



Case Report

1	Case Number	0339/16
2	Advertiser	Bras n' Things
3	Product	Lingerie
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Poster
5	Date of Determination	10/08/2016
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

These store window posters features images of a woman wearing Playboy branded lingerie. The accompanying decal (copy) says 'It's Show Time Playboy [Logo]' with a secondary decal (copy) 'Bunny Boost Plunge Double Push Up to E Cup'.

THE COMPLAINT

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

I understand that the business needs to advertise and sell their lingerie, and that means photos of women wearing the lingerie. But Highpoint is populated by large numbers of teenage and pre-teen boys and girls who cannot make a distinction between Playboy brand lingerie, and Playboy the brand that sexualises and sexually exploits women of all ages. I strongly object to this normalising of the Playboy brand and all that it represents in blatant and in-your-face advertising that shapes the perceptions of vulnerable young minds. It is advertising such as this that normalises a culture of sexting and sexual exploitation at ever-increasing young ages. As a parent of both a young boy and young girl, I ask you to rule that this advertising is out of order and needs to be removed.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Thanks for sending this through. Bras N Things does not feel that it has breached any advertising standards and have received very little feedback from customers directly.

The Playboy window posters are promoting our current Playboy branded lingerie campaign and is live from July 18 – 31.

The complaint relates to our Highpoint store which has campaign posters on display in the store window. The accompanying decal (copy) says 'It's Show Time Playboy Logo' with a secondary decal (copy) 'Bunny Boost Plunge Double Push Up to E Cup', advertising our new Bunny Boost Bra range.

Please see below our response to Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics:

2.2 Exploitative and degrading – The poster images feature a solo woman in lingerie showcasing a range of different styles to promote the latest range of Playboy branded lingerie in-store. We do not believe that these posters are degrading or exploitative in any way.

2.4 Sex, sexuality and nudity – Bras N Things is a lingerie retailer and therefore showcase a variety of lingerie styles in our store front windows. Bras N Things is the exclusive stockists of Playboy branded lingerie in Australia and in this particular instance, the posters relate to a Playboy window campaign that we are running from July 18-31. The model in the posters wears a variety of lingerie styles including bras, briefs ('Brazilian' cut, no G-strings), suspenders, stockings and a bodysuit. There is no nudity.

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 complainant's concerns that the advertisement is normalising the Playboy brand which sexualises and exploits women.

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

The Board 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 and degrading of any individual or group of people."

The Board noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement depicts women in Playboy lingerie and this type of advertising normalises a culture of sexting and sexual exploitation. The Board noted that in order to breach this Section of the Code the images would need to be using sexual appeal in a manner that is considered both exploitative and degrading.

The Board noted the AANA Practice Note which provides guidance on the meaning of the terms exploitative and degrading:

Exploitative - purposefully debase or abuse a person for the enjoyment of others, lacking in moral, artistic or other values

Degrading – lowering in character or quality a person or group of people.

The Board noted that the advertising is a Playboy lingerie poster in the window of Bras N Things outlets.

The Board noted that some members of the community could find the use of women in lingerie in advertising to be exploitative however the Board noted that the advertised product is lingerie and considered that it is not inappropriate or exploitative, of itself, for an advertiser to depict women wearing the advertised product.

The Board noted that the woman is posed in a manner which is clearly intended to show the lingerie she is modelling and is not posed in a manner that is degrading. The Board considered that the images have a significant focus on the model's body but that the relevance to the product is apparent, particularly as the Playboy lingerie branding is written across the poster which is in the store window. The Board considered that the relationship between the product being advertised and the images shown are not about promoting the women as objects but about the style of lingerie available to purchase in store.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.2 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 acknowledged that some members of the community would prefer that lingerie not be advertised in this manner but considered that it is reasonable for an advertiser to show its product being worn in the intended manner. The Board noted that the advertisement consists of different images of the same woman wearing Playboy branded lingerie. The Board noted that the lingerie fully covers the woman's breasts and genitals and considered that while the size of the images means that the level of nudity appears high, in the Board's view the focus of the advertisement is the lingerie and the woman is not posed in a sexualised manner.

The Board noted that these posters are in the store window and considered that the relevant audience would be broad and would include children. The Board acknowledged that some members of the community may be offended by images of lingerie clad women in shopping malls where children can see them. The Board also noted that advertisers are allowed to advertise the products available to purchase from within their store as long as the advertising complies with the Code. In this instance the Board considered that the current advertisement did treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant broad audience which would include children.

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.