

# Why I support #CancelNetflix. It's not because Chappelle is offensive.

By Cristan Williams

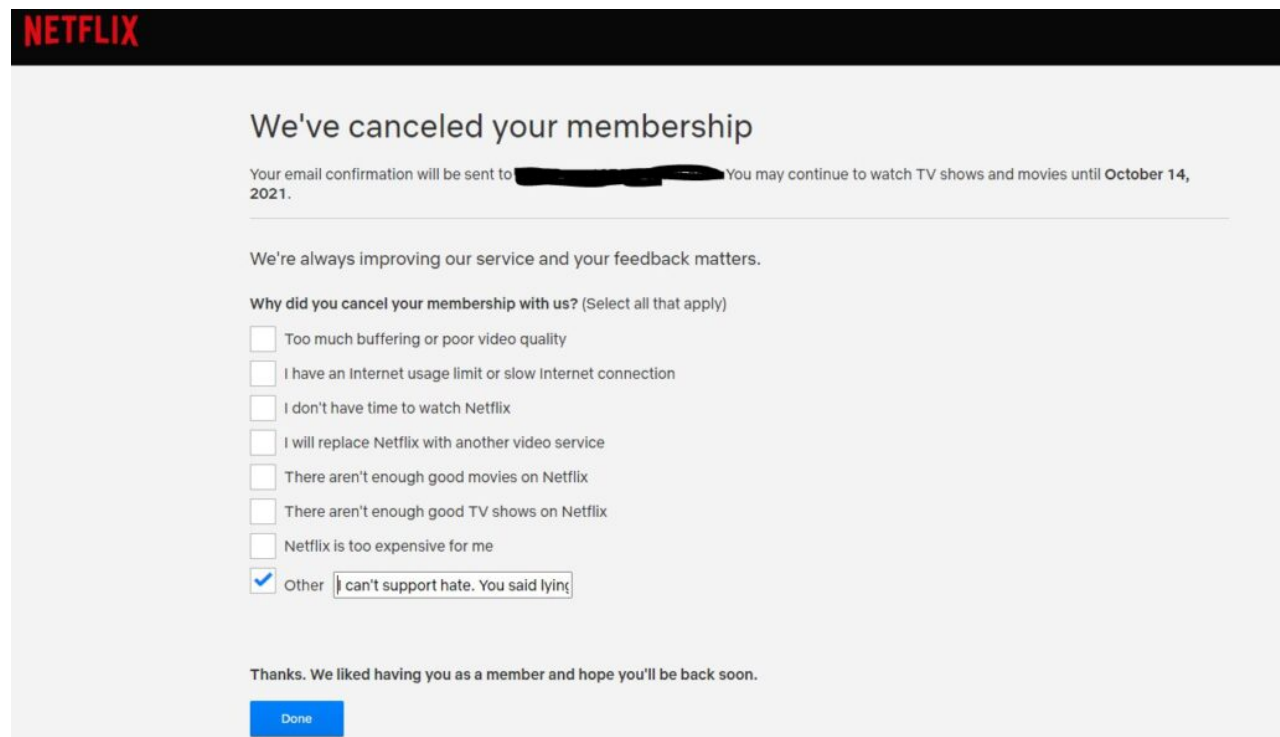
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[https://www.transadvocate.com/why-i-support-cancelnetflix-its-not-because-chappelle-is-offensive\\_n\\_64606.htm](https://www.transadvocate.com/why-i-support-cancelnetflix-its-not-because-chappelle-is-offensive_n_64606.htm)

## Abstract

*Cisgender media seems to want to have a “debate” over opinions about whether Dave Chappelle is offensive, and I can understand why. If we debate opinions instead of verifiable facts, cis media gets to perpetuate cis grievance over so-called “cancel culture.” So, let’s talk about what is true. First, Dave Chappelle lied about trans existence [...]*

## Article



**NETFLIX**

### We've canceled your membership

Your email confirmation will be sent to [redacted] You may continue to watch TV shows and movies until **October 14, 2021**.

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We're always improving our service and your feedback matters.

Why did you cancel your membership with us? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Too much buffering or poor video quality
- ☐ I have an Internet usage limit or slow Internet connection
- ☐ I don't have time to watch Netflix
- ☐ I will replace Netflix with another video service
- ☐ There aren't enough good movies on Netflix
- ☐ There aren't enough good TV shows on Netflix
- ☐ Netflix is too expensive for me
- ☒ Other

Thanks. We liked having you as a member and hope you'll be back soon.

**Done**

Cisgender media seems to want to have a “debate” over opinions about whether Dave Chappelle is offensive, and I can understand why. If we debate opinions instead of verifiable facts, cis media gets to perpetuate cis grievance over so-called “cancel culture.”

[Figure] Image

So, let’s talk about what is true. First, Dave Chappelle lied about trans existence in his Netflix

Special. Next, he apparently lied about his relationship with a trans woman who committed suicide. Then, Netflix fired a trans employee after she spoke up about how it felt to have an employer support anti-trans lies. Finally, Netflix said that they will continue to platform anti-trans lies because cis people like it.

#### The lies

In his special, Chappelle promoted the TERF propaganda that he and J.K. Rowling are canceled. Neither Chappelle nor Rowling are “canceled.” Both are still rich, employed, beloved, have access to all their platforms, and enjoy favorable coverage in the (cis) international press. Being canceled would be like a trans person expressing an opinion about Netflix’s support of anti-trans lies and then being fired. Unless I am very much mistaken, nothing like that has happened to Chappelle or Rowling.

Next, Chappelle claimed that trans people created the term TERF. The fact is that cis people created the term. Chappelle claimed that he was labeled a TERF because trans people disagreed with him. What makes one a TERF isn’t merely disagreeing with a trans person; instead, what makes one a TERF is that one promotes TERF propaganda in the same way that what makes one a fascist is that one promotes fascist propaganda. Therefore, if Chappelle is promoting TERF propaganda, then he’s a TERF.

TERF propaganda about sex always relies on a 3rd grade understanding of biology. Chappelle asserted that there are two genders because everyone came out of a womb. If we were to accept this Chappelle/TERF metric for a sexed binary, we would have to assert that this man, born with a womb, is a woman. This is TERF propaganda which asserts that “sex” is essentially reducible to fecundity or a womb.

#### The Truth about Sex

“Sex” is phenotype and genotype. Phenotype is the thing that is transitioned when trans people medically transition. For instance, this is a trans man’s phenotype:



A TERF would claim that his phenotype looks the way it does because of the testosterone he injects. The fact is testosterone alone will degrade into an estrogen without a body's genotypic ability to make 5-alpha reductase, which converts testosterone into dihydrotestosterone, the thing that produced the male phenotypic sexed attributes you see in the above photo.

#### Daphne's Suicide

Here, I am going to share what Daphne's roommate, Mia Satya had to say about Daphne's relationship with Chappelle, and his use of her suicide in his recent Netflix special:

*Daphne was my best friend for over 5 years. We bonded over having eclectic interests, including loving history, sociology, psychology, comedy, and cartography. We were there with each other through relationship drama, job changes, moving, and more. She met up with me for moral support when*

I announced my candidacy for the Board of Education. Daphne helped coach me for my first stand-up comedy performance, and I was there for what she alleged was her first comedy performance, but it was so funny that I hardly believe it was her first. I saw her start to get booked for more and more comedy performances, and I felt like, "Damn! She's about to be a celebrity, and I'm going to get to say - I knew her before she was famous!" And then she killed herself. Today has been two years since Daphne chose to end her life. I don't say 'committed suicide' because committed implies that it's a crime. It seems surreal that she missed the COVID pandemic, Tiger King, the insurrection, and so many moments from her friends' lives. I miss her jokes and know she would have made COVID quarantine so much more bearable for many folks that appreciated her humor on social media. People ask me if she killed herself because of Dave Chapelle (henceforth called DC) mentioning her in his 2019 special because she ended her life just one week after it came out. Daphne met DC at a comedy club while he was performing. He was telling controversial jokes, and she laughed because she always had a dark sense of humor. But Daphne never told racist jokes or punched down on groups of people. Instead, she used humor to heal from pain; she told self-deprecating jokes and used humor to educate people about trans issues. She never used humor to be hateful. Before DC's 2019 special, he really buttered her up, promising to mentor her and take her under his wings. I was suspicious of his antics and didn't really appreciate his style of humor, but I was happy for Daphne if she was happy. I watched part of DC's 2019 special when it came out because Daphne was so excited for it, but I couldn't even finish it because I felt like it was so offensive to different marginalized groups. But I didn't want to criticize it because I knew Daphne was excited for the shoutout, even though the mention of her was so quick you could miss it. Then after Daphne died, it was crickets from Dave Chapelle for months and years after it happened. When a group of her theatre/comedy friends threw a memorial for her in San Francisco, DC didn't say anything. When her funeral in Pennsylvania happened a couple months later, DC's team hadn't reached out to her friends or family. When we planned another memorial for her in SF, we didn't hear anything from his team. It was like if he said something about her, he would admit that he was responsible for her death. I'm not going to say I know for sure 100% that Dave Chapelle making fun of Daphne in his 2019 special is what caused her death. I don't think it was the leading cause, but who knows. Daphne had PTSD from a life of trauma, and she had battled suicidal thoughts for years. I think the final blow was a combination of her losing custody of her daughter, losing her job, and dealing with a lot of transphobic harassment on the streets of San Francisco. I lived with her, and yet I didn't know how bad she was feeling. I heard from a friend that Dave Chapelle mentioned her last year in a stand-up comedy routine, and he said how he let her open for one of his stand-up routines but that she "bombed it." For him to patronize her, demean her, and minimize her talent AFTER her death is cruel and crass. For him to invoke her name as a free pass to continue being transphobic is beyond fucked up. In the latest Netflix special, he starts his piece about trans people with "I'm not saying trans women aren't women" but then calls trans vaginas "beyond pussy". And he says he is a TERF and describes himself as transphobic MULTIPLE TIMES. He mentioned the story of when he met Daphne and when he invited her to open for him. He said that he didn't know she was an amateur. He says she was dressed well for the performance and admitted, "I'm transphobic, and even I think she looked nice." OKAY, TELL US HOW YOU REALLY FEEL. "This bitch bombed for 45 min straight... that show was terrible... but here's what impressed me... Any other comedian I've ever seen, if they bombed as bad as she did, would have snuck out of the theater and gone on home and cried. But she found a seat right in front... she laughed hard like (she didn't bomb). She was talking to me while I was performing like she was watching the TV

alone, but the crowd didn't like that shit because she sucked...."And then Daphne told a joke to a heckler, and then they went back and forth and told jokes. DC speaks about a touching moment they had together, but then he says her performance "stunk" again. That's what 4 times he said she wasn't funny?! This is how you speak about your dead "friend"? Then he [suddenly] realized she was funny after the performance because she genuinely interacted with the audience. After the show, he said when she hugged him, he pushed her off violently because "I'm transphobic."DC: "My friend Daphne killed herself...She identifies as a woman \_\_\_\_ [Then he describes how she killed herself], \_\_\_\_ clearly only a man would do some gangster shit like that!"I don't even know how he found that out because her friends and family didn't say that publicly. After all, IT'S PRIVATE AND PAINFUL! And beyond that, studies have shown that mentioning how people kill themselves only causes more suicides. But Dave doesn't care.He continues.. "As hard as it is to hear a joke like that, Daphne would have loved that joke" Maybe she would, maybe she wouldn't, but SHE KILLED HERSELF AND CAN'T DEFEND HERSELF ANYMORE! He goes on to say, "I don't know what the trans community did for her, and I don't care because she was my tribe."He says Daphne killed herself because trans people were criticizing her on Twitter... So he's blaming trans people for causing her death? WTF. That's some next-level victim-blaming and gaslighting.He ends his mockery of her by saying he wants to tell Daphne's daughter, "I knew your father, and HE was a wonderful woman."Dave Chapelle doesn't give a fuck about trans people. He deliberately goes out of his way to make fun of us, even making fun of his alleged friend AFTER her death.If you are reading this and made it this far, please take a moment to ask Netflix to remove this hateful special. Not because it might offend trans people, but because it might inspire more people to end their life.Daphne Dorman deserved better.

Was Dave Chapelle actually Daphne Dorman's friend, or is she, after she was dead, just a useful narrative device to facilitate his anti-trans mockery and lies? Because those two things are incompatible.



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Dave Chappelle has the right to make jokes about anything he wants to. I share this now because I'm seeing people I love being hurt by his words.

Since he's trending for saying terrible things, it might be time to tell my Dave Chappelle story. I was cast on his show for the episode 'Playa Haters Ball' (my first time in front of a camera) playing a sex worker.

It was the worst day of work I've ever had. I was ridiculed, demeaned, yelled at, touched fondled and pushed without my consent.

Dave was the worst culprit of it, but almost every male that day treated me this way. (The exceptions being Patrice O'Neal, Ice-T, and Rich Vos who all protected me.) I left set and cried and thought about quitting acting because maybe this was how it always was. His new special does not surprise me because I watched the way he

3:22 PM · Oct 9, 2021



Figure 1. Chappelle, #MeToo, & Netflix

I became a Netflix member in around 2005, which means that I was a member before they were a streaming platform. I stuck with them when they converted from DVD rentals to streaming, when they rolled out their buggy streaming service, when they suddenly wiped out my like/dislike preferences, and when they platformed problematic content in the past. What changed this time is that Netflix heard from their employees and members alike that their behavior was harming marginalized people. Netflix responded by making it clear that harming trans people was enjoyable to their non-trans audience, and they would therefore continue to harm trans people. I realized that my membership helped them harm trans people, and for as much as I have valued my membership over the past 16 years, I valued my integrity more. Therefore, yeah: #CancelNetflix.

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### **Suggested citation**

Cristan Williams. "Why I support #CancelNetflix. It's not because Chapelle is offensive.." TransAdvocate, October 13, 2021.

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