



Ad Standards Community Panel
PO Box 5110, Braddon ACT 2612
P (02) 6173 1500 | F (02) 6262 9833

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Ad Standards Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

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| 1. Case Number : | 0301-20 |
| 2. Advertiser : | Bang Hero |
| 3. Product : | Entertainment |
| 4. Type of Advertisement/Media : | App |
| 5. Date of Determination | 7-Oct-2020 |
| 6. DETERMINATION : | Upheld - Not Modified or Discontinued |

ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.1 Discrimination or Vilification
AANA Code of Ethics\2.2 Exploitative or Degrading
AANA Code of Ethics\2.3 Violence

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This in-app advertisement featured an animated video which begins with four women in bikini's standing on scaffolding on a rooftop. Below them are two more women in bikinis and two barrels of TNT. To their right there is a boulder sitting on an angled platform held up by a box. A sniper is shown from first-person viewpoint on a rooftop across from the women. The sniper looks through their scope, first at the women, then at the boulder, before shooting at the box holding the boulder in place. The boulder roles down and hits the scaffolding, causing the TNT to explode. The women are seen flying through the air.

THE COMPLAINT

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

Player shoots at women in bikinis



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 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 shows a game in which players shoot at women in bikinis.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted that the advertiser did not respond to the complaint.

The Panel noted the Practice Note to Section 2.1 of the Code which provides the following definitions:

"Discrimination – unfair or less favourable treatment

Vilification – humiliates, intimidates, incites hatred, contempt or ridicule".

The Panel considered that games of this nature, being a shooting game, often feature stylised versions of people or animals and advertisers are able to use such gameplay imagery to promote the product.

The Panel considered that the women shown in the advertisement are depicted to receive less favourable treatment given that they are being blown up/shown as targets. However, the Panel considered that there is no suggestion in the advertisement that this treatment is due to their gender, or that suggests that all women should be treated in a similar manner.

The Panel considered that the advertisement does not depict the women in the advertisement or women in general in a manner that is unfair or unfavourable nor in a manner that would be likely to humiliate or incite contempt or ridicule based on their gender. The Panel determined that the advertisement does not discriminate against or vilify a person or section of the community on account of gender.

The Panel considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.2 of the Code. Section 2.2 of the Code states: "Advertising or marketing communications should 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 first considered whether the advertisement used sexual appeal.

The Panel considered that the depiction of women in bikinis, even though the women are animated, is one which most people would consider to contain sexual appeal.

The Panel then considered whether the advertisement used sexual appeal in a manner that was exploitative of an individual or group of people.

The Panel noted that the scene depicted is relevant to the advertised product, a game, in that the scenario shown is a part of game play. The Panel considered that the women are shown in a manner similar to bowling pins, in that they are lined up on a structure and then knocked over by a wrecking ball. The Panel considered that the women are used as props and that this was depicting them as objects in the context of the advertisement.

The Panel considered that the advertisement was exploitative of the women depicted.

The Panel then considered whether the advertisement used sexual appeal in a manner that was degrading of an individual or group of people.

The Panel considered that the depiction of the women in a manner similar to bowling pins and the scene showing them being blown up with the women flying through the air is a depiction of material which lowers the women in quality and character and the Panel considered that the advertisement is degrading of the women in the advertisement.

The Panel determined that the advertisement did employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of an individual and did breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

The Panel considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised".

The Panel noted that the Practice Note for the Code provides: "*Realistic depictions of the consequences of violence are not acceptable. More leeway is permitted where the depiction is stylised rather than realistic.*"



The Panel considered that the depiction of the women being blown up and flying through the air is a depiction of violence. The Panel considered that the advertisement is highly stylised and animated and does not show any blood or graphic imagery. The Panel considered that the violence in the advertisement would be considered by most members of the community to be mild.

The Panel noted that the advertised product is a game in which players aim and shoot various firearms in various scenarios, and considered that the scenario shown in the advertisement is consistent with game play. The Panel considered that the mild degree of violence in the advertisement was justifiable in the context of the storyline of the advertisement and did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

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

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION

The advertiser has not provided a response to the Panel's determination. Ad Standards will continue to work with the relevant industry bodies regarding this issue of non-compliance.