



Biased and reckless journalism from *Four Corners* team

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Australian Feminists for Women's Rights (AF4WR) are dismayed at the blatantly biased and unprofessional journalism exhibited in the 10 July, 2023 edition of *Four Corners* on the ABC.

The program, "Blocked", was a one-sided piece promoting so-called "Gender Affirming" medicine (GAM). It barely mentioned the growing international evidence of long-term health consequences of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones provided as treatment for gender dysphoria, and ignored key evidence that most GAM patients have mental health co-morbidities that remain untreated.

Among the many Australians raising concerns are psychiatrist Jillian Spencer, clinical psychologist Dianna Kenny and detransitioned woman Courtney Coulson, who appear to have been included to give an illusion of balanced reporting that in fact was not met. Their interviews received only a few minutes of airtime in a 55 minute program, and were interspersed with stills of Donald Trump, Ron de Santis and Melbourne Nazis, in a thinly veiled attempt at guilt by visual association.

More soap opera than journalism in tone, the program contained many factual inaccuracies, such as the fallacy that the impacts of puberty blockers (used off-label in GAM) are "reversible", or that sex is "assigned at birth" rather than determined at conception. Further, it glossed over other key information without comment, such as:

- the majority of young people with rapid onset gender dysphoria are girls (WHY?), and
- several European countries have now outlawed the use of puberty blockers (WHY?).

Discussion of research critical of GAM—such as that conducted by a clinical team at Westmead Children's Hospital—was superficial and selective, with more airtime being given to the presumed "weaponising" of such research (by whom, is not clear) than to the actual content of their work.

Most deeply shocking in the report was its treatment of the suicide of a young anorexic female, who had already been socially transitioned to a male gender identity. Her death was undeniably tragic, but what presenter Patricia Karvelas neglected to mention was that anorexia nervosa has the highest mortality rate of any mental illness and one in five sufferers will attempt suicide. It is also the third most common chronic illness among girls and young women (Garvan Institute). Again, we ask, WHY? Again, that question remains unanswered by *Four Corners*.

"That our national broadcaster exploited this suicide and the mother's grief in the service of pro-GAM propaganda is reprehensible", said AF4WR co-convenor, Emeritus Professor Bronwyn Winter. "We expect better, we deserve better, from our national publicly-funded broadcaster. The ABC is bound by its Charter to provide a high standard of broadcasting. On this, as on many recent occasions, it has failed the Australian public".

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