



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	149/05
2. Advertiser	Unilever Australasia (Continental Cup-a-Soup)
3. Product	Food
4. Type of advertisement	Print
5. Nature of complaint	Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 14 June 2005
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This print advertisement which appears in Woman's Day, NW, Fresh, That's Life, Cosmopolitan and Madison magazines features a mature couple in a bedroom setting. The couple is sitting up in bed reading a copy of the Karma Sutra, and the woman is holding a cup in one hand. A large copy of the book rests open in their laps to display stylised images of suggested positions. The tagline: "*So deliciously revitalising you may come to expect more*" appears at the bottom of the advertisement with a picture of a Continental Cup-a-Soup packet.

THE COMPLAINT

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

"... the 4 pictures in the book are extremely graphic sexual positions very easily seen. this is not suitable for a mainstream magazine with readers of all ages ... "

"... I was shocked and extremely offended to see this and am very disappointed that this kind of distasteful advertising would be allowed; I certainly did not expect to be subjected to vulgar and unwanted images in what I thought was a 'respected' magazine. ... "

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

"... To bring the re-launch to life, Unilever developed the brand idea 'Expect More' – the concept being that our products liberate you to expect more from life."

"Continental Cup-a-Soup is very popular amongst older consumers and market research has shown us that these consumers want to feel acknowledged for who they are instead of being treated as old and boring ..."

"... The pictures were deliberately stylised to ensure that they were not explicit, but rather, merely 'suggestive' ... it was felt that the pictures would have limited impact and were not, by themselves, sufficiently detailed to be considered lewd. In this respect, we believe we met the requirements of section 2.3 of the Code, to 'treat sex, sexuality, and nudity with sensitivity to the relevant audience'".

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 that the advertiser had used a deliberately stylised approach in depicting the images in the Karma Sutra. The Board was of the opinion that the depiction was not overtly graphic nor inappropriately explicit.

The Board found that the depiction did not contravene the provisions of the Code relating to the portrayal of sex, sexuality or nudity.

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