

Kristin M. Peterson, Boston College

#MuslimGirlWoke: Muslim Lifestyle Website Challenges Intersectional Oppression

Since its founding by teen Amani al-Khatahtbeh in 2009, MuslimGirl.com has grown from a lifestyle magazine for young women to a space for political organizing and consciousness raising. While much has been written about Islamic lifestyle online, this paper examines over 200 MuslimGirl articles from 2015-2019 in order to analyze how the online magazine discusses political topics. Building on previous studies of the influence of fashion and lifestyle magazines on the lives of young women, this paper asserts that MuslimGirl is a significant site for the formulation of the political consciousness of Muslim American women, especially an awareness of how their experiences of oppression intersect with other marginalized groups. The analysis of the articles illustrates that political issues are discussed on MuslimGirl far more frequently than religion, culture, or lifestyle topics. Furthermore, the discussion of political issues shifted from the 2016 election to the current Trump administration. At first, MuslimGirl featured more discussions of political issues that impact Muslim Americans of Middle Eastern or South Asian descent, like Islamophobia, public harassment, immigration, refugees, or foreign policy. In recent years, the discussion has shifted to addressing more intersectional feminist concerns related to anti-Black racism, LGBTQ issues, and Latino experiences. While MuslimGirl still covers lifestyle topics and features religious teachings and inspiration, the prevalence of articles on overt political issues demonstrates the ways that digital media provide hybrid and interstitial spaces for Muslim youth to network with others in order to challenge larger structures of oppression.