

Gnome is Where the Heart is?

Although we at ASA¹⁾ deal with over 30,000 complaints a year, even we are surprised sometimes by the reaction that an ad can provoke. This was certainly the case when a recent TV ad by IKEA featuring garden gnomes prompted nearly 50 complaints that it was offensive, unsuitable for children, frightening, violent and encouraged anti-social behaviour.

So what did the ad contain to prompt such concerns? The ad featured a couple clearing out the old furniture and ornaments from their garden. As they did so they were confronted by an increasingly combative army of gnomes that tried to prevent them from replacing the old (them) with the new. Several gnomes were featured being smashed and broken and the ad finished with the tagline "Make more of your garden. Say no to gnomes".

As a starting point, we take all the complaints we receive seriously. However, just because an ad has prompted a negative reaction amongst some viewers does not mean that we will automatically investigate. In fact, the Advertising Code even states that ads may be distasteful without necessarily breaking the rules on harm and offence. We didn't take any further action on this occasion. While we appreciated that the ad would not be to everyone's taste we thought it was clearly fanciful and light-hearted. We also didn't share the view that it would encourage or condone violence or anti-social behaviour.

While ensuring ads do not cause serious or widespread offence is very important, particularly when it comes to protecting children, we have to be proportionate and judge accepted standards. It is not our role to act as censor. The garden gnome ad is a case in point.



asa.org.uk, 2013

noot 1 ASA = Advertising Standards Authority: een onafhankelijk instituut dat toeziet of bedrijven zich aan de advertentieregels houden.

Tekst 11

- 1p 30 Wat is het doel van deze tekst?
- A bewijzen dat advertenties verkoopcijfers beïnvloeden
 - B duidelijk maken wat de taak en werkwijze van de ASA is
 - C uitleggen dat je bij de ASA niet kunt klagen over advertenties
 - D verklaren waarom klagen over advertenties geen zin heeft

Bronvermelding

Een opsomming van de in dit examen gebruikte bronnen, zoals teksten en afbeeldingen, is te vinden in het bij dit examen behorende correctievoorschrift, dat na afloop van het examen wordt gepubliceerd.