



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 433/06 |
| 2. Advertiser | Pilates Canberra |
| 3. Product | Leisure & Sport |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 14 November 2006 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement is set in a women's-only gym and features women dressed in typical exercise-wear, using poles attached to the ceiling as a focus for their exercise routine. A female voiceover announces "Want to have some fun? Dress up. Have a hen's night. Play up. Act up. Get vertical. Pilates Canberra".

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

Young girls in skimpy clothing suggestively dancing around poles - pole dancing.

What messages are we giving to our young boys and girls about women? There is no doubt about the sexual innuendo it implies.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s regarding this advertisement included the following:

Pole Dancing "For Fitness" is a legitimate form of exercise found in many fitness centres around Australia .

"The young girls in skimpy outfits dancing suggestively around poles" included women from 20 to 45 years of age dressed in sports wear. Pilates Canberra advertised with the aim in mind of focussing on Sport not smut, hence the sportswear and runners as opposed to stilettos and lingerie.

Pilates Canberra offer over 30 classes a week in two locations promoting pole dancing for women of all ages "not to degrade women" but rather to liberate them. The pole dancing taught and advertised is a far cry from the Pole Dancing found in strip clubs.

Both the Directors of Pilates Canberra are mothers and are disappointed that the advertisement has caused offence especially with the suggestion that it was degrading to women, considering that we are two women providing a service for women.

It is interpretations such as the one received in your complaint that does not allow women to move with the times and participate in a sport that not only improves their health and wellbeing but enables them to feel empowered and liberated.

We have advised the TV station not to run ads during children's show s such as Toasted TV, however we do believe there is a place for them in prime time, and hope that parents would explain to children (if necessary, because do children really understand what Pole dancing in strip clubs is about, I think not, perhaps this is an adult hang-up and preconception) that pole dancing is a form

of aerobic exercise for women in a women only environment that helps them to feel good.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the comments of the complainant. The Board considered whether the advertisement breached section 2.3 of the Code dealing with sex, sexuality and nudity.

The Board noted the images of the women in the advertisement moving around the poles and considered whether they treated sex or sexuality insensitively. The Board noted that there was no nudity in the advertisement and that there was no sexual context to the advertisement (apart from the obvious connection to pole-dancing in strip clubs). The Board agreed that pole dancing is becoming a mainstream form of healthy exercise and that there is no sexual content to such exercise programs. The Board agreed that the advertisement did not treat sexuality insensitively and therefore did not breach section 2.3 of the Code.

Further finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.