

<b>COMPLAINT NUMBER</b>	19/123
<b>COMPLAINANT</b>	N Lewis
<b>ADVERTISER</b>	Briscoes Group Ltd
<b>ADVERTISEMENT</b>	Briscoes Television
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	25 March 2019
<b>OUTCOME</b>	No Grounds to Proceed

**Advertisement:** The television advertisement for the Briscoes St Patrick's Day Sale features a man speaking in an Irish accent, explaining the particulars of the sale.

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

**Complainant, N Lewis, said:** The Briscoes advert is promoting the company's St Patrick's Day Sale. I have found the advert to be highly offensive and racist in the way the advert poorly mimics an Irish accent. Once again I find it offensive and in ill taste and extremely racist to derogate the Irish accent in such a way.

If you were to be advertising a sales day celebrating some other cultures holiday, e.g. an Asian Indian Holiday, would it be appropriate to poorly imitate an Asian Indian accent for your company's sale day???

If anything the Briscoes advert could have used an actual Irish person with a true broad Irish accent.

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

**The Chair** noted the Complainant's concerns that the way the advertisement poorly mimics an Irish accent is racist and derogatory.

The Chair said accents and other identifiers synonymous with particular cultures are used in advertising from time to time. The Chair agreed that some of these could cause offence.

The Chair took into account the Briscoes advertisement promoted a sale on St Patrick's Day, a Christian feast day, which has become a commercialised celebration of all things Irish, across the world.

The Chair noted the Complainant's view it would have been more authentic to use an Irish person to voice the advertisement. The Chair said the advertisement used clichéd language such as the phrase "top of the mornin' to ya" and images of shamrocks. The Chair agreed the advertisement was hyperbolic and a parody.

The Chair acknowledged the fake-sounding Irish accent used in the advertisement was offensive to the Complainant.

The Advertising Standards Code requires the Chair to consider whether the use of the accent to promote the Briscoe's St Patrick's Day Sale caused serious or widespread offence to the audience, taking into account context, medium, audience and product.

The Chair said in the context of this advertisement and the commercialisation of St Patrick's Day, the accent had not reached the threshold to cause that level of 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](http://www.asa.co.nz). Appeals must be made in writing via email or letter within 14 days of receipt of this decision.