

CAPITULATION OR PROGRESS?
THE IMPACT OF CHICK-FIL-A'S 2019 SPONSORSHIP
DECISIONS ON CORPORATE SOCIAL ADVOCACY AND
BRAND EQUITY

by

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Advocacy and Brand Equity

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In November of 2019, Chick-fil-A made the decision to withdraw sponsorship from The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Chick-fil-A framed this decision as a desire to have a more focused philanthropic approach moving forward, with an emphasis on supporting organizations that address hunger, homelessness, and education in the nation's youth. This decision was set against a backdrop of heavy protests due to the company's religious principles as well as the homophobic comments made by President Dan Cathy in 2012, resulting in failed expansion attempts in San Antonio, Buffalo, and Reading, U.K. Once the decision to withdraw sponsorship was made, the company faced backlash from both conservative and liberal individuals and groups. This research is based on a qualitative content analysis of 30 articles that covered this decision, with an even ratio of conservative, liberal, and unbiased sources. The main findings are that this decision impacted brand equity by taking away existing brand loyalty and making brand associations unclear. Additionally, when a brand abruptly changes the direction of its corporate social advocacy, consumers lose sight of who the company is, at least temporarily.

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Introduction

Companies have the ability to use their brands as platforms to espouse certain values or beliefs. One way in which this is seen is corporate social responsibility (CSR). At its core, CSR is when a firm incorporates social and environmental concerns into the operation of its business (What Is CSR). This aligns with the Triple-Bottom-Line-Approach, which is a strategy that companies use to reach a balance of social, environmental, and economic components in their business management. Some key CSR issues currently are eco-efficiency, working conditions, gender balance, and human rights (What Is CSR). When a company takes a stand on one of these issues and implements programs, initiatives, or funding to address the issue, it resonates well with consumers that share a similar mindset about that issue.

Initially, companies were hesitant to invest in CSR. Investing time and resources into a purpose or cause can be hard to justify when there is no guaranteed return on investment. For decades, this risk aversion caused apathy in companies regarding corporate social responsibility (Schaverien, 2018). However, as some companies started to adopt CSR programs, consumers began to expect this of all companies, increasing the pressure on the companies that were not yet involved with CSR (Schaverien, 2018). The necessity of corporate social responsibility is increasing as Generation Z and millennials tend to affiliate more with companies that care about some sort of larger purpose. According to a study conducted by Accenture Strategy, six out of ten consumers in these younger generations think about the ethical values of a company before they make a purchase from that company (Schaverien, 2018). Furthermore, studies have shown that 87% of consumers would make a purchase because the company supported an issue

that the consumer cared about (Anderson, 2017). On the other hand, 76% of consumers would boycott a brand if it was in support of a cause that did not align with the consumer's beliefs (Anderson, 2017). All of this is to say that a company's values are no longer on the backburner. Consumers are belief-based buyers, and how a company displays what it believes in can have a direct impact on whether or not the consumer will support that company.

While there is a clear understanding of the relationship between social and environmental causes integrated into companies and the decisions of a consumer, there is not as clear of an understanding of how the integration of religion into a company impacts the consumer. There is supposed to be a division between church and state, but yet religion plays a role in consumer culture. An example of this is Masterpiece Cakeshop. In 2012, romantic partners Charlie Craig and David Mullins went into Masterpiece Cakeshop located in Lakewood, Colorado, hoping for a wedding cake. The owner, Jack Phillips, refused to provide a cake to the same-sex couple, which was a decision based in his religious beliefs (Smith & Graves, 2018). This issue went all the way to the Supreme Court, where the justices ruled in favor of Phillips. The reasoning behind this was the First Amendment, because by refusing to serve this couple, he was executing freedom of speech. Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote, "religious and philosophical objections to gay marriage are protected views and, in some instances, protected forms of expression" (Smith & Graves, 2018). Although Jack Phillips won, this started a national dialogue about the rights of individuals and the rights of business owners. Furthermore, this situation brought about significant backlash towards Masterpiece Cakeshop.

The second example of a company with religious views is In-N-Out Burger. While Masterpiece Cakeshop was very blatant in its religious stance, In-N-Out Burger is much more subtle. In-N-Out Burger prints Bible citations on a significant amount of its packaging, such as on the bottom of cups or French fry packaging. This is an intriguing choice because it is not noticeable unless one looks at the bottom of the packaging. This religious representation is quite indistinct, which results in some consumers not even noticing that it is there. However, it is still an instance where a company utilizes its brand to indicate its religious views.

The poster child of companies driven by religion is Chick-fil-A. Since the chain opened, decisions about the company have been influenced by the Christian beliefs of the founder. The primary example of this is the entire chain being closed on Sundays because it is a Biblical day of rest (Green, 2015). In 2014, the founder, S. Truett Cathy, passed away. Beforehand, he made a contract with his children that the company would never go public, because if ownership was transitioned outside of the family, that could jeopardize the religious mission of the company. Within the mission statement of the company, it states “to glorify God by being a faithful steward of all that is entrusted to us” (Green, 2015).

Throughout the years, the beliefs of the company have caused some controversy. Chick-fil-A donated to organizations that were against gay marriage and the LGBTQ community. Additionally, this company supported Proposition 8 in California, which was a proposed amendment to the Constitution to ban same-sex marriage. Both of these political actions were grounded in their traditional family values (Green, 2015). However, in the fall of 2019, Chick-fil-A surprised everyone by pivoting from its well-

known stance on LGBTQ rights and withdrew funding from The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. This decision, while framed as being driven by a desire to have a more focused philanthropic approach moving forward, is easily interpreted as being a stance. The way in which a company spends its money speaks to what it values and what it prioritizes. In the past, Chick-fil-A showed that it prioritized traditional family values by donating money to organizations that prioritized the same things. These past decisions have lined up well with the religious orientation of the business. However, when Chick-fil-A withdrew this same funding, it was making a statement in the opposite direction. Through making a progressive move, Chick-fil-A shifted its advocacy and reputation for holding more traditional values.

This paper will delve into the decision to withdraw sponsorship from these controversial organizations through looking at the reasons why the decision was made, what Chick-fil-A's approach to sponsorship will be moving forward, and the various opinions and spokespeople involved in the dialogue surrounding this decision. Through a content analysis of thirty articles from liberal, conservative, and unbiased news sources, this study will consider the impact of this decision on Chick-fil-A's brand equity and corporate social advocacy. This paper contributes to the literature because it provides insight into a company that pivoted in its ideology after decades of being unabashedly traditional. Through an examination of media portrayals, this paper will show what happens when a company changes course so drastically and will provide insight on what a company should know when preparing to make a decision of this fashion. Before analyzing this recent development in Chick-fil-A's story, it is important to understand the history of the company and how it evolved to where it is today.

History

People across the United States love Chick-fil-A for its chicken sandwiches, waffle fries, and southern hospitality. This booming enterprise would not be what it is today without the efforts of a man named S. Truett Cathy. Cathy grew up during the Great Depression. His mother ran a boarding house and his father sold insurance policies (Parker). Cathy's first experiences with the warmth and comfort that food can bring were in this boarding house, as he observed his mom preparing food for the guests. True to the nature of that period in time, money was tight for the family, so Cathy and his brother Ben took on paper routes. This line of work proved itself to be profitable, and soon the family let go of the boarding house, accepted the paper routes as their primary source of income, and moved into federally subsidized housing (Parker).

While managing their paper routes, Cathy and his brother learned that they worked well together as business partners. As the clouds of the Great Depression lifted, many Americans felt the entrepreneurial spirit and began starting their own businesses. Cathy and his brother were no exception. Together, they created Dwarf Grill, which was a 24-hour diner in Hapeville, Georgia. This diner had 4 tables and 10 bar stools along the counter, with Cathy and his brother as the only employees. On May 23, 1946, they opened the doors of Dwarf Grill for the first time and made \$58.20 on their first day (Parker). From then on, these two brothers took turns with twelve-hour shifts on the grill. They honored Sundays as a day of rest; a decision based in their religious beliefs but also necessitated by the importance of rest after six twelve-hour shifts in a row.

Their diner was frequented by employees of the nearby Ford assembly plant, as well as the Atlanta airport (Parker).

In 1949, tragedy struck when Ben passed away in a plane crash. Faced with the loss of his brother and business partner, Cathy persevered with the business they had built together (Parker). Fast-forward to 1964, and after countless tests, Cathy decided on the chicken sandwich recipe that America knows and loves, with two pickles and a bun toasted and buttered. Dwarf Grill transitioned into being Chick-fil-A and was able to land a placement in a mall food court (History). In 1986, it went from being in the food court to achieving its first stand-alone location on North Druid Hills Road in Atlanta, Georgia. Over the next few decades, this fast food chain gained awareness in the public sphere through advertising campaigns, such as the infamous “Eat Mor Chikin” billboards, as well as involvement in and sponsorship of major events, such as the Peach Bowl (History). Chick-fil-A became a force to be reckoned with as it surpassed two billion in system-wide sales in 2006, thus establishing this family-owned company as a multi-billion-dollar brand (History).

From very early on in his life, Cathy stated, “I think I’d like to be remembered as one who kept my priorities in order.” Arguably, he achieved this mission. His priorities were made clear through his actions. He was a man who loved to help others, and was heavily involved with philanthropic work throughout his time at the helm of Chick-fil-A. He even received awards for the charities that he contributed to and was always driven to improve the lives of the youth in this country (History). He valued family as well, having been married to Jeannette McNeil Cathy for 65 years, and leaving behind two sons, one daughter, twelve grandchildren, and 23 great

grandchildren (History). Last but not least, he prioritized his relationship with God. Cathy created a company that was clear about what beliefs were the cornerstone of the whole operation. The culture of this company is rooted in servitude and kindness, with employees trained to go above and beyond with regards to hospitality and helpfulness. Cathy maintained biblical stances on social and political matters, regardless of how many feathers he ruffled. Controversy did not deter Cathy from using his brand as a platform to espouse what he believed in, and many consumers came to expect and respect his boldness and transparency.

Commitment to family and religion are certainly attributes that the late S. Truett Cathy passed on to his son, Dan Cathy. In 2012, Dan assumed the role of CEO of his father's company, and it did not take him long to also become a controversial figure. He was featured on a segment of The Ken Coleman Show, during which he said, "I think we are inviting God's judgment on our nation when we shake our fist at Him and say, 'We know better than you as to what constitutes a marriage'. I pray God's mercy on our generation that has such a prideful, arrogant attitude to think that we have the audacity to define what marriage is about" (Collier, 2012). He then proceeded to say, "We are very much supportive of the family -- the biblical definition of the family unit," as well as "We know that it might not be popular with everyone, but thank the Lord, we live in a country where we can share our values and operate on biblical principles" (Collier, 2012). For an executive of such a big business to get involved in a national debate and make remarks that are offensive and insensitive to many individuals was shocking. Bloggers all over the country voiced their opinions, celebrities announced that they

would be boycotting the company, and consumers, both pleased and disgusted, expressed their perspectives on social media (McGregor, 2012).

Dan Cathy's remarks were not completely unprecedented for a company that from the beginning made it very clear what its values were. Additionally, as an executive, it was within his ability to use his business as a platform on which to share his religious ideologies. The fact that Chick-fil-A is a private and family-owned business gave Dan Cathy even more license to speak his mind. However, the manner in which he did so was not seen as tactful. For consumers, it is understandable for an executive to have an opinion. Even so, it does not resonate well with people when the executive shares that opinion while demeaning anyone who disagrees. Through his use of words like prideful and arrogant, Cathy damaged consumer relationships, by insulting the consumers who disagreed with him. He did this during an election year, when political tensions were already high, placing Chick-fil-A in the midst of incredible controversy. Consumers would have been more receptive to his opinions if he had approached the topic from a more balanced perspective, as he had in the past, saying, "while my family and I believe in the Biblical definition of marriage, we love and respect anyone who disagrees" (McGregor, 2012). Unfortunately, once he made his controversial remarks in 2012, there was no retreat. His words further cemented Chick-fil-A's religious principles, as well as positioned it as a company that held discriminatory views against the LGBTQ community.

In tandem with the reputation that Dan Cathy had created, Chick-fil-A sponsored organizations such as The Salvation Army, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Paul Anderson Youth Home, and the Family Research Council (FRC); all

of which had a history of being anti-LGBTQ. The Salvation Army had a track record of opposing legal protections for American citizens in the LGBTQ community. The Fellowship of Christian Athletes bars any employees engaging in homosexual acts through a sexual purity policy. The Paul Anderson Youth Home enforces messages that homosexuality and same-sex marriage are wrong, as well as go against Christ and His values (Israel, 2019). Finally, the Family Research Council works as a lobbyist group to further matters regarding family, freedom, and faith, all from a Christian perspective. The words of Chick-fil-A's executives as well as its philanthropy practices resulted in significant pushback against the company over the years. Some individuals had such strong opinions regarding the words of Dan Cathy and Chick-fil-A's sponsorship practices that it resulted in violence.

In August of 2012, a man named Floyd Lee Corkins II walked into the lobby of the Family Research Council and shot a security guard. Right before shooting the guard, Corkins said, "I don't like your politics" (Martin, 2012). He was carrying a handgun, along with a box of 50 additional rounds of ammunition and 15 Chick-fil-A sandwiches. Corkins was a man who spent his spare time reading work by German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, as well as volunteering at an LGTBQ community center in Washington D.C. (Martin, 2012). At the community center, people knew him as being kind, modest, and gentle. However, his parents told the FBI that Corkins, "has strong opinions with respect to those he believes do not treat homosexuals in a fair manner" (Martin, 2012). Corkins was taking a stance against the Family Research Council, while paying homage to Chick-fil-A by bringing its sandwiches with him. Through his actions he was not only protesting the work of the FRC, but also making it clear that he was not

pleased with any company that supports the FRC. This instance exemplifies that Chick-fil-A consumers can associate the company with the values of the organizations it supports financially.

In addition to this violent event, there were a myriad of forms that pushback took, whether it be posts on social media or protests in front of restaurant locations. The composite of pushback began to limit the company's ability to expand into new markets. In March of 2019, the San Antonio airport sent a new concessions contract to the city council, which was approved by the city council leaders with the condition that Chick-fil-A be removed and replaced with another restaurant (Sperance, 2019b). San Antonio Councilman Robert Treviño said, "San Antonio is a city full of compassion, and we do not have room in our public facilities for a business with a legacy of anti-LGBTQ behavior. Everyone has a place here, and everyone should feel welcome when they walk through our airport" (Sperance, 2019b).

Along with San Antonio, the concessions handler for Buffalo Niagara International Airport, the third-largest airport in New York, decided that Chick-fil-A would not be a part of the food court upgrade. New York Assemblyman Sean Ryan maintained that it was not appropriate for a publicly financed facility like this airport to host such a controversial chain (Sperance, 2019b). Furthermore, San Jose, California, had recently approved to have Chick-fil-A as part of its concessions at the Norman Y. Mineta San Jose Airport. However, the city announced that it did not intend to keep Chick-fil-A around permanently and would not allow the chain to stay once its lease is up for renewal in 2026. Politicians in San Jose encouraged citizens to make this chain location "the gayest Chick-fil-A" by putting the rainbow flag all around it, in order to

show solidarity with the LGBTQ community (Sperance, 2019b). The airport is often one of the first places that a person interacts with when they arrive in that city. It was important for the values of that location to be clear to visitors from the very first impression, which in turn meant that any organization with a history of discriminatory words or behaviors would not be welcome.

The most recent way in which expansion was limited happened in October of 2019. Chick-fil-A had just opened its first restaurant in the United Kingdom (Lucas, 2019a). However, a little over a week after it opened, management of the Oracle shopping center in Reading, U.K., where this new location was housed, told the chain that its 6-month lease would not be extended. The shopping center had faced significant pressure from Reading Pride, which is the local LGBTQ rights advocacy group (Lucas, 2019a). Thus, this marked the fourth example of Chick-fil-A's ideology limiting its ability to open branches in new locations or maintain existing branches. For a company with such traditional values, expanding out of the southeastern states was proving to be a challenge. Soon after, in November of 2019, Chick-fil-A made the decision to withdraw sponsorship from The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, while also refining its philanthropy approach moving forward.

This was a significant decision, as Chick-fil-A had been indicating a change in sponsorship practices for years but had not fully followed through on that commitment. After Dan Cathy's controversial remarks in 2012, the company posted on Facebook, saying that its primary focus moving forward would be making chicken, and that it would "leave the policy debate over same-sex marriage to the government and political arena" (Israel, 2019). In 2016, Chick-fil-A was on record for saying that it would be

ceasing all contributions that have been deemed offensive, with the exception of the Salvation Army. However, in 2017, Chick-fil-A tax filings showed that the company gave \$1,653,416 to the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, \$150,000 to The Salvation Army, and \$6,000 to the Paul Anderson Youth Home (Israel, 2019). This same year, Chick-fil-A announced that it would not be supporting the Paul Anderson Youth Home moving forward. However, it was not until 2019 when the charitable branch of Chick-fil-A withdrew sponsorship from the other two controversial organizations. In order to understand how this history fed into Chick-fil-A's sponsorship withdrawal and the impact that it had, it is important to lay a groundwork of the existing literature surrounding branding and corporate social advocacy.

Literature Review

The main theory that will be guiding this research is corporate social advocacy (CSA). CSA looks into how organizations take a stance on social-political issues. CSA is found at the intersection between corporate social responsibility and issues management. Through CSA, companies can take stances on issues such as health care reform, gay marriage, and emergency contraception (Dodd & Supa, 2014). Researcher Melissa D. Dodd has spent much of her scholarship considering how CSA impacts the financial performance of a company. Her findings include that, “greater agreement with a corporate stance results in greater intentions to purchase; whereas lesser agreement with a corporate stance results in lesser intention to purchase” (Dodd & Supa, 2014).

Corporate social advocacy is at times part of proactive public relations, where companies hope to benefit from carefully planning out a communication plan to take an organizational stance on an initiative. Other times, CSA can be found in words that are unintentionally delivered by an executive member of a company, which then triggers reactive public relations (Dodd & Supa, 2014). Whether or not the CSA is intentional does not matter to the consumer, because it is all an instance where a company is aligning itself with an issue. Corporate social advocacy differs from corporate social responsibility in the sense that these advocacy efforts might be seen as less of an obligation or action that the stakeholders expect, but rather a voluntary activity. This voluntary activity strives to have a positive impact on society at large (Dodd & Supa, 2014). Of course, everyone has a different vision for what a better society would look like, which is why CSA has the potential to be so controversial.

The financial impact of corporate social advocacy completely depends on the stakeholder group. CSA can have a positive or negative financial impact based on how certain stakeholders react to the company's stance (Dodd & Supa, 2014). The potential for there to be positive and negative responses can lead to the impact offsetting itself. In this case, companies can feel certain freedom from financial pressures and advocate with more liberation (Dodd & Supa, 2014). For this research, I will consider the religious stances of a company as being CSA.

Corporate social advocacy interacts with branding elements. For a company, the brand itself is one of the most valuable attributes. While the concept of a brand can seem vague and broad, it is essential for companies to build and manage this asset over time in order to increase profitability and revenue, as well as the overall value of the company. There are four key pillars of a brand that are used to determine its success: brand awareness, perceived value, brand associations, and brand loyalty (Grewal & Levy, 2018, 232). Brand awareness is a metric of the number of consumers in the marketplace who not only know what the brand is, but also what the brand stands for, and therefore form personal opinions about the brand based on that information. Brand awareness is important for companies because it plays heavily into the decision of a consumer to buy a certain good or service. For this reason, companies tend to invest heavily into exposing the public to brand elements (such as name, slogan, logo, or packaging) as well as communications work such as advertising or publicity (Grewal & Levy, 2018, 233). A company reaches true brand awareness when its brands become synonymous with the product itself. Examples of this are when lip balm is referred to as

ChapStick, bandages are referred to as Band-Aids, or petroleum jelly is referred to as Vaseline.

The second pillar of branding is perceived value. Perceived value is generally what the consumer perceives as the relationship between the cost and what a good or service provides them with (Grewal & Levy, 2018, 233). This leads into the third pillar, which is brand associations. Brand associations are mental and emotional connections that a consumer makes between a brand and the key attributes of what it delivers. A brand association is what immediately comes to mind for a consumer when they think about a company. As a result, it is important for this association to be a positive one, because brands do not want consumers to immediately think negative thoughts when they consider the company. As a result, brands work tirelessly to “create specific associations with positive consumer emotions such as fun, friendship, good feelings, family gatherings, and parties” (Grewal & Levy, 2018, 234). These brand associations begin to be formed the first time a consumer interacts with a brand and are reinforced through each ensuing interaction. Once an association is solidified, it can be incredibly difficult to alter what that association is, so a firm negative association can lead to negative word of mouth and loss of patronage, both of which are damaging to a company and its brand.

The final tenant of branding is brand loyalty. Brand loyalty is achieved when a consumer consistently chooses to purchase the good or service of one company over the competitors in its industry. Brand loyalty is beneficial for a business for several reasons. First, the company does not have to sink significant funds into marketing to these customers, because people who are loyal to a brand will continue to support that brand

regardless and do not need encouragement from advertisements or promotional materials (Grewal & Levy, 2018, 234-235). Along with this, brand loyalists tend to promote the company through word of mouth, as they praise the attributes to their friends, family members, or coworkers. People who are loyal to a brand tend to be very passionate about what that brand offers and have glowing reviews to pass on to others. Third, it is rare for a brand loyal consumer to switch over to another brand, which provides companies with a layer of protection against competition. These loyal customers provide consistent patronage, free promotion, and insulation from other companies within the industry, all of which renders them highly valuable, which is why companies create various loyalty programs and incentives to maintain this connection (Grewal & Levy, 2018, 234-235).

With the foundation of this literature review, which focused on brand equity and corporate social advocacy, the study asks:

RQ1: How did Chick-fil-A's decision to withdraw sponsorship from The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes impact brand equity and public perception?

RQ2: Based on Chick-fil-A's experience, what can be learned from when a brand abruptly changes the direction of its corporate social advocacy?

These questions will be addressed through the following method.

Method

This research was conducted through a qualitative content analysis of news coverage specific to Chick-fil-A's decision to withdraw sponsorship from The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. To that end, I identified news outlets that have a liberal bias, a conservative bias, and ones that are on fairly middle-ground with no bias. The decision that Chick-fil-A made to withdraw funding from The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes was a political stance rooted in religion. I chose to focus on conservative news sources as they generally agree with Chick-fil-A's religion and historically traditional political viewpoints. I chose to focus on liberal news sources as they generally do not agree with how Chick-fil-A's religion manifests itself in the political stances they have taken in the past. Finally, I chose to focus on news sources without as much of a bias in order to receive the most genuine account of the facts, in comparison to biased sources that have a tendency to frame the facts within their opinions and agendas. For each of these news source categories, I gathered ten different articles, which totaled thirty articles. The only necessary qualities for these articles to have were that they specifically focused on the 2019 decision of Chick-fil-A to withdraw sponsorship and fit into one of the above categories of news sources. Thirty articles proved to be a sufficient amount because they were all regarding a specific event, so it was not necessary to consider an extensive amount of coverage.

I read through the articles for the first time with the goal of gaining a sense of key themes and aspects present throughout the majority of the articles. Based on this initial review, I identified aspects by which to code the articles. The first aspect was whether or not the article mentioned the failed Chick-fil-A expansion attempts in either

San Antonio, Texas, Buffalo, New York, or Reading, England. I felt that this was an important aspect to highlight because several articles positioned it as a key reason why Chick-fil-A made this sponsorship change. These three cities were opposed to the political stances that Chick-fil-A had taken in the past and protested its interactions with the LGBTQ community. Since this was limiting its ability to expand as a business, then that would be a compelling reason to make a more progressive shift in philanthropic giving, even if Chick-fil-A framed the decision as a desire to focus on education, homelessness, and hunger, with no other ulterior motives.

The second aspect that I used to code these articles was discussion of new donation policies and/or focuses. This was an important aspect to consider, as Chick-fil-A focused on its new donation plans and policies in its communication to the public, so it is valuable to consider how well this messaging pulled through in these news sources. If the article devoted time to discuss these new policies, then it shows that Chick-fil-A had a mix of successful media pitching, as well as key messages in its presentation of this decision.

The third aspect that I considered while coding these articles was whether or not a response from The Salvation Army was offered. Chick-fil-A claimed to have withdrawn sponsorship in order to focus on homelessness, education, and hunger. However, these three causes are some of the primary causes that The Salvation Army already strives to address with its services, which clearly implies that there was another reason why Chick-fil-A felt it necessary to distance itself from The Salvation Army. As a result, The Salvation Army is cast in a bit of a negative light, and its relationship with the LGBTQ community is questioned. Several articles gave The Salvation Army some

real estate to respond to this decision and assert its own key messages about the services that it offers to the LGBTQ community.

The fourth aspect that I coded for was mention of Governor Mike Huckabee. As another key player in this discussion, I felt that it was of value to consider how often his role in this news was discussed. Huckabee has a history of supporting Chick-fil-A when it was under scrutiny for conservative political views in the past. He used his platform to unite people for the sake of Chick-fil-A. However, its most recent decision is not seen fondly by Huckabee, so he once again has the ability to use his platform to unite people, against Chick-fil-A this time. In general, it became clear that this decision did not exist within a bubble, and there was value in considering the representation of messaging for the other key players involved.

The fifth aspect that I coded for was whether or not the source seemed to be pleased with this decision. Frequently, the answer to this question was in line with the conservative or liberal bias of the source. In coding for this factor, I focused on words with particularly strong positive or negative connotations. This was a reliable indication of bias, as sources that are more neutral would not be as inclined to use words that are laden with strong emotions or opinions.

The sixth and final aspect that I considered as I was coding articles was the presence of a spokesperson. Many articles would reference quotes from executives of Chick-fil-A or The Salvation Army, as well as leaders of non-governmental organizations. The use of a quote allows for companies and organizations to have some small semblance of control in how they are portrayed in an article. Companies often shape the narrative of news articles through news releases that they provide to the

outlet. However, at the end of the day, it is the prerogative of the journalist to cover the story how they see fit. If the journalist does include a quote from the company, that is a small sliver of space in which the company can interject its key messaging.

As I read through all thirty articles for the second time, I coded them based on these six factors, entering all findings into an Excel spreadsheet. This spreadsheet also indicated which of the three news source categories that the article fit into, as well as the name of the news outlet, the article title, the article link, and the date on which it was published. Through this content analysis, I was able to identify how three different categories of sources covered this decision, what the key aspects included were, and as a result, reach conclusions for how this decision impacted Chick-fil-A's branding and corporate social advocacy. The following section identifies the key findings based on the outlined qualitative content analysis.

Findings

In November of 2019, Chick-fil-A announced that it would no longer be donating to charities that have a reputation for opposing same-sex marriage and the LGBTQ community in general (Lucas, 2019b). The two primary charities that Chick-fil-A ceased to support were The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Chick-fil-A had received significant backlash from supporting these charities, along with the controversial homophobic comments by executive Dan Cathy in 2012. Chick-fil-A claimed to be moving forward with a new focus for its philanthropic giving. All funds would go to charities that supported education and combatted homelessness and hunger (Lucas, 2019b). After analyzing 30 articles, the three main themes covered throughout the media sources regarding this decision were the new approach to philanthropy, the reasons why Chick-fil-A made the sponsorship change, and key opinions and spokespeople.

Growth Necessitates Refinement

A large focus of the coverage of this decision was to outline Chick-fil-A's sponsorship plans and criteria moving forward. When the Chick-fil-A Foundation made this announcement, it was introduced as, "a more focused giving approach to provide additional clarity and impact with the causes it supports" (Chick-fil-A Foundation, 2019). With the new focuses of education, homelessness, and hunger, Chick-fil-A plans to give to Junior Achievement U.S.A, which is an organization that helps students through 12th grade become prepared for the workplace as well as financially literate, and Covenant House International, which focuses its outreach on youth who are

homeless, have run away from home, or are victims to trafficking (Pesce, 2019). Chick-fil-A will also be donating to the local food bank in each new town that a restaurant opens up in (Gawronski, 2019).

While Chick-fil-A's sponsorship of The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes was part of multi-year contracts, moving forward, all sponsorships will be yearly and not bound by a contract or timeframe. This was conveyed through the foundation's official statement, saying, "the Foundation will no longer make multiyear commitments and will reassess its philanthropic partnerships annually to allow maximum impact. These partners could include faith-based and non-faith-based charities" (Chick-fil-A Foundation, 2019). This will allow Chick-fil-A to have more flexibility and agility with how supports organizations. This will also allow the company to reevaluate its sponsorship choices every year, and make changes if need be (Pesce, 2019). Chick-fil-A aims to donate to whatever organizations have the most impact and effectiveness in education, homelessness, and hunger. It has made it clear that no organization will be excluded from consideration in the future (Pesce, 2019).

The Age-Old Battle Between Profits and Purpose

Another one of the main types of information that was present in this collection of articles was the various reasons why Chick-fil-A made this change. One prominent reason was that as Chick-fil-A expanded out of the southern states, to states across the country as well as internationally, it started to face more resistance. Not all places that it was expanding to were as agreeable with its traditional values as the southeast (Lucas, 2019b). Large chains like Chick-fil-A are always working to expand, yet it has been facing some obstacles in this arena. As previously stated, within the past year, Chick-fil-

A was not welcome in Reading, U.K., as well as the airports of Buffalo and San Antonio, and will not be allowed to stay in San Jose long term. Regarding expansion, Chick-fil-A President and Chief Operating Officer Tim Tassopoulos said, “There’s no question we know that, as we go into new markets, we need to be clear about who we are” (Sperance, 2019a). This quote was noteworthy because it reflects the change that Chick-fil-A is going through. As a company that used to have a very clear public perception of what it was, Chick-fil-A made this decision to reflect a more progressive identity. It is clear that the motivation is based in expansion, as the C.O.O. himself discusses going into new markets.

As previously stated, Chick-fil-A had also come to the end of multi-year philanthropy commitments with both of these organizations, so it had the opportunity to pivot and make some changes to who it was providing financial support to (Lucas, 2019b). People had been protesting this sponsorship for years, but since Chick-fil-A was in contract to continue this funding, there was no way for the funding to stop until the contracts ended. Finally, they did end, and Chick-fil-A was given the chance to reevaluate who it was giving to, which led to it making the decision to part from The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. With this new decision, Chick-fil-A made it very clear that it made the change in order to better address education, hunger, and homelessness. In the words of C.O.O. Tim Tassopoulos, “We think [education, hunger and homelessness] are critical issues in communities where we do business in the U.S.” (Sperance, 2019a). It is possible that Chick-fil-A was motivated to withdraw sponsorship from some organizations in order to make more of an impact with these causes moving forward. However, with these causes being ones

that The Salvation Army already focuses on, it is probable that the decision was a combination of motivating factors.

Yet another theory is that this was an attempt to make more consumers like Chick-fil-A amidst the Chicken Wars with Popeyes (Heil, 2019). The final prominent view of why Chick-fil-A made this decision was one of causation. The backlash, protests, and controversy that it had been entrenched in for almost a decade caused it to withdraw the funding from the controversial organizations. This means that Chick-fil-A may have been worn down by the backlash and thus was compelled to change course once the contracts ended, which is what it did. However, this view of causation is challenged by the words of the Chick-fil-A Foundation head, Rodney Bullard, when earlier on in 2019 he asserted that the organizations that Chick-fil-A supported were “relevant and impactful in the community,” elaborating that, “For us, that’s a much higher calling than any political or cultural war that’s being waged” (Dreher, 2019). This quote might suggest that Chick-fil-A was willing to withstand this backlash, as it had been doing for years. It might have taken a limit to its expansion to finally encourage this company to pivot. Regardless of the various prominent reasons that seem to be at play here, the one reason that Chick-fil-A itself promoted is the refined focus going forward.

Is it Betrayal or Lip Service?

This variety of articles brought forth different key opinions. The main viewpoint of more liberal news sources was one of skepticism. In 2012, after Dan Cathy had made controversial comments regarding the LGBTQ community, Chick-fil-A had indicated that it would cease relationships with anti-LGBTQ companies (Chick-fil-A Says, 2019).

However, it did not follow through on this commitment, as it was still donating to organizations such as The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes in the years since. As a result, liberal advocates encouraged a balance of positivity and skepticism after this sponsorship withdrawal was announced, with the reminder that past promises of this sort had not been genuine. Drew Anderson, the director of campaigns and rapid response for the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), conveyed this by saying, "Chick-Fil-A investors, employees, and customers can greet today's announcement with cautious optimism, but should remember that similar press statements were previously proven to be empty" (Chick-fil-A Says, 2019).

Additionally, individuals and groups felt that Chick-fil-A needed to be more upfront about the relationships it has with other organizations. Anderson stated, "If Chick-Fil-A is serious about their pledge to stop holding hands with divisive anti-LGBTQ activists, then further transparency is needed regarding their deep ties to organizations like Focus on the Family, which exist purely to harm LGBTQ people and families" (Lucas, 2019b). While Chick-fil-A cut off ties with The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, it still has associations with other organizations that share its traditional values. Liberal advocates feel that if Chick-fil-A is serious about becoming more progressive, then it needs to sever all ties with organizations that work against the LGBTQ community.

Furthermore, making this one decision to withdraw sponsorship does not lend itself to the complete cultural and reputational change that liberal advocates are pushing for. Anderson elaborated, "In addition to refraining from financially supporting anti-LGBTQ organizations, Chick-Fil-A still lacks policies to ensure safe workplaces for

LGBTQ employees and should unequivocally speak out against the anti-LGBTQ reputation that their brand represents” (Chick-fil-A Says, 2019). Anderson is calling for a complete separation from the anti-LGBTQ past that Chick-fil-A has. He is rallying advocates to push for a version of Chick-fil-A that has fundamentally changed from what it is now, with workplaces free from discrimination and a brand that is in full support of LGBTQ rights. While this is an admirable vision, it is also one that would exist fairly far into the future, considering that many key aspects of the company would need to be modified in order to make this a possibility. As a result, any small victory, such as the withdrawal of sponsorship, is difficult to celebrate when this lofty end goal is the focus.

A large concern for more progressive individuals is that, while this is a step in the right direction, there is a chance that Chick-fil-A’s actions are empty; that they are simply meant to appease people in the short term, but that this is no indication of real change or progress. People who are advocates for equality want to see organizations who are making changes because they genuinely are buying into the progress, not just giving lip service to those who are rallying for change. Until Chick-fil-A proves that it is serious by being transparent about the relationships it has with other organizations as well as instituting support for the LGBTQ community in its policies and branding, it will be difficult for this group of consumers to believe that what Chick-fil-A is doing is anything more than baseless words and actions (Heil, 2019).

The key viewpoint of more conservative news sources was one of disappointment. There was a significant amount of conversation on Twitter about this topic, with people saying that Chick-fil-A was, “chickening out in the face of the left-

wing mob” and that they had “caved to the extremists and are no longer a religious company” (Pesce, 2019). A reader commented on a Fox News article, claiming that, “Compromise comes quickly to those who have no convictions” (Deabler, 2019). Throughout conservative news sources, the term capitulation was the standard description of what Chick-fil-A had done. For these loyal fans with conservative and religious viewpoints, it is difficult to grasp why Chick-fil-A turned back on its values all of a sudden, when it had already proven that it was capable of not only surviving but thriving in the midst of controversy. Chick-fil-A has experienced backlash in the past and has persevered through that just fine. Regardless of the controversy, it has been nominated as America’s favorite fast-food restaurant for four years in a row (Pesce, 2019).

This fan-favorite company has consistently espoused Christian beliefs and made decisions based on those beliefs. Many consumers believed in the same ideals and had reliable patronage of Chick-fil-A largely because of their religious alignment. Faith was something that consumers and the company could share, which lent itself to a higher affinity for the company from the perspective of the consumer (McGhee, 2019). For Chick-fil-A to make this decision and change course felt like it was betraying and backstabbing the same people who helped to make it successful (Heil, 2019). The motivation to make this decision was also lost on the more conservative consumers, as it was their opinion that the reputation of this restaurant chain was tarnished beyond repair in the eyes of liberal advocates (Hirschauer, 2019). Therefore, why would Chick-fil-A betray its core identity if this decision would not make Chick-fil-A more appealing to the left-wing? The primary reason that was identified was money, which in and of

itself was unsavory for conservative consumers. As stated in a National Review article, “No one can serve both God and Mammon, and heaven help the man — or the fast-food chain — that tries” (Hirschauer, 2019). For Chick-fil-A to choose the pursuit of financial profit over the adherence to religious values indicated to conservative consumers that Chick-fil-A’s priorities were out of order for the first time since 1946, which was more than enough for this group of consumers to feel double-crossed.

Despite the general dissatisfaction, there was one prominent religious figure who supported Chick-fil-A’s decision. Franklin Graham, the son of renowned evangelist Billy Graham, posted on his Facebook account the assertion that Chick-fil-A did not deserve the heat that it was receiving. He stated, “They announced that in 2020 they’re giving to fight hunger and homelessness and support education. What’s wrong with that?” (Genovese, 2019). He proceeded to outline a call he had with Dan Cathy, who had made it clear that Chick-fil-A was not bowing down to demands, and that the company was as committed to its values as ever. Graham then asserted, “the gay movement wouldn’t ever be happy with Chick-fil-A unless they were open on Sunday, gave all of their charitable donations to LGBTQ organizations, and flew the rainbow flag over their stores!” (Genovese, 2019). Through his defense of Chick-fil-A, Graham made it clear that Chick-fil-A was still true to its core values, and that there was nothing wrong with the company refining its philanthropic approach. His opinion that no amount of capitulation would please the left-wing was common in the conservative narrative and evident in the reaction of some liberal individuals and groups. For Graham to use his large platform to promote a view contrary to the majority of media narratives

had the potential to appeal to more consumers about Chick-fil-A's decision. Regardless, the general tone of the conservative consumers was one of negativity and resentment.

In the conversation regarding this decision, there were a few main characters. One of the key players was Governor Mike Huckabee. When Chick-fil-A initially received backlash in 2012 after Dan Cathy's controversial remarks, Huckabee coordinated an appreciation day for Chick-fil-A to encourage customers to show support and solidarity. However, after he learned of its change in philanthropic spending in 2019, he tweeted on his personal account, "In Aug 2012, I coordinated a national @ChickfilA Appreciation Day after they were being bullied by militant hate groups. Millions showed up. Today, @ChickfilA betrayed loyal customers for \$\$\$. I regret believing they would stay true to the convictions of founder Truett Cathy. Sad." (Huckabee, 2019). This tweet conveyed how Chick-fil-A had countless supporters in the past who stood by Chick-fil-A and agreed with the values that it conveyed. For someone with as large of a following as Huckabee to speak out against this was problematic for Chick-fil-A, because in the past he was successful in uniting people for this company, so he has the ability to do the same against the company.

Huckabee identifies that this action is contradictory to the values that S. Truett Cathy had founded the company on and a disservice to the loyal consumers. His words bring to mind that if the company's founder was still alive today, this decision would most likely not have been made. So he is, therefore, accusing Chick-fil-A and the Cathy family of acting against what their patriarch would have wanted. He is also accusing Chick-fil-A of prioritizing a paycheck over its tried and true customers. These are the customers who stuck with Chick-fil-A through all prior backlash because they believed

in what it was doing; the same customers who appreciated Chick-fil-A's espousal of religious viewpoints because they shared those same viewpoints. According to Huckabee, Chick-fil-A chose to appease the masses and make more money, while shafting those who stuck with the company through the hard times.

Another key player in the dialogue surrounding this decision was The Salvation Army. This organization was quite displeased with Chick-fil-A's decision, not only because it would be losing funding, but also because this decision further cemented negative opinions of The Salvation Army. In response, The Salvation Army stated, "We serve more than 23 million individuals a year, including those in the LGBTQ+ community. In fact, we believe we are the largest provider of poverty relief to the LGBTQ+ population" (Lucas, 2019b). The Salvation Army refuted the accusations of discrimination, claiming that its services were made fully available to people in the LGBTQ community, with a specific section of their website highlighting every resource people in the LGBTQ community can take advantage of (Pesce, 2019). The Salvation Army proceeded to say that, "When misinformation is perpetuated without fact, our ability to serve those in need, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or any other factor, is at risk" (Molina, 2019).

While Chick-fil-A did not blatantly say why it was separating itself from The Salvation Army, there was a certain implication that it was not simply about Chick-fil-A wanting to go in a different direction. Hunger, education, and homelessness are three areas that The Salvation Army already heavily addresses with its services, which suggests that Chick-fil-A ceased sponsorship of this organization for more reasons than just changing its philanthropic focus.

Chick-fil-A could have continued to fund The Salvation Army and still pursue education, homelessness, and hunger. In aiming to separate itself from these organizations with a reputation for discrimination, Chick-fil-A further placed the spotlight on how these organizations interact with and regard the LGBTQ community.

Discussion and Conclusion

In November of 2019, Chick-fil-A made the decision to withdraw sponsorship from The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Chick-fil-A framed this decision as a desire to have a more focused philanthropic approach moving forward, with an emphasis on supporting organizations that address hunger, homelessness, and education in the nation's youth. This decision was set against a backdrop of heavy protests due to the company's religious principles as well as the homophobic comments made by President Dan Cathy in 2012, resulting in failed expansion attempts in San Antonio, Buffalo, and Reading, U.K. Once the decision to withdraw sponsorship was made, the company faced backlash from both conservative and liberal individuals and groups. People with conservative ideologies felt like Chick-fil-A had capitulated to the demands of the left wing and had betrayed the beliefs that the company was founded upon. People with more liberal ideologies were not all that thrilled with the progress, concerned that Chick-fil-A was not genuine or committed to continued changes in this direction, but rather was trying to use this as a temporary fix to the controversy it was mixed up in.

Through conducting a qualitative content analysis of 30 articles that covered this decision, with an even ratio of conservative, liberal, and unbiased sources, the following conclusions were made. In answer to RQ1, Chick-fil-A's decision to withdraw sponsorship from The Salvation Army and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes impacted brand equity by taking away existing brand loyalty and making brand associations unclear. Additionally, this decision impacted public perception by making people with conservative ideals disappointed in Chick-fil-A's abandonment of its

principles and making people with liberal ideals skeptical that Chick-fil-A is genuine in the pursuit of progress. In answer to RQ2, based on Chick-fil-A's experience, when a brand abruptly changes the direction of its corporate social advocacy, consumers lose sight of who the company is, at least temporarily. The essence of corporate social advocacy is for a company to be clear about the political and religious ideals that it supports. However, when a company such as Chick-fil-A pivots so drastically away from their existing CSA initiatives, the company needs to put concerted effort towards providing clarity as to who it is once again. It will take time for consumers to gain a clear vision of the new version of the company and the ideals that are now driving the decisions.

Together, the answers to these research questions provide insight into the decision of a company to pivot, and the impact it has on brand equity, public perception, and corporate social advocacy. It should never be the goal of a company to make all consumers happy, because consumers inherently value different things, so there is no one business model that everyone will like. For this reason, it is necessary for companies to identify who they are trying to sell their product to, and then base all decisions from there on out with that specific audience in mind. For decades, Chick-fil-A has had a clear idea of who its audience was and did a great job of appealing to them. A Christianity-driven and hospitality-focused restaurant has the ability to thrive in the southeast, because many individuals share those values in that region of the country. Even as Chick-fil-A expanded throughout the country, the company made it clear through its actions that it had no intention of changing. People could either like it or hate it, but it was not going to change regardless. In line with Dodd's analysis of

corporate social advocacy, people who agreed with what a company was advocating for were more likely to support that company, and vice versa. However, it is much more difficult for consumers to support an organization in this way if the organization is not clear as to what its beliefs are anymore.

When Chick-fil-A made the decision to withdraw its funding, it shifted the reputation of the company. Before, when the name Chick-fil-A was brought up, people could think about the company and certain associations would come to mind. However, now that Chick-fil-A changed its course, the associations that the consumer has are fragmented. Chick-fil-A no longer presents itself as a traditional Christian organization because it is leaning more towards a progressive bent. Furthermore, many of Chick-fil-A's loyal customers identified with its traditional values. With a shift away from those values, Chick-fil-A is jeopardizing some of the loyalty that these customers have for the brand. When a company starts to change crucial elements of what signifies and defines its brand, then the brand itself is at risk of crumbling.

Loyal customers are an incredible asset to a brand because they help promote the company to those they come into contact with, they do not need convincing to continue patronage, and they do not default to competitors very often. However, when a loyal customer hears news that the brand they were so devoted to made a decision that is contrary to the beliefs that they bought into, then that shifts their ability to be loyal. They might be hesitant to continue to support that company, they most likely would not be comfortable recommending that company to others if they themselves are having doubts, and they may support competing businesses, as they are no longer certain about the brand they were originally loyal to. Brand loyalty and brand associations are two of

the four key pillars for brand equity. With the brand associations becoming a bit blurred and customer loyalty at risk, it poses a major threat to brand equity.

There is a common adage that if something is not broken, then there is no need to fix it. For 2018-2019, Chick-fil-A was ranked as the best fast food restaurant in the country, according to the American Customer Satisfaction Index. Based on interviews with 23,468 American consumers, Chick-fil-A received the best ratings for various factors such as food quality, restaurant layout, cleanliness, accuracy of order, and courtesy and helpfulness of the staff (Im, 2019). Regardless of the controversy and protests regarding this company's beliefs, it was thriving in the fast food industry, even over other big fast food chains that do not take strong stances on religion or politics. Chick-fil-A built a brand that is incredibly popular and successful. The religious and political viewpoints that the company espoused were not inclusive of all individuals, so through making this sponsorship change it was taking a step towards inclusivity. However, by doing so, it was going against the successful brand that it had built. This decision damaged two of the key aspects of brand equity, while also clouding the waters of its corporate social advocacy. In trying to please everyone, Chick-fil-A ended up pleasing no one.

At the end of the day, companies build brands for themselves, and those brands are of incredible value. Consumers appreciate consistency, so when a company acts in a way that does not reflect the brand, that is bound to displease some individuals. This is not to say that companies should never evolve or become more progressive. They should, however, be cognizant of the fact that pivoting away from what the company stands for will harm loyalty, associations, and corporate social advocacy practices.

Chick-fil-A has endured its fair share of controversy in the past and will surely do the same through this. The Chick-fil-A brand did, however, take a major hit through the change in sponsorship practices, and it may be a while before customers know exactly who Chick-fil-A is again.

Limitations and Future Research

As with all research, this study has limitations. If there had been greater coverage of this event, then a more extensive content analysis would have been beneficial. However, saturation was reached with the chosen set of articles. Additionally, since all articles in the sample were regarding one specific event, more extensive coverage was not integral to the validity of the research. In the future, it would be valuable to conduct a study that combines quantitative and qualitative methods by using surveys and focus groups. This study would focus on the opinions that consumers have about Chick-fil-A, and how that impacts their decision to support the business, if at all. Additionally, it would be valuable to conduct a comparative study with Chick-fil-A as well as other religious companies such as Alaskan Airlines, Marriott Hotels, Hobby Lobby, Mary Kay, and In-N-Out Burger. This study would consider whether or not the industry that a company operates in has an impact on how much its religious beliefs impact the consumer decision-making process.

Source Type	News Outlet	Title	Date	Link	Yes Reading	Mentions Salvation Army's response	Mentions/like headline	Yes includes his tweet	No clear bias: first half of the article delivered news of the decision and approach moving forward. Then background on controversy and limited growth. Then a well-rounded sample of quotes.	Yes, Spokesman for Chick-fil-A, Salvation Army representative, Scott Robertson at the occasion used Eboni Harlow, Milwaukeeabe
2 Readers	News Outlet	Fast food chain Chick-fil-A changes donations after losing LGBT protests		https://www.foxnews.com/politics/chick-fil-a-donations	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, Spokesman for Chick-fil-A, Salvation Army representative, Scott Robertson at the occasion used Eboni Harlow, Milwaukeeabe	
3 The Advocate	The Advocate	Chick-fil-A Says It Will Stop Donating to Anti-LGBTQ Organizations	15-May-19	https://www.foxnews.com/politics/chick-fil-a-donations	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes, Spokesman for Chick-fil-A, Salvation Army representative, Scott Robertson at the occasion used Eboni Harlow, Milwaukeeabe	
3 Query	Query	Chick-fil-A announces ad to anti-LGBTQ donations	15-May-19	https://www.foxnews.com/politics/chick-fil-a-donations	No	No	No	Yes	Yes, Spokesman for Chick-fil-A, Salvation Army representative, Scott Robertson at the occasion used Eboni Harlow, Milwaukeeabe	
3 Pink News	Pink News	Chick-fil-A will stop donations to homophobic and transphobic charities after immense backlash from queer activists	15-May-19	https://www.foxnews.com/politics/chick-fil-a-donations	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes, Spokesman for Chick-fil-A, Salvation Army representative, Scott Robertson at the occasion used Eboni Harlow, Milwaukeeabe	
3 LGBTQ Nation	LGBTQ Nation	Chick-fil-A says they're done donating to anti-LGBTQ organizations	15-May-19	https://www.foxnews.com/politics/chick-fil-a-donations	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes, Spokesman for Chick-fil-A, Salvation Army representative, Scott Robertson at the occasion used Eboni Harlow, Milwaukeeabe	
3 HuffPost	HuffPost	Chick-fil-A Says It Will End Donations to Anti-LGBTQ Organizations	15-May-19	https://www.foxnews.com/politics/chick-fil-a-donations	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes, Spokesman for Chick-fil-A, Salvation Army representative, Scott Robertson at the occasion used Eboni Harlow, Milwaukeeabe	
3 Vox	Vox	Chick-fil-A's many controversies, explained	15-May-19	https://www.foxnews.com/politics/chick-fil-a-donations	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes, Spokesman for Chick-fil-A, Salvation Army representative, Scott Robertson at the occasion used Eboni Harlow, Milwaukeeabe	
3 Daily Kos	Daily Kos	Chick-fil-A Announces That It Will No Longer Donate to Anti-LGBTQ Organizations (Again)	15-May-19	https://www.foxnews.com/politics/chick-fil-a-donations	No	No	No	No	Yes, Spokesman for Chick-fil-A, Salvation Army representative, Scott Robertson at the occasion used Eboni Harlow, Milwaukeeabe	
3 The Week	The Week	Chick-fil-A cuts off donations to 2 charities considered anti-LGBTQ	15-May-19	https://www.foxnews.com/politics/chick-fil-a-donations	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes, Spokesman for Chick-fil-A, Salvation Army representative, Scott Robertson at the occasion used Eboni Harlow, Milwaukeeabe	
3 LGBTQ Nation	LGBTQ Nation	Remember, Chick-fil-A isn't LGBTQ-friendly	15-May-19	https://www.foxnews.com/politics/chick-fil-a-donations	No	No	No	No	Yes, Spokesman for Chick-fil-A, Salvation Army representative, Scott Robertson at the occasion used Eboni Harlow, Milwaukeeabe	
3 Occupy Democrats	Occupy Democrats	Conservatives are having embarrassing meltdowns over Chick-fil-A ending donations to anti-LGBT groups	15-May-19	https://www.foxnews.com/politics/chick-fil-a-donations	No	No	No	Yes	Yes, Spokesman for Chick-fil-A, Salvation Army representative, Scott Robertson at the occasion used Eboni Harlow, Milwaukeeabe	

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