



## Case Report

1	Case Number	0518/10
2	Advertiser	Unilever Australasia
3	Product	Toiletries
4	Type of Advertisement / media	TV
5	Date of Determination	19/01/2011
6	DETERMINATION	Dismissed

### ISSUES RAISED

2.3 - Sex/sexuality/nudity      Treat with sensitivity to relevant audience

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

A young man is at a bar in some discomfort as he experiences sweat under the armpits. Another scene at a library shows a similar situation where another young man starts sweating next to an attractive woman. Similar situations are presented at a video store and laundromat until finally the Lynx solution is presented. The voiceover describes the problem as Premature Perspiration.

### THE COMPLAINT

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

*I am revolted by the explicit sexual innuendo that the Lynx brand - and in particular - this advert portrays. Not only does it objectify and over-sexualise the women in the ads portraying them as mere masturbatory meat for men's sexual fantasies but it demeans the young men it represents as well. The content is inappropriate and although the 'perspiration' metaphor for ejaculation is presented as a joke I find it extremely offensive and disgusting. I would not want my brothers or sons, sisters or daughters subjected to the objectification and over-sexualisation of women and explicit sexual innuendo that is continually presented in these lazy advertisements.*

*The scenes of men simulating ejaculation near young attractive women are crude and unnecessary and not appropriate in any way to be shown on day time television. Surely there are more acceptable ways to sell anti-perspirant.*

*I really don't want to see an advert that appears to show young men suffering premature ejaculation. Not at ANY time of the evening. I don't think this is appropriate and I find it really distasteful. Unlike a movie where you could predict this kind of smutty humour will occur and make a decision to watch despite that when it's in an advert you really don't have a choice. I also have a teenage stepson and it's incredibly embarrassing when this advert comes on.*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

### *1. The Complaint*

*The details of the complaints received by the ASB are as follows:*

*??Complaint received on 1 December 2010:*

*Description of TVC:*

*"The advertisement shows young men simulating ejaculation in the presence of young attractive women. The slogan of 'premature perspiration' is included as a play on words."*

*Reasons for concern:*

*"The scenes of men simulating ejaculation near young attractive women are crude and unnecessary and not appropriate in any way to be shown on day time television. Surely there are more acceptable ways to sell anti-perspirant."*

### *2. Overview*

*Lynx is a brand with a history of fun, tongue-in-cheek, playful advertising. Lynx also has a proud history of award winning commercials which both entertain and surprise its consumers. We submit that the TVC continues this tradition of tongue in cheek entertainment and that the intended young adult male audience understands the playful and hyperbolic nature of the TVC and its distinction between fact and fiction.*

*CAD provided the TVC with a "PG" (Parental Guidance) rating whereby the TVC may be broadcast during defined hours, except during P and C programs or adjacent to P or C periods.*

*Unilever has taken great care to ensure that the TVC has been placed in PG rated programming. The TV media buying is targeted at the young adult male audience and as such the spot placements are amongst programming that is targeted at its intended audience. The humour and content of the TVC is consistent within the context of this programming.*

### *3. Compliance with AANA Code of Ethics*

*Section 2.3 - Advertisements shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensibility to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, to the relevant programme time zone.*

*We submit that the TVC does not contain any overt or ambiguous treatment of sex, sexuality and nudity. At no point does the TVC show any open references to sex, sexuality or nudity.*

*The TVC shows a young man at a bar in some discomfort as he experiences sweat under the armpits. Another scene at a library shows a similar situation where another young man starts sweating next to an attractive woman. Similar situations are presented at a video store and Laundromat until finally the Lynx solution is presented.*

*The TVC does not show an act of sex or men simulating ejaculation, as raised by the complainant, nor does it contain a reference or indication that the men and women are going*

*to have sex. It was deliberately ensured that the short scenes take place in public places like a bar, a library, a video store and a Laundromat where young men happen to see young women.*

*The TVC is firmly set in the realms of humour and playfulness and with themes constant with the style of themes that are regularly shown as content around the TVC's placement. The main message of the TVC is that with Lynx Dry premature perspiration can be controlled.*

*The TVC shows that young men start sweating when they see attractive women because these men are insecure and nervous. The voiceover explains the rationale of the TVC's message:*

*Voice over: "Many men have a small problem ..... Premature Perspiration"*

*Super: "Premature Perspiration"*

*Voice over: "It can be produced by nervousness, insecurity; it's something they can't control. Making them lose self-confidence but above all making them lose women."*

*"With Lynx Dry, Premature Perspiration can be controlled."*

*MVO: Stay Dry with Lynx Dry 24hr antiperspirant*

*The words "Premature Perspiration" displayed in the TVC in connection with the voiceover make clear that the TVC does not show young men simulating ejaculation, but men who start sweating when they see attractive women because they feel insecure and nervous. The rationale behind the Lynx Anti Perspirants and the TVC is that men who use Lynx Anti Perspirants feel more confident and, because they feel and appear more confident, may have more success with women.*

*In this particular TVC hyperbole is used to communicate to the intended audience that Lynx Dry is the fragrance that keeps you dry. In the last frame we can see a confident young man with his girl friend. He feels confident because he does not sweat. The relevant audience in the Lynx Fever TVC is a young adult male audience who we believe will understand the humour intended.*

*The TVC is entirely appropriate with respect to the programme time zones and intended audience.*

*Approvals*

*Unilever is a responsible advertiser and has numerous internal review processes, including review by Unilever's Legal Department, and corporate relations to critique all advertisements to ensure compliance with legal and ethical considerations.*

*4. Conclusion*

*We submit that the TVC does not contain any overt or ambiguous treatment of sex and sexuality as the tone of the TVC is one of humour and playfulness.*

*In summary, we submit that the context of the TVC is well within prevailing community standards and that the TVC complies with section 2.3 of the Code.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standard Board ('the Board') considered whether the advertisement complied with the AANA Code of Ethics ('the Code').

The Board noted the complainants' concern that this advertisement objectifies women and features sexually explicit innuendo.

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

The Board first 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 ...sex...'

The Board noted that the advertisement features scenes of men sweating heavily when they see attractive women, accompanied by a voice over describing these men as suffering from 'premature perspiration'.

The Board noted that the women in the advertisement are all suitably clothed for the situations they are depicted in and while the women are admired by the men they are clearly seen as people and not as objects, and considered that the focus on the advertisement was on the men. The Board considered that the advertisement did not objectify women.

Based on the above 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. The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach section 2.1 of the Code.

The Board then considered whether the advertisement complied with section 2.3 of the Code. Section 2.3 states: '...shall treat sex, sexuality and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience and, where appropriate, the relevant programme time zone'.

The Board noted that the reaction of the men to being near attractive women was to sweat excessively and make convulsive movements. The Board considered that some members of the community might find the way the men react whilst sweating to be in poor taste. The Board noted that it had previously upheld a case for Jamba (83/09) which featured men making similar convulsive movements to those in this Lynx Premature Perspiration advertisement. The Board noted that it upheld the Jamba complaints on the grounds that the depictions of the characters' reactions were accompanied by sexually suggestive lyrics, and noted that in this Lynx advertisement the accompanying voice over does make it clear that the men are perspiring and not ejaculating.

The Board noted that this advertisement has been rated PG by CAD, and considered that the double entendre of the advertisement would not be understood by most children.

The Board determined 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.

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

