



Rap mogul wants racist lyrics ban

The founder of legendary hip-hop label Def Jam has called for three sexist and racist words to be banned from songs.

Russell Simmons said there was "growing public outrage" about the use of the terms, which he said should be viewed as the same as "extreme curse words".

He asked broadcasters and record companies to voluntarily remove, bleep or delete the words from music.

And he suggested setting up an industry watchdog to recommend guidelines for lyrical and visual standards.

'History of oppression'

Simmons, the pioneering entrepreneur whose label has released music by Public Enemy, Run DMC and the Beastie Boys, objects to the use of "nigger", "ho" and "bitch".

He said: "The words 'bitch' and 'ho' are utterly derogatory and disrespectful of the painful, hurtful, misogyny that, in particular, African-American women have experienced in the United States as part of the history of oppression, inequality, and suffering of women.

"The word 'nigger' is a racially derogatory term that disrespects the pain, suffering, history of racial oppression, and multiple forms of racism against African-Americans and other people of colour."

HAVE YOUR SAY

As much as I hate to hear those words used, I hate censorship

Christine Fowler, Los Angeles, USA

Last week, Simmons called a private meeting of influential music industry executives to discuss the issue.

'Social responsibility'

But no music executives were associated with the announcement by Simmons' Hip-Hop Summit Action Network.

Simmons added: "It is important to re-emphasise that our internal discussions with industry leaders are not about censorship.

"Our discussions are about the corporate social responsibility of the industry to voluntarily show respect to African-Americans and other people of colour, African-American women and to all women in lyrics and images."

His comments follow the sacking of US DJ Don Imus for referring to the players on the Rutgers university women's basketball team as "nappy-headed hos".

Should sexist and racist lyrics be banned? Send us your views using the form below:

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Comments

VOTE Should rappers clean up their language? **Yes No** Results are indicative and may not reflect public opinion

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