
BOYCOTTS AND SILENCING

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A RESPONSE TO Jeremy V. Davis (2020), “Boycotts, Expressive Acts, and Withdrawal of Support”, *Bus Ethics J Rev* 8(3): 14–19,
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ABSTRACT

Jeremy Davis offered critical comments on our article that argued some boycotts are *pro tanto* morally wrong. We argued against organized boycotts over expressive acts where the actor is attempting to engage in the market place of ideas. Davis offered two versions of a direct objection to our position – one that boycotts are not attempts to silence and one that boycotts do not cause a chilling effect – and one objection based on reframing the goals of boycotts. In this Response, we argue that Davis’s direct objections are unsound and his reframing objection is consistent with our initial position.

IN HIS RECENT Commentary “Boycotts, Expressive Acts, and Withdrawal of Support,” Jeremy Davis (2020) criticizes our article “The Business of Boycotting: Having Your Chicken and Eating it Too” (Tomhave and Vopat 2018). In particular, he offers two versions of a direct objection to our position, and an additional argument offering a reframing of the purpose of boycotts. He raises a fourth issue, but as it is largely one of agreement, we shall not concern ourselves with that here. In what follows we will consider these issues in turn, beginning with his direct objection and then turning to his revised way of viewing boycotts. We should specify that Davis begins by clarifying that his focus is on organized boycotts against expressive acts, which he refers to as *expressive act boycotts*. Though the original arti-

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