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Abstract

Recorded Scholarly Presentation

Major: Religion

Faculty Mentor: amy carr

The New Forms of Religion in African American Pop Culture

Teonna Wade

Over the last decade, African American women have become less religious. This group has shifted their religious beliefs to a more multidimensional perspective. Spirituality has been popular amongst Black women with the help of music, films, and social media. It involves the practice of worshiping yourself versus the God of an orthodox religion. With the help of technology, Black women from different upbringings have been able to connect and share their spiritual journey. This project will examine Spirituality in pop culture and the significance it has on Black culture today. Can this new practice become its own sector alongside orthodox religions? I decided to research a Facebook group called "Magically Spiritual Black Women". This group is among the social media outlets that have made Spirituality popular. I've found that African American women include African traditions and culture into their Spirituality. Many feel connected to African traditions because it helps them understand their identity. It allows them to find their ancestry and learn more about their roots. It was interesting to learn that Spirituality gave them access to a heritage they couldn't find without it. Also, I learned that many followers of Spirituality believe it differs from religion. Several believe religion is used for control and to enforce rules, whereas Spirituality emphasizes freedom and allows followers to move at their own pace. Individuality is important within followers' Spirituality journey. I'm learning that Spirituality has the capacity to become its own sector alongside orthodox religions.