

Nike has long relied on controversy in marketing an image of edgy youthfulness. "Nike from Day 1 has really been a brand that has stood up to and stood for things that were important to them and important to their athletes, so I think there's a little precedence there," said Mary Scott, a president at UEG, a sports, entertainment and lifestyle marketing agency. Last year, as a part of Black History Month, Nike released a campaign titled "Equality" that featured LeBron James, Serena Williams, Kevin Durant and others. When French Open officials announced this summer that Ms. Williams's black catsuit would no longer be permitted attire on the tournament's courts, Nike tweeted in response, "You can take the superhero out of her costume, but you can never take away her superpowers." It enacted a new rule requiring players to stand during the national anthem or to remain in the locker room, then put the rule on hold after several owners said they would not penalize players and the N.F.L. Players Association vowed to challenge it. Similarly, sportswear companies have stumbled when addressing social justice campaigns and Mr. Trump. It dressed the tennis player Andre Agassi in jean shorts. Ms. Scott said.