



**Ad Standards** Community Panel  
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**AdStandards.com.au**

Advertising Standards Bureau Limited  
ACN 084 452 666

# Case Report

1	Case Number	0525/18
2	Advertiser	Honey Birdette
3	Product	Lingerie
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Poster
5	Date of Determination	28/11/2018
6	DETERMINATION	Upheld - Not Modified or Discontinued

## ISSUES RAISED

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

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This poster advertisement features a woman in a blue and black bra and underwear reclining on a seat, or what appears to be a sleigh. The caption reads "Take a Ride".  
Madame Set.

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*I find this advertisement offensive firstly because of the prominent placement in a thoroughfare between a cinema and a children's playground during Christmas promotion time. Secondly I am offended by the picture and slogan, which I feel carries the invitation to 'ride' the model. This objectifies the female model and implies she is there for someone's use. This objectification and commodification of women enables a culture that promotes violence against women and inequality*



## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*The 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 complainant's concern that the advertisement is objectifying of the model.

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 complainant's concern that the advertisement is objectifying of the model.

The Panel noted that the advertised product is lingerie and the advertiser is justified in showing the product and how it would be worn provided that in doing so it meets the provisions of the Code.

The Panel first considered whether the advertisement used sexual appeal.

The Panel noted the poster advertisement featured a woman in a black and blue bra and underpants reclining on a padded seat and "Honey B's Guide to Christmas – TAKE



A RIDE!” 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 the model in the advertisement was well covered and that the advertisement focus was relevant to the style of lingerie being sold.

The Panel considered that the advertisement text of “TAKE A RIDE” was interpreted to imply that the model was available for sexual relations, or “riding”, and that this theme was objectifying and exploitative of the woman.

The Panel noted that children may not understand the sexual innuendo of the tagline, but considered that it would be immediately apparent to adults. The Panel considered that there was no other obvious and reasonable interpretation of the accompanying text.

On that basis, the Panel determined that the advertisement did employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative of an individual and did breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

The Panel 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 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 noted the underwear on the model, and considered that the woman is well covered, the woman’s nipples and genitals are covered and the style of the underwear is similar to some contemporary fashions.

The Panel noted that the model is depicted reclining on a padded chair and considered that while the woman’s pose may be considered to be sexually suggestive, the imagery included on a poster that is visible to members of the community in a shopping centre is not explicit and is not inappropriate for the relevant broad audience which would likely include children.

In the Panel’s view the advertisement did treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant broad audience and that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.



Finding that the advertisement did breach Section 2.2 of the Code the Panel upheld the complaint.

#### **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION**

The fact that complaint was upheld simply astounds me.

Like any other retailer located in a Shopping Centre thoroughfare we have the right to display and advertise our current collections in our store front windows.

This year we have pulled back the reins and produced our tamest campaign yet to still be sent a complaint. We've done all we can to be considerate in treating nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience (section 2.4) and being selective in the imagery we display in our windows.

Our very commercial photography does not objectify our model in any way, shape or form.

The tag line 'Take a Ride' is a nod to the classic Christmas carols that reference taking a ride in a sleigh seeing as though the model is quite clearly sitting in a sleigh. If someone perceives this tag line as meaning to 'ride' the model, then that is their personal interpretation.

This collection and campaign has been very well received by our customers, equating in our biggest week of sales to date, so it couldn't possibly be offending many people.

