



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

1	Case Number	0321/18
2	Advertiser	Realisation Par
3	Product	Clothing
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Internet
5	Date of Determination	25/07/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.2 - Objectification Degrading - women
- 2.2 - Objectification Exploitative - women

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This internet advertisement is a product listing on the advertiser's website. It features photos of a woman in a black dress with stars, and the accompanying text states "Here's what we know. Men love sundresses. We also know this point is actually pointless because we women dress for ourselves and ourselves only. But sometimes... just sometimes you need a get-out-of-jail-free card. Maybe you forgot to take the trash out or you scratched your dad's car or maybe you were really late and you forgot do the one thing they asked you to do. Whatever the reason, the Alexandra dress is the solution. This is the dress that makes them forget why they were even mad at you in the first place and the only thing that really matters is: If you're bad at being good, you better be damn good at getting out of it. Trust us. You're welcome."

THE COMPLAINT

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



This terrified me - it made me feel sick that this had somehow passed a group of people who deemed this appropriate for publishing - blatant objectification, that women's best appeal to appease a man is by wearing a mini dress.

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 objectifies women.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser did not provide a 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 Communication shall 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 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 this internet advertisement is a product listing on the advertiser's website. It features photos of a woman in a black dress with stars, and the accompanying text states "Here's what we know. Men love sundresses. We also know this point is actually pointless because we women dress for ourselves and ourselves only. But sometimes... just sometimes you need a get-out-of-jail-free card. Maybe you forgot to take the trash out or you scratched your dad's car or maybe you were really



late and you forgot do the one thing they asked you to do. Whatever the reason, the Alexandra dress is the solution. This is the dress that makes them forget why they were even mad at you in the first place and the only thing that really matters is: If you're bad at being good, you better be damn good at getting out of it. Trust us. You're welcome."

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement description is blatant objectification of women.

The Panel first considered whether the advertisement contained sexual appeal.

The Panel considered the wording of the description, in particular the phrases 'men love sundresses', 'the dress that makes them forget they were even mad at you' and 'if you're bad at being good, you better be damn good at getting out of it'.

A minority of the Panel considered that these phrases are not direct sexual references, and could be interpreted as a dress that makes you look cute and innocent, rather than sexy.

The majority of the Panel however, considered that the overall interpretation of the message of this ad was that if you wear this product you will look so good you can get whatever you want' and considered that this interpretation was directly related to sexual appeal.

The Panel considered that in combination with the image of an attractive woman squatting down with a focus on her bare legs the overall impression of the advertisement was that it did contain sexual appeal.

The Panel considered that the woman in the images accompanying the photographs clearly looked over 18 and considered that the advertisement could not be seen to sexualise minors.

The Panel then considered if the advertisement portrays sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative. The Panel considered that while there was a suggestion in the advertisement that women should use their sexual appeal to get away with things they normally wouldn't, this is not a depiction of a person as an object or commodity.

The Panel considered the woman in the advertisement is portrayed in a way which highlights the dress for sale and is not depicted in a way which suggests she is an object or commodity. The Panel considered that while the woman's legs are bare in one of the accompanying photos, this is not the focus of the advertisement, and it is directly relevant to the short dress being advertised. The Panel considered that the advertisement was not exploitative.



The Panel then considered whether the advertisement portrays sexual appeal in a manner which is degrading. The Panel considered the woman in the advertisement appeared comfortable and relaxed and was not portrayed in a way which would lower her, or women in general, in character or quality.

The Panel noted that the concept of a woman using her looks to get away with things is old-fashioned and dated, however considered that this is not an issue which falls within the Code.

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.

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

