



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited
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Case Report

1	Case Number	0433/18
2	Advertiser	Honey Birdette
3	Product	Lingerie
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Poster
5	Date of Determination	10/10/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Upheld - Not Modified or Discontinued

ISSUES RAISED

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

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The shop window display of Honey Birdette features two women in black lingerie standing on a balcony with the caption 'an affair like no other - MRS ROBINSON'.

THE COMPLAINT

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

Inappropriateness of sexually explicit images in a public shopping centre frequented by children. Children and the general public should not be subjected to these kind of porn images whilst out at a shopping centre which has children's facilities, children's rides, children's clothing stores etc! This is not the place for these kind of advertisements. To make matters worse they are full floor to ceiling window displays which makes it very difficult not to notice.



The product is not offensive however the suggestive sexual positions of the models depicted is more inline with the porn industry and not general

I don't need to see that while shopping with the family I know what the shop is about you don't need to put those posters up WE GET IT!!

An externally large poster of the back side of a girl in a g-string. This is wrong on so many levels! As mother of young boys I do not want them to view women in this way and as the mother of a daughter I don't want her to believe that it is acceptable for women to be viewed in this way. This advertisement is not ok on any level and must be removed. This is not the first complaint I have made about this company but seemingly it is falling on deaf ears.

Quite simply it is offensive. I was stopped in my tracks last night when I saw it. This image is more suited to being positioned as the centrefold in a men only magazine and is totally unsuitable in a shopping centre frequented by women and children. It could be seen as an invitation for anal sex and is hugely inappropriate in a time of media publicity about the sexual objectification of women. It is a large and eye catching display which is too far on the side of pornography and confirms the idea of women as sex objects. There is nothing positive or uplifting in this image of a young woman offering up her backside. It should be taken down as soon as possible. I am also contacting Centre Management asking them to remove the image.

Both pictures are of a sexualised nature and especially the bodysuit photo, are a form of pornography. They are prominently displayed in a shopping centre frequented by minors. It is not appropriate. It is sexual harassment (I could not display this picture on my wall at work).

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Advertiser did not respond.

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' concerns 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 did not respond.

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 two women in black lingerie standing on a balcony with the caption 'an affair like no other - MRS ROBINSON'. A brunette model is facing towards the camera and a blonde model is facing away from the camera, wearing underpants which show a large portion of her buttocks. 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 directly relevant to the style of lingerie being sold.

The Panel considered that the advertisement did not suggest either woman either was an object, or was available for sale, rather the advertisement featured the women 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 comfortable, 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.

On that basis, 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 too explicit for a shopping centre.

The Panel noted the underwear on the brunette model, and considered that although her underwear is very brief, the style is contemporary and her groin region is covered. The Panel also noted that the shadowing in this section of the advertisement does not draw attention to her lower torso.

A minority of the Panel noted that the underpants on the blonde model had a similar design to swimwear, and considered that although the image was sexualised, it has the appearance of a classic lingerie set and is relevant to the broad style of product available in this lingerie store.

The majority of the Panel considered the pose of the blonde model is overly sexualised, with her torso pushing forward and buttocks pushing back. The majority considered that as the model was not posed in a side-on stance, but rather more back facing the camera, the image displayed a significant amount of bare buttocks.

The Panel considered that the component of the image was highly sexualised and as such the image included on a poster that is visible to members of the community in a shopping centre 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 industry bodies regarding this issue of non-compliance.