



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	266/04
2. Advertiser	Reckitt Benckiser (Aust) Pty Ltd (Napisan oxyaction)
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, 12 October 2004
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The advertisement features a man demonstrating the features of Napisan Oxyaction in a shopping mall. A woman is watching and after a successful demonstration he says to her “Even a man can do it.” The woman replies “It’s gotta be good then!”

THE COMPLAINT

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

“The guy is demonstrating how easy it is to use and they says “even a man can do it”. That just reinforces society’s accepted norm – that washing is woman’s work! That’s a bit sexist don’t you think!”

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

“Jon Harker has represented this brand for the past 10 years and on several occasions we have seen him at work in the laundry. What has been taken to be offensive here, the reference to “even a man can do it!” was quite simply a comment made by Jon to stimulate a reaction from the woman he was talking to. He was in no way inferring that washing is a woman’s work, merely that the product is so easy to use that anyone can get great results.”

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board found that the depiction did not contravene the provisions of the Code relating to discrimination (sex)/vilification.

The Board noted that the dialogue in the advertisement was unscripted humorous banter which was not intended to be taken literally. The Board formed the view that in the context of prevailing community standards, the majority of people would not find the advertisement offensive.

Further finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.