

Letter From Darryl Roberts

As you know, I was supposed to appear on CNN News today with Dr. Maria Rago of ANAD and former supermodel Emme at 4pm Eastern Time to announce the nationwide boycott of Ralph Lauren that thousands of you signed up for.

Well, The Ralph Lauren Company orchestrated a very savvy move and the segment was just cancelled. 30 minutes ago. 2 hours before we were to go live.

Tomorrow morning I will send out a newsletter with the full details letting you know what happened. Every single gory detail! The boycott will continue, but even stronger now.

I've started the America the Beautiful Action Network which will fight any ad or condition that harms the healthy self-esteem or overall emotional and mental well being of young women and girls.

When I sent out the newsletter yesterday announcing the CNN appearance, hundreds of teenage girls emailed me, saying they would watch the segment knowing their voice would finally be heard by many. You should be proud of yourselves because your voice was heard. Imagine the top executives at Ralph Lauren scurrying to keep me off of CNN. They won that battle but together we will win the war. I fully understand now that these companies aren't going to change their ways unless you make them with how you spend your money.

What upsets me the most is that so many young girls are suffering from these images and all Ralph Lauren seems to care about is not being boycotted (i.e. losing revenue). I'm speaking with organizers to mount boycotts outside of his stores in NY, Chicago and maybe San Francisco.

I'll need your support more than ever now. We're on their radar now and if we buckle, they'll never stop with their draconian advertising. To every woman and young girl reading this. I promise to keep fighting for you. And the fight will continue tomorrow!

Forever with you,
Darryl Roberts

PR Newswire

Documentary filmmaker Darryl Roberts (*America the Beautiful*) has spearheaded a major boycott against Ralph Lauren Polo, which will hit three major U.S. cities this month--Chicago, New York and San Francisco. On Tuesday, Dec. 15, Roberts along with 100 supporters seeking to improve media and advertising images being sent to young women and girls will boycott Lauren's Downtown Chicago store (750 N. Michigan Avenue) at 4pm.

Supporting Roberts in this boycott are the YWCA of America, IAEDP (International Association of Eating Disorder Professionals) and ANAD (National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Eating Disorders).

The boycotts come in the aftermath of the Filippa Hamilton uproar in October, when an ad featuring Hamilton, a model for Lauren, was found to be photoshopped to make her look thinner. Lauren released a media response, noting, in part, that, "Polo Ralph Lauren has apologized for the poor retouching of the images in question and takes full responsibility for the error." But in the following weeks, Roberts was notified of two additional ads, both featuring extremely thin looking models.

"Ralph Lauren apologized for the first image of Filippa Hamilton that was photoshopped," Roberts says, "but later he was caught with a second image and a third image. If he was truly sorry, why didn't he pull the additional ads when he apologized for the first one? So it seems that his company has an apologize-as-we-get-caught philosophy. The reason that we're boycotting is that we want him to commit to never putting out another ad that's egregious and offensive to young women and girls again."

Roberts, whose documentary *America the Beautiful*, tackles the subject of body image and eating disorders, said, "No more empty apologies from Mr. Lauren. We want a firm commitment that he'll never use ads that are disrespectful and egregious again."

"The relentless marketing of so-called 'beauty' in the Ralph Lauren ads is alienating to all who don't meet those artificial standards of 'ideal,'" says Lorraine Cole, PhD, CEO of YWCA of America. "It is time that we ignite a cultural change in this country to end the pursuit of the elusive beauty myth, starting with a boycott of those companies that disregard the self-esteem, health and human worth of the women and girls whose dollars they seek."

ATB Action Network is a newly-founded organization whose mission is to fight for and protect the healthy self-esteem of young girls. Dates of boycotts in New York City and San Francisco to be announced.