Antwone Fisher is a documentary film that is about a young sailor who has anger management problems. This sailor’s name is Antwone Fisher. Antwone has a very troubled past, first off, he has never known his parents, his father died two months before he was born and his mother had him while she was in prison and never went to find him when she got out. After he was born he was put in an orphanage and was put into a foster home at the age of two with a family called the Tate’s, Mr. Tate was a preacher at a local church. While he was at this foster home he, along with his other two foster brothers, endured some extremely cruel abuse that included verbal abuse (they were called “niggers” only, not even by their real names), physical abuse (the foster mother beat them with wet rags and threatened them with fire), and sexual abuse (Antwone was raped when he was six years old at least twice). After receiving so much abuse and losing his best friend after he was shot in the head when trying to rob a convenient store Antwone left his past behind him to join the navy. While in the Navy Antwone was involved in a number of fights because of little things that people would say that would trigger off memories from his childhood, the only thing he could think of to do was beat up that person. Because of the amount of fights he was involved in, Antwone was recommended to see a psychiatrist where he spills his story to the doctor and overcomes his past. The movie ends with Antwone going back to his childhood home and finding his real family. Antwone Fisher has an overachieving them of a young black male overcoming some of the most excruciating abuse to be a successful person and serve his country; it is a story that proves anyone can live “the American dream”.
Something unique about this film is that most stereotypes and discriminatory actions are thrown out the window, Antwone just doesn’t see it that way because of his past experiences; anything that anyone says or does that triggers off something from his past is, to him, discriminatory. Without his reactions to sometimes meaningless words, there would be no story here; the fact that he had these reactions and was prescribed to be treated is what makes this a story and makes Antwone’s character so interesting. An example of this is when Antwone is on his ship with his shipmates and is reading a book that his psychiatrist gave him that is about slavery and how its effects, mostly of abuse, are passed down through generations, which is why he was abused to frequently as a child. While reading the book one of the shipmates asks him what he is reading and once he finds out he goes on a rant of how “this aint no slave ship, and these aint no slavery days”, for some reason this rant triggers something in Antwone and he gets in a fight with his shipmate. When the scene is watched it appears that there is no action of discrimination but to Antwone he felt he was discriminated against and got offended.

Although Antwone felt discriminated against, he was actually doing a very courageous thing in overcoming a stereotype that has lasted for decades, that African-Americans are at the lower end of society. This film is based on a true story about a young African-American man who overcomes this stereotype and lives the “American dream”, he goes from the slumps of a Cleveland suburb and becomes an important part of our nation. Without realizing it, Antwone, through his experiences, was able to overcome how the world thought about him and his situation. This idea is brought to light very clearly at the end of the film when he finally comes to meet his real mother; after asking her why she never came back for him, he proceeds to tell her how he serves his country, has never fathered any children, speaks two languages and is
working on a third, and that he is a good man. This scene helps show how Antwone overcame his difficult past to become a strong person that anybody could be proud of.

Antwone overcame a lot of difficulties in his past, as mentioned above; he endured all sorts of abuse. One of these types of abuse was verbal (he was often called a “nigger” by his foster mother). These racial slurs through language are a representation of how a particular race is portrayed. In our class we have recently discussed how the “black” culture often uses the term “nigger” to refer to one another and how to them it is not meant in a derogatory manner at all, but if a white person calls them that they get mad and the end result may be violence. This portrayal of this race is a stereotype, that in my experiences from school is mostly true. The exception to this is, as Zack from our class noted, when a black person is comfortable around you they may give you permission or even prefer that you call them a slang term such as “nigga”; in my experience from high school football this is true, though they do not like when the word “nigger” is utilized. I found it very interesting how the African-American race was portrayed through this use of language.

Even though there were such portrayals as the example of using a racial slur, this film was, and had to be, fairly accurate in its stereotypes, ideas, and biases because it is a documentary film. Antwone Fisher is based on a true story and therefore many of the events that occurred in it are factual; this means that the film must be accurate in its portrayal of stereotypical situations. I thought this film was an excellent insight to many people of how a young, orphaned, black male has to grow up and overcome diversity. Throughout the story there are about five young black males, Antwone included, that are mentioned; Antwone is the only one of the five to not end up dead, in jail, or in another bad, life challenging, situation. Antwone’s story is one of courage and desire to overcome larger than normal difficulties in life.
to become what he wanted to be, a good person. Antwone Fisher is a film that shows how anybody, even a young black male with hardly anything, can overcome anything, even some of the most excruciating abuse, to be a successful person and serve his country; this story truly shows how anyone, if they put all their efforts into it, can live “the American dream”.