

Dr. Michael Eric Dyson

Scholar, Best-selling Author, Renowned Public Intellectual

Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, named by *Essence* magazine as one of the 40 most inspiring African-Americans – and by *Ebony* magazine as one of the 100 most influential black Americans – is one of the nation's most renowned public intellectuals. The *Philadelphia Weekly* contends that Dyson “is reshaping what it means to be a public intellectual by becoming the most visible black academic of his time.” When one hears Dyson's name, one thinks of the many hats he wears: prolific author, scholar, public intellectual, ordained minister, media commentator and talk radio show host.

In his books, Dyson has taken on some of the toughest and most controversial issues of our day, including Martin Luther King, Jr.'s radical legacy, in *I May Not Get There With You: The True Martin Luther King, Jr.*; the virtues and crises of hip-hop culture in *Holler If You Hear Me: Searching for Tupac Shakur*; racial conflict and black identity in *Race Rules: Navigating the Color Line*; and more recently the political and racial fallout from Hurricane Katrina in *Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster*, and *Debating Race*, a collection of his previously unpublished intellectual encounters--cordial and combative--with some of today's most influential thinkers and politicians.

Dyson has been nominated for the prestigious NAACP Image Award three times – and has won it twice, first in 2004 for his book, *Why I Love Black Women*, and in 2006 for his New York Times bestselling book, *Is Bill Cosby Right? Or Has the Black Middle Class Lost Its Mind?*, which dissects class warfare in black America. Dyson's New York Times bestselling *Mercy, Mercy Me: The Art, Loves and Demons of Marvin Gaye*, was optioned for a major motion picture. His newest book *Know What I Mean? : Reflections on Hip Hop*, returns to the subject of Hip Hop music and culture.

While Dyson has taught at some of the nation's most prestigious universities – including Brown, UNC at Chapel Hill, U. Penn and Columbia – his influence has carried far beyond the academy into prisons and bookstores, political conventions and union halls, and church sanctuaries and lecture stages across the world. Dyson has also taken the media by storm through appearances on *The Today Show*, *Nightline*, *O'Reilly Factor*, *The Tavis Smiley Show* and *Real Time with Bill Maher* – and he has cemented his star appeal on such shows as *Rap City*, *Def Poetry Jam* and *The Colbert Report*. Dyson is also the host of the syndicated radio show, *The Michael Eric Dyson Show*, which addresses social, cultural and political issues in a contemporary vein.

Dyson's powerful scholarship has won him legions of admirers and has made him what *The Washington Post* terms a “superstar professor.” His fearless and fiery oratory led the *Chronicle of Higher Education* to declare that with his rhetorical gifts he “can rock classroom and chapel alike.” Dyson's eloquent writing inspired *Vanity Fair* magazine to describe him as “one of the most graceful and lucid intellectuals writing on race and politics today.”

Dr. Dyson is presently University Professor at Georgetown University where he teaches Religion, English and African American Studies. His legendary rise – from welfare father to Princeton Ph.D., from church pastor to college professor, from a factory worker who didn't start college until he was 21 to a figure who has become what writer Naomi Wolf terms “the ideal public intellectual of our time” – may help explain why author Nathan McCall simply calls Dyson “a street fighter in suit and tie.”