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America's Next Top Model: Making Violence Against Women Sexy *Top Ten Sexiest Ways to Kill a Woman* **Viewers Outraged**

Amidst a storm of outrage over Dolce & Gabbana's latest ad depicting a stylized gang rape scene, America's Next Top Model has managed to steal the spotlight. In their most recently aired episode Wednesday, March 21, oddly titled "The Woman Who Changed Her Attitude," competitors were told to pose as victims of violent crime in various horrific positions.

While each model was assigned a distinct wound to bear, all had the same challenge: to make their death look the sexiest. The crimes varied; models were stabbed, pushed down stairs, poisoned, drowned, shoved off a rooftop, strangled, shot, decapitated, robbed of their organs, and electrocuted. Challenger Jael poses in a red velvety bed donning black lacey lingerie with her legs invitingly spread, her bruised neck the only signal to the viewer that a violent strangulation had just taken place. Robbed of her organs and left in a grimy hallway in her underwear, challenger Diana gazes blankly at the viewer in her photo. Wrapped in plastic and discarded like garbage in an ally, challenger Natasha attempts to be a sexy drowning victim.

Why is this show, which caters to teenage girls, describing the mutilation and murder of women as "high fashion?" Most disturbing is that Executive Producer Tyra Banks, supposedly an advocate of female empowerment, is fully behind such a production. Because the viewership is primarily female, the message that violence is sexy and women are objects is being sent over television waves and directly into the homes of young women and girls. The New York City Chapter of the National Organization for Women received calls from viewers, many parents, who were angry and disturbed by this episode.

"America's Next Top Model is only the latest most blatant example of the fashion industry glamorizing violence against women," said Sonia Ossorio, president of NOW-NYC. "There is an alarming increase in the toxic mix of violence against women and entertainment. But a lot of people are fed up. We're seeing activism around this issue also increase."

America's Next Top Model is simply the latest organization to glamorize violence against women. Not only did Dolce & Gabbana pull their recent ad, but Calvin Klein recently removed a window display sexualizing young girls after NOW-NYC complained. Lions Gate, distributor of the movie Captivity, pulled a graphic ad depicting a terrorized young woman from New York City cabs and Hollywood billboards due to pressure from NOW chapters in these two cities.

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.

TO VIEW PHOTOS FROM AMERICA'S NEXT TOP MODEL: <http://tv.yahoo.com>