# Bumble apologizes for its anti-celibacy ad fumble

Dating app company Bumble has issued an apology for running an ad campaign that seemingly shamed women for not being sexually active and mocked people for choosing celibacy instead of dating.

After updating its app and brand design in April to try to attract new users who are “exhausted from the dating scene,” Bumble ran a series of billboard ads containing messages like “You know full well a vow of celibacy is not the answer,” and “Thou shalt not give up on dating and become a nun.” The company faced swift backlash across social media from users who condemned the ads for delegitimizing celibacy as a valid personal choice.

“We made a mistake,” the company said via an Instagram post on Monday. “Our ads referencing celibacy were an attempt to lean into a community frustrated by modern dating, and instead of bringing joy and humor, we unintentionally did the opposite.”

The company said it’s removing the ads and will be donating to the National Domestic Violence Hotline and other organizations that support women. The billboard spaces will also be offered to these organizations to display “an ad of their choice” for the remaining duration Bumble reserved them for.

Social media users accused the ad campaign of going against the founding principles of Bumble, which launched in 2014 with the aim of creating a more hospitable dating environment for women. Critics noted that the campaign is dismissive of people who choose celibacy, including Bumble’s asexual users and people who avoid sex due to trauma, and pointed out racist

language differentials on ads depicting a Black woman.

Women have also started embracing celibacy as a means to protest rigid gender roles, sexism, and sexual violence, such as South Korea’s 4B feminist movement, which renounces sex with men, marriage, and having children.

https://www.theverge.com/2024/5/14/24156746/bumble-dating-app-anti-celibacy-billboard-ad-apology