

COMPLAINT NUMBER	18/047
COMPLAINANT	C Ferguson
ADVERTISER	Garden Hotel and Restaurant
ADVERTISEMENT	Garden Hotel and Restaurant, Radio
DATE OF MEETING	12 February 2018
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The radio advertisement for the Garden Hotel Restaurant has a man cooking dinner for his partner and says in part: “Happy Valentines Day my love” and woman is heard saying “Oh Greg, I didn’t know you could cook” followed by the woman in a shrill voice saying “Beans on toast and instant pudding! - Does our love mean nothing to you?” A crashing sound and a male voice groaning can be heard and the voiceover says “The DIY approach probably won’t go down well this Valentines Day, but a candlelit dinner at the Garden Hotel Restaurant definitely will.”

The Chair ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed.

Complainant, C Ferguson, said: I am complaining about the Valentines Day promotion that Christchurch Restaurant "The Garden Hotel" is using. They also used the same advertisement leading up to the same holiday in 2017.

It is about how a man should have taken his wife to the restaurant as he prepared a less than adequate dish for the big night. When the wife lifted the lid she screamed out Argh, beans on toast and instant pudding! Does our love mean nothing to you? She then threw the beans fresh off the stove at him and he screamed in a pain.

Now apparently this is meant to be funny. Forget about the poor guy trying to do something nice. Forget that it's the thought that counts. He wronged her.

Now let's swap the couples behaviours around. Let's say the male is the more dominating one and what he says goes in most situations. What would society think of him? Imagine the outrage if an advertisement had a male throwing a hot substance at a female and yelling at her.

Rarely do we imagine men as victims. To do so is almost comical - literally. The image of the angry housewife - usually fat and unattractive waiting at home for her delinquent husband with curlers in her hair and holding a rolling pin, ready to dispense retributory violence for some slight, has been around for generations.

...This advertisement is deeply upsetting to me and a lot of other males. Statistics worldwide show that 50% of domestic violence victims are actually male!!

It is not right that this is deemed suitable and by having it played on air is showing that it is ok for woman to abuse men.

The relevant provisions were Code of Ethics - Basic Principle 4, Rule 4, Rule 5, Rule 6.

The Chair noted the Complainant's concern the advertisement was upsetting in its depiction of domestic violence, in particular with a male as the victim.

The Chair took into account that the Advertiser sought to use light-hearted humour to promote its establishment. She said that while the tone of the advertisement was less than ideal and did not present the woman in a good light, it was not possible to say whether any actual violence took place or whether the plates were smashed on the floor and the man groaned in disappointment.

The Chair said that with this limited context, the woman's actions did not meet the threshold to condone violent behaviour towards men. When taking into account generally prevailing community standards, the Chair said the advertisement was unlikely to cause serious or widespread offence.

While acknowledging the genuine concern the advertisement caused the Complainant, the Chair said the advertisement did not breach of Rules 4, 5 or 6 of the Code of Ethics and had been prepared with a due sense of social responsibility required by Basic Principle 4 of the Code of Ethics.

Accordingly, the Chairman ruled there were no grounds for the complaint to proceed

Chair's Ruling: Complaint No Grounds to Proceed

APPEAL INFORMATION

According to the procedures of the Advertising Standards Complaints Board, all decisions are able to be appealed by any party to the complaint. Information on our Appeal process is on our website www.asa.co.nz. Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 days of receipt of this decision.