

OFFENSIVE TELEVISION ADVERTS (2012)

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I wrote to ITV about two offensive television advertisements and they referred them to the ASA (Advertising Standards Authority) who wrote to me to say that they had had many complaints about these two advertisements.

The first advertisement was for Specsavers where a man sits in what he believes is a sauna or Turkish bath. He is naked and eventually realises that he is in a steamy kitchen with Jamie Oliver and his staff. We see the nude man at a distance with a pepper shaker in the foreground covering his manhood. Jamie Oliver then chops in half a cucumber and rather angrily. The nude man crosses his legs which obviously means that he does not want his manhood chopped off. The advertisement ends with the message, "He should have gone to Specsavers!".

The ASA agreed that this advertisement was offensive to complainants and in bad taste. They also said it portrayed the aggressive character of Jamie Oliver and that his attack on the cucumber was regarded as violence highlighted by the nude man nervously crossing his legs.

The many complaints were not upheld since it did not breach the Communications Act and was regarded as light-hearted humour. The advertisement could and would not be removed simply because it was in bad taste.

The other advertisement was for Galaxy Minstrels Chocolates. Two young women are sitting in a theatre looking forward to a dance choreographed by a Russian choreographer of great repute. Of course he is fictitious. He is described as the choreographer of the Grand Bulge. The show is of male strippers and it is obvious what the grand bulge refers to. The girls are using binoculars. The advertisement is sexist, offensive, rude and in poor taste.

The ASA confirmed that they had had many complaints about this advertisement but, again, they said it did not contravene the Communications Act and was light-hearted and humorous. The advertisement could not be withdrawn because it was in bad taste.

For many years there have been complaints about advertisements about sanitary towels. Many complaints were engendered by young children wanting to know what they are and therefore creating domestic problems.

Nivea withdrew an advertisement in a magazine and put an apology on You Tube but that apology was offensive with exceptionally bad language and those who complained were vilified mercilessly. Kentucky Fried Chicken had an advertisement which was deemed as racist.

Coca Cola produced some appalling advertisements. There was a spoken message exclusively for the deaf and a special colourful film for the totally blind.

There is currently an advertisement for Tena Lady in which a young lady gets her little dress caught in the elevator and the dress rises up and she cannot hold it down.

Is this offensive? Men and lesbians have openly admitted that this scene has caused them to experience sexual arousal and the desire to go hunting for sex.

If offensive advertisements are screened and allowed by the appropriate authorities, what does this say about the continuing moral decline in society?