



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Sonia Ossorio
President, NOW-NYC
212.627.9895

NOW LEADS THE CHARGE TO RECLAIM HIP-HOP FROM MISOGYNISTS AND MALE SUPREMACISTS

Women in Hip Hop: Revered or Reviled? Thursday, April 19th at 6:30pm in NYC

The National Organization for Women in New York City is launching a campaign to shed light on how music executives and artists are complicit in what has become a thriving modern-day market for sexism, homophobia and racism.

“Disguised as entertainment, some in the music industry promote an image of manhood that finds success by denigrating women, blacks and gays,” said Sonia Ossorio, President of NOW-NYC. “Our campaign will break down how sexism, homophobia and racism are being peddled in the music business. We want the free market of ideas to expand to include a critique of this so that the American public can decide whether they want to continue supporting it as part of our economy and as part of our popular culture.”

The Don Imus debacle has presented an opportunity to redouble efforts to put music executives and artists in the hot seat. With Don Imus, Americans expressed their unwillingness to continue to listen to his ideas. He is free to continue to share his views, but no one is willing to pay for it any longer. Will the same hold true for exploitive music?

“There is a long tradition in American culture of demeaning African-American women through the mass media. That systematic denigration has taken on an even more disturbing twist with black hip-hop artists co-opting the misogyny,” said Ebony Edwards-Ellis, chair of NOW-NYC’s Women and Girls in the Media Committee. “They are creating and selling this music to an audience that is predominantly non-black and making millions of dollars in the process. This has led to an all-new generation of Americans who have been trained to regard black women in a negative light.”

When: Thursday, April 19, 2007

What: Panel Discussion & Film

The award-winning film, *Beyond Beats and Rhymes* by filmmaker Byron Hurt, explores the sexism and homophobia of much of today’s hip-hop music.

Panelists: Shante Paradigm Smalls, a music writer and hip-hop performer, DJ Shakey, DJ and music writer, and Kim Osorio, former Editor in Chief of Source Magazine and current Executive Editor at BET Interactive.

Where: The Charities Building at 105 East 22nd St, Room 4 between 6:30pm and 9pm.

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.