

Hershey's faces meltdown over ad celebrating women featuring trans activist

Valerie Richardson

The chocolatier Hershey's is celebrating International Women's Day in [Canada](#) with an ad campaign featuring a biological male, a decision some consumers are having trouble digesting.

Calls to boycott Hershey's trended Thursday on Twitter as critics accused the company of trivializing and undermining women by casting the Canadian transgender [activist](#) Fae Johnstone in the "Her for She" [campaign](#).

"My name is Fae Johnstone. I'm the executive director of Wisdom2Action. We can create a world where everyone is able to live in public space as their honest and authentic selves," says Fae Johnstone in the ads. "See the women changing how we see the future at Hershey's [Canada](#)."

Among those pushing back was Linda Blade, a sports performance coach and prominent critic of allowing men who identify as women participate in female sports.

"Hershey's faces boycott after launching him-she's bar in a gesture of taunting women & girls by celebrating the triviality of their sex-based human rights to female identity, personal safety & privacy on the occasion of International Women's Month," tweeted Ms. Blade.

Other comments included "We want chocolate, not Leftist propaganda" and "So you celebrate women by putting a man that thinks he's a woman when he's not?"

"Hershey's is 'honoring' women by featuring delusional, disfigured men on its candy bars. Feel empowered yet, ladies?" tweeted Sean Davis, CEO and co-founder of The Federalist.

The campaign, which includes the release of limited-edition Hershey's SHE candy bars, also features female activists Autumn Peltier, Naila Moloo, Rita Audi, and Kelicia Massala.

Both Hershey's [Canada](#) and Fae Johnstone reacted to the backlash with Thursday posts.

"The reaction to my inclusion as a trans woman in Hersheys Canada's IWD campaign shows just how far we still have to go in the fight for feminist liberation and trans rights," said Fae Johnstone. "I'm not going anywhere. I'm not shutting up. I will always stand up for women and girls, cis and trans."

Hershey's [Canada](#) was less direct, issuing a [statement](#) about the value of diversity.

"We value togetherness and recognize the strength created by diversity," said [Hershey's](#). "Over the past three years, our Women's History Month programming has been an inclusive celebration of women and their impact. We appreciate the countless people and meaningful partnerships behind these efforts."

Others accused the critics of being transphobic.

"Transphobic haters are calling for a boycott of Hershey's chocolate. If you're a chocolate fan, please buy a Hershey's bar," tweeted author Nancy Levine Stearns.