



**Ottawa Coalition to End
Violence Against Women**

**Coalition d'Ottawa contre la
violence faite aux femmes**

February 17, 2009

Pete Travers
Program Director - Virgin Radio 106.9FM

Darren Stevens
Promotions Director - Virgin Radio 106.9FM

Re: OCTEVAW supports the community reaction to your recent "Gods of Rock" advertisements

To Mr. Travers and Mr. Stevens,

The Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW) is a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to ending violence against women and, through leadership, education, advocacy and political action, to promoting a coordinated response to women and their children who have experienced abuse.

We would like to put forth our support of the Ottawa community who has spoken out against Virgin Radio 106.9FM's misogynist advertisements featuring the caption: "Lock up your daughters; the Gods of Rock are now in Ottawa." We echo the sentiments of many in our capital city who believe that your advertisements condone female subjugation and the sexual exploitation of women's bodies, which leads to promoting sexual violence against women.

This is a serious issue that affects us all, especially your young female listeners. "Young women between the ages of 15 and 24 are at greater risk of sexual assault than women at any other age (General Social Survey on Criminal Victimization, Stats Can, 2004)." By running these ads your station is lacking in responsibility as community leaders.

We recommend that your station immediately take down the advertisements and issue a public apology. We also recommend that your station have a look at your own website posting of an article about V-Day Ottawa's production of the Vagina Monologues. Not only are you sending completely mixed messages to your listeners, but the opportunity to integrate V-Day's message about ending violence against women into your policies and procedures is right at your finger tips.

OCTEVAW expects that Virgin Radio 106.9FM will take this issue seriously and in response make positive reparations to the Ottawa community to highlight your commitment to ending the exploitation of women. For example, we feel this could be accomplished by a radio fundraiser to raise money for a local sexual assault centre in the Ottawa area. OCTEVAW is willing to provide guidance for that effort.

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In early October 2009, OCTEVAW, along with the Sexual Assault Network, will be organizing a two-day forum on a public education campaign that engages young men. Michael Kaufman, the co-founder of the White Ribbon Campaign, has been invited to present “Man Talk,” his new resource on healthy relationships and consent currently tailored for universities and colleges. We would like to take this opportunity to invite Virgin Radio 106.9FM to participate in this city-wide forum and contribute to the discussion and prevention work.

It is the responsibility of leaders in our community, like your radio station, to take a stand against sexism and violence against women. We look forward to collaborating with you on this new initiative.

I can be reached at any time at 613-725-3601 x105.

Sincerely,

Erin Williams
Executive Director – OCTEVAW