



## CASE REPORT

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| 1. Complaint reference number | 88/00  |
| 2. Advertiser                 | Northern Territory of Australia, Department of the Chief Minister, Office of Women's Policy (Domestic Violence Strategy) |
| 3. Product                    | Community Awareness  |
| 4. Type of advertisement      | Print  |
| 5. Nature of complaint        | Discrimination or vilification Other – section 2.1   |
| 6. Date of determination      | Tuesday, 11 April 2000   |
| 7. DETERMINATION              | Dismissed  |

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENTS

The print advertisement, captioned 'Covering it up won't make it go away', depicts a woman looking into a mirror and dabbing with a cotton ball to camouflage facial bruising.

There are four television advertisements in the campaign:

1. 'We Call It Love': The advertisement comprises shots of a family (man, woman, boy and girl) in happy, outdoor situations, interspersed with indoor scenes in which the man behaves violently and the ambulance and police are called to the house. The voiceover includes: 'And yet, every year, nearly half of the people murdered in the Northern Territory die at the hands of people who said they loved them. And that's not love. It's domestic violence. And it's got to stop.'

2. 'Generational Echo': The advertisement comprises shots of a young man riding a bicycle, interspersed with scenes in a house of his parents arguing and his father behaving violently. The action is narrated by the young man who, as an adult, concludes the voiceover: 'There are times now that I find myself carrying on just like my Dad. And I don't want that. I love my family. And it's got to stop.'

3. 'Sketches of Love': The advertisement is set in a schoolroom where, supervised by a teacher, children are drawing. The sketch of one child becomes animated and depicts a cartoon sequence of a family picnic in which the father, becoming angry and violent, is portrayed as an alarming caricature. Back in the schoolroom, the child says, 'I don't like that monster. He's scary.' A voiceover concludes: 'Domestic violence affects everyone. Don't let your child think you are a monster.'

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4. 'Violent Man With Flowers': The advertisement comprises images of a man behaving violently towards a woman, interspersed with shots of the woman dressing in clothing worn to hide bruising. The couple is depicted preparing for an evening out, the woman covering her neck with a scarf and the man presenting her with a bouquet. The voiceover states: 'If he does it once, he'll do it again. If unresolved, family violence usually gets worse, not better. You can try to cover it up, but it won't go away. It's got to stop. So please, get help now.'

## THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant made regarding these advertisements included the following:

*'These ads always depict men/fathers as the perpetrator and drinking/intoxicated or affected by other substances in an aggressive state while women are portrayed as a prim and proper lady (sic) of more Victorian times.'*

## **THE DETERMINATION**

The Advertising Standards Board ('the Board') considered whether these advertisements breached Section 2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics ('the Code').

While appreciating the view expressed by the complainant, the Board was of the view that the failure of the advertisements to include a depiction of a female perpetrator of domestic violence did not constitute discrimination or vilification. The Board determined that the advertisements did not breach the Code on these or any other grounds and, accordingly, dismissed the complaint.