Case Report

1. Case Number :	**0198-25**
2. Advertiser :	**Black Knight Erotica**
3. Product :	**Sex Industry**
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	**Billboard**
5. Date of Decision:	**17-Sep-2025**
6. Decision:	**Upheld – Modified or Discontinued**

ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.2 Exploitative or Degrading
AANA Code of Ethics\2.4 Sex/sexuality/nudity

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This billboard advertisement features a man standing behind a woman with one of his hands on the woman's waist and his other hand around her neck holding her jaw. The woman has a black lacy stocking over her head covering her face. The text "Scandal. Everyone wants to be a little naughty. Calexotics" are beside the image.



THE COMPLAINT

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

I wish to lodge a complaint regarding an adult shop billboard on Kilkenny Road, Kilkenny (South Australia).

The billboard advertises the product "Scandal Lace Hood", showing a woman in lingerie, blindfolded in lace, being held in an intimate and sexualised pose.

Why I believe this breaches the AANA Code of Ethics:

Section 2.2 (Exploitative or degrading sexual appeal): The advertisement uses overt sexual imagery in public, which I believe is exploitative and inappropriate.

Section 2.4 (Sex, sexuality and nudity): The sexualised content is not appropriate for a general audience, especially as the billboard is on a main road visible to children and families.

This type of content should not be displayed in public where minors are unavoidably exposed.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Advertiser did not provide a response.

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 exploitive and degrading to women and inappropriate for a broad audience which includes children.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser had not provided a response.

Section 2.2: Advertising shall 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.*

The Panel noted the Practice Note to Section 2.2 states:

"For material to breach this section of the Code, it must contain sexual appeal.

Models in underwear or lingerie surrounded by or next to fully clothed models may suggest a power imbalance and be found to be exploitative or degrading.

Material can be found to be exploitative or degrading even where the model is looking confident where the model is being depicted as a product or commodity or the focus on body parts is not relevant to the product or service being advertised. Advertising which used sexual appeal and suggests that a person is a product, or that they exist only for the enjoyment of others has been found to breach this section of the Code. Likewise, advertising which uses attractive models in revealing clothing, where the use of the model is not relevant to the product, has been found to be exploitative."

Does the advertisement use sexual appeal?

The Panel noted that the advertisement features sexualised products and a couple in an intimate pose and considered that the advertisement uses sexual appeal.

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

The Panel noted that the advertisement depicted the woman in lingerie and a lace hood, and in contrast the man was depicted fully clothed. The Panel also noted that the man was posed with his hand around the woman's jaw or neck. The Panel noted the lace hood was one of the products being promoted, however considered the fact only the woman was depicted with her face covered was dehumanising. The Panel considered the combination of contrast between the man and woman, the posing of the man, and the woman's face being covered in a dehumanising manner, combined to form an overall impression of a power imbalance between the man and the woman.

The Panel considered that the woman was depicted in a manner which suggests that she is an object or commodity. The Panel considered that the advertisement does employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative of the woman.

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

The Panel considered that the dehumanisation of the woman and depiction of her as an object does lower her in character or quality.

The Panel considered that the advertisement does employ sexual appeal in a manner which is degrading to the woman.

Section 2.2 conclusion

The Panel concluded that the advertisement did breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

Section 2.4: Advertising shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience.

The Panel noted the Practice Note for the Code states:

> *"Overtly sexual images are not appropriate in outdoor advertising or shop front windows.*
>
> *Although not exhaustive, the following may be considered to be overtly sexual:*
>
> - *The use of paraphernalia such as whips and handcuffs, particularly in combination with images of people in lingerie, undressed or in poses suggestive of sexual position*
> - *Interaction between two or more people which is highly suggestive of sexualised activity."*

Does the advertisement contain sex?

The Panel considered whether the advertisement contained a depiction of sex. The Panel noted the definition of sex in the Practice Note is "sexual intercourse; person or persons engaged in sexually stimulating behaviour".

The Panel noted that both the man and the woman appear fully clothed, and while his hand is on her neck they don't appear to be engaged in sexually stimulating behaviour. The Panel considered the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

Does the advertisement contain sexuality?

The Panel noted the definition of sexuality in the Practice Note is "the capacity to experience and express sexual desire; the recognition or emphasis of sexual matters".

The Panel considered that the nature of the product being promoted, the depiction of the woman in lingerie, and the intimate posing were a depiction of sexuality.

Does the advertisement contain nudity?

The Panel noted that the definition of nudity in the Practice Note is "the depiction of a person without clothing or covering; partial or suggested nudity may also be considered nudity".

The Panel noted that the woman was depicted in lingerie, with her cleavage visible, and considered that this is a depiction of partial nudity.
Are the issues of sexuality and nudity treated with sensitivity to the relevant audience?

The Panel noted that the definition of sensitivity in the Practice Note is "understanding and awareness to the needs and emotions of others".

The Panel noted that assessing whether sexual suggestion is 'sensitive to the relevant audience' requires consideration of who the relevant audience is and how they are likely to react to or feel about the advertisement.

The Panel noted that this billboard was on the outside of the store, facing the carpark, but could also be seen from the road. The Panel considered that the relevant audience would be broad and include children. However, the Panel considered that most people viewing the advertisement would only view it for a few seconds if they were passing by, and only those visiting the adult store would likely view it for longer.

The Panel considered that the level of nudity in the product was mild, and not inappropriate for a broad audience. The Panel considered that the lace hood was a sexualised product, however, younger children who viewed the advertisement for a few seconds would be unlikely to understand the sexual nature of the product. The Panel considered that while the man and woman were shown in an intimate pose, the pose was not highly suggestive of sexual activity.

Overall, the Panel considered that while the image was sexualised, it was not overtly sexual. The Panel considered that the advertisement did treat the issues of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant broad audience.

Section 2.4 conclusion

The Panel found that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

Conclusion

Finding that the advertisement breached Section 2.2 of the Code the Panel upheld the complaint.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DECISION

We have modified the banner by blocking out the male and female intel.

