



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	173/01
2. Advertiser	Mastercard International (Guitar)
3. Product	Finance/Investment
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Violence Other – section 2.2 Health and safety – section 2.6
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 14 August 2001
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement opens on a boy accompanied by a man entering a music store. A voice over announces “Your first amp, \$200. Your first strap, \$30. Your first guitar, \$450.” The boy picks up a guitar and, on being told by a shop assistant to “go ahead” and try it, proceeds to smash it to pieces. The announcer’s voice says “Rock and roll, priceless. There are some things money can’t buy. For everything else there is MasterCard. Accepted everywhere music is.”

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainants made regarding this advertisement included the following:

“I am offended by the needless violence that this ad portrays. The destruction of property should never be glamourised. The example set by the child in this ad is irresponsible and violent. It is difficult enough for some parents to control their children in a supermarket without the media appearing to condone such reckless behaviour.”

“I thought this sort of behaviour was called vandalism and attracted a criminal charge. When I consider the amount of damage done to our school on weekends, I hardly think TV should be condoning this behaviour.”

“I understand the inference to the association with the activities [of] some bands (mainly heavy metal), but I find the ad offensive and [it] could even be seen to be vindicating this sort of action.”

THE DETERMINATION

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

Expressing the view that the advertisement was based around an obvious parody on contemporary rock and roll, the Board determined that it did not breach the Code’s provisions relating to violence or health & safety. Finding that the advertisement did not contravene the Code on any other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.