



**ADVERTISING
STANDARDS
BUREAU**

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Case Report

1	Case Number	0258/11
2	Advertiser	Colgate Palmolive Pty Ltd
3	Product	Toiletries
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	27/07/2011
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.6 - Health and Safety within prevailing Community Standards

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement depicts a young lady brushing her teeth in front of a bathroom mirror, with her outfit and accessories changing several times. There is background music played (instrumental only) and a voice over throughout the advertisement. The advertisement is for Colgate Max White ONE toothpaste.

THE COMPLAINT

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

The size of the model is offensive. She is clearly either dramatically underweight and bears several signs of an eating disorder. To advertise cleaning teeth I cannot believe such a model is used to highlight fun enjoyment and good health. If there is ever to be any chance of young girls not getting into the thin culture then advertisers need to be far more vigilant and pro-active about the types of models they use to sell their products.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Colgate-Palmolive is committed to conducting all advertising and promotion with integrity and takes seriously any complaints made in relation to any such advertising and promotion. Colgate-Palmolive is a responsible advertiser with a comprehensive review process in place for all advertisements and is committed to compliance.

Having considered this matter in detail, Colgate-Palmolive believes that the advertisement does not breach the AANA Code of Ethics (Code), having regard to section 2 of the Code or otherwise. Colgate-Palmolive respectfully submits that the advertisement is a lighthearted scenario used to illustrate the benefits of whiter teeth and good health with regular brushing. With reference to specific sections of the Code, Colgate-Palmolive respectfully submits as follows:

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

The advertisement depicts a young woman brushing her teeth in front of the bathroom mirror and promotes the benefits of whiter teeth. Colgate-Palmolive submits that it does not contain any material which is contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety.

Throughout the course of the advertisement the woman's clothing and accessories continually change. The woman is then shown at the end of the advertisement without any extravagant clothing or accessories with a big smile across her face, emphasising the catchphrase spoken throughout the advertisement "Now your best accessory can be your smile."

The complainant describes the advertisement as depicting a model that is dramatically underweight and bearing several signs of an eating disorder. The complainant also describes the size of the model as offensive, stating that the advertisement promotes the thin culture as opposed to highlighting fun, enjoyment and good health.

Colgate-Palmolive respectfully disagrees with the complainant and notes that the advertisement portrays the image of a healthy, fun loving, quirky individual. In addition, the advertisement only depicts the model from above her torso, therefore making it impossible to adequately assess the model's weight and figure. Colgate-Palmolive submits that any assessment of the model as dramatically underweight or bearing several signs of an eating disorder is a subjective perception that is unfounded by the limited scope of the advertisement. Colgate-Palmolive submit that the majority of people would consider the advertisement to be a fun, lighthearted and positive advertisement that does not contain any overt or ambiguous support of unhealthy weight, or eating disorders amongst young women, nor does it promote one body type over another.

Colgate-Palmolive submits that the advertisement is well within prevailing community standards on health and safety. The advertisement is classified and programmed to air during time periods where such imagery is considered appropriate and the advertisement therefore complies with section 2.6 of the Code.

2. Remaining sections of the Code

Colgate-Palmolive submits that the advertisement does not breach the remaining sections of the Code (sections 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7 or 2.8), due to there being no violence or sexual references in the advertisement, it is not marketing to children and the language used could not be considered inappropriate, strong or obscene. In relation to sections 2.7 and 2.8, the product being advertised is not a motor vehicle or a food or beverage product.

We trust that the above information addresses all of the matters raised in the Complaint and will assist the Board in its determination.

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 complainants' concerns that the advertisement depicts a woman who is unhealthily slim and bears signs of an eating disorder.

The Board noted the advertisement depicts a young girl brushing her teeth and that she is only visible from the chest upwards.

The Board considered the advertisement within the context of section 2.6 of the Code which requires that advertising or marketing communications shall not depict material contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety.

The Board noted that obesity, anorexia and body image are issues of community concern. The Board noted that there is no obligation on advertisers to use large models in advertising but noted that it could uphold complaints about advertisements which used models who were inappropriately slim.

The Board noted that the only parts of the woman's body visible are her upper chest, arms and face. The Board considered the woman is obviously slim, as are most models, but that the advertisement as a whole did not present her as unhealthily slim or anorexic. The Board noted the complainant's concerns that the woman “bears several signs of an eating disorder.” The Board considered that an image of a slim young female brushing her teeth is not a suggestion of an eating disorder.

The Board considered that this advertisement did not depict material contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety and was not in breach of Section 2.6 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement was not in breach of the Code, the Board dismissed the complaint.