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No One is Entitled to Call A Woman the “B” Word *NOW-NYC Takes on the Culture of Disrespect That Harms Women*

New York, NY- September 18, 2007 - In a taped deposition played at the Isiah Thomas trial this Monday, Thomas said that it is more acceptable for a black man to call a woman the “b” word then it is for a white man. This deeply misguided thinking is training a new generation to regard black women in a negative light.

“While men debate about who among them has more entitlement to denigrate black women, the end result is the same. They are creating and maintaining a culture of disrespect that black women in America know all too well,” said Sonia Ossorio, President of the National Organization for Women in New York City.

NOW-NYC has been at the forefront of bringing attention and demanding change to the ways in which popular media perpetuate negative stereotypes and images of women. By directly confronting individuals, corporations, and artists who contribute to the culture of disrespect and raising awareness, NOW-NYC members and supporters are leading the wave of change that is demanding a new standard.

“Isiah Thomas rationalized the abuse and disrespect of black women and made it look as if all black men behave that way toward women,” said Ebony Edwards-Ellis, Chair of NOW-NYC’s Women, Girls & Media Committee. “He’s playing on racist stereotypes of black men to justify sexist treatment of black women. An insult is an insult regardless of who is saying it or why.”

NOW-NYC’s Women, Girls & Media Committee is dedicated to combating the sexist and misogynistic messages that are regularly disseminated by the media. The committee has launched a campaign to change the culture of disrespect that exists in popular culture today. On September 9th, the night of this year’s MTV Video Music Awards, NOW-NYC protested in front of the Viacom headquarters in Times Square against the rampant sexism, racism, and homophobia in the music video industry.

The National Organization for Women is the nation’s largest organization working to advance women’s rights and improve women’s lives. The New York City Chapter of NOW, founded in 1966, is the largest chapter in the country with 7,000 members locally and 35,000 statewide. NOW-NYC works to protect women’s reproductive choices, end violence against women and eliminate sex discrimination in our schools, workplaces, and the justice system in New York.

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