

# Government Won't Save Us From "Woke" Corporations

From the shoes you wear to the ice cream you eat, politics has found a way to sneak into some of the most mundane aspects of our lives. The new trend of "Woke Capital," where firms are actively promoting social justice causes, has had many free-marketers scratching their heads at how corporate America has hopped on board this wave of Progressivism.

Take for example the ice cream company Ben & Jerry's. Ben & Jerry's has made it a point to virtue signal about the latest leftist hobby horses. It made sure to showcase its progressive credentials through its launch of a [resistance-themed ice cream flavor](#) and even went as far as to endorse the [Green New Deal](#).

Woke Capital was also on full display when Nike decided to [pull its Betsy Ross flag line of shoes](#) thanks to pressure from former NFL player Colin Kaepernick. Now an activist, Kaepernick viewed the [Betsy Ross flag](#) as an image of racism due to its creation during the American Revolution when slavery was still present.

A similar trend of political activism gone corporate has popped up when dealing with wedge issues such as gun rights. Companies such as Salesforce recently [stopped doing business](#) with organizations that sell semi-automatic rifles and firearms accessories. This decision is part of a larger wave off [corporate gun control](#) taking place since the 2018 Parkland shooting.

## Corporations are Following in the State's Footsteps

The threat of state action has hamstrung many forms of private associations and has seeped into the culture as well. The

[“therapeutic managerial state”](#) we see today functions as a public-private partnership where political correctness culture is pushed as a means of re-socializing the public. Corporate actors are now well aware of this and work to one-up their PC overlords in the entrenched DC bureaucracy by trying to be “woke” in the boardroom.

Big Tech is a great example. Last year’s social media purges of political personalities such as Alex Jones demonstrated this new form of corporate policing. However, the blunt force of the state still lurked in the background as the late Justin Raimondo previously [noted](#) during the Jones deplatforming saga:

*All this wasn’t good enough for Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Connecticut), who [demanded to know](#) if the plan was to only take down “one web site.” No doubt he has a whole list of sites he’d like to take down. Even more ominously, it was revealed that a [direct threat](#) had been made to these companies by Sen. Mark Warner (D-Virginia), who sent out a memo listing all the ways the government could crack down on Big Data if they refuse to go along with cleansing the internet of “divisive” material.*

Even though no direct legislative action came out of Senator Murphy’s threats, many companies are well aware of the state’s power to modify private behavior. The administrative state’s willingness to put the clamps on [allegedly discriminatory activities](#) is well-documented. So, these companies have every incentive to be on their best behavior, and in some cases go the extra mile by being “woke” to avoid bureaucratic persecution.

## **Changing Corporate Culture?**

It is intriguing that there hasn’t been much pushback against corporate virtue signaling from consumers. This indicates some degree of cultural tolerance from a large portion of the population. Just think about it, when’s the last time a mass

conservative boycott of a company enacting “woke” policies led to its bankruptcy?

Bill Anderson’s [point about](#) how “the fundamentals of private property, prices, and profits and losses” cannot be ignored in any business operation is valid, but it overlooks one trend that has taken place during the last few decades – how much the American consumer base has been re-socialized by the managerial state and its many indoctrination mechanisms.

Paul Gottfried makes an [interesting observation](#) about both corporate titans and consumers in the twenty-first century when it relates to deplatforming:

*Many of those who avail themselves of Zuckerberg’s invention hold the same political and cultural beliefs. I’m not even sure that the decisions made by Facebook and Google here and in Western Europe to kick political conservatives off their sites is a bad business practice. Perhaps most users of these internet conveniences welcome P.C. intolerance.*

Gottfried also explains how entrepreneurs during the Gilded Age like Cornelius Vanderbilt, John D. Rockefeller, and Andrew Carnegie generally held more traditional views and “were devout Protestants, and they lived in societies in which both rich and poor were expected to conform to certain bourgeois proprieties that hardly exist anymore.” In sum, there is not enough collective opposition to match the “woke” Corporate America of the twenty-first century nor the activist groups constantly pressing for more diversity and inclusiveness in the workplace.

What we see now is both corporate leadership that is culturally receptive to social justice culture, and a more apathetic consumer base that does not care about the politics of these companies enough to actually revolt against them via the pocketbook.

Some right wing politicians have suggested additional government regulation in retaliation against these firms. But for those more inclined toward *laissez-faire*, consumer action and robust civil society are more important than ever. Instead of exclusively focusing on elections, free-marketers should shift their energy toward business and cultural endeavors. In these areas, there are more level playing fields. The silver lining of this new Woke Capital trend is that these kinds of battles will incentivize free-market advocates to put more skin in the game and actually build viable alternatives to current corporate structures.

For example, Amazon shareholders [nixed](#) several employee-led proposals which included a plan to tackle climate change. Similarly, Google shareholders [rejected](#) a plan to link executive compensation to diversity goals. Through shareholder pressure, those of free-market inclinations can make their voices heard. More boardroom, less ballot box.

The last thing we should do in these situations is to bring the government in to “normalize” business conduct. If anything, the last century has demonstrated that government stepping into private affairs has thrown everything out of whack. As American society becomes more polarized and the government maintains its automated growth, alternative strategies that promote political decentralization are crucial.

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