



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	322/06
2. Advertiser	Honda Australia Pty Ltd (Odyssey)
3. Product	Vehicles
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 12 September 2006
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement opens on an elderly woman on a couch flanked by two sleeping children – as she checks her watch it is obvious she is waiting for the children’s parents to arrive home. Outside, we see that the parents are actually parked in the driveway “making out”. The older woman gets up from the couch, adjusts the time 20 minutes forward on the clock, and goes outside with a torch, shining it through car window, startling the amorous couple. She apologises, but states that they did promise to be back by 11pm and drive her home. The woman (her daughter-in-law) sheepishly gets out of the car and adjusts the front seat back to vertical position and cringes with embarrassment at being caught. As the elderly woman gets into the car, her son mumbles “Sorry Mum”. A male voiceover states “The new Honda Odyssey. It really doesn’t feel like a family car”.

THE COMPLAINT

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

Showing people in such a position is pointless. What has sex got to do with selling a car?

I feel that such explicit scenes implying what is happening is not suitable for my foster children 8 yrs and 5 yrs to see but I also find it offensive to myself and my husband has shared similar feelings, it is not necessary to use sexual innuendos to sell nice cars.

The ad has highly sexual/adult themes.....could possibly give ideas to young teenagers regarding other possible means of having sexual intercourse, that being in a car in an isolated place.

I do not believe that I have to watch other’s (sic) sex lives on advertisements.

...not a good ad for family viewing.

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

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

The advertisement is intended as a humorous look at a married couple ...taking advantage of their last moments of precious “freedom”, before they have to return to the reality of family life.

As fully grown adults and parents themselves, they are still effectively “sprung” by the mother-in-law, and their embarrassment and awkwardness is quite obvious. In our view, many parent will readily identify with the ideas presented in the advertisement and will take the advertisement in the humorous and innocent manner in which it is intended.

The kissing scenes between the parents are not overtly sexual, and do not implicate that sex is

taking place, particularly given the overall air of humour and innocence about the execution.

The scenes portray a married couple who are so happy with their Honda Odyssey, that they are momentarily able to re-capture their feelings of youthful passion, before the advent of their children.

Whilst we respect the complainant right to express concerns, we do not consider that we should tailor the advertisement in order to placate (an) individual's arguable conservative views in this particular instance.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board ("Board") considered whether this advertisement breaches the FCAI Code as the advertisement is an advertisement for a motor vehicle. The Board considered that there were no images in the advertisement that breach the FCAI Code.

The Board then considered whether this advertisement breaches section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the "Code").

The Board noted that the image of concern was that of a husband and wife 'making out' in a car. The Board noted that the couple were fully clothed at all times and that the only depictions were of the couple kissing and cuddling. The Board considered that the depiction was sexual but that it was mildly sexual, humorous and did not contain any inappropriate scenes. The Board considered that the advertisement was a humorous parody of teenagers making out and being caught by their parents and was not offensive or inappropriately sexual.

The Board considered that the advertisement was unlikely to encourage young people to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour.

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