



CASE REPORT

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Complaint reference number | 227/00 |
| 2. Advertiser | Carter Holt Harvey Tissue Pty Ltd (Sorbent Kids) |
| 3. Product | Toiletries |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1
Language – use of language – section 2.5
Other - Miscellaneous |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 8 August 2000 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The television advertisement depicts a group of six, dining formally and discussing cinema. A man seated at the head of the table says, 'Um, um, I, I need to go poo-poo', wipes his mouth with his napkin and leaves the table. The other diners' reactions are portrayed as embarrassed/nonplussed/off-put/

surprised. To a shot of the product on a toilet-roll holder from which sheets are torn by a man's hand, a child's voiceover says: 'Thick, soft Sorbent. Now has a funny new Kids Range.' The diners look towards the lavatory from which the man's voice is heard calling, 'I'm finished'. Against an interior shot of the lavatory and the product, the child's voiceover concludes: 'It brings out the child in everyone.'

THE COMPLAINT

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

'The Sorbent presentation, with the poo-poo remark at the dinner table, reaches an all-time low

'The advertisement deliberately mixes polite society, a meal and toilet humour. By doing that, the advertisement promotes an incorrect and demeaning image of Australian culture.'

'The advertisement is also sexist. Masculinists have had enough of males being portrayed as idiotic children.'

'This is a disgusting way to market toilet tissue, especially when telecast during meal hours, and is a bad example for children.'

'We and many of our friends find this advertisement offensive, in poor taste and an affront to good etiquette and manners.'

'Let's lift our standards and encourage a bit of dignity in our society.'

'I feel it is degrading and every time I see it I feel embarrassed.'

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board, while appreciating the personal distaste expressed by complainants, was of the view that

the man portrayed in the advertisement spoke in the manner of a child, puncturing any perception of realistic adult behaviour. The Board determined, given the contextual humour of the advertisement, that the material within it did not contravene prevailing community standards and that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any ground. The Board, accordingly, dismissed the complaint.