involvement in terrorism regardless to what extent females were truly perpetrators. Obviously, in

my opinion, media depicted how women cannot be perpetrators unless there was a male

involved, and the reason behind that was because they were *females*.

Another example that exemplified women as wives, was in a news report shared by Al-

Arabiya. As unexpected, it started with a footage of ISIS men executing hostages. These

footages had the correspondent's voiceover saying that regardless such violent and brutal actions,

yet women still insisted on moving to ISIS state for the sake of marriage. Nevertheless, these

women still seek to find their awaiting prince charming in spite of these men's crucial gaze.

However, these men whose hands were covered with blood promise young girls love, romance,

and a Halal marriage. And these immigrants were searching for the previous mentioned dreams

(Al-Arabiya, 8 March 2015).

This news report was only one example of the too many shared by Al-Arabiya,

illustrating how women's first and last goal was only concerning marriage. And it showed how

media's representation of women was often restructured to meet the gender criteria. In this case,

it showed how females cannot be represented except as searching and in need for the other

gender to be able to continue their life. At last, the starting of the video showed that regardless

how women joining ISIS were portrayed as perpetrators, yet, such portrayals were gendered because these women were acting in response to the males calls.

Meanwhile, many videos not only on Al-Arabiya, but also on CNN, stated how women were constructed according to the males' existence in extremist groups, as well as insisted on stereotyping women as shy and quite. A video broadcasted on CNN discussed how intelligence officials saw a twenty-year-old university of Alabama Birmingham dropout, a potential security threat after once considered quiet and shy by her classmates. Such representation first proved that regardless the women's participation in ISIS, they were still portrayed in a feminine way, as soft and quiet, in this case. Nonetheless, the video added how she wanted to escape and asked for help from her family, soon after she announced that now she was "happily married" to an ISIS fighter (CNN, 21 April,2015). Such example not only showed how she was structured in a feminine way, but also how she was a weak person while requiring help to escape. However, as soon as she got married she became a happy person. This illustrated how media's representation of women was connected to a male. Happiness, being strong and powerful according to the way media represented this girl was fixed to marriage and in need for the other gender in her life, in this case.

"The British security authority was to blame for the case of the three wives who ran away to Syria with their children, according to what the husbands said. And the main reason for that was because the authority ignored the calls between these wives and their brother who was already in Syria (Al-Arabiya, 25 June 2015). The report used the words "wives" and "their children" to depict how it was deviant for women to join such an extremist group, especially when such women were "wives" and had "children". It was a way to tell audience that such category structured the roles of mothers who were supposed to be full of tenderness, kindness,

care and love. Also, these "wives" were nonstandard comparing to the usual image of women. Therefore, women's gender was constructed to meet up the stereotype of women's femininity. Nonetheless, obviously it was important for the report to connect these women's unexpected actions to a male, who was in this case the brother. This was also to illustrate that women's joining ISIS was due to a male who was a relative in this case.

Also, one CNN news report broadcasted an interview with a former assistant Homeland Security Secretary, who demonstrated: ISIS were "creating these videos, that they are a little bit the real house-wives of Syria, you get these cars, and you go to parks, and you have these beautiful children, but in reality it is brutal and violent, and these women will be the victims of rape and assault. It is a horrible existence and chances are you are gonna die" (CNN, 25 August 2015). This example's way of mentioning women was portrayed as the "other" gender. It illustrated that no matter how much women could be involved in terrorism and even masculinized, yet they were eventually the victims of terror due to their gender. Therefore, media stereotyped women as victims of the dominant gender. Also, regardless if these women were going to be housewives, yet they would remain the powerless and weak gender comparing to the males who were generalized and stereotyped as the powerful ones.

Again, Al-Arabiya broadcasted a news report with the title: "ISIS' recruitment for women". Part of the report mentioned the girls who were living in Syria already, and they had been "allowed" by their husbands to join this extremist group since the husbands were already with ISIS. Them joining was mainly to take care of minor jobs like give support while aiding, prepare food for fighters, train how to use guns and administer women affairs (Al-Arabiya, 31 January 2016).

This report stated that these women were joining just because their husbands were in ISIS already. Using the term "allowed" demonstrated that such women only joint after being affected by what their husbands did and them joining was only a result of the husbands' involvement in "terrorism". Therefore, they would not had joint if the dominant relative gender, who was the husband in this case, had not joined. Nevertheless, the wives' roles were represented as soft and taking secondary jobs like preparing food or else. This was also another example that showed how females were not participating in violent professions, but were considered second participants thus representing femininity.

Al-Arabiya's videos were so many regarding women's roles in ISIS. In another video shared by it on the same date, shared almost the same information but added that "males" were the ones behind recruiting women online. It added that they targeted them through requiring them to travel and prepare food as well as giving advice. On the other hand, these girls expected to find their "dream prince" and live a different style of life. However, they will end up being a third or fourth wife, their roles are mainly to give birth to the next generation or join the women's battalion that includes arresting and torturing other females, or in worst cases, run away from ISIS' hell after being familiar with ISIS' reality (Al-Arabiya, 31 January 2016). Once more, women's portrayal was connected to males, and them joining was because they were radicalized or brainwashed to join ISIS or in need for the other male in their lives. This proved how media stereotyped the female gender joining ISIS, through victimizing them by mentioning at the end of the video how hard it was even trying running away after finding out the truth behind ISIS. It was an indirect message Al-Arabiya made by trying to warn women not to travel to Syria, because it was not their game, but males' game. Finally and once again, this showed that males were the dominant gender involved in terrorism and the male being a relative influenced the

females who were easily effected since they were emotional and weak. This proved how media again and again portrayed women in a feminine way. Also, what surprised me was that when media often made a feature story, they represented women as perpetrators, yet in a gendered way. However, when talking about women's involvement in ISIS, it ended up portraying them as victims due to their gender, and being influenced by the dominant one, the male.

In a news report broadcasted by Al-Arabiya on the 21st of November, 2014, titled: "ISIS women: Teenagers, Europeans, and black widows". The report at first started by indicating why ISIS started recruiting women, talking about women joining extremist groups in history then focusing on certain women who have joined ISIS. As expected, most women portrayed in this report were not mentioned directly as "women wanted to join ISIS all by themselves" however, attached their joining to their husbands' involvement in terrorism in history. One example was about the Tunisian women named "EmmMuhajer" who traveled to Syria from Iraq with her husband and was in charge in one of the women battalion in Reqqa. Nonetheless, the video continued to talk about other women, then quickly jumped to mention how these women were not the first to join extremist groups in general. However, there were other women who had joined also, yet some were wives and others were widows to terrorist males who had roles in Qaeda. One example was Heela Al-Qaseer, her nickname was "Al-Qaeda Lady"; got married twice to men in relation with Al-Qaeda and was accused forsupporting this extremist group as well as owning weapons that were used in attacks.

This example was one of the first news reports broadcasted on Al-Arabiya regarding women's participation in ISIS. Moreover, such news report was not the only report to portray women in such ways, but all previous ones that I previously analyzed, broadcasted by Al-Arabiya and CNN, took place in portraying women as wives. Media again connected these

women with other women who took place in terrorism in history. Also, regardless being accused in taking part in terrorist act and being perpetrators, they were still constructed as the "other" gender by relating them to their husbands, even if these women left their husbands like Al-Qaseer's example. Also, these women had taken part in terrorism not directly, but as wives of terrorists, especially that their jobs were mainly secondary and mostly "helping" their husbands. Therefore, one concluded that such women's participation would not had taken place unless there was a male. And this showed that extremist groups, terrorism and violence remained masculinized, meanwhile females remained feminized.

ISIS Women as Mothers

A different familial situation highlighted in media concerning women's participation in the extremist group ISIS was through mentioning that they were mothers. The discussion took place in these channels in a way that showed how it was very bizarre not only to see women in such an extremist group, but also females as mothers in specific.

First report to discuss was broadcasted by CNN where they talked about the reasons behind women's joining ISIS. The report spotlighted on many girls, especially the news of a "mother of two". "What possibly could have enticed this British mother of two? When she became an ISIS fighter in Syria, she was widely quoted online saying: "My son and I love life with the beheaders"" (CNN, 3 April 2015). The way the channel decided to represent this women was through stereotyping females, who was a mother in this case, saying how it was very surprising to see a "mother" joining extremist groups. This example indicated that mothers' roles was to take care of children and protect them from violence, and not taking place in terrorism. Using the term "enticed" showed how media insisted on considering the female genders' role

neither in extremism nor in violence or terrorism. They reconstructed females in a feminine way like they were emotional, weak, full of love as well as caring and their place did not belong where males belong (in battlefields). Also, this indicated that mothers' participation in ISIS was something deviant and not usual for the public to see or hear.

Again, a different video aired by CNN but with a different date talked about the same mother mentioned above, and the video started with: "Look closely! That jihadist behind the veil is a mother of two. Her name used to be Sally Jones, but after she converted to Islam, she reportedly changed it to Sakeena Hussein" (CNN, 9 January 2015). The report also mentioned that she had her youngest child with her and he had taken the Islamic name, Hamza. This was the second time for CNN to discuss the story of this women, and each time they represented her as a mother, and the tone of the correspondent sounded surprised. In my opinion, this was to tell the audience again, that women, mothers in specific, did not belong where Sally Jones live nowadays. Nevertheless, the report reassured to the audience how it was surprising to find "mothers" in ISIS, especially that mothers' characters were usually seen as weak, powerless, emotional and caring. And seeing how this mother taking her child to a battlefield full of violence was something crazy to do and will lead her child growing up and becoming nothing except for a violent and extremist fighter.

Another video shared by CNN mentioned how it was mothers' role to educate their children not to join extremism and violence. However, mothers were not to blame when one sees the daughters and sons joining extremism because children spending a lot of time on social media could lead to such results. Moreover, media's usage of the term "mothers" here indicated that it was only a female job to keep children safe. This became obvious in another video shared by CNN on the 13th of January 2015, titled: "Western women lured by radical terror networks".

The video talked about women who had been joining ISIS as Muslim wives and daughters, and included an interview with an American Muslim mother who felt a bit lost after the events of 9/11. Also, she mentioned in the report that there must be people who know Islam very well and the world is in need to spread the "real" Islam. The report ended with her indicating that she would teach her 6 year old daughter that Islam is like any other religion which is about oneness. CNN's including the statement of a "mother" showed that mothers' job was to awaken, raise, and teach their children that terrorism had no space in life, and that females had no space in extremism or conflicts either. This stereotyped the females' role takes no place in extremist groups, and whenever this happen it is considered deviant.

Once again, a video shared by CNN on March the 16th 2015 discussed the participation of women in ISIS. And at the end of the report, the correspondent talked about a campaign which targeted mothers in Turkey. It discussed how massive the role mothers play in teaching their children not to join extremism and be careful of terrorism. Also, how it was important for mothers to have a great relationship with their children since their roles as mothers was vital for the children unlike the "father". One could see in this example as well, how media's concentration on mothers was stereotyping the general image of females roles. And the main role for a female in a society was to be a "mother" and awaken her children. Whereas, fathers were not mentioned in media neither in campaigns, the time there was a chance to make campaigns targeting males however were ignored by the media.

On the other hand, looking and analyzing Al-Arabiya news reports concerning "mothers" joining ISIS, I had not found any video that directly specified females as mothers except for one video that I had previously mentioned before in the report titled: "ISIS Women as Wives". The news report talked about three females, mentioned in the same video many times as mothers as

well as wives. Mentioning them as mothers took place where the channel explored how and why these three mothers joined ISIS with their nine children. The report's coverage's angle told the audience how it was surprising to not only find females joining extremism, but female mothers specifically. Labeling females took place to illustrated that their participation was deviant and not normal. Moreover, the report mentioned how the participation of these "mothers" in ISIS was a result of them contacting their "brother" who was already in the Islamic State. This also showed there was a high percentage that these females were "brainwashed" or "affected" by the dominant gender participating in extremist groups, the male. Another reason for their joining according to the report, the police was to blame due to its' high surveillance to one of the mothers, which made one conclude that this a mother did not want to join, but due to being watched, led her eventually do something "unexpected" and maybe crazy (Al-Arabiya, 25 June 2015).

ISIS Women As Sisters

Women in ISIS did not take place only as wives and mothers, but also as sisters. Their portrayal remained in relation to their families' members who took part in extremism. In this section, I discussed the reasons behind females' participation in jihad, ISIS in specific, which was due to their brothers who already joined the group before they did.

The first video for Al-Arabiya channel to broadcast concerning women joining ISIS, was on the 22nd of August, 2014. The news report talked in general about the rules ISIS made for women, as well as it included information regarding the way ISIS was taking advantage of women for sex. Soon, the news report mentioned the news of the British twins who left their

home, where it was expected that they had gone to ISIS to follow their brother who had already joined ISIS.

Another example by CNN, published on May 29th 2015 discussed the story of the girls who got popular in Britain after they went missing in Manchester. Soon, the authorities found that they had moved to Syria to join the extremist group, ISIS. Shortly after, they got married, and soon were widows. "The sisters were believed to follow the footsteps of their brother Ahmad Helani, the first in the family to leave the UK for the battlefields of Syria in 2013 according to authorities" (CNN, 29 May 2015).

Both media's way of portraying these girls was not through saying that they wanted to join the group all by themselves. However, their decision was connected to a male relative who was in this case a brother. These were examples of females who were not being able to decide all by themselves what they wanted to do, but a male's action encouraged and affected them. Nonetheless, this also showed how media portrayed them in a feminine way, as weak, powerless, and easily affected by the dominant males' behavior. The portrayals of these girls were depicted as the victims of the brothers' participation in ISIS, rather than considering them perpetrators of extremism and terrorism.

After discussing, in this section, women's descriptions where women were depicted either as wives, mothers, or sisters, one could conclude that aggressive and violent acts, especially during conflicts, was usually constructed as masculine within societies: hegemonic masculinity created male's use of violence (Connell, 2002; Lorber, 2005). Thus, I noticed, in media, that when a male was acting aggressively and violently, his gender was not specified as much as it was specified when a female was acting violently. The reason behind that was in accordance

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with constructing the gendered expectations, therefore, reconstructing male violence as justifiable. The gender of extremists were important for the media to acknowledge only when the perpetrators were females, since they were not acting in the "usual" and "expected" way, which is the feminine stereotypical way (Egan, 2007).

Reasons Behind Women's Participation in ISIS

Media succeeded in broadcasting many videos concerning women's participation in ISIS. From the discussed videos so far, portraying them as victims, perpetrators, suicide bombers, and terrorists were often represented from a gendered lens. Sometimes as sisters, mothers, and wives, other times as "forced" or "sent" to join ISIS. Also, them being in need to find their "prince charming" had taken place in the media news reports. However, there had been other ways of representing these women in media, which were discussed in this section:

In Need of Salaries

Many of Al-Arabiya's reports mentioned women joining ISIS for salaries. On the contrary, CNN did not mention women's participation in ISIS for salaries. I believed the only reason for that was due to the angle each channel was interested in covering, as well as the amount of information each channel was able to collect since ISIS' topic was a bit sensitive. Also, one of the main reasons behind the difficulty in collecting information regarding ISIS was due to journalists used to find it threatening to get into the group and escape without being arrested or executed. Nevertheless, since Al-Arabiya channel was mostly broadcasting for the Arab audience, they covered the news of Arab women joining ISIS as well as Western and American women. Meanwhile, CNN's audience were mainly Westerns and Americans, therefore, they only concentrated on covering the news of European and American women.

Females who had been joining for salary were all Arab women living under ISIS. The main reason for their joining is their need for a salary to survive. On the other hand, no Western women would join ISIS for a 160$ per month to survive the time they were able to make much more money in their homeland countries.

Three videos were broadcasted on Al-Arabiya talked about the salary volunteered women receive in return for their jobs which was mainly occupying in women's battalion. The reason behind the media choosing the term "volunteers" was to indicate that such action was all by their own decision, without any interference from any other gender or even the group. Nonetheless, I believe the reason behind these women not being a target for ISIS to recruit them, was because they already lived under ISIS regime, and its' not ISIS' aim to target Syrian women as much as their concern was to bring people including women from different countries especially Western ones for foreign political policy. Besides, it was kind of surprising for me to find out that CNN did not cover the news of any Arab women joining ISIS. The only interpretation for that in my opinion was because they were not concerned with their stories since there was a generalization and stereotyping that Arabs were usually terrorists.

Returning to the news reports broadcasted on Al-Arabiya, three reports talked about these women who were from the areas that ISIS control, and they were either unemployed, their age varies between the 30s and 40s, or young girls their age did not exceed the 20 years old, and salary for all these women did not surpass the 160$. Nonetheless, the reports continued to talk about the secondary jobs women work in, which was mainly in preparing food, giving advice, support, as well as aid care. Reports did not indicate if these girls were perpetrators or victims, however, portrayed them from a gendered lens and structured them in a way that told the audience as if their existence or nonexistence in ISIS was the same. This showed how males

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remained the dominant gender involved in extremism, and even within the existence of women, they were still seen as not taking huge roles in terrorism. Their existence was just to support the dominant gender. And poverty was the only reason, for their cases, that dragged them into this game which they knew was not theirs, but males' game (Al-Arabiya, 21 November 2014; Al-Arabiya, 31 January 2016; Al-Arabiya, 31 January 2016).

Nevertheless, many had heard how bad the situation was in Syria from an economic side. Many had lost their jobs, many companies had closed, the Syrian currency declined, and females did not had freedom to travel from one place to another without the existence of a male, in areas ISIS control, therefore, these were all reasons that might had made women join ISIS. One concluded that women did not "want" to join, but had no better option except for moving with the flow and join the extremist group. In my opinion, "volunteered" was not the best term to describe women's participation in ISIS, however "forced" was, since their existence in extremism would not had taken place if they had a better option. Therefore, such portrayal showed how media "frames" women as non-agents nor decision makers in becoming part of extremism, as they were just in need to survive.

Grief and Loneliness

The reports did not discuss that women joined ISIS because of sadness or losing someone close to them. However, the time media talked about women's participation in ISIS, they connected their joining to a relative who passed away like a husband, a brother, or a mother. To discuss more this issue, examples were given below through talking about how media portrayed these women as being brainwashed and radicalized:

Brainwashed

Another reason for women's participation in ISIS according to media was because of the brainwashing mechanism. In the 41 news reports shared by the media, most of Al-Arabiya and CNN stories indicated how these women were being radicalized and brainwashed. The reasons behind their joining were various, some was due to them hanging out with "religious" friends, others were because of their husbands who had already taken action in extremism and terrorism, another girl was because of the government who kept an eye on her which led her eventually go "insane" and join ISIS, another one was due to her teacher's lectures that affected her, and the list continues, yet I discussed first the story of the three British girls who fled to ISIS, then explain other examples as well (CNN, 5 September 2015; Al-Arabiya, 22 August 2014; Al-Arabiya 25 June 2015; CNN, 27 January 2015).

The three girls escaped from UK to Turkey, soon to Syria had been mentioned on CNN over eight times out of the twenty six news reports. Almost in all of the reports, a discussion regarding them being brainwashed took place:

"It is incredible to see how effective the ISIS machine has become, not only targeting men clearly, targeting young women as well". "There are four key promises that [ISIS] make to women, first empowerment, so you are joining a much larger state building project of participation, you are joining a very strong collective sisterhood, and that everything you do is a religious importance, and that allows individuals, and women in particular who are part of Islamic State to leave all of the wrongs that Islamic State said they might have done in the West" But what do they want with these girls? They promise them,[or] they lure them? Why? What do they want in particular with women? That's a very interesting question! What they want from

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women in particular is to be wives to jihadist fighters, and to be mothers of the next generation of jihadist fighters [...] It is easy to stop a potential female recruit from becoming radicalized than trying bringing her back after she is radicalized" (CNN, 5 March 2015; CNN, 19 November 2015).

In the previous examples, CNN succeeded in portraying these young girls and women joining ISIS in a feminine way. Regardless the girls' involvement in extremist groups as perpetrators or victims, yet media continued to stereotype them as feminine like weak and emotional. And according to the media, this justified the women's participation in ISIS, because they were an easy target to being brainwashed since they were females. Nevertheless, CNN ignored the thought of such girls could actually be perpetrators and there was no difference between them and men's participation in ISIS, and continued their focusing on such women as the weak, not strong, powerless, and could easily be persuaded.

Not only CNN portrayed women as brainwashed and radicalized, but Al-Arabiya as well. The examples below illustrated Al-Arabiya's ways in representing these girls as brainwashed:"Aqsa Mahmoud, the Scottish twenty year old girl, did not live in an extremist family, on the contrast, she was raised up in a very rich and loving family. However, as soon as she left to ISIS, her life completely turned into the opposite [...] Social media websites are all for people to communicate, however, nowadays it is the fastest way for ISIS to recruit others, especially the young girls". Another example regarding Al-Arabiya's way in portraying women as feminine and victims of extremism was:"Regardless ISIS men's scary looks, and their hands that are full of blood, yet, on social media they lure women with promises like love and marriage, life full of adventure for those women seeking Halaal (permissible) marriage, Halaal (permissible) husband, and a free staying. Thus, how is ISIS propagandizing on social media to

recruit such women?[...]". One last example from Al-Arabiya that also illustrated how women were portrayed as brainwashed, taking into consideration how the channel insisted on stereotyping them this way with time was: "And here comes ISIS' role in trying to persuade and lure the Western girls whom ISIS fighters communicate with, in order to ask them to prepare food, and give advice. And after luring them, coordination process takes place in order to ship these girls over Syria, Al-Reqqa in specific" (Al-Arabiya, 24 February 2015; Al-Arabiya, 8 March 2015; Al-Arabiya, 31 January 2016).

Those were just few examples from Al-Arabiya's news reports regarding women's participation in ISIS was due to being brainwashed. Even though the reports did not include directly how these girls had been brainwashed to join such an extremist group, however the audience could conclude that these girls were a target for ISIS to recruit and attract them because they were young girls. The way Al-Arabiya broadcasted those reports was in a feminine way, through stereotyping the female as easy to change their viewpoint, as well as the powerless and weak gender. However, this channel was able to portray them as perpetrators just like males, but favored to represent them as the weak gender who was being "used" by the dominant gender, the male. This also stereotyped the male's dominance in violence and wars, and regardless to what extent a female could be a perpetrator, still she would usually remain portrayed as the brainwashed by the other gender and weak.

This drew upon what Herman and Chomsky (2002) discussed, first how media decided to portray these women through depicting them as the weak and powerless gender due to the social and media construction of gender. Second, how both media channels portrayed the females in a gendered stereotypical way.

Nationality

While analyzing news stories of women's participation in ISIS, I was able to examine the different ways both channels covered their news. I took into consideration many details while analyzing, mainly through looking at the countries these girls came from. Below I showed in details how CNN and Al-Arabiya tackled nationality in their news reports:

Through looking at nationality first, I noticed the interconnectedness between gender and nationality of the girls, portrayed in the media. Going into details, I noticed how Al-Arabiya covered the news of the girls joining ISIS from different nationalities worldwide through mentioning the country they came from. However, CNN only covered the news of the girls who joined ISIS from Western countries (United States, Canada, and Europe). This indicated how CNN's interest was more into broadcasting the news of Western women joining ISIS, rather than girls coming from Arab countries since most of CNN's audience were from Europe and the United States. Nonetheless, it showed that Al-Arabiya was interested in covering the news of these girls from different nationalities, from both the Arab and Western countries, regardless their audience who were mostly from the Arab countries.

Going into more details and since my paper was about the way media portrayed women joining ISIS from a gendered lens, I looked forward to seeing if such women's portrayal in media was more as perpetrators or as victims, and looked which overlapped the other in both CNN and Al-Arabiya. Plus, I seek to know if nationality played a role in the way such girls were represented. Therefore, I divided women into either joining from Arab countries, or Western countries which included the United States, Canada, and Europe.

Starting with CNN, which did not broadcast any stories of Arab women joining ISIS, however only broadcasted stories of women joining ISIS from the Western countries. Their coverage included the United States, Canada, and Europe. Out of the twenty six news reports, the portrayal of women was either as perpetrators, terrorists, radicalized, brainwashed, or victims. However, there were many times when the channel portrayed these women as more than one of the ones mentioned above. Also, some videos did not mention if such women were victims or perpetrators, yet I was able conclude the results from the framing of the news stories. Nonetheless, terms other than perpetrators, terrorists, radicalized, brainwashed, or victims were used to refer to these women, like when referring to a girl as a victim, they used for example ISIS lured women, ISIS inspired girls, or ISIS used its' propaganda to attract women and convince them to join the Caliphate. On the other hand, other terms were used to refer to these women as perpetrators such as, young girls were arrested, meanwhile showed that they were brainwashed by saying, parents tried persuading their daughter that this was not what she wanted but she kept on explaining why she had to join. Many other examples took place as well, but below I gave numbers of the news stories that mentioned women as perpetrators, terrorists, radicalized, brainwashed, or victims. Mentioning that I combined perpetrators and terrorists in one section, radicalized and brainwashed in another section, and victims in a third section.

Regardless CNNs' twenty six videos and Al-Arabiya's fifteen videos, yet CNN included an overall of thirty eight stories, meanwhile Al-Arabiya included twenty two stories of women in the extremist group, ISIS. In almost all of the videos women, teens, and young girls were portrayed as the weak gender through structuring them like easily attracted and convinced to join the group as well as powerless and emotional; due to their gender. This, in both channels' coverage, resulted women joining the group was due to ISIS' propaganda that manipulated and

brainwashed these girls and women. Therefore, in spite of the portrayal of women as perpetrators or victims, the majority of the news reports on CNN and Al-Arabiya included that these women were brainwashed.

However, women's representation as perpetrators or victims took less portion in these videos broadcasted on CNN than represented as brainwashed. Also, women and young girls were often considered victims in combination with being represented as brainwashed. Out of the twenty six videos, fourteen times women were structured and portrayed as victims. Mentioning that I did not label each video separately, but divided each one of them into stories according to how many girls were mentioned in each news report, as well as the way each was represented in a news story. On the other hand, the bigger portion of girls being represented as victims was almost all the times when the women had already fled to Syria. Therefore, CNN broadcasted these young girls and women as victims of war, victims of terrorism, victims of social media, victims of propaganda, or even victims of sex and marriage.

Lastly, women being structured as perpetrators differed according to the place these women were in. When women were trying to make a suicide bomb in their home countries and arrested, they were most of the times considered perpetrators and terrorists. Also, when women and girls were arrested on their way to Syria, they were often represented as perpetrators and terrorists. Moreover, these were not the only cases where women were portrayed as perpetrators, but some women after joining ISIS were also portrayed as perpetrators and terrorists. However, those cases were mostly through connecting them to a male relative, husband, fiancé, brother, or even boyfriend, who were considered terrorists. Therefore, I concluded that from all the feature stories on CNN, women were arrested and considered perpetrators which took place eight times, also from the women who joined ISIS already, they were represented as perpetrators eight times

as well. The difference between the two upper conclusions, was that police was able to arrest them before joining ISIS or before making any terrorist attack, while the other was without arresting them because they had already moved to Syria, as police had no power upon them.

Repetition of Information

While analyzing the news reports on both CNN and Al-Arabiya, there had been many repetition in certain feature stories as well as footages. Nevertheless, feature stories about certain girls were sometimes being portrayed as victims, perpetrators, brainwashed, used, forced, or as "others". This was according to the angle the news channel was covering, for example CNN covered the news of the three British girls who escaped from UK to Syria many times, sometimes deeply, other times just mentioning or bringing their photos on screen. However, within the twenty six news reports broadcasted on the channel, they were mentioned around eight times. But their portrayal differed one from the other according to the framing of such reports. First, I give examples of the repetition of certain stories on CNN, then examples of repetition broadcasted on Al-Arabiya to emphasize my argument:

First report that mentioned the three girls on CNN was on February 20th 2015. The report mentioned at first how it was expected that these "Muslim" girls had fled from UK to Turkey then to Syria. Soon, the report included an interview with a commander in metropolitan police who said that no one knew why these girls travelled to Syria, and one had no idea what might had come to their mind. Here, one concluded that these girls were manipulated, soft, and weak, despite the report mentioning "We don't know what encouraged these young girls join Jihad"(CNN, 20 February 2015). In my opinion, this meant that it was surprising to see young "girls" joining ISIS, and obviously they were brainwashed or manipulated. On the other hand,

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concerning the visual data, the news report included two pictures of the three girls which their pictures were taken from the Turkish airport's surveillance camera, with a voiceover saying how these girls were lured to join the Islamic State. The voice of the reporter on the news report had the tone of surprise, and the pictures of the three girlswere soon connected with other pictures of different women who had already joined ISIS. Some footages and pictures showed women carrying guns and learning how to shoot, other footages were pictures of women who were arrested on their way to Syria. Nonetheless, the video included different footages of covered facedwomen holding guns, as well as footages of ISIS men practicing on fighting. Such visuality showed a sort of contradiction through what was being said in the report, and what was being showed. One was able to conclude from the report how these girls were victims of ISIS, however, footages of extremist women were being depicted on TV as terrorists and perpetrators.

Second video that also mentioned the story of the three missing teens was also on CNN on the 28th of February 2015. The report looked into the reasons behind these young girls' participation in ISIS. However, an interview with a lawyer of another missing girl who joined ISIS said: "there is no reason why bright, young, kind students wouldn't be joining, because ISIS is selling a package [...]. The report also discussed how these young girls were being manipulated by ISIS through telling them that they would get a free ticket to paradise. Finally, the lawyer mentioned how there must be a way to protect children from this propaganda machine. The video here showed how these young girls were the victims of extremism, propaganda, and terrorism. Concerning visual content, the report depicted the same exact pictures of the three girls which showed, first they had no other pictures except for ones being broadcasted, second, repetition is a way to emphasize that they were victims of terrorism, so one keeps on remembering these girls who ended their lives by going to Syria. Also, the repetition is

a way to remind whoever wants to join ISIS, they will end up in a miserable, messed up, extremist place.

Third video to mention the three British girls was on CNN on March 1st, 2015. The report discussed how their parents tried to persuade them to come back, and it was not the life they desired or looked for. Yet, the parents did not hear back from any of the girls. Moreover, one concluded that these women were victims of the ISIS propaganda machine and they were brainwashed. To illustrate how these girls were brainwashed, a combination of footages of the same old pictures were shown with a voiceover saying how they were the victims of ISIS' propaganda. Nonetheless, since more information were mentioned in the report, including an interview with one of the girls' mothers, a short video of the mother crying was added. The report tackled the story of one of the missing girls in details, plus the same old information mentioned in the previous videos. Moreover, an interview with one of the girls' mothers was conducted, while she was crying to show sympathy with the girl against the extremist group, whereas the girls were the victims of terrorism. The tone of the mother does not only emphasize sympathy, but also it was a way to refer to how dangerous ISIS is.

Fourth video mentioned them briefly while portraying other women who already joined ISIS, however, the report included the same interview that was conducted with a commander in metropolitan police on March 4th, 2015. The video mentioned that the reason behind women's joining ISIS was because they were an easy target, which played upon the feminine details like emotional, weak, and were easily manipulated. Nonetheless, the report included an interview with a world affairs columnist who said that girls who joined would be housewives which illustrated that females were represented in the traditional way, as housewives as well as portrayed practicing secondary jobs to the dominant gender, the male. Nevertheless, they were

never taken serious through considering them part of violence and extremism, but continued to

specify their gender rather than ignoring it. And concerning their pictures, again, same pictures

were portrayed, which were taken from the surveillance camera in the Turkish airport. And a

serious tone took part in the news report to illustrate the serious situation young girls are in

nowadays.

Fifth video discussed the story of the three missing girls in details, on CNN, on the 28th

of May, 2015. An interview conducted with the lawyer of one girl whom the family had put, said

that parents in general should put effort to teach their children about extremism to avoid any

chance of the children's participation in extremism and terrorism. Nonetheless, this comes along

with what Blee (2002) and Dowler (1998) tackled through saying that mothers are expected to

socialize and educate their children during wars, where socialization is often seen as the source

of the conflict. Also, the report mentioned that the British police indicated that if the girls

"choose to" and were "able to" return, they would not be persecuted because they were all

minors. This showed that age played a role in considering these girls victims rather than

perpetrators. However, when they traveled, general security in airport ignored their age, as

minors, and did not forbid them from travelling. Yet, the report discussed more information

regarding one of the girls' story, where they portrayed the Twitter account of Aqsa Mahmoud,

with what tweets she tweeted. This showed that the more time passed, the more information

CNN tried collecting to broadcast. Nonetheless, an interview conducted with the mother of the

girl was shortened, and only a couple of seconds footage of her was put while she was begging

her daughter to come home, while crying. This emphasizes how CNN decided to show as if ISIS

is a great propaganda machine that plays in girls' minds and attract them to "hell". Nonetheless,

this not necessarily is true, because probably there are other reasons behind girls' participation in

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extremism. For example, the video also included how one of the girls' father participated in a demonstration pro-Islam. Then the lawyer mentions how the father is not an extremist. But, who knows if the family is an extremist or not, besides there could be other reasons behind the girls' participation in ISIS that the report did not mention, like social, religious, personal, or even economical reasons.

After CNN made five feature stories about the same three young girls who fled to Syria, mentioning them continued in other videos. A video portrayed them saying that "from the over 100 Western women known to be in ISIS' hands, only five are believed to have returned home" (CNN, 29 May 2015), and the tone of the reporter was pessimistic. Another report mentioned: "These three British high schools ran away from home, recruited by ISIS [...] The reality that its brutal and violent, and these girls will be the victims of rape and assault" (CNN, 25 August 2015), the tone of the woman who was interviewed was sardonic. Nonetheless, showing footages of the girls was soon connected to other footages of girls shooting, as well as ISIS men distributing candy among children in the Caliphate. This illustrated how girls thought life is in Syria, yet, the voiceover described how the life under the ISIS regime is brutal, and girls will be the victims anyway how. And last video concerning them, was one only showing their pictures without giving any details concerning them(CNN, 19 November 2015) However, the interviewee was talking about how parents are not to blame for the reasons behind girls' participation in ISIS, because ISIS is luring these young girls, as well as giving them a theological justification to join. However, I believe that no matter what effort ISIS put to attract women through media, girls still have their agencies where they can distinguish the right from wrong, and the good from bad. Therefore, there must had been other reasons behind girls' participation in ISIS like sociological or psychological for example.

These examples were not the only concerning repetition on CNN and Al-Arabiya. There had been a vast repetition concerning the story of the American women who tried fleeing from the United States to Syria, but then was arrested. Shannon Conley's story was broadcasted for the first time on CNN on the 2nd of July 2014. From the news report, one was able to conclude that this girl was brainwashed, and after her parents tried persuading her that joining an extremist group was not the thing she wanted, she kept on explaining the reason why she needed to join, which resulted her being arrested by the American police. But, Conley's picture was not shown in this news report, however, only papers from the United States District Court were shown. The reason behind not showing the girl's picture, unlike other news reports, because this video was the first for CNN to broadcast concerning females joining ISIS, thus, the channel did not have her picture yet. On the other hand, the media showed how Shannon was the victim of propaganda, and how ISIS was able to brainwash her, yet this is not necessarily true, because, in my point of view, media does not brainwash a person that easily. However, media could be a minor factor that resulted her participation in extremism, besides major factors like personal or due to her family's background for example. However, the second video sequentially broadcasted on CNN portrayed the picture of Shannon Conley, with more information concerning her. This showed that this media channel was not able to attain her picture in the first video, but eventually portrayed her photograph to fulfill the content of the news report. Nonetheless, she was portrayed as a terrorist as well as mentioning that she got arrested. Soon, the news report mentioned other girls who joined the extremist groups through saying that they were all radicalized, also portraying their pictures. And in the videos, the reporter's tone had the element of surprise. (CNN, 6 August 2014; CNN, 7 August 2014).

CNN was not the only channel to discuss the story of the three missing British teens, but Al-Arabiya as well. However, Al-Arabiya did not talk about them as much as CNN did, where Al-Arabiya mentioned them only twice. Below I talked in details regarding Al-Arabiya's news reports concerning the young girls:

On February 24th, 2015, Al-Arabiya discussed the story of the three girls, through connecting their participation in ISIS with a twenty year old Scottish girl, who was estimated to had attracted them to join ISIS using Twitter. Afterwards, the news report talked about the police's conclusion in arresting the people behind recruiting girls from countries worldwide. One was able to conclude from the report how the girls were the victims of extremism and terrorism, and their participation in ISIS was only because of being easily targeted, influenced, and brainwashed by the dominant gender, the males. The visual content of the news report was organized in a way that shows the audience how one of the girls' life turned into the opposite consequently; first they showed her picture smiling while wearing a Hijab, soon they portrayed a picture of a girl covering all her face, except for the eyes, trying to show as if it is the same girl. Soon, they showed pictures of other women holding guns with all their bodies covered to illustrate how Shamima's life turned from a good and happy life, into an extremist violent life. And I believe the reason behind the neutral tone the reporter chose, was to let the audience decide and conclude if Shamima did the right thing or not. This was regardless the footages that showed how her life turning completely into the opposite after joining ISIS.

Second and last video by Al-Arabiya that talked about the three young girls was on the 5th of July, 2015. The report discussed how after they had fled to Syria, they were videotaped by citizens in Raqqa, walking around the city while holding guns. The visual data of the girls holding guns was the extra content and footage that was broadcasted on Al-Arabiya compared to

CNN's reports. Also, the report mentioned that they used to live in a house under the protection of a lady called Um Layth. However, soon two of them called their families in UK to declare to them that they got married to ISIS fighters whom they had chosen from a catalog. The report was connected to the previous one broadcasted by Al-Arabiya, through giving more details about these young girls' lives. However, the video did not mention whether the girls were victims, perpetrators, used or even forced to move to the Islamic State or get married. But, with the footages of the families, and the sadness shown on their faces, makes one, in my opinion, conclude that these girls definitely had no idea what they did when they decided to travel to Syria, especially that they are very young.

Going back to CNN's news reports, where they discussed a feature story about a twenty year old Scottish girl who fled to Syria. The story of this girl was tackled once on CNN and once on Al-Arabiya. Discussing her story on CNN took place on the 5th of September, 2014, where they mentioned how she was a "normal" daughter who was raised up in a moderate Muslim family, attended a prestigious high school, loves Harry Potter books, and the British band Coldplay. Sooner, they mentioned that she was radicalized through the internet and family still expect her to return home. Meanwhile, Al-Arabiya's portrayal of Aqsa Mahmoud, was on the 24th of February, 2015. They discussed how she was not raised up in an extremist family, but in a rich and loving one. However, her life quickly turned into the opposite since the time she decided to flee to Syria. Moreover, the British police believed that she was one of the major girls to recruit other girls on social media websites. Also, it was expected that she was the one behind recruiting and attracting the three British girls who escaped to Syria. Afterwards, the report mentioned that the Spanish police was able to take apart a cell that worked on recruiting young girls to ISIS from different countries around the world.

The two examples above exemplified how this girl, Aqsa Mahmoud, was portrayed in two different ways. On CNN, one concluded that she was a victim of the internet, as she was radicalized and brainwashed the time she is a very "normal" girl. Nonetheless, on Al-Arabiya they talked about her at first where it was surprising to see a "girl" who was raised up in a loving and rich family to join "such" a group. Moreover, regardless the expectations of her recruiting three young girls, yet the report mentioned how the police had taken apart a cell that worked on recruiting young girls. This showed how in both cases, regardless Aqsa Mahmoud's participation in ISIS, yet she was portrayed in a feminine way, as weak, soft, loving, and powerless girl who was a victim of terrorism and recruitment of extremist group, ISIS.

Concerning the visual content shown on CNN, first zooming in on her picture as a grown up was portrayed on the channel, soon, the channel showed pictures of her when she was a baby. Then, the video broadcasted a picture of her in Niqab, saying that this is her in the Islamic State. What I found contradicting, is that the channel showed a picture of her wearing the niqab, the same image that was shown in another news report to refer to another girls who joined ISIS, also saying that these were them in Syria. Nonetheless, one was able to conclude from the news report, from the way it was organized, that she is the victim of assault and extremism. This is concluded due to the voiceover that said that the girl was a loving daughter and she used to massage her mother's feet. However, Al-Arabiya's news report showed a picture of another girl, yet broadcasted her story as if it was Aqsa Mahmood. This mistake done by Al-Arabiya illustrates how the news channels barely have pictures and data concerning the girls who were joining ISIS. On the other hand, the pictures that were shown were put in order in a way that allows the audience ratiocinate that the girls did not know what they were doing, and were the victims of ISIS' propaganda.

Moreover, another news report was broadcasted on CNN which was after five months of the last news report that tackled Conley's story in August 2014. This time, the report included more information than the previous ones. The news report mentioned that she was sent to prison, brainwashed as well as an interview was conducted with her lawyer, whose family put, saying that she only wanted to know more about Islam, but soon got trapped in ISIS' propaganda. On the other hand, regarding visuality and CNN's footages, the channel used the same photo they previously broadcasted in August 2014. However, her photo was combined with videos of ISIS women shooting and being trained on how to use weapons. The repetition of Shannon Conley's picture as well as the footages of girls holding guns in ISIS was a way to confirm and emphasize the deviant act Conley and other women had been doing, through their participation in ISIS. Nonetheless, it was a sign to make the audience remember the girls who tried joining the extremist group, and make the audience ratiocinate that it was an unusual and unexpected act for "females" to do(CNN, 13 January 2015). And the last video for CNN to cover the news of Shannon Conley was on the 20th of February 2015. However, her story was mentioned only as another example of females who had been trying to flee to Syria to join ISIS. Yet, her story was mentioned as a last example in the report that included stories of five females who either tried joining ISIS but got arrested or joined the group already. Nonetheless, the same old picture was broadcasted, and soon a new photo was added to the video which was a picture of her while wearing a veil this time. I believe that CNN's decision of portraying Conley's story lastly, with her pictures in news report, was a message and a lesson to teach the American audience and others that whoever want to try traveling to the Islamic State, the results would end up being arrested and imprisoned by the American police.

Many other news stories took place on both CNN and Al-Arabiya, where they both portrayed the same story but each from a different angle. However, teens, girls, and women were mostly portrayed from a gendered lens, where they were stereotyped as feminine like weak, soft, and an easy target for the dominant gender, the male. Moreover, they were usually portrayed as "females" taking part in secondary jobs like housewives, give support and advices, or even as sex slaves. This emphasized how media insisted on confirming the stereotypical of gender, and regardless women's participation in violence, they were usually framed as victims and brainwashed, rather than perpetrators. Nonetheless, violence remained masculinized whereas victims were feminized.

Conclusion

In this research, I was very interested in getting to know how women were depicted in media. I already know that women most of the times were being portrayed from a feminine and gendered angles, however, I wanted to find out if such portrayals still exists in media, especially that we are in the twenty first century. Meaning, with time, people improve, become open minded, and accept the other more, regardless the gender, the color, the ethnicity, or the nationality. However, I found out that regardless what kind of a group ISIS is, yet, women joining it were mostly represented from a gendered lens, depicted as powerless, emotional, weak, and even represented according to their appearance, or connecting their participation in the group with the dominant gender, the male, who was most of the times a relative, like a brother, a father, or a husband. Most importantly, I also found that media could be wrong, where women can be violent and aggressive without the need for ISIS nor media to brainwash, radicalize, or manipulate them.

On the other hand, I know that I did not include any analysis regarding men's participation in extremism and terrorism. This comes mainly because I concluded how women were depicted as victims, meanwhileviolence was mostly masculinized. Through history, men were generally taking part in violence, extremism, terrorism, as well as wars and conflicts. Moreover, since my research was only limited to women's participation in ISIS, in specific, and to two channels only, I look forward, in the future, to making a broader analysis, which includes more TV channels as well as other traditional media platforms, plus social media platforms. Nonetheless, it will not be only exclusive to women, but men as well.

This explains the reasons behind me choosing journalism researching, because one can always develop, expand, and analyze more. Nonetheless, In order to understand the larger picture of the media'sportrayal of women participating in terrorism, all of these media could be examined andcompared. Also, since the searches were mainly exclusive to women's participation in extremism, this did not give me an overall understanding of people's participation in extremism, including women and men. Therefore, an analysis that includes the ways media represented men and women's participation in ISIS, is essential to do in the future.

Nonetheless, within my studying years at the American University of Beirut, I became very interested in anthropology studies. Also, while I have been working on this thesis, I became also very interested in learning more about extremist groups and terrorism. This might lead me in the future do a second masters in anthropology studies, and expand my research. As well as, this will be through including a quantitative analysis, through interviewing men and women who joined ISIS. Also, in order to have a broader understanding of the real situation ISIS is making, acting, and treating others, conducting interviews with people who lived under ISIS might take part as well.

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Appendix A

Women ISIS Recruits in CNN and Al-Arabiya Codebook

- ❖ Channel:
- ❖ Publication date of report:
- ❖ Title of News Report:
- ❖ Number of feature stories in one news report:
- ❖ Story Frame:
  - o Social frame:
    - Focus on the female's life and background before and after joining ISIS.
  - o Humanitarian frame:
    - Focus on the female and show how she was the victim of extremism. Also, highlighting that she was brainwashed.
  - o Terrorism frame:
    - Focus on the female and show how she was part of violence, extremism and terrorism.
  - o Gendered Frame:
    - Focus on the female from a gendered aspect, and portrayed her in a feminine way.
- ❖ Report mentioned:
  - Nationality
  - Race/Ethnicity
  - Age
  - Religion
  - Education
  - Citizenship Status
  - Appearance
  - Social Status
  - Jobs
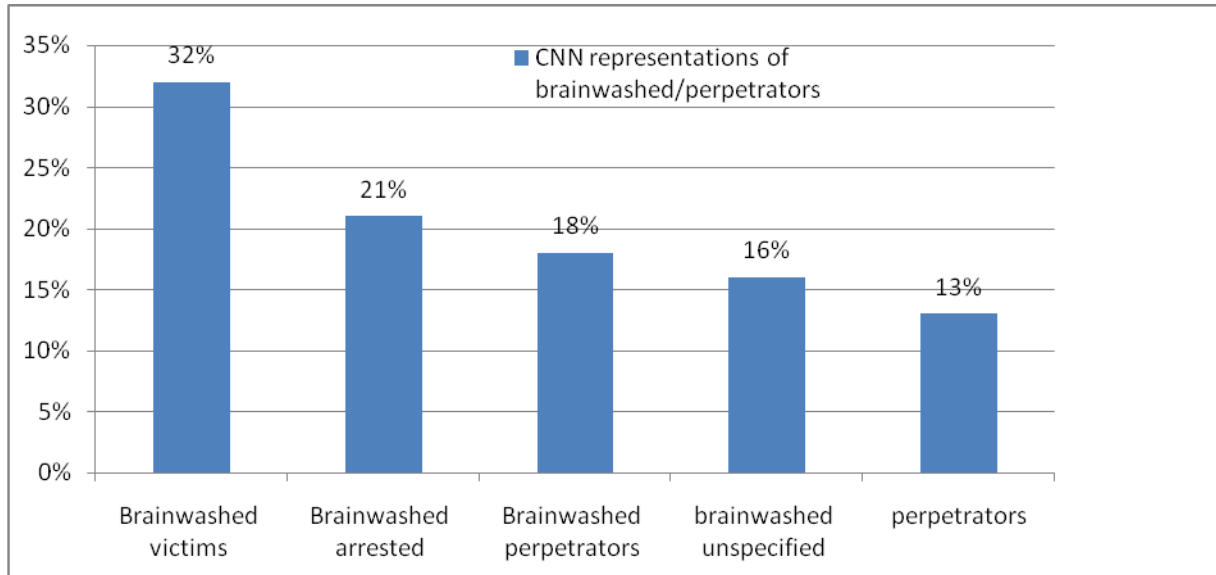 - Nonemployees
- ❖ Feminizing women:
  - Powerless

- Emotional
- Soft
- Romance

❖ Women labeled:

- Perpetrators
- Brainwashed: Perpetrators, Victims, Unspecified.
- Arrested

❖ News report included an interview:

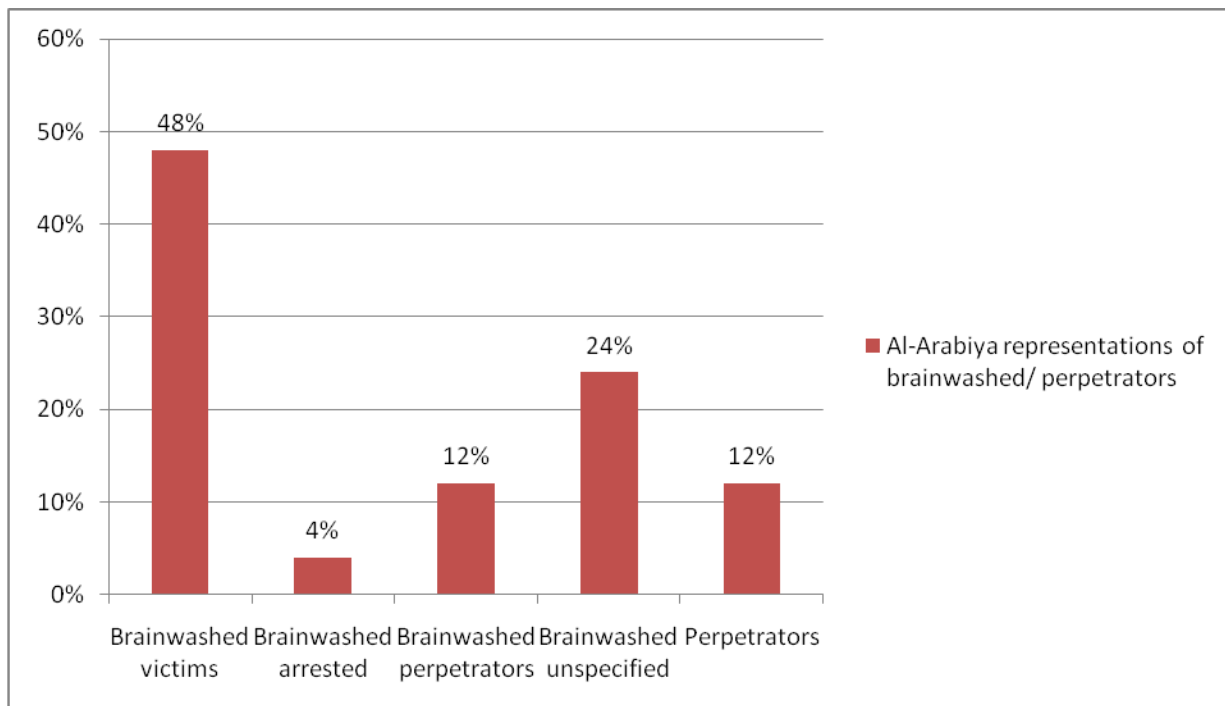- Yes, with the targeted female/ parents
- No.

Appendix B

Charts for each TV channel by theme:
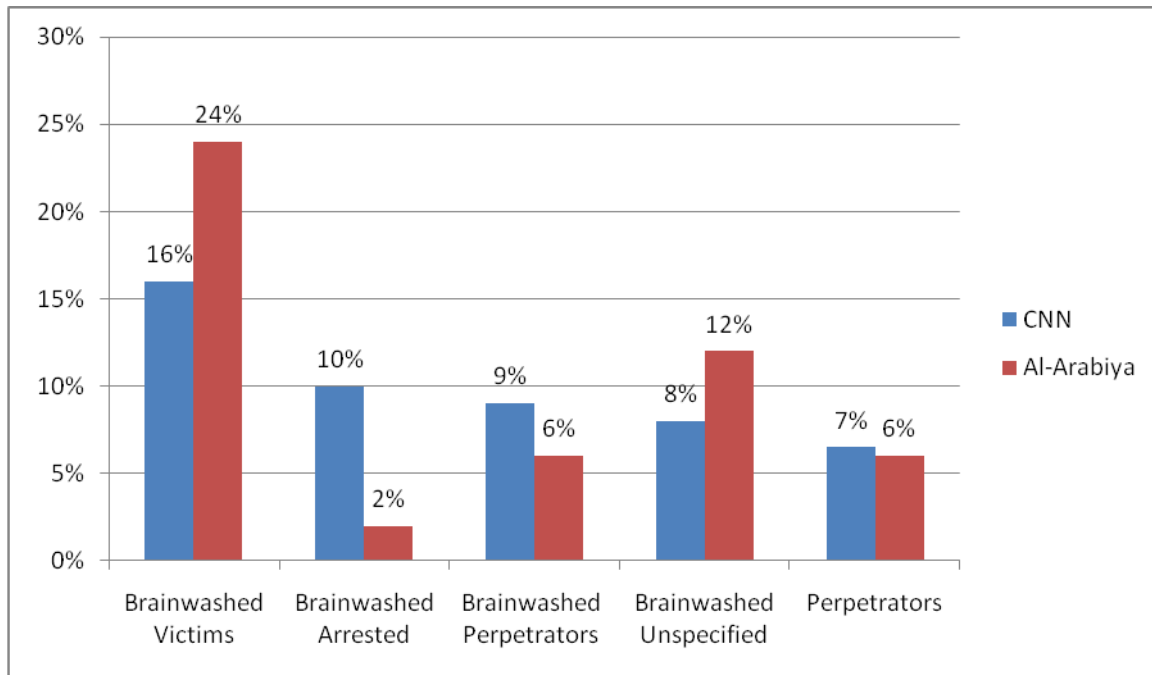
A- CNN representations of brainwashed/ perpetrators

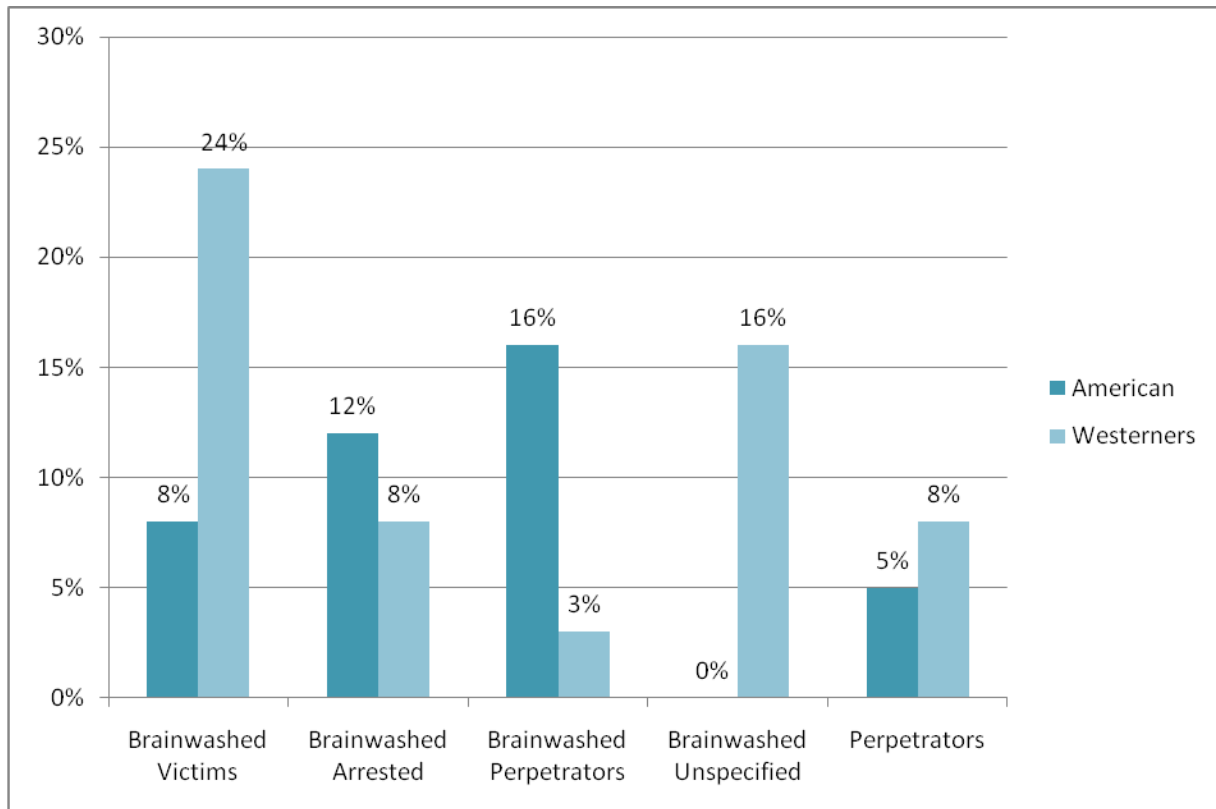B- Al-Arabiya representations of brainwashed/ perpetrators

C- CNN and Al-Arabiya representations of brainwashed/ perpetrators

D- CNN Representation of Nationality

E- Al-Arabiya Representation of Nationality