

Case Report

1. Case Number :	0287-22
2. Advertiser :	Universal Pictures Entertainment
3. Product :	TV - On Demand
4. Type of Advertisement/Media :	25-Jan-2023
5. Date of Determination	Dismissed
6. DETERMINATION :	

ISSUES RAISED

AANA Code of Ethics\2.3 Violence

DESCRIPTION OF ADVERTISEMENT

This TV On Demand advertisement contains scenes from the film Bones & All. There are three versions.

Version 1 includes scenes showing a couple kissing, a man hitting another man with a bat, a couple dragging another person.

Version 2 includes scenes showing a couple kissing.

Version 3 includes scenes showing a woman dragging someone from under a coffee table, a man swinging an axe, and a person covering a woman's mouth. The voiceover includes a woman saying "my whole life I've had one wish-to not be this way" as the imagery shows a woman biting another woman's finger. The advertisement ends with a man saying "either you eat or you lock yourself up in there".



THE COMPLAINT

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

Content of the movie is inappropriate for children.

THE ADVERTISER'S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complainant/s regarding this advertisement include the following:

Advertiser did not provide a response.

THE DETERMINATION

The Ad Standards Community Panel (Panel) considered whether the versions collectively forming this advertisement breaches Section 2 of the AANA Code of Ethics (the Code).

The Panel noted the complainant's concern that the advertisement is inappropriate for broadcast when children can view it.

The Panel viewed the advertisement and the noted advertiser's response.

Section 2.3 Advertising or Marketing Communications shall not present or portray violence unless it is justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised.

The Panel noted the Practice Note for this section of the Code which states:

"Graphic depictions of violence or a strong suggestion of menace have been found to present violence in an unacceptable manner especially when visible to a broad audience which includes children. For example, advertising for violent or horror movies, tv shows or video games should take care not to include images that give the impression that a character has just committed violence against someone (for example, a weapon with dripping blood), was the victim of violence (for example, freshly severed limbs) or is about to commit violence against someone (for example, gun aimed directly at a person or the viewer) where there is a broad audience which includes children".

Does the advertisement contain violence?

The Panel noted that there are four scenes in the advertisement which depict a level of violence. A scene depicting a woman biting another woman's finger, a woman

dragging someone from under a coffee table, a person covering a woman's mouth, and a man hitting another man with a bat.

Is the violence portrayed justifiable in the context of the product or service advertised?

The Panel noted that the advertisement was promoting a movie titled 'Bones and All' which is rated MA15+.

The Panel considered that while the film does contain indications of cannibalism in the images and voiceovers used, the references are not explicit. The Panel considered that while mature viewers may infer the theme of the film, children are unlikely to understand the subject matter.

The Panel considered that the scene of a woman biting another woman's finger is quite mild and the context of violence will only be inferred if a viewer understands the overall context of the film.

The Panel considered that although the advertisement contains distressing imagery (noted above), the advertisement uses quickly changing scenes which breaks up the sense of suspense. The Panel considered that there is no focus on blood or gore, noting that blood does not appear in the advertisement.

The Panel noted that the advertised product is a horror/thriller film that contains violent sequences and graphic imagery, and noted that the scenes shown are scenes from the film. The Panel noted that the sound/music in the advertisement is spooky and does suggest a degree of menace.

Overall, the Panel considered that the tone of this advertisement was suspenseful and frightening, and contained a moderate level of violence. The Panel considered that the level of violence was not excessive in the context of an advertisement for a horror movie.

Section 2.3 conclusion

In the Panel's view the advertisement did portray violence that was justifiable in the context of the product being advertised and did not breach Section 2.3 of the Code.

Conclusion

Finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on other grounds, the Panel dismissed the complaint.