



Case Report

1	Case Number	0436/12
2	Advertiser	Cat Media Pty Ltd
3	Product	Health Products
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	14/11/2012
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

ISSUES RAISED

- 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 advertisement talks about the popularity of coconut and how the Coconut Detox Plan can help you feel lighter and rejuvenated. It shows a group of young women having fun and dancing on a beach. They are wearing bikinis or jeans and there is a focus on their flat stomachs. The voiceover describes the Coconut Detox.

THE COMPLAINT

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

I don't think it's healthy or good for women's bodies to be sexually objectified like they are in the ad. This is just contributing to a society that does not respect women for who they are instead of being sex objects. I think it is disgusting that this FatBlaster ad is contributing to this, and also irresponsible of FatBlaster for suggesting that their product would provide the result of the bodies like the women in the commercial.

Body image is an issue of concern to young people. Research shows us that negative body image can affect self-esteem and general well-being, inhibit participation in social activities and lead to serious health issues such as

depression, eating disorders and social isolation.

This commercial is promoting negative body image pressures of how a woman old or young should look and should be removed.

It seems to be on all hours of the day and to be frank I am sick of seeing half naked women dancing on my TV screen... That's what strip clubs

are for...

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

First and foremost, I must say that we are surprised at the nature of the complaints as when we put this advertisement together the overriding image we wanted to portray was a group of young women having fun on the beach, as is typical during the summer throughout Australia. We had no intention of objectifying or degrading women in any way.

Our Response

The Coconut Detox commercial shows a group of confident young women portraying a self-assured body image enhanced within a party like social situation.

We disagreed that the women are “sexually objectified” or being “sexually degraded”:

a. The setting is a girls' beach party. The young women are having fun and dancing amongst themselves. Nowhere in the advertisement are they being objectified or degraded by anyone. There are no acts of degradation or sexual objectification of these women by anyone in the commercial.

b. The product featured is a detox product that helps reduce bloating which can then help one feel lighter and rejuvenated. The young women in the ad feel this and demonstrate it by dancing happily and confidently on the beach. The bikinis they wear allow a visual portrayal of a non-bloated stomach.

Section 2.4 Sex/ sexuality/ nudity S/S/N – general

Nature of complaints

- “half naked women”

- “sexual content of the advertisement”

Our Response

The women at no point in the advertisement displayed nudity or acted in a sexual manner. Beach culture is entrenched within the Australian way of life. One of the more common and socially acceptable forms of clothing that are worn at the beach is the bikini. Furthermore, music and dancing at the beach is a social norm and does not demonstrate something not seen on Australian beaches.

Section 2.6 Health and Safety within prevailing community standards

Nature of complaints

- *“negative body image pressures of how a woman old or young should look”*
- *“body image is an issue of concern to young people”*

Our Response

The advertisement at no point asserts that the young women in it are an ideal body image or that other women should aspire towards such a look. The young women in the ad were used to portray confidence, fun and a healthy body image.

Nature of Complaints

“by using this product you will achieve the same body as the women in the ad”

Our Response

The advertisement at no point asserts that by using the product you will achieve the body of the models used within the advertisement. Referring back to the voice over it states that the Coconut Detox Plan can “help you feel lighter and rejuvenated”

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 presents women as sexual objects, is degrading, sexualised and could lead viewers to develop eating disorders.

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...gender...”

The Board noted that the advertisement is for a coconut detox program and features women in bikinis dancing on a beach whilst the camera zooms in on their waistlines.

The Board noted the complainant’s concerns that the women are presented as sex objects and considered that as the advertised product is a detox which aims to decrease body fat the images of the women’s stomachs is not inappropriate in this context. The Board noted that the detox is aimed at women and considered that this is consistent with the target market for detox programs and that advertising a product to women does not of itself amount to discriminating or vilifying a person based on their gender.

The Board determined that the material depicted did not discriminate against or vilify any person or section of the community on account of gender and 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 the complainants’ concerns that it is degrading to show women in this way and considered that whilst the women are clearly being used for their bodies and appearance in the advertisement the women all look empowered and in control. The Board considered that the women are not presented in a manner which is exploitative and degrading.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not employ sexual appeal in a manner which is exploitative and degrading to men and that the advertisement did not breach Section 2.2 of the Code.

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 that the women are shown wearing bikinis and considered that this was appropriate wear for the beach setting of the advertisement and that the bikinis covered the women in a manner which ensured their private areas were covered.

The Board noted the complainants’ concerns that the advertisement was sexualised and considered that whilst some of the dance moves of the women could be considered mildly sexual the overall tone was not overtly sexualised and was in keeping with the ‘G’ rating given by CAD.

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

The Board considered Section 2.6 of the Code. Section 2.6 of the Code states: “Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not depict material contrary to Prevailing Community Standards on health and safety”.

The Board noted the complainant’s concerns that the content of the advertisement could give women issues with how they look. The Board noted that the women in the advertisement are all slim, as most models are, and that they appear healthy and confident with their appearance. The Board noted that the advertised product is a detox program and considered that it was appropriate to depict women who looked like they had undergone the program. The Board considered that the advertisement did not present material which would be contrary to prevailing community standards on health and safety around body image.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not depict material which would be in breach of Section 2.6 of the Code.

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

