



# Case Report

<b>1</b>	<b>Case Number</b>	<b>0401/15</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Advertiser</b>	<b>Edgewell</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Toiletries</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Type of Advertisement / media</b>	<b>TV - Free to air</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Date of Determination</b>	<b>14/10/2015</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>DETERMINATION</b>	<b>Dismissed</b>

## ISSUES RAISED

- Other Social Values

2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender

2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading - women

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

2.6 - Health and Safety Within prevailing Community Standards

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The 30sec TVC features three women wearing bikinis, who are practising topiary beside a swimming pool. The camera pans in medium close-up across the first two women clumsily using trimming scissors on topiaries until it reaches the third woman, who uses the Schick Hydro Silk TrimStyle women's razor to quickly fashion a love heart. The TVC cuts back to a long-shot. The third woman looks cheekily across at the other two women and shrugs her shoulders as they appear disappointed with their own efforts. The TVC then cuts to a graphic of the razor in close-up above the pool and displays brand supers.

## THE COMPLAINT

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

*This is a male fantasy. It's gross.*

*It's sexist.*

*The bushes are meant to represent their pubic hair.*

*The ad is offensive and suggestive and completely inappropriate for this time slot. Yuk*

*Very degrading - absolutely disgraceful that the company would use this image to promote its product.*

*It is rude. It gives girls the impression they need to do shave there selves in their private parts.*

*The link between the visual image, the visual focus on a specific part of the female anatomy through the use of limited clothing and the crude term associated with the pubic area of the female. It presented females in a derogatory manner, open to crude jokes.*

*Sexualisation of females again, with how to have your public hair looking, with a time slot for young girls, not good enough.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*Edgewell Personal Care owns the Schick brand for razors and shaving products.*

*As a company, we strive to uphold the highest standards in our advertising creative. We aim to make products and tools that help a woman to make her beauty and grooming needs easier. We felt this Advertising helped tell the story of one of those products in a fun and light-hearted way. It was not our intention to offend or upset anyone, or imply otherwise.*

*In this Advertising, we celebrate a woman's personal preference when it comes to her beauty and grooming habits. We are simply letting her know that we have a convenient tool available for a woman who is interested in maintaining her bikini area.*

*This Advertising has been classified as 'PG' by the Australian CAD (Commercials Advice Pty Ltd) authority and local TV networks are working within guidelines for when the Advertising has permission to be shown.*

*We respond briefly to the allegations of breaches of section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (Code) as raised by the complaints received by the Advertising Standards Board as follows;*

*2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Gender. The Advertising is a celebration of a woman's personal preference for grooming her bikini area. The Advertising does not portray women or depict material in a way that is capable of discriminating against or vilifying a person or section of the community on account of their gender.*

*2.2 - Objectification Exploitative and degrading – women. The content of the advertising is not exploitative or degrading. There is no suggestion of a threatening or predatory gaze, or anything else that would objectify or demean the models (or women in general). The underlying concept of the advertisement is to celebrate a woman's preference when it comes to personal grooming in a fun and playful way. The target market for this product is adult women, as featured in the Advertising. The actors are not objectified in the Advertising, but are rather shown to positively express their personalities in choosing their grooming*

*preference.*

*2.4 - Sex/sexuality/nudity S/S/N – general. The three women featured are wearing bikinis, which is appropriate to the context of the Advertising. There is no nudity shown in the Advertising and it is not overtly sexual in nature. The trimming of topiary bushes is rather a playful visual metaphor for the maintenance of a woman's bikini area.*

*We stand behind the creativity and originality of this Advertising and respectfully request the ASB's dismissal of these complaints.*

## **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 is insulting and degrading to women in its depiction of three women shaving bushes, and that the content is not appropriate for a broad audience which includes children.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement complied with Section 2.1 of the Code which requires that 'advertisements shall not portray or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.'

The Board noted this television advertisement features three women in bikinis trimming small bushes. The Board noted that the height of the bushes means that they are positioned in front of the women’s pubic areas.

The Board noted that some members of the community would prefer that this type of product, grooming tools for pubic hair, not be advertised on television but considered that this product is legally allowed to be advertised.

The Board noted that the advertisement does not suggest all women should trim their pubic hair or that a woman who does shave her pubic hair is better than, or of lesser value than, a woman who does not shave. The Board noted it had recently dismissed complaints about an advertisement for a personal hair grooming tool aimed at men in Case 0381/15 and considered that targeting a specific gender in an advertisement does not of itself amount to discrimination or vilification.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.2 of the Code. Section 2.2 of the Code states: “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 Board noted that in order to be in breach this section of the Code the image would need to use sexual appeal in a manner that is both exploitative and degrading.

The Board noted the complainants' concerns that the bushes in the advertisement are intended to represent women's pubic hair and that the placement of the bushes in front of the women's bikini bottoms draws attention to this part of their bodies.

The Board noted that the women in the advertisement are all wearing bikinis and considered that in the context of the setting of the advertisement, next to a pool, the level of nudity is not inappropriate. The Board noted the poses of the women and considered that they were not sexualised.

The Board noted the positioning of the bushes in front of the women's pubic areas and considered that whilst the advertisement is playing on an innuendo in the Board's view it is not exploitative and in the context of a personal hair grooming product it is not degrading to draw attention to this part of a woman's body.

The Board considered that the advertisement did not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading towards women.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

The Board then 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 that the bushes are intended to represent the women's pubic hair.

The Board noted that the advertisement had been rated 'PG' by CAD.

A minority of the Board noted that younger children would not be familiar with the term 'bush' being used to describe pubic hair but considered that the juxtaposition of the bushes in front of the women's bikini bottoms does put the issue of sexuality before the broad audience in a manner which is not sensitive or appropriate.

The majority of the Board however noted that it had recently dismissed complaints about a similar advertisement for a man's personal hair trimmer (0381/15) and considered that the content of the current advertisement was less sexualised than this previous case as there is no suggestion of sexual activity with the focus being on how easy to use the product is.

Overall the majority of the Board considered that the advertisement did treat the issue of sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.4 of the Code.

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

