

ASA to consider 'Class Action' to end Porn & Sex Ads in Newspapers



Advertising Regulator, The ASA, is deciding whether to bring a 'class action' against porn and sex ads in newspapers.

This comes after concerns raised by pressure group, [Not Buying It](#) that the presence of such ads in newspapers, like The Sport, essentially contravene every ASA code.

'child protection
lies at the heart
of our work'

These codes, which can be viewed [here](#), stress the need for all advertising 'to be socially responsible' and not to 'harm or offend' *wherever* they may appear.

The ASA emphasises child protection as 'lying at the heart' of its work and that it 'makes sure that ads that are likely to be seen by children don't contain anything that is inappropriate or harmful'.

"Basically, it's a no brainer, we should never have had ads for these industries in the Great British Press and it's time to get them out!" says **Dr Sasha Rakoff, Director** [Not Buying It](#).

10% of 12/13 year olds addicted to pornography

“This is particularly pressing when the NSPCC has found that 10% of 12/13 Year olds are addicted to pornography. In fact, the situation is so dire that the Government is currently consulting on how to make *all* internet pornography age-restricted. So how does it make any sense at all for newspapers to be advertising the porn and sex trade?”

“And this isn’t just an issue of not exposing kids to the porn and sex industry. stresses **Becca Mordan, [Not Buying It Trustee](#)** “Pornography isn’t ‘just people having sex’. 90% of porn shows violence against women and the sex industry is hugely abusive for the vast majority of women in it. Carrying ads for these industries in a newspaper totally normalises and ‘Oks’ them, and is a slap in the face for Government policies to end violence against women.”

“It also makes a nonsense of Government attempts to stem the flood of porn we are all bombarded with through introducing the internet ‘opt in’ scheme (which means porn is now blocked on all Internet Service Providers unless customers specifically request to ‘opt in’ to porn viewing).”

The ASA boast on its website that it proactively takes on ads, even if no complaints made.

Why then has it never been proactive about the ads in the Sport ?

Jess Not Buying It supporter

The key issue here is whether or not the ASA decide to take up a ‘class action’ or, as they call it, a [‘project approach’](#) to these ads. This allows them to make a blanket ruling about a specific sector (*newspapers*) or group of advertisers (*pornographers*) in order to bring them in to line with Advertising Codes.

“The problem is” says Rakoff “you can complain about individual porn/sex ads in a newspaper and the ASA can rule on each individually but there are *so many* of these ads (The Sport for instance contains 100s in every issue) and *so many* newspapers that carry them (like the Metro and ES, distributed throughout London’s transport network) that it is impossible to complain on an individual basis. Besides which, if you did and a complaint was upheld against one particular ad, a pornographer only needs to offer up a different ad to a newspaper in its next edition”.

porn and sex industry 'untouchable'

“In other words, if the ASA does *not* take up a ‘project approach’ the porn and sex industries are basically ‘untouchable’ and can continue their promotion in newspapers unchecked, despite this contravening all ASA codes, despite the harm linked to them and despite Government initiatives to reduce the accessibility of the porn/sex industry. [Not Buying It](#) are simply asking the ASA to close this loop hole.”



END

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About Not Buying It:



www.notbuyingit.org.uk

Not Buying It was set up at the beginning of this year to challenge the normalising of the porn and sex industries.

Ads shown here:

This represents a small sample of the porn/sex industry ads carried by The Sport newspaper group (in this case, The Sunday Sport, Feb 28, 2016)

ASA Codes can be viewed here:

https://www.asa.org.uk/Consumers/~/_media/Files/ASA/Reports/CD2123_ASA_ParentsLeaflet_No%2050%20Years%20Logo%20PDF%20Web.aspx

ASA Project Approach is outlined here:

<https://www.asa.org.uk/Consumers/How-to-complain/Multiple-complaints.aspx>