



Apr 16th, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

The Internet and Neopaganism: A Match Made in Avalon

Austin Buscher
Illinois Wesleyan University

Carole Myscofski, Faculty Advisor
Illinois Wesleyan University

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Oral Presentation O4.3

THE INTERNET AND NEOPAGANISM: A MATCH MADE IN AVALON

Austin Buscher and Carole Myscofski*
Religion Department, Illinois Wesleyan University

Although the Neopagan, Witchcraft, and Wiccan movements have started to gradually move from bearing the title of "cults" toward being considered legitimate new religious movements by the general public, they still face some difficulties in the areas of canonization, orthodoxy, and hierarchy. This presentation will examine some of the inherent problems in these new religious movements and will examine how these groups use the Internet as a tool to resolve some of these issues. Although research indicates that the way the Internet is used in a religious context can vary greatly and depends largely on the individual's concept of "cyber space" and their relationship with it, there are some noticeable themes in the way religion, specifically neopaganism, employs the Internet. Specifically, the Internet can be used as a ritual meeting place, a forum to discuss and share ideas, a collection of sacred texts and other pertinent information, or any combination of the above. The way in which the Internet is used as a religious medium depends on the attitude of the religion and of its practitioners; because of this, the Internet is an ideal medium for practitioners of neopaganism.