

# Women can control images

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trayed. "Women need not be complicit in this behavior," Guy-Sheftall said. "I think you have to avoid blaming the victim."

So, why hasn't there been an outcry for things to change? Guy-Sheftall said that in order for real change to happen, there has to be a "consciousness raising."

"The problem is that these images are so normal and natural that young people don't see them as problematic," she said.

With popular performers like Beyoncé Knowles showing more and more skin in videos and rappers like D4L making songs about women shaking their "laffy taffy," the line between celebrating black women's bodies and

objectification is blurred.

Guy-Sheftall calls it "strip-tear culture."

Paul Porter of the media watchdog group Industry Ears calls it illegal. Porter and his group recently took on the hit song "Ms. New Booty" and its web site calling for women to submit pictures of their posteriors to be crowned Ms. New Booty.

"I was turned on to that web site by an 8-year-old," Porter said. Underage children, he alleges, submitted pictures of a woman's behind in small parties.

A disclaimer on the web site does say viewers "should be 18 years old", but there is no way to verify age.

As for the song itself, according to Porter and FCC rules, it shouldn't be played before 10 p.m. on the radio. But listen-

ing to Charlotte's hip-hop and hit music stations, it's played throughout the day.

Lisa Pager, founder of Industry Ears, has testified before Congress urging the FCC to enforce regulations against airing indecent material before 10 p.m. So far, according to The Boston Globe, there's been no response.

Porter said filing a complaint against the FCC is a long process and most people don't know how to do it.

On the Industry Ears web site, there is a form where people can file online.

"It takes months to get a response," he said.

Demanding change from radio stations and record companies is one way experts say women can take charge of their image. Davis

goes one step further and calls for personal responsibility and community involvement.

"Demand programs from your church and your college and go get a girl," she said. "I'm not saying don't go to the clubs, but if a song comes on that offends you, sit down, don't buy a drink or leave. Especially if you're fly."

Burton said it's time to "vote with your dollars." Since music videos are made to encourage people to buy artists' CDs, don't do it if the image is considered offensive, she said.

On the net:  
www.industryears.com  
www.essence.com  
www.playahata.com  
The Associated Press contributed to the reporting of this article.

# Connection between black men, Caddy

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the expression of middle-class success was to purchase a Cadillac.

Automobiles, and Cadillacs in particular, were also an emblem of freedom and status for blacks, according to scholars of black culture. Some bought the American luxury icon for patriotic reasons; some bought because they had relatives working in the automotive industry, Gaskins

said.

Auto historians and black culture academics said Gaskins' exhibit should be fascinating, and appears to be a unique effort.

It is being mounted after overcoming some obstacles. Gaskins said one grant application was rejected after a museum director was afraid the exhibit would be about gaudy cars driven by pimps, as lampooned in some films.

"There are a lot of stereotypes about black men and cars, mostly pretty narrow ones," said Gaskins, who is black.

Gaskins said his subjects, who he hopes to find through community groups, will be from a broad swath of life. "These men are not just athletes, not just ministers, not just pimps," he said.

He is particularly interested in men who owned Cadillacs from the late 1940s to 1970s, when it was the best-selling luxury brand in America (it now ranks third, behind Lexus and BMW).

"These people are not just holding on to the quality of the car. They are holding on to inherited torches," said Gaskins, 52, of Princeton Township.

Mark Anthony Neal, a professor of black popular culture at Duke University, said in that era, when a black man

was sometimes called "boy," owning a Cadillac was a "clear statement that I'm a man, I'm a grown man."

"This was a way for black men to show their humanity, based on its size and luxury," said Neal, author of "New Black Man: Rethinking Black Masculinity."

Letrez A. Myer, a graduate student at Penn State who wrote a paper, "Blacks on Wheels," said Gaskins' project is timely.

"Automobiles spoke to freedom and upward mobility for blacks," Myer said. "Blacks had to stand up on buses. Or sit in the back. So, owning your own car, you had freedom. You didn't have to sit in the back. You just got in and went."

Black culture reveres Cadillac. Gaskins said he has counted 72 blues, jazz, R&B and country songs that refer to black men in Cadillacs.

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50th  
Anniversary

Mr. & Mrs. Roger McCullough, Sr.

Roger & Margaret McCullough renewed their wedding vows on March 25, 2006 at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Charlotte. Dr. Leonzo Lynch, and Elder John A. McCullough, officiated.

Daughter, Yvette Brown, and Mary Clawson were matrons of honor. Son, Curtis McCullough and Frazier Wright were the best men. Sons Roger McCullough, Jr. and Michael Thomas and son-in-law Eric Brown served as groomsmen along with the couple's nephews and nieces as bridesmaids. Nikki Brannon gave his Grandmother away. Granddaughter Erin Brown was the flower girl escorted by Master Jordan Horn as ring bearer. A reception was held at the church.

Mr. & Mrs. McCullough were married March 31, 1956 at Woodland Presbyterian Church in Charlotte. Roger, a Korean War veteran, is a retired truck driver from Yellow Freight. Margaret has been employed at Grier Funeral Service for 38 years.

The couple will continue their celebration with a trip to Dallas, TX in June with family.



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