



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	164/04
2. Advertiser	Office of the Status of Women (Australia Says No)
3. Product	Community Awareness
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 13 July 2004
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

These are advertisements that depict a series of women who have been the victims of violence and/or males who have been perpetrators of violence against women. The tagline is: 'To violence against women, Australia says: 'No.'

THE COMPLAINT

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

"It implies that men are the only perpetrators of violence. This is simply not the case. I am a male victim of violence. I find the ad to be totally sexist."

"They feature the white Aussie male as the villain. No other race or sex is shown to be potentially violent."

"Violence is NOT acceptable in Australia, inflicted by men, women or children on any man, woman or child. It is not about men inflicting violence on women."

"I feel that the adverts were strongly biased towards women being the primary (if not the only) victims of domestic abuse and violence. There was no mention made of the fact that many men are also victims."

"The advertisements use offensive gender specific stereotypes about domestic violence to perpetuate a known falsehood."

"The ads negatively and unfairly portray males as being the perpetrators of domestic violence. The ads are highly gender-biased as they make no reference to the violence and abuse committed by women towards other women, or the violence and abuse committed by women towards children, or the violence and abuse committed by women towards males."

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

"Domestic and family violence and sexual assault are destructive and damage the lives of many people."

"The Australian Government is concerned about the levels of domestic violence in Australia and believes that all forms of violence in the community are unacceptable."

"Australian and international research and statistical analysis consistently show that women are predominantly the victims of domestic and family violence."

“A small percentage of men, and men or women in same-sex relationships also may be victims of domestic and family violence.”

“The Campaign Helpline (1800 200 526) does offer help and support for men as either victims or perpetrators of violence. Thousands of men have already rung seeking help.”

“A cross-section of models have (sic) been used in the TV ads to represent a diversity of Australian images. Contrary to some statements in the complaints, the models are not always white Anglo-Saxon males.”

*“ **Evidence to support:** Australian and International research and statistical analysis consistently show that women are predominantly the victims of domestic and family violence.”*

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 provision by the advertiser of statistical evidence in support of their claim that women are predominantly the victims of domestic and family violence.

The Board also noted the advertiser’s response that the helpline was available to all victims and/or perpetrators.

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

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