

Advertisement:

Dewar's "Meet the Baron"
video advertisement

Advertiser:

Bacardi U.S.A., Inc.

Complainant:

Private Citizen
Saint John, New Brunswick,
Canada

Complaint Summary:

The complainant believes that the Dewar's "Meet the Baron" video advertisement violates Responsible Content Provision No. 24 of the DISCUS Code of Responsible Practices for Beverage Alcohol Advertising and Marketing because the "this ad is in very poor taste and is degrading to larger size women. The message is: if you are a large overweight woman you are not worthy to drink Dewar's. BUT if you are a size 0, gorgeous bikini model, you are...."

Responsible Content Provision No. 24 provides that "[b]everage alcohol advertising and marketing materials should not degrade the image, form, or status of women, men, or of any ethnic, minority, sexually-oriented, religious, or other group."

In that regard, the complainant states that "[a]t 0.28 seconds of the video, a large voluptuous and overweight (by social standards) woman walks into the room. The announcer is heard saying: And on the battlefield, he wouldn't just take a bullet, he'd be the one throwing himself on the explosives." The complainant further states that "[t]his is a play on words and is a variation of: 'Jumping the hand grenade,' which in bar circles means, and this is taken directly from Urban Dictionary but is well known in the 20-30's something demographic as: '[a]n action performed by the wingman: this situation arises when the said wingman takes one for the team by hitting on the fat/ugly chick in order to help his buddy/buddies score with hot chicks, and therefore, sacrifices himself by jumping onto the grenade.'"

The complainant notes that "[l]ater in the commercial, the 'Baron' introduces him to the women the 'drinking' man is worthy of...the hot, thin Swedish bikini models..."



Code Review Board Decision: In response to the complaint, the advertiser stated that it was never their intent to degrade women; nevertheless, the advertiser understood the complainant's point of view. Upon further review of the advertising execution, the advertiser removed the "Meet the Baron" video from the digital medium where it was posted.

Despite the removal of the video and upon consideration of the complaint, the Board found the advertisement in violation of Responsible Content Provision No. 24. The Board concluded that the video was degrading to women in light of the fact that, as a "plus-sized" woman approached "the Baron's" friend at the bar, "the Baron" interceded her path, with the voiceover referring to "the Baron" that "on the battlefield, he wouldn't just take a bullet for you, he'd be the one throwing himself on the explosives." This colloquialism has been used to connote a situation where someone in a group of friends will take on the "ugliest" woman so that his friends have an opportunity to seek out more "attractive" women.

After this scene, "the Baron" and his friend are shown in a scene with "attractive women" that has the following voiceover: "and he always said there's no I in team, but there is in Swedish bikini models." The Board viewed the advertising execution as degrading to the form and image of women because the "plus-sized" woman was depicted in the video as an individual that required deflection, as compared to Swedish bikini models.

Action by Advertiser: The advertiser removed the "Meet the Baron" video from all digital sources.

Status: Resolved: Responsive action taken