



TRANS MEDIA WATCH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Charity welcomes ASA ruling on transphobic advert

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Trans Media Watch responds to the ASA ruling on Paddy Power.

Trans Media Watch, the charity that works to see transgender people and issues treated with accuracy, dignity and respect, welcomes today's decision by the Advertising Standards Authority to uphold complaints about a recent advert by Paddy Power. The advert, screened in February, invited attendees at the Cheltenham races to "sport the stallions from the mares," identifying some women in the crowd as transgender (trans).

Trans Media Watch respects that opinions will differ on the offensiveness of the advert but stresses that it raised serious safety issues. The charity spoke with individuals who were verbally harassed in the street in relation to the advert. This is distressing in itself, but verbal harassment against trans people can often lead to violence. The risk of violence is increased when alcohol is involved, as is often the case at the racecourse.

"This advert placed trans women and, indeed, any women who happened to look a bit masculine, at risk of harassment, humiliation and, potentially, violence" said Trans Media Watch Chair Jennie Kermode. "Aggression toward trans people unfortunately remains common. It is unacceptable that people just going about their daily business or enjoying a day at the races should be singled out for mockery."

In its response to the ASA ruling, Paddy Power has noted that it gained permission for the advert to be screened from Clearcast, but editors should note that the agency retrospectively withdrew its approval. It also points out that it consulted trans group The Beaumont Society but fails to acknowledge that it did not show them the whole script subsequently used for the advert.

Trans Media Watch regrets that Paddy Power will welcome the publicity associated with this decision but hopes it will send a clear signal about the unacceptability of transphobic discrimination.