



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 327/03 |
| 2. Advertiser | Lever Rexona (Lynx Shower Gel) |
| 3. Product | Toiletries |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
Portrayal of sex/sexuality/nudity – section 2.3 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 14 October 2003 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

The television commercial before the Board opens on a scene of a naked man in a shower washing himself with Lynx shower gel. The floor starts to crack and the shower recess falls through the roof into the middle of a women's dance class. The advertisement is accompanied by a musical soundtrack of pop music. The man starts dancing in front of the group of women. His genitalia are covered by the shower gel but he is naked and his bottom can be seen as he dances. The women in the class start dancing informally and following the man's routine. The man then goes to the exit and waves goodbye but is met at the door by a glamorous woman and they embrace. The women in the dance class see this and make simulated sexual dance moves. The voiceover states, "New Lynx shower gel."

THE COMPLAINT

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

"...Unnecessarily physically and sexually explicit. It is downright offensive."

"...Excessive nudity throughout the advertisement, and the blatant references to sex in the advertisement including its concluding scene... very distasteful."

"...Naked backside, buttock cheeks spread, anus and testicles almost visible".

"...There is no precedent I have seen for an ad this graphic. I find it offensive and out of step with the generally acceptable boundaries in nudity observed in other commercials."

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

"...The commercial has an "M" rating which means media placement is restricted until 8.30pm.... The content should not be seen as disgusting.... In terms of the sexual content of the advertisement we believe this to be well within the prevailing community standards... The sexual content is limited to a single dance movement... there is no actual simulation of sex or overt sex portrayed... In terms of the nudity we believe this to be acceptable and within prevailing community standards. While the lead male character is indeed nude he is modestly covered in a lather of shower gel foam to ensure no offensive body parts are visible. It is also important to note that the nudity of the male is essential to the story (he is using shower gel in the shower), it is not gratuitous or merely for the sake of shock value."

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 took into account firstly, the fact that the advertisement had an “M” rating and was only aired after 8.30pm. The Board then considered the nudity used in the content of the advertisement. The Board determined that, while the lead figure in the advertisement was a naked man who had been having a shower, there was some modesty in the content of the advertisement as there was no full frontal nudity depicted and accordingly, there was no inappropriate portrayal of nudity in breach of the Code.

In relation to portrayal of sex and sexuality, the Board found that there were only insinuations of sexuality and no overt or explicit sexual acts. Such insinuations were not in breach of section 2 of the Code.

In relation to vilification, the women depicted in the advertisement were confident and in control of the situation. They appeared to view the presence of the man with humour. Accordingly the Board considered that there was no evidence of demeaning conduct or vilification and therefore the advertisement did not breach the vilification provision of the Code.

The Board considered further that the content of the advertisement was not intended to be viewed realistically, but rather as humorous and fantastical.

Accordingly the complaint was dismissed.