

COMPLAINT NUMBER	18/256
COMPLAINANT	K Brewerton & E Moncrieff
ADVERTISER	Smiths City
ADVERTISEMENT	Smiths City Television
DATE OF MEETING	1 October 2018
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The television advertisement for Smiths City features a woman sitting in her house reminiscing about her life back in the 1950's. "...Buying our first double bed was a bit stressful, the Smiths City man was very diplomatic – I couldn't stop thinking about the wedding night, must've been a great bed – we have seven kids!" The advertisement ends with the voiceover and text saying: "Smiths City, celebrating 100 years of making your house a home."

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

Complainant, K Brewerton, said: Smiths City's advertisement for beds mentioned sex and the wedding night, which I did not feel was appropriate for broadcasting during the ad break in a G rated program, one that families often watch together. My kids who were watching with me said and said they didn't feel it was appropriate either. They looked uncomfortable with the content. I feel this ad should have been shown after 8.30pm.

Complainant, E Moncrieff, said: I wish to complain about an advert where an elderly lady talks about sex. I find it completely inappropriate at prime time when children can view an advert involving a grandmother figure talking about sex. I don't find the advert funny or clever, it is revolting to witness the sexualisation of the elderly especially in front of my young child. Is nothing sacred anymore? How much more sexualisation will our children be subject to in advertising. This advert has taken it to a new low.

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

The Chair noted K Brewerton's concerns that the mention of sex and the wedding night was inappropriate for broadcasting during the advertisement break in a G rated programme screened before 8.30pm.

The Chair noted E Moncrieff's concerns that a grandmother figure talking about sex during prime viewing was sexualisation of the elderly and inappropriate at prime time.

The Chair confirmed the advertisement had been given a PGR (Parental Guidance Recommended) rating by the Commercial Approvals Bureau. The advertisement screened after 7pm during "Prime Planet" as well as during "Breakfast", which is categorised as Unclassified Programming.

The Chair noted that advertisements are rated PGR if they contain material which is more suited to adult audiences, but they are not necessarily unsuitable for child viewers when

subject to the guidance of a parent or adult. PGR rated advertisements can generally be screened between 9am and 4pm and after 7pm, until 6am.

The Broadcasting Standards Authority refers to Unclassified Programming as “news, current affairs, sports and live content that is not, because of its distinct nature, subject to classification. However, broadcasters must be mindful of children’s interests and other broadcasting standards and include audience advisories (i.e. a warning) where appropriate.” The Chair said according to information provided by TVNZ, 1.7% of the audience for “Breakfast” on 30 July 2018 was under the age of eighteen, confirming this programme is not directed at children.

The Chair said while the advertisement used references to sex, in a humorous way, this was not sexualisation of the elderly. The Chair acknowledged the timing and tone of the advertisement was of concern to the Complainants. While the Chair noted the Complainant’s concerns, she said the advertisement did not reach the threshold to be considered offensive, taking into account the context, medium, audience and product.

In light of the above, the Chair said there was no apparent breach of the Code of Ethics.

Therefore, the Chair ruled that 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.