

Black Thought 2.0 Conference at Duke April 6-7



DURHAM, N.C. – More than a dozen prominent African-American scholars will participate in a conference on the role of social media in cultural studies, April 6-7 at Duke University.

The two-day conference, “Black Thought 2.0: New Media and the Future of Black Studies,” will be held at the John Hope Franklin Center (2204 Erwin Road) and is free and open to the public.

To register, go to the [conference website](#). Parking is available in the Pickins Center visitor lot across the street.

For those unable to attend, the conference will be streamed live on Duke’s Ustream channel, ustream.tv/dukeuniversity and viewers can tweet questions for the panelists using the hashtag #BT2Duke.

S. Craig Watkins, the author of “The Young & the Digital” will deliver the keynote address at 7 p.m. Friday, April 6. Watkins is a communications professor at the University of Texas at Austin and researches young people’s social and digital media behaviors.

The event begins Friday, April 6 with a 5:30 p.m. reception in the John Hope Franklin Center gallery. Watkins will speak in room 240.

The conference continues Saturday at 9 a.m. with panels “The Chocolate Supa Highway: Precursors to Black Social Media,” and “On the Grid: Teaching and Researching in the Digital Age.” Afternoon panels begin at 1:30 with “From Jena, La.

to Tahrir Square: Activism in the Age of Social Media,â€” and at 3 p.m. with â€œThe Twitterati and Twitter-gentsia: Social Media and Public Intellectuals.â€”

â€œIn many ways Black Thought 2.0 is an attempt to encourage black scholars and academics to catch up to our audience,â€” said conference organizer Mark Anthony Neal, a professor of black popular culture at Duke. â€œGiven our rich tradition of public intellectuals, dating back to figures like Fredrick Douglass and Sojourner Truth, it just seems as though new media represents another way for black intellectuals to be in the world. Imagine what W.E.B. Dubois might have done with a Twitter feed?”

Other panelists include Jasiri X, a rapper who recently released â€œTrayvon,â€” a tribute song for the slain teen; author Marc Lamont Hill, an education professor at Columbia University and the host of the nationally syndicated TV One program â€œOur World With Black Enterpriseâ€”; and Moya Bailey, a blogger for Crunk Feminist Collection best known for organizing a protest as an undergraduate student at Spelman College against the rapper Nelly. Several Duke faculty will participate in the conference as well.

The conference is sponsored by Dukeâ€™s Department of African and African American Studies, the John Hope Franklin Center for Interdisciplinary and International Studies, Left of Black and the Office of the Provost.

For more information, go to blackthought.aaas.duke.edu.