

# Headspace x Peanut: rethinking sexual wellness for women

CASE STUDY | Sep 14, 2022

A new collaboration between meditation app, Headspace, and online women's network, Peanut, is taking the shame out of sexual wellness for women. With women's reproductive rights being curtailed in the US, how are brands showing support and providing holistic sexual health resources?

## AUTHORS

Jacqueline Salomé

**LOCATIONS:**  
UNITED STATES

**SECTORS:**  
HEALTH AND FITNESS  
SEXUAL HEALTH



## EXPERTS



Julie Prodor

## HIGHLIGHTS

- 01** Headspace and Peanut are mainstreaming women's sexual health and pleasure by incorporating it into holistic wellness approaches
- 02** Their new Women's Collection offers educational and mindfulness resources on reproductive health and sexuality while creating community
- 03** The collaboration is helping breakdown pervasive sexual health stigma at a key moment when American abortion rights are under fire

## DATA

- 89% of women think the medical world doesn't take their sexual desires seriously, and 70% want better access to information to improve their sex lives
- 57% of Americans disagree with the US Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade and restrict abortion rights
- 83% of Glamour Magazine readers think society has a stigma towards female sexual pleasure

## SCOPE

Women's sexual health and pleasure are some of society's best-kept secrets, which is why 89% of women think the medical world doesn't take their sexual desires seriously and 70% want better access to information to improve their sex lives. [1] "Our fears and misunderstandings of sex are deeply engrained in us – they're all part of the social scripts that have guided society for so long," says Julie Prodor, a sexual health educator. [2] With Roe v. Wade being overturned in the US and the continued censoring of [women's sexual health ads](#), open discussion and safe access to abortion are moving into more nuanced and intimate spaces. Brands are responding to this critical moment by stepping into the sexual wellness realm, and [Headspace](#) is the latest key figure aiming to evolve and progress the conversation.

Headspace has partnered with [Peanut](#) – a women's social networking and sexual health support app – to release the [Women's Collection](#), which destigmatizes sex through educational resources and meditations on topics long considered too taboo to talk about, like menopause and miscarriage. The collection offers resources across three categories: 'body and health' to befriend your body, 'sex and relationships' to deepen intimacy, and 'strength in solidarity' creating safe spaces for women to connect with each other, as well as offering guided mindfulness practices that allow users to process difficult times. As people come to the realization that sexual health and wellness can be incorporated into their self-care

routines, franker and more open conversations are needed – the Headspace x Peanut content from sexual health experts is catering to this consumer demand.

Launched in August 2022, the partnership released '[Let's Talk About Sex](#)', a short film that united women across diverse lived experiences to normalize conversations about relatable themes like post-partum sex or expecting a child with gender-diverse parents. The film is a testament to the empowering possibilities when new narratives and modes of storytelling around typically sensitive topics and taboo subjects are explored, uniting women across regions and cultures that may typically have more conservative views on sex. With the subject of women's sexual health, rights, and bodily autonomy a hot topic of debate in the US, how are brands giving women access to supportive sisterhood and information they need?



The Headspace x Peanut partnership recognizes sexuality as crucial to overall wellbeing

Headspace (2022)

## CONTEXT

### TACKLING TABOOS

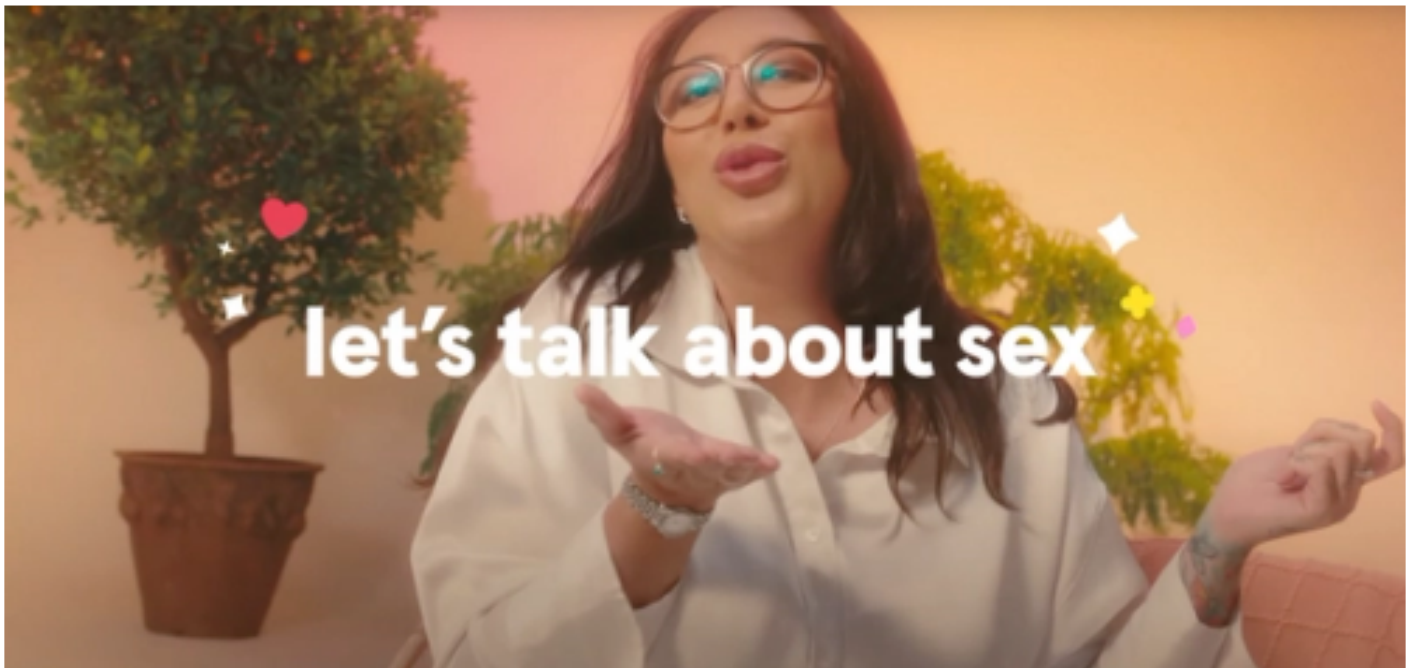
The curtailing of abortion rights in the US signals a prevalence of sexual health taboos and a need for educational content and resources that address sexual wellbeing, as well as access to safe abortion. "We've moved deeper than stigma," says Prodor. "We're in a much more urgent and serious area now." [2] The majority of Americans support abortion rights – 62% say it should be legal in all or most cases, and 57% disagree with the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. [3] Brands like Headspace and Peanut are responding to the magnitude of this moment with tangible actions to support women's sexual health in their products and marketing. Elsewhere, [Stix](#) has broadened access to emergency contraception, [OkCupid](#) has shown allegiance in a pro-choice ad, and [Computer Cowgirls](#) crowdsourced funding for abortion access through an NFT collection.

## A PUSH FOR BETTER SEXUAL WELLNESS

People's understanding of holistic wellbeing tends to focus on mental and physical health, with sexual health often overlooked even though it's [interconnected with our physical and emotional state](#). Like Gwyneth Paltrow's [Goop](#) empire, Headspace and Peanut recognize sexuality and reproductive rights as crucial to overall wellbeing, and are using their platform to fuse sexuality with the growing advocacy for emotional vulnerability and openness through mindfulness. Similarly, [Maude](#) is linking sexual wellness to self-care with a range of sex toys and sustainable products, while [Enjoy](#) uses erotic storytelling as a form of self-love. These brands are filling both a knowledge and wellness gap – seven in ten women want better access to information to improve their sex lives, yet only 6% have tried mindfulness or meditation in relation to their sexuality. [4]

## ALIGNING WITH NEW WORLDVIEWS

Americans are becoming increasingly divided across the political spectrum, which impacts behaviors like choosing friends and aligning communities – 82% of Democrats, for example, disapprove of repealing Roe v. Wade, while 70% of Republicans approve of the court's decision. [3] In response, brands like Headspace and Peanut are offering solidarity and actioning their political views in support of women's rights. Taking things further, sex-toy brand [Dame](#) sued the subway system in New York City in 2019 for rejecting their ads even though erectile dysfunction marketing was permitted. [5] As 63% of consumers are more likely to buy from a brand that speaks out on social issues, people are embracing marketing materials and content that expose them to opinions and ways of thinking that align with their worldview. [6]



63% of consumers are more likely to buy from a brand that speaks out on social issues

Headspace (2022)

## INSIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### EXPAND HOLISTIC HEALTH

With 83% of Glamour Magazine readers thinking society has a stigma towards female sexual pleasure, and over four in ten American women wishing they knew more about their reproductive organs, many feel as if they have not been equipped to incorporate sexuality into their holistic wellbeing. [7][8] Brands have an opportunity to keep pushing the dial, folding sexual health into wellness categories as Headspace and Peanut have done, as well as [The Truth Undressed](#) educational campaign from Canesten. “The wellness and health aspect – that’s where we need to be putting our focus, and we need to make sure information is accessible for all bodies,” says Prodor. “Many diverse experiences, like those of LGBTQ+ people or those with disabilities, have been excluded for too long.” [2]

## CREATE CONSIDERATE CONTENT

Demonstrating political beliefs doesn’t have to come in the form of a statement, knowledge-sharing resources and educational content such as the Headspace and Peanut’s Women’s Collection is one way brands can better support people as [populations continue to polarize](#). Sex toy brand [Unbound](#) blogs about queer-friendly medical care and guides to sex toys for trans women, like [Lioness’ sex research platform](#), making such topics accessible and informative. By partnering with sexologists and sexual health educators, brands can avoid contributing to the rise of sexual health [myths and misinformation](#) that are common on platforms like TikTok and can create useful content that people need. Prodor says that brands should critically ask themselves whether the content they’re producing is “based in research and from a health and care perspective, or is just about selling a product.” [2]

## BUILD COMMUNITIES TO BREAK TABOO

As 78% of consumers want brands to use social media to bring them together in a divided society, and 62% believe that social media can unify people of different backgrounds and beliefs, brands have an opportunity to create online communities and use relatable storytelling to open up the sexual health and wellness conversation – an approach taken by Headspace and Peanut. [9] This demand for affinity communities is evident in the rise of online wellness platforms like [Black Girl’s Healing House](#) and trending [#PeriodTalk](#) content on TikTok. By creating brave, safe, and supportive spaces that further cultural dialogue, brands, businesses, and organizations can help people to find the encouragement and support they need when looking for guidance on censored topics.

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## SOURCES

1. Peanut (August 2022)
2. Interview with Julie Prodor conducted by the author
3. Pew Research Center (July 2022)
4. The Drum (August 2022)
5. Bay Street Bull (March 2022)
6. Adzooma (August 2020)
7. Glamour Magazine (April 2020)
8. Statista (June 2021)
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