

17 Muslim Youth Cultures

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Young people are central actors in the formation of American Muslim cultures, and their cultural production engages questions of identity. This self-making through culture does not occur in a vacuum but has been shaped by specific contextual realities. For one, American Muslim youth cultures are shaped by the contemporary moment in which the convergence of a bad economy, racism, and the "War on Terror" has made their very existence a cause for national concern. As a result, Muslim youth in the United States are typically represented and analyzed through two narrow prisms: as potential jihadis or as upwardly mobile model minorities. The cultures of young American Muslims respond to this binary, both explicitly and implicitly.

Young U.S. Muslims are in dialogue with the expectations of "parent culture," the perspectives of often dominant older American Muslims, both immigrants and converts. Parent culture holds a series of ideals about who young people should be and their proper role in community life. A primary consequence of these beliefs is that many Muslim youth feel marginalized in traditional spaces of American Muslim sociability, such as the mosque. For some youth, part of their identity work resists parent culture by creating alternative spaces and frameworks for American Islam. Yet resistance is not the only response to the parent culture. Some young Muslims aspire to these "parental" ideals and find room to live out their sense of religious identity within them.

Finally, although young Muslim cultures in the United States are grounded in local contexts, this identity work is also transnational. This is partly due to the ways that Muslim identity remains informed by intra-Muslim debates that cross national boundaries.¹ Technology also plays a role in making Muslim youth cultures transnational. Young U.S. Muslims, like youth across the globe, embrace technology as a tool to

¹ miriam cooke and Bruce Lawrence, eds., *Muslim Networks from Hajj to Hip Hop* (Chapel Hill, 2005).

make and share culture. Blogs and social media have become critical sites of communication and debate in which actors have a stake in shaping U.S. Muslim youth cultures.

We identify Muslim youth as females and males of diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Some were raised in Muslim families, and others are converts to Islam and in fact, many converts are leading cultural producers. Thus there is an important caveat to be made in any discussion of American Muslim youth cultures. Since its emergence in the United States in the 1950s, the category "youth" is typically associated with adolescence. Accordingly, "youth culture" is defined as an age-based set of styles, practices, and interests. However, consideration of American Muslim youth cultures demands a more expansive notion of the category "youth." American Muslims who are now well into their thirties remain critical actors in the production of American Muslim youth cultures in the United States. Although no longer adolescents, they came of age as Muslims in the United States and have now become the artists, activists, and academics that are paving the way for subsequent generations of American Muslim youth.

Young American Muslim cultures have taken shape and taken up space in a variety of locations, yet three key areas stand out: music, fashion, and new media. These sites of inquiry, often studied within broader academic youth studies scholarship, are key arenas in which cultural production is youth generated.² While U.S. Muslim youth are in dialogue with parent culture and broader discourses on youth and society at large, these sites are more autonomous and thus more centrally guided by youth interests, perspectives, and anxieties than other spaces youth occupy such as schools, universities, and workplaces.

MUSIC

From the late 1990s, music, from *nasheeds* to punk, began to emerge as a significant site of Muslim youth cultures. The form and content of music composed by American Muslims has ranged widely. Some music focuses on religious themes and adheres to religious opinions that only use of the male voice and the drum is Islamically permissible in creating music. These performers have typically been endorsed by parent

² Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London, 1979); Julian Sefton-Green, *Digital Diversions: Youth Culture in the Age of Multimedia* (London, 1998); Norma Mendoza-Benton, *Homegirls: Language and Cultural Practice among Latina Youth Gangs* (Malden, 2005); Sunaina Maira and Elisabeth Soep, *Youthscape* (Philadelphia, 2004).

culture. Other music pushes boundaries by relying on different readings of religious texts and histories of music in Muslim communities, such as Qawwali and Gnawa, to argue for not only the permissibility but the centrality of music to Islam.³ This music is also broader thematically. Some young American Muslim musicians even push back against the necessity of being identified as a "Muslim" artist. Troubling the boundary between "religious" and "secular," these artists argue for what they see as a more holistic understanding of religion's relationship to art. Three genres dominate the soundscape of Muslim youth cultures: hip hop, punk, and nasheed.

There is a synergistic relationship between American Islam and hip hop that is rooted in values of self-determination and community empowerment spread within urban Black and Latino communities by the Nation of Islam (NOI), the Five Percenters, and Sunni Islam. As a result, themes and motifs related to Islam are standard elements of hip hop music and culture. This synergy is also what made hip hop the first musical genre to be seriously engaged by young U.S. Muslims. Some of the earliest hip hop productions by young Muslims were novice rhymes, such as the 1990s MYNA raps. These early songs were typically composed by teenagers, performed at youth camps, and sold on cassette tapes. This music related to the everyday experiences of young American Muslims, reinforcing particular notions of Islamic piety while appealing to the aesthetic tastes of teenagers. These objectives have become cornerstones of hip hop music produced within the American Muslim community such that we argue that the perceived needs of young American Muslims have been the central motivational force behind the creation of all "American Muslim music."

Though skeptics question the genre's religious permissibility, hip hop's significance to young Muslims is unequivocal. As a result, Muslim hip hop has become standard at Muslim events. Yet, for the artists who perform at these venues, the climate toward hip hop is complicated by race. Invitations to perform are typically accompanied by stipulations about what artists can do on stage, illustrating that in many communities hip hop is still held at arm's length. Some artists have argued that this is the product of anti-Black racism. In the documentary *Deen Tight*, poet Amir Sulaiman describes his experiences performing for Muslim audiences as: "[It seems as if] what makes you black and American is *haram*."⁴

³ Suad Abdul Khabeer, "Rep that Islam: The Rhyme and Reason of American Islamic Hip Hop," *Muslim World* 97:1 (2007): 125–141.

⁴ Mustafa Davis, *Deen Tight* (Abu Dhabi, 2010).

Sulaiman is one of many U.S. Muslim hip hop “heads” (artists, promoters, activists, or fans) who have encountered a mix of hostility and ambivalence toward music in general, and hip hop in particular, from other Muslims. This mix stems from anti-Black racism as well as interpretive religious stances that prohibit music. For many Muslim hip hop heads, this has meant isolation from community life. One response to this isolation was the creation of an email listserv called *Muslims in Hip Hop*. Launched in 2002, by event promoter Christie Z-Pabon and her husband, Pop Master Jorge “Fabel” Pabon, *Muslims in Hip Hop* provides Muslim hip hop heads with a virtual community space. Over the listserv and Facebook page, relationships of mutual support developed among members who were negotiating the demands and needs of contemporary Muslim artists. Coming from distinct local contexts both within and outside of the United States, Muslim hip hop heads share commitments to hip hop and to Islam. We argue that these transnational networks have produced dialogic relationships between Muslims that have the potential to challenge the religious hegemony of the “Muslim world” as well as the cultural imperialism of the United States. Likewise, they will have significant localized effects on Muslim youth cultures in the United States.

Young Muslims frequently cite the 2004 novel *The Taqwacores*,⁵ about a group of young Muslims who negotiate American Muslim identity through punk music and culture, as playing a seminal role in their engagement with punk music as *Muslims*. For example, Kouroush Poursalehi started his own band, Vote Hezbollah, after reading *The Taqwacores*. Others, such as the band Al-Thawra, were already consuming punk and creating music. Yet reading *The Taqwacores* seemed to give young punk Muslims more confidence. The stories told in *The Taqwacores* reflected their own frustrations with mainstream American culture and the ideological and social norms of their local Muslim communities.

“Taqwacore” is a term that brings together *taqwa*, the Islamic precept of God-consciousness, with core, a reference to hardcore or specifically hardcore punk. Blending punk and Islam comes as a surprise to many. Punk is typically characterized as deeply irreverent, and Islam is seen as demanding conformity in belief and ritual practice. For Muslim punk bands and fans, taqwacore was not a paradoxical term. Rather, young Muslims “have embraced punk rock as . . . a form of open

⁵ Michael Muhammad Knight, *The Taqwacores* (New York, 2004; 2nd ed., New York, 2009).

resistance to both mainstream American society and traditional Islam, as a means of community development, and identity building in the context of U.S. government policies and prominent media stereotypes of Muslim Americans.”⁶ The music they create retains connections to the cultural traditions and histories of the Muslim cultures in which they were reared.

Not all audiences see value in taqwacore. In 2007 taqwacore bands including the Kominas, Al-Thawra, Vote Hezbollah, and Secret Trial Five, an all-female band, formed to do a “Taqwa-tour.” This tour, featured in the 2009 documentary *Taqwacore*, made a stop at the 2007 convention of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and signed up for the evening’s youth entertainment night. However, their lyrics and incorporation of female vocalists came in direct conflict with ISNA’s vision of Muslim entertainment. There were reports that the young Muslim audience enjoyed taqwacore, yet ultimately the bands were not able to negotiate with the ISNA officials onsite. Rather, their sets ended early as the local police arrived to remove the Taqwa-tour bands from the premises. Regardless, the event was interpreted as a success by Muslim punk artists, who saw these types of encounters as useful in pushing boundaries for social change.

A similar confrontation took place at the same conference during a hip hop performance, and it is worth noting that those objecting were not “parents” but other young Muslims. This speaks to the diversity among American Muslim youth and underscores the fact that youth cultures, Muslim or otherwise, are not necessarily subversive but can be aligned with what is considered normative. Accordingly, whereas hip hop and punk are typically framed as socially transgressive by parent cultures, the contemporary English-language nasheed genre, made famous in the United States by artists such as Native Deen, Maher Zain, and Dawud Wharnsby, is more broadly embraced across generations. The nasheed is a devotional song that has its roots in majority-Muslim countries. Nasheeds typically privilege voice and percussion, in adherence to aforementioned religious rulings, yet popular nasheed artists in the United States, Canada, and Europe have increasingly incorporated a broader range of instrumentation, and their music has reflected the influence of the “secular” musical genres of pop, R&B, and hip hop.

⁶ Sarah Siltanen Hosman, “Muslim Punk Rock in the United States: A Social History of the Taqwacores” (Master’s thesis, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2009), p. 14.

Native Deen, who started out with MYNA raps, has emerged as a premier group of the genre. Exemplifying the value of identity, piety, and aesthetics in American Muslim music, Native Deen songs emphasize faithfulness, moral fortitude, and Muslim pride. Native Deen's audience, like many nasheed groups, includes Muslim adolescents *and* their parents. Furthermore, in addition to stateside concerts, Native Deen has visited fans outside the United States through events such as *Evening of Inspiration*, a concert series held in the United Kingdom by the international charity, Islamic Relief. The worldwide appeal of nasheed artists underscores the transnational circulation of a set of ideals regarding Muslim identity and Islamic piety, ideals that are tied to American Muslim youth yet more often than not align with parent cultures.

Nasheed artists also reached global audiences by way of concert tours in Muslim-majority nations sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. These performances, in which some Muslim hip hop artists have also participated, can be seen as complicity or an alignment with another kind of mainstream, the U.S. empire. Hishaam Aidi notes that "the U.S. government's growing use of hip hop in public diplomacy, counter-terrorism and democracy promotion [is] an attempt to harness the genre towards various political objectives," such as improving the image of the United States abroad.⁷ These artists are not unaware of the controversy surrounding these trips. For Native Deen, the response has been to evaluate collaborations with the state in light of the principles that guide its artistic production. Band member, Abdul Malik Ahmad has stated that "if it's our mission to spread tolerance and faith, it can be O.K. to take this [particular] offer."⁸

In all these genres, save to some extent punk, women performers have been marginal. This marginalization stems from certain religious taboos regarding women's bodies and patriarchal notions of male and female desire. Restrictions around women's bodies find their roots in "certain elements of the classical Muslim tradition [that] treat female sexuality as dangerous, with potentially disruptive and chaotic effects on society."⁹ Accordingly, female sexuality, if left unchecked, will unleash heterosexual male desire and social discord or *fitna*. The association of women with *fitna* has precipitated practices and discourses that restrict

⁷ Hishaam Aidi, "Leveraging Hip Hop in U.S. Foreign Policy," *AlJazeera*, November 7, 2011.

⁸ Mark Oppenheimer, "A Diplomatic Mission Bearing Islamic Hip Hop," *New York Times*, July 22, 2011.

⁹ Kecia Ali, *Sexual Ethics and Islam: Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith and Jurisprudence* (Oxford, 2006).

women's bodies and activities. Accordingly, for some scholars and communities, Muslim women's *awrah* (private parts), unlike a man's, includes her voice. This had particular implications for female Muslim vocalists. As one U.S. Muslim hip hop artist, Miss Undastood, explained: "It's harder because people don't think that I should be so vocal ... I had one brother tell me it is not becoming of a Muslimah [Muslim woman] to do this."¹⁰

These norms are in alignment with the patriarchy endemic in the wider hip hop scene and broader U.S. culture. Women in hip hop struggle against being cast primarily as objects of male desire and anxiety rather than artists in their own right. American women find themselves facing gender-based discrimination, which is often also attenuated by race and class. The marginal position of young female Muslim artists underscores the limits of "resistance" in Muslim youth cultures. In terms of race, Muslim youth cultures are often at odds with parent cultures, yet seem to more commonly reproduce traditional gender norms.

FASHION

Like music, fashion is also a central location of Muslim youth culture in the United States. The styles of U.S. Muslim youth culture have been developed by individual designers, many of whom are formally trained in fashion design, as well as everyday "fashionistas" who mark their bodies in daily negotiations of American Muslim identity. Critically, these designers and consumers co-constructed an "Islamic Fashion Scape," a broad field of "sartorial possibilities open to" Muslims, by "developing distinctive Islamic styles inspired by different types of regional dress" and by "selecting, altering and re-combining elements of mainstream fashion to create new Islamically sensitive outfits."¹¹ "Islamic" is not defined here as one form of dress over another but rather indexes the stylistic choice to dress modestly according to particular understandings of religious requirements. These choices are meaningful because the visual is deployed not only as individual self-expression but also as an "intervention and medium of debate" in public spheres of Muslim life.¹²

¹⁰ Khabeer, "Rep that Islam," p. 132.

¹¹ Emma Tarlo, *Visibly Muslim: Fashion, Politics and Faith* (Oxford, 2010), p. 225. Writing from the British Muslim context, Tarlo dates the beginnings of this Islamic Fashion Scape in the late 1990s. However, we argue that in the U.S. context the Islamic Fashion Scape has its origins in the sartorial practices of African American Muslim communities from the 1960s, if not earlier. This included a consumer market and events such as fashion shows.

¹² Annelies Moors and Emma Tarlo, "Introduction," *Fashion Theory* 11:2–3 (2007): 138.

They may infer competing and complementary notions of religiosity, race, and nation between youth culture and parent culture.

Modest dress is a broadly accepted virtue among Muslims. However, what precisely defines a practice as modest or "Islamic" is contested. For young American Muslims, the desire to dress modestly can be a youthful complement to parent culture's notions of pious dress or be in competition by pushing boundaries through choices such as color, shape, and scarf style. Further, young Muslim sartorial choice sometimes functions as a critique of parent culture, whose own styles are seen as "more 'cultural' and 'traditional' than 'religious' and therefore less 'Islamic.'"¹³ Moreover, the same debates over women's bodies and male desires implicated in the contestations over music are also at play in Muslim youth fashion. As a result, the Islamic fashion scape has been dominated by designs that respond to growing demands by young American Muslim women for modest wear. Sites such as Shukr Islamic Clothing, Primo Moda, and Artizara as well as individual designers such as Nzinga Knight and Nailah Lymus, seek to cater to this growing market, offering fashion choices that reflect Islamic principles with flair. In addition to these sites, blogs and Web sites advise young Muslim women on how to transform the latest fashion trends into hijabi-friendly styles.

Young Muslims also seek attire that reflects their concerns with their own marginalization in a U.S. political and cultural climate. T-shirts, the "iconic item of global youth culture,"¹⁴ became particularly popular. Online and at events, young Muslims choose T-shirts with satirical messages such as: "Whoops! There goes my Wudu," "Go Ahead, Profile me," and "This is what a radical Muslim Feminist Looks Like."¹⁵ These T-shirts are assertions of Muslim identity. By centering on shared religious practices, like ablution, with humor, these T-shirts reproduce bonds of communal affiliation and can even encourage piety. Further, in a context where being identifiably "Muslim" is likely to mark one as an enemy of the state, these T-shirts also directly confront state-sponsored civic ostracism.

While the Islamic fashion scape, like the broader fashion industry, is dominated by women's styles, some of the more dynamic fashion trends that young Muslims are creating on the ground are for and by young men. These are male styles of dressing that incorporate urban and hip hop inspired fashions such as large white T-shirts and sneakers

¹³ Moors and Tarlo, "Introduction," p. 139.

¹⁴ Emma Tarlo, *Visibly Muslim*, p. 217.

¹⁵ www.hijabman.com.

with clothing items from Muslim-majority regions, such as the *izar*, or male wrap skirt. As seen in major urban centers like Philadelphia in the first decades of the twenty-first century, a young Muslim man might be found wearing a denim *izar* over capri-length pants, matching Air Jordans, and a beard under a short-brim hat or a more simple ensemble of a *thobe* (long-sleeved long garment) paired with Timberland boots and a puffy vest. These choices epitomized the hybridity at the heart of young Muslim fashion, which links identifications of race, age, class, gender, region, and religion. These styles underscore religious commitments as each is tied to prophetic tradition. Yet they are also specific iterations of the prophetic tradition for male dress as articulated through Salafist or other literalist approaches commonly found in urban centers in the United States. This highlights the important role of the local in shaping Muslim youth culture. Yet these styles are also seen in other cities around the nation and around the ummah, underscoring U.S. Muslim youth culture's ties to transnational Muslim discourse. The use of denim, Timberlands, short brims, and white T-shirts further demonstrates that Islamic fashion, like Muslim youth culture more generally, is not only tied to particular notions of religiosity but also "related to national, regional and ethnic belonging."¹⁶

NEW AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Another location wherein Muslim youth culture has made critical interventions is new media. This new media ecology includes social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube and activities like blogging and social activism. Scholarship of "Islam online" has traced the sociocultural impact of new technology on individual and communal Muslim identities, notions of religious authority and authenticity, and transformations in the Muslim public square(s).¹⁷ For Muslim youth, new media platforms function as promising spaces for religious self-making and cultural (re)definition. At times, social media allow for an expansive conception of "community" that engages a "virtual ummah" of "collective Muslim identities."¹⁸ Yet, as Muslim youth connect to their counterparts across difference in the "virtual ummah,"

¹⁶ Moors and Tarlo, "Introduction," p. 136.

¹⁷ Dale Eickelman and Jon Anderson, eds., *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*, 2nd ed. (Bloomington, 2003); Gary Bunt, *iMuslims: Rewiring the House of Islam* (Chapel Hill, 2009).

¹⁸ Mohammad el-Nawawy and Sahar Khamis, *Islam Dot Com: Contemporary Islamic Discourses in Cyberspace* (New York, 2009).

they also police boundaries of “Muslimness” that remain grounded in local Muslim contexts in which race and gender are central.

Young Muslims use social media sites as their non-Muslim peers do: status updates, retweets, “liking,” posting comments and photos, and generating their own content. In late 2011 a popular YouTube video “Shit Girls Say,” a montage of sayings stereotypically associated with young white women, inspired spin-off videos using the meme “Shit X says” or “Stuff X says” to parody a wider range of groups like “parents,” “New Yorkers,” and hijabis. Young Muslim women produced videos such as “Stuff Hijabis Say” and “Stuff People Say to Hijabis” and “Stuff MGT Say” that use satire to critique stereotypes signified by the hijab, such as Muslim women are uniquely pious or repressed.¹⁹ These young Muslim women use social media to intervene in a religious and cultural milieu where Muslim women are marginalized. Indeed, while all Muslim youth may feel marginal in many mainstream Muslim community spaces, gender creates an added level of exclusion. Yet new media has the potential to engender more equitable community space. Through humor as well as more serious webzines and dailies, like *AltMuslimah* and *Muslimah Media Watch*, young Muslim women have used new technologies to challenge gender-based exclusion.

Activism through social media extends beyond questions of gender. By 2010, advocacy messaging, like the Twitter hashtags #Jan25, #Syria, #Yemen, and #AllAmericanMuslim as well as Facebook campaigns had become an increasingly popular medium for creating awareness and, to a certain extent, mobilization around specific causes.²⁰ At the intersection of gender, race, religion, and social media was the 2012 campaign “We Are All Abeed.” According to the Chicago-based blogger Hind Makki, this campaign was prompted by an incident where the n-word was used against a student of African descent at an all-girls Muslim high school whose population is predominately Arab. Tying this incident to a pattern of anti-Black racism in the Middle East, the United States, and the American Muslim community, a former student began the “We Are All Abeed” awareness campaign. This is an effort to recuperate the term “abeed” which literally translates as slave and, in the Qur'anic sense, references servitude to God but has historically been used as a

¹⁹ MGT is short for Muslim Girls Training and General Civilization Class (MGT-GCC), an auxiliary unit of the NOI that is dedicated to the religious education and socialization of female members.

²⁰ #Jan25, #Yemen, and #Syria were forms of virtual support for antiregime efforts in Egypt, Yemen, and Syria, respectively. #AllAmericanMuslim trended in support of the 2011 TLC docu-series, *All American Muslim*.

derogatory term for Black people. Like other youth-generated social media campaigns, there was a Facebook page, which had links to purchase campaign-related merchandise including T-shirts and wristbands, which have become icons of an uneasy contemporary marriage between consumerism, fashion, and activism. This campaign, spearheaded by a young woman, engaged intra-Muslim discourses around race and gender but also participated in the broader culture of youth-generated social media activism.

Social media was also the site of youth-generated responses to revelations of a New York City Police Department (NYPD) secret surveillance program targeting American Muslims by ethnicity and religious practice. In response, the Yale Muslim Students Association created the Facebook page "Call the NYPD," which mocked the alleged threat posed by Muslim college students through photos of individuals holding signs with phrases such as "I am a ... Blonde, Call the NYPD." The hashtag #mynypdfile derided NYPD surveillance of Muslims, with quips such as the tweet by @msentropy: "Sir, she's been known to talk publicly about ijihad. Sounds close enough to jihad to me. #mynypdfile." This online social activism by young Muslims contradicts the academic scholarship and broader popular discourse that tends to view the online activities of young U.S. Muslims only in terms of potential terrorist recruitment.²¹

While "U.S. Muslim youth online" remains an understudied topic, our preliminary research suggests that one major consequence of new media is that it has helped to decenter the mosque, typically dominated by parent culture, as the primary setting for the authentication of Muslim identity and religious authority. Although new technologies were initially contested by parents and other agents of "tradition," it was not long before even the most "traditional" leaders were blogging, tweeting, and updating their Facebook pages. Thus there are complex and, at times, tense negotiations between youth culture and parent culture online.

These negotiations were at the fore of online debates on the multimedia blog, "30 Mosques." Each day during the month of Ramadan, a duo of twenty-something South Asian American Muslims, Aman Ali and Bassam Tariq, would visit a different mosque to break their fasts and later post a blog entry that documented their observations of the local mosque culture. The project, which began in 2010 and was continued

²¹ David Drissel, "Online Jihadism for the Hip-Hop Generation: Mobilizing Diasporic Muslim Youth in Cyberspace," *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*, 2:4 (2007): 7–20.

in 2011, received international media attention and was praised by Muslims and non-Muslims alike for showcasing the U.S. Muslim community as diverse rather than monolithic. Yet this showcase did not go unchallenged by other young Muslims. Some commentators read the visits with an openly gay Imam in 2010 and in 2011 to an Ahmadi mosque as progressive and others as an attempt to legitimate transgressions. Likewise, some hailed their effort to document women's spaces in mosques. Others, such as blogger Peter Gray, argued the visit was a violation of women's privacy and that their commentary on what they saw as inequities in the women's space was a smug performance of patriarchy.

This online back and forth reflects a transposition of the offline tug of war over the boundaries of "Muslimness." The public sphere of cyberspace is a locale of contestation. Parent culture and its youthful advocates seek to recenter the locus of power and authority back in the hands of traditional leaders, as agents of boundary-pushing Muslim youth cultures seek unconventional sources. New and social media have created alternative spaces for religious dialogue and cultural production, yet young Muslims have not completely shifted the centers of power and authority, and not all desire to do so. Whatever the perspective, young Muslim engagement with new media stands as evidence of the ability of Muslim youth cultures to shift the terms of engagement.

CONCLUSION

This chapter is in no way meant to be exhaustive, as the cultural production of young American Muslims is dynamic and changing rapidly. However, the specific examples provided here do illustrate a common thread found in all forms of Muslim youth culture: identity. Race or ethnicity, gender, and class as well as the expectations of parent culture, long-standing religious debates, and contemporary geopolitics frame the negotiation of identity by young U.S. Muslims. At the convergence of all these factors is contemporary Muslim youth culture, which, by way of resistance, alignment, and ambivalence, young Muslims have and will continue to shape their social worlds.

Further Reading

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