



Ad Standards Community Panel
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Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0311/18
2	Advertiser	Honey Birdette
3	Product	Lingerie
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Poster
5	Date of Determination	11/07/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Upheld - Not Modified or Discontinued

ISSUES RAISED

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

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This poster advertisement features a women in a white bra, garter belt, stockings and underpants facing away from a mirror. The mirror shows the reverse of the underwear and the woman's buttocks are visible. The word "Gabrielle" is in the bottom right hand corner of the poster.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The models nipples were revealed. This is contrary to community standards and that is all that should need to be said. Honey birdette ignore community standards continually and somehow expect to actually change community standards by making it impossible to get any action against them.



This is in my local shopping centre. The poster is passed by numbers of families – small children, teenagers, parents – day in, day out. Next week is school holidays and shopping centres like this are actively promoting visits to their centres with increased traffic of children passing this disgusting site, internalising why it's okay to use naked women's bodies as a commodity. At a time where sexual assault is increasing in the news, this legitimisation of using woman's naked bodies to sell underwear is inappropriate. Other manufacturers sell underwear/ lingerie and do not portray a woman in this way nor do it in full view of young boys and girls. This is not about an objection to women. It is the objection to the sexual objectification of women - it is about opposition to sexism, to corporates who profit from the sexual exploitation of women and have the audacity to claim they are empowering women in the process. I complained to the centre itself but as the ASB has authorised previous highly sexualised images, they commented that they were powerless to make any changes. This is advertising on a pornographic level and the ASB needs to be more responsive to community safety.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

In regards to our posters:

Much like all retail brands, we advertise our product on our posters and mannequins in line with the advertising standards, much like Bras n Things and other lingerie, and even swimwear companies.

It is certainly not our intent to offend anyone in any way. At Honey Birdette, we are all incredibly passionate about empowering women and making everyone feel more comfortable in the skin they're in.

We do change our posters quite regularly in line with our new collection drops and we have a new collection dropping in the near future.

Please know we've taken this feedback on board and it's been forwarded on to the correct departments for consideration on future campaigns.

Have a lovely day and thank you again for taking the time to contact us about this.

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 complainants’ concern that the advertisement featured a sexualised image of a woman that was inappropriate for a broad audience which would include children.

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

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 noted the complainants’ concern that the advertisement objectifies women and uses women as a commodity.

The Panel first considered whether the advertisement used sexual appeal.

The Panel noted the poster advertisement featured an image of a woman in white, lace lingerie, standing in front of a mirror, looking over her shoulder at herself. The Panel considered that the style of the lingerie in combination with the woman’s pose did constitute 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 considered that there was a particular focus on the woman’s buttocks in the advertisement, however considered that this focus was relevant to the style of lingerie being sold.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not suggest the woman was an object, or was for sale, rather the advertisement featured the woman wearing the underwear that was for sale.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not use sexual appeal in a manner



that was exploitative of an individual or group of people.

The Panel then considered whether the advertisement used sexual appeal in a degrading manner.

The Panel considered that the advertisement depicted the woman as confident and empowered, and considered that the advertisement did not depict the woman in a way which lowered her in character or quality.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not use sexual appeal in a degrading manner.

The Panel determined that the advertisement did not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative or degrading of any individual or group of people, and did not breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

The Panel 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 this poster advertisement was in the window of a store and was visible to people walking past the store, and considered that the relevant audience for this poster would be broad and would include children.

The Panel considered the complainants' concerns that the advertisement is pornographic and that models nipples were revealed which was contrary to community standards.

The Panel noted that the bra the woman was wearing was sheer lace and considered that there was a suggestion that her nipple was visible, although this was not overly clear.

The Panel noted that the advertisement included a reflection of the back of the woman and considered that the design and cut of the lingerie featured in the advertisement left a large proportion of her buttocks visible with only a small piece of fabric covering her genitals.

The Panel considered that the focus of the reflected image within the advertisement was on the woman's bottom and that this imagery did contain a high level of nudity and sexual suggestion.

The Panel considered the pose of the woman was sexualised and that the way she was looking over her shoulder at her reflection, emphasised the focus on her buttocks.



The Panel considered that the level of nudity was at the higher end of the scale and the image was highly sexualised and as such the image included on a poster that is visible to members of the community standing outside the business was not appropriate for the relevant broad audience which would likely include children.

The Panel determined the advertisement did not treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and did breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement breached Section 2.4 of the Code, the Panel upheld the complaints.

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 authorities regarding this issue of non-compliance.