



Case Report

1	Case Number	0034/13
2	Advertiser	Il Ricco
3	Product	Clothing
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Print
5	Date of Determination	27/02/2013
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - sexualization of children

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This print advertisement features an image of a young woman wearing grey underpants and matching vest and the accompanying text reads, "Mums! Offer your daughters protection with style. Fact: 25% of young girls suffer embarrassment with their first period". There is also a picture of what appears to be contraceptive pills, and a free G-String offer with every purchase.

THE COMPLAINT

A sample of comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

The advertisement clearly stated it was aimed at mothers who desired to "protect" their daughters at the time of their first period. In Australia the average age for onset is around 12 years of age, but can be as early as 7. Clearly depicted in this advertisement is a packet of contraceptive pills with the brand name of the company emblazoned across them, implying both the sexualisation of the target market, and simultaneously making both a spurious enhancement of the claims of protection offered by their underwear. But wait, there's more! There is also a mature and comely young lass who overcome her membership of the 26% club (those the ad claims are embarrassed by the onset of their first period) many years prior. She proudly sports her new panties, with the matching logo emblazoned singlet that she must have chosen over the G-string option in the free gift give-away. How many mums are out buying g-strings for their tweens this Christmas? Now I appreciate that there is a code that

directs advertisers to use older models so that children are not exploited, but seriously, when anybody is used to further sexualise the item, this is really offends on every level.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The Advertiser did not provide a response.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code").

The Board noted the complainant's concerns that the advertisement displays material which sexualises young girls and is not appropriate.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.1 of the Code. Section 2.1 of the Code states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not portray people or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of...gender..."

The Board noted that the advertisement features an image of a young woman wearing grey underpants and matching vest and that the accompanying text reads, "Mums! Offer your daughters protection with style. Fact: 25% of young girls suffer embarrassment with their first period".

A minority of the Board noted that the advertisement suggests that periods are embarrassing and considered that this message is offensive to women and is not appropriate. The majority of the Board however noted that the advertisement quotes this statement as a statistical fact and considered that the advertisement reflects a not unlikely situation that young girls can be embarrassed if their period starts without being prepared and offers a solution to enhance a young woman's preparation for her period.

Based on the above the Board considered that the advertisement did not depict material which vilifies or discriminates against a person or group of people based on their gender.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.4 of the Code. Section 2.4 of the Code states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience".

The Board noted that the advertisement also contained an image of what appears to be a contraceptive pill packet containing pills as well as a free g-string offer with every purchase

and that the complainant believes that to display this image and offer in connection with a product aimed at young girls sexualises young girls.

The Board noted that the young woman featured in the advertisement appears to be over the age of 18 years however the accompanying text is clearly aimed at the mothers of girls starting puberty who would mostly be under the age of 18. The Board noted that the pose of the model in the advertisement is not sexualised and that the underwear she is wearing is basic and not sexy.

The Board noted that the model appears to be wearing the advertised product, not a G String, and that there is no direct suggestion that the free G String would be for a young girl but rather that the most likely interpretation is that the mother would be doing the purchasing and she could take advantage of this offer.

The Board considered that the depiction of the packet of pills resembling contraceptives is an attempt to equate the product (lined underwear) with high level protection and the product is not likely to be seen as a contraceptive or as a suggestion that young women should be sexually active. In the Board's view there is no sexual suggestion or at most a mild sexual connotation through the depiction of a contraceptive pill lookalike. The Board considered that as the tone of the advertisement is clearly directed at mothers the advertisement does treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and the advertisement does not sexualise young girls.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaints.