



Case Report

1	Case Number	0287/10
2	Advertiser	Unilever Australasia
3	Product	Toiletries
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	14/07/2010
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender
- 2.3 - Sex/sexuality/nudity Treat with sensitivity to relevant audience
- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

A large group of women are swimming in the ocean towards a beach. Other women are climbing down a steep cliff. Once on the beach the women, who are all dressed in bikinis, run towards a smiling young man standing on the beach wearing board shorts and spraying himself with two Lynx cans. The expression on the women's faces is one of determination. The following slogans appear on the screen: "Spray more, Get more." and "The Lynx Effect".

THE COMPLAINT

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

This Ad is highly offensive especially during this time slot where families and women are watching the ad. Slow motion vision of running in very small bikinis sexualises women as they run with their breasts bouncing around implying that women are 'primal' and driven sexually by a man's deodorant where they would act like wild animals. This ad objectifies women in the most offensive and degrading way possible. Disgusting - I would be mortified if my children saw this ad.

This ad is depicting scantily clad women racing towards a man on the beach spraying deodorant and is not suitable for a programme that would be family viewing in most NSW and Qld households with fathers and sons viewing the State of Origin match. As a mother this

ad sends the wrong message about women to my 2 sons. Not only are the women barely dressed and flopping all over the place as they run but they are a hungry bunch of women chasing one man. As a woman this message tells the man the more he sprays the more he gets. Well women are not desperate women who will be attracted by a bit of tacky deodorant. It sends a message that women are an object that are there for the taking. This ad is so sexually based it sickens me as a Mother that we are sending our sons the message that women are objects of desire not somebody to be loved and nurtured as a gift. Please withdraw this ad from our television screens and especially at the time of the evening when family are watching sporting matches.

I object to the sexualised and stereotyped portrayal of women in this advertisement. The portrayal of women in this ad is disgusting. I find it extremely distasteful especially considering there are young people watching during the time slot/show in which it was shown (State of Origin). Men are confronted daily with these sexual images of women that are inappropriate and unhealthy both for men and women. I am totally disgusted that this was allowed to be shown and feel that it should have been refused as a breach of section 2 of the AANA code of ethics.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Lynx is a brand with a history of fun, tongue-in-cheek, playful advertising. Lynx also has a proud history of award winning commercials which both entertain and surprise its consumers. We submit that the TVC continues this tradition of tongue in cheek entertainment and that the intended young adult male audience understands the playful and hyperbolic nature of the TVC and its distinction between fact and fiction.

CAD provided the TVC with a "PG" (Parental Guidance) rating whereby parental guidance is recommended, The TVC may be broadcast during the following hours, except during P and C programs or adjacent to P or C periods: Weekdays 8.30am - 4,00pm, weekdays 7.00pm - 6.00am and weekends 1 0.00am - 6.00am. Care needs to be exercised when placing in cartoon and other child - appeal programs. Unilever has taken great care to ensure that the TVC has been placed in PG rated programming. The TV media buying is targeted at the young adult male audience and as such the spot placements are amongst programming that is targeted at its intended audience such as 'Underbelly', 'Two and a Half Men' and the 'State of Origin', The humour and content of the TVC is consistent within the context of this programming.

Section 2.1: Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not portray people or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of [...] sex [...] J.

We submit that the TVC does not portray women in a way that discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of sex. In particular, the TVC is not sexist or sexual and woman in the TVC is not portrayed as a sexual object.

The TVC plays in a beach environment. It shows a large group of women swimming in the ocean towards a beach. Other women are climbing down a steep cliff. Once on the beach the women dressed in bikinis run towards a smiling young man standing on the beach wearing board shorts and spraying himself with two Lynx cans. The expression on the women's faces

is one of determination. The following slogans appear on the screen: "Spray more, Get more." and "The Lynx Effect." A Lynx pack shot shows the Lynx Twist, Lynx africa and Lynx Dark Temptation cans.

The TVC promotes the Lynx product in a playful and hyperbolic way. At no point in time does the TVC give the impression that the young man is seeing the young women as a sex object. It is created in a way that both entertains and surprises the consumer and is in no way discriminating against women. The man is smiling and spraying himself with the Lynx product. The TVC shows the link between the Lynx product and sexual attraction in a hyperbolic way. The man is enjoying the effect of Lynx that makes him feel more physically confident and attractive. The images of the women running towards the young men are therefore relevant to the TVC and the Lynx product advertised. The complaints that the TVC degrades and objectifies women and shows them as 'object of desire' is based on a misunderstanding of the TVC's main premise. The ordinary viewer will simply see the women swimming and then running on a beach, wearing bikinis being the appropriate clothing for the beach. The TVC therefore complies with the Basic Principle 4 of the Code of People in Advertising and does not show women in a manner which, taking into account generally prevailing community standards, was reasonably likely to cause serious or widespread offence or ridicule. The slogan "Spray more, Get more." is linked to the second slogan "The Lynx Effect" which again explains the effect that Lynx makes you feel more attractive. Section 2.3 Advertisements shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensibility to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, to the relevant programme time zone.

We submit that the TVC does not contain any overt or ambiguous treatment of sex, sexuality and nudity. At no point does the TVC show any open references to sex, sexuality or nudity. The TVC plays on a beach. Both the young man and the group of women are wearing beach clothes (board shorts and bikinis).

The TVC does not show "sexual images of women that are inappropriate and unhealthy both for men and women" as one complainant states. The TVC is firmly set in the realms of playful fantasy and with themes constant with the style of themes that are regularly shown as content around the TVC's placement. The TVC is in no way explicit and at no point in time do the women remove any item or interact with another person or object in any type of suggestive manner. They simply swim and then run on the beach towards the young man. The TVC clearly does not show an act of sex nor does it contain a reference or indication that the man and the two women are going to have or want to have sex.

The TVC is entirely appropriate with respect to the programme time zones and intended audience. It is highly likely that the young target audience would be exposed to similar images as the ones shown in the TVC during their regular television viewing. The spot placements are amongst programming that is targeted at its intended audience such as 'Underbelly' and 'Two and a Half Men'. We submit that, in light of the prevailing community standards, the TVC is not likely to cause serious or widespread offence, or offend these standards. The relevant audience is a young adult male audience who we believe will understand the humour intended.

Approvals

Unilever is a responsible advertiser and has numerous internal review processes, including review by Unilever's Legal Department, and corporate relations to critique all advertisements to ensure compliance with legal and ethical considerations.

4. Conclusion

We submit that the TVC do not contain any overt or ambiguous treatment of sex, sexuality and nudity and does not portray women in a discriminating or vilifying way as the tone of the TVC is one of humour and playfulness.

In summary, we submit that the context of the TVC are well within prevailing community standards and comply with sections 2.1 and 2.3 of the Code.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (the Board) considered whether the advertisement complied with the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Board noted complainants' concerns that the advertisement is sexist; objectifies women; depicts women as 'man hungry'. The Board agreed that the advertisements for this product are aimed at men and are intended to highlight men's attraction to women through fantasy situations. The Board considered that many people in society consider that the use of attractive women to sell products is not appropriate and noted concern that this sends an inappropriate message to young people about how to treat members of the opposite sex. The Board expressed some sympathy for this view but noted that the requirement of the Code is whether or not the advertisement 'discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of society on account of ...sex.'

The Board considered that in this particular advertisement, while the women in bikinis are running towards the man, the scene is set at a beach and the clothing is not inappropriate – even though it is clear that the setting is chosen because it makes it more acceptable to depict the women in bikinis.

The Board considered that the advertisement's depictions of hundreds of women running towards the man is an over the top, Tarzan style epic and is so exaggerated that it is clearly a fantasy. The Board considered that most people would consider the advertisement humorous.

The Board noted the inclusion of the voice-over – 'Use more get more'. While intended to be a reference to getting more women or even as getting more 'sex' the Board considered that this tag line did not make the advertisement discriminatory against women – rather it pointed to the obvious depiction in the advertisement of a young man attracting many women because of the deodorant he uses. The Board considered that this tag line was not inappropriate language and did not breach section 2.5 of the Code.

The Board considered that the depiction of the women in bikinis does not amount to nudity and is not a sexualised depiction. The Board considered that the advertisement complied with section 2.3 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any grounds the Board dismissed the complaints.

