



CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 78/02 |
| 2. Advertiser | Just Jeans Group |
| 3. Product | Retail |
| 4. Type of advertisement | TV |
| 5. Nature of complaint | Violence Other – section 2.2
Health and safety – section 2.6
Other - Miscellaneous |
| 6. Date of determination | Tuesday, 9 April 2002 |
| 7. DETERMINATION | Dismissed |

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This television advertisement shows a young woman approaching a bird cage and allowing the bird to hop onto her hand. In a subsequent shot, the young woman is shown with what appear to be bird feathers protruding from her mouth. The advertisement concludes with a Just Jeans logo superimposed over a view of the jeans-wearing woman walking away.

THE COMPLAINT

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

“The name of the jeans, Whiskas, or perhaps it is Whiskers, implies that the woman is like a cat that has devoured a bird. This ad is distasteful (no pun intended)...”

“The advertisement shows a young woman stuffing a live bird into her mouth, leaving only the bottom half of the bird protruding...in very poor taste, particularly in these times of great sensitivity towards the plight of animals.”

“I find this type of add (sic) very offensive and in time slots when children are watching TV.”

“As animal lovers and parents, we found the whole ad in bad taste and quite distressing, especially to children.”

“Is this what we have become, using the destruction of a living creature to promote a product?”

“... little respect for life...Extremely offensive.”

“I have never been so offended by anything on television in my 47 years. I also consider it a repugnant idea to put into the head of the target audience, impressionable teenagers.”

“The ad is in poor taste and to say I was absolutely outraged, not to mention completely nauseated by this dreadful commercial, is a monumental understatement.”

“I felt sick in the stomach...”

“This sick humour is a display of animal cruelty and the add (sic) is totally offensive and distasteful by its implication.”

“This is a cruel and disgusting act and sends a completely inappropriate message.”

“...as the retail price of the bird in question is \$300 and more than most cats, I feel the ad devalues the bird’s worth when it appears to be killed.”

...extremely offensive and totally unrelated to the product, in fact totally unrelated to anything.”

“...disgusting and sick...”

“...repulsive to me and totally unacceptable...”

“...most repulsive, disgusting, very distressful and in very poor taste.

“I felt sick in the stomach...I switched off the program.”

“...offensive as it condones killing and eating native birds...”

“...derogatory towards animals...How low is a company allowed to go to sell a product? In a world that is already in torment and full of cruelty, you don’t need to see it in an advert for a pair of jeans!”

“...this ad portrays wanton destruction...”

“I feel very upset and offended...”

“...hardly a good example for children...I fail to see what eating a live pet has to do with the buying and wearing of jeans.”

“I am a parrot owner myself and dread to think if anyone decided to try the same thing for a laugh or just to be stupid.”

“To show such abominable behaviour towards a living creature on television is revolting.

“The person/persons who came up with that image to sell clothing (or anything for that matter) is one hell of a sick person, and in my opinion quite demented. I am really sick and tired of these so called ‘visual artists’ being allowed to use images that are not only in bad taste but quite offensive to sell products.”

“It’s disgusting...the company who makes the commercial should be fined...”

“We find it utterly irresponsible...”

“The ad aimed at young people seriously concerns me...What sort of message does this ad send to young people?”

“...most unpleasant...” “...distasteful in the extreme...”

“I have not complained about any of the rubbish ads that have been thrust upon the TV viewing public, but this one really raises my anger each time I see it.”

“...this is upsetting...” “...unacceptable...”

“...the whole family were shocked...”

“I can’t even find the words to express how sick we both felt...What SICK mind could come up with image of a lovely young girl crunching the bones of anything alive, let alone a domestic pet?”

“Is portraying the luring of an innocent budgie to its death really necessary to sell a pair of jeans?”

“There are tens or hundreds of thousands of budgie owners who will be incensed with this ad.”

“...in very poor taste...” “...out of step with public concerns...”

THE DETERMINATION

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

While acknowledging that this advertisement might attract negative regard from many people, the Board noted its intended light humour in illustrating a particular treatment of denim and determined that it did not contravene the Code in relation to the portrayal of violence, health and safety or any other grounds.

As the advertisement did not breach any provisions of the Code, the Board dismissed the complaint.