Keeping cool, staying virtuous: Social media and the composite habitus of young Muslim women in Copenhagen

Engl. transl.: Keeping cool, staying virtuous: Social media and the composite habitus of young Muslim women in Copenhagen

# Keywords

* Social media
* Young Muslim women
* honor
* reputation
* habitus
* field

# Details

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Copenhagen

## Topics

* Social mediation
* Internet usage, practices and engagement
* Access, inequalities and vulnerabilities

## Sample

"The material is based on fourteen months fieldwork with young Muslim women between 20 and 30 years-of-age living in a social housing area in Copenhagen"
"8 months of fieldwork “in situ” between February and September 2014, which included both participant observation and collaborative video-making, alongside 6 months of online fieldwork conducted via smartphones and the social media platforms that the women use on these, including most importantly Snapchat, WhatsApp, Facebook, text messaging and telephone conversation"

# Abstract

This article builds on long-term anthropological fieldwork among young Muslim women in a social housing area in Copenhagen. It explores how morality, modesty, and gender- and generational relations become reconfigured in the ways in which young women use the Smartphone and social media to navigate their everyday lives. I focus on love and marriage, the imperatives of appearing cool among peers, and keeping the family’s honour intact through the display of virtuous behaviour. Building on Bourdieu’s writings on the split habitus, I introduce the term composite habitus, as it underscores the aspect of a habitus that is split between (sometimes contradictory) composite parts. The composite habitus of the young women is more than a hysteresis effect (where disposition and field are in mismatch and the habitus misfires), as the composite habitus also opens up to a range of possible strategies. I present examples of how intimate and secret uses of Smartphones have played out and show how social media have allowed for multiple versions of the self through managing public and secret relationships locally and across long distances

# Outcome

introduction of the term 'composite habitus'
"the uses of social media mirror, augment, and aid the conditions for – and are productive of – a composite habitus"
presentation of "empirical examples of how young Muslim women draw upon and use social media to enable both legitimate contact and “clandestine” relationships in order, thus, to “augment their social being” in different ways and to pursue otherwise seemingly incompatible strategies, namely, aspirations for love and maintaining the family’s honour through the public display of virtuous behaviour. Discreetly, these young women negotiate morality between themselves and their girlfriends, experiment and push boundaries, and extend the “range of possibilities” through the use of social media: keeping cool and staying virtuous."