

Baby, you can drive my car

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Full Text:

Dozens of Saudi women risked arrest by flouting a driving ban. No arrests were reported after women across the country violated religious restrictions on driving, intended to limit their ability to fraternize with men.

Saudi Arabia is the only country in the world that bans women from driving. The prohibition forces families to hire live-in drivers, and those who cannot afford the \$300 to \$400 a month for a driver must rely on male relatives to drive them to work, school, shopping, or the doctor.

A Saudi woman defiantly drove through the nation's capital while others brazenly cruised by police patrols in the first forays of a campaign that hopes to ignite a road rebellion against the male-only driving rules in the ultraconservative kingdom.

It was a rare grassroots challenge to the Western-backed Saudi monarchy as it tries to ride out the Arab world's wave of change, and a lesson in how the uprisings are taking root in different ways. In this case, on Friday, the driver's seat was turned into a powerful platform for women's rights in a country where wives and daughters have almost no political voice.

Associated Press, June 18, 2011

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