



Case Report

1	Case Number	0301/13
2	Advertiser	Australian Fast Foods
3	Product	Food / Beverages
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	28/08/2013
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N - general

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

Three men in their early twenties are eating Red Rooster and watching sport on TV at the home of one of the men. His mother walks in and asks how they are enjoying the meal. One of the young men says, "Everything's great, Mrs B." The mother notices a drop of sauce on his cheek, wipes it off with her finger and then tastes it, saying, "Mmm, peri peri." After she walks away, the young man says, "Dude, your mum..." to which the son interjects, "I know, still thinks we're kids." A voiceover and a series of product shots introduce the new roast chicken with spicy peri peri marinade now available at Red Rooster, ending with the caption: "Peri Peri Roast Sensations, It's Roast Re-Invented".

THE COMPLAINT

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

I believe it inappropriate to promote flirting of mature adults with the friends of their children. This crosses a line and if it had been a man flirting with a teenage girl we would think it even more inappropriate.

As parents we have an unequal balance of power in relationships with teenagers and this should not be exploited.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

We note that a complaint has been received claiming that the woman in the advertisement “licks her finger suggestively.” However, this over-exaggerates the action actually shown in the advertisement.

The woman only very briefly brings her finger to her lips to taste the peri peri sauce. She does not linger in this pose or lick her finger in a particularly suggestive or provocative way. It is clear from the sequence that she is simply tasting the sauce and not “flirting” with the young man.

The complaint was raised under section 2.4 of the AANA Code of Ethics, which reads: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience.”

The situation depicted in the advertisement is not inappropriately sexualised. Whilst the interaction shown in the advertisement seems to have an effect on the young man with sauce on his cheek, the mother is not seen to encourage any inappropriate behaviour. The son is shown to find the situation awkward only because he thinks his mother is treating them like children, but he does not think she is acting inappropriately.

The mother is shown to be friendly and hospitable. The situation of wiping sauce from the young man’s cheek and tasting it is playful and relevant to the product in highlighting the spicy peri peri marinade. At most, the scene is only very mildly suggestive. There is nothing to suggest that the mother is making a sexual advance or encouraging inappropriate behaviour, let alone that she would exploit a position of power to foster an inappropriate relationship with one of her son’s friends.

At all times in the advertisement, the woman is appropriately dressed. She does not pose provocatively or expose her body inappropriately.

We note that the advertisement received a “W” rating from Commercials Advice (CAD), indicating that the advertisement is appropriate for general audiences.

In light of the above, we consider that the advertisement does not treat sex, sexuality and nudity inappropriately for the relevant audience, and therefore does not breach section 2.4.

We have also considered section 2.2 of the AANA Code of Ethics, which reads: “Advertising or Marketing Communications should not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading of any individual or group of people.”

The advertisement does not exploit or degrade any person or group. In particular, the woman is shown to be confident and the young men treat her respectfully. None of the young men are seen to ogle the woman, despite closely watching the situation unfold. Whilst it is implied that one of the young men finds the woman attractive, he is clearly seen to appreciate her as an individual and does not objectify her.

We therefore consider that the advertisement does not breach section 2.2.

We do not consider that any other sections of the AANA Code of Ethics apply to the advertisement, and therefore conclude that the advertisement is not in breach of the AANA Code of Ethics.

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 complainant’s concerns that the advertisement depicts a mother flirting with her teenage son’s friend which is inappropriate.

The Board viewed the advertisement and noted the advertiser’s response.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.4 of the Code. Section 2.4 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience”.

The Board noted the advertisement features a young man and his friends eating Red Rooster chicken and the man’s mum wipes some sauce off one of his friend’s cheek and then licks the sauce from her finger. The Board noted that there are two versions of the advertisement: a short 15 second version and a longer 30 second version.

The Board noted the complainant’s concerns that the advertisement promotes the flirting of mature adults with the friends of their children and that this crosses a line.

The Board noted that the young men in the advertisement appear to be in their early twenties rather than teenagers and considered that the action of the mum in wiping the sauce off the cheek of one of the young men is consistent with a typical motherly action. The Board noted that whilst most mothers would not eat the sauce they had wiped off their son’s face, in this instance the Board noted that in the longer 30 second version of the advertisement the son’s reaction is that his mother, “...still thinks we are kids”.

The Board noted the complainant’s comment that if the genders were reversed the advertisement would not be tolerated and considered that the Board’s role is to consider each advertisement on its own merit and that addressing hypothetical alternatives is not part of its role.

The Board considered that whilst the actions of the mother are unusual and could be considered as slightly inappropriate by some members of the community, in the Board’s view the response of the son to his mother’s actions and the age group of the men involved amount to an overall depiction which does not encourage or condone inappropriate sexual behaviour with teenagers.

The Board noted that in the shorter 15 second version of the advertisement we do not hear the boy justifying his mum’s actions and considered that whilst this version of the advertisement is more suggestive in the Board’s view the level of sexual suggestion is very mild and does not encourage or condone inappropriate sexual behaviour with teenagers.

The Board noted that the advertisement had been rated W by CAD and considered that the content of the advertisement is not inappropriate for the relevant audience.

The Board considered that the advertisement did treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

Further finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.