

## FødevareWatch

# Wild growth, few women and large amounts of alcohol have created the perfect conditions for sexism in the beer industry

**Alcohol, lack of diversity and rapid growth have caused a culture of sexism in *craft beer*, according to a number of women with knowledge of the industry. "It's a huge problem," it reads.**



Brewer Mariana Schneider has been part of the beer industry since 2015 and has - like many other women - experienced sexism. | Photo: PRIVATE PHOTO

**BY SIMONE SCHEUER-HANSEN**

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A male-dominated world, where women more than often have to work twice as hard for half the recognition and at the same time they are objectified and degraded to some who only exist to meet gender quotas.

This is how brewer at Amager Bryghus describes Mariana Schneider's craft beer industry - an industry she has been a part of since 2015, and an industry which in recent years has been the center of a large number of sexism cases.

“Women are being objectified to an extreme degree in the industry. For example, I have been out for someone in all seriousness to tell me that I had been hired because the owner had a fetish for Latinos like me, and not because I worked the ass in laser in production. That kind of thing is quite normal,” she says.

And something could indicate that she is right. Since the spring of 2021, when the #metoo wave hit the craft beer industry, the skeletons have at least been knocked out of many brewery cabinets, and the cases have become more and more.

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MARIANA SCHNEIDER, BREWER AT AMAGER BRYGHUS AND FOUNDER OF THE GLOW INITIATIVE.

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If you talk to people with knowledge of the industry, it is the same story that you are served.

Sexism as well as racism and homophobia have always been part of the craft beer culture, for example, says the American journalist Beth Demmon, who writes about the beer industry for a large number of American media, including Vice.

It's a huge problem, says her journalist colleague from the media Good Beer Hunting, Kate Bernot, who has written about the industry for a decade and, among other things, has covered the **Mikkeller case in San Diego**.

<<https://www.goodbeerhunting.com/sightlines/2021/7/1/former-mikkeller-employees-allege-culture-of-bullying-harassment-and-indifference>>

"All of the women I've talked to who are involved in the industry in one way or another - being a journalist, brewer or sales representative - have a history of some form of discrimination or harassment," she says.

### **A boys' club**

When describing the culture of the industry, Mariana Schneider uses the term "rock star mentality".

She does this because some craft beer brewers, according to her, are treated as immovable rock stars, which has resulted in a culture where people are systematically let go with things.

"There's this boys' club where everyone wants to be friends with each other and therefore does not want to step on each other's toes and say, 'hey, you crossed the line,'" says Mariana Schneider.

In 2019, together with Amalie Knage from the Danish Slowburn Brewing Co-op, she founded the Gangsta Ladies Of Wort (Glow) initiative, which aims to bring together and highlight the women in the industry.

Today, the initiative has developed into a kind of support group where women can share experiences on everything from career issues and beer brewing to problems with sexism.

## Metoo in the beer industry

Det er dog langt fra alle mænd i branchen, der udgør et problem, understreger Mariana Schneider.

”Det her er ikke mit forsøg på at starte en krig mod mænd. Det her handler mere om bestemte individer, der skal blive bedre og holde deres ligesindede ansvarlige for de ting, de gør og siger,” siger hun.

### Alkohol spiller vigtig rolle

Heller ikke Kate Bernot ønsker at male med en alt for bred pensel. Hun vil til gengæld gerne komme med en række bud på, hvorfor sexismen stortrives i craft beer-branchen.

Først og fremmest spiller det ifølge hende en rolle, at branchen har undergået en så hurtig og voldsom udvikling, hvor man ikke har taget sig tid til at etablere procedurer til at tage sig af den slags problemstillinger, men kun har haft ét fokuspunkt; øllen.

”Det er uheldigt, når virksomheder kun fokuserer på vækst for vækstens skyld – og det gælder for så vidt i alle brancher. Men når du kombinerer det med alkohol og en lav repræsentation af kvinder, får du en perfekt storm,” siger hun og fremhæver netop alkoholen som en central årsag:

”Alkoholen fjerner hæmningerne og giver et indtryk af en industri, der er sjov og uformel. Men det skaber også en kultur i branchen, hvor man ikke behøver at agere professionelt over for hinanden – at man til enhver tid kan være nede på jorden og sjov. Og det tror, kan have en meget mørk bagside.”

Siden 2010 er antallet af bryggerier i USA eksploderet. Hvor der dengang var 1813 bryggerier ifølge Brewers Association, var der i 2020 i alt 8884. **Samme tendens** <<https://finans.dk/erhverv/ECE13021593/danske-bryggerier-slaar-igen-rekord-aldrig-har-der-vaeret-saa-mange/?ctxref=forside>> ses i Danmark, hvor der i 2004 var blot 26 bryggerier, mens der i 2020 var 228.

Oven på sidste års metoo-bølge begynder Kate Bernot dog at kunne mærke noget ske i branchen.

Når hun taler med mænd i branchen, oplever hun en anden lydhørhed og anerkendelse af problemets omfang. Hun møder også mænd med et reelt ønske om at komme det til livs.

Spørger man Mariana Schneider er der dog lang vej endnu. Problemet kan ikke alene løses af ølbranchen selv, mener hun, og forbrugerne er nødt til at forstå, hvilken magt de har.

”Selvfølgelig er det bidende nødvendigt, at folk i branchen bliver bedre, men forbrugerne bliver også nødt til at blive bevidste om, at konsumerisme er en nøgle i vores samfund,” siger hun og fortsætter:

”Hvis vi bliver ved med at udpege dårligdommene i virksomheder og samtidig fortsætter med at købe deres produkter, ender det med, at de slipper afsted med tingene. For desværre er det sådan, at mange først lærer det, når de står over for økonomisk tilbagegang – og sådan er det også i ølbranchen, hvor mange af direktørerne ikke forstår kritik eller tænker, at de er for vigtige til at tage sig af den slags. De tager det først seriøst, når deres virksomheder mister værdi.”

*Har du input, erfaringer du vil dele eller bare en kommentar til sagen, kan du kontakte redaktionen på [fwatch@fwatch.dk](mailto:fwatch@fwatch.dk)*

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