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Professor Griff to speak at NKU

Hip-hop star to talk about its origin

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HIGHLAND HEIGHTS - Northern Kentucky University will continue its Black History Month celebration with an appearance by Richard Griffin, better known as Professor Griff of the legendary hip-hop group Public Enemy.

Michael Griffin, NKU's program coordinator for African-American student affairs, said Professor Griff will speak about the "perversion" of hip-hop into what it is today.

"Hip-hop culture is a large part of any campus environment and many of our students don't realize why hip-hop was created," Griffin said. "It was created to be an activist voice to the social ills going on in the early-to-mid 1980s ... in the birthplace of hip-hop - New York City."

Griffin said the positive aspects of hip-hop have "changed and morphed into not so positive." He said hip-hop and rap music are not the same.

"Real hip-hop is still positive," Griffin said. "Hip-hop is more of a culture. Rap is a part of hip-hop culture, but it's not hip-hop."

"Professor Griff will talk about how the two terms are not synonymous. Rap is a part of hip-hop. He's really good at talking about how record companies perverted hip-hop and turned it into what it is now."

Griffin cited as an example the group NWA.

"NWA was a group that talked truthfully and realistic about their lives but turned it into what we call now gangster rap," he said. "NWA mused about police brutality but now it's turned into something very misogynistic toward women and derogatory toward each other."

Professor Griff will speak 6-8 p.m. Friday at NKU's Otto Budig Theater.
