**Celebrity Silence During the Coronavirus Outbreak**

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*Story by Callie Andrew*

he Coronavirus is affecting each and every American— although some more than others.

With the need for medical supplies and financial assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic growing every day, many are shining light on the deafening silence of celebrities and other well-known millionaires who have neglected to financially contribute.

Celebrity activity on social media, such as the infamous "Imagine" montage, where many A-list stars sang a verse of the hit John Lennon song to inspire the American people, has led to backlash. Their followers demand to know why there is an absence of aid for the population that these influential celebrities and billionaires wish would "stay home and stay safe."

Directly following the release of the “Imagine” montage, social media users began to react in frustration, as posts mocking the attempt to inspire went viral. Perhaps the most famous reaction came from John Meyer, who took a lighthearted dig at the video by explaining to his Instagram followers that he was asked to be in the montage, but was not included because he accidently sang a verse of Ariana Grande’s “Imagine” instead.

Celebrities included in this video remained quiet following its release, as their fans responded both facetiously and angrily, like one twitter user who went viral for responding, “No politician can unify people in the way that the “Imagine” video seems to have unified every single person against it.”

The general reaction to celebrity silence has largely been seen on social media, as the American public is not ignoring the fact that celebrities such as Gal Gadot and Madonna have taken to social media to preach the “togetherness” of the Coronavirus, while making no financial contribution to aid in the relief efforts.

While celebrities who have used social media as a platform to “inspire” have received backlash, it is celebrities who have publicly complained about the inconveniences of this pandemic whose reputation will not recover. A-listers that should have stayed silent include Venessa Hudgens, who recently released a public apology for her failed attempt to address the postponement of Coachella on her Instagram Live, as she stated that, "yeah, people are going to die. Which is terrible. But, like, inevitable?"

When asked about Hudgens statement, many were offended and thought that it showed a clear example of how out-of-touch some celebrities can be regarding the COVID-19 outbreak. Maggie Andrew, social media editor of Yahoo Entertainment, was asked about her thoughts on Hudgens statement. “It’s obvious that Hudgens was not speaking with intention. She used her large platform in a careless way, which should act as a wakeup call to herself and other celebrities about the impact that they can have when discussing such a serious and sensitive matter.”

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Celebrities such as Jeff Bezos, the CEO of Amazon and world's richest man, have broken their silence and received backlash due to their out-of-touch relief effort attempts. Critics quickly brought attention to Bezos’s Amazon Relief Fund, which asks the public for donations to aid “employees and partners” during the Coronavirus outbreak. Thousands have taken to social media to ask why Bezos does not donate to this need himself. His lack of personal outreach during this national crisis is frustrating to the public, as many also note that Amazon’s sales have increased during the quarantine period.

Now don't get me wrong, there are plenty of relief efforts organized by A-listers, such as the Real Housewives of New York City matriarch Bethenny Frankel, who donated 250 thousand masks to New York City hospitals. Or Ryan Reynolds, actor and founder of Aviation Gin, who is donating thirty percent of all earnings to bartenders who are out of work due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Celebrities who gave to charity, like Angelina Jolie, whose one-million-dollar donation to No Kid Hungry has sparked positivity from fans. Other stars who have contributed money to the cause, like Rhianna, James Taylor, and Kristen Bell, are making a difference by encouraging others to also donate to their favorite charities.

Have you broken your silence yet? Some of the most popular charities during the COVID-19 pandemic include Feeding America, American Red Cross, and The Salvation Army. Donations of any size are widely encouraged and appreciated— and you can make them right from your home!