



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	274/03
2. Advertiser	McDonalds Aust Ltd (salads)
3. Product	Food
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 9 September 2003
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

A series of six television advertisements referred to the Board variously promote the advertiser's recent addition of a 'Salads Plus' range to its restaurants' menu. In one, a young child is shown eating a generic 'Happy Meal' while saying: "McDonald's new Roast Chicken Salad is my absolute favourite." The apparent contradiction is explained by a view of his mother eating the salad and the boy saying: "Now mum loves Macca's as much as me." In another of the advertisements, a mother says: "I used to go to McDonald's for my kids. Now I come here for my lunch." Typically, in another advertisement, a young woman is shown being handed a 'Berrynice Yoghurt Crunch' at a McDonald's drive through restaurant, saying: "I used to go to the supermarket for fruit and yoghurt. Now I just drive through," while another features a young man buying a 'Vege Burger' saying: "There's one place I like to go to veg out...Macca's." Each of the advertisements ends with a voiceover stating: "New Salads Plus. It's a change for good, at McDonald's"

THE COMPLAINT

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

"The benefits of a healthy diet should be promoted equally to both sexes, as opposed to this kind of cynical market-targeting."

"I think this whole area needs to be investigated. Trying to get a message across to men, women and children, that healthy eating and a little exercise is important to all of us is fine. Unfortunately, most of the time the message is directed to women who are already under enough pressure trying to look young, pretty and thin, sometimes even when they actually are young, pretty and thin! I think it's sexism."

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board noted a response from the advertiser pointing out that '*the nature of the advertising in question is light-hearted...*' and that '*McDonald's is a responsible Australian advertiser and as a company and brand, our position is deeply embedded and underpinned by fun and family values*'.

In the Board's view, most people exposed to the advertising would recognise the advised light-hearted intent in its execution.

It determined that the material did not constitute discrimination and/or vilification as represented in the Code, and that it did not otherwise contravene the Code.

Accordingly, the complaint was dismissed.