



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	171/03
2. Advertiser	Reckitt Benckiser (Aust) Pty Ltd (Pine-O-Clean)
3. Product	Housegoods/services
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 10 June 2003
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement opens on a domestic kitchen scene, where a young boy wipes a pet dog's mouth with a kitchen sink sponge that the mother subsequently picks up, looks at suspiciously and wrinkles her nose before reaching for a pack of Pine-O-Clean Wipes. An accompanying voiceover states: 'Pine-O-Clean presents the facts of life. Fact: To a little boy, a dog is simply a hairy person. And to a germ, a wet sponge is simply a perfect breeding ground. Fact: Pine-O-Clean Wipes don't just wipe up, they wipe out 99.9% of germs and can be used hygienically on more than one surface.' The young boy is then shown discovering his toddler sister sucking on his 'Action Man' figure. He rescues it for his mother to wipe clean with a Pine-O-Clean Wipe as the voiceover continues: "Fact: Pine-O-Clean Wipes even kill girl germs." The advertisement ends on a view of the product with a voiceover-supported caption reading: 'It's not clean unless it's Pine-O-Clean.'

THE COMPLAINT

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

"It shows a woman typically (stereotyped) cleaning and then taking a toy off her son and disinfecting it because it has 'girl germs' all over it. It suggests that 'girls' are unclean or dirty. I find this offensive." (Complainant's emphasis).

"Women seem to be hated world wide, and it saddens me to see it continue in the form of television advertising."

"It felt like we had jumped back several years. With our social justice laws and goals of inclusivity, I thought we had heard the last of this type of speech."

"I find this misogynistic and a clear picture to males in our society that girls are dirty."

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board ('the Board') considered whether this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics ('the Code').

The Board noted advice from the advertiser that the material employed 'a preschool notion typical of how small boys feel about small girls to add light-heartedness to the scenario.'

Considering that the majority of people viewing the advertisement would recognise the intended humour in the situation rather than be offended by it, the Board determined that the content did not constitute discrimination and/or vilification.

On further determination that the material did not breach any other provision of the Code, the Board dismissed the complaint.