



Ad Standards Community Panel
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AdStandards.com.au

Ad Standards Limited
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Case Report

1. Case Number :	0153-21
2. Advertiser :	Yves Saint Laurent
3. Product :	Clothing
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	Internet - Social - Instagram
5. Date of Determination	16-Jun-2021
6. DETERMINATION :	Upheld – Modified or Discontinued

ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.6 Health and Safety

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This sponsored Instagram advertisement features a person standing on a rocky beach. They are wearing black stockings, a green and blue skirt, a silk tank top and holding a blue blazer over one shoulder. The text 'Saint Laurent' has been superimposed over the image.

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

The model in the advertisement is emaciated or otherwise appears to be extremely thin. This advertisement creates the impression that being underweight is desirable for women. It is irresponsible and potentially triggering to some members of the community.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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



Advertiser did not provide a response.

THE DETERMINATION

The Ad Standards Community Panel (Panel) considered whether the advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement depicts an extremely thin person and creates the impression that being underweight is desirable for women which is irresponsible.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser did not respond.

Section 2.6: Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety.

The Panel noted the Practice Note to this section of the Code which states:

“Advertising must not portray an unrealistic ideal body image by portraying body shapes or features that are unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices. Exposure to unrealistic body ideals can lead to harmful body dissatisfaction and disordered eating and for this reason it is not acceptable in advertising.

UNREALISTIC IDEAL BODY IMAGE: Advertising that provides an unrealistic ideal body image by portraying body shapes or features that are unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices, which is not justifiable in the context of the product or service being advertised, will be contrary to prevailing community standards relating to health and safety. An unrealistic ideal body image may occur where the overall theme, visuals or language used in the advertisement imply that:

- a body shape, or feature, of the kind depicted (e.g. very thin or very muscular) is required to use the product or service or to participate in an activity associated with the product or service;*
- those people who do not have a body shape, or feature, of the kind depicted cannot use the product or service, or participate in a particular activity; or*
- those people who do not have a body shape, or feature, of the kind depicted should alter their body shape, or features, before they can use the product or service, or participate in a particular activity.*

An unrealistic ideal body image may also occur where models are depicted in a way that:

- promotes unhealthy practices*
- presents an unrealistic body image as aspirational; or*
- is reasonably likely to cause pressure to conform to a body shape that is unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices (such as diet or physical activities); unless such depictions are justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised.*



BODY SIZE: The Code does not require the use of ‘healthy weight’ models as this term could exclude people in smaller or larger bodies from advertising and unnecessarily limit the portrayal of diversity in society. As such, advertisements may include a diversity of images, including people who have a variety of sizes and shapes, but advertisers should take care to avoid images of people with extreme body weights or shapes that are unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices which are not justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised, and which are contrary to prevailing community standards relating to health and safety. While the use of people in smaller or larger bodies is itself not necessarily problematic, advertisers must ensure that models do not adopt a pose or are not depicted in a way which produces an unrealistic sense of body image, for example through the style of the advertising, the clothing, lighting, or make-up used.

ALTERATION OF IMAGES: The use of digitally enhanced images is a normal part of the production process used in many aspects of the media and advertising industries, and is a vehicle for visual expression. The Code does not prevent the use of post-production, altering or digitally enhancing an image. Similarly, the Code does not require a disclosure that images have been digitally altered. However, where technology is used to digitally alter images of people to such an extent that their body shape, or features, are no longer realistic or attainable through healthy practices, or where the changes are not justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised, the advertisement may breach the Code if it is contrary to prevailing community standards relating to health and safety. Advertisers should refrain from altering images in a way that changes the body shape or proportions portrayed, for example by lengthening a person’s legs to the extent they are not in proportion with the rest of their body or tightening their waist disproportionately to the rest of their body, so that the resulting image portrays a body shape or features that are unrealistic or unattainable through healthy practices.”

The Panel noted that the person depicted in the advertisement is advertising ‘high-fashion’ and that typically models used for such promotions are of a slim body type.

However the Panel considered that the person depicted in the advertisement is very thin and that their clavicle bones are visible, their arms and legs are very slender and their thighs have a concave appearance. The Panel considered that their cheekbones looked skeletal and although this may have been highlighted by the makeup used, the impact was the same.

Overall the Panel considered that the person depicted in the advertisement looked emaciated and considered that while the model may not actually be unhealthy, the impression of the advertisement was of a person that looked thin to a degree that would not be attainable by healthy practices.

The Panel considered that most members of the community would consider such an image to be indicative of an unhealthy body image.

Section 2.6 conclusion



The Panel considered that the advertisement did contain material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety and determined that it did breach Section 2.6 of the Code.

Conclusion

Finding that the advertisement did breach Section 2.6 of the Code the Panel upheld the complaint.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION

Saint Laurent respects the Community Panel's decision; however, it respectfully disagrees that the advertisement depicted an unhealthy body image.

As a general principle, all models appearing on any Saint Laurent campaign or fashion show must comply with strict medical regulations guaranteed by the agencies representing these models. The model depicted in this image complied with those medical requirements which are strictly and regularly controlled.

Please note the image was taken from the Saint Laurent Winter Fashion show and was included on Instagram to promote that fashion show and allow followers of the brand early access to upcoming Saint Laurent releases. The image was available for 2 days, from May 3 to May 5. No other usage of the image is planned.