



## **CASE REPORT**

1. Complaint reference number	339/03
2. Advertiser	Aventis Pharma Pty Ltd (Telfast)
3. Product	Health Products
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Gender - section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 14 October 2003
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

The advertisement opens with an image of a man and a woman in their lounge room. The man's body is contorted to look like a vacuum cleaner. The woman is holding the man by the legs and pushing him backwards and forwards across the carpet as though he were a vacuum cleaner. At the same time the man is making vacuum cleaner type sounds while the woman casually hums a tune. An image of the Telfast hay fever packaging then appears from the top of the screen.

## **THE COMPLAINT**

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

*"...(the ad) features emotional and physical violence carried out by a female on a male, and portrays men as being stupid and incapable"*

*"...implies males are to be "used" for the purpose of a house hold item. I also has the implication I'm sure that men are not capable of vacuuming a house and that their only use it to transform them into a useful tool. The sight of a male being pushed around implies that the male is only capable of "sucking up dirt" and this is purely sexist and inappropriate."*

## **THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE**

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

*"...the advertisement is quite obviously intended to be over the top in terms of visuals. The adaptation of a male to be the vacuum cleaner is intentionally quirky. The overall intention is to be humorous in nature and we believe any link to show violence or denigration toward one sex or the other is rather tenuous. The advertisement could equally be criticised on the basis that the female was stereotyped in the role of "housewife performing the domestic chores". It would be obvious the average viewer that the roles are arbitrary and no denigration or violence was intended. We believe the average viewer would understand the overall humour and quirkiness rather than be offended..."*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

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

The Board determined that the majority of viewers would recognise the intended humour in the advertisement. The emphasis of the advertisement is on how well Telfast enables Hayfever sufferers to cope with their allergies, rather than on demeaning any particular gender. The Board found that the content did not contravene any provision of the Code relating to discrimination or vilification on any

ground.

Accordingly the complaint was dismissed.