



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	305/05
2. Advertiser	Just Jeans Group (Skinny Jeans)
3. Product	Clothing
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 8 November 2005
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The opening scene in this television advertisement depicts a young girl sitting on a bed in a prison cell. A young man is shown to be lying on the bed behind her. A prison guard is asleep in his chair with an empty bottle of alcohol at his feet. The young girl stands up and walks towards the front of the prison cell. She stares at the guard sleeping in his chair. She then turns to her left and passes through the bars into the adjoining prison cell. The final scene in the advertisement depicts the young girl holding onto the bars of her prison cell. A super reads: “*Skinny Jeans*”.

THE COMPLAINT

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

“It tells young women that being in jail is a really cool thing to do. It’s a place where you can have sex with handsome men, get away with defying authority. But to do this you have to be extremely skinny.”

“The message to young people is: 1) It is cool to be in jail. 2) It is cool to take risks. 3) It is cool to be so skinny you can fit through the bars of your prison cell and just walk on out. 4) it is easy to hoodwink authority (guard asleep outside)...”

“... Why does she look so smug? She’s in jail for God’s sake, she should be terrified! It’s just crass and sends a very poor message... It is not cool, fashionable or healthy to be able to fit through the bars of a jail cell!”

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

“It seems that the complainants are motivated by political concerns and are therefore reading more into the TVC than actually exists.”

“... the TVC by the use of visuals... is merely trying to show that the jeans are a slim fit by the model... being able to squeeze between prison bars. At the end of the TVC, the words “skinny jeans” appears in narrow font with the Just Jeans logo so the viewers can make the connection in the use of the images.”

“The use of this setting is certainly not to promote jail as a desirable nor a glamorous place. The TVC is not meant to be taken seriously...”

“Clearly the TVC is not raising any health and safety issues.”

“The TVC was aired according to its rating of suitability.”

“Firstly, the commercial was in no way intended to glorify a “skinny” body-shape per se. The term “skinny jeans” is a standard industry and retail descriptor for this cut of denim...”

“This is clearly an unrealistic and wholly absurd scenario. It is not intended to be taken seriously as a piece of social commentary. As such, we feel that it is highly unlikely that a young woman would consider prison to be a desirable place to be...”

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board was of the opinion that the advertisement did not promote jail as a desirable place to be. The Board further considered that the advertisement did not promote or endorse this model’s size or weight as being healthy. It was of the view that the text: “*Skinny Jeans*” (that appears at the end of the advertisement) clearly linked the images shown to the product being advertised (being skinny-style jeans).

The Board considered that the majority of people would not find this advertisement offensive.

The Board determined that the advertisement did not breach the provisions of the Code relating to the portrayal of people (sex).

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