



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 307/05 |
| 2. Advertiser | Adelaide Advertiser |
| 3. Product | Media |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
Violence Other – section 2.2 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 8 November 2005 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The opening scene in this television advertisement depicts a man in his late 40s in a café, reading the Advertiser Newspaper. He looks up and notices a good looking woman looking over at him. It takes the man a while to realise that she is interested in him and we see the two glance repeatedly at each other. Eventually the woman stands up and walks over to the man and begins to write her phone number in lipstick in large numbers across his newspaper. Shocked and offended that the woman has written on his newspaper, the man rips the page away and strikes the woman with the piece of paper.

THE COMPLAINT

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

“... The pairing up of the violent image with “humour” seemed inappropriate... I found this to be offensive.”

“I found this offensive because of the following: 1) promotes male violence against women. 2) connects notions of sex and violence. 3) promotes a subtext that – it’s OK to humiliate a woman by using physical violence or a gesture of violence – women want sex from men, even very attractive women from ugly men – the newspaper is more valuable and important than the dignity of the woman. 4 it reinforces stereotypes that women must be passive and wait for a man to make the first move if he is interested – it is naturally his choice (i.e. if women take the sexual lead they are likely to be humiliated, discarded, or degraded as they have stepped out of line)...”

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

“This TVC is one of a series of three brand ads for The Advertiser...”

“Our position is that “Lipstick” does not promote violence against women and that while the woman appears slightly startled, she is obviously not injured by the event.”

“This is particularly true when viewed in context with the other two ads”

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 view that the majority of people would understand the humour used in this advertisement and would not find the advertisement offensive. The Board also considered that the

scenes in this advertisement were not overly violent. The Board noted that the exchange between the two characters was playful and that when the gentleman struck the woman with the paper he had not rolled the paper up nor intended it to cause any harm. The Board was of the opinion that the advertisement had a slapstick quality.

The Board found that the depiction did not contravene the provisions of the Code relating to the portrayal of violence.

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