



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	277/01
2. Advertiser	ABC Decor
3. Product	Retail
4. Type of advertisement	Print
5. Nature of complaint	Violence Other – section 2.2 Language – use of language – section 2.5
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 13 November 2001
7. DETERMINATION	Upheld – discontinued or modified

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This print advertisement employs a coloured photograph of a young child attempting to play ice hockey under text reading: ‘Imagine this Child Being Raped or Murdered’ Beneath the photograph, the text continues: ‘then Imagine Society Rewarding the Criminals by giving them money just like it does when our virgin forests are raped and our wildlife murdered. Timber Venetians are lovely Plantation Grown Kiriwood is a Superior Quality Timber that doesn’t endanger forests or wildlife. Don’t just ask for Kiriwood Demand It!’ The advertisement also includes a stylized name of the advertiser, the tag-line, ‘the only choice’, and a free call telephone number.

THE COMPLAINT

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

‘I find this analogy between child rape and murder and the deforestation of virgin bushland to be excessive in the case of a venetian blinds advertisement.’

‘I believe that it is the worst example of bad taste I have ever seen in an advertisement.’

‘Advertisers in family magazines are expected to respect their readership and not confront them with unnecessary, unreal, frightening, distressing, sensationalised and yet belittled issues.’

‘I think this particular advert is a despicable and unnecessary angle by which to bring across an advertising point.’

‘..... an affront to all innocent child victims everywhere, causing distress to every parent, grandparent and relative of such victims’

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board determined that the advertisement contravenes Sections 2.2 and 2.5 of the Code which provide as follows:

2.2 Advertisements shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised.

2.5 Advertisements shall only use language which is appropriate in the circumstances and strong or obscene language shall be avoided.

In reaching its determination, the Board deplored the use of the photograph and wording in the context of the advertising of a product.

ADVERTISER’S STATEMENT

'We wish to convey our apologies to anyone offended by our advertisement and accept without reservation that those who opposed it did so with the same passion as we have for forests and wildlife, being the reason behind the advertisement.'