In this class students will explore how African American ideas about religion have not been confined solely to the church, the mosque, or the synagogue. Black Americans have also expressed their thoughts about life’s purpose through literature, humanistic philosophy, social criticism, poetry, and live theater. In these secular spaces, beyond the four walls of “the church,” the meaning of religion is frequently refashioned and its importance called into question. Our course will begin with black religion during the colonial period and will work through to contemporary issues faces African American religious identity.

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