



Case Report

1	Case Number	0172/10
2	Advertiser	Honey Birdette
3	Product	Clothing
4	Type of Advertisement / media	Poster
5	Date of Determination	28/04/2010
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.3 - Sex/sexuality/nudity Treat with sensitivity to relevant audience

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The poster depicts a woman sitting on a black saddle on a black horse with her back to the camera. Her back and arms are exposed. She is wearing a razor back bra, leggings/g-string, black riding boots and riding hat, red gloves and head scarf. The 'coat of arms' on saddle and repeated in top right hand corner of the poster features a red badge with HB inscribed in gold above the text 'Honey Birdette Sensuality Boutique'.

THE COMPLAINT

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

I think the picture is insensitive indecent and unnecessarily provocative bordering on soft porn. I think it's particularly insensitive to children and people with a strong religious belief and appears to be advertising the sex act rather than the underwear. I'm sure an ad could be designed for this underwear in a more discreet manner. the use of riding props in this context is overtly sexual and not related to womans underwear. It's a very sexual pose exposing as much of the body that is possible within the law but I feel it's in poor taste.the owners of this company are apparently modelling themselves on Ann Summers from the UK. I found out last night that the British ad. standards have banned one of her posters which sounds very similar except they added a slogan on the bra strap which said "ride a cock hoarse". this refers to an old nursery rhyme ride a cock horse to banbury cross. One way to be more discreet is to show 1/2 of the persons body blocked by a wall or mirror and partially cover the top or bottom. this image is also all black giving more impression of erotica. Thank you for considering my complaint.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Please note that the complaint to which your correspondence refers to is actually positioned within our store and not on the outside.

It depicts a woman sitting on a saddle with her back to the camera wearing lingerie, full length leggings, riding boots, gloves, a head scarf and riding hat. Her buttocks are fully covered by the leggings and only her back and arms are exposed. There is no text.

The photographic ad was designed to highlight the razor back strapping of the bra. The model is sitting on a horse and wearing relevant riding props, because the name of the lingerie set is in fact called "Riding Gear" by a luxury lingerie label called Marlies Dekkers. We have been using this image for the last 6 months due to the popularity of the bra as it is unlike anything else in the market. Marlies Dekkers is also regularly named the world's best lingerie designer.

We certainly do not see the image as soft porn or advertising of any sexual act. In fact she is wearing more clothing than most lingerie models would wear for a photo shoot. Instead we see it as a very clever way to market lingerie by showing the models back and not her front as is often the case in lingerie advertising/marketing.

As for the complainant's example of Ann Summers' posters, I am unable to comment as I am not aware of such campaign or complaint. I have never been into a Ann Summers store so I am also confused to her comments that we are basing ourselves on this.

I can't even begin to debate the logic of black photography backgrounds giving the impression of erotica as it's nonsensical.

I hope this helps the board understand that in marketing and advertising of lingerie a certain level of skin needs to be exposed, whilst keeping in mind the sensitivity of the community.

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 concern that the poster is sexually suggestive and offensive.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser's response. The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 of

the Code states: "Advertising or marketing communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience".

The Board considered that the poster within the store with an image of a woman on a horse, showing her back whilst modeling 'Riding gear' lingerie in this particular advertisement was not overtly sexualised, that there was no direct reference to sex or nudity and that the advertisement did treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience. The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach section 2.3 of the Code.

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