

The Good, The Bad, And The Ugly?

By Marti Abernathey

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https://www.transadvocate.com/the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly_n_1144.htm

Abstract

I spend a lot of time here at The Transadvocate posting various news articles from around the web through a plugin that pulls tweets from the Transadvocate Twitter page. Recently Stephanie Stevens from Abnormal Heights and Transgender News Yahoo group started tweeting transgender news on Twitter as well. This morning she posted the following tweet: [...]

Article

I spend a lot of time here at The Transadvocate posting various news articles from around the web through a plugin that pulls tweets from the Transadvocate Twitter page. Recently Stephanie Stevens from Abnormal Heights and Transgender News Yahoo group started tweeting transgender news on Twitter as well. This morning she posted the following tweet:

In California, a transwoman led police on a 100 mph chase in stolen vehicle. <http://bit.ly/DAr00>

In response to that tweet, I asked:

@TransNewsGirl how is this kind of story good for trans people? #transgender #p2 #fem2

I do think it's a very valid question to ask. Here at The Transadvocate, we are ADVOCATES for transgender/transsexual/gender variant people. Apparently the former editor of Colorez! (a now defunct Arizona LGBT magazine), Kynn Bartlett, has issues with my question.

She writes:

There's been some controversy within the online trans community about even sharing this story; Marti Abernathey (mzmartipants on LJ, where she lists mlgaetjens as a friend) has been critical on Twitter of @TransNewsGirl for including a link to the article in her trans news round-up feed: @mzmartipants: @TransNewsGirl how is this kind of story good for trans people? #transgender #p2 #fem2

@mzmartipants: @TransNewsGirl how is reporting transpeople committing crimes good 4 the community? #transgender

@mzmartipants: @TransNewsGirl and that benefits who? You? Why not post alerts from dobson and TVC? #cuttingnose2spiteface #p2 #transgender #glbt

Should aggregators of trans-related news stories only report the good ones, and not the embarrassing ones, the scary ones, the negative ones? Hide the ones that make us look like crazy, dangerous criminals? Do trans people serving as information sources (reporters, bloggers, twitterers) have an obligation to the greater trans community at large to carefully make sure that

they only present positive images of trans people?

First off, I'm kind of shocked that a former editor would try and defame me by using my online friending of the accused. Am I supposed to do background checks on everyone that friends me on Facebook/LiveJournal/Twitter? I have about 600 people following me on both Facebook and on Twitter. Should I be held responsible for all of their actions?

Secondly, what does my Facebook/LiveJournal friending to the accused have to do with the question I asked?

What good does it serve to report on the dirty underbelly of our community? You'll hear cries of censorship, but censorship is defined as:

the suppression of speech or deletion of communicative material which may be considered objectionable, harmful, sensitive, or inconvenient to the government or media organizations as determined by a censor.

We are neither the government or a media organization. We are delivering news about the community, to the community. I'm not sure how our brothers and sisters are lifted up or informed by hearing the news that an unstable transwoman stole a vehicle and went on a car chase. If there is a good reason to do so, I'd love to hear it. It would be welcomed much more than ad hominem attacks on my character.

Suggested citation

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