

# Imus

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MSNBC initially distanced itself from the remark by issuing a disclaimer. But, Sharpton and others say none of that is good enough.

John Smith, publisher of the *Atlanta Inquirer* and chair of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, says he agrees with Sharpton that "part of it's our fault for allowing our people to say it."

Smith adds that MSNBC must take greater responsibility.

Following the fallout as major corporate sponsors, including General Motors, American Express and Procter & Gamble pulled their ad dollars indefinitely from the show, MSNBC TV announced it would drop its simulcast of Imus' show.

In a statement released yesterday, MSNBC TV, which is wholly owned by NBC Universal, stated:

"This decision comes as a result of an ongoing review process, which initially included the announcement of a suspension..."

It further stated: "Once again, we apologize to the women of the Rutgers basketball team and to our viewers. We deeply regret the pain this incident has caused."

Smith says the "ho's" comment by Imus is just indicative of a racist mentality among much of American media, which often treats Blacks with a double standard.

"Anna Nicole Smith," with all that she's done, they're praising her every day, raising her up with all that she's done for the world to see. She's been on TV every day. Janet Jackson, all that happened was one of her breasts came out. And they tried to crucify her."

Angela Burt-Murray, editor-in-chief of *Essence* magazine has called for a tougher reprimand of Imus.

"Disparaging comments about African-American women are unacceptable," said Burt-Murray. "MSNBC and WFAN must take a stronger stance. It needs to be made clear that this type of behavior is offensive and will not be tolerated without severe con-

sequences."

Black women should be outraged, says San Francisco psychologist Julia Hare, co-founder of the Black Think Tank.

"...When we find that anyone in media or in high position is calling us names — because we notice that you don't call your blond mothers this or your sisters or your daughters this — then we must move to remove you from that particular position."

Hare says the fact that Imus might have picked up the term from rappers is no excuse. "He is truly just an old guard racist."

NAACP Chairman Julian Bond says because of Imus' past offensive statements, this time is inexcusable.

"As long as an audience is attracted to his bigotry and politicians and pundits tolerate his racism and chauvinism to promote themselves, Don Imus will continue to be a serial apologist for prejudice. It is past time his employers took him off the air," Bond said in a statement.

The recent outrage over Imus' comments harkens to C. DeLores Tucker, the late chair of the National Political Congress of Black

Women Inc., who was a strong critic of hip-hop culture for more than a decade, citing its denigration of Black women and its negative influence on youth.

"The glorification of pornography, wanton disregard for civil authority, misogynistic disrespect for women and a penchant for violence are the unintended impact of hip-hop culture on today's youth," she told *Jet*.

"I say unintended, because hip hop... was intended to celebrate the revival of the age-old rhymed recitations of life's problems and aspirations set to music."

Sharpton says this is an opportunity to deal with it all. "The FCC has got to put in a standard and enforce it across the board. And I think that our community has got to take a real appraisal of what we've allowed to happen. Here you have some young ladies who did the right thing. They're in school; they're excelling in athletics."



Rutgers Coach C. Vivian Stringer



The Offended Parties: Some members of Rutgers women's basketball team listen as coach C. Vivian Stringer speaks at a news conference on campus in Piscataway, N.J., on Tuesday to react to remarks directed at her team made on air by radio personality Don Imus. The team said they would meet privately with Imus. Players are Rashidat Junaid, from left, Myia McCurdy, Brittany Ray, Epiphanny Prince and Dee Dee Jernigan, all freshmen.



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