

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/leader/east/concerning-link-between-online-gambling-advertisements-and-family-violence-experts-warn/story-fngnvlxu-1227402140968>

Herald Sun

Concerning link between online gambling advertisements and family violence, experts warn

Thomas O'Byrne

Manningham Leader

June 17, 2015 12:54PM



A Sportsbet video advertisement where a man shoves his partner's head into the bed so he can listen to horse racing on the radio has attracted 9000 views online. Picture: YouTube.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuufdAA9TLo&feature=player_embedded

“DEPLORABLE” and “troubling” online gambling advertisements implying bestiality and sexualised depictions of women have authorities concerned about the link between family violence and problem gambling.

The controversial online advertising was examined at a forum in Melbourne today, co-organised by Doncaster advocacy group [Women’s Health East](#), which explored the relationship between the two social issues.

Recent research undertaken by Deakin University associate professor Nicki Dowling showed that more than one-third of people with gambling problems reported being the victims or perpetrators of family violence.

[Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation](#) chief executive Serge Sardo said his organisation was concerned with the increasing proliferation of online advertisements which he described as “deplorable” and “absolutely misogynistic”.

“The campaigns really do objectify and demean women in significant ways, and a number of those are from high profile sports betting brands,” he said.

“Women are typically depicted as an object of the man’s entertainment, or a nagging housewife.”



A still image from the Sportsbet Fifty Shades of Greyhound video advertisement. Picture: YouTube.

Online bookmaker Sportsbet made headlines this year with a video called Fifty Shades of Greyhound.

In the clip, which parodies the film 50 Shades of Grey, a scantily clad woman lies on a bed with the greyhound and is depicted tied-up in a bondage scenario.

Sportsbet.com.au spokesman Shaun Anderson told the Herald Sun the feedback to the video had been positive.

Another video advertisement, posted in 2013, begins with a couple having intercourse but the man stops when he hears a horse race come on the radio.

He then places a hand over his partner's face and shoves her into the bed as he leaves to get closer to the radio.

Mr Sardo said other advertisements emphasised the idea of men achieving "power" through gambling.

"From an attribute perspective, I think advertisements do influence men's opinions and views," he said.

"When you start talking about the use of power and how you can use it, I think it is quite unacceptable."

Mr Sardo said the organisation was seeking national regulation of television and digital advertising, but admitted the nation was "sometime away" from an outcome.

Family Violence Prevention Minister Fiona Richardson said it was "very troubling" to see some of the online gambling advertisements.

"There is no regulation for online advertising, despite the fact that it can have some very disturbing messages around women and gender stereotypes," she said.

"Clearly there is something more that needs to be done in that area."

Ms Richardson said the State Government was "very keen" to work with the Federal Government to bring about structural change.