



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0122/18
2	Advertiser	Bras n' Things
3	Product	Lingerie
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Poster
5	Date of Determination	21/03/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading - women
- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This poster advertisement depicts a woman dressed in white lingerie standing in an area decorated by Chinese lanterns.

THE COMPLAINT

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

These images are harmful to women and girls as they have been proven to contribute to self-objectification by women and girls, sexism, an ongoing culture of violence against women, and the dehumanisation of women as a social class. Let me know if you want any links to the research into this.

The imagery in this advertising is full of pornogrified symbolism that indicates that women are valued more for their bodies and how those bodies can sexually satisfy men than they are for their other, non-physical qualities.

These images are in full view of all who walk past them at the mall, including women and girls.

Please note that I am not raising any of the following issues:





Taste

Offence

Choice

The personal history or consciousness of the individual models

The empty concept of 'empowerment' as it is used in relation to women's choices

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Bras N Things does not feel that it has breached any advertising standards and received a lot of great feedback from our customers regarding the campaign.

The window display for the mentioned campaign in the attached documents started 12 February and ran until 25 February (across all stores). The content showcases a range of styles that were new to Bras N Things for the two weeks the campaign ran, in no way do these images cause or portray violence towards women.

Please see below our response to Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics:

2.4 Sex, sexuality and nudity

At Bras N Things we are passionate about empowering all women to feel beautiful from the inside and out and as such, we endeavour to provide women with a range of lingerie and sleepwear products that appeal to many different women's tastes and style preferences.

Bras N Things does not feel that it has breached any advertising standards with this campaign. The models wear lingerie throughout the campaign imagery, there is absolutely no nudity, we always ensure that everything is covered. We are showcasing our latest collection in a non-sexual way.

2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading - women

Our products are designed by women for women, to satisfy women when they wear it. It's designed with the intention to make a women feel great in her own skin and satisfy her.

There is nothing degrading about a gorgeous set of lingerie.



THE DETERMINATION

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 overly sexualised and inappropriate for a broad audience.

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

The Panel noted that the complaint was received before 1 March 2018 and therefore the complaint was considered under the version of Section 2.2 of the Code which states: “Advertising or marketing communications should not employ sexual appeal: (a) where images of Minors, or people who appear to be Minors, are used; or (b) in a manner which is exploitative and 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 - means clearly appearing to purposefully debase or abuse a person, or group of persons, for the enjoyment of others, and lacking moral, artistic or other values.

Degrading – lowering in character or quality a person or group of people.”

The Panel noted that in order to breach this Section of the Code the advertisement would need to be using sexual appeal in a manner that is considered both exploitative and degrading.

The Panel considered the image on the poster advertisement shows a woman dressed in white lingerie standing in an area decorated by Chinese lanterns.

The Panel noted the complainants’ concerns that the advertisement was degrading toward the women in the advertisement.

The Panel considered the women in the advertisement were depicted as comfortable and confident and that there was not unnecessary focus on the woman’s body parts – the focus was on the lingerie advertised.

The Panel considered that the pose of the woman was not overly sexualised and was not degrading of the woman, or women in general.

In the Panel’s view, the advertisement did not purposefully debase or lower in character the quality of the women and did not breach Section 2.2 of the Code.



The Panel then 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 Panel considered in the context of an advertisement for lingerie it was reasonable for advertisers to show women wearing the product being sold.

The Panel noted that the advertisement was in the window of the store in a shopping centre and would be visible to a broad audience, which would include children.

The Panel noted that the white colour and design of the bodysuit displayed on the poster appeared slightly more sexually suggestive than other styles of lingerie considered in cases 0120/18 and 0121/18 for this advertiser.

The Panel considered that the woman in the advertisement was appropriately covered by the lingerie and that her nipples and genitals were covered. The Panel noted that the level of nudity in the advertisement was mild and would not be inappropriate to be seen by a broad audience which would include children.

The Panel considered that the level of nudity in the advertisement was mild, and that the advertisement did treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

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

