



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 397/06 |
| 2. Advertiser | Opera Queensland (Lucia di Lammermoor) |
| 3. Product | Entertainment |
| 4. Type of advertisement | Transport |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Violence Other – section 2.2 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 10 October 2006 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This transport advertisement features the famous character from the Donizetti opera, Lucia di Lammermoor, wearing a blood-stained white dress, and holding a bloody knife above her head.

THE COMPLAINT

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

My 3 and a half year old son noticed the ad and remarked that the lady had a big knife, knives cut people and knives hurt. So why did she have it in her hand and why was she smiling?

I don't think it's appropriate advertising for the back of a bus, given the demographic it hits 0 – 100. I'm tired of society's love affair with the adultification of children.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Throughout this production's history, the primary advertising image has been drawn from the title role, with Lucia during the internationally famous "Mad Scene".

There is no direct portrayal of an act of violence, although it is suggestive of one, which is completely justifiable in the context of this particular work of art.

The complainant does not mention that the child in question was in any way distressed, but merely that her son noticed the advertisement and asked a question with respect to it.

I reject absolutely the charge that this particular image has anything to do with "society's love affair with the adultification of children".

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board noted that the complainant was offended by the depiction of what appears in the advertisement to be blood on the woman's dress and her holding a knife. The Board noted that the Code provides that violence shall not be portrayed in advertisements unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised. The Board noted that the advertisement was for the Opera Queensland and that the advertisement was artistic and stylised in nature.

The Board noted the advertiser's response and considered that the advertisement did not portray

violence that was unjustifiable in the context of the artistic product being advertised.

The Board noted that the advertisement appeared on public transport. The Board noted that young children travelling on public transport would be accompanied by adults and would be unlikely to be frightened by such images.

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