

Public Abstract

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Graduation Term:WS 2007

Department:Sociology

Degree:MA

Title:Branding Faith: Object and Consumerism in Religious Identity Construction

In this thesis I theorize about the potentially negative affects of competition among Evangelical groups in their attempts to attain members on a college campus. I hypothesize that in order to draw the attention of potential members, religious groups will offer "quick-fix" solutions to problems of everyday life which, due to their unsatisfactory nature, will result in either church-hopping or constant changes in religious identity. To observe these processes and investigate an understudied aspect of religious life, I look for how objects come to be a part of, or resist, tendencies towards church-hopping and simplistic short-term solutions. Contrary to my expectations, I found through photo-elicitation interviews and non-participant observation of one Evangelical group that members of the religious group I studied created long-term solutions, community, and a sense of wholeness in their lives through objects.