



Case Report

1	Case Number	0491/14
2	Advertiser	Camel Tanks
3	Product	House Goods Services
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV - Free to air
5	Date of Determination	26/11/2014
6	DETERMINATION	Upheld - Modified or Discontinued

ISSUES RAISED

2.3 - Violence Violence

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

A man shows his friend his new water tank, his wife slaps him on the head.

THE COMPLAINT

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

Why, if a woman slaps a man on TV, is it O.K. yet if the role were reversed, it would be violence against women. I believe this ad could give young girls the Idea it's O.K. to use violence against boys, but not the other way round. As another well known ad states, Violence against WOMEN will not be tolerated. Violence against woman OR men should not be tolerated.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The 15 second advertisement was one which attempted to promote the benefits of owning a new water tank which is more attractive than the available competition. The scene was a BBQ with the husband cooking for friends. His mate wants to show off his new water tank

and they leave the social gathering to look at the tank. The husband goes to the tank and hugs it in a parody of attracted behaviour. His wife is clearly annoyed at his mate encouraging her husband to abandon his social duties and play up with the tank. This results in a playful smack on the back of the mates head in reprimand. Elements of the scenes such as the wife stealing her husband's food and the husband dropping his sausage at the sight of the gorgeous tank are light hearted in nature. This visual presentation style is further exaggerated by loud sound effects.

In our view the scenes are not meant to reproduce a realistic situation but in fact are comic in nature. The complainant is drawing a very long bow in connecting this humour with encouraging domestic violence. Firstly that type of violence is virtually exclusively perpetrated by males in a relationship with women and hence the government funding for this form of promotion. Secondly there is no physical exchange between the 2 actors who are meant to be partners in a relationship as is normally the case in domestic violence situations. Lastly, the tap to the head is not seen to be one which will inflict pain, suffering or damage and is hence not an illustration of genuine violence. It follows that if this view is accepted then it is not an encouragement to carry out violent acts and it could not realistically be construed to do that.

The product being promoted in this advertisement is not sold or targeted to children so the Section 2 of the Code for Advertising and Marketing Communications to Children is not thought to be relevant in the case of this advertisement. We also dispute the claim by the complaint that the ad encourages young girls to use violence and cannot see how this interpretation could be levelled.

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 gives the wrong impression about what is acceptable behaviour toward men.

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

The Board considered whether the advertisement was in breach of 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 Board noted that the advertisement features a backyard BBQ scene with two friends talking at the BBQ about water tanks. The two men are seen leaving the BBQ and heading off to have a look at the water tank on the property of one of the men (the husband). The wife is then seen approaching the men and she slaps the friend on the back of the head for taking her husband away from his cooking and social duties.

The Board noted that the advertiser mentioned that the advertisement is meant to reflect a common social setting and that the actions of the woman are intended to be light hearted and

the smack a playful reprimand.

The Board noted that the woman first takes food from her husband as the two 'mates' continue to discuss other friends who have purchased water tanks. The Board noted that the wife then follows the men down to the tank that her husband is now cuddling with affection. The Board noted that as the woman sees her husband cuddling the water tank she looks to the friend and gives him a swift slap to the back of his head as reprimand for flaunting his own water tanks and for taking the husband away from his social obligations. The Board noted that the reaction of the friend after being slapped is indicative that the slap did hurt and he grabs the back of his head and his face is reflective of pain.

The Board noted the sound of a man being hit and his expression of pain. The sound effect of the slap suggested that the slap could quite easily have hurt the man. The Board considered that the sound effects were realistic and were not humorous nor could they be considered a slap stick depiction of violence.

The Board considered that slapping a friend in response to such insignificant behaviour is not relevant to the product or service advertised as required by section 2.3.

The Board noted significant community concern about domestic violence and, considered that, although most domestic violence is perpetrated by men against women, it is not appropriate to be depicting violence against men in the context of an advertisement for water tanks.

On the basis that the advertisement depicted violence and that such violence was not justified in the context of the product or service advertised, the Board determined that the advertisement contravened Section 2.3 of the Code.

Based on the above the Board determined that the advertisement did breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Board upheld the complaint.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE TO DETERMINATION

There are currently no plans to run the advertisement again. Should there be a time in the future that it is used again we will remove the slap segment prior to showing.