



Black and Not Baptist: Nonbelief and Freethought in the Black Community

Don Barbera

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Known only to each other, they walk among us, invisible and undetected. Now, the secret is out! Atheists exist in the African American community. In the African American community there is an unspoken rule to never air dirty laundry in public, and for years the inner workings of the black community stayed hidden beneath a veil of dark silence, but with integration came a mingling of the races and now few secrets remain. Now, there is one there is one less. Not only do black nonbelievers exist, they walk unnoticed among the "true-believers" along with a host of other religious skeptics and freethinkers. Any hint of atheism or freethought in the African American community remain virtually invisible, camouflaged by indignant denial and indistinct expressions, which help conceal clear atheistic, agnostic or freethought connections . Despite more than 90% of African Americans claiming Christianity, *Black and Not Baptist* explores how there is a significant chasm between belief and behavior with a searing look at the statistics for adultery, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, gambling and other social problems in both the white and black communities. In the manner of Norm Allen's *African American Humanism: An Anthology*, *Black and Not Baptist* exposes another side of the black religious experience with the individual stories of black atheists and agnostics, including a historical and current listing of black freethinkers and nonbelievers similar to Warren Allen Smith's *Who's Who in Hell*.

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