



Case Report

1	Case Number	0337/16
2	Advertiser	Pacific Brands Holdings Pty Ltd
3	Product	Lingerie
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	10/08/2016
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- Other Social Values
- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender
- 2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading - men
- 2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement shows a series of shots to music of popular blog star Zoe Foster Blake and her real life husband, comedian and radio host Hamish Blake, working out - skipping, boxing and doing 'chin ups'. During one of the scenes Zoe pulls Hamish's pants down (he is seen wearing bonds underpants) after he continues doing his chin ups whilst she has fallen from the bar.

THE COMPLAINT

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

At one point the woman pulls down the back of the man's pants and slaps his backside. If the roles were reversed and a male removed a females pants and smacked her bottom just because she beat him in an exercise routine, it would be considered sexist and offensive while objectifying and degrading her.

The ad clearly objectifies men and shows how they are sexual objects to the viewers; is this message what we want children and other viewers to think?

I feel this is derogatory towards men, also promotes putting down another person. We are

constantly being told to respect women, but this ad does not show anyone being respectful. Surely we want to promote mutually respectful behaviour to other people not this sexist attitude.

I am currently the director of a before and after school child care centre - this ad has had an impact on the behaviour of a few children at the centre who now feel it is okay to pull their peers' pants down.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

We write in response to the complaint made against the Bonds Sport campaign, specifically relating to the following sections of the AANA Code of Ethics:

*2.1 Discrimination or Vilification Gender, and
2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N – general.*

On 17 July 2016, the Bonds Sport campaign launched to promote the new range of sportswear products available in store and online. The campaign follows in the long tradition of Bonds marketing using celebrity ambassadors – in this case, Hamish Blake and his wife Zoe Foster Blake. This campaign celebrates sport and an active lifestyle in a cheeky, down to earth manner consistent with Bonds' brand values.

In regard to the complaint that has been made to the ASB under Complaint Reference Number 0337/16, relating to section 2.1 of the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics we disagree that the advertisement 'discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of gender, 'or, relating to section 2.4, that the advertisement 'treats sex, sexuality and nudity without sensitivity to the relevant audience.'

The complaint refers to the scene in which Hamish Blake and Zoe Foster Blake attempt to complete chin ups. While Hamish completes the chin ups, Zoe struggles and drops to the ground, dacking Hamish as he hangs from the bar to reveal his Bonds underwear.

The complainant describes the scene as 'derogatory towards men' and 'sexist and offensive' if the gender roles were flipped.

Bonds objects to the complaints on the following grounds:

Care was taken to ensure the facial reactions captured throughout the TVC ground the competition and rivalry between Hamish and Zoe in a friendly, respectful and fun context.

· The talent are, in fact, a married couple with enormous respect for one another. The scene was developed in collaboration with the talent and reflects their cheeky, fun-loving personalities.

· The scene in no way indicates that Zoe dacked Hamish because of his gender or to objectify him.

The relevant audience, in this case, includes adults interested in purchasing men's underwear and the commercial was aired at an appropriate time to reach this audience. The commercial was granted a W rating and the complainants viewed the commercial during prime-time, adult programming. A key part of this range is men's underwear and as such it is appropriate to show this product on the body as part of the brand's communications.

We trust upon receiving our written response that you will agree that the Bonds Sport campaign does not breach the AANA Advertiser Code of Ethics.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code").

The Board noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement is not respectful toward men.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser's response.

The Board considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.1 of the Code which requires that 'advertisements shall not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.'

The Board noted that the couple in the advertisement are well-known identities who are a married couple.

The Board considered that during the various activities the couple are seen as sharing power, presented as equals and playful in their interactions together. The Board noted the scene where the woman pulls down her partner's shorts and smacks his bottom. The Board considered this was very playful and in the overall context of a friendly spar, was not of concern, and there was nothing in the man's response to cause concern.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of gender.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

The Board 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 Board noted that the scene where the female pulls down the man's shorts does reveal his underpants, but does not expose his buttocks. In the absence of any nudity and in emphasising the underwear brand, through the action of pulling the man's pants down, the Board considered that the overall message was to indicate the range of products available

through the brand, including sportswear and underwear.

The Board noted that the advertisement was rated W and was viewed during prime-time, adult programming.

The Board considered that the advertisement was not sexualised and did treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

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