Celebrity apologies never feel genuine

By Jay'Mi Vazquez
Managing Editor

Celebrity apologies are never good. The message is usually the same: "I'm sorry... that I got caught" or "I'm sorry that I messed up."

From musicians to reality stars to YouTubers, no one is safe from making the occasional mistake or being exposed for something they have done.

For example, Travis Scott, following the deadly 2021 Astroworld Festival crowd surge that killed ten people, posted a black-and-white video where he rubbed his forehead and repeated vague phrases like "I'm just devastated."

He never once mentioned the victims by name or took specific responsibility. His apology was late. But it was also cold, impersonal and clearly crafted to prevent liability more than show remorse.

His apology never sat right with me. Considering the recent Netflix documentary, "Trainwreck: The Astroworld Tragedy," that concert was so unorganized, it is absurd to watch Scott's "apologetic" statement to this day.

Then, there is Cierra Ortega from "Love Island USA," who recently faced backlash after old footage surfaced of her using a racial slur.

Her apology? A TikTok video in a hoodie with the word "empathy" on it, where she blamed her age and claimed she did not "understand the weight" of her words. But it was clear she only responded after being publicly called out.

If no one had dug up the clip, would she have said anything at all? Likely not.

And who could forget Colleen Ballinger? Ballinger was accused of manipulating underage fans.

Rather than issue a straightforward apology, she sang a bizarre ukulele song titled "Toxic Gossip Train," where she deflected blame and essentially mocked the situation.

It was less about accountability and more about creating a viral moment. Spoiler: it did not help her case.

These so-called celebrity apologies share a commonality. They are always vague, defensive and calculated.

They are not rooted in genuine regret; it always feels like it is about brand management. PR teams and lawyers craft every word to avoid lawsuits, cancelation or further fallout.

The worst part is how often these non-apologies work.

After a short social media hiatus, many celebrities come back like nothing happened. Their fan base defends them, critics move on, and the internet forgets for a while, usually until the next controversy.

And viewers also play a role in this problem. Fans always want to believe these apologies are real. When they mess up, people want to forgive them. But maybe fans should not be so quick to let them off the hook.

A real apology is not about protecting your image. It is about naming the harm, taking ownership and committing to change.

Celebrities have massive platforms, and with that comes responsibility.

If they expect the benefits of fame, they should also accept the consequences of their actions, not just issue a half-hearted apology and disappear for a few weeks.

Fans do not need more tears or guitar solos. They deserve sincerity and for celebrities to take accountability for their actions. Until then, the next time a celebrity says "I'm sorry," maybe fans should ask: sorry for what, and sorry to whom?



PHOTO | HARD DRIVE

Colleen Ballinger playing the ukelele for her apology video.

Jimmy Kimmel silenced

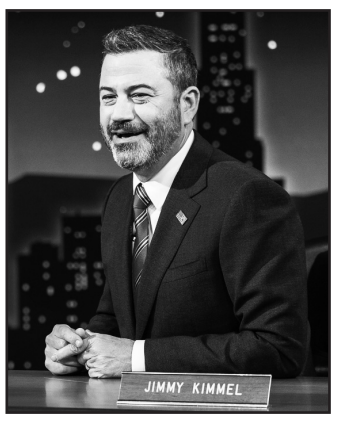

PHOTO | CNN

Jimmy Kimmel, the host of the ABC late-night talk show, Jimmy Kimmel Live!

By Jay'Mi Vazquez
Managing Editor

Late-night host Jimmy Kimmel has become the latest flashpoint in the ongoing battle over free speech and political power after making controversial comments about the fallout from Charlie Kirk's assassination.

At its heart, this controversy feels like the clash of two forces that should normally live side by side in a healthy democracy: satire and political power.

Kimmel, like many late-night hosts, uses humor to comment on public figures, especially polarizing ones like Donald Trump.

I think comedy is useful because it can highlight problems in politics in ways that straightforward reporting often cannot. Humor sometimes cuts deeper and makes audiences pay attention where serious commentary might be ignored.

But when an administration or its allies push back through coercion, the situation turns dangerous. When people in high positions of power try to control what others are allowed to say, that is a textbook example of sliding toward censorship.

The remarks that Kimmel made resulted in ABC suspending him, and many local TV affiliates went further by blacking out his show even after the suspension was lifted.

This moment is not just about one segment or one monologue; it is about the precedent it sets. If the president's team can pressure a media company to silence someone mildly critical under the excuse of "insensitive remarks" or "misinformation," it gives those in power a dangerous new tool.

And the harm builds over time. Even the possibility of retaliation creates what lawyers call a "chilling effect," discouraging creatives from speaking freely.

At the same time, public figures should expect criticism. That comes with being in the political arena. Satire is not always careful or precise; it is supposed to provoke and sometimes offend.

Kimmel's delivery was messy, and some of his lines might have been too controversial. But the answer should be debate, not blackout or punishment that looks more like an attempt to silence free expression.

Kimmel himself addressed this point when he returned, warning about media suppression and emphasizing that satire must stay free.

It is also worth pointing out that this backfired in a dramatic way. Kimmel's return brought huge ratings and renewed attention. What may have been intended as a warning ended up becoming a media victory for him.

I sympathize with Kimmel's goal of provoking thought and challenging power, and I worry about what this episode says about media independence today. The best response to offensive speech is always more speech, not suspension, not political pressure and not shutting someone down.

Because if we accept leaders silencing dissent whenever it is convenient, we risk losing something much more valuable than a late-night comedy show. We risk a part of the freedom that keeps democracy alive.

Mariah Carey is back



PHOTO | BILLBOARD

Mariah Carey's cover art for her new album titled "Here For It All."

By Solé Scott
Editor in Chief

Mariah Carey is a seasoned legend who has been in the music industry for 35 years, and she continues to display her status and talent on her 16th studio album.

"Here For It All" was released on Friday, Sept. 26 and consists of 11 songs. This is Carey's first non-Christmas album since 2018.

Carey is such an Aries, and she shows it all throughout this album. As a fellow Aries, I am obsessed.

The first song, "Mi," is egotistical and an instant classic in my personal playlist.

"I wear my high heels walking on my tip toes," Carey said. "I don't care about much if it ain't about Mi."

This would not be a Mariah Carey album if she was not talking about herself and how luxurious she is.

I was surprised that she had a song with Anderson .Paak, who she has been rumored to be dating for the past year.

Their collaboration, "Play This Song," is a '70s throwback vibe that is a continuation of .Paak's music with Bruno Mars as Silk Sonic. There was a music video as well that confirmed for me that the two were an item.

"Type Dangerous" was my favorite song on the album when it was released in the beginning of the summer. The song was on the airwaves every 10 minutes, and you could not escape it.

However, the music video is terrible and might just be her worst. Artists need to stop trying to cater to Generation Z aesthetics and just continue doing what they always have because that is how we fell in love with them.

"Sugar Sweet" is the worst song on the album and makes my ears bleed. The lyrics are very grade school, and that is shocking because Carey's songwriting is the holy grail.

"Nothing Is Impossible" was a heartfelt song and one of the most personal songs she has released in a minute.

"I will not break. I won't be broken," Carey said.

I could not help but think of Whitney Houston's "I Didn't Know My Own Strength" from her last studio album, as both have similar messages.

"I Won't Allow It" is a cute dance song that I can see all the Black aunties posting on their Instagram Reels or Facebooks.

"Jesus I do" with The Clark Sisters is the second-best song. The Clark Sisters ascend anyone who listens to their music, as they are arguably the greatest gospel ensemble in history.

One thing I noticed is that her tone is deeper, which is completely normal as we age. I honestly enjoy how she has adjusted her arrangement to compliment her mature voice. She was still able to hit her infamous whistle notes here and there.

"Here For It All" was a fantastic conclusion to this album and made me emotional because the vocals sounded like the old Carey. I passed out when she hit her whistle notes so crystal clear. This was by far the greatest song on this project, and I am so happy she put it at the end.

This album receives a gold star, and these new age artists need to study the greats like Carey because she is a walking billboard of how to preserve your voice and craft as you age.

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