

COMPLAINT NUMBER	20/239
ADVERTISER	Asahi Beverages (NZ) Ltd
ADVERTISEMENT	Boundary Road Brewery Out of Home
DATE OF MEETING	22 June 2020
OUTCOME	No Grounds to Proceed

Advertisement: The billboard advertisement for Boundary Road Brewery shows a photo of a can of Boundary Road Brewery craft beer with the text: "Crave complexity? Drink it with your mate's wife... It's not rocket science".

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

Complaint: This billboard is extremely offensive to both men and women by adhering to stereotypes that males and females cannot be friends without it being "complex", insinuating that they would hook up and cheat on their husbands or wives. This is sexist, demeaning, outdated, conservative view point.

This advertisement breaks the following advertising standard rules:

Rule 1 (c) Decency and Offensiveness

"Advertisements must not feature stereotypical roles or characteristics which, through their content and context, are likely to be harmful or offensive to people". This includes, but is not limited to, advertisements that:

Mock people for not conforming to gender stereotypes.

Portray an activity or product as being inappropriate for a girl or boy because it is stereotypically associated with the opposite sex.

Portray men or women failing at a task that is stereotypically associated with the opposite sex.

Advertisers must not use offensive, degrading or provocative copy and/or images to attract attention or promote the sale of products or services.

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

Principle 1: Social Responsibility: Advertisements must be prepared and placed with a due sense of social responsibility to consumers and to society.

Rule 1(c) Decency and Offensiveness: Advertisements must not contain anything that is indecent, or exploitative, or degrading, or likely to cause harm, or serious or widespread offence, or give rise to hostility, contempt, abuse or ridicule.

The Chair noted the Complainant's concern the advertisement was offensive.

The Chair referred to one of the guidelines for Rule 1(c) of the Advertising Standards Code which says "Humorous, satirical treatment of people and groups of people are natural and accepted features of societal relationships and may be acceptable, provided they are not likely to cause harm or serious or widespread offence".

The Chair said in this case the advertisement is intended to be humorous about the use of the word 'complexity', a term which is often used in descriptions of some craft beers.

The intended consumer takeout would appear to be that Boundary Road Beer doesn't have complexity, so if that's what a consumer is looking for they will need to add it through a social situation, in this case, "drink it with your mate's wife".

The Chair said the advertisement played on a relationship stereotype between men and women and a view that meeting with a mate's wife to share a drink could cause problems in the men's friendship.

Rule 1(c) of the Advertising Standards Code required the Chair to consider whether the statement in this context was likely to cause serious or widespread offence in light of generally prevailing community standards. While acknowledging the Complainant's view, the Chair said the advertisement did not meet the threshold to breach Principle 1 or Rule 1(c) of the Advertising Standards Code.

The Chair 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 calendar days of receipt of this decision.