

January 20, 2015

Open letter to the Executive Producers of "The View"

We are outraged that in the past few weeks a source from "The View" has been dispensing derogatory information to the press about Rosie Perez, first telling a NY Daily News reporter that Ms. Perez "is not the sharpest tool in the box" and most recently, being quoted in the industry outlet, Variety, saying that Ms. Perez "can't read a TelePrompTer."

It doesn't take a genius to read into the racist and sexist language hurled against Ms. Perez. Questioning a woman's intelligence is an old stereotype that is sexist and in this case, also racist. The stereotype that Latinas are stupid is outrageous. There is no excuse for this behavior. Network officials should not tolerate this kind of racist conduct. The fact that the leaks come from one of your staffers is deeply offensive. Implicit in the insider comments is that Ms. Perez is unintelligent and illiterate. Ms. Perez is a beloved community icon, an acclaimed author, director, a member of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV& AIDS, an Academy Award nominated actor, a Broadway stage actor, and a dedicated activist. Those close to her know her as a compassionate and generous woman—yet this cowardly insider has maliciously smeared her anonymously.

When ABC announced that it had named Ms. Perez to co-host "The View," the Latino and Latina community was proud and enthusiastic with the choice. Though it took show executives eighteen years to cast permanent Latina representation on the show, as Latinos and Latinas, we were delighted that finally someone of such caliber was chosen. That the network named an award-winning entertainer with an impressive history of activism in education, the arts, and Latino causes, was even more impressive. In naming Ms. Perez as a co-host, ABC chose an intelligent, committed, and esteemed Latina role model. People magazine's critic Tom Gliatto acknowledged Ms. Perez as the "best thing about the new View" and a "keeper." The fact that in less than four months someone from your staff and network is slandering her is not only outrageous but, unacceptable. We are furthermore disappointed that industry leader, Variety, chose to go with a story quoting an anonymous insider and failed to give Ms. Perez and her management an opportunity to respond. This is shoddy journalism at its best. Your bland statement in response to Variety's article that Rosie Perez' "status with the show has not changed," added insult to injury. Ms. Perez, Latinas and the entire Latino community merits respect, not insults. We expect more from the staff of "The View" and ABC network. When you disparage the only Latina on "The View" you disparage all Latinas. Rosie Perez and by extension, all Latinas, deserve an immediate apology.

Sincerely,

#yosoyrosie

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