



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 160/09 |
| 2. Advertiser | Coca Cola South Pacific |
| 3. Product | Coke Zero |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3 |
| 6. Date of determination | Wednesday, 22 April 2009 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

Television commercial opens with a young man walking into a supermarket holding a shopping basket. He opens the fridge door and grabs Coke Zero. Wording on Screen “Starring ‘Our Hero’”. He turns as girl speaks to him and she says “Hi” wording on screen “Co-starring ‘the Ex’”, woman says “How have you been?” The man takes a drink of his Coke Zero. Flash image of Cola, flash image of arm hair standing up, flash image of the film melting in a black circle. Wording on screen and voice over says “Coca-Cola Zero presents” as a girl swings across the screen on a disco ball,”Coca-Cola Zero presents”. Wording on screen and voice over “A taste of Life as it should be”

Next scene shows a second female approach the group. She walks up to the man holding two cans and says “Baby...., whipped cream? Or Chocolate Sauce?”. Flashes to an image of a woman pouring cream and chocolate over her body. Man says “Both”. A chain drops from the ceiling, the man grabs it as he wraps his hands around the second woman and says to the first woman “You know me.....“I’ll manage” as they lift off up through the ceiling

Wording on screen and voice over “A taste of life as it should be”. Final wording ”real coke taste, zero sugar”.

THE COMPLAINT

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

*The ads (137/09 & 160/09) are overtly sexual in their content and demeaning to women. They indicate that women should be both sexy and available. One of the big issues facing our society today is the sexual objectification of women. The advertising industry is often under fire for contributing to this problem. Here is an example of way they come under fire. This is both lazy and inappropriate advertising.
Please reconsider its suitability.*

I have to say I am shocked that we still see these kinds of ads on tv where women are portrayed as nothing but sex objects. Sure, these portrayals might appeal to blokes and tickles their fancies (no doubt they will), but leave them for the Ralph and Zoo mags where generally the rest of us don't have to watch. All the times I have seen these ads, they have come on when my children are with me (Sunday afternoon and before 8pm on weeknights). My daughter is 8 and my son is 12. He is a mature 12 but I am embarrassed for him frankly that in his formative years he is subject to this extremely inappropriate depiction. Not only is it highly inappropriate for the time slot (even though her boobs are covered, we all know that we are looking at a naked woman and the sexual connotation is way too advanced for the demographic at that time slot. I would totally prefer junk advertising like this to never be shown, but if it has to, it must have restrictions surely on the time slot so that my 8 year old daughter and 12 year old son (and the thousands of other kids out there)

do not have to see it and get screwed up thinking that this is the extent of human relationships! Once again we have to see women depicted as nameless, almost faceless bodies that are there simply to satisfy some poor losers every fantasy. No thanks! I appreciate the opportunity though to discuss these major objections I have to this advertisement in this form and I look forward to hearing the outcome.

Sexual discrimination and innuendo. This whole campaign revolves around a lack of monogamy, scantily clad women and the perfect life being about sleeping with many women.

The add is downright sexist. It posits that in this man (and by extension the audience) should see a perfect world as one where a man is entitled to have a woman who looks like a playboy model at his sexual beck and call. It portrays women as only being there for heterosexual male sexual enjoyment and that heterosexual males are the only ones watching the show and the only ones who would want to drink coca-cola zero.

It further demeans men by positing that the only thing they desire are for playboy models to be at their sexual beck and call.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the complaints regarding the Coca-Cola Zero "Supermarket" advertisement. (Your reference 160109.)

"Supermarket," as part of Coca-Cola Zero's "Taste of life as it should be" campaign, was intended to be humorous, light-hearted and over-the-top. Clearly, it was designed to appeal to young males, the core target for our brand. We submit that the ad is sufficiently exaggerated as to not violate section 2.1 of the Code.

The ad received a G classification by Commercials Advice Pty Ltd (CAD), and the media buy was carefully considered to reach our core male target and exclude children's programming. However, we acknowledge a proportion of the media buy in the early evening made the advertising available to a wider audience, and therefore took the step to withdraw the advertising from television first week of April '09.

Although the ad received a G rating by CAD we reviewed the recommended media buy. We based the media around a core group of programs such as AFL, NRL, Dexter, Underbelly, NCIS, Footy Show, So You Think You Can Dance and Ten Late Night News. We use a tool called 'age profiler' which allowed the team to focus on key programs that most strongly targeted males aged 18-24. However being sensitive to community concerns and in-line with the AANA Code of Ethics, we removed some of the programs from the recommended buy including 6pm News, Biggest Loser, 60 Minutes, Wipeout, Video Hits, Simpsons and Neighbours due to the broader audience viewing those programs.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code") and the AANA Food and Beverages Advertising and Marketing Communication Code (the "F&B Code").

The Board noted the complainants' concerns that the advertisement was sexist, discriminatory and objectifying of women, demeaning to men, contained sexual innuendo, depicted nudity and was screened at an inappropriate time when children may be viewing. The Board considered the application of Section 2.1 of the Code, relating to discrimination and vilification and Section 2.3, relating to sex, sexuality and nudity.

The Board viewed the advertisement and considered that most members of the community would regard the storyline, style and tone of the advertisement to be fanciful and pure fantasy, as the imaginings of the male character encountering an ex-girlfriend, and would not find the advertisement offensive. The Board considered that the portrayal of the female characters in the advertisement was not discriminatory towards or vilifying of women generally. The Board also considered that the depiction of the man's fantasy, in how he would deal with confronting an ex-girlfriend, was not discriminatory towards men generally. The Board therefore determined the advertisement did not

breach Section 2.1 of the Code.

The Board noted that the woman depicted in the "fantasy" sequence was wearing a top similar to an undergarment or swimwear and no nudity was evident. The Board agreed the advertisement contained some implied references to sex and sexuality, but considered this to be mild in tone and unlikely to be understood by younger viewers. The Board therefore found no breach of Section 2.3 of the Code.

The Board also noted that it found no breach of the F&B Code.

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