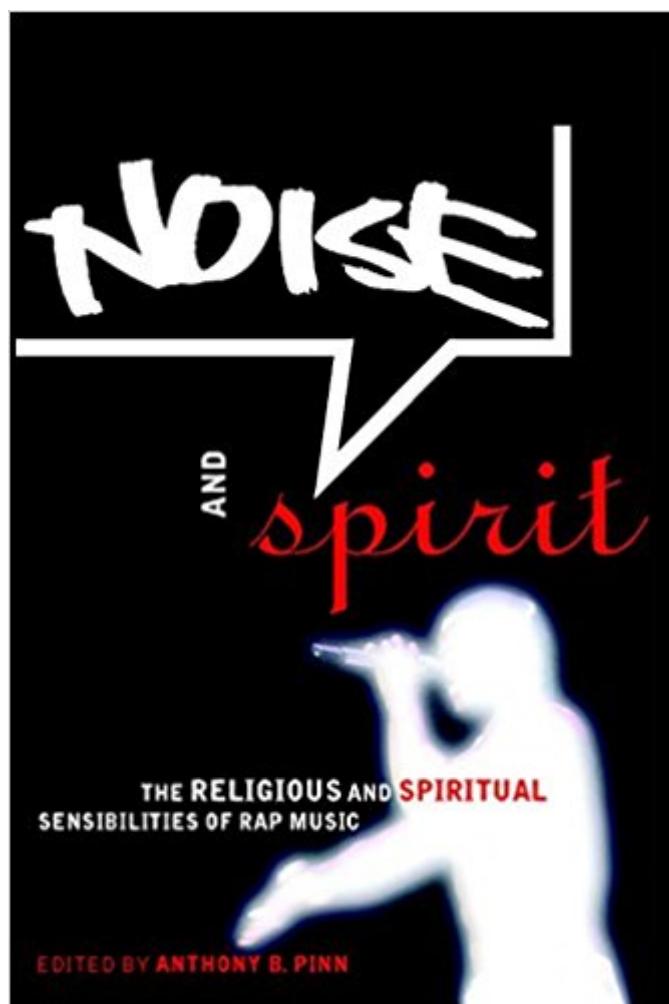


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Noise And Spirit: The Religious And Spiritual Sensibilities Of Rap Music



Synopsis

Rap music is often seen as a Black secular response to pressing issues of our time. Yet, like spirituals, the blues, and gospel music, rap has deep connections to African American religious traditions. Noise and Spirit explores the diverse religious dimensions of rap stemming from Islam (including the Nation of Islam and Five Percent Nation), Rastafarianism, and Humanism, as well as Christianity. The volume examines rap's dialogue with religious traditions, from the ways in which Islamic rap music is used as a method of religious and political instruction to the uses of both the blues and Black women's rap for considering the distinction between God and the Devil. The first section explores rap's association with more easily recognizable religious traditions and communities such as Christianity and Islam. The next presents discussions of rap and important spiritual considerations, including on the topic of death. The final unit wrestles with ways to theologize about the relationship between the sacred and the profane in rap.

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Customer Reviews

"Cutting through the din of confusion and controversy surrounding hip-hop, Noise and Spirit illuminates the spiritual struggles at the root of the music and the culture. The essays collected here brim with the energy of discovery and engagement, and leave no doubt that Tupac, KRS-One, and Queen Latifah are carrying on the tradition of Al Green, Mahalia Jackson, and the 'black unknown bards' who forged a redemptive vision in the fires of a furnace that continues to burn." -Craig Werner, author of Higher Ground: Aretha, Stevie, Curtis and America's Quest for

Redemption—“Both a scholarly book and a pleasurable read.”—QBR—“In moving beyond the common misconception that rap is simply a secular expression, this volume offers a refreshing discussion about the tensions that exist between the sacred and profane. It foregrounds the spiritual and religious dimensions of rap music and the genre’s interpolation and critique of Buddhist, Islamic, Christian, Rastafarian, and Humanist thought in an unprecedented way.”—Cheryl L. Keyes, author of *Rap Music and Street Consciousness*—“Noise and Spirit is a thought provoking collection of empirical works that ultimately offer even the most reluctant of scholars a great vantage point from which to build on a continuing examination into, and further discussion of, the fragile and often contentious alliance between rap and religion. This is clearly a definitive work worth reading.”—The Sociology of Religion

Anthony B. Pinn is Agnes Cullen Arnold Professor of Humanities and Professor of Religious Studies at Rice University, where he also serves as the executive director of the Society for the Study of Black Religion. His books include *Varieties of African-American Religious Experience*, *Why Lord?: Suffering and Evil in Black Theology*, and *By These Hands: A Documentary History of African-American Humanism* (NYU Press, 2001).

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