



Case Report

1	Case Number	0363/12
2	Advertiser	Bonds Industries Ltd
3	Product	Clothing
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	12/09/2012
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

Various groups of male and female models are shown dancing and wearing different styles of Bonds underwear. The final text on screen reads, "Shop your shape".

THE COMPLAINT

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

I am upset that women are again being sexually objectified for an underwear commercial. It's unnecessary to have these women dancing provocatively with some shots in slow motion with close ups of the groin areas. I find these ads offensive in nature, nakedness and the message it is sending to young women and men about women's bodies and worth in society.

I'd like to see the new ads for Bonds taken off the air and replaced with something that is empowering to young women instead of sexually objectifying. I feel like I'm watching a burlesque review every time it comes on. It's not okay. Please remove them from the television and print media in tram and bus stops. Someone has to stand up and say it's not okay to do this to women.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The campaign objective was to show that Bonds has a wide range of underwear styles for all types of men and women. The campaign was developed as part of a multi-media campaign which extends across TV, Digital, Outdoor, In store and PR channels. The advertising creative is built on the idea that consumers' choice of underwear is determined by their personality and lifestyle. Bonds uses its products physical features to personify the different Bonds wearers – grouping them into male and female 'underwear tribes'. The TVC brings the 'underwear tribes' idea to life with a 'dance-off'. Each tribe has a signature style, theme music and dance movements based on their underwear design and functionality. No one tribe is better than the other, they are all equally as important, and they are all very different. Bonds aim is to get consumers to identify with a tribe/style and shop for that style – the campaign slogan being 'Shop Your Shape'. The print creative features two female 'underwear tribes'. They are in poses, acting out their signature dance moves from the TVC. The tone of voice is playful, essentially the Bonds tone of voice. The models are wearing underwear as this is the product we are advertising as an underwear retailer. We challenge that this is sexually objectifying or offensive given it is in an appropriate context – we are selling underwear and that the creative context is lighthearted and playful. It is a dance-off.

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 sexually objectifies women and features close-ups of their groin areas.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.2 of the Code which 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 that the advertisement features women and men dancing whilst wearing different styles of Bonds' underwear.

The Board noted that the women and men are presented in a manner which is clearly intended to show the underwear they are promoting and that the women and men appear happy and confident.

The Board considered that the women and men in the advertisement are not represented in a manner which could be considered exploitative and degrading.

The Board determined that the advertisements did not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading and 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 noted that the complainant’s concerns regarding close-up images of groin areas and considered that the focus of the close-up scenes is the underwear. The Board noted that it is reasonable to expect an underwear advertisement to feature imagery of underwear and considered that the manner in which the underwear is presented in the advertisement is not sexualised and is not inappropriate. The Board noted that all the models in the advertisement, both male and female, are wearing the underwear in a manner which does not expose any of their private areas and considered that the advertisement did not contain any inappropriate nudity.

The Board considered that the advertisement did treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and 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.