

BASIL ALI KHAN

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Date: _____

Reading Assignment

DOLCE & GABANA : RACISM , STEREOTYPES , OR BEING FUNNY

Dolce and Gabbana racism controversy case study highlights cultural insensitivity, racial stereotypes and blurred line between humor and offense in industry. The Italian luxury brand itself involved in a highly controversial situation when it released a promotional video in 2018, intended to celebrate Chinese culture, but instead resulted in outrage. The video part of brand campaign for Shanghai fashion show, featured a Chinese model attempting to eat various Italian food like Pizza and spaghetti using chopsticks, including by a voiceover in an exaggerated Chinese Accent. This was criticized for showing offensive stereotypes and cultural insensitivity. It was viewed as reducing Chinese culture to clothes and modeling custom traditions. Social Media erupted with backlash leading to a significant fallout for Dolce and Gabbana. Chinese called for boycotts. Celebrities distanced themselves from brand, canceling their attendance at fashion show. Retailers dropped to product from shelves resulting in substantial financial repercussions for the brand. Also faced PR crisis. The incident raised question about fashion industry policy in portraying diverse culture respectfully and consequences of cultural ignorance in market. It highlighted the need for brands to understand and respect cultural aspects. Case study highlighted the power of Social Media in holding brands accountable and importance of cultural competence where diverse audience are connected. They issued apology but incident served as reminder of repercussions of insensitivity and cultural understanding in fashion industry and beyond.