

Manhood in Hip-Hop Culture Conference

Written by Robert ID2452

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From national imaginings to media fantasies, there is a constant imagining of what black men must be. On April 28, Media and Visual Culture: Reading the Black Male Body, a conference presented by Wheelock College, will bring together cutting-edge scholars to debate the historical and contemporary visual images of black men. Several of the topics the panels at the conference will cover include:

- * The impact of hip-hop culture on black and white masculinity today;

- * The black struggle to create authentic media images of the black

Experience in America;

- * How media images shape society's perceptions of race, gender and class,

and;

- * The potential of media to create an open and democratic space for

progressive social change.

The keynote speaker, Professor Herman Gray, is one of the pioneers of African-American media studies in U.S. colleges and author of numerous articles and books on race and the media. His latest book is "Cultural Moves: African Americans and the Politics of Representation." Gray is chair of the Department of Sociology at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

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"Beyond Beats and Rhymes: A Hip-Hop Head Weighs in on Manhood in Hip Hop Culture," a film produced by award-winning documentary filmmaker Byron Hurt will be shown at the conference. The film has received recognition at the Sundance Film Festival, wide national attention and is to be aired on PBS later this year. Following the screening, Hurt will lead a discussion and take questions from the audience.

Additional panelists include such respected media scholars as Dr. Joyce Hope Scott, Dr. Keith Harris, Dr. Imani Perry, and Dr. Mark Anthony Neal.

Wheelock College's American Studies Department has created this conference to expose students to the richly diverse nature of American society through the in-depth study of pop culture, politics, art, history and literature.

"Our goal is to bring a diversity of voices to the dialogue that is going on between the academy and communities of color about the centrality and multi-faceted nature of race in American society," says Dr. Gail Dines, Chair of American Studies at Wheelock College. Well-known within the field for her award-winning book, "Gender, Race, and Class in Media," Dines is considered one of the leading experts on the effects of media on women and men's gender identity.

Media and Visual Culture: Reading the Black Male Body takes place on Friday, April 28, 2006 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Beyond Beats and Rhymes will be screened at 3:45 p.m. followed by a question and answer session with

Hurt. General admission is \$35 for members of the public. The conference costs \$15 for college students and faculty.

Founded in 1888 and located in Boston, MA, Wheelock College is a private institution with the public mission of improving lives of children and their families. The College fulfills this mission by providing a strong education in the arts and sciences and in its professional fields -- education, child and family studies, and social work -- for which its undergraduate and graduate programs are nationally and internationally recognized. Throughout its academic programs and student experience, the College reflects the multicultural dimensions of the communities and countries in which it operates and fosters diverse learning experiences -- all of which contributes

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to the success, leadership, and impact that its graduates enjoy in a wide variety of careers.

For more information on the conference, visit www.wheelock.edu/mvc-conf/

Web site: <http://www.wheelock.edu/>