



Case Report

1	Case Number	0418/10
2	Advertiser	George Weston Foods Limited
3	Product	Food and Beverages
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	13/10/2010
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 2.8 - Food and Beverage Code untruthful/dishonest
- 2.3 - Sex/sexuality/nudity Treat with sensitivity to relevant audience
- 2.1 - Discrimination or Vilification Sex

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This advertisement borrows the style and rhythm of Dorothy Mackeller's "My Country" poem but is written (and voiced) as an "Ode to Tip Top". Each line of the poem is illustrated with a bread moment/analogy. For example the line "I love washing up the dishes" shows a young girl mopping up her soup bowl with a slice of Tip Top bread. When the bread is described as having a soft texture, we see a man resting his head on a woman's chest.

THE COMPLAINT

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

In one scene a man is suggestively rubbing his face on a woman's breast whilst talking about the softness of the product. I find this highly offensive
There was a double meaning in the narrative of the ad which was inappropriate. While children would possibly fail to get the 'sexual' meaning the visuals depicting a man resting his head on a woman's breast are also inappropriate.
There is a particular scene that talks about a "Soft Familiar Texture" and he is rubbing his face against a woman's breasts while talking about this texture. The woman's breasts are almost popping out. This whole scene is so offensive and is not appropriate to be shown

when there are young children around. It is so demeaning to women and is totally unnecessary in order to sell bread. Everytime I see this particular scene it makes me angry that it actually got past your standards boards.

During a line in the narrative "A soft and familiar texture" a man speaks the line while rubbing his face against a woman's breasts. This is not something that the Home & Away audience (mostly under 18) should be exposed to. It is also heterosexist and suggests that men should want to rub their faces against women's breasts. As a male I don't believe I should have this type of sexual behaviour advertised to me particularly during the early hours of the evening. It put me off my usual slice of bread with dinner and was overtly sexual. If a man was rubbing his face against another man's sexual organs exclaiming it "A soft and familiar texture" there would be a severe public backlash particularly in this early time-slot. Please consider that this advertisement is inappropriate.

I find the ad very insulting and offensive. Having a man lie on a woman's chest so much that her breasts squash out of her t-shirt while eating bread has nothing to do with buying bread. Slipping this type of crude shot in the middle of all family/children shots is disgusting. There is no need for it. I feel this ad depicts a serious lack of respect for women and all consumers. In the ad it refers to "texture" that one is used to and it shows a man lying on a woman's breasts. I find this to be sexist and inappropriately using women to advertise food.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

George Weston Foods Limited (GWF) takes the complaints made in relation to its Tip Top® "Ode to Tip Top" TV Campaign very seriously and we trust that the following explains our reasoning for the TV Campaign and addresses the concerns raised in relation to the various sections under the AANA Code of Ethics and the AANA Food & Beverages Advertising & Marketing Communications Code. We have also addressed your concerns raised under the AANA Code for Advertising & Marketing Communications to Children although GWF's Tip Top® "Ode to Tip Top" is not intended to be targeted at children.

Tip Top® is Australia's favourite bread and we are known primarily for standard white breads. Through our latest campaign we wanted to show consumers that we are more than just white bread, that Tip Top® in fact produces a large selection of other bread products, including our Café™, 9 Grain™, Sunblest®, UP™ range of products.

Tip Top® targets the main grocery buyer (MGB), that being Females aged 35-49 years, it is not targeting children. The idea behind the campaign is "Loyalty is earned when you do something for someone in their time of need." And "Turn everyday into good days". This has been achieved through illustrating the different life situations in which everyday consumers would eat Tip Top® bread: from school lunches, to an accompaniment with dinner, a snack, family BBQs or breakfast in bed.

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 race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability or political belief.

"Ode to Tip Top" TV Campaign never intended nor do we believe that we have in any way discriminated or vilified a section of the community through the campaign. The depiction of

the man lying on the women's breast is a light hearted way to deliver the message our product is a familiar product to consumers. The idea is to create a sense of comfort and something that connects a couple as it is familiar to both.

2.3 Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant programme time zone.

To illustrate the fact that Tip Top also has a Café™ range of products the scene is set to demonstrate that you do not have to go out for a café experience, as Tip Top® allows you to have café service in your own home. The scene in question depicts a couple, by which the husband has prepared breakfast in bed for his wife who has just woken up. You will note that the female is wearing pyjamas and is also covered by the quilt. The Male character is covered by a large lamp, who was wearing boxer shorts during the shoot. This scene demonstrates a usual Sunday morning in the household of a couple being served breakfast in bed.

2.8 Advertising or Marketing Communications for Food and/or Beverage Products not intended or suitable as substitutes for meals shall not portray them as such.

At Tip Top® we do not believe that the advertising of bread in the "Ode to Tip Top" TV Campaign does not in anyway portray the product in a manner in which it would not ordinarily be consumed in the average consumer's household. Grain based foods form an essential part of an everyday balanced diet. Dietary Guidelines for Australians recommends that we eat plenty of cereals (including breads, rice, pasta and noodles) preferably wholegrain. The way in which we display our product is in no way outside the boundaries of how an everyday consumer would typically consume the product.

2.4 Sexualisation – Advertising or Marketing Communications to Children: (a) must not include sexual imagery in contravention of Prevailing Community Standards

As highlighted earlier the "Ode to Tip Top" is not intended to target children. In any event GWF does not consider the depiction of the man lying on the women's breast (covered by clothing) as "sexual imagery in contravention of Prevailing Community Standards", similarly this is the view for the café service in your bed scene, as noted above the female is fully clothed and covered by a quilt and the male is covered by a large lamp shade.

I hope that this helps to clarify the "Ode to Tip Top" TVC campaign.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code") and the AANA Food and Beverages Advertising and Marketing Communications Code (the "Food and Beverages Code").

The Board noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement is offensive, inappropriate, sexist and demeaning to women.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of section 2.1 of the Code. Section 2.1 of the Code states: "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..".

The Board noted the advertiser's response that the advertisement was intended to be light hearted and it was never the intent to discriminate against women or contain sexual imagery.

The Board noted that in one scene a man is seen to rest his head against the covered breast of his female companion. The Board noted that this scene matches the voice over which is reading a poem about the soft, familiar texture of Tip Top bread. The Board noted the complainants' concerns that this is sexist and demeaning to women. The Board noted that an earlier scene in the advertisement featured a naked man whose modesty is preserved by the placement of a lamp, and considered that all the scenes in the advertisement taken together suggested the familiarity of the people portrayed and that this was in keeping with the advertiser's intent of portraying their brand as familiar. The Board considered that this advertisement did not discriminate against or vilify women or men, and that it is not demeaning to women.

The Board noted that one scene in the advertisement features a woman preparing some muffins for a man, and the view of her shows that some flesh is hanging over the top of her jeans. This image is accompanied by the voiceover talking about 'muffin tops'. The Board considered that this was intended to be a humorous reference to a modern social term and determined that it was not demeaning to women generally or suggestive that this is only an issue for women.

The Board determined that, in this instance, the advertisement did not depict any material that discriminated against or vilified any person or section of society on account of their sex. The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach section 2.1 of the code.

The Board then considered whether the advertisement was in breach of section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 of the Code states: "Advertising or Marketing Communications shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant programme time zone".

The Board considered that whilst some members of the community could take offense to the man resting his head on a woman's breast, the woman is clothed and the action is not sexualised. The Board noted that any nudity in the advertisement was treated with sensitivity and that there were no sexual overtones.

The Board considered that the advertisement did "treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience" and that it did not breach section 2.3 of the Code.

The Board then considered whether the advertisement was in breach of Section 2.1 of the AANA Food and Beverages Advertising and Marketing Communications Code. Section 2.1 of the Code states:

"Advertising or Marketing Communications for Food or Beverage Products ...shall not otherwise contravene Prevailing Community Standards and shall be communicated in a manner appropriate to the level of understanding of the target audience of the Advertising or Marketing Communication.."

The Board considered that the advertisement depicted the product being consumed in the normal manner and that no claims were made which would go against prevailing community standards.

The Board considered that this advertisement did not depict any material that is contrary to community standards and did not breach section 2.1 of the Food and Beverages Code.

The Board noted that no complaints had been received about the statement at the end of the advertisement that Tip Top bread is “Australia’s favourite bread” and did not consider whether this statement is truthful.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach any of the codes on any other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.