



## **CASE REPORT**

1. Complaint reference number	409/06
2. Advertiser	Redtail Group Australia (The Amazing Human Body)
3. Product	Education
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Violence Other – section 2.2
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 14 November 2006
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT**

This television advertisement announces “For the first time ever...experience the Amazing Human Body, an anatomical display of real human bodies. This educational exhibition provides you with a unique perspective of the human body by previewing real human specimens preserved through the plastination process.” The voiceover is accompanied by still-life exhibits of human bodies and body parts and organs.

## **THE COMPLAINT**

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

*The partly dissected images shown in the advert are of actual human beings, not some artistic replicas. This visual media is careful not to show dead bodies in news stories etc. surely the same responsibility should also apply to adverts.*

*If you have a respect for the sanctity of life, respect for the dead and are against human exploitation, then please say no to this advert.*

## **THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE**

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

*This is an educational/museum based exhibition that is currently touring with the sole purpose of educating the general public about the human body in both health and disease.*

*While the exhibition does display human bodies that have been permanently preserved using a remarkable technique called “plastination” it is presented in a very tasteful, non-confronting and respectful manner....It is important to note that the display is definitely not gruesome or frightening in any respect. There is no skin on the specimens therefore we see only the muscles, organs and bones which greatly depersonalises the display.*

*There is nothing artistic about this exhibition it is purely a display of human anatomy.*

*The specimens were all donated to medical institutions for the purpose of medical education and medical research. There is no trauma or injury to any of the specimens – they all died of natural causes, the majority being smoking related illnesses and heart disease.*

*It is a very highly respected and credible educational event that is supported by respected organisations such as The National Heart Foundation of Australia, the Children’s Medical Research institute, Jeans For Genes Day and the Red Cross.*

*Because of the sensitive nature of the exhibition and the display of real human bodies we are very*

*mindful to show the utmost respect to the people who have donated their bodies so that others may learn in this manner.*

*We do not feel that the advertisement is distasteful or demeaning of the human body in any way.*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breached section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board viewed the advertisement and considered it in the light of Section 2.2 of the Code relating to violence.

The Board took the view that while the advertisement clearly showed the innards of human beings, the images were clearly in a museum-style environment, the specimens were largely de-humanised and the nature of the exhibition implied that the bodies concerned were collected through professional, ethical means. The Board agreed that the advertisement did not depict violence.

The Board then considered whether the advertisement was aimed at children and whether the AANA Code for Advertising to Children applied. The Board agreed that the advertisement was not ‘directly, primarily’ directed at children under 14 years old and therefore the AANA Code for Advertising to Children did not apply.

The Board acknowledged that children were likely to view the advertisement, but it agreed that the calm and considered tone of the voiceover with the accompanying music further emphasised the professional, clinical context of the exhibition and further eroded any likelihood that the advertisement would cause distress to children.

The Board noted the complainant’s concern that the advertisement promoted human exploitation. The Board noted that this aspect of the complaint was directed to the value of the product being advertised. The Board noted that advertisers have a right to advertise their products or services subject to compliance with the Code. The Board considered that this issue was not an issue that was appropriately considered under the Code.

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