



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 74/06 |
| 2. Advertiser | Telstra Corporation Ltd (101 Home Messages) |
| 3. Product | Telecommunications |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1
Violence Other – section 2.2 |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 14 March 2006 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement shows a middle-aged man teaching his elderly mother the ease of using Telstra's 101 service to take phone messages for her when she is not available to take a call. He tries to demonstrate on the spot by calling her number using his own mobile phone, but she immediately picks up the handset instead of allowing it to ring through to the 101 service. Her son tries again, telling her to let the phone ring and not to answer, so that he can show her how the 101 service works. She again picks up the handset to answer the call. Getting frustrated he tries again, and as she reaches for the handset again, he says "Leave it...leave it..." A male voiceover announces "It's great when it all comes together".

THE COMPLAINT

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

It insinuates that old people and women in particular are stupid and incapable of learning modern technology.

Ageism is a more cowardly form of bullying.

It implies old people are incapable of learning new skills and absorbing new ideas.

In those 30 seconds we are bombarded with numerous offensive negative stereotypes...negative gender and ageist representations.

The ad shows the older woman to be daft, stupid, not able to follow simple instructions. The son is treating her like a child.

...subtle denigration of women, who are not senile as soon as their hair turns grey.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

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

Telstrais of the strong view that the advertisement does not discriminate against nor vilifies women or older people.

The scenario could have easily featured any combination of family members....we felt that the son and mother scenario worked best.

The advertisement is not intended to imply that all or a large proportion of elderly women have difficulties learning new skills....

THE DETERMINATION

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

The Board considered that the advertisement was a humorous depiction of the battle that many people in society, of all ages, face in becoming familiar with new technology. The Board considered that the use of an older woman and son in this particular advertisement was not vilifying or degrading. The Board considered that the advertisement was carried out with gentle and affectionate humour.

The Board did not consider that the advertisement vilified or discriminated against older women, or women in general.

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