

## Overview

In this post 9/11 climate, prejudice and racism is directed at Arabs, middle easterners and those who practice Islam. How does it manifest in mainstream media and what is the resulting public discourse? This lesson plan addresses this question. The lesson plan was developed to teach students critical media skills by examining the how the media reported two murder cases.

In June 2009 Mohammad Shafia, an Afghan immigrant to Canada, conspired with his wife and son to kill his first wife and three daughters by drowning them in Rideau Canal near Kingston Ontario. In May 2012 Luka Rocco Magnotta killed and dismembered an international Chinese student in Montreal. These events created an intense civic engagement in both online and offline environments.

In this lesson plan, students will critically examine:

- The public conversation that ensued over the Shafia and Magnotta cases.
- The means in which the media represented both cases. Students will identify examples of hate speech and explain how the Shafia case represents a post-911 discourse shaped by the media.

A list of additional references with links to articles on the Magnotta and Shafia cases for teachers are provided at [www.projects someone.ca/theonlineother](http://www.projects someone.ca/theonlineother)

## Learning Goal

Students will critically examine the public conversation that ensued over the Shafia and Magnotta cases. They will identify examples of hate speech and explain how the Shafia case represents a post-911 discourse shaped by the media.

## Duration

3 hours

## Materials

1. Student Guide – Lesson 1
2. Huffington Post articles:
  - Shafia Trial Verdict: Honour Killing Jury Finds All Accused Guilty Of First-Degree Murder
  - Luka Magnotta Verdict: Guilty Of First-Degree Murder

## Teachers Guide

### The Security Environment and the Online Articulations of the “Other”

#### Lecture

##### 1. Define and discuss “hate speech”

- Ask, what is hate speech?
- Cover the following points:

##### 2. Define and discuss “post-911 fear and prejudice”

- In 1994, Joanne Hall created a model to explain marginalization largely on theories by Hooks, Bordieau, Foccault and Said.
- In 1999 Hall added additional concepts—exteriorization--which is an extreme form of marginalization.
- An exteriorized group not only operates on the margins, their voice is incomprehensible to the dominant group as they are considered expendable.
- According to Hall, exteriorization is accomplished through symbolic violence which is transmitted through language.
- Hall uses the example of how words such as freedom and liberation which used to mean the freeing of the oppressed but now the American government has appropriated these words and communicates them back in such a way that they are understood but the real meaning and how they are used is not challenged. An example of this is “Operation Iraqi Freedom” which associates death and bombing with a cherished American value of freedom.

#### Methodology

1. Ask students to read both articles and to reflect on the questions provided in the student materials:

##### *Shafia article*

- What did the journalist chose to focus on and how did that shape the discussion?
- What themes come out in the comments?
- Extract examples of the language used and explain how this constitutes “hate speech”.
- Why do you think this case spurred a discussion on Canadian values?
- How does this article reflect post-911 fear and prejudice?
- Give examples of how the Shafias are “othered”.

##### *Magnotta article*

- What did the journalist chose to focus on and how did this shape the comments?
- What themes come out in the comments?
- Extract example of the language used and explain how this constitutes “hate speech”.
- Why do you think the victim’s country of origin was repeatedly mentioned?

2. Conduct a discussion with the class using the questions for each article.
3. Cover key comments and quotations included by the journalist for both articles.
4. Cover key comments made by the public for both articles.
5. Put students in small groups.
6. Assign each group 1-2 questions:

- Compare the comments from the public in this case to those of the Shafia case. How is the debate different? Why?
- How are the victims perceived differently in the Shafia and Magnotta case? How would you explain this difference?
- How does racism surface in both cases? What is the root cause of this racism?
- How do comments regard the agency of Safia vs. Magnotta?

7. Ask each group to report back.

<b>Overview: Shafia Trial Verdict: Honour Killing Jury Finds All Accused Guilty Of First-Degree Murder</b>	
<b>Source</b>	Huffington Post – January 30, 2012
<b>URL</b>	<a href="http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2012/01/29/shafia-trial-verdict-honour-killing-guilty_n_1228859.html?ref=canada">http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2012/01/29/shafia-trial-verdict-honour-killing-guilty_n_1228859.html?ref=canada</a>
<b>Summary</b>	This article focused on the verdict in the Shafia case which was first degree murder with a sentence of 25 years. The article underlined how such a murder goes against <u>Canadian values</u> .
<b># Comments</b>	1628
<b>Themes found in comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debate: Is it the Shafia's religion or culture that is responsible for the murders?</li> <li>• Mistrust</li> <li>• Fear</li> <li>• Intolerance</li> <li>• Immigrants go home</li> <li>• Primitive vs. developed</li> <li>• Hypocrisy</li> <li>• Us and them</li> </ul>
<b>Discourse Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "these people"</li> <li>• "stone age"</li> <li>• "honour killing"</li> <li>• Language reflects misogyny</li> </ul>
<b>Class discussion: Journalist comments and quotations</b>	<p>Focus on the impact of the journalist underlining the contrast of the murder with "Canadian values" using the following quotations from the article:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The apparent reason behind these cold-blooded, shameful murders was that the four completely innocent victims offended your completely twisted concept of honour...that has absolutely no place in any civilized society."</li> <li>• "Outside court, Crown attorney Gerard Laarhuis said the verdict is a reflection of Canadian values that he hopes will resonate."</li> <li>• "This verdict sends a very clear message about our Canadian values and the core principles in a free and democratic society that all Canadians enjoy and even visitors to Canada enjoy," Laarhuis said to cheers of approval from onlookers." "In a statement following the verdict, Justice Minister Rob Nicholson called honour killings a practice that is "barbaric and unacceptable in Canada."</li> </ul>

<p><b>Class discussion: Public comments</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1. a) "An Afghan immigrant accused of murdering a wife and three teenage daughters in what prosecutors have called an "honour killing" told his alleged accomplices that the newly-deceased women were "filthy and rotten children," adding: "may God's fury descend upon those girls".</li> <li>• 2. c) Since the Prophet is the one that Muslims base their religion then after reading this account I would have to say that the culture and the religion are one and the same.</li> <li>• 2. e) these people are barley out of the stone age and we are letting them into this country by the thousands! ITS GONNA BITE US ON THE BUT sooner or later</li> <li>• 3. It is a source of constant amazement to me that some people leave developing country hellholes for Western secular developed civilization, and then insists on bringing along the cultural baggage that is at least partially responsible for making their former homeland as terrible to live in as it is.</li> <li>• 3. a) making it unnecessary to learn about Canadian cultural practices (and allowing them to actively dismantle them) because certain communities refuse to even learn about what this country is about. Apparently, in the minds of this disgusting crew, adopting anything Canadian is basis for murder. This country has got to get some balls and stop pandering to everyone with archaic ideas of propriety.</li> <li>• 7. Islam is all about what works best for men's egos....why we allow these people to cross our borders is beyond comprehension, after all the struggle it has taken to lift women out of servitude in the US. It is a slap in the face of our women, to allow men like these into our country!!!</li> <li>• 9. a) Why cannot our northern neighbor be more tolerant of different cultures? We are tolerant of different cultures, but, when that turns to murder of innocent women and children, it is not accepted. It may be accepted in Muslim ruled countries, but, not in ours. Women here have equal rights that include education, freedom of choice. It is not honour to kill your own children, it is barbaric, unacceptable and punishable. Sharia law is not accepted in our Canadian values and will never be. If one wishes to practice sharia law, do not attempt to do so in our country.</li> <li>• 10. Why cannot our northern neighbor be more tolerant of different cultures? a) We are tolerant of different cultures, but, when that turns to murder of innocent women and children, it is not accepted. It may be accepted in Muslim ruled countries, but, not in ours. Women here have equal rights that include education, freedom of choice.  It is not honour to kill your own children, it is barbaric, unacceptable and punishable. Sharia law is not accepted in our Canadian values and will never be. If one wishes to practice sharia law, do not attempt to do so in our country.</li> </ul>
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**Overview: Luka Magnotta Verdict: Guilty Of First-Degree Murder**

<b>Source</b>	Huffington Post – December 23, 2014
<b>URL</b>	<a href="http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2014/12/23/luka-magnotta-verdict-guilty_n_6371018.html?utm_hp_ref=luka-rocco-magnotta">http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2014/12/23/luka-magnotta-verdict-guilty_n_6371018.html?utm_hp_ref=luka-rocco-magnotta</a>
<b>Summary</b>	The verdict for Luka Magnotta who killed and dismembered a student from Concordia University held maximum sentences for the five charges against Luka. The charges included criminally harassing Prime Minister Stephen Harper and other members of Parliament; mailing obscene and indecent material; committing an indignity to a body; and publishing obscene materials. His defence attorney claimed that Magnotta was in a psychotic state when committing the crime. However, the jury was not convinced.
<b># Comments</b>	42
<b>Themes found in comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental illness is never an excuse</li> <li>• Magnotta should never see the light of day again</li> <li>• Magnotta is an animal</li> <li>• The prison population will take care of him.</li> <li>• Get him off the front page/tired of this trial/let's forget him</li> <li>• The prison system is broken</li> </ul>
<b>Discourse Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “forgotten”</li> <li>• Sludge, cockroach, sh*t, SOB, sick f***'s</li> <li>• “Chinese”</li> </ul>
<b>Class discussion: Journalist comments and quotations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crown experts countered that Magnotta's schizophrenia diagnosis was erroneous and that he actually suffered from a variety of personality disorders, which are not mental illness.</li> <li>• "It causes me fresh pain to know that my son's legacy is to be remembered as a victim," Lin said in the victim impact statement. "He not only suffered in his murder but will be humiliated for each time his name is mentioned and it hurts me deeply and will hurt me forever."</li> </ul>



<p><b>Class discussion: Public comments</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. a) I agree with you Caren. I'm afraid he should never see the free light of day again. His victim had no choice in his fate, neither should Mr. Magnotta. I hope his name and his being fade from our scopes of consciousness. This story has been too sick to even think about.</li>   <li>1. b) There is no such thing as 'sociopath' or 'narcissist' - they are not clinical things. Moreover, there is no accepted way to even identify things like bipolar, ADD etc... Scientifically, they don't exist because we cannot with any degree of confidence identify them unless in the extreme. Moreover - schizophrenics know what 'murder' is and just because someone has some degree of mentally illness does not mean they are not guilty.</li>   <li>2. While I am glad of the verdict I do not need to see his face plastered all over the place. The headline is enough. This broken person should be studied by experts and then forgotten by history.</li>   <li>3. I can only hope other inmates have a chance to "initiate" him. He needs to know what physical harm feels like. Meanwhile us as taxpayers are paying to keep this piece of sludge behind bars. The very best they could've done would've been death row, but maybe we'll be lucky enough and some others in there will help us along and save us some money.</li>   <li>4. Send the SOB to China to serve his sentence. They know how to deal with his sort there. That's my visceral, uncivilized opinion. Magnotta (he doesn't deserve the honorific "Mr. from me) previously gained notoriety because he liked to post videos of himself strangling kittens online. Perhaps if the authorities had taken notice of this sick f***'s behaviour then, and our animal cruelty laws took animal cruelty seriously and carried real penalties, he might not have been at liberty and Mr. Lin might still be alive.</li>   <li>5. Good let's put this piece of sh*t where it belongs and keep it there for the rest of its natural life. Study him like the cockroach he is.</li> </ol>
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## Comments from the public

1. While pleased by the verdict, I must admit I'm a little surprised. With deliberations going into the eighth day, it appears the jury did well to inform themselves of the difference between actual mental illness (i.e. - schizophrenia) and personality disorders (i.e. - sociopathy, narcissistic personality disorder). Most people assume those with personality disorders are mentally ill when they are not. Sociopaths and narcissists cannot be rehabilitated, ever. It is safer for society to cage them and feed them through the bars for the rest of their miserable unimportant lives.
  - a) I agree with you Caren. I'm afraid he should never see the free light of day again. His victim had no choice in his fate, neither should Mr. Magnotta. I hope his name and his being fade from our scopes of consciousness. This story has been too sick to even think about.
  - b) There is no such thing as 'sociopath' or 'narcissist' - they are not clinical things. Moreover, there is no accepted way to even identify things like bipolar, ADD etc... Scientifically, they don't exist because we cannot with any degree of confidence identify them unless in the extreme. Moreover - schizophrenics know what 'murder' is and just because someone has some degree of mentally illness does not mean they are not guilty.
2. While I am glad of the verdict I do not need to see his face plastered all over the place. The headline is enough. This broken person should be studied by experts and then forgotten by history.
  - o I'd like to study him, through the cross-hairs in a telescope mounted on a 30/06!
3. I'm not sure he's going to be too hard done by. He gets what he needs: doctor/medication anytime he asks 3 meals a day, commissary treats, a bed and whatever else. I don't believe he will spend 25 yrs. locked up before he's up for parole. How many times do we hear that because of over crowded prisons they let some of the worst out early and they murder again. Then people say "they" should never have been released. This is the Canada Justice System. I can only hope other inmates have a chance to "initiate" him. He needs to know what physical harm feels like. Meanwhile us as taxpayers are paying to keep this piece of sludge behind bars. The very best they could've done would've been death row, but maybe we'll be lucky enough and some others in there will help us along and save us some money.
4. Send the SOB to China to serve his sentence. They know how to deal with his sort there. That's my visceral, uncivilized opinion. Magnotta (he doesn't deserve the honorific "Mr. from me) previously gained notoriety because he liked to post videos of himself strangling kittens online. Perhaps if the authorities had taken notice of this sick f\*\*\*'s behaviour then, and our animal cruelty laws took animal cruelty seriously and carried real penalties, he might not have been at liberty and Mr. Lin might still be alive. I hope his cellmate is a Hell's Angel who works out and is an animal lover with a hair-trigger temper and who finds out about Magnotta's little hobby. And one who has access to a handy 2'x4'.
5. Good let's put this piece of sh\*t where it belongs and keep it there for the rest of its natural life. Study him like the cockroach he is.
  - o Paul Constantineau.....Put him in a cage and forget he's even there. Absolutely needless to spend the time and money "studying" him like a couple on here have suggested. He deserves to be gone...poof - like the magic dragon. The sooner the better.



## Lesson 1 – Student Guide

<b><i>Shafia Trial Verdict: Honour Killing Jury Finds All Accused Guilty Of First-Degree Murder</i></b>	
<b>Source</b>	Huffington Post – January 30, 2012
<b>URL</b>	<a href="http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2012/01/29/shafia-trial-verdict-honour-killing-guilty_n_1228859.html?ref=canada">http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2012/01/29/shafia-trial-verdict-honour-killing-guilty_n_1228859.html?ref=canada</a>
<b>Instructions</b>	Read the article and reflect on the following questions. Be prepared to report back and share your answers.
<b>Questions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What did the journalist chose to focus on and how did that shape the discussion?</li> <li>2. What themes come out in the comments?</li> <li>3. Extract examples of the language used and explain how this constitutes “hate speech”.</li> <li>4. Why do you think this case spurred a discussion on Canadian values?</li> <li>5. How does this article reflect post-911 fear and prejudice?</li> <li>6. Give examples of how the Shafias are “othered”.</li> </ol>
<b>Comments from the public on: <i>Shafia Trial Verdict: Honour Killing...</i></b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Oh here we go again.....its Muslim bashing time! People, it's not the religion but the culture that permits and perpetuates these suppressive and abusive practices (they're Afghani). But you go on ahead and take this opportunity to really rile up the hatred for Muslims in this country. Way to go.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Why should I listen to you sitting at home in a western country explain his motives when I have it directly from the killer himself? Is there anything in his statements here about his Afghan tribe? No. It's all about God and Islam. And Muslim clerics outside of Afghanistan have supported honor killings in the name of Islam. Anyway, here you have it from The Guardian: "An Afghan immigrant accused of murdering a wife and three teenage daughters in what prosecutors have called an "honour killing" told his alleged accomplices that the newly-deceased women were "filthy and rotten children," adding: "may God's fury descend upon those girls".</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. A court in Ontario yesterday heard a series of secret police tape recordings of 58-year-old Mohammad Shafia attempting to justify the brutal murder of his daughters Zainab, 19, Sahar, 17, and Geeti, 13. He described them as "treacherous" and said they deserved to die for having betrayed Islam.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Muslims are the ONLY ones that kill their children!!! defend that! Well known examples: Julie Schenecker, Matthias Schepp, Emily Hopkins Christian Longo, Deanna Laney, The list goes on. It's rather easy to go ahead and trash muslims when we can CLEARLY see they have a history and a knack for killing their kids.</li> <li>b) This type of article is red meat for all the tolerant, enlightened and not at all hypocritical Christians that come on here and advocate for an end to Islam.</li> <li>c) How many times do we hear that argument? I recall a story that Aiesha told about her husband conquering a city...there she met a very beautiful woman (who was obviously hysterical) who was about to be be-headed as a sacrifice to Allah. As this poor woman</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

was led away she was laughing and talking how she was to be killed so as to become a wife to Allah. Since the Prophet is the one that Muslims base their religion then after reading this account I would have to say that the culture and the religion are one and the same.

- d) Sad thing is people will bash the Muslim religion and then on Sunday they will go to catholic church, a church with a history that makes the Muslims extremists look like boy scouts.
- e) what you need to understand is in the mid.east the religion IS the culture! not long ago karzai ruled that a woman who had been RAPED had to marry her RAPIST!! these people are barley out of the stone age and we are letting them into this country by the thousands! ITS GONNA BITE US ON THE BUT sooner or later!

3. It is a source of constant amazement to me that some people leave developing country hellholes for Western secular developed civilization, and then insists on bringing along the cultural baggage that is at least partially responsible for making their former homeland as terrible to live in as it is.

- a) Absolutely right. For whatever reason, they want to replicate the very thing they are trying to escape. What's most annoying is that Canada tolerates a lot of the behaviours that may contribute to these things happening: supporting the wearing of garments offensive to women; making it unnecessary to learn English and/or French; making it unnecessary to learn about Canadian cultural practices (and allowing them to actively dismantle them) because certain communities refuse to even learn about what this country is about. Apparently, in the minds of this disgusting crew, adopting anything Canadian is basis for murder. This country has got to get some balls and stop pandering to everyone with archaic ideas of propriety.

4. Remember that this family committed four murders. Shafia is a horrible man, and he enlisted the help of his current wife and his son, who willingly complied. This family is twisted and guilty of a very heinous crime. This family was put on trial and found guilty. The Muslim community was NOT put on trial. Other Muslims were NOT found guilty of this horrific crime. And other Muslims haven't committed such a crime in Canada. So as a Canadian, I would like my fellow Canadians to stop making this about Islam, or Muslim people. I think we can be better than that.

That being said, I would like to see this family serve their entire 25 years in Canada, and if they don't die in prison, return them to Afghanistan when their sentences here are complete. If they have citizenship in Canada, I would like to see it revoked as well.

- a) In 2006, the brother of Khatera Sadiqi was convicted of murdering her and her fiancé; he stated he wanted his sister to respect their father. In 2010, Muhammad Parvez and his son Waqas were convicted of murder of 16-year-old Aqsa Parvez, allegedly regarding conflict over her wearing a traditional hijab.

In Canada

White people never murder family members, right? Do you have ANY idea what a limited and narrow point of view you represent? You have no argument.

5. This isn't a question about whether immigrants to Canada should be told that they have to obey Canadian law when they come here. When taking the citizenship oath, they do just that. Nor can it be argued that Shafia didn't understand that under Canadian law, he was committing murder, and that he would be prosecuted for it. If they had believed otherwise, they would not have tried to conceal the murder and mislead police.

6. Nor is this about immigrants or the attitudes some of them bring with them from abroad. The Shafia murders represent four murders in 450-500 that take place in Canada every year, most

of which are committed by people who were born in Canada.  
This is about the victims and punishing their killers, and that is all.

7. I lived in Morocco for a year, and I saw first-hand the kind of honour muslim men have... I witnessed fathers, pimping out their daughters at night and then forcing them to wear veils during the day.  
Islam is all about what works best for men's egos....why we allow these people to cross our borders is beyond comprehension, after all the struggle it has taken to lift women out of servitude in the US.  
It is a slap in the face of our women, to allow men like these into our country!!!  
a) While you may have good intentions, breezy, your last sentence sums up that you think of women as possessions. You state that "it is a slap in the face of OUR women." Ummm, you do not own any woman. I do not find your attitude a whole lot more enlightened than those who are written about in the article.
8. Very, very sad situation all around. Even sadder are all the bigoted comments re Islam. This tragedy has become fodder for the ignorant to vent their bile.  
a) Please articulate what people are ignorant about.....The Quran gives instructions on how a husband is to beat his wife. Honor killings are promoted by Islamic clergy (along with other forms of wife abuse). What on earth are we ignorant about?  
honestly...you'd think no woman was ever killed by a related male until now. Or boyfriend or husband. You'd think it never happened in any other country or culture or religion.  
Example....some of you do know this has been a problem within the Sheik community...right...and you do know they are not muslim but they can be very patriarchal. These acts come from a particular mindset within the Islamic culture...true...but it has to do with the control of women and Islamic men are hardly the only men who feel the only way to deal with the "independence" of the women close to them who've "humiliated" them is to kill them. May I remind people of this  
<http://news.nationalpost.com/2011/12/16/shooter-in-alleged-highway-murder-suicide-thought-to-be-former-boyfriend/>  
not the same culture but sure as heck a similar mindset....you hurt me, you humiliated me so I'm going to kill you but that's fine...go ahead and pretend is just an "Islamic" issue....boot them all of the country and no woman will ever again be murdered by a family member...whatever
9. Why cannot our northern neighbor be more tolerant of different cultures?  
a) We are tolerant of different cultures, but, when that turns to murder of innocent women and children, it is not accepted. It may be accepted in Muslim ruled countries, but, not in ours. Women here have equal rights that includes education, freedom of choice.  
It is not honour to kill your own children, it is barbaric, unacceptable and punishable. Sharia law is not accepted in our Canadian values and will never be. If one wishes to practice sharia law, do not attempt to do so in our country.
10. So pleased with this verdict.  
I agree with the head of the Canadian Muslim Women's group they interviewed (?) that said it should never be called an "honour killing".  
Will Huffpost allow us to talk about this verdict now? I'd really like an explanation why all comments are, or have been, closed down for this topic. It is a very important issue in Canada and I find/found it appalling that HP shut down all conversation on this in all other related stories. If they do this again, please at least give an explanation.

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<b>Comments from the public</b>	
<p>1. While pleased by the verdict, I must admit I'm a little surprised. With deliberations going into the eighth day, it appears the jury did well to inform themselves of the difference between actual mental illness (i.e. - schizophrenia) and personality disorders (i.e. - sociopathy, narcissistic personality disorder). Most people assume those with personality disorders are mentally ill when they are not. Sociopaths and narcissists cannot be rehabilitated, ever. It is safer for society to cage them and feed them through the bars for the rest of their miserable unimportant lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I agree with you Caren. I'm afraid he should never see the free light of day again. His victim had no choice in his fate, neither should Mr. Magnotta. I hope his name and his being fade from our scopes of consciousness. This story has been too sick to even think about.</li> <li>• There is no such thing as 'sociopath' or 'narcissist' - they are not clinical things. Moreover, there is no accepted way to even identify things like bipolar, ADD etc... Scientifically, they don't exist because we cannot with any degree of confidence identify them unless in the extreme. Moreover - schizophrenics know what 'murder' is and just because someone has some degree of mentally illness does not mean they are not guilty.</li> </ul>	
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4. Send the SOB to China to serve his sentence. They know how to deal with his sort there. That's my visceral, uncivilized opinion.

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