INTRODUCTION

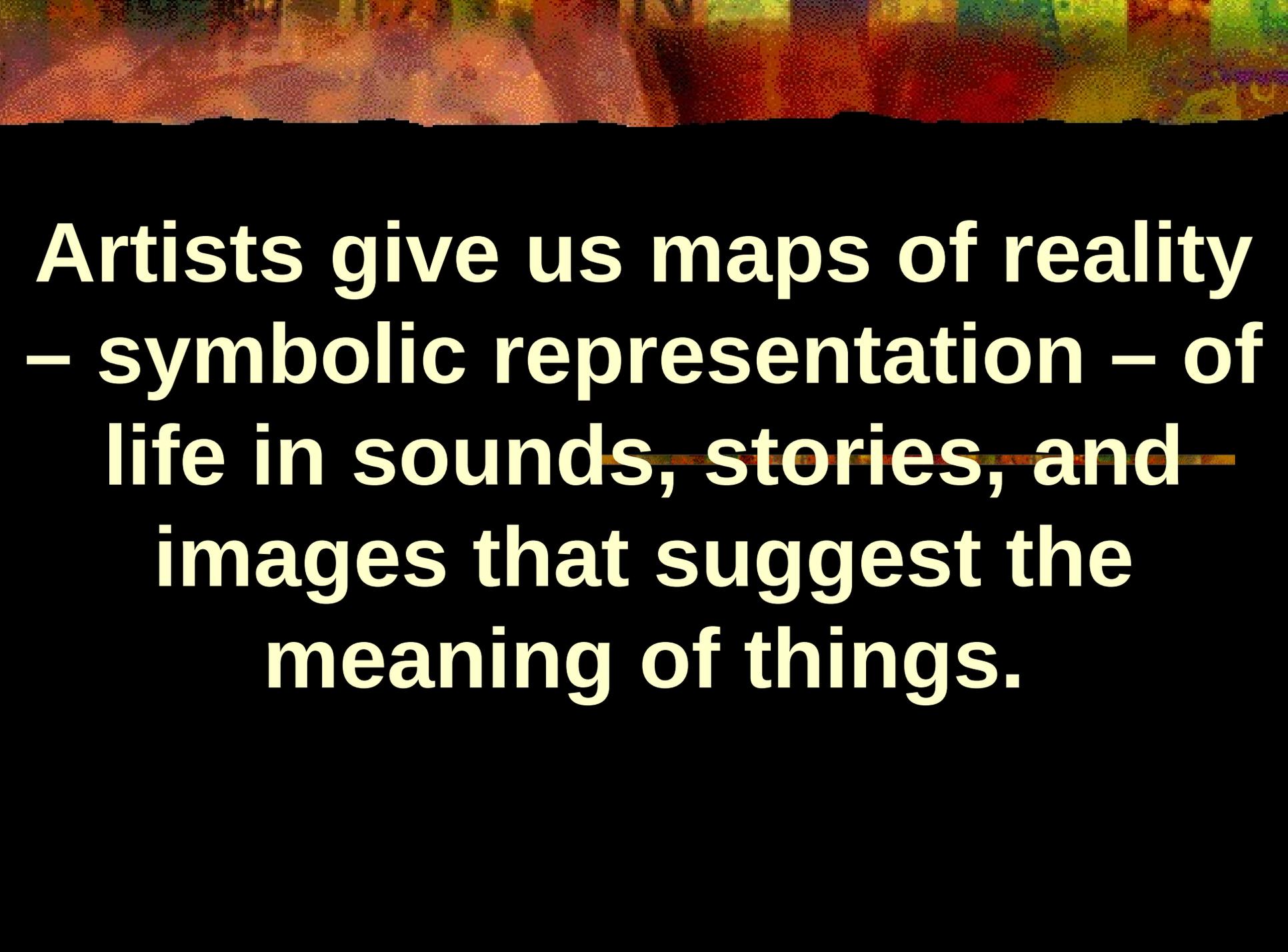**Developing a critical approach helps us reach conclusions about the meaning and value of particular artworks.**
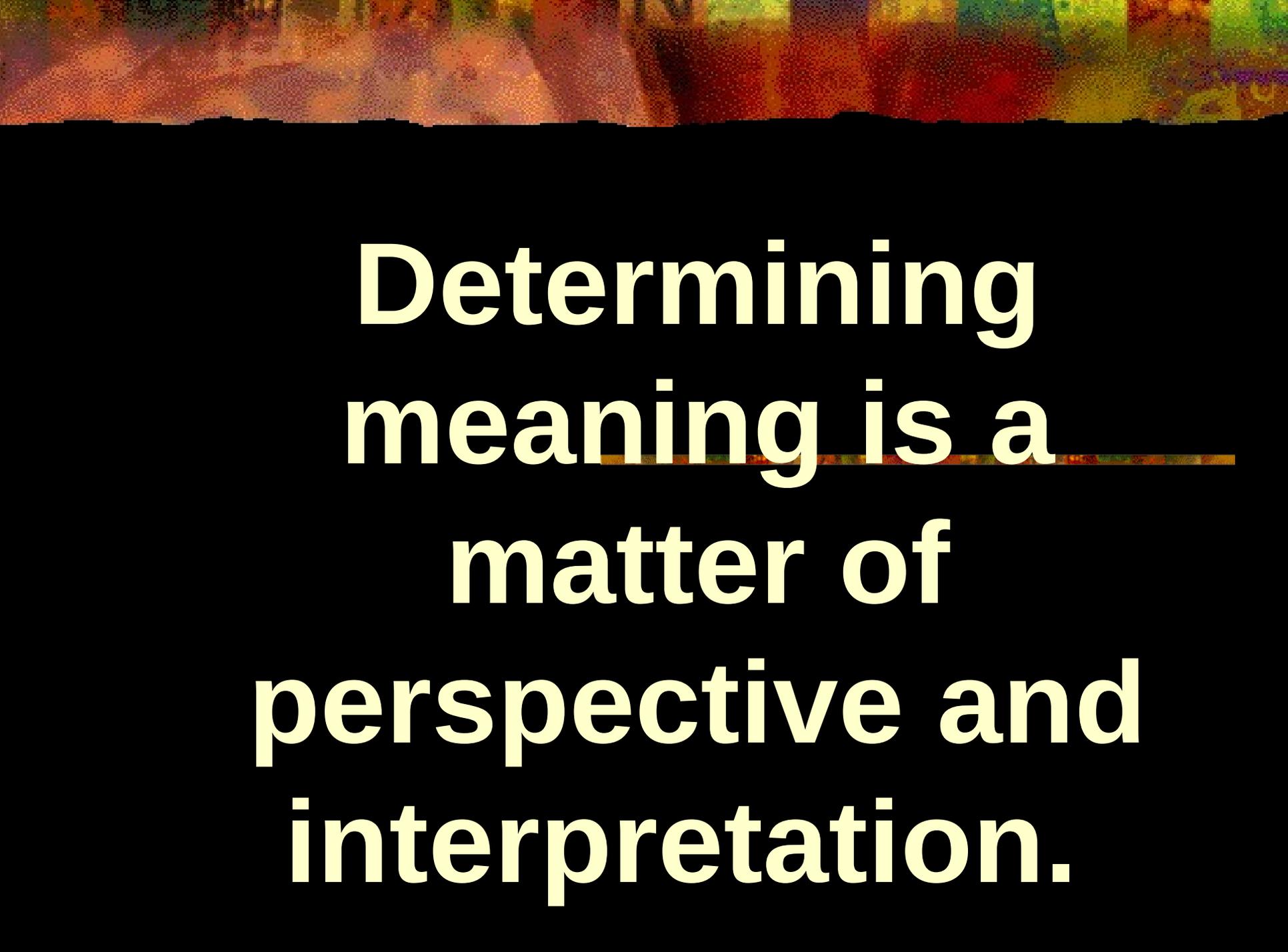
The realm of popular culture can be seen as an arena for argument or debate in which different ideas and perspectives find voice in stories, videos, songs, and pictures.
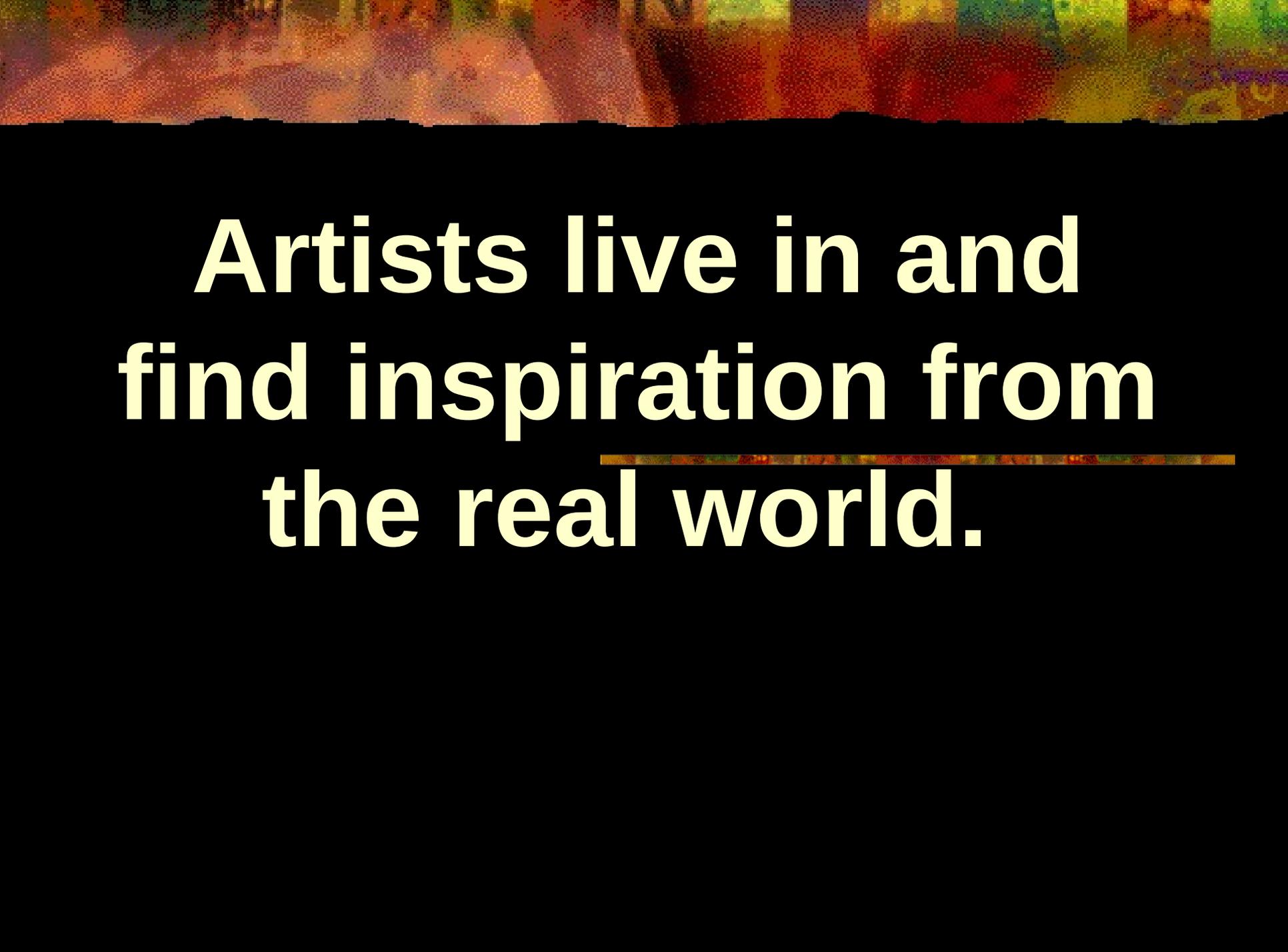
Artists live in and find inspiration from the real world.

Artists give us maps of reality – symbolic representation – of life in sounds, stories, and images that suggest the meaning of things.

Determining meaning is a matter of perspective and interpretation.

Popular art embodies meaning for people and contributes to one's cultural orientation.

Christian appraisals are often entangled in the dominant American mythology.
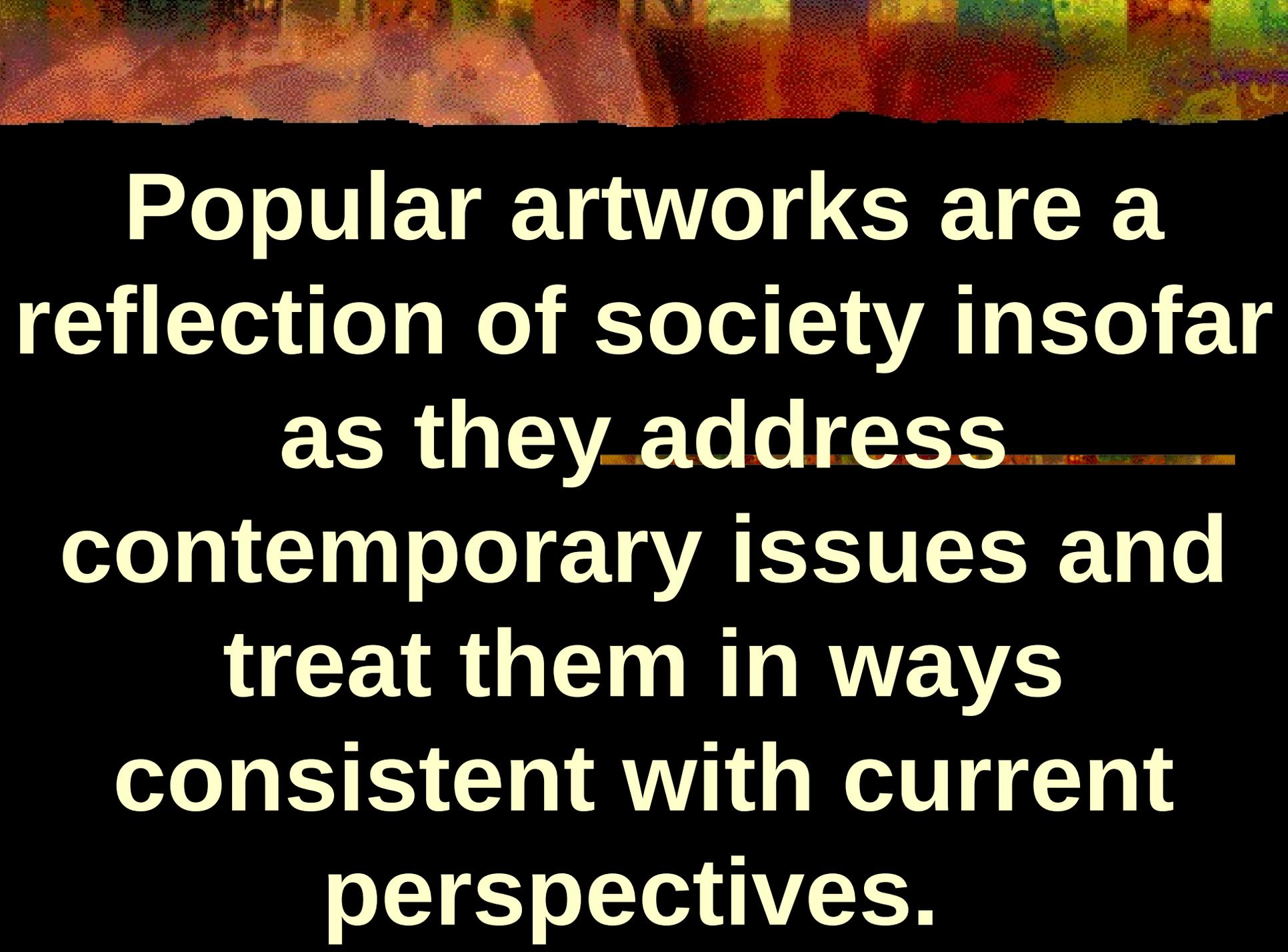
Popular artworks are a reflection of society insofar as they address contemporary issues and treat them in ways consistent with current perspectives.
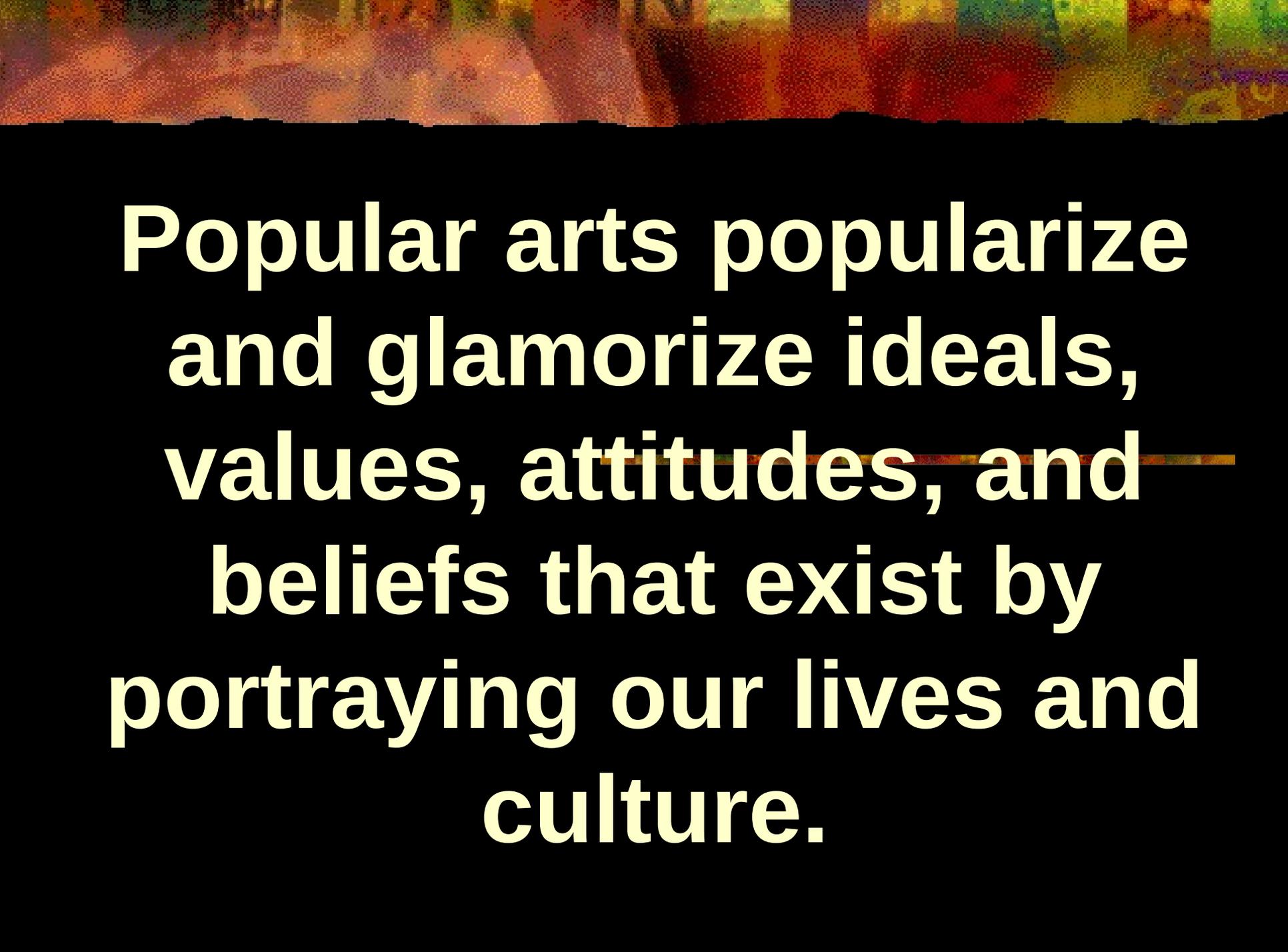
Popular arts popularize and glamorize ideals, values, attitudes, and beliefs that exist by portraying our lives and culture.
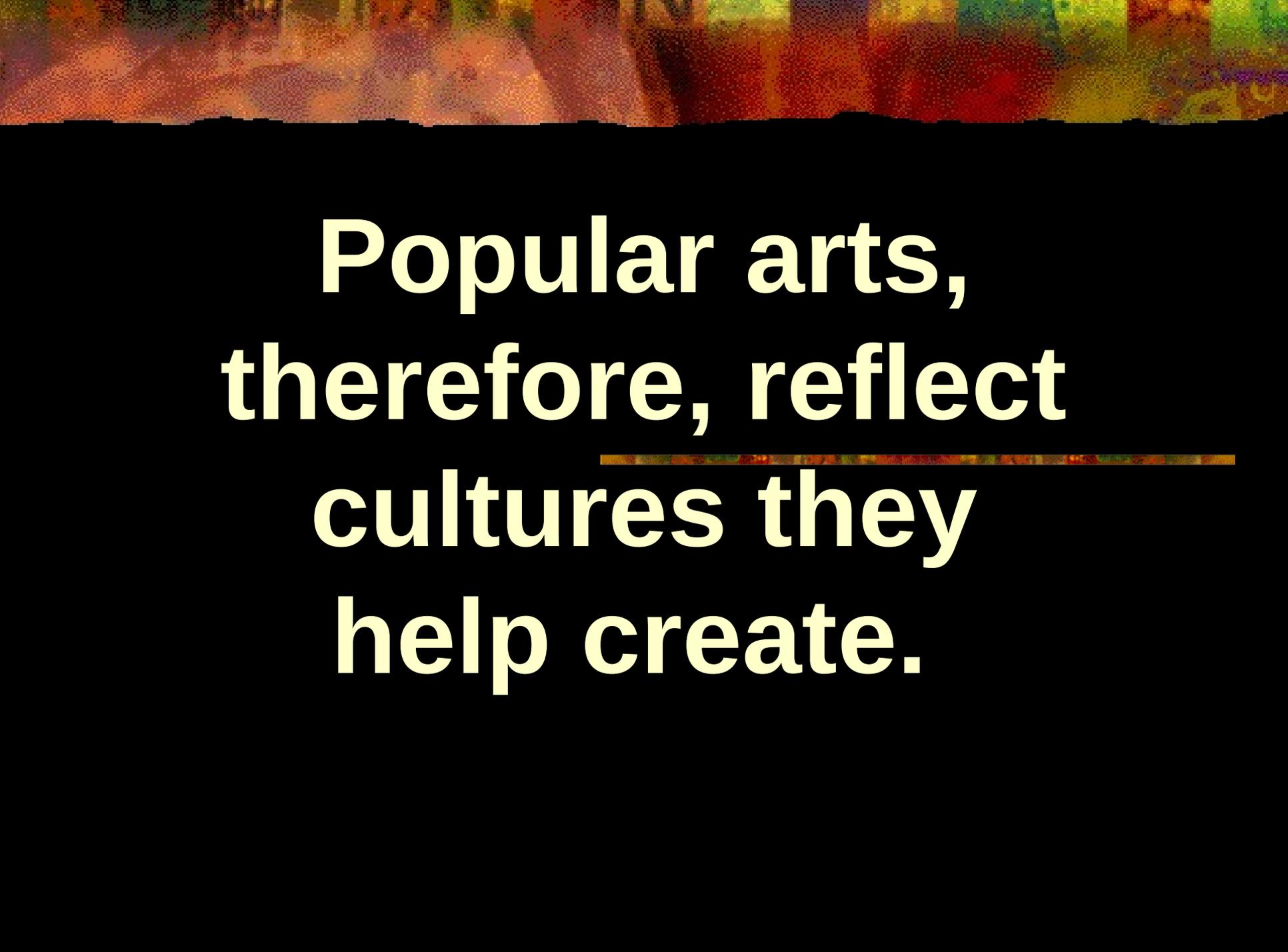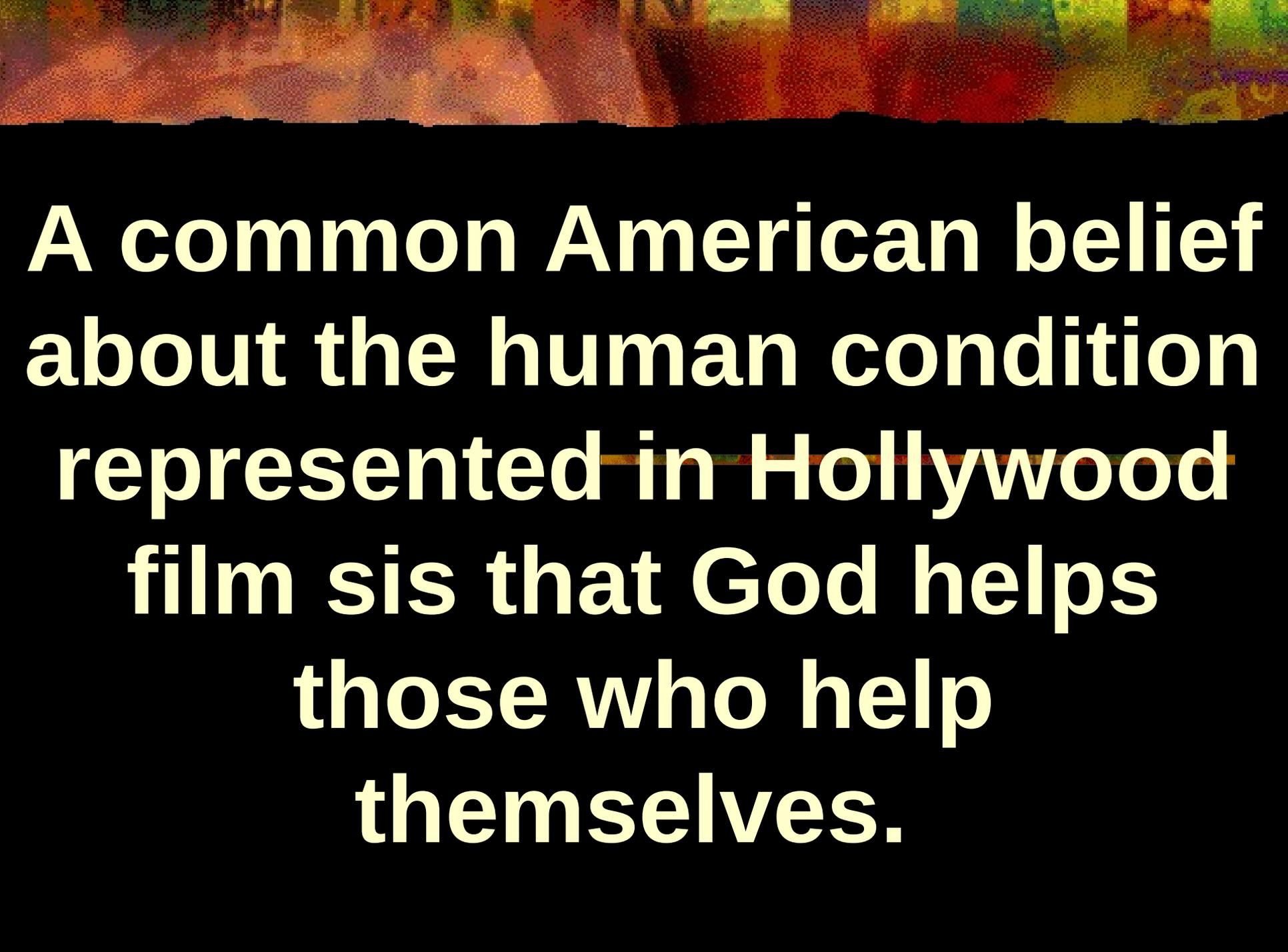
# Popular arts, therefore, reflect cultures they help create.

Cultural landscape refers to the collection of ideals, beliefs, attitudes, values, and assumptions that are represented by theme, character traits and actions, storylines, symbols, and images.
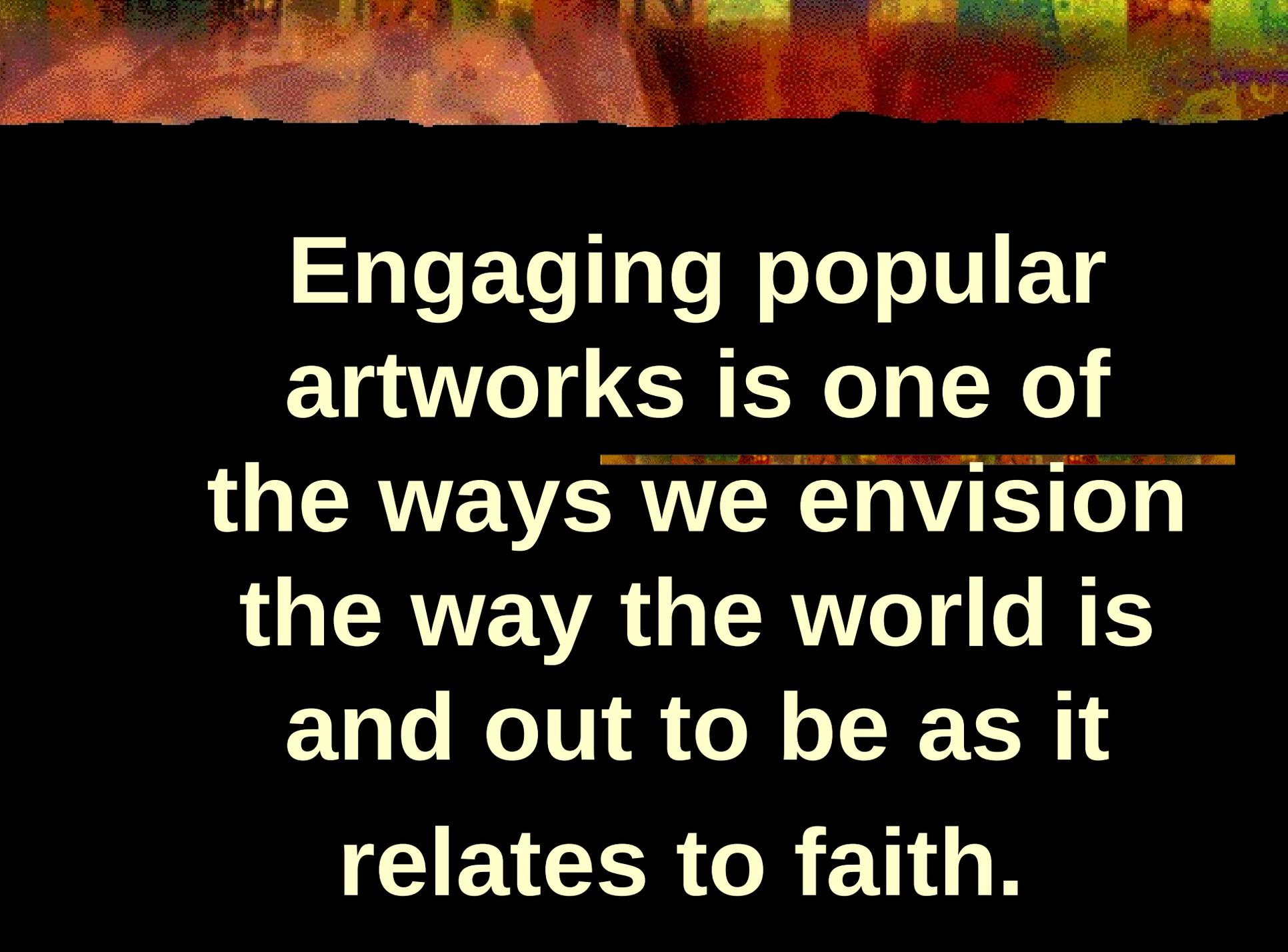
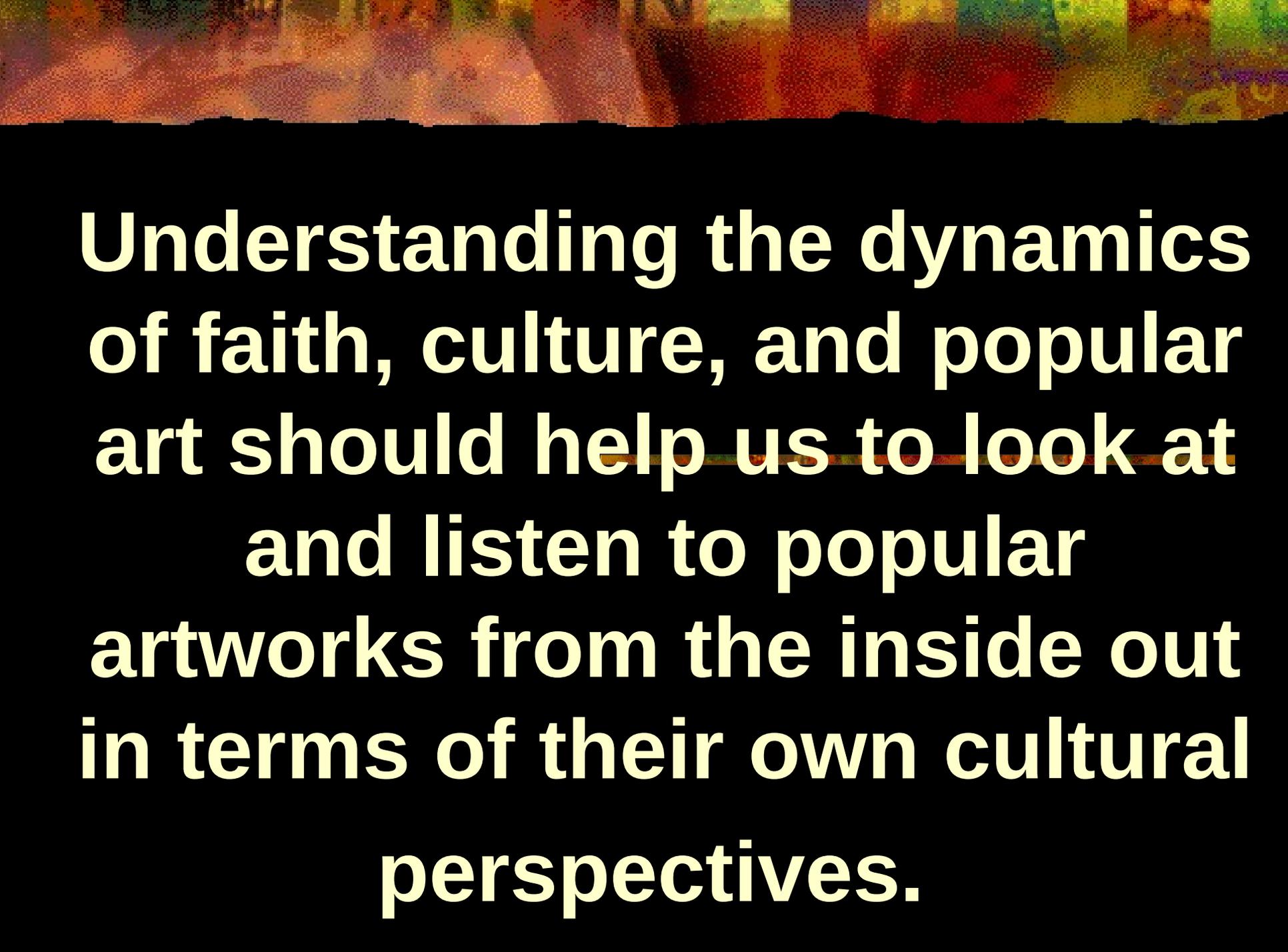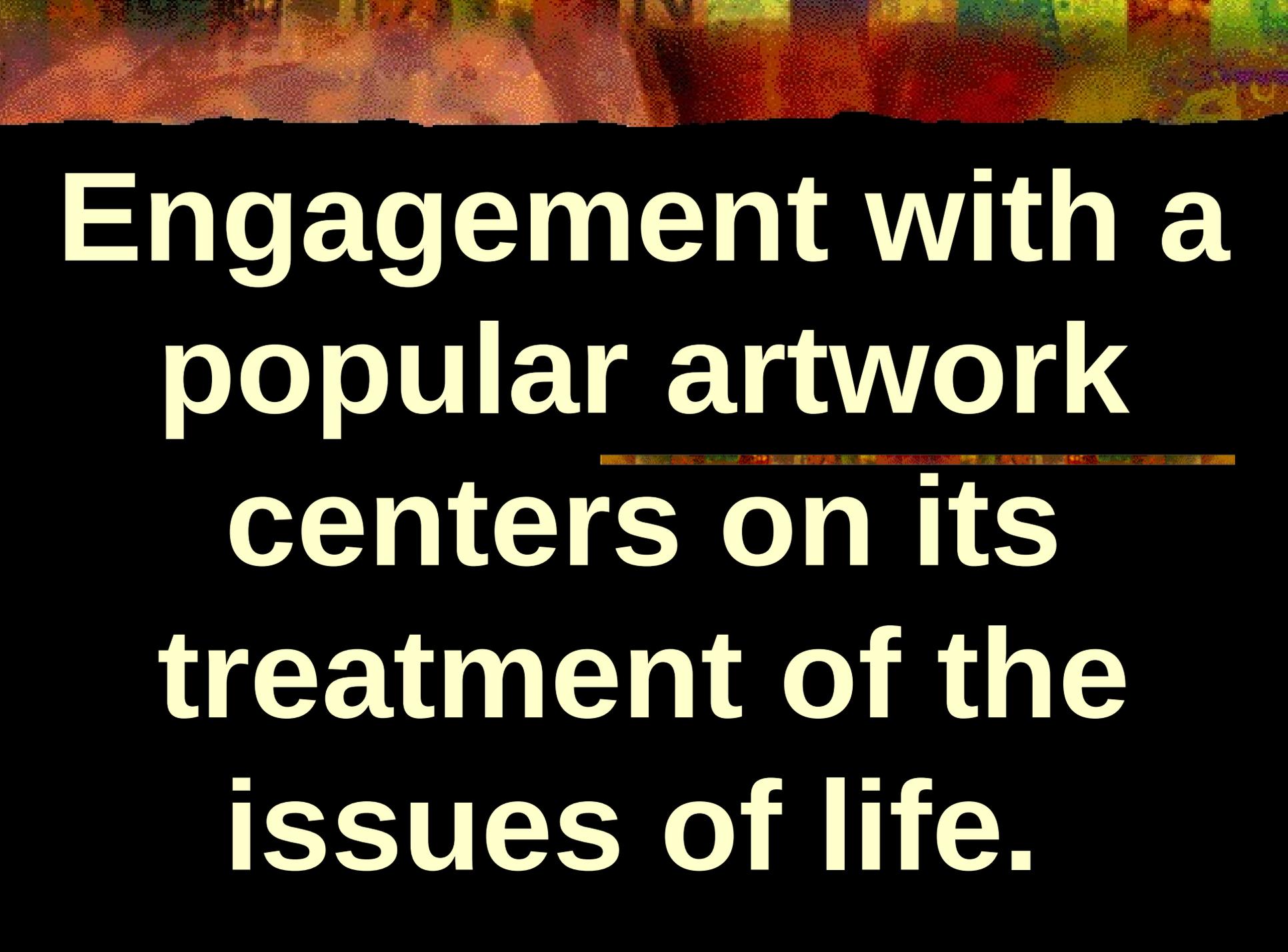**Engaging popular artworks is one of the ways we envision the way the world is and out to be as it relates to faith.**

A common American belief about the human condition represented in Hollywood film sis that God helps those who help themselves.
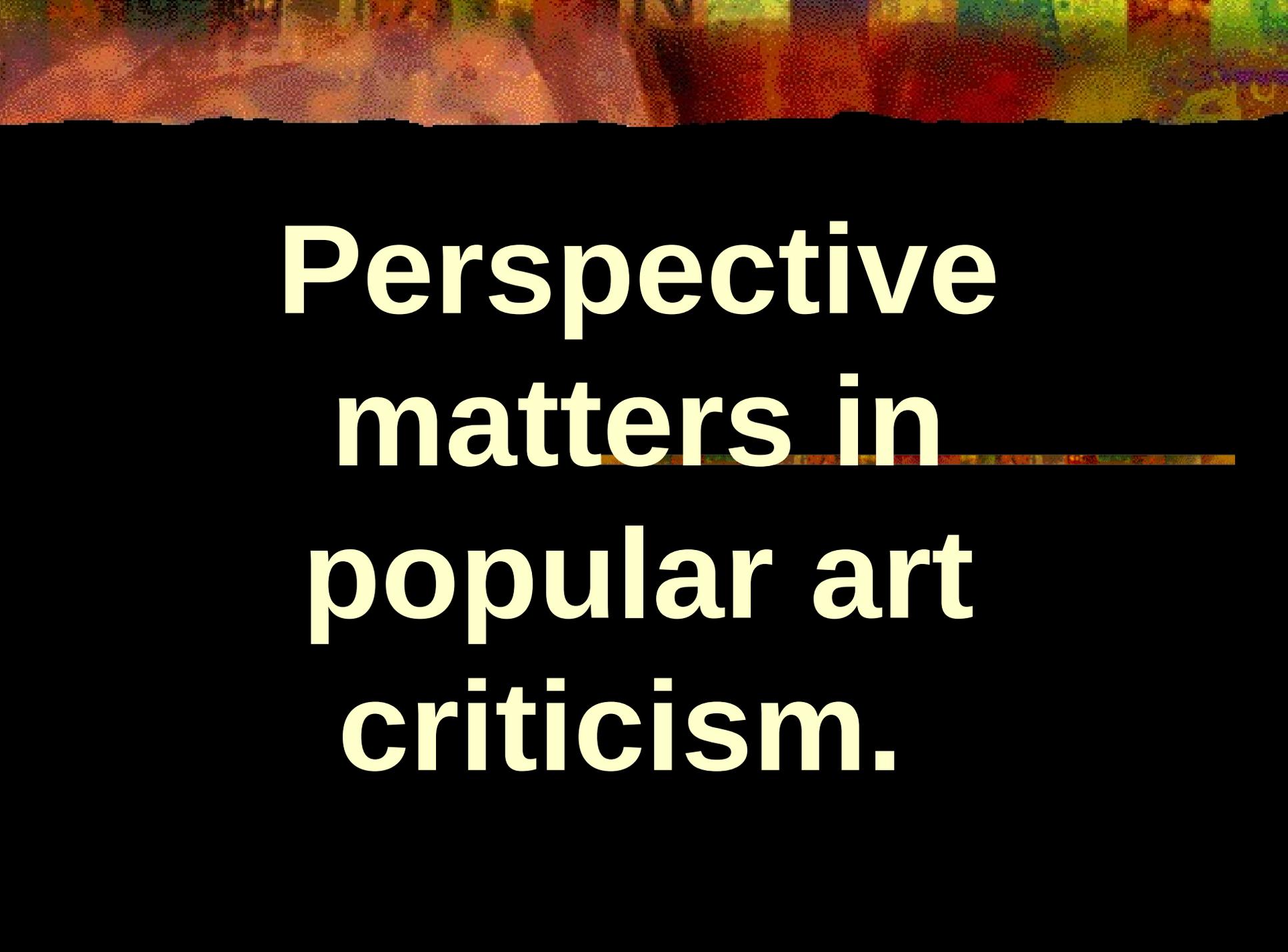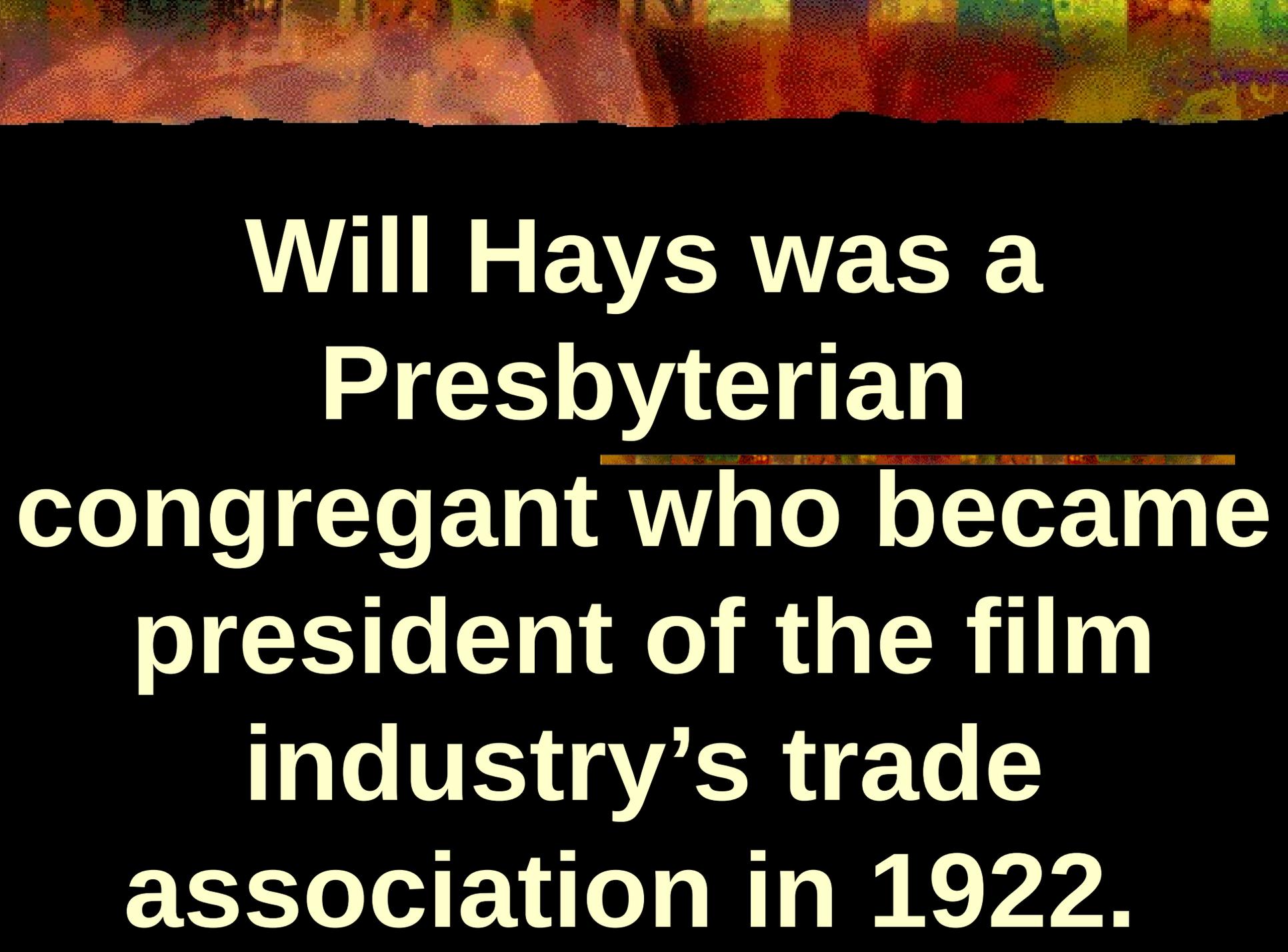
Perspective matters in popular art criticism.

Understanding the dynamics of faith, culture, and popular art should help us to look at and listen to popular artworks from the inside out in terms of their own cultural perspectives.

Engagement with a popular artwork centers on its treatment of the issues of life.

CHAPTER ONE

Will Hays was a Presbyterian congregant who became president of the film industry's trade association in 1922.

In contrast, Catholics formed the Legion of Decency and threatened a massive boycott of movies in the early 1930s.

Ironically, Hays put a Catholic, Joseph Breen, in charge of the Production Code Administration which was an industry agency

**that monitored film content.**

In 1948, the Supreme Court dismantled the film studio monopoly over production, distribution, and exhibition of movies.

In 1968, the Motion Picture Association of America in cooperation with Catholic and Protestant agencies, abandoned the Production Code and adopted the movie rating system still in use today.
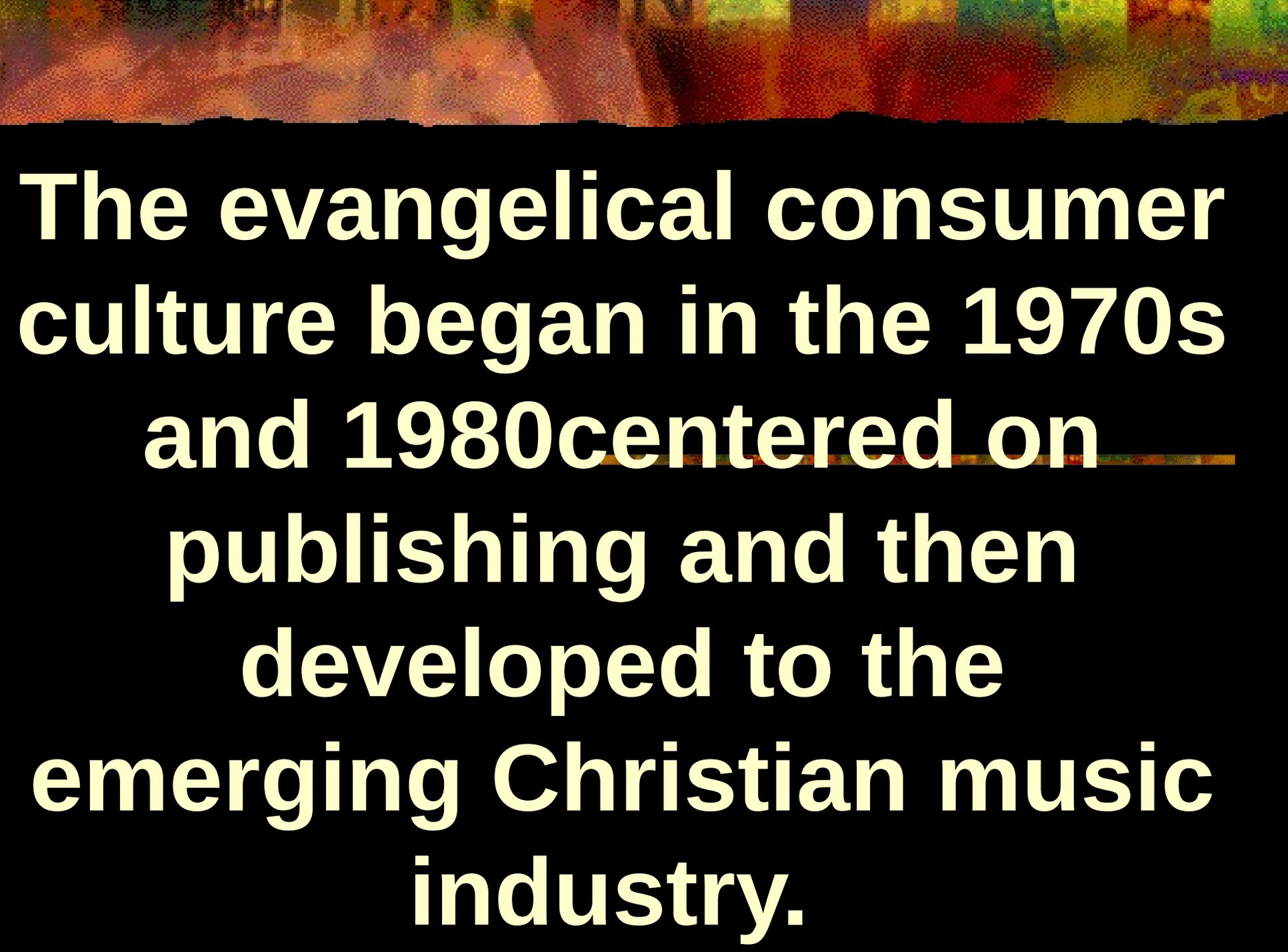
The evangelical consumer culture began in the 1970s and 1980centered on publishing and then developed to the emerging Christian music industry.
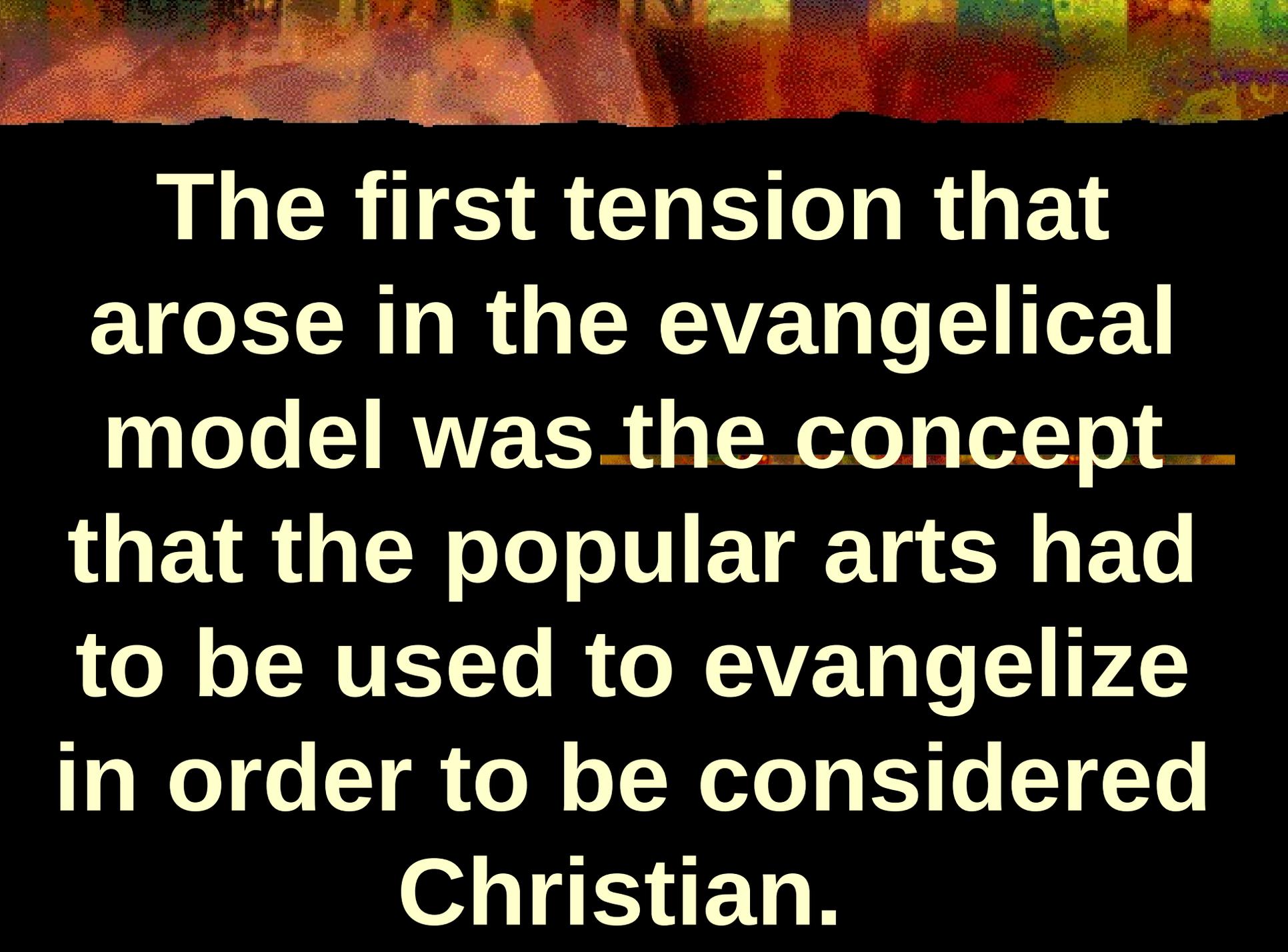
The first tension that arose in the evangelical model was the concept that the popular arts had to be used to evangelize in order to be considered Christian.
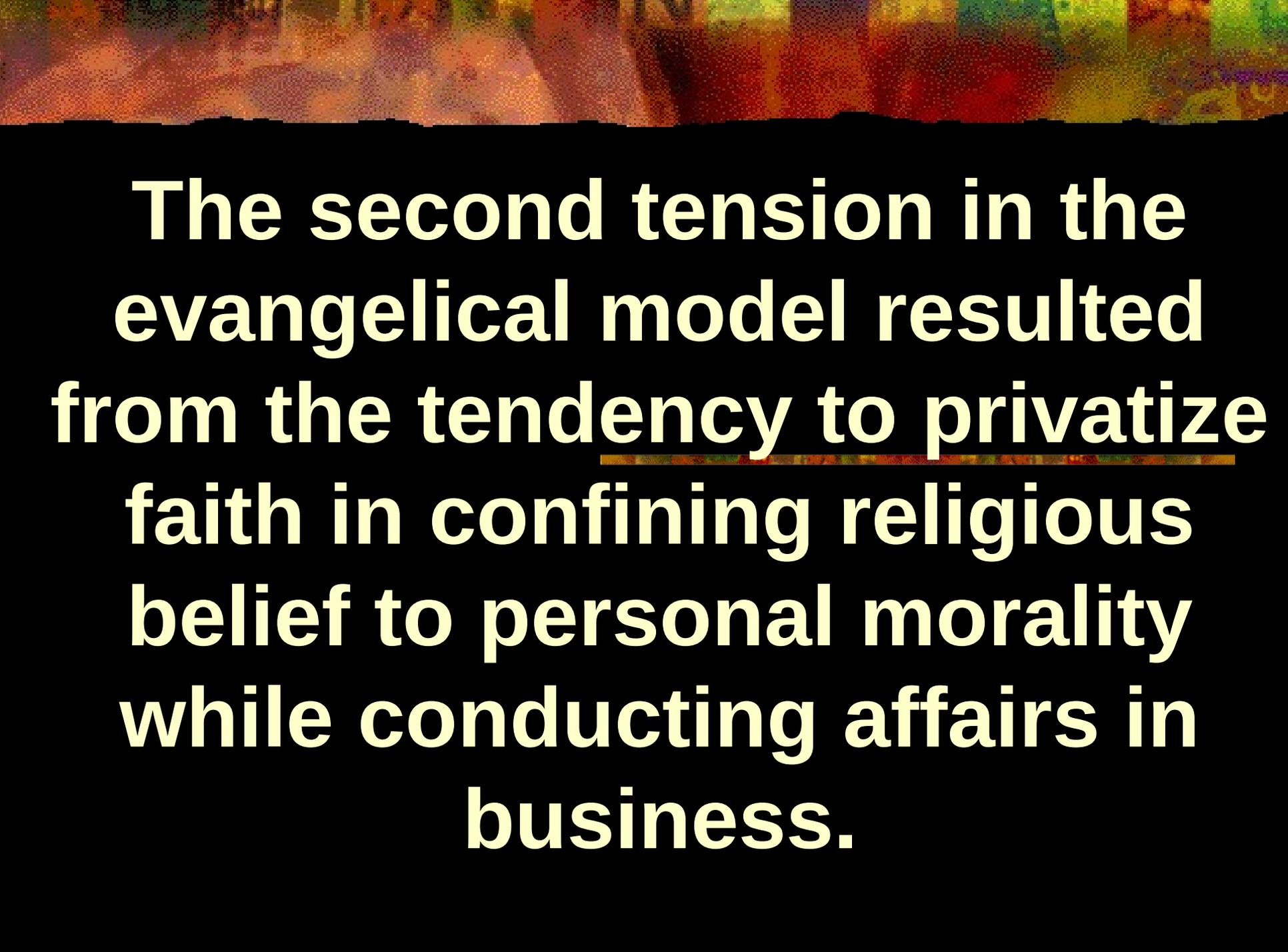
The second tension in the evangelical model resulted from the tendency to privatize faith in confining religious belief to personal morality while conducting affairs in business.

Popular art can be used for multiple confessional purposes – to enhance worship, make statements of belief, exhort believers to faithful living, and/or attempt to evangelize.
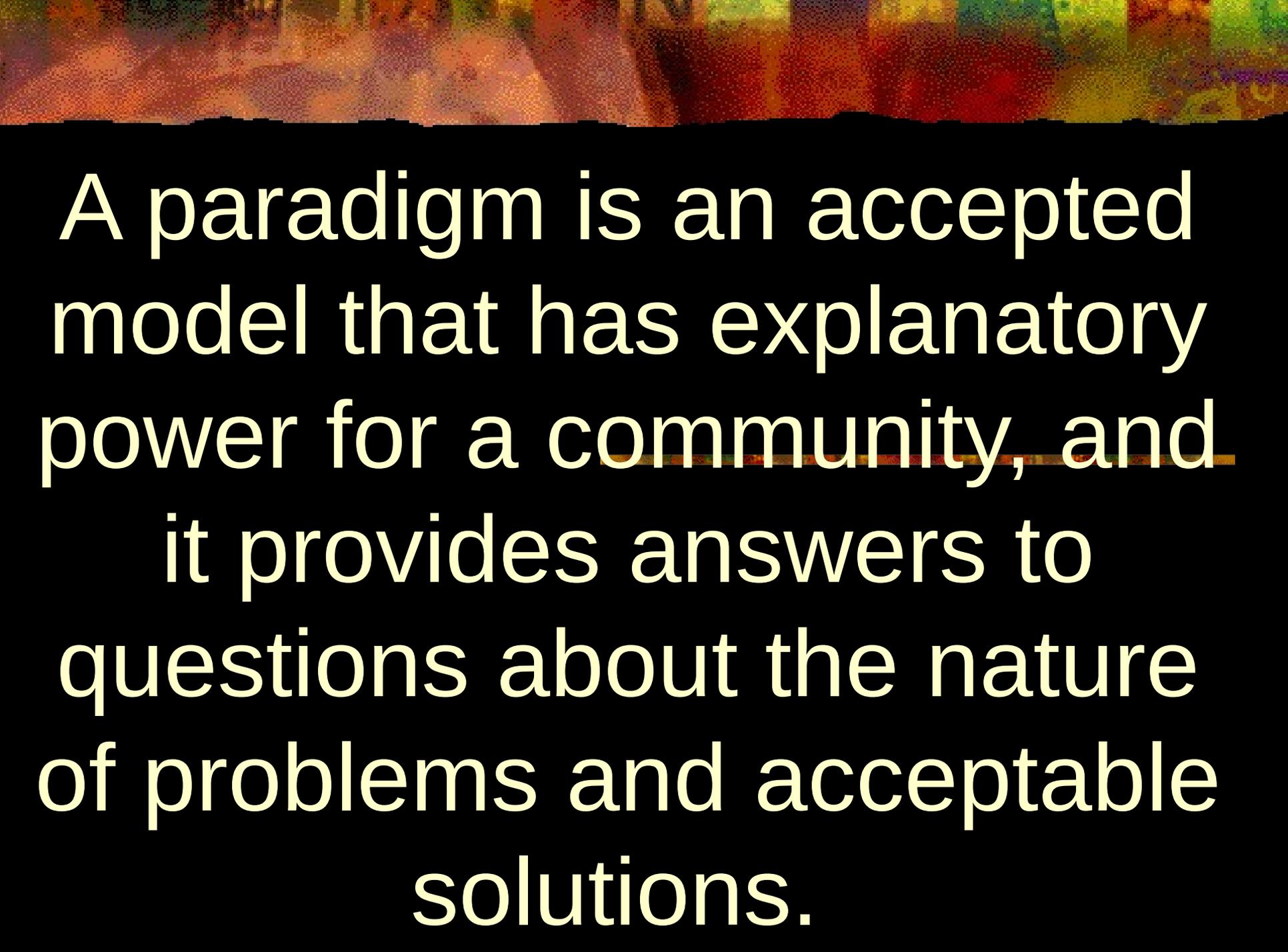
A paradigm is an accepted model that has explanatory power for a community, and it provides answers to questions about the nature of problems and acceptable solutions.