

Local Leaders Hope To Eliminate Use Of 'N-Word'

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By Rebecca Wu

(KSDK) - On Monday, some local leaders joined the national effort to eliminate use of the n-word "We're asking comedians to eliminate it from their routines. We're asking audiences to stop laughing. We're asking rap artists to eliminate it from their lyrics," said Rev. Douglas Parham, president of the St. Louis Clergy Coalition.

The leaders said the word is a holdover from the period of slavery and should not be used in this day and age.

"This word was carved into the mutilated bodies of slaves," said James Buford, president of Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis.

Some have argued it's the intention behind the word that counts. But Buford said that doesn't take the sting out of the word.

"For this word to be used as a term of endearment by some African-Americans is hogwash. It's foolish and it should stop.

When local comedian Darius Bradford performs his comic routine, he said he doesn't intentionally write the "N" word into his material.

"I don't choose to use it, it's part of everyday language."

Ironically the University City native was called the racial slur when he was growing up and he can see how younger people may not see the hate associated with the word.

"I think the further we get away from our history, and your not conscious, the looser you are with it," said Bradford.

And that's why local leaders said it needs to stop.

"If we don't stop using this word, how can we expect anyone else to stop using this word?" said Buford.

Bradford said now that there's a movement to eliminate the word, he will try to do his part.

"It's not going to hurt for me to take it out, let's see if it helps."

According to the American Civil Liberties Union, negative words are protected just as much by the Constitution as positive words.

Brenda Jones, the executive director of the ACLU of Eastern Missouri, said she is not yet prepared to weigh in on the issue.