

COMPLAINT NUMBER	19/109
COMPLAINANT	K Holdsworth
ADVERTISER	Woolworths New Zealand Limited.
ADVERTISEMENT	Countdown Television
DATE OF MEETING	11 March 2019
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The television advertisement for Countdown supermarket and three charities: Salvation Army, KidsCan and Forest and Bird opens with a spokesperson for the Salvation Army. He says: 'If you swipe your One Card you have a chance to share in over \$100,000 worth of One Card rewards... Countdown will match the dollar amount and donate to Salvation Army...'. As he is speaking, he is interrupted by representatives from both KidsCan and Forest and Bird. Julie from KidsCan says "Hey we're all good causes, so if a customer wins, we let them choose". As well as winning One Card rewards, a customer can choose which of the three charities Countdown will donate to.

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

Complainant, K Holdsworth, said: I've actually watched this advert a couple of times and been made to feel uncomfortable. It's meant to be a lovely idea, donating to charity through shopping at Countdown. But it begins with the representative from Salvation Army being joined by two other deserving charitable organisations. The Salvation Army representative appears dismayed that he has to share the proceeds and seems argumentative. He is rebuked by the KidsCan representative as though he needs to be told to share.

I object to this advert on the grounds that it perpetuates the view that churches are money grabbing and pushy. I think that's a very unfair projection. I am not affiliated to any particular church, but have met Salvation Army people and not got that view of them at all.

I feel the advert could have been really positive and beneficial, gaining buy-in from the public in such a different way. It is after all, a great thing that Countdown are doing. Instead, I'm left with the impression that they've been giving all donations to the Salvation Army and the SA aren't subsequently happy about having it split three ways. I realise that absolutely isn't the case and am sorry that Countdown has chosen to portray the church element in this way. It fits into the stereotype of the pushy, hard sell televangelist image. This isn't something I've ever had reason to associate with the Salvation Army. I'm guessing they are unable to complain, otherwise they will be cut from the list but they must be cringing every time it's shown.

I could labour the anti-Christian undertones of the advert but I don't think I need to. I think it's unfortunate, rather than intentional.

The relevant provisions were Advertising Standards Code - Principle 1, Rule 1(c).

The Chair noted the Complainant's concerns the advertisement perpetuates the view that charities are money grabbing and pushy.

The Chair said the Advertiser had confirmed to the ASA Secretariat that all the charities involved had viewed and signed off on the script prior to filming.

The Chair said the advertisement did not contain anything that was likely to cause harm or serious or widespread offence.

The Chair ruled the complaint had no grounds 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.