

CEP Magazine – November 2018 Modern dilemmas

by Sally March

Sally March (sjmarch10@gmail.com) is Director, Drummond March & Co, in London, UK.

The revelations about Cambridge Analytica's use of Facebook's platform and tools to influence elections has generated a debate on free speech and policing social media. The quandary of how to handle such a situation got me thinking about other dilemmas that we face today.

"Dilemma" is defined as a situation in which a difficult choice must be made between two or more alternatives, especially ones that are equally undesirable. We are frequently faced with instances where fundamental principles conflict. Take Uber for example. Women and minority employees are complaining about attitudes and remarks of colleagues with, one might argue, arrested social skills. As one board member put it, Uber was protecting "brilliant jerks." The accusations of sexism have reverberated around the tech industry. "Isn't free speech protected in a democracy?" the brilliant jerks might argue. Provided they don't engage in discrimination or harassment that violates the rules, are employees entitled to express opinions and attitudes that offend others? How are we meant to resolve the conflict between one person's fundamental right to free speech and another's right to work in a safe and nonthreatening environment?

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