



Ad Standards Community Panel
PO Box 5110, Braddon ACT 2612
P (02) 6173 1500 | F (02) 6262 9833

AdStandards.com.au

Ad Standards Limited
ACN 084 452 666

Case Report

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Case Number : | 0392-19 |
| 2. Advertiser : | Chemist Warehouse |
| 3. Product : | Toiletries |
| 4. Type of Advertisement/Media : | TV - Free to Air |
| 5. Date of Determination | 11-Dec-2019 |
| 6. DETERMINATION : | Dismissed |

ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.3 Violence
AANA Code of Ethics\2.5 Language

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement features characters from Ariana Grande's music video "ThankU, Next". One scene depicts a cheerleader pushing another cheerleader.

THE COMPLAINT

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

At the end of the adv. one teenage girl physical pushed the other teenage girl very hard. THIS IS BULLYING. We are trying to teach our young ones that BULLYING IS NOT ACCEPTABLE

In the ad, a young lady pushes away a person who disagrees with her. This behaviour implies violence is appropriate in conflict or dispute situations.

This advertisement is set in a school and there is an incident where one teenage girl shoves another aggressively. Since bullying in schools is a very real problem in our schools, it appears that this advertisement is condoning violence between students. The clip is available for viewing at: Ariana Grande - thank u, next (the fragrance) - YouTube



At the end of the add two female actors are discussing the perfume when one violently pushes the other . As this add is directed towards young women I find this totally inappropriate in this age of anti violence and bullying . This is an add for perfume and I was shocked to see it and I believe it breaches community standards

One person violently bullies another near the ending of the advert.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Thanks for the opportunity to respond to the complaints re Case reference number: 0392-19

We respond as follows;

A description of the Advertisement;

The advertisement subject to the complaint was provided to Chemist Warehouse by the product manufacturer, Chemist Warehouse simply added the footer at the end of the advertisement. The product manufacturer described the advertisement as follows;

Thank U, Next fragrance video follows Ariana's music video (of same name) and can viewed as the next chapter.

The music video is a play on the famous movie Bring it on, Legally Blonde and Mean Girls. Some of the cast from both movies are in the fragrance video.

The music video clip can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gl1aHhXnN1k>

Discrimination or vilification

We contend that the advertisement is neither discriminatory nor does it vilify any person or group of people.

Exploitative or degrading

We contend that the advertisement is neither exploitative nor degrading

Violence

We contend that the advertisement is not violent and the actions objected to are not excessively violent but are a simple parody of popular culture movies and video clips.

Sex, sexuality and nudity

We contend that the advertisement contains no overt sex, nudity or sexuality.

Language



We contend that the advertisement contains no offensive language

Health and Safety

We contend that the advertisement is consistent with societal norms in regards to health and safety.

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Panel noted the complainant’s concern that the advertisement depicts violence and bullying.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and considered the advertiser’s response.

The Panel considered whether the advertisement breached Section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised".

The Panel noted that the scene in the advertisement depicting cheerleaders from two different squads is a parody of a film “Bring It On”. The Panel considered that many viewers in the target audience would be familiar with the rivalry of the cheerleading squads in the film and would recognise the pushing incident as being a humorous portrayal in the advertisement.

The Panel noted that the advertised product is a perfume by Ariana Grande (a popular singer) who is well-known by teenagers and young adults. The Panel considered that in the context of an advertisement which parodies several well-known films from the 2000s, the action depicted in the advertisement would not be considered by most members of the community to be a depiction of violence, but rather an action that is highly relevant to the creative storyline of the advertisement.

The Panel noted complainants’ concerns about school violence but considered that this advertisement was not depicting behaviour in a setting that would be seen as being akin to violent behaviour to others, and was not condoning physical violence towards other people.

The Panel noted that bullying is of particular concern to the community, but considered that the conduct depicted in the advertisement is a single push and that there is no suggestion of repeated harmful behaviour that would amount to bullying. In the Panel’s view the advertisement did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

The Panel considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.5 of the Code. Section 2.5 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall



only use language which is appropriate in the circumstances (including appropriate for the relevant audience and medium). Strong or obscene language shall be avoided”.

The Panel noted that during the scene when one cheerleader pushed another, a word was beeped out. The panel considered that it was not clear what word was said, and the cheerleader’s mouth was not visible. The Panel considered that the word was fully beeped out and considered that this was not a depiction of strong or obscene language.

The Panel also noted that a word in the background song was muted out during the advertisement, and noted that people familiar with the song would know that the muted out word was “fucking”. However, the Panel considered that the word was fully muted and considered that this was not a depiction of strong or obscene language.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Panel dismissed the complaints.