



CASE REPORT

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Complaint reference number | 2/01 |
| 2. Advertiser | GE Lighting Aust Ltd |
| 3. Product | Housegoods/services |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1
Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3
Health and safety – section 2.6 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 13 February 2001 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The television advertisement depicts a nurse walking with a trolley containing surgical instruments into an operating theatre where she joins a surgeon preparing to operate. Looking down on the operating table, she says in an American accent, 'People say long lasting energy light bulbs don't fit in. They're ugly, (shot of a bulb in 'the patient's' theatre gown) so no-one wants to be seen with them. Doctor', she continues, 'can you help?' 'We'll change that', he replies, snapping his surgical gloves. 'Nurse?' 'Yes, Doctor?' 'Scalpel, please.' 'Oh', she says, dithering about a tray of instruments before handing one to him. He performs a procedure and asks, 'Ready?' 'Yes, Doctor', she replies, standing close to him. He removes bandages to reveal a (GE) bulb. 'It's more attractive', he says, and the bulb lights up. 'Oh, Doctor', she agrees, 'it's radiant.' 'I know', he says as they move toward each other. 'Oh', she sighs, and they embrace. A voiceover says, 'The new look GE energy saving light bulb fits in anywhere. Show it off in your home.' The advertisement concludes with a shot of surgical instruments on a tray and text, 'We bring good things to life'.

THE COMPLAINT

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

'The advertisement depicts a nurse in a very demeaning and degrading way. The nurse is represented in a sexually and professionally submissive way to a doctor in an operating theatre. The image that is portrayed is not a contemporary image of the professional nurse who, today, practices as an autonomous health professional. The real damage is that young people who see it, and for whom it just reinforces an outdated stereotypical image promoted by popular media, may not dismiss it.there is a national nursing shortage because there are too few nurses undertaking nursing courses and many nurses are leaving the profession because of poor conditions and bad images of nurses and nursing.'

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board, while acknowledging the point of view expressed by the complainant, was of the view that the material within the advertisement was intended as a humorous and satirical sketch which neither contravened prevailing community standards in its depiction of sex, sexuality or nudity nor constituted discrimination or vilification. The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach the Code on these or any other grounds and, accordingly, dismissed the complaint. The Board noted in passing the advertiser's advice that the advertisement had been broadcast last on 28 November 2000 and will not be aired again.