

# IN THE WORDS OF TRINIDAD JAMES

By Pierre Salomon

As a Real Estate agent I do a lot of driving around. When I'm driving I usually listen to a CD, or my radio is off. I don't like listening to radio stations because of the gossip but one day I was feeling brave.

A caller called in the station because he had a complaint. His complaint to the DJ pertained to a white rapper who used the word 'nigga' in his songs. The caller exclaimed that the white rapper was not entitled to say the word. And that he (the caller) in fact was an independent rapper and was going to his studio to make a negative song about the white guy for saying the word.

I couldn't understand why he was so furious about a white guy saying the word, unless he sees his self as a nigga or nigger—ignorant, in the true sense of the word. It amazes me how some of us are still in a slave mentality—what else could explain why WE use the word to describe ourselves. Does he have a right to refute

the white rapper from saying it? Who came up with the word, a white guy or an African?

What about the words cracker, spik, chink, and wet back that we black people use freely to express hatred toward other races? In all my years of listening to radio stations, I have never heard a white, Asian or Spanish person called in the radio and complain about black artists degrading them on their songs. Do you know why? Here are four reasons: One, they don't let things like that get to them. Two, they are bigger than that. Three, their time is too valuable to waste by calling in radio stations to complain about idiots using derogatory terms toward them. And four, they know that by not paying attention to it they are not giving it life.

We all remember the fiasco Seinfeld actor Michael Richards, who played Cosmo Kramer went through after using the N word yet we used the word "cracker" as if

it was going out of style.

It should go out of style. Stop calling [white people] that.

Is there a word that belongs exclusively to a certain race that we black people cannot use? And what right does this white rapper has to say the word?

We live in America, freedom of expression and freedom of speech. If the Negroes that this white rapper is friend with do not mind or get offended when he says the word around them, then it doesn't matter. Obviously he is welcomed and accepted amongst his black friends.

We all want our rights protected, to be able to express ourselves without violations from others. It is the same with others. They want their rights protected, and to be able to express themselves too—without violation.

## —Race Relations—

By Cinnamon West

Common portrayals, such as Asians being good at math, Hispanics being hard workers and African Americans being excellent at sports and entertainment, were emphasized in an hour-long forum, March 14, about media and stereotypes.

Dr. Nicole Lucas, Fayetteville State University sociology professor, inferred through her presentation that people know stereotyping is wrong but yet they continue to allow some prejudice to thrive, without even realizing it.

Dr. Lucas stressed that the mass media have a strong influence on how different ethnicities are perceived. Hollywood roles of the Mammy, Sambo, Zip Coon and Uncle Tom figures have not gone away but simply have just been altered and changed by individuals, such as Tyler Perry and his Madea movies to accommodate a newer generation.

However, it is not just African Americans who are portrayed with stereotypes and negativity.

"Every minority group has had some stereotypical imagery of them depicted in the media not just African Americans," Dr. Lu-

cas said.

Lucas developed the forum to educate students about the history of African American stereotypes and suggested that the excessive violence, servitude and ignorance still can be seen in the media today.

Students expressed mixed emotions during the discussion. Some students said that they feel the media portrayal of certain stereotypes can negatively impact the way a person perceives a certain culture, especially if the viewer has never been exposed to the culture.

Other students said the media emphasis on prejudice keeps ignorance alive in the greater culture. Students said the mass media should highlight more positive aspects of ethnic groups to provide a more accurate view of different cultures.

If you are interested in learning more about racial stereotypes contact Dr. Lucas in the Sociology department or if you're looking for a new exciting minor in Africana studies contact Dr. Jerry Woods.