

Teens Transcript

Teenagers Chris Gaines and Margaret Smith were interviewed and openly admitted that they have used the n-word to address their friends but not to be racist. Juxtaposed with Chirs and Margaret are two young college students who are barely out of their teen years who do not use the n-word, Veralynn Williams and Ilene Level. Veralynn Wilaims is a Hunter College student studying for her Bachelors at the Film & Media department. Williams also is an intern with WYNC's Radio Rookie team and did an audio piece on people's opinions on the n-word. You can visit Williams' piece at: <http://www.wnyc.org/news/articles/70266>

Ilene Level is a student at Borough of Manhattan Community College and voices her strong opinion and how the n-word makes teenagers look stupid who use it.

CG: I use the word nigger, with my friends, a lot.

MS: I forgot actually how I used it, but it just came out, like I didn't use it to yell, or scream at someone, it just came out.

CG: Well I don't feel I have to use the word, I guess it's just a bad habit, I guess, using the word nigger.

VW: When I was in highschool, I'm not gonna front, I did use the word. But that's because everybody else was using the word. It was just another word, so I used it. When I finally started realizing there was something wrong with the word, I didn't know the history of the word but I knew that it was a bad word like a curse word. I tended to use it when other people were around me. It's like a socializing mechanism, you want to fit in.

MS: I believe it was in a positive way I used the word, it was toward my white friend. It wasn't trying to be racial at all it was like, "What Up?", like a joke. I try not use it around people I don't know because I'm not the person who should be using it.

CG: I don't mean it in a disrespectful way when I say, "What Up my Nigger?", I just mean, "What's Up?, How's your day?, What's up? "

MS: I have asked my black friends,"Why is it okay for you to call your friend the n-word but I can't call my friend the n-word, we share the same friend, why is it okay for you to call him the n-word and not me ? And they say it's like they share that, that they can't use it but I can't.

IL: I just think that whole idea of we're gonna take the word nigger and use it on our ourselves so you can't use it on us. HA! And now it's just became, "What up Nigga?", but now it just makes you sound stupid!

CG: If I learned about the civil rights movement and the history of the word nigger, I think it would change my mind. Only because in school these days they don't really teach black history.

VW: They get educated through Hip Hop. So hip-hop is coming strong. Hip-hop has 50cent, all of these people coming strong, everyday in the ear, twenty four, seven. Their not getting anything to counter that so of course it's just another word. No one is on the other side telling them all the struggle and sacrifices that people had to make not use this word. It's just angers me.

MS: If kids now knew what the n-word meant, it would change how some people use it, I don't think you can change how all people use it. Black people would be more aware and when they see their friends, they wouldn't be willing to use the word with their friends so regularly. Or it could backfire on other races using it, because it would anger black children more if they heard a white man say it. Because they would say, you're using it when, "your people," have called us the n-word before or it would enlighten that what your calling your friend, isn't necessarily that right word to choose.