



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0128/18
2	Advertiser	Honey Birdette
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 standing with her hands on her hips, leaning slightly forward. She is wearing black lingerie with embroidered details.

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 everyone who walks past them at the mall - including women and girls.

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





Taste

Offence

Choice

Individualism

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:

The advertiser did not provide a response to the complaint.

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 objectifies women.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted that the advertiser did not provide a 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 that applied at the time. Section 2.2 provide that: "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 poster advertisement depicts a woman standing with her hands on her hips, leaning slightly forward. She is wearing black lingerie with embroidered details.

The Panel noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement was degrading toward the woman in the advertisement.

The Panel noted that the woman was wearing elaborate lingerie and that the imaging in the advertisement did contain mild sexual appeal consistent with the product being promoted.

The Panel noted that it had consistently determined that when advertising lingerie it is reasonable for the advertiser to depict the product being worn, and that this could not be considered exploitative.

The Panel noted the pose of the woman in the advertisement and considered that she appeared confident and in control of her situation. 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 woman 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 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 considered that the woman in the advertisement was appropriately covered by the lingerie and that her nipples and genitals were covered. The Panel considered 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 the woman in the advertisement was not posed in an overly sexualised manner 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 level of nudity and sexualisation in the advertisement was mild, and that the advertisement did treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant broad 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.