

Hip Hop 'Tap' Dancing Lead by Russell Simmons

Written by Robert ID3618

Monday, 23 April 2007 06:25 -

Russell Simmons and Dr. Benjamin Chavis on behalf of the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network have released a statement that contains nothing new or anything positive.

Relying on the stance for the First Amendment right of free speech and artistic expression respect for women has been put aside. The Hip-Hop Summit Action Network instead thinks that the recording and broadcast industries should "voluntarily remove/bleep/delete the misogynistic words "bitch" and "ho" and the racially offensive word "nigger."

The call for the recording industry to "voluntarily remove/bleep/delete" seems ironic since they are the ones who overlooked it this long. That is like asking a drug dealer to 'voluntarily' remove his dope from the market because it is the thing to do to be socially responsible – there is too much money being made or the industry would have done this before. Everyone seems 'afraid' of stepping on some toes and demanding change. It seems like the 'good old boy' network in hip hop. Give it another month and it will be off the radar and everyone will go back to not even mentioning it until the next time someone disrespects RESPECTABLE women in prime time.

I can see the point of there "should not be any government regulation or public policy that should ever violate the First Amendment" but leaders, or so called leaders are suppose to lead. Is this leadership? A leader is suppose to give guidance and direction and it seems in reading this we are suppose to go along with the same ol same ol; that is not leadership.

What about accountability? I know it is very unpopular for anyone to take responsibility for their own actions now days, but that is the purpose of having leaders – to lead.

So for what its worth here is the latest attempt at 'damage control' or should I say statement by Russell Simmons and Dr. Benjamin Chavis on behalf of the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network:

The theme of the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network (HSAN) is "Taking Back Responsibility." We are consistent in our strong affirmation, defense, and protection of the First Amendment right of free speech and artistic expression. We have recently been involved in a process of dialogue with recording and broadcast industry executives about issues concerning corporate social responsibility.

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It is important to re-emphasize that our internal discussions with industry leaders are not about censorship. Our discussions are about the corporate social responsibility of the industry to voluntarily show respect to African Americans and other people of color, African American women and to all women in lyrics and images.

HSAN reaffirms, therefore, that there should not be any government regulation or public policy that should ever violate the First Amendment. With freedom of expression, however, comes responsibility.

With that said, HSAN is concerned about the growing public outrage concerning the use of the words "bitch," "ho," and "nigger." We recommend that the recording and broadcast industries voluntarily remove/bleep/delete the misogynistic words "bitch" and "ho" and the racially offensive word "nigger."

Going forward, these three words should be considered with the same objections to obscenity as "extreme curse words." The words "bitch" and "ho" are utterly derogatory and disrespectful of the painful, hurtful, misogyny that, in particular, African American women have experienced in the United States as part of the history of oppression, inequality, and suffering of women. The word "nigger" is a racially derogatory term that disrespects the pain, suffering, history of racial oppression, and multiple forms of racism against African Americans and other people of color.

In addition, we recommend the formation of a music industry Coalition on Broadcast Standards, consisting of leading executives from music, radio and television industries. The Coalition would recommend guidelines for lyrical and visual standards within the industries.

We also recommend that the recording industry establish artist mentoring programs and forums to stimulate effective dialogue between artists, hip-hop fans, industry leaders and others to promote better understanding and positive change. HSAN will help to coordinate these forums.

These issues are complex, but require creative voluntary actions exemplifying good corporate social responsibility.

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