

Social justice falls short

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The so-called social justice warriors have succeeded only in dividing Americans between the sensible and the non-sensible. In fact, social justice does not have a reliable standard. In the past few weeks we have seen individuals, and companies, learn that not enough people will even follow a social justice norm. And sometimes those that do, cannot follow such a norm consistently themselves.

Social justice part 1: the Bud Light story

Several weeks ago, the Vice-President in Charge of Marketing for Anheuser Busch gave an endorsement contract to one Dylan Mulveney. Dylan Mulveney, a year ago, decided to self-identify as female, rather than his biological gender, which is male. As far as anyone knows, he has taken estrogen treatments but has not opted for sexual reassignment surgery.

As part of his activities, he promoted Bud Light, Anheuser Busch's brand of "light" lager beer. Very quickly after this campaign began, sales of Bud Light fell sharply. In fact, sales of nearly *all* Anheuser Busch brands fell off. Merchandisers reported that stores could no longer sell these brands, though they sold virtually every other brand of beer from every other brewer.

Newsweek suggested, last week, that a boycott of Bud Light would help rather than hinder the brand. But in fact, the controversy has hurt the brand. Bar owners are refusing to stock it, perhaps knowing that it won't sell. While that's happening, someone has already created an "Ultra Right" brand to compete with it directly.

At first Anheuser Busch executives brazenly boasted that the Bud Light brand was suffering anyway, and they needed to appeal to another customer base. That didn't last long, because the company stock fell sharply, and the company lost \$5 billion in market capitalization.

The CEO breaks his silence

Finally the Chief Executive Officer broke his silence:

As the CEO of a company founded in America's heartland more than 165 years ago, I am responsible for ensuring every consumer feels proud of the beer we brew.

We're honored to be part of the fabric of this country. Anheuser-Busch employs more than 18,000 people and our independent distributors employ an additional 47,000 valued colleagues. We have thousands of partners, millions of fans and a proud history supporting our communities, military, first responders, sports fans and hard-working Americans everywhere.

We never intended to be part of a discussion that divides people. We are in the business of bringing people together over a beer.

My time serving this country taught me the importance of accountability and the values upon which America was founded: freedom, hard work and respect for one another. As CEO of Anheuser-Busch, I am focused on building and protecting our remarkable history and heritage.

I care deeply about this country, this company, our brands and our partners. I spend much of my time traveling across America, listening to and learning from our customers, distributors and others.

Moving forward, I will continue to work tirelessly to bring great beers to consumers across our nation.

Brendan Whitworth, CEO, Anheuser-Busch

Is that an apology?

Twitter user War Clandestine did not appreciate this apology, if apology it was.

This is a bullshit corporate statement from [@AnheuserBusch](#)

This was a long-winded way to say nothing, beg people to buy their beer again, all without making any changes to their philosophy or their culture.

This problem could be fixed in 30 mins with competent leadership.

<https://t.co/83nLCJyF1P>

— Clandestine (@WarClandestine) [April 14, 2023](#)

He then suggested he could do better with a straightforward apology:

If Anheuser-Busch were serious about saving their company, their statement would look something like this. [@AnheuserBusch](#) ldk how much y'all are paying Brendan Whitworth, but I'll save your company overnight, for half of whatever you're paying him. pic.twitter.com/Jqsodt1luE

— Clandestine (@WarClandestine) [April 14, 2023](#)

Of course, the company will likely *not* make that kind of apology. The problem for the company is that it thinks that, once it's started on the road to social justice, it must continue. This holds even after "insiders" realize that such a social justice campaign is a mistake.

No one at a senior level was aware this was happening. Some low-level marketing staffer who helps manage the hundreds of influencer engagements they do must have thought it was no big deal. Obviously it was, and it's a shame because they have a well-earned reputation for just being America's beer — not a political company. It was a mistake.

But again, a higher level executive chose to *make* it a "big deal." But that executive then completely removed her social-media presence. This led to vain speculation that the higher executive echelon had terminated her employment. Apparently this did not happen.

Social justice part 2: the abortion controversy

The second controversy involving social justice concerns the "right" of a woman to end her pregnancy. This controversy flared up again with the suit over the popular abortifacient, mifepristone. Recall: a Texas judge "stayed the approval" of this drug. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals has since reinstated it – but only to *status quo ante* certain changes to its availability that the FDA made beginning in 2016.

Two days ago Stephen King chose to play the social justice warrior – by offering this time-honored aphorism:

It has been said before, but it bears repeating: if men could get pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament.

— Stephen King (@StephenKing) [April 13, 2023](#)

Before "trans-women" became a common meme, that aphorism might have stayed acceptable. But today it no longer is.

Delete this, you transphobe.

— Clifton Duncan (@cliftonaduncan) [April 14, 2023](#)

A conservative pointed out yesterday morning that of course abortion is a sacrament – of the left.

What an idiotic statement. Our whole pro life argument is that Abortion is the sacrament of the left. We did an entire show last night discussing this topic.

<https://t.co/CAxAGmNnWp> <https://t.co/oMJqyOWFf5>

— Anthony (@Catholicizm1) [April 14, 2023](#)

But Cathy Young made an even more pointed argument:

Trans debate aside, this was always a bad argument.

1. If men could get pregnant...it would mean we call female persons "men" instead of "women."

2. We never abridge the liberties of male people? Really? "If men were the ones killed in combat, war could be a crime." Oh wait... <https://t.co/ozUhbLdgCK>

— Cathy Young  (@CathyYoung63) [April 14, 2023](#)

This is probably the best tweet pointing out the inconsistency:

How long before we see him tweet an apology to the trans community?

<https://t.co/GSel6HtBwc>

— Storm (@stormrobinson) [April 14, 2023](#)

Analysis

These two controversies have illustrated the problem with trying to stay with “social justice.” As one can see, trying to stay neutral doesn’t always work. One will offend either one or the other, no matter what one does. For that reason, the best thing is to stay with Christianity, not with social justice.