



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	164/08
2. Advertiser	Murdoch University
3. Product	Education
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Violence Cruelty to animals – section 2.2
6. Date of determination	Monday, 19 May 2008
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement opens on a Sudanese woman in a forest. She speaks direct to camera: "A way of stopping the ice caps from melting." The next scene shows a man in a fun park speaking direct to camera. He states: "Communication. I think we need better ways to communicate." The next scene is of a woman in a city square in front of a monument. She says: "A cleaner alternative to oil." The next scene is of an Indian woman in a food market. She is chopping fish. The woman speaks to the camera in her native language and the following subtitles are shown: 'Education for everyone on the planet.' A plain screen with text 'The world needs more discoverers and the Murdoch Logo 'Murdoch University'. The text changes to 'We're ready when you are'. Final scene of a teenage boy with surfboard on beach. He speaks to camera: "A surfboard that catches every wave.... And doesn't dump you." Final graphic: Murdoch Logo, text 'Discoverers Welcome' and the website address www.discover.murdoch.edu.au.

THE COMPLAINT

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

One of the ladies interviewed in the ad is sitting in a market place slaughtering a chicken with a machete. I find this ad too graphic for young children.

This advert shows a chicken/poultry being hacked into by one of the women. It clearly shows the bird being cut open. I find this advert revolting, unnecessary and completely offensive. I am a vegetarian and animal lover and i believe this frame of this ad is completely irrelevant and useless. The university should remove this portion of the ad or remove the ad altogether.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

The role of the television commercial is to support the Murdoch "Discoverers Welcome" brand positioning, so a blend of people and cultures from domestic and international environments are referenced with the objective of reinforcing the brand positioning.

The brief to the production company was to use "real" people (rather than actors), in genuine, everyday situations (rather than a staged setting). This provided an authentic context for those individuals to tell us what discoveries they would like to see happen in the world.

In the course of shooting the television commercial in 2007, people and cultures from seven countries were referenced. The scene in the Mumbai fish market was a case in point.

Here, the workers in the market were going about their everyday working life and preparing the fish for sale, giving their thoughts on what they would like to see discovered. It is worth noting that the complaints incorrectly refer to chickens when they are in fact fish.

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 complainants' concerns that a chicken was being slaughtered using a machete during this advertisement.

The Board further noted that the advertiser's response clarified that the woman was in fact cutting up a fish in a fish market and that no chickens appeared in the advertisement.

The Board viewed the television advertisement and noted that the woman was cutting up a dead fish which was to be sold for food in the market where she was working.

The Board considered that the woman was engaged in a culturally appropriate activity and that the image was not a violent one, nor would it cause alarm and distress to the intended audience as these type of images are widely seen in all forms of media.

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