



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	126/04
2. Advertiser	Colgate-Palmolive (Aust) Pty Ltd
3. Product	Toiletries
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 8 June 2004
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement depicts a teacher demonstrating to the children in her class the anti-cavity effect of Colgate toothpaste by treating one sea shell with Colgate toothpaste and not treating the other sea shell. The ‘untreated’ sea shell breaks.

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

“I find it offensive because it is absurd, dishonest, unscientific and an insult to children’s intelligence, apart from being a free ride on people’s genuine concern for the state of the world currently.”

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s regarding this advertisement included the following:

“Colgate has used this depiction in its advertisements for Colgate toothpaste around the world for approximately 15 years. Colgate’s use of the sea shells is intended to be a fanciful depiction for the purpose of illustrating in a memorable, imaginary and captivating way the fact that fluoride hardens teeth. The depiction is not intended to be a demonstration of scientific method and Colgate does not believe that there is anything in the advertisement which makes this suggestion.”

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board was of the opinion that in the context of prevailing community standards, the majority of people would not find this advertisement offensive.

The Board found that the depiction did not contravene the provisions of the Code relating to discrimination (age) and vilification.

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