

## Case Report

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Case Number :                 | 0126-24                           |
| 2. Advertiser :                  | Pickle my Chili                   |
| 3. Product :                     | Food/Beverages                    |
| 4. Type of Advertisement/Media : | Internet - Social - Instagram     |
| 5. Date of Decision:             | 15-May-2024                       |
| 6. Decision:                     | Upheld – Modified or Discontinued |

### ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.2 Exploitative or Degrading

### DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This Instagram advertisement features two posts with information on two new chilli sauce flavours, named for two different women, Julia and Vanessa, when referring to how hot the chilli sauce is.

Post one features an image of a woman with a bottle of hot sauce with an illustrated image of a woman on the label. The caption for the post is, "Hi, I'm Julia. Here to titillate and invigorate your tongue. Find me in garlic and oregano or lemon and bay. I can penetrate the fattest of chicken thighs and pair perfectly in a baked ricotta. I'm full bodied and intense, perfect for all your culinary needs. Try me on eggs and rice, in soup or as a marinade for chicken. #PickleMyChili #HandMade #ChiliSauce #MadeInAustralia"



Post two includes an image of a woman taking a bottle of hot sauce out of her pocket. The caption for the post is, "Hi, I'm Vanessa. The headless Goddess of chili pepper. Here to entice you with my killer thighs and Lucious hips. I'm so irresistible, even the Pope can't get me off his lips... [winking emoji] [pizza emoji] Throw me on anything, pizza, eggs, or even fish and chips!?" #PickleMyChili #HandMade #ChiliSauce #MadeinAustralia"



## THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

*The advertisements and branding/labels use imagery and wording that is highly sexualised & objectifying of women (and men, but I am complaining specifically about the images of women as that is what I am). These images are offensive as they do not honour or respect women, and contribute to a society where gender based violence and abuse is rampant.*

## THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complainant/s regarding this advertisement include the following:

*In both ads the girls appear relaxed and comfortable, they are appropriately dressed. The script is funny and relevant to the product.*

## THE DECISION

The Ad Standards Community Panel (the Panel) considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement is sexualised and objectifies women.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser's response.

**Section 2.2: Advertising should not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative or degrading of any individual or group of people.**

The Panel noted the AANA Practice Note which provides guidance on the meaning of the terms exploitative and degrading:

- Exploitative - (a) taking advantage of the sexual appeal of a person, or group of people, by depicting them as objects or commodities; or (b) focussing on their body parts where this bears no direct relevance to the product or service being advertised.
- Degrading – lowering in character or quality a person or group of people.

**Does the advertisement use sexual appeal?**

Post one

The Panel noted the advertisement featured a woman's face as she holds and looks at the product. The Panel noted that the product packaging included an illustration of a headless woman in a crop top and underwear, sitting with her legs crossed. The Panel noted the caption of the image included sexualised terms, such as "titillate" and "penetrate". The Panel considered that the combination of the wording and the image on the bottle meant that post one did have sexual appeal.

Post two

The Panel noted that the image featured a woman's body (her head is out of frame) in a bikini top and jeans, with her hand placing the bottle in her back pocket. The Panel noted that the product packaging included an illustration of a headless woman from behind, wearing a bikini top and shorts. The Panel noted the caption of the advertisement included a sexualised depiction of the product which could also be read to refer to the woman. The Panel considered that the combination of the image of the model, the wording and the image on the bottle meant that post two did have sexual appeal.

**Does the advertisement use sexual appeal in a manner that is exploitative?**

The Panel considered that the captions of the two posts are designed to refer to both the hot sauce and the women in the images. The Panel considered that this draws a direct comparison between women and products to be consumed. The Panel considered that both posts do depict the women as objects and that this is exploitative.

The Panel also noted that the woman in post two is depicted from the chest down, and the caption refers to a “headless Goddess”. The Panel considered that depicting the woman without a head is dehumanising and further objectifies the woman.

### **Does the advertisement use sexual appeal in a manner that is degrading?**

Further to the reasons discussed above, the Panel considered that the depiction of the women as sexualised objects lowers them in quality and character and the Panel considered that the advertisement is degrading of women.

### **Section 2.2 conclusion**

Finding that the advertisement did employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative or degrading of an individual or group of people, the Panel concluded that the advertisement did breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

### **Conclusion**

Finding that the advertisement did breach Section 2.2 of the Code, the Panel upheld the complaint.

### **THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE TO DECISION**

I will remove the blurb from the two posts.