



TRANS

MEDIA WATCH

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Charity Denounces Transphobic Article

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Trans Media Watch responds to Julie Burchill article in The Observer

Trans Media Watch, the charity that works to see transgender (trans) and intersex people and issues treated with accuracy, dignity and respect, expressed disappointment at the comment piece by Julie Burchill published in the Observer newspaper on 13th January 2013.

The article was ostensibly written in defence of Ms Burchill's colleague Suzanne Moore after comments made earlier in the week by individual Twitter users. Ms Burchill, however, attacked the whole trans community, using language which would be considered offensive and distressing to many trans people.

Trans Media Watch has been contacted by numerous people concerned about this article. In a social context in which trans experiences are poorly understood and many trans people face social exclusion, attacks of this kind are particularly damaging. Not only can they cause acute distress to individuals, many of whom have no-one to turn to for support, but they perpetuate a climate of prejudice that makes it difficult for people to go about their daily lives without harassment.

"We are saddened to see a former campaigner for social justice reduced to this kind of name calling, and still more saddened that the Observer would publish it," said Trans Media Watch chair Jennie Kermode. "It should have been quite possible for Julie Burchill to make her point in defence of Suzanne Moore without resorting to such tactics. Her article purports to challenge bullying but bullying is exactly what it is doing. Hate speech like this has no place in a national newspaper."

Trans Media Watch hopes that the Observer and its sister newspaper The Guardian will take steps to ensure that future reporting of transgender issues is more balanced.

Find out more:

<http://www.transmediawatch.org>

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