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Cass' interview with Aishah Shahidah Simmons, independent filmmaker of  
*NO! The Rape Documentary*

Screening at University of California, Santa Barbara  
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I was introduced to Aishah back in 2004 via an email communication from Stacey Tolbert, the author of *Baring My Soul* . [Thanks Stacey!!]. Aishah is one of those sistahs you immediately fall in love with even through email communications because she keeps it real ALL DA TIME!!! After several e-chats, we finally talked late one night back in September 2004. Our first conversation was a "HEY GURL, HOW YA DOIN' CHAT," because we were both really busy. Long story short, Aishah sent me a rough cut of *NO!* (which I looked at), along with a press kit (which I read). As luck would have it, I interviewed her shortly thereafter, but I didn't get to put pen to paper to write my review of *NO!* Now fast-forward to the "as fate would have it" portion of my story. As a result of Hurricane Katrina, (which you already know my story) I lost everything, including my notes regarding *NO!* , but I did have this old interview on my computer at work. YIPPIE! Remember I said, "Aishah is one of those sistahs you immediately fall in love?" Well, immediately after the hurricane, Aishah emailed me to see if I was safe and if I needed anything. What a sweetheart and that's why I love this SISTAH!

Well, I'm proud to say that Aishah's journey to make this documentary has come full circle. To find out what has happened in over a year, check out her [journal entries](#) . In the interim, however, below is my interview with Aishah when she was a struggling independent filmmaker, and but *NO!* finally hit the big screen.

*Cass :*

Honey chile, I just read your email and your [journal entry](#) about the problems you had trying to secure financing to finish your documentary *NO!* After I read it, I said, "Oh, that po' baby needs some money." So, how can I help?

**Aishah :**

Sistah, you felt my pain. Honestly, I don't know. Thank God for the speaking engagements I have done and continue to do. I have also been going the traditional, non-profit route, but I'm certainly in a predicament. Usually, feature films will get investors, which is a whole lot different from convincing grant officers that your project is important so that they will give you a grant. People around the world seem to think *NO!* is an important film but the folks who fund it, don't seem to understand that.

*Cass :*

Okay, you might think this is a little weird, but after I read your journal entry, I immediately emailed Oprah [because we're tight like that] and told her about your documentary. Then, I hit her with my sympathy plea – "Oprah, we need your money to help finish an important documentary about rape. Please grant my girlfriend's wish and make her dream come true."

**Aishah :**

Oh my God, WOW! A little crazy, but thank you Cass.

*Cass :*

Now, my \$50 may help a little whenever I send it to you, but in the scheme of things, Oprah has a little more money in the bank than this Chick. There's nothing wrong with just putting your wish out in the universe, as well as in the hands of the Lord. I'll pray that you get exactly what you need to complete your project.

**Aishah :**

Laffin...but Amen!!!

*Cass :*

My daughter-in-Love and I...

**Aishah :**

Daughter-in-Love?

*Cass :*

Yes, my daughter-in-Love because I absolutely Love her.

**Aishah :**

That's wonderful.

*Cass :*

Thanks. We looked at ***NO!*** several times and I have to tell you that we were very moved by its message. Quite naturally, it sparked a discussion about how we actually defined rape. Oftentimes, women simply think that because they're involved with a guy and he's trying to ***get some***, they usually just give in. But, when the guy crosses the line and you say, "You know what honey, I really don't want to do this right now," or "I'm tired," is that necessarily rape? And, if "Yes" it's rape, then I was raped by an ex-boyfriend. There were countless times when I didn't want to have sex, but simply gave in to avoid any confrontation. Every weekend after he went clubbing, he'd show up at my house drunk and, of course, horny. There's obviously a disconnect between men and women especially when men think that just because they're aroused that they have the right to just take "it". So, what's your definition of rape?

**Aishah :**

That's pretty deep, but very common. It gets somewhat complex in terms of the legal definition of rape. Basically, the California Supreme Court said, "No, means no," even in the middle of intercourse.

*Cass :*

Even when I say "Stop!"?

**Aishah :**

Right, at any point. But it's also any orifice – vaginal, anal, or oral – being penetrated against your will. When we think about "against your will," we immediately visualize a woman fighting and screaming to the top of her lungs, but it can really be as simple as

saying, "I don't want you to do that. Please stop!"

*Cass :*

That broad?

**Aishah :**

Yes. In fact, I'm not one of the ladies in *NO!*, because my perpetrator was not black. *NO!* focuses on black men raping black women and our collective experiences within our community. I was raped by a Mexican while in Mexico on a school program. I paid for the hotel room and then I said to myself, "I don't want to do this," so I said, "No." It wasn't like he threw me on the bed or that type of thing.

*Cass :*

You mean the violent act associated with rape?

**Aishah :**

Exactly. Not like the things we hear, so I didn't think I had been raped. When I told him that I didn't want to do it, he was like, "Well... we're here now." This happened in my sophomore year in college. So, when I got back and told a friend of mine what happened, it was she who told me that I had actually been raped. That friend of mine was a white woman I had gone to high school with and I was like, "This white woman is ridiculous." Mentally, that's where I was in terms of not thinking that I had been raped because I freely went to the hotel room but I simply changed my mind. I didn't know that refusing him was a legitimate right of mine.

*Cass :*

Of course, and that brings to mind athletes like Mike Tyson and Kobe Bryant. You have these women going up to their rooms and then these women accuse them of rape, and then you hear people saying, "She knew what the deal was when she went up to his hotel room at 4:00 a.m. in the morning."

**Aishah :**

What was so deep about the Kobe scandal was when he wrote his apology and said that he could understand why what he did was rape, but that it **wasn't** rape. We'll never know what really happened, but from what I gathered, the alleged victim agreed to some form of sexual activity but didn't agree to another form of sex. So the questions become, when a woman gives consent to have sex, does she give up the rights to her body to that person, or does that person have rights over her body and for how long do they have these rights?

*Cass :*

I guess this stems back to the days when women were viewed as chattel.

**Aishah :**

Exactly.

*Cass :*

I remember when I was six-years-old, my grandfather brought a friend of his over with he and my grandmother for Sunday dinner. Because I had seen this guy at my grandparents'

house, I happily greeted him like any six-year-old would do. He picked me up and sat me on his lap. I didn't remember this until years later, but I did sense that there was something weird about him. He kept moving me around on his lap and then I really started feeling uncomfortable, especially since our backs were to the rest of the family. But when he asked me to touch this bulge on his pants, I immediately jumped off his lap and ran to tell my dad and told him what happened. I saw my dad whispering something to my grandfather and the next thing I remembered, they hustled that guy out of our house and I never saw him again, even at my grandparents' house.

**Aishah :**

You see how innocent it starts out. That's wonderful that your parents and grandparents quickly came to your rescue because for so many little girls, that's not the case.

*Cass :*

Why is that?

**Aishah :**

I don't know. Although this man wasn't a blood relative, there's a book, *No Secrets, No Lies*, written by Robin Stone that delves into the issue of incest in the black family. For so many reasons, I think people have a harder time dealing with it when the perpetrator is a blood relative. I have a brother who has a daughter, and I love my brother and father deeply, and not saying that they would do this or are even capable of doing this, but what would I do if my niece came to me with this? I would want to believe that even if I was like, "Damn, are you sure?" that I would let my niece know that I believed her and that I would fully investigate her story. Also, with incest, it gets very complex because of economic situations.

*Cass :*

My niece is 10-years-old and we have repeatedly told her that regardless of who it is, if anyone touches her in a manner that she feels threatened or harmed, to immediately report it to us.

**Aishah :**

But some women say that because *he's* the provider, what can they do?

*Cass :*

That brings to mind the *McMartin Daycare* case and the witch-hunt against daycare workers when it was revealed years later that these accusations were false. Also, there are false reports of rape filed by women who do this out of revenge. For example, in the Kobe Bryant case, it was reported that the victim had sex with several different partners prior to Kobe, but that Kobe had "deep pockets" and that's when it became "rape". How does the judicial system filter through this to get to the truth?

**Aishah :**

What I understand is she agreed to vaginal sex but not anal and that's when he forced himself on her. I thought he did it even before his post-apology. Here's what I grappled with, I can consent to having sex with 20 people, but I can't say "no" to the 21st person.

*Cass :*

And “no” to that 21st person who doesn’t honor your wishes is then a rapist?

**Aishah :**

Exactly. There is so much pressure on women in terms of morality. I felt bad for the alleged victim especially when the underwear thing came out and it had the wrong DNA. Then they started getting into her mental and sexual history as opposed to what she said happened. It’s such an awful thing, and maybe she was looking for money, I don’t know. If people really understood what rape victims have to go through after they accuse someone of rape, particularly a high profile individual, they might be a little more sympathetic. Quite frankly, they almost risk being raped again on the witness stand. That poor woman had to live in hiding.

*Cass :*

That’s a valid point. I think we get caught up though with the term "violent" act, and rape in any form is an act of violence when it's against your will. But, if the victim doesn't show any physical bruises, then it's assumed that she wasn't raped. Another issue is that the rapist doesn't have to be this lewd weirdo, peeping Tom or stranger, but can easily be an acquaintance.

**Aishah :**

Exactly.

*Cass :*

It’s such a profound experience to listen to the women that you have chosen to highlight in this documentary, along with the impact of Honoree Jeffers’ poem, “that’s proof she wanted it”. She’s a powerful poet. How did she get involved in this project?

**Aishah :**

I met Honoree in 1996 at the National Black Arts Festival. Myself, Tamara Xavier, who is the co-producer and dance coordinator of *NO!*, and a whole group of us were there and we performed a poem that I wrote entitled “The State of Rage,” at this open slam that Kevin Powell was hosting and Honoree was there. I was talking about *NO!* and setting the tone and then we performed “The State of Rage”. After our performance, she came up to me and said, “Sistah, God your poem was amazing!” [I’m not a poet and she is]. She then shared with me her poem “that’s proof she wanted it”. I told her then that I really wanted to include her in *NO!* Although I didn’t film Honoree until 2000, that marked the beginning of our developing a connection as sisters, friends, survivors, artists and cultural workers.

*Cass :*

I’m a huge fan of Honoree's work, and her performance in *NO!* is powerful. When did you actually begin working on *NO!* ?

**Aishah :**

The Mike Tyson case was the incident that created the idea for *NO!* for me. I started working on *NO!* in 1994 but in 1995 I had the opportunity to meet Janelle White, who is now the Women’s Center Director at the University of New Orleans, but back then she was a graduate student at the University of Michigan and she heard about *NO!* and invited me to come out and present my idea because I had nothing on paper, just an idea.

Cass :

So how did it evolve, and how did you go about getting all these different women/activists, as well as a few men, to participate in this project?

**Aishah :**

First, my parents are in *NO!* My mother is Zoharah Simmons (Islamic Scholar and Former SCNN Organizer) and my dad is Michael Simmons (International Human Rights Activist). I called together all my filmmaker friends and graduate students at Temple University and we got some equipment. At that point, we filmed Rosetta Williams (Poet & Visual Artist), Queen (Poet), and my mother. Then I went to the University of Michigan and received my first paid honorarium for *NO!*, and through that, I used that money to pay for Essex Hemphill (deceased, Poet, "To Some Supposed Brothers"). I was on a mission to film him because I knew he wasn't well (in fact he died five months later). I was just happy to do it for free but Janelle insisted that I get paid for that speaking engagement. That was the first time I even thought about really using opportunities like that to pay for *NO!* pre-production and production stuff. Since Janelle was very connected with the Anti-Violence against Women's Movement she also arranged for Tamara and I to present at the National Coalition Against Sexual Assault meeting, which was held in Myrtle Beach. It was there that I connected with so many women activists. At the same time, *NO!* hit the scene with the advent of the Internet, so the word started spreading. From 1994 and 1998, myself, Tamara and other folks who had been working on *NO!* were researching and basically developing the script. The actual filming started in 1999.

Cass :

That's interesting, because Tyson's case really got Black folks talking about their own definition of rape. How did *NO!* go from being a thought about Mike Tyson to a documentary?

**Aishah :**

Over the years while I was talking about *NO!*, people were asking, "Why are you going to lynch another brotha," and that caused me to look at this from a historical viewpoint. Initially, *NO!* was only going to be a 20-minute piece about Mike Tyson, and looking at Desiree Washington and Tawana Brawley. I was curious about why Tawana Brawley was being portrayed and considered a queen and hero in the *Fight the Power* video simply because she accused White men of raping her versus Desiree Washington being called a gold digging whore when she accused a Black man of raping her. After that, this project just grew, and quite frankly this was the only way this could have happened, because if I had I known then what I know now, I wouldn't have done this.

Cass :

Are you serious?

**Aishah :**

Oh yeah. 20 minutes...in and out...we're done...see ya...and thank you.

Cass :

Now it's 10 years later.

**Aishah :**

Yes. I think it's better now because of this journey and the constant talking, fighting, arguing and rejections fueled my passion. Other topics needed to be addressed and it wasn't enough just to have women's voices, because I have old trailers with just my mother, Queen and Rosetta Williams (the woman who was 12), and people were saying, "She's having sex at 12?" I thought it was also important to include commentators to legitimize and put viewpoints and statistics into perspective. Initially, men weren't going to be involved, even though I liked Essex's poem, I wasn't going to have men commentating because I felt that this was a Black woman's issue. Then I got an inspiration and thought hey, "Men can stop rape because men listen to men, and women listen to men." Therefore, I included a male perspective because this is a community issue. As a result of my own personal growth, in many ways *NO!* has also grown.

*Cass :*

That's true as far as getting men involved because they can help other men understand that when they hear "no" that their brain must first acknowledge what they heard so they can stop the physical act from continuing.

**Aishah :**

Exactly.

*Cass :*

What type of feedback have you received?

**Aishah :**

Because the screenings are usually free to the public, the people who do come out want to be there for the most part, even if they may be sitting on the fence. I have definitely had some crazy comments, but mostly, the feedback has been very positive. For example, there was this one young white woman, a college freshman, who said "WOW. Prior to seeing *NO!*, I didn't know that black women could get raped."

*Cass :*

Are you kidding me? Has she been living under a rock?

**Aishah :**

That was very deep, and it made me wonder, how many other people are out there who think that way. Another young man, in that same class and school, who had no shame in his game, said, "Your film doesn't leave a lot of room for seduction. I've had sex with a lot of women who initially said "no" but by the time "I" was finished, they said "yes". Of course, his comment sparked a discussion about the difference between seduction and coercion.

*Cass :*

Which meant that he was a rapist and that he planned on doing it again. You almost want to put his picture up on a billboard with a caption saying, *This man is a rapist* .

**Aishah :**

You got that right. I wanted to check in with the women he had and was sleeping with to

warn them about this guy. There was another guy who had his arm around his girlfriend who said, “Where I come from, if you take a woman out on a date, if she doesn’t give you any, you’re supposed to rape her.”

*Cass :*

Where does this fool come from? Not only does he need to be in jail, but the fool or fools who taught him this behavior need to be locked up too. And, it’s obvious that his girlfriend is a victim too.

**Aishah :**

I wondered how she felt that he made that stupid comment. Or, I get comments like, “Women rape men too.”

*Cass :*

Girl, give me a break.

**Aishah :**

I know. But the truth is, I appreciate their ignorance and their level of comfort in saying those things because it gives me the opportunity and others in the audience to respond because there are a lot of people who think the same way but they have enough sense not to make uneducated comments or ask stupid questions in public.

*Cass :*

Are these panel discussions?

**Aishah :**

Sometimes it’s just me doing Q&A and other times it’s panel discussions. Just recently I was in Prince George’s County, which was the first government in the United States to sponsor a screening. Prince George’s County in Maryland is 67% African American and most of the sponsors of the event were men – Sheriff Jackson, the County’s Executive, Jack Johnson.

*Cass :*

That’s amazing.

**Aishah :**

It was. They had counselors on hand, which I think is important to have on hand after these screenings because even though I’m a survivor and I’ve been doing this work, I’m not a psychologist or therapist. I’ve had young and old women say, “Oh my God, I just realized that I’ve been raped because I wasn’t aware of this information.

*Cass :*

I know for me, after watching *NO!* it was certainly an eye-opening experience, and I’m sure there are a lot of women who can identify with the women you showcase who are sharing their experiences. I get the impression though that *NO!* is your way of healing. For you to go through this for years, it’s obvious that you were still dealing with those events. At what point do you consider yourself recovered or do rape victims really ever recover?

**Aishah :**

I feel like what Charlotte Pierce-Baker, the author of *Surviving the Silence* says, “We’re always surviving.” Even with all that I do and all that I know, there are certain times when things trigger those events. With *NO!*, I’m kind of immune to it, but I have seen a documentary about incest in the South Asian community, I’m also an incest survivor, and when I saw that film, it blew me away. I’ve been in therapy since 1992, and even though I meditate, and I have resources and I know where to go, it’s still always there.

*Cass :*

Certain events and stories trigger it again?

**Aishah :**

Yes. I can usually pull myself out of it more quickly, and I work hard on not going back to that place. I can't undo what happened to 10-year-old Aishah, because I have to be present with the 35-year-old Aishah.

*Cass :*

The counselors add a layer of support just in case someone has a breakthrough?

**Aishah :**

Right. Usually, women want to share their experience with me because I’m this safe person. I don’t know anybody in the neighborhood or community so they don’t have to worry about their stories being leaked. I particularly like to have counselors of color available so that women and men know that there are resources in their own community that they can use.

*Cass :*

After you hear all these painful stories, how do you shield yourself from not allowing their issues to become your burden?

**Aishah :**

I’m glad you asked that question because this is what I’m learning how to deal with because I absorb it all. Therapy helps me immensely because it teaches me the techniques on how to release that stuff. I’m very committed to meditation and getting into body work, which is something that I’ve learned from Tamara, that our body’s have memory.

*Cass :*

I’ve never thought or even considered that our own bodies have memories.

**Aishah :**

That’s been the work that I’ve been most resistant to because I’m a very cerebral person, and I love to talk, analyze, and process things. It really does get intense and one of the things I’ve been trying to do after screenings is to go back to my room and just sit and observe and let those comments just flow through me, almost like a conduit as opposed to being a pit stop.

*Cass :*

That’s a good term to use – pit stop – because you don’t have space within your own

psyche to incorporate the pain of other victims because that will make you crazy.

**Aishah :**

That's so true and I'm working on that very thing.

*Cass :*

If women choose not to seek therapy, what kind of books can they read for help and healing?

**Aishah :**

Black women especially tend not to seek therapy. Based on statistics, John Dickerson [whose is not on *NO!*] from Bluegrass Rape Crisis Center said, "That every minute a woman is assaulted -- i.e., if the rape takes 10 minutes -- it takes a year for each of those minutes for a women to heal, especially if she's doing some serious work in therapy.

*Cass :*

WOW! I can believe it because quite frankly, rape is a lifetime of hurt and pain, and there's no way to mask it.

**Aishah :**

Women can go to [NO! resource page](#) . All of the books listed are very good but I think Lori Robinson's book, *I Will Survive: The African-American Guide to Healing from Sexual Assault and Abuse* , because it's an excellent resource book, and Robin Stone's book, *No Secrets, No Lies* , because there are so many of us who are incest survivors. Anyone with children should also read these books for preventive measures. It's very easy for me to say what I'm going to do to that teacher if they lay a hand on my child, but what am I going to say, God forbid, if my father, my brother, or my uncle lays a hand her on. So, I think Robin's book gives important tools about addressing that through the voices of people's testimony and stories.

*Cass :*

I know this has been an uphill battle and struggle for you. What can people do to help you financially?

**Aishah :**

I have a 501(c) non-profit sponsor, Women Make Movies Inc., who is the oldest educational distributor of films by and about women. Checks can be made out to Women Make Movies Inc. and write donation for *NO!* on the memo line. They can also go to [NO! contribution page](#) for all the information. Remember, that NO donation is too small.

*Cass :*

Was *NO!* your first project?

**Aishah :**

I've worked on other people's projects, but this is my first big project. I started *NO!* in 1994, and I finally quit my job in 1998. I feel very blessed because I know a lot of filmmakers have to work 2 or 3 jobs just to survive. Up to this point, my life has been about *NO!* I have worked like a dog around the clock, with speaking engagements and grant proposals, but it's all connected to *NO!* Don't get me wrong, even though I haven't

had to get a job since September 1998, it's been rough. There have been lots of times that I've said, "To heck with this." But, every time I do that, a door opens and doors keep opening. Honestly, I believe this documentary is so much bigger than me. I feel like I'm a conduit for our ancestors, so that has kept me humble.

Cass :

Amen! How did you get involved in filmmaking? Did you always want to be a filmmaker?

**Aishah :**

Yes and no. When I was raped in my sophomore year in college, I became pregnant and had an abortion. It was a very traumatic experience so I dropped out of school as a result of that. I always thought I was going to go back, but in many ways I think because the way in which my rape happened, I know that that's what has kept me going in terms of *NO!* There's a place in Philadelphia called [Scribe Video Center](#) , founded by a very powerful and good brother, Louis Massiah. He was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship, and his documentaries include *Eyes on the Prize* and *W.E.B. DuBois - A Biography in Four Voices* . I actually started studying there when Toni Cade Bambara was still alive. In fact, Toni Morrison published two of her books after she died in 1995. It was really through Louie and Toni Cade at Scribe Video Center that I really was introduced to Black Independent Cinema. Toni rattled off the name of 84 Black Women filmmakers, because I was like, "Can I be a black woman filmmaker?" That was the first time I heard of women like Michelle Parkerson and Julie Dash. I saw *Daughters of the Dust* when it was a trailer in 1991. The Scribe Video Center offers these forums, workshops and scriptwriting for \$85. That's where I learned everything, and for me, it's like an activist training ground. Learning how to use the camera lens and to quote Toni, "to make revolution irresistible."

Cass :

Thanks for this very useful information because I know a lot of young filmmakers are looking for places to help them from beginning to end in terms of completing a film. Let's just change the topic a little and focus on the exploitation of women in movies, fashion magazines, television, commercials, and music videos. What's your thoughts on that?

**Aishah :**

You're right, but it's so complex because I've had artists say to me, "Why are these women lining up to be in the videos?" And, "What's going on with Black films?" Grant it, I think we should have the right to makes movies with Boo Boo the fool, or whatever, but the problem is we don't have other things. In white cinema, you can have *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* , but you can also have *Schindler's List* . It's like we're limited and don't have the variety or diversity. Sure, I laughed at *Barbershop* , and the like, but we don't have other films that challenge us or stimulate us intellectually. When I saw *Hero* or *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* , I stayed and watched the credits because it was so moving to see all these Asian last names. Not only were they in front of the camera, but they were behind the camera. And, I look at the story, and I think to myself, "Why can't we have this?"

Cass :

That's how I felt about *Baadasssss!* because I absolutely loved that movie. Problem is, it wasn't marketed enough and not put on enough screens.

**Aishah :**

I just bought *Baadasssss!* and it resonates with me so much too.

*Cass :*

It's because of movies like *Baadasssss!* ,*One Week* ,*30 Years to Life* ,*Lift* , or *All About You* , that I continue to seek out independent black films. It may be few and far between, but they're out there.

**Aishah :**

Yes, and thank God for Black Film Festivals because a lot of these films don't even get distributed. It wasn't until I started attending UrbanWorld and The Pan African Film & Arts Festivals did I realize that Black folks are really making more good films. Why don't we (Blacks) have access to them?

*Cass :*

Because of a lack of distributors and that's one of the major roadblocks for black independent filmmakers.

**Aishah :**

Exactly. As I wrap up the making of *NO!* , I'm faced with how am I going to get it out there to the masses. I have educational distributors who have done an excellent job, but I don't want *NO!* to cost \$200. I want *NO!* to be at WalMart, Kmart or somewhere where people can have access to it at an affordable price. I understand why the educational distributors do it because they're selling it to colleges and universities who are going to be screening it a hundred times so they're trying to get some money. I'm not making *NO!* for this kind of elite group of people in the know, because I want everyone to have access to it.

*Cass :*

Any final thoughts about *NO!* ?

**Aishah :**

What's also very powerful about *NO!* , with the exception of the narrative actors, is that everyone in *NO!* is Black. Not only are black women talking about their victimization, but they are also talking about their healing and their activism. That was very important for me with *NO!* , that this is an issue that we can address and resolve. But, to have Black women as experts, because we hardly ever see ourselves as experts. As Julie Dash said about *Daughters of the Dust* , "We're not trained." We're not trained to sit and be a black woman for two hours so we're uncomfortable. So I think that *NO!* is like saying not only are we going to talk about rape, but we are going to look at it from a black woman's perspective. Since we're not trained to look at something like this, then they say it's not realistic.

*Cass :*

I'd rather arm myself with information and knowledge instead of putting my head in the sand and acting like this doesn't exist. If that happens, it simply means I've freely given

my power away to the perpetrator so he can victimize me again, and that's the biggest tragedy.

**Aishah :**

And that's exactly what the perpetrators want from their victims -- silence.

*Cass :*

Hopefully, **NO!** gives a voice to those silent victims.

**Aishah :**

Thanks for saying that.

*Cass :*

Well darlin', we better practice our interviewing skills for television and be camera-ready at the drop of a dime because I feel Oprah will be calling us real soon.

**Aishah :**

Laughing! Cass, you are too much!

*Cass :*

I'm serious. I'm dieting right now, minus the French fry I just ate.

**Aishah :**

Laughing! Me too. I love your site, and I'm so honored and excited you contacted me.

*Cass :*

Aishah, it's been a pleasure meeting and talking with you too. And seriously, my contribution is in the mail!

**Aishah :**

And I will accept it!

*Cass :*

Latta!

To find our more information about Aishah Shahidah Simmons' documentary, go to **[NO!](#)**

**Other Links :**

[NO! resource page](#)

[The Rape Crisis Center for Children and Adults](#)

[The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network \(RAINN\)](#)

[INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence](#)

[Kobe Bryant -- Full Trial Coverage on CourtTV](#)

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